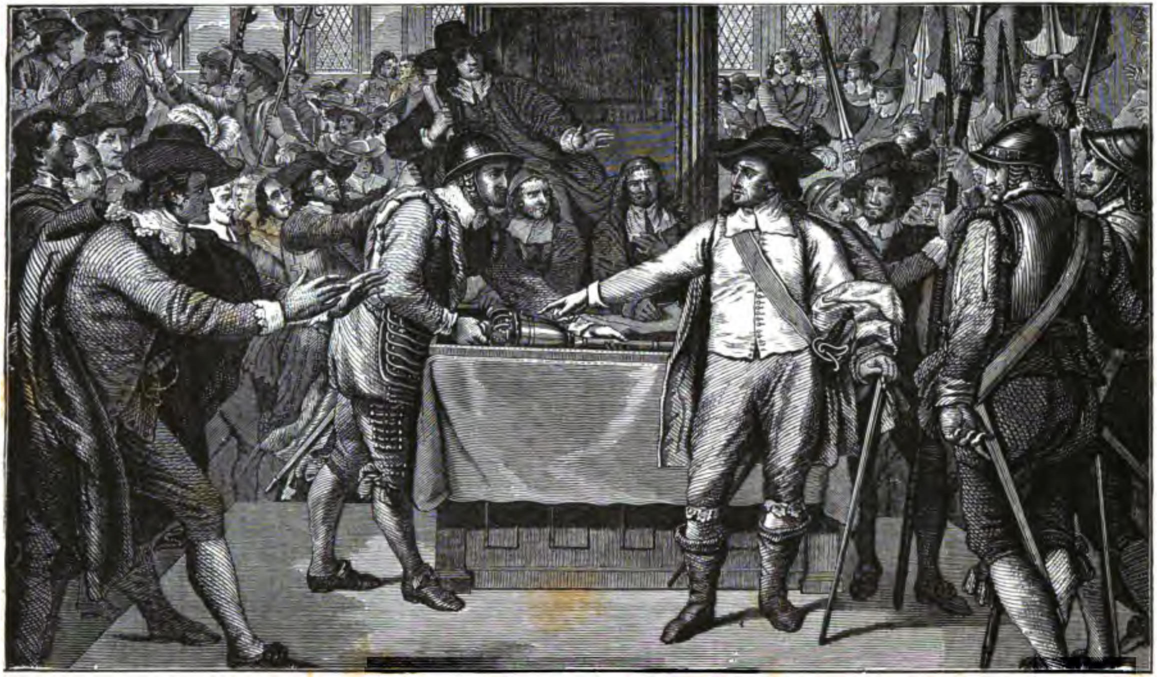

CROMWELL DISSOLVING THE PARLIAMENT. [*Page* 271.

OLIVER CROMWELL

HIS LIFE, TIMES, BATTLEFIELDS, AND CONTEMPORARIES.

BY

PAXTON HOOD,

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INTRODUCTORY.

I.

CONFLICTING THEORIES OF CROMWELL'S LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

CONFLICTING THEORIES OF CROMWELL'S LIFE.

IN one of those stately old folio histories in which our forefathers wrote the chronicles of England more than a century since, it was the wont of our dear old nurse, who supplied the place of a mother to us, to permit us to *look*, when the rare occasion came round on which we were rewarded because we had behaved somewhat better than usual. But well do we remember, as we looked at the full-length portraits of the kings, and from these full-length portraits derived sometimes a better idea of the men than from the pages of the letterpress—midway through the book we came to a portrait that puzzled us: it stood opposite the page headed, "Interregnum—Commonwealth." Yes, there stood a rough, robust being, without a crown, and yet with a most ominous hat upon his head, a broad-brimmed and steeple-crowned hat, like that we had seen on the heads of witches: and we could not but say to our old nurse, "What does he here?" Our old nurse was a woman, therefore a Royalist and Conservative. Moreover, she was very old, and her memory touched the generation which had heard Cromwell talked about. From her we gathered that the reason why this broad-hatted person stood there, was because he was a very badly-behaved character, and would on no account be induced to take his hat off, even before his king. We tried to make it out; the story was very dark to us. But the son of our nurse was a very fine and thoughtful man; and when to him we used to say, "Why does he stand there with only a hat on? Why has everybody else a crown, and he no crown?" then he would tell us that he believed that there was more in his head beneath a hat than in those of any of the other kings who wore a crown, and that he was more king-like than all the kings. Thus our historical apprehensions were confused—as many wiser heads have been—at the commencement of our studies; and even from our very earliest days we stumbled, and became perplexed, over the two theories of Cromwell's character.

For it may be, perhaps, asserted, that the variety of opinion with reference to the character of Cromwell is almost as diversified as ever, although the collection of his letters and speeches by Thomas Carlyle has done so much to set him forth in a fair and honourable light, for which even those most enthusiastic for the career he represented were scarcely prepared. And it cannot be doubted that the estimate of his character will always be formed, not merely from sympathy with a certain set of opinions, but even more from that strange, occult, and undefinable sentiment which, arising from peculiarity of temperament, becomes the creator of intellectual and even moral appreciation. Hence there are those to whom, whatever may be the amount of evidence for his purity, Cromwell can only be hateful; while there are others, again, to whom, even if certain flaws or faults of character appear in him, he can only be admirable. It is very interesting to notice the varied estimates which have been formed of this great man, even within the present, or within this and the immediately preceding, generation.

ROBERT SOUTHEY, for instance, a pleasant and venerable name in recent English letters, wrote a life of Cromwell to sustain his theory of the great Protector's character. To him Cromwell was "the most fortunate and least flagitious of usurpers; he gained three kingdoms, the price which he paid for them was innocence and peace of mind. He left an imperishable name, so stained with reproach, that notwithstanding the redeeming virtues which adorned him, it were better for him to be forgotten than to be so remembered, and in the world to come,—— but it is not for us to anticipate the judgments, still less to limit the mercy, of the All-merciful." And then he continues, "Let us repeat that there is no portion of history in which it so behoves an Englishman to be thoroughly versed as in that of Cromwell's age." He says, indeed, that "Cromwell's good sense and good nature would have led him to govern equitably and mercifully, to promote literature, to cherish the arts, and to pour wine and oil into the wounds of the nation;" and he adds that "the dangers to which he was exposed alone prevented him from carrying out all his wishes."[1] To Southey, Cromwell was hypocritical, always looking out for himself; he was conscious of a guilty ambition, he knew that he was doing wrong through the whole process of the struggle. He felt that he was a traitor, he knew that monarchy, aristocracy, and episcopacy were essential to the well-being of the country; he overthrew them, and yet he sought in some sense to retain their images, although he had got rid of the things. He committed a great crime, he attained to the possession of sovereign power by means little less guilty than Macbeth; but he dared not take the crown, and he dared not confer it upon the young Charles Stuart, because he knew the young man would never forgive his father's death, and if he could he would be altogether unworthy to wear his father's crown. What would not Cromwell have given, says Southey, whether he looked to this world or the next, if his hands had been clean of the king's blood! Such, in brief, was the portrait it pleased Robert Southey to portray,—such was his theory of Cromwell's life.

Of the life of Cromwell by JOHN FORSTER it is more difficult to speak. He never withdrew his life of Cromwell, never formally announced his dissent from the doctrine and theory of Cromwell's characte contained in his "Lives of the Statesmen of the Commonwealth." We may fairly believe that this doctrine is still held by multitudes whose general opinions as to the Long Parliament, and the possibility of the establishment of a republic, are in unison with Mr. Forster's. With Robert Southey, Cromwell was a traitor to Charles I.; with Mr. Forster, in his "Lives of the Statesmen," he was a traitor to the cause of civil and religious liberty. Cromwell commenced his career in earnest and faithful love of liberty, certainly with a faithful determination, a sense of righteousness in his strong insubordination against tyranny. He was a man of singular intellect, sincerely religious, but his religious nature was wrought upon by a temperament almost hypochondriacal. His shrewdness soon enabled him to see the probable issues of the struggle; his force of character soon elevated him to be the foremost man in it. Knowing, perhaps, nothing of Machiavelli, he became far greater and more perfect than Machiavelli himself, as a deep and designing deceiver, full of contrivances. As his personal ambition grew more and more within him, he grasped at the shadow of personal authority; but as he did so, and seemed to become possessed of the power at which he aimed, the means of government eluded him, or crumbled in his grasp, and difficulties and perplexities accumulated around him. The doctrine of Mr. Forster, in the work to which we refer, appears to be that Cromwell was not so much untrue to himself, considering the complicated weft of his character, as that he was untrue to those great men, his friends, with whom he had wrought, and untrue to those principles for which he and they had struggled. He lived a life of torment, not because he had killed the king, not because he had been a traitor to the royal cause, but because he had been a traitor to his friends and principles. The day of death, therefore, to Cromwell was, not less than his great days at Worcester and Dunbar, "his fortunate day," because it released his entangled spirit from its cares. Such was Mr. Forster's Cromwell, as portrayed in 1840.

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[1] Southey's "Life of Cromwell," p. 77.

Another, and a far inferior portrait, was attempted some years since by M. GUIZOT, the ex-minister of France. Judging from that great historian's lectures on the Civilization of Europe, it might have been supposed he would have taken a broad and eminently satisfactory view of the career of Cromwell. It is, in fact, the least satisfactory; and he has contrived to delineate a really inferior man, a great man, but enamoured of the world's substantial greatness. The business of his life was to arrive at government and to maintain himself in it; and all who threw any bar or hindrance in his way were his enemies, and all whom he could use to that end were his friends, and they were his only friends. Hence, to substitute for a weak House of Stuart a strong House of Cromwell was the noblest aim of the Protectorate; and he failed because, says M. Guizot, "God does not grant to the great men who have set on disorder the foundations of their greatness, the power to regulate at their pleasure and for centuries, even according to their better desires, the government of nations." Guizot does not refuse to pay his meed of homage and justice to Cromwell; but he seems to have been unable to conceive a great idea of the Protector's ends. In his opinion Cromwell was thoroughly conscious of the weakness by which he was smitten as the punishment of his own acts, and, feeling about in all directions for some prop on which he could lean for support, he selected liberty of conscience. Resigning the name of king, it was impossible for him to retain kingly authority. He had arrived at a slippery height, on which to stand still was impossible—there was no alternative but to mount higher or fall; and therefore he died in the fulness of his power, though sorrowful—sorrowful "not only because he must die, but also, and above all, because he must die without having attained his true and final purpose." It is impossible not to perceive that M. Guizot has, in his theory of Cromwell's character, delineated the Government, weak and selfish, of Louis Philippe, of which, in its fall, he was the minister. Men are usually unable to conceive a loftier public ideal than their own realization; and such is the Cromwell of Guizot.

But in justice to Mr. John Forster, it must be said that he reviewed in a very able paper, entitled, "Cromwell, and the Civil Wars of England," in the *Edinburgh Review*, this delineation of M. Guizot, and sufficiently exhibited the unfaithfulness of the humiliating portrait; for since his publication of the "Lives of the Statesmen" had appeared the great collection and commentary of Carlyle, and it may be thought that this publication sets the character of Cromwell in a niche of honourable security and rest for ever. "Suppose," said Eliot Warburton, in his "Rupert and the Cavaliers," apologising for the shameless perfidy revealed in the letters and correspondence of Charles I.—"suppose all the letters of the crafty Cromwell had been discovered, what a revelation we should then have had!" Well, Cromwell's letters have all at length been discovered and bound together, and their publication has been the best vindication of the consistent integrity and healthful whole-heartedness of the man. According to CARLYLE, the faith of Cromwell never rested on any doubtful or insecure foundations. Whoever else might forsake him, hope and faith never deserted him. He never consented to take part in any public affairs upon any compulsion less strong than that of conscience. He was guided by superior instinct and the practical good sense of a man set apart by God to govern. He had no premeditated plan or programme to which to conform. On the other hand, his principles were never to seek. He saw the drift of circumstances, but he was nevertheless to guide them, to use and control them, for the good of all. He had no personal ambition; he was distracted by no fear, dazzled by no honour. Southey's Cromwell was full of penitence for his treason against Charles. Forster's was full of penitence for his treason against the republican cause. Guizot's Cromwell was full of sorrow on account of his failure in clutching at sovereignty and founding a dynasty. The real Cromwell, according to Carlyle, has no penitence of any kind, no sorrow, save for the sorrow and sin, the sad heirlooms of our race. He was the great champion of the Puritan cause, a sworn soldier to defend the rights of civil and spiritual freedom; not to protect the interests of a party, but, so far as he could, to throw a shield over all; having only a zeal for what he honestly believed to be God's truth; one of those rare souls who could lay upon itself the lowliest and the loftiest duties; a dutiful son; for a large part of his life a quiet country gentleman; a tender husband, a tender father; a daring political leader; a great soldier; a man who knew men, and who could, as in his dealings with the subtle Mazarin, while preserving his own integrity, twist subtle statesmen to his pleasure; at last a powerful sovereign, so living, praying, dying; no hypocrite, no traitor, but a champion and martyr of the Protestant and Puritanical faith. Such is the Cromwell of Thomas Carlyle, and such the Cromwell of the following pages. But thus it is that the variety of opinion as to the character and motives of this singular man seem to call from time to time for such resettings as may enable readers to obtain and form a clear idea for themselves of his character.

We cannot readily find the instance of another personage in history whose acts and memory have been the subjects of such conflicting theories as those of Cromwell. The unphilosophical and paradoxical verdict of Hume, the historian of England, that he was a fanatical hypocrite, may now be dismissed; we suppose that by all parties it is dismissed, with the contempt to which it is only entitled, to the limbo to which it properly belongs, with many other of the verdicts this writer ventured to announce in his history. Hume's character as an historian has not only been long since impeached, but, by Mr. Brodie,[1] reliance upon its veracity has been entirely destroyed; and even the *Quarterly Review* many years since distinctly showed in how many instances his prejudices have permitted him to distort evidence, and even to garble documents. And it was especially the case when writing concerning Charles I. and Cromwell, that "he drew upon his imagination for his facts, and prejudices for his principles." It is very remarkable, however, that men, eminent for discrimination and judgment, well read in the story of the times, and in the interest of whose opinion it seemed the very memory of such a man as Cromwell was involved, spoke of him and his actions with a kind of bated breath, as if they feared to incur some penalty in public opinion by too laudatory an utterance of his name. We think of such writers as WILLIAM ORME, the more than respectable author of the lives of John Owen and Richard Baxter: he speaks of Cromwell as one of whom it is difficult to speak with candour and justice. He says that if "to unmingled praise he is by no means entitled, unqualified censure is equally undeserved"; and he very oddly goes on to remark, that "he did much to promote the glory of his country; and if not a religious man himself, he yet promoted religion in others, and was eminently the friend of religious liberty at home and abroad. If he did not always act as he ought, it can scarcely be denied that few men who have grasped the rod of power have used it with so much moderation, and so generally for the good of others, as Oliver Cromwell." The tone of HENRY ROGERS, in his life of John Howe, is precisely the same. He admits that "Cromwell committed crimes" (!), but he "does not think that his fanaticism actually perverted his moral judgment"(!), although "he was quite conscious that they were crimes which he had committed." (!) And the remarks of these two excellent writers occur in their attempts to solve the singular mystery that Cromwell was so unquestionably attached to men so eminently holy as John Howe and John Owen, that he sought their friendship, and would have them present with him in his palace.

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[1] "A History of the British Empire from the Accession of Charles I. to the Restoration, etc., etc.; including a particular examination of Mr. Hume's statements relative to the character of the English Government." By George Brodie, Esq., Advocate. 4 vols., 1822.

This tone of remark has been long since dropped; and among illustrious English writers, it is singular, perhaps, that even many years before Carlyle's magnificent vindication, MACAULAY had, in his own eloquent and glowing style, as dispassionately as heartily, set forth the character of the great Protector in his blaze of eloquent language. He says: "The ambition of Oliver was of no vulgar kind. He never seems to have coveted despotic power. He, at first, fought sincerely and manfully for the Parliament, and never deserted it till it had deserted its duty. But even when thus placed by violence at the head of affairs, he did not assume unlimited power. He gave the country a constitution far more perfect than any which had, at that time, been known to the world. For himself, he demanded indeed the first place in the Commonwealth, but with powers scarcely so great as those of a Dutch stadtholder or an American president. He gave to Parliament a voice in the appointment of ministers, and left it to the whole legislative authority, not even reserving to himself a veto on its enactments; and he did not require that the chief magistracy should be hereditary in his family. Thus far, if the circumstances of the time and the opportunities which he had for aggrandising himself be fairly considered, he will not lose by comparison with Washington and Bolivar." And our readers surely remember what ought to be a well-known passage, in which Macaulay prophesies that "truth and merit concerning Cromwell would at last prevail; cowards, who had trembled at the very sound of his name,—tools of office, who had been proud of the honour of lacqueying his coach, might insult him in loyal speeches and addresses,—a fickle multitude might crowd to shout and scoff round the gibbeted remains of the greatest prince and soldier of the age; but when the Dutch cannon startled an effeminate tyrant in his own palace,—when the conquests which had been won by the armies of Cromwell were sold to pamper the harlots of Charles,—when Englishmen were sent to fight under foreign banners against the independence of Europe and the Protestant religion, many honest hearts swelled in secret at the thought of one who had never suffered his country to be ill-used by any but himself. It must indeed have been difficult for any Englishman to see the salaried viceroy of France sauntering through his harem, yawning and talking nonsense, or be-slobbering his brother and his courtiers in a fit of maudlin affection, without a respectful and tender remembrance of him before whose genius the young pride of Louis and the veteran craft of Mazarin had stood rebuked, —who had humbled Spain on the land and Holland on the sea, and whose imperial voice had arrested the sails of the Libyan pirates and the persecuting fires of Rome. Even to the present day his character, though constantly attacked and scarcely ever defended, is popular with the great body of our countrymen." These eloquent words of the great essayist are simply true; and in fact, the faith avowed by Macaulay was endorsed and demonstrated by the great vindication in the publication of the letters and speeches by Thomas Carlyle; but we believe that through all the years which have elapsed since the great Protector died, there has been an instinctive sense in the heart of the English people that his name would be cleared from all mists and calumnies, and know a brilliant resurrection; while we suppose it is true a thousandfold now, as compared with the time when Macaulay penned his eulogy, that his character is popular with the great body of our countrymen.

And yet, is it now a less difficult thing to bring before our readers with some vividness that strange and surely wraith-like form of robust yet mysterious majesty, which rises to our vision in the later twilight of English story? Like the patron saint of England, St. George of Cappadocia—he of the dragon—Cromwell seems a strangely mythic character. In an age when real kings were dying or dead, and sham kings were flying from their own weakness beneath the outspread shadowy wings of Right Divine; when, out of the sea and scenery of confusion, beasts rose and reigned, like hydras, seven-headed and seven-horned; when every man sought to do what was right in his own eyes; when the prisons were full of victims, when the churches were full of mummeries;—there rose a wraith, unexpected, unprecedented in the history of the nation, perhaps of the world, and said, "Well, then, you must settle your account with me!" That quaint, broad-hatted majesty of our old folio histories was, without a doubt, the Pathfinder of his nation in that age. "Pray, Mr. Hampden," said Sir Philip Warwick, when Cromwell had been rather more forcible than usual, "who is that *sloven* who spoke just now; for I see he is on *our* side, by his speaking so warmly." "That sloven whom you see before you, and who hath no ornament in his speech—that sloven, I say, if we should ever come to a breach with the king, which God forbid,—that sloven, I say, will be, in that case, the greatest man in England." For he was a true Pathfinder. He had a gift of simplicity as great as that finest creation of the American novelist, and an insight of wonderful power; as one set down in the depth of a wilderness, where there seems to be no way, and is able to discover the thin, faint trail, and to detect the burning eyes of the savage where no life seemed to rustle beneath the tree. This was his gift: prescience beyond the lot of mortals. This, like the scabbard of the good sword Excalibur, was more to him than the sword itself; its hilt was armed with eyes.

Vain, then, is the employment to ask: Is this man great?—and vain to contest his sovereignty and his grandeur. Very vain. You say, indeed, "What do *you* here, farmer that you are; what do you here in the gallery of kings?" Thus when we have climbed old Helvellyn, and had reached the height of its three thousand feet, we found ourselves amidst a sanhedrim of crows and choughs—a sublime council of ravens; and they said to the old hill, "Art thou larger than we? See, we perch upon thee, and peck on thee. Why art thou here?" Sublimely stood the old mountain, the lightning-scathed crags in his sides bearing testimony to the thunder-strokes of ages, and seeming to say, "Let it suffice: I *am* here." It is the same with Oliver. He rises in the English story like a Helvellyn, or a sublime Peak of Teneriffe, and says, "Let it suffice: *I am here!*"

A few years since it would have sounded too bold if a writer, in introducing the great hero of the English Commonwealth to his readers, intimated his determination to attempt, in defending him, to throw new light round his position, to plead for his right to a lofty place in human estimation, and to assert the honesty and integrity of his manhood, and the value and the worth of the great work he performed. To say this now is almost a matter of supererogation. The time has gone by when Oliver Cromwell needed any man's good word: the evidences of his life-long consistency of purpose, the grandeur and durability of his legislative genius surround us on all hands. Gradually, from many quarters of a most opposite kind, proof has been accumulating. The wisest, who have been disposed to form an opinion adverse to the great English Protector, have confessed themselves compelled to pause before pronouncing; others, again, have ransacked the archives of state paper offices, the heaps of dingy family letters and scrolls, every shred of paper bearing Oliver's name that could be brought to light has been produced; and the result is, that no name, perhaps, in all history stands forth so transparent and clear, so consistent throughout. It is the most royal name in English history, rivalling in its splendour that of Elizabeth, the Edwards, and the Henrys; outshining the proudest names of the Norman, the Plantagenet, or the Tudor.

Doubtless, as we have often heard, great men are the out-births of their time; there is a providence in their appearance, they are not the product of chance; they come, God-appointed, to do their work among men, and they are immortal till their work is done. We should not, perhaps, speak so much of the absolute greatness of the men of one age as compared with the men of another; they are all equally fitted to the task of the day. Let the man who most hates the memory of Cromwell, ask not so much what the land and the law were with him, as what they must inevitably have been without him. Remove the leading man from any time, and you break the harmony of the time, you destroy the work of that age; for an age cannot move without its great men,—they inspire it, they urge it forward, they are its priests and its prophets and its monarchs. The hero of a time, therefore, is the history of a time; he is the focus where influences are gathered, and from whence they shoot out. It has been said that all institutions are the projected shadow of some great man, he has absorbed all the light of his time in himself; perhaps he has not created, yet now he throws forth light from his name, clear, steady practical light, that shall travel over a century; his name shall be the synonym of an epoch, and shall include all the events of that age. Thus it is with Cromwell; hence, very happily, the time of the Commonwealth has been called the Cromwelliad.

But the sublime unconsciousness of this great spirit is the most leading characteristic indication of his greatness. The reader may remember what Cardinal de Retz said: "M. de Bellivre," said the cardinal, "told me that he had seen and known Cromwell in England. And he said to me one day, that one never mounted so high as when one did not know where one was going." Whereupon says the cardinal, "You know I have a great horror of Cromwell; but however great a man many think him, I add to this horror *contempt*, for if that be his opinion, he seems to me to be a fool." But Cromwell was right. This is, indeed, in all things true grandeur: the unconscious is alone complete. The eminently tricky cardinal did not know the great flights of an unconscious spirit, and how surely the measure of the one is, in great souls, the height of the other. No doubt Cromwell was amazed at the lofty elevation to which he ascended; for he commenced his public career without any plan; he threw himself, and his fortunes, and his life, into the scale against the king, and on the side of the people. He was at that time a plain country yeoman. We do not believe that he had any ambition other than to serve the cause with a brave pure heart. Could he, whose unnoticed days had been passed by a farmer's ingle, see gleaming before his eyes a crown, which he might refuse? Could he, who had spent his later years in following the plough, dream that he should draw the sword, only to find himself at last the greatest general of his own age, and one of the greatest soldiers of any age? Well might he say, "*One never mounts so high as when one does not know where one is going.*" It is the sublime of human philosophy and character to be able to say this; it is faith in Providence and in destiny alone which can say this. When he first entered on the struggle, his thought, no doubt, was to fulfil a duty or two upon the field and in the senate, and then go back to his farm. He little thought that he was to be the umpire of the whole contest.

Certain it is that we are to seek for what Cromwell was in after life, in those early days of his history. Some writers, Guizot among the rest, have said that he adopted theories of liberty of conscience, and so forth, to suit his ambition and his success. Not he! He was for years, before the breaking out of civil war, substantially all that he was after. When he entered upon his career of public life, he had no principles to seek; he had found them long since, and he acted upon them invariably. Nor can we perceive that he adopted any new principles, or expedients, through the whole of his future career. Cromwell was all that we include in the term Puritan. His whole public life was the result of that mental experience by which his faith was moulded. In him there was a profound reverence for the law of God. He had an instinctive apprehension of order. To disfranchise, to rout and put to flight the imbecilities of anarchists; such was his work. A sworn soldier of the Decalogue was he. Say that he read with keen vividness into men's hearts and men's purposes; well, he did so, as any man may do, by the light of high intelligent principles within him. In many things, we do not doubt, he much misinterpreted texts of the Divine Book. Perhaps he was too much a "Hebrew of the Hebrews." Some do not see how a man can be faithfully a Christian man and also a soldier; but if he will be a soldier, then we do not see how he can fulfil a soldier's duty better than by looking into the Old Testament. We see plainly that *we shall not know Cromwell's character and deeds unless we acquaint ourselves with Cromwell's theology.*

His theology made the life of his home in old farmer days at St. Ives. His theology guided his impressions of men and events. His theology went with him to the army, and kindled there his heroism, and, if you will, his enthusiasm. His theology ruled his character in the senate and on the throne. It was not merely his speech, but deep, far beneath his speech, lay his great thoughts of God; and unless you understand his inner depth of vital conviction, you will have no comprehension of the man. His mind was fostered from the unseen springs of meditation, and from reading in that literature, unquestionably the most glorious in magnificence and wealth we have had. In our age we have little religious literature: the mighty folios in which the Puritan fathers taught have dwindled down to the thin tracts in which our friend the Rev. Octavian Longcloth, or his curate, the Rev. Dismal Darkman, mix their acidulated milk and water for weak stomachs. Far different was the theology of Cromwell and the writers of Cromwell's age. Manton, himself one of the greatest of these writers, says Cromwell had a large and well-selected library. Many of our most famous pieces were then unwritten; but there were some pieces of Smith, Caudray, Adams, Owen, Goodwin, and Mede, and the earlier fathers, and Calvin, and Hooker, and Herbert's lyrics. We think such were the men with whom Cromwell walked and mused, and whose writings shed light into his soul.

Sir John Goodricke used to relate a remarkable anecdote, which we should probably assign to the siege of Knaresborough Castle, in 1644, and which was told him when a boy, by a very old woman, who had formerly attended his mother in the capacity of midwife. "When Cromwell came to lodge in our house, in Knaresborough," said she, "I was then but a young girl. Having heard much talk about the man, I looked at him with wonder. Being ordered to take a pan of coals, and air his bed, I could not, during the operation, forbear peeping over my shoulder several times to observe this extraordinary person, who was seated at the far side of the room untying his garters. Having aired the bed, I went out, and shutting the door after me, stopped and peeped through the keyhole, when I saw him rise from his seat, advance to the bed, and fall on his knees, in which attitude I left him for some time. When returning again, I found him still at prayer; and this was his custom every night so long as he stayed at our house; from which I concluded he must be a good man; and this opinion I always maintained afterwards, though I heard him very much blamed and exceedingly abused."

No! we should say there would be no shaking this woman's faith in him. To her he would appear as what he was—genuine and transparent. How many of Cromwell's maligners, how many of us writers and readers, would stand the test of the keyhole?

II.

ANCESTRY, FAMILY, AND EARLY DAYS.

CHAPTER II.

ANCESTRY, FAMILY, AND EARLY DAYS.

IT cannot be an unimportant thing to glance at the ancestry of a powerful man; and that of Cromwell is very curious, more like that of the Tudors, whom he so much resembles, than like that of any other royal name of England. He was descended from a Celtic stock by his mother's side. He was a ninth cousin of Charles I.[1] Elizabeth Steward, Mrs. Robert Cromwell, the mother of Oliver, was descended from Alexander, the Lord High Steward of Scotland—the ancestor of the whole family of the Stewarts. This is one of the most singular coincidences occurring in history; but the family of Cromwell's father was from Wales. He was the second son of Sir Henry Cromwell, himself eldest son and heir to Sir Richard Williams, *alias* Cromwell, who, as the issue of Morgan Williams, by his marriage with a sister of Thomas, Lord Cromwell, Earl of Essex, assumed—like his father—the name of Cromwell. Morgan ap Williams is said to have derived his family from a noble lineage, namely, that of the Lords of Powys and Cardigan, who flourished during the period of the conquest. But of this we are not herald sufficient to declare the truth; however, all Welsh blood is royal or noble. The elevation of the Cromwell family is to be dated from the introduction of Richard Williams to the Court of Henry VIII., by Thomas Cromwell, the son of Walter Cromwell, some time a blacksmith, and afterwards a brewer at Putney, in Surrey, and a great favourite with the bluff old Hal. Richard Williams appears to have been—and he was—one of the few royal favourites who did not lose his head as the penalty for his sovereign's favouritism. We have an account of a great tournament, held by King Harry, where Richard acquitted himself right gallantly. There the king knighted him, and presented him with a diamond ring, exclaiming, "Formerly thou wast my Dick, but now thou art my Diamond," and bidding him for the future wear such a one in the fore gamb of the demi-lion in his crest, instead of a javelin as before. The arms of Sir Richard, with this alteration, were ever afterwards borne by the elder branch of the family; and by Oliver himself, on his assuming the Protectorship, though previously he had borne the javelin. Henry himself, it will be remembered, was of Welsh descent; and he strongly recommended it to the Welsh to adopt the mode of most civilized nations, in taking family names, instead of their manner of adding their father's and, perhaps, their grandfather's name to their own Christian one, as Morgan ap Williams, or Richard ap Morgan ap Williams.

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[1] For a stream of Cromwell's ancestry, and proof of this, see Forster's "Lives of British Statesmen," vol. vi. pp. 35–307. But more explicitly in "The Cromwell Family" of Mark Noble

Great was the munificence, and large the possessions of the Cromwell family. Our Oliver, indeed, appears to have been poor enough for so great a connection; but his uncle, Sir Oliver, inherited all the estates of his ancestor, Sir Richard; and these included many of those wealthy monasteries and nunneries for the escheatment and confiscation of which Thomas Cromwell has become so famous, constituting him *Malleus Monachorum*, the "Hammerer of Monasteries," as Oliver has been called *Malleus Monarchorum*, or the "Hammerer of Kings and Thrones."

Hinchinbrook, near Huntingdon, was the residence of Sir Oliver. There, no doubt, he kept up a magnificent old English cheer. Beneath his gateway he received, and in his halls he entertained, three English monarchs. Elizabeth, when she left the University of Cambridge, paid him a visit; King James I. was entertained by him several times; as was also Charles I. But the great festivity of his life was his reception of James on his way to London from Edinburgh, when he succeeded to the English throne. High feasting days were those at Hinchinbrook House. The king came in a kind of state; Sir Oliver entertained all comers with the choicest viands and wines, and even the populace had free access to the cellars during His Majesty's stay. At his leaving Hinchinbrook, after breakfast, on the 29th of April, he was pleased to express his obligations to the baronet and his lady, saying to the former, with his characteristic vulgarity, "Marry, mon, thou has treated me better than any one since I left Edinburgh;" and an old chronicler remarks, "It is more than probable, better than ever that prince was treated before or after;" for it is said Sir Oliver at this time gave the greatest feast that had been given to a king by a subject.

We shall not have occasion to refer to Sir Oliver again throughout this biography, and therefore we may close this notice of him by saying that he continued throughout his life loyal to the cause of king and cavalier. He obliged all his sons to serve in the Royalist army, and was ever more obnoxious to the Parliamentarian cause than any person in his neighbourhood. At last he was obliged to sell his seat of Hinchinbrook, and he retired to live in silence and quiet in Ramsey, in the county of Huntingdon. His whole estates were sequestrated, but spared through the interposition and for the sake of his illustrious nephew. He never, however, courted the favour of Oliver, and no doubt was heartily ashamed of him. The losses he sustained from his loyalty were so great that, as the shades of the evening of life closed round him, they found him deep in pecuniary difficulties; and he is said to have been buried, in the evening of the day on which he died, in the chancel of Ramsey church, in order to prevent his body being seized for debt.[1]

But although we linger thus long upon the ancestry and relationships of Oliver (perhaps it may be thought too long), it must not be supposed that we do so from any foolish effort to disconnect him from the ranks of toil and labour. The truth appears to be that Mr. Robert Cromwell, the brother of Sir Oliver, was by no means his brother's equal in either position or wealth. The honours of the family would be, of course, reflected upon him, but his income never exceeded, independently, £300 per annum, and it is certain that he sought to increase his fortune by engaging in trade. He appears to have been a brewer, but he was also a justice of the peace for Huntingdon. He represented the same town in Parliament in the thirty-fifth of Elizabeth; and he was one of the commissioners for draining the fens. He appears to have been a plain and simple country gentleman; but it is probable his intercourse with the world had enabled him to give to his son views of men and things which might materially influence his impressions in after life.

Oliver Cromwell, one of the most illustrious captains on the field and legislators in the cabinet of any age, was born at Huntingdon, April 25th, 1599.

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[1] The reader may recall one of the most charming of the imaginary conversations of Walter Savage Landor as being between old Sir Oliver and his nephew and namesake, beneath the gateway of Ramsey Abbey.

In the region of the Fens, then, our English hero was reared; a quiet, picturesque region, far removed from any bold or exciting scenery. There, now as then, the quiet waters of the winding Ouse pursue their way amidst sedgy banks and stunted poplars and willows; amidst fields not so well drained then as now, and amidst scenes farther removed than now they seem from the noise of the great world. There the mystery of life fell upon him; and in rambles about Godmanchester, and Houghton, and Warbois, and the Upper and Lower Hemingfords—all of them at that time having the reputation of being witch-haunted, and therefore under the atrocious visitations of Matthew Hopkins—there, in these spots, Oliver found his sport-places and play-grounds, and there, no doubt, his young mind was haunted by strange dreams. We need not keep our readers with narrations as to how he was saved from drowning by one who wished afterwards that he had let him drown; how he wrestled with little Charles, Prince of Wales, as he came along that way with his father, James I., and enjoyed the hospitality of old Sir Oliver Cromwell, at Hinchinbrook; how he was endangered and saved, in his childhood, from death, by a monkey.

"His very infancy," says Noble,—"if we believe what Mr. Audley, brother to the famous civilian, says he heard some old men tell his grandfather—was marked with a peculiar accident, that seemed to threaten the existence of the future Protector: for his grandfather, Sir Henry Cromwell, having sent for him to Hinchinbrook—near Huntingdon, the ancient family seat—when an infant in arms, a monkey took him from his cradle, and ran with him upon the lead that covered the roofing of the house. Alarmed at the danger Oliver was in, the family brought beds to catch him upon, fearing the creature's dropping him down; but the sagacious animal brought the 'Fortune of England' down in safety; so narrow an escape had he, who was doomed to be the Conqueror and Magistrate of three mighty nations, from the paws of a monkey. He is also said to have been once saved from drowning by a Mr. Johnson, Curate of Cunnington; a fact more credible, perhaps, for that the same worthy clergyman should at a future period, when Oliver was marching at the head of his troops through Huntingdon, have told him, that he 'wished he had put him in, rather than have seen him in arms against the king:'" the latter part of which story is probably a loyal but fabulous appendage tagged, after the Restoration, to the former.

Anecdotes of the first days of men who have attained to any kind of command over their fellows are frequently important; they give a clue to the state of opinion about them during their lifetime. It is probable that most of such stories, although somewhat inflated in their tone, may yet have a fundamental substance of truth and dramatic propriety. Thus there are a few tales told of our hero which do appear to be, in no slight degree, illustrative of his after life; and thus we should expect it to be. Manhood is contained in boyhood; do we not often echo the words of our poet, "the child is father to the man"? We cannot conceive Oliver inferior to his young comrades, either in physical or mental prowess: he was, beyond all doubt, a burly little Briton, with large resources of strength; and from a shrewd comprehension of things, whether in sport or in school, and a musing, dreamy, half poetic (in those days), all enthusiastic temperament, was, no doubt, frequently carried far out of the reach of his playmates and companions. All childhoods are not cheerful, all childhoods are not exempt from care. Strong and sensitive natures are stamped with a wonderful precocity; even in their cradles the shadows of future achievements, the prophecies of unperformed actions, cross the path. Dim and undefined, like worlds not realized, their destiny rises before them like a painting on the mist, even in the very earliest of their years; and Oliver was of that peculiar temperament, that it seems necessary to believe that such a boyhood was his.

He went to Huntingdon Free Grammar School, and the place we believe is still shown where he sat and studied his first lessons. Heath, a scurrilous compiler of a life of Cromwell, who has been handed down to future years by Carlyle under the patronymic of "Carrion Heath," has, with a laudable zeal, chronicled the number of dovecotes robbed by our daring little Protector; with a meanness of malice unequalled, he has recounted his adventures in breaking into orchards, and other such juvenile offences. For our part, we do not doubt both his capabilities and disposition for such adventures.

More interesting will it be for us to notice the various traditions that have come down to us of the feats and appearances of those early days. Especially is it recorded that Charles I., when a child, was with his father, the king, at Hinchinbrook House, the seat of Sir Oliver, of whom we have made mention above; he was then Duke of York. And that he should visit the old knight is very likely, as we do know that many times the hospitable gates were thrown open to the monarch and his family, either going to or returning from the north to the English capital. But upon this occasion the future monarch and future Protector met, and engaged each other in childish sport, in which Charles got the worst of it.

For what fixed the attention of the lovers of prognostications in that and succeeding ages, was that "the youths had not been long together before Charles and Oliver disagreed; and, as the former was then as weakly as the latter was strong, it was no wonder that the royal visitant was worsted; and Oliver, even at this age, so little regarded dignity, that he made the royal blood flow in copious streams from the prince's nose." "This," adds the author, "was looked upon as a bad presage for the king when the civil wars commenced."

Certainly there is nothing unlikely or improbable in this anecdote. If Charles visited Hinchinbrook—

and that he did frequently has all the certainty of moral evidence,—he would surely meet young Oliver, and he would certainly not be in his company long, we may venture to assert, without a quarrel; haughty obstinacy and daring resolution—the weakness and effeminacy of a child of the Court, and the sturdy independence and strength of the little rustic farmer—would easily produce the consequences indicated in the story.

The same writer relates as "more certain," and what Oliver himself, he says, "often averred, when he was at the height of his glory," that, on a certain night, in his childhood, he "saw a gigantic figure, which came and opened the curtains of his bed, and told him that he should be the greatest person in the kingdom, but did not mention the word *king;* and," continues the reverend narrator, "though he was told of the folly as well as wickedness of such an assertion, he persisted in it; for which he was flogged by Dr. Beard, at the particular desire of his father; notwithstanding which, he would sometimes repeat it to his uncle Stewart, who told him it was traitorous to relate it." Different versions have been given of this tale. It even finds a place, with much other serious anti-monarchical matter, in what Lord Clarendon so intemperately (as the great Fox observed) called his "History of the Rebellion"; but we dismiss it for the moment, again to recur to the pages of that indefatigable collector, Mark Noble.

For yet another incident recorded of these years is connected with the performance of a comedy called "*Lingua*," attributed to Anthony Brewer, and celebrating the contest of the five senses for the crown of superiority, and discussing the pretentions of the tongue to be admitted as a sixth sense. It is certainly a proof of the admitted superiority of Oliver over his schoolfellows, that the principal character was awarded to him; and truly there is something remarkable in the coincidence of some of his impersonations and the realities of his future life. In the character of *Tactus*, or the sense of feeling, "The little actor came from his tiring-room upon the stage, his head encircled with a chaplet of laurel. He stumbled over a crown purposely laid there, and, stooping down, he took it, and crowned himself. It is said—but how likely that such things should be said!—that he exhibited more than ordinary emotion as he delivered the majestical words of the piece." Nor may we refuse to believe that his mind felt something of the import of the words he uttered: all unconscious as he was that he was uttering a prophecy connected with his own life; and he would, perhaps, recur to them when, in after years, he came, from a position so lowly, to be so near to the neighbourhood of a crown; when the highest symbols of power were brought to his *touch*, and his name, lauded in poetry and oratory, alike by friends and parasites, was placed on the level of the Cæsars and Alexanders, as he strode on from height to height of pride and power.

Oliver had a very stern schoolmaster, and whatever may have been the necessity existing for it, Dr. Beard is said to have visited upon him a severity of discipline unusual even for those severe days.

Thus we obtain glimpses of his early life: thus it comes before us. He was learning then,—learning in many and various ways,—around the hearth at Huntingdon. By the winter fireside he would hear the rumours from the great world of the Popish Gunpowder Plot; he was six years old when the news of this would reach his father's house. He was eleven when Henry of Navarre, the defender of the Protestants of France, was assassinated. Sir Walter Raleigh, too, the intelligence of his death would be noted; and the quiet and glorious end of the fine old martyr to Spanish gold and Spanish influence would make some impression, even upon the quiet dwellers of Huntingdonshire. We do not know his playmates: of one we have caught a dim shadow, a royal playmate, no match for our stubborn little hero. Another we may fancy with him in the playground, his cousin, John Hampden, five years older than Oliver; kind, but firm, gentle, thoughtful, mild, he would temper the fiercer spirit. They certainly knew each other in those days, and played together. That surely is a scene on which artist and poet may linger, the two boys, John Hampden and Oliver Cromwell, together! We attempt to follow them through their days of youth, their sports of the field; and strive to imagine the two strong, stately men—warriors, legislators, representatives of English mind and opinion, disputants with a king—in their simple boyhood's life.

We wonder at some things in Cromwell's history. We wonder that in his after years, while his soul was so blessed by a large toleration, he so resolutely and intolerantly hated Romanism. We must remember, as we have already said, that when Oliver was six years old there came to his father's house in Huntingdon the news of the Gunpowder Plot; we must remember that a feline Jesuitism was sneaking over the whole of England, and round the courts of Europe and through its kingdoms; we must remember that when he was only eleven years old the brave Henry of Navarre was murdered in the streets of Paris—fine defender of Protestantism that he was! Pieces of news like these were calculated to sting a boy's memory, and to remain there, and to leave a perpetual irritation. Popery was to be hated then;—we now may afford to forgive what Popery has done. In that day it did not well comport with public safety to be so tranquil; so Oliver listened as a boy, and treasured these things in his recollection, and when the time came—the day of wrath—he heaped up the wrath, and sought to set fire to the whole tawdry mass of error and corruption.

Let us pause for a moment or two upon the days of Cromwell's boyhood; those, as we have seen, were the days when James I. was king; probably, as we have said, the lad often saw him at the house of his uncle, Sir Oliver; the sight would not be likely to enhance his conceptions of the dignity of the sovereign, as the tales he heard would be as little likely to increase his respect for kingly power. It will not be out of place here to devote a word or two to the delineation of the person and character of the first of the English Stewarts; for with him, unquestionably, those troubles began which Oliver, by-and-by, would be called upon to settle.

There were many unfortunate circumstances which combined to bring about the unhappy doom of Charles I. He was unfortunate in his own nature, in himself; it was unhappy that one with a nature so weak, and a will so strong, should be called upon to face men and circumstances such as he found arrayed against him. But we have always thought the most unfortunate circumstance in the life of Charles to have been that he was the son of his father. The name of James I. has become, and speaking upon the best authority is, synonymous with every sentiment of contempt; it is quite doubtful whether a single feature of character, or a single incident in his history, can command unchallenged regard or respect: that about him which does not provoke indignation, excites laughter. His conduct as the sovereign of his own country, of Scotland—before he succeeded to the throne of England—was such as to awaken more than our suspicion, beyond doubt to arouse our abhorrence. He has been handed down through history as a great investigator of the mysteries of king-craft; but the record of the criminal trials of Scotland seems to show that he chiefly exercised his sagacity among those mysteries for the purpose of procuring vengeance on those monsters of iniquity who had sneered at his person or undervalued his abilities. Whenever his own person was reflected on, he followed the delinquent like a panther prowling for his prey; and, as Pitcairn has shown in his immense and invaluable work on the criminal trials of Scotland, he never failed in pursuing his victim to death. It is worth while to recite an instance or two: On the third of August, 1596, John Dickson, an Englishman, was indicted for uttering calumnious and slanderous speeches against the king. The amount of his offence was, that being drunk, he had allowed a boat he was managing to come in the way of one of the king's ordnance vessels, when, being called upon by Archibald Gairdenar, one of his majesty's cannoners, to give place to his majesty's ordnance, "he fyrst ansserit, that he would nocht vyre his boit for king or kasard: and thairefter, maist proudlie, arrogantlie, shlanderouslie, and calumniouslie callit his majestie ane bastard king: and that he was nocht worthie to be obeyit." The jury found him guilty, but qualified their verdict by admitting his drunkenness; but their qualification did not avail —the poor fellow was hanged. Another case Mr. Pitcairn gives, of John Fleming, of Cohburn Path, who was indicted for uttering treasonable, blasphemous, and damnable speeches against the king. He appears to have lost a case in litigation; and on being asked why he uttered blasphemous and horrible words concerning the king, he made this scornful and disdainful answer, "That were it not for the king and his laws, he would not have lost his lands; and therefore he cared not for the king, for hanging would be the worst for it." He spoke like a prophet, he was hanged. But in 1609, Francis Tennant, merchant and burgess of Edinburgh, was indicted for writing slanderous words against the king, and he was sentenced to be taken to the market cross of Edinburgh and his tongue cut out at the root; then a paper should be affixed to his brow, bearing "that he is convict for forging and geveing out of certane vyld and seditious parcellis, detracting us and our maist nobill progenitouris; and thairefter that he shall be takyn to the gallous, and hangit, ay quhill he be deid." By a merciful decree this audacious sinner was yet permitted to be hung with his tongue in his head. Another remarkable instance concerns an offender who had affixed upon one of the Colleges of Oxford some seditious words reflecting on the king, after he had attained to the English throne The laws of England did not permit the hunting this delinquent, one Thomas Rose, to death; so the king wrote to his faithful Privy Council of Scotland, informing them of the most unhandsome restrictions placed upon his kingly power, soliciting their advice, and as the words had reflected upon the Scottish king and the Scottish nation, expressing his wish that the man should be tried in Scotland. To which from the Privy Council he received a gracious reply, informing him that they would receive him, the prisoner, and commit him to the Iron House (by which name the cage was called in which desperate prisoners were confined previous to their execution), and continuing: "Oure opinioun is that he sal be hanged at the Mercatt-Croce of Edinburghe, and his heade affixt on one of the Portis. But in this we submitt oure selffis to your maiesteis directioun; quhairunto we sall conforme our selffis." The poor fellow was hung. James was a firm believer in the divinity which doth hedge a king; but it must seem something surprising that, however Scotland might bow down graciously to such follies, England should yield as compliantly to his will. His reply to his first counsellors upon his arrival in England is well known: "Do I mak the Judges? do I mak the Bishops? then, Godis wauns! I mak what likes me, law and gospel." Commenting upon this, John Forster, in his "Statesmen of England," says, "He was not an absolute fool, and little more can be said of him." It was the bluff Henry IV. of France who affixed to him the soubriquet, with its sly insinuation, that "undoubtedly he was Solomon—*the son of David*." There was nothing in the appearance of this person which carried the presence of sovereignty along with the impudent arrogance of his audacious will. A contemporary describes him when, at the age of thirty-seven, he came to the English throne: "He was of middle stature, more corpulent through his clothes than in his body, yet fat enough; his eye large, ever rolling after any stranger that came in his presence, insomuch as many, for shame, left the room as being out of countenance; his tongue was too large for his mouth, and made him drink very uncomely, as if eating his drink, which came out into his cup at each side of his mouth; his skin was as soft as taffeta sarsenet, which felt so because he never washed his hands, but rubbed his fingers' ends quite slightly with the wet end of a napkin; his legs were very weak, some have thought through some foul play in his youth, and the weakness made him ever leaning on other people's shoulders, and his walk was ever circular."[1] The arbitary powers assumed by this singular person can only have had the effect of rousing the most vehement indignation in the minds of the very many who in England, in that day, were beginning to realize the folly and emptiness of all merely titular claims to homage and regard. On a cold October morning, in 1619, a great crime was perpetrated, the influence of which was to create one of the most bitter and invincible enemies to the tactics and policy of the Stuarts, as represented either by James or Charles: that fine old English gentleman, Sir Walter Raleigh, was brought forth to the scaffold in Palace Yard. Perhaps the reader is scarcely able to repress the feeling, even now, of abhorrent indignation that such a miserable piece of loathsome corruption as James should have been able to order the death of so great and magnanimous a man. It was on the 29th of October, when the officers went into his room to tell him that all was in readiness for his execution, they found him smoking his last pipe and drinking his last cup of sack, remarking to those who came to fetch him, that "it was a good liquor, if a man might stay by it." He said he was ready, and so they set forth. Young Sir John Eliot was in the crowd, and saw him die, and he never forgave that death; and perhaps, the rather as it was the offering of cowardice to appease the animosity of Spain. And in future years, when Cromwell had to decide whether he should accept an alliance with France or Spain, it was probably the death of Raleigh, among other motives, which led him to send torth Blake to pour his tempests of fire over the Spanish colonies, and to avenge the outrages on England so often perpetrated by that power, so hateful and abominable to all English tastes and feeling. There seems nothing in the character of James which could ever have recommended him to English sympathies, whether we regard his dealings with Church or State, whether with matters of political principle or finance. It is a singular trait of his character that he affected to treat with contempt his illustrious predecessor, Queen Elizabeth, and no doubt regarded himself as far superior to her in all that constituted the majesty of the sovereign, and all that could imply power of dealing with statesmen. Many enormities of cruelty, which had fallen into hopeful disuse in her reign, were called into existence again. He commenced a more severe persecution of the Puritans; and many of his speeches, either to them or about them, exhibit at once the low shrewdness and the despotic wilfulness of his character. In his speeches to the Puritan champions, when they ventured to address his majesty in petition for a revival of those meetings which Elizabeth and her bishops had been at great pains to suppress, he burst forth into most unkinglike anger, and violent and abusive harshness. "If you aimed at a Scotch Presbytery, it agrees as well with monarchy as God and devil; then Jack and Tom and Will and Dick shall meet, and, at their pleasure, censure me and my council." "My Lords the bishops," he said, putting his hand to his hat, "I may thank you that these men plead thus for my supremacy, they think they cannot make their party good against you but by appealing unto it. But if once you are out, and they in, I know what will become of my supremacy; *for no bishop, no king!* I have learned of what cut they have been who, preaching before me since my coming into England, passed over with silence my being supreme governor in causes ecclesiastical." Then turning to Dr. Reynolds, "Well, Doctor, have you anything more to say?" "No more, if it please your majesty." "If this be all your party hath to say, I will make them conform themselves, or else harrie them out of the land, or else do worse." Such was the indecent language this man could indulge to gentlemen who came, with the meekness of subjects, to urge upon the king the claims of conscience. It was high time that this family should receive some lessons as to the limitation of royal prerogative. And as over the conscience of his subjects, so he also entertained the same ideas as to the rights of prerogative over their pockets. He was reckless in his extravagance, he would listen to no advice, his embarrassments increased daily; he did not like parliaments, and without parliaments how could he obtain a parliamentary grant? So he ordered the sheriffs of all the counties to demand of all persons of substance, within their respective limits, a free gift proportionate to the necessities of the king; the sheriffs also were ordered to take strict cognizance of all persons who refused to contribute, and the names of such given in to the Privy Council were marked out for perpetual harrying and hostility by the Court. He did not gain much by this obnoxious and arbitrary scheme—only about £50,000 it is said; but it lost him the confidence and the affection of the entire nation. Such are some sufficient lines indicating the character of the founder of the line of the Stuarts in England; in a word, it may be said he inherited, in all their coarseness, the worst vices of every member of his family. He was not without some claim to the pretentions he made to learning, but such learning as he possessed exhibited itself in intolerable pedantry, and a foolish and offensive parade of what amounted to a little more than grammatical precision. His works, such as they are, remind us of those personal pleasantries which Weldon attaches to his person. His superstition was dismal, grotesque, and dreadful; and by his wild ideas concerning witchcraft, and the possibility of evil intercourse with another world, he aided in the extension of dark and morbid ideas, and inaugurated a succession of cruelties which, in their horrible enormities of persecution, equalled almost anything to which poor human nature had been subjected in the enormities of the Inquisition, and which, alas! furnished precedents for the continuance of the same horrors through future years. On the whole, it is scarcely too much to say that the reign of James I. is for the most part a dark blot in the history of our country. Whatever of lustre there may be is derived from the last rays of the setting sun of the age of Elizabeth, or the first streaks of dawn, promising the morning glory, when the people, wearied and worn out by the ignominy of oppression, should stand upon their feet prepared to enter on the contest, and struggle for rights withheld so long. The whole story of the reign, however, should be distinctly remembered in order that the origin of those ideas may be traced which wrought with such fatal and tragic effect upon the character and career of Charles. And such was the English monarch and monarchy when Oliver Cromwell was a boy.

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[1] Weldon's character of King James, quoted in "Memoirs of the Court of King James I.," by Lucy Akin.

The schoolboy days are over, and we may follow young Oliver to Cambridge; he entered, as a fellow-commoner of Sidney Sussex College, on the Feast of the Annunciation, the 23rd of April, 1616. Carlyle has not failed to notice a remarkable event which transpired on this day, and our readers shall have it in his own words: "Curious enough," he says, "of all days, on this same day, Shakespeare, as his stone monument still testifies at Stratford-on-Avon, died:

> "*Obiit Anno Domini* 1616.
> *Ætatis* 53. *Die* 23 *Apr.*"

While Oliver Cromwell was entering himself of Sidney Sussex College, William Shakespeare was taking his farewell of this world. Oliver's father had, most likely, come with him; it is but twelve miles from Huntingdon; you can go and come in a day. Oliver's father saw him write in the album at Cambridge; at Stratford, Shakespeare's Ann Hathaway was weeping over his bed. The first world-great thing that remains of English history, the literature of Shakespeare, was ending; the second world-great thing that remains of English history, the armed Appeal of Puritanism to the invisible God of heaven against many visible devils, on earth and elsewhere, was, so to speak, beginning. They have their exits and their entrances. And one people in its time plays many parts."[1]

But Cromwell's study at Cambridge was brief enough. In the month of June of the next year he was called to the death-bed of his father; the wise, kind counsellor and guide of his youth was gone. Now he followed him, as the chief mourner, to the chancel of the parish church of St. John's, and returned to the solitary hearth to comfort, as he best might, his surviving parent. We do not know whether he returned to Cambridge; but it is probable that, if he returned, it was for a very short time; for he had now to prepare himself as quickly as possible for the bustle and reality of active life, as it would be necessary that he should take his place as director and head of the family. His detractors have been glad to make out a case for his ignorance in all matters pertaining to polite and elegant literature, and perhaps it could scarcely be expected that a youth whose studies closed in his seventeenth year should be a finished scholar; but facts stubbornly contend for the furniture and polishment of his understanding. He ever had a sincere respect for men of learning, and patronized and elevated them, and showed a disposition to honour literature in its representatives. He was wont to converse in Latin with the ambassadors he received, and, although Bishop Burnet has made it an occasion of jest, not one of the most learned of them speaks of his Latin with any slight or contempt.

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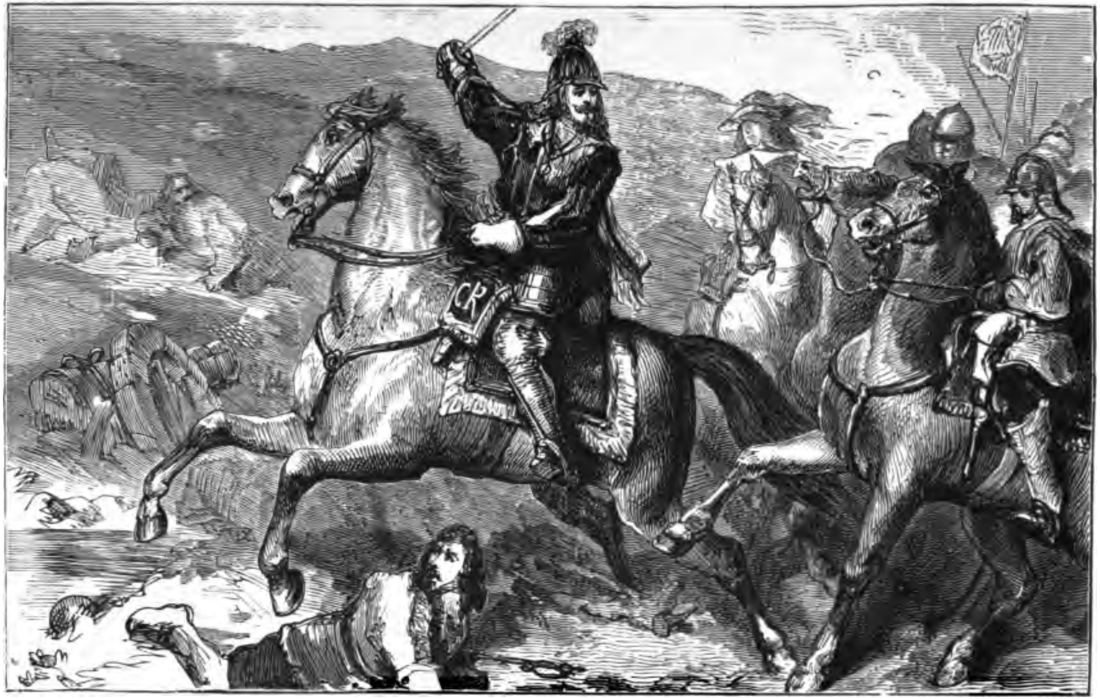
[1] "Cromwell's Letters and Speeches," vol. i. pp. 58, 59.

The monarchs and masters of mankind have seldom been able to abide the scrutiny bestowed upon their home and fireside. It is the most doubtful of all tests by which to examine a man, and



CHARLES I. AT THE BATTLE OF NASEBY. [Page 202.

especially a great man—a man whom the world has claimed, whose time and talents have been placed at the world's disposal; a man irritated by contending factions, who has been compelled to appraise men, and their motives, and frequently to appraise them very lowly. When we follow such a man from the camp, and the cabinet, and are able to behold a fountain of freshness playing through the home-thoughts of the man, to see a perennial greenness about his life, with his wife and children, we seem to have applied the last test by which we attempt to understand his character. Now, it might be thought that Cromwell's character had but little home-life in it. Yet it never changes; it opens before us in his youth, and a beautiful freshness and affection appears to play about it until the close of his career.

There is something like an answer to the charges of his early wildness and licentiousness in the fact that he wedded such a woman as Elizabeth Boucher, the daughter of a wealthy knight, possessed of estates in Essex; for the consent of such a wife is almost a security for the character of her husband.

Truly affecting is the imaginary spectacle, so easily conjured up, of Cromwell and his bride standing by the altar of St. Giles's Church, Cripplegate, the church which was, by-and-by, to receive the body of his friend and secretary, John Milton. The soft hand of Elizabeth—the rough, strong hand of Oliver; the hand holding that little one in its grasp was to deal death-blows on battle-fields; it was to sign a monarch's death-warrant; it was to grasp the truncheon of royalty and power; it was to fold the purple of sovereignty over the shoulders; it was to wave back an offered crown! That frank but strongly-lined face, so youthful, yet prematurely thoughtful; and that kind and gentle creature, face to face before him—through what a crowd of varying changes shall it sorrow and smile: in a lowly homestead, directing the work of maids and churls; in a palace and a court, among nobles and sagacious statesmen; and again, in silence and obscurity; and shining with the same equable lustre through all. Beautiful Elizabeth Boucher! so humble, and yet so dignified. Those who knew her have not neglected to inform us that she was an excellent housewife, descending to the kitchen with as much propriety as she ascended to her lofty station. How she shines in contrast with Henrietta, the queen of Charles I. Was she fitted to fill a throne? Her name must not be included in the biographies of the queens of England; and yet, perhaps, not one among the queens consort more truly deserves there a chronicle than she.

A loving and beautiful wife; and Oliver appears ever to advantage in connection with all the memories we have of her. It is given to us to see something of their home during the period of about ten years that Cromwell remained in quietude and seclusion. The spectacle of that home, the interior of it, is very amusing to Hume and sundry other historians; for it would seem that there was prayer there, and the singing of hymns and spiritual songs, and the reading of Scripture, and comments, and even preachings, thereon. All this, to a man of Hume's character was most laughable and inexpressibly comic. It was all a part of the conduct of our "fanatical hypocrite," who, however, Hume thinks, must have lost very much, and "gone back in worldly matters in consequence." Now, with all deference to Hume's clearer perceptions, hypocrites do not usually like to lose by their religious profession; to gain is a part of their policy and determination. We suspect, however, that Cromwell did not lose. This is mere assumption without foundation: he would know, of all men, both how to be "diligent in business and fervent in spirit." And Milton, in his account of him, leads us to altogether another inference when he says, "Being now arrived to a mature and ripe age, all which time he spent as a private person, noted for nothing so much as the culture of pure religion and an integrity of life, *he was grown rich at home*, and had enlarged his hopes, relying upon God and a great soul, in a quiet bosom, for any the most exalted times." That home at St. Ives the late possessor of Cromwell's house razed to the ground, so that not one brick remained standing on another. The man who razed Cromwell's house also razed his own: he died a beggar, and his only daughter is now in the workhouse of St. Ives.

Cromwell married August 22nd, 1620. Before him there are yet thirty-eight years of life. Of these we shall find that, during nearly twenty of them, as Milton has said, "he nursed his great soul in silence," especially during the first ten years spent in Huntingdon.

It is not difficult to glance at the education of the hero. To the superintendence of a brewery we may be certain he added the superintendence of farms and fields; and about 1631 he removed from Huntingdon, about five miles down the river Ouse, to St. Ives, renting there a grazing farm. There he probably spent about seven years of his life. If, reader, thou hast ever walked, as we have done, by the banks of that river, through the lovely little rural villages of Houghton, and Hartford, and Hemingford, and Godmanchester, and the adjacent little ruralities, be sure thou hast trodden through some of the most remarkable scenery in England—in the world. There *he* was accustomed to walk to and fro. Fancy, immediately at our bidding, presents him to us, by the fireside of the old gabled farm-house, or in the field attending to his farm affairs, mowing, milking, marketing. We may think of Cromwell standing in the market with his fellow-tradesmen, and striding through those fields, and by those roadsides, and by the course of the stream, then sedgy and swampy enough. What thoughts came upon him; for was he not fighting there the same battle Luther fought at Erfurth? He was vexed by fits of strange black hypochondria. Dr. Simcot, of Huntingdon, "in shadow of meaning, much meaning expressions," intimates to us how much he suffered. He was oppressed with dreadful consciousness of sin and defect. He groaned in spirit like Paul, like later saints—Bunyan, for instance. A flat, level country is it about St. Ives, and then probably much more like the fen country of Norfolk than the quiet, lovely seclusion its neighbourhood wears at the present day; but there, in the experience of this man, powers of heaven, earth, and hell were struggling for masterdom. The stunted willows and sedgy watercourses, the flags and reeds, would often echo back the mourning words, "Oh, wretched man that I am!" What conception had he of the course lying before him? What knowledge had he of the intentions of Providence concerning him? Life lay before him all in shadow. For fifteen years he appears to have had no other concern than "to know Christ and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings." But, then, it would be scarcely other than possible to hear, from news and scattered report, how one and another of God's faithful servants were shut up in prison, fined, pilloried, and persecuted to banishment and death, without additional anguish to the severe torture of the mind crying for salvation; nor would it be possible to hear of successive tyrannic exactions and impositions, of libidinousness, intemperance at Court and throughout the country, without wonder, too, where all this should end. Men called and ordained by God to great actions have strong presentiments and mental foreshadowings; and thus Cromwell would be probably visited by mysterious intimations that he was, in some way, to solve the mighty riddle of the kingdom's salvation. But how? What madness to dream it! How?

Nor must we forget that during these years Cromwell had many times renewed the joys and anxieties of a father; indeed, all his children were born before he emerged from the fen country into public life. They were as follows:—

Robert, his first-born, baptized 13th October, 1621.

Oliver, baptized 6th of February, 1628. He was killed in battle early in the civil war. The Protector alluded to him on his death-bed: "It went to my heart like a dagger; indeed it did."

Bridget, baptized 4th of August, 1624. She was married to Ireton, and after Ireton's death to Fleetwood; and died at Stoke Newington, near London, 1681.

Richard, born 4th of October, 1626. Him Carlyle calls "a poor idle triviality."

Henry, baptized 20th July, 1628.

Elizabeth, baptized 2nd July, 1629.

All the above children were born at Huntingdon; the following at St. Ives and Ely:—

James, baptized 8th January, 1631; died next day.

Mary, baptized at Huntingdon, 3rd February, 1639.

Francis, baptized at Ely, 6th December, 1638. "Preaching there, praying there, he passed his days solacing persecuted ministers, and sighing in the bitterness of his soul."

In all, five sons and four daughters; of whom three sons, and all the daughters, came to maturity at Ely; for about 1638 Cromwell, probably, removed to Ely. His uncle, Sir Thomas, resided there. His mother's relatives—those of them who were left—were there; and now his mother herself removed there, probably with the idea of there terminating her days in the presence of first impressions and associations. The time draws nigh for Oliver to leave his silence, his lonely wanderings to and fro, his plannings, and his doubtings. The storm is up in England, and Oliver has become a marked man; he probably knows that he will have to take a prominent part in the affairs of the kingdom. Halt we awhile to reflect on this. This obscure man, lone English farmer, untitled, unwealthy, no grace of manner to introduce himself, ungainly in speech and in action, unskilled in war, unused to the arts of courts and the cabals of senates and legislators—this man whose life had passed altogether with farmers and religious-minded men—was, at almost a bound, to leap to the highest place in the people's army, grasping the baton of the marshal. This man was to strike the successful blows on the field, shivering to pieces the kingly power in the land —himself was to assume the truncheon of the Dictator; was to sketch the outline of laws, of home and foreign policy, which all succeeding legislators were to attempt to embody and imitate; was to wring concessions to his power from the most haughty monarchies of ancient feudal Europe, and to bear up, in arms, England, fast dwindling into contempt, to the very foremost place among the nations; was to produce throughout the world homage to the Protestant religion, making before his name the fame and terror of Gustavus, of Henry IV., of Zisca, to dwindle and look pale. And this with no prestige of birth or education. Is it too much, then, to call him the most royal actor England, if not the world, has produced?

Notice, also, that when he was at Cambridge he won some money at gambling: £20, £50, £100. All these sums now were returned as moneys upon no principle his own. Here, too, is a letter of this Huntingdon time, just before the busy world called him away, giving a glimpse of the man:—

"*To my beloved cousin, Mrs. St. John, at William Masham, his house, called Otes, in Essex.—Present these.*

"Ely,
"13*th October*, 1638.

"Dear Cousin,—

"I thankfully acknowledge your love in your kind remembrance of me upon this opportunity. Alas! you too highly prize my lines and my company. I may be ashamed to own your expressions, considering how unprofitable I am, and the mean improvement of my talent.

"Yet to honour my God by declaring what He hath done for my soul, in this I am confident, and I will be so. Truly, then, this I find, that He giveth springs in a dry, barren wilderness, where no water is. I live, you know where—in Meshec, which they say means *prolonging*—in Kedar, which signifies *blackness;* yet the Lord forsaketh me not. Though He do prolong, yet He will, I trust, bring me to His tabernacle, to His resting-place. My soul is with the congregation of the first-born; my body rests in hope; and if here I may honour my God, either by doing or by suffering, I shall be most glad.

"Truly no poor creature hath more cause to put himself forth in the cause of God than I. I have had plentiful wages beforehand; and I am sure I shall never earn the least mite. The Lord accept me in His Son, and give me to walk in the light, as He is the light! He it is that enlighteneth our blackness, our darkness. I dare not say He hideth His face from me. He giveth me to see light in His light. One beam in a dark place hath exceeding much refreshment in it. Blessed be His name for shining upon so dark a heart as mine! You know what my manner of life hath been. Oh, I lived in, and loved darkness, and hated light! I was a chief, the chief of sinners. This is true; I hated godliness, yet God had mercy on me. Oh, the richness of His mercy! Praise Him for me—pray for me, that He who hath begun a good work would perfect it in the day of Christ."

Notice, also, that those latest years of James and first years of Charles were the period when the cruel persecution proceeding in England drove the first emigrants away into the American wilderness, there to found the old Massachusetts Colony; they left their homes and country, willing to encounter the privations and dangers of the distant wilderness, hoping there to find a rest and refuge for outraged religion and humanity. Those were the days commemorated by the Plymouth Rock,—the first settlers in Salem, and the growth of Lynn. We refer to this especially, because tradition says that on the 1st of May, 1638, eight ships, bound for New England, and filled with Puritan families, were arrested and interrupted in the Thames by an order from the king, and that among their passengers in one of those vessels were Pym, Hampden, Cromwell, and Hazelrig. Mr. John Forster doubts this, but cannot disprove it. Our own impression is that these master patriots were probably on board; that they did not intend to desert their country, in whose existence and future they had too large an interest, but that they were on a voyage of discovery, partly to sympathise with the exiles, and partly to obtain some knowledge for future possibilities. The rumour seems to be too extended to be altogether unfounded.

EPISODE.

III.

CROMWELL'S CONTEMPORARIES:
SIR JOHN ELIOT.

CHAPTER III.

CROMWELL'S CONTEMPORARIES: SIR JOHN ELIOT.

WE are desirous to set before our readers, not only the character of Cromwell himself, but of those contemporaries who also wrought out with him the work of national salvation; among these, and especially those who may be termed the great heralds and precursors of what may be called more strictly the Cromwell period, no name is more eminent than that of John Eliot. He is really the Elijah of the Revolution, and his was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way." His bold, courageous, and ardent spirit went before, and he anticipated the great impeachments of Pym and the great victories of Cromwell. It is only recently that he has been restored to the high place in popular regard and memory, from whence he had passed almost into obscurity, until Mr. John Forster first published his brief life, more than thirty years since, in his "Statesmen of the Commonwealth," and afterwards expanded the sketch into the two handsome volumes which now so pleasantly embalm the name and memory, the words and works and sufferings, we may add, the martyrdom, of John Eliot. He was born in 1590, a Cornishman, but on the banks of the Tamar, in the town of St. Germains, which, however, does not appear to have been more than a poor little straggling village of fisherman. Travelling on the Continent, he made the acquaintance of the Duke of Buckingham, the favourite of James I. Perhaps the acquaintance was not very intimate or very deep; it seems likely, however, that to it Eliot owed his position of Vice-Admiral of Devon. When, however, Eliot entered into public life, the opinions and careers of the two men were so divergent, that it is probable that, by his great impeachment of the Duke, Eliot would have taken away his head had not Felton's lance anticipated the headsman's stroke.

Eliot entered Parliament in his twenty-fourth year as member for the borough of St. Germains, and he found himself in company with some of the men whose names were to be allied with his own in working out the English redemption. John Hampden, three or four years younger than Eliot, had not yet finished his studies in the Inner Temple; but there were Pym, Philips, Sir Edward Joel, Sir Edward Sands, and Whitelock, and, amphibiously bowing about, but scarcely giving a hint of the vast space he was to fill by his power in the future, Sir Thomas Wentworth, soon afterwards created Earl of Strafford. Buckingham was the favourite,—the most unprincipled of favourites,—but Lord High Admiral of England. And here we are most likely to discover the cause of Eliot's elevation to the Vice-Admiralty of Devon. The Duke, probably, soon found that he had made a mistake in the appointment of Eliot to this post. The western coast was ravaged by pirates, and Eliot does not appear to have understood that it was quite possible for, perhaps almost expected that, the admiral and the pirate, especially if he were an English pirate, should understand each other. Not only Turkish rovers swept round our seas, but wild, lawless, dissolute Englishmen, bold bravadoes capable of every crime, who, when they were wearied and foiled in their adventures upon Spanish dollars and doubloons, varied the pleasantry of their occupation by more homely and less toilsome endeavours, seizing our own merchant ships, surprising and pouncing upon villages and small towns along the coast, and, in innumerable ways, creating a fear and a dread on the land and on the sea. What seems most marvellous to us now, is that such men should be frequently shielded and patronized by Government, or Government favourites, for their own ends and purposes!

This was the case, just then, with one who had obtained the most infamous distinction, Captain John Nutt, one of the most daring sea-devils of that lawless time. He was an untakable man, and he had several pirate ships. He commenced his career as gunner of a vessel in Dartmouth harbour bound for the Newfoundland seas. Coming to Newfoundland, he collected a crew of pleasant fellows like himself;

they seized a French ship, also a large Plymouth ship, then a Flemish ship, and, with these gay rovers, he played off his depredations on the fishing craft of the Newfoundland seas, and came back, too strong for capture, to the western coasts of England. Arrived there, this worthy played off new devilries: he tempted men from the king's service by the promises of higher wages, and—what alas! might easily be promised in those dreary days, more certain payment; he hung about Torbay, laughed at threats, scoffed at promises of pardon, although more than one offer had been made conditionally. The whole western country was in a state of dread, and municipalities poured their entreaties upon the Council and upon Eliot in his office of Vice-Admiral. What did it all avail? Capture seemed a mere dream, a hopeless thing. Sometimes he touched the shore, and, as was the wont with those bold fellows, when he did so, he was fond of exhibiting himself in the dress of the men he had plundered. The mind of Eliot was moved at these things. Sir George Calvert, a great Court favourite, had interests in Newfoundland; to him Nutt was necessary, and he appears to have obtained pardons for the pirate. Copies of the pardons were issued to Eliot,—it was his design to make the pardons useless; he was bound on capturing the pirate, but the pirate was too wary for the admiral. At last he had recourse to negotiation; but even while the negotiation for submission was in progress, Nutt made it still further unavailing by the capture of a rich Colchester ship with a cargo of sugar and timber. Eliot immediately insisted that this should be given up; the daring pirate was indignant at the command; and now Eliot became yet more crafty. But how remarkable is all this as illustrating the state of the times, that only the admiral should have been in earnest to take the man, and he had to represent to the Government how ill-deserved pardon and grace to such a man would be; that during the period of three months since the pardon had been issued, this lively specimen of an ancient British sailor had occupied his time in committing depredations and spoils on the coast, in one week had taken ten or twelve ships, and, while the pardon was in negotiation, had seized the Colchester brig with a freightage of £4,000! In the end, however, Eliot did manage to get possession of him. He seized Nutt's ship, took down her sails, and put a guard on board her, and then wrote to the Council, waiting to hear in what way he was to deal with the pirate and the men. The pirate was more powerful than the admiral. Buccaneers, and especially such a buccaneer as Nutt,—an immensely wealthy man, a daring, resolute, and serviceable man—had friends at Court, especially, as we have seen, a friend in Calvert. It is marvellous to relate, that Nutt was permitted to become the accuser of the admiral—the admiral who had been first congratulated by Conway, the Secretary of State, for his daring and magnanimous conduct, and who had been told by letter that he was to receive the king's thanks and to kiss the king's hand in acknowledgment of his rescue of the western counties and seas from Nutt's piracy, plunder, and murder. That admiral, our readers will understand, for that very transaction of seizing that pirate, the month following, lay in the Marshalsea prison upon some frivolous pretences; whilst the happy and blithe-hearted pirate and plunderer stepped forth with a free and unconditional pardon, to renew his pleasant adventures on the seas. Of course there had to seem some pretext of law for this; but law, in the person of the Chief Justice, Sir Henry Marten, soon shrivelled up all these pretexts. Sir John Eliot, indeed, did escape from prison and from all punishment, but not with such flying colours as Nutt,—"that unlucky fellow, Captain Nutt," as Sir George Calvert called him,—poor penitent pirate! Whatever Nutt said, what protestations he made, we know not; a shaggy black dog like that making a clean breast of it is a queer picture to us. "This poor man," says Sir George, "is able to do the king service if he be employed, and I do assure myself he doth so detest his former course of life, he will never enter on it again." So the Vice-Admiral of Devon was weighed in the scales against a freebooter of the seas, and found wanting! The whole man seems to come out in the indignant truthfulness running through Sir John's letter. Nay, the admiral was to pay a fine of £100 to the pirate for his ship and goods seized; but here the admiral was tough. One of the officers writes to their lordships of the Government, while Sir John continues in prison: "So may it please your lordships, Sir John won't pay; so that your lordships' order is very much slighted, and nothing at all regarded." He escaped from prison, however, as the pirate escaped—by royal favour and State protection—from the gallows Eliot had erected for him.

This is not the last we hear of Mr. Nutt. That penitent person achieved still greater fame than before on the seas, and became, say the records, the most incomparable nuisance in all his majesty's dominions. Nothing on the seas was safe from him. At last, Captain Plumleigh was sent to the Irish seas to seek him and to take him. Nutt met the captain with twenty-seven Turks, gave the captain chase, and, had he not fled into harbour, would have sunk his ship. This encouraged the penitent pirate to still further magnanimities; he struck at the very highest game, and when Lord Wentworth sent over to Ireland—to which country he was himself going as the Lord-Lieutenant—a ship full of luggage, furniture, wardrobe, plate, etc., essential to his station, Nutt seized the whole. Wentworth was the intimate friend and counsellor of the king, and also the intimate friend of that Sir George Calvert who had saved Nutt's bull-neck from its legitimate twisting some years before; but, as we do not read that Nutt made restitution when these little particulars were discovered, perhaps he did not the less enjoy his prize. We believe he reached a happy and honoured old age, and died comfortably, as a man deserved to do who availed himself of the facilities afforded by those times when "every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

This exercise of prerogative with which Eliot came immediately into collision, would not be likely to incline him to look patiently upon the successive attempts of royal rapacity.

It was through Sir John Eliot, very eminently, that the Commons and the Stuarts came at last to their great rupture. James I. heartily desired alliance with Spain by the marriage of the Prince of Wales with the Infanta, and when the negotiations were broken off, the nation manifested its hearty sympathy by a great outburst of joy. Then came the contest with the stubborn old king upon the privilege of debate in Parliament. The king said the Parliament held their liberties by toleration, not by right; and when the House recorded its very different conviction in a resolution on its journals, the imbecile old king came up from Theobald's in a passion, got together a privy council, and six of the judges, sent for the Commons' journal, and even dared to tear out the registry. He then instantly dissolved the House by proclamation, and wound up the arduous labours of the day by tumbling off his horse into the New River. It was winter—December weather,—the ice broke, so that nothing but his boots were seen, which mishap was a pretty diagram of that representative

Stuart. Then came the coquetting with popery, and the disastrous marriage of the Prince of Wales with Henrietta Maria. Then also came James's last Parliament of 1623–4, in which Eliot was member for Newport. The intense Protestantism of the country longed to interfere to help the Protestants of the Continent, and especially to be at war with Spain. "Are we indeed poor?" asked Eliot, about this time in a memorable debate in the House. "Be it so; Spain is rich. We will make that our Indies. Break with her, and we shall break with our necessities also." Supplies were voted to meet the necessities of the coast-guard defence, as well as for warlike equipments. Then bonfires blazed to the very doors of the Spanish embassy, and all the world in the city ran into debt for faggots and gallons of wine. "The Spaniards," said aristocratic Wentworth, afterwards Strafford, "were insulted, to the great joy of all the cobblers and other bigots and zealous brethren of the town." Still went on the game of imposition by prerogative. Mischievous monopolies sprang into existence. Large traders were beggared by the actions of the Government, and the merchant shipping of the country had fallen away to an alarming extent. Many of the exports most in demand had been diminished more than half. The Government in truth plundered its subjects and robbed itself.

The old king died, and his death was followed by a sense of relief and hope. But the new reign brought no relief, and the hope was soon dissipated.

At this time there existed in England many of the same fearful indications which were the preludes of the subsequent French Revolution; while the people were starving beneath the weight of oppression and forced loans, so that for the first twelve years of the reign of Charles I. scarcely any one dared to call his property his own, and a morning never rose upon an English family which was not dreaded as the possible herald of some new oppression, it is quite curious, and moves to a natural indignation, to notice the enormous sums expended by the king on diamonds, jewels, and chains of gold, either for himself or for personal presents. We read of £10,400 paid to one William Rogers, a goldsmith; we read of £10,000 paid to Philip Jacobson, a jeweller, for a ring, etc.; we read of £2,000 paid to Henry Garway, Esq., for one large thick table diamond; we read of £8,000 paid to Sir Manrill Abbott for a diamond set in a collar of gold; and in fact, there lie before us a long catalogue of similar items, indicating the reckless extravagance of the king. It is almost the anticipation of the story of the diamond necklace with natural differences; and meantime, the people were crushed down beneath cruel exactions to satisfy the cost of these playthings. The great guide of State, Buckingham, continued the game, and soon was manifested the same arbitrary misrule. The Parliament pursued its way, determined from session to session to maintain its strength and its integrity. Meantime, early in the reign, the laws against Puritan Dissent began to be pressed with eager severity, and Laud was active in his bad business of superstitious bigotry. Looking back upon these times, they seem sad, black, and desolate; the plague ravaged the metropolis, the deaths averaging about five thousand a week. The city was empty, grass was growing in the street; and Lily, the astrologer, going to prayers to St. Antholin's, in Watling Street, from a house over the Strand Bridge, between six and seven in a summer morning of the month of July, testifies that so few people were then alive, and the streets so unfrequented, he met only three persons in the way. And then came the debate on the Tonnage and Poundage Bill, and the king and Buckingham pursued their bad path. Sir Humphrey May, the Chancellor, sought the mediation of the popular and powerful member, Sir John Eliot, to attempt to bring the Duke of Buckingham to a sense of reason. It was a strange interview. He came to York House, and found the duke with the duchess yet in bed; but notice having been given of his coming, the duchess rose and withdrew to her cabinet, and he was let in. "Ourselves," says Mr. Forster, "admitted also to this strange interview, the curtain of the past is uplifted for us at a critical time."

"Judging the present moment of time by what we now know to have followed it, will it be too much to say that if Eliot could have prevailed with Buckingham, and if the result had been that better understanding between the Parliament and the Court which he desired to establish, the course of English history might have been changed. To Charles's quarrel with his first Parliament, Clarendon ascribes all the troubles of his reign; and now the good or the ill understanding, publicly, is to date from this day. What privately is to flow from its two hours' conference, not only to the men sitting in that bed-chamber of York House, but to the royal master whom they would both have served, will not have exhausted itself for many years. It will not have closed when Buckingham's wretched death has come. When Eliot sinks beneath the king's unrelenting persecution of his favourite's fiercest assailant, it will be working still. Not until the harsh persecution of Eliot is remembered and put forth in later years to justify the harshness dealt out to an imprisoned king, will the cycle of wrong and retribution be complete that this day begins."

Eliot used what argument he could, and he has told his own story of the interview, with the tremendous discovery of Buckingham listening impatiently, and then letting fall a hasty word, so that the whole truth flashed upon him that the success of the Tonnage and Poundage Bill was not so much desired as reasonable ground for quarrel. "The proposition must proceed without consideration of success, wherein was lodged this project merelie to be denied." "For the present," Eliot concludes, "this observation of Buckingham gave that gentleman [himself] some wonder with astonishment; who with the seals of privacie closed up those passages in silence; yet thereon grounded his observations for the future, that noe respect of persons made him [Eliot] desert his countrie."

During the recess of 1625, Eliot travelled to the West. As he passed along, news reached him of the cruel mischief inflicted by Turkish pirates, who, from under forts and castles left helpless and unguarded, sprung on English ships. The western sea, with all the villages lining its coasts, was entirely at their mercy; all trade was interrupted, and the number of Christians captured to be sold into slavery during the outrages of three months could not be less than twelve hundred. There were wailings for fathers and sons, for brothers, for husbands and wives. Meantime, the ships of the nation lay in harbour, men and provisions on board, and Government careless of the inflictions on its subjects. Eliot also first became acquainted with the treason meditated against the Protestants of Rochelle, for which the sums granted by Parliament for the defence of Protestant interests were diverted, to crush them. It is a story which covers the Government of Charles I. with ignominy, and renews feelings of bitter execration; while yet it is one of the proudest stories of English magnanimity. It scarcely needs to recite that tale, which must be fresh in the recollections of all who are proud of their country. The French Government was maintaining a struggle against the Huguenots of Rochelle. They were very unequal to the conflict, but they were brave and determined. The free town of Rochelle had become the stronghold of Protestantism, and

Richelieu determined to crush it. He was scarcely equal to the work; the place was strong and important—it was, in fact, a kind of little republican Hanse town. A clause in the marriage treaty of France with England, on account of Charles and Henrietta Maria, provided that eight ships — men-of-war—should be placed by England at the disposal of France when claimed. It was a rather prompt demand, but a lucky thought induced Richelieu to ask for them now to serve his purpose upon Rochelle. Upon this, Buckingham and the king, entirely concealing their purpose from the Council, pressed seven first-rate merchantmen, and sent them to sea under the command of Captain Pennington, who had hoisted his flag on board the *Vanguard* man-of-war.

Neither Pennington nor any of the captains knew their destination; they expected they were to act against Genoa, or against Italy. The thing was far enough from their thoughts that they were to act against Protestantism, and there was a specific understanding that the ships promised were not to engage in the civil wars of the French. Arrived in the Downs, Pennington was scandalized to find that, by an order from the Admiralty, he was placed beneath the command of the French ambassador, who was to exercise power over the whole fleet. When Pennington discovered the deceit practised upon him, and suspected that he was to be used against the Rochellois, he wrote in piteous terms to the ministers known to have influence with Buckingham, imploring mediation with the king and salvation from the disgrace. Meantime, the men on board the *Vanguard* and the other ships had discovered their destination, and refused to fight against their brother Protestants. They signed a round-robin, and placed it, where they knew it would meet their commander's eye, between the leaves of his Bible. The brave and pious sailor waited but a short time after receiving it; he brought back all his ships to the English coast. Arrived there, he was deceived again by the assurance that there was to be peace between the King of France and the Huguenots; so he once more sailed for the Dieppe Roads, Conway, the Secretary, too, having informed Pennington, from Buckingham, that the command of the fleet was to be altogether the French king's, and Pennington was, according to his majesty's express pleasure, to obey entirely the command of the Admiral of France. Again all these pretences proved to be without foundation. The simple facts cannot be impeached. There is extant a letter of Buckingham, from Paris, to Charles, in which he says, "The peace with them of this religion depends upon the success of the fleet they [Richelieu] had from your majesty and the Low Countries." All attempts are vain to screen the minister and the king. There was a scheme first to get the fleet into a French harbour, and the false instructions to Pennington were the commencement. Pennington wrote direct to Buckingham, imploring his Grace to recall him, adding that he would rather put his life at the king's mercy at home, than go forward in the business, and that he rather desired to suffer in person than to suffer dishonour. The answer to this letter was a peremptory refusal of his prayer. The Duke marvelled that he, a captain, should, upon the instance of his obedience being required, ask leave to withdraw! Still he was told not to fear the issue, for news of peace between the French king and his subjects was not far off. Pennington once more sailed, but he reached the Dieppe roads alone; the merchant captains refused to follow him! But as yet Government officials had no conception of the intense religious feelings, the passionate, Protestant zeal of the common people of England. The king and the chief minister were insensible to it, and their insensibility proved their ruin. There was soon a religious mutiny on board the *Vanguard;* the crew could not believe the ship was to be delivered up to the French, and it was known that it would be employed against the Huguenots. Pennington declared to the Secretary, Nicholas, that his men were in such a rage that they swore nothing should prevent their carrying away the ship from the roads, and so indeed news came that the *Vanguard* was under sail. The ship left the roads in tempestuous weather, and returned to the Downs. From the English coast Pennington makes a manly and touching appeal: he relates what had passed in the roads at Dieppe; his crew had returned without acquainting him—but he frankly adds that he knew it, and had connived at it, otherwise they would never have done it; and he declares that he had rather live on bread and water for the rest of his days than be an actor in that business. The old artifices were again employed. Peace was to be made with the Protestants, and war declared with Spain and Milan. "The king," Pennington was told, "was extremely offended with him," and if he desired to make his peace, he must obey punctually. Then the royal warrant followed, formally requiring Pennington to put his ship, the *Vanguard,* and all the other seven ships, with their equipage, artillery, and ammunition, into the service of his dear brother, the "most Christian king"; and in case of the refusal on the part of crews, commanding him and the others to use all means possible to compel obedience, "even to the sinking of the ships." "See you fail not," are the closing words of this decisive document, "as you will answer to the contrary at your utmost peril."

For the third time Pennington took his *Vanguard* into the French harbour, and with him went, with desperate reluctance, the seven merchant ships. One captain, Sir Fernando Gorges, broke through and returned, learning that the destination of the fleet was Rochelle. Pennington and the rest doggedly obeyed the king's warrant, and delivered up the ships and their stores *without their crews,* Pennington declaring that he would rather be hanged in England for disobedience, than fight himself or see his seamen fight against their brother Protestants of France. He quietly looked on while his crews deserted; leaving every ship, including his own, to be manned by Frenchmen, and came back to set himself right with his countrymen. The *Vanguard* hastened away to Rochelle, and her cannons, no longer manned by English crews, accomplished the object of the "martyr king" and "Defender of the Protestant Faith!"—"opening fire against Rochelle, and mowing down the Huguenots like grass."

These were the sailors of those days, and this was the English Government of those days. Surely there was need of men like Eliot to attempt to mend this wrong doing! Thus the money voted in subsidies by the brave English House of Commons to defend Protestantism in Europe, was squandered in the treacherous attempt to crush it. Pennington, upon his arrival in England, sent, from his place of concealment, his papers to Eliot, that he might have at once the means of vindicating him to Parliament, which vindication would also be the impeachment of the Government. After a brief recess, the House reassembled, burdened with many grave causes of grief. Puritans were being cruelly persecuted, Jesuits were being pardoned and set at liberty, and the state of the people everywhere demanded immediate consideration. Prerogative was dancing a perfect maniac dance through the country; the dues of tonnage and poundage were actually in the course of levy and collection without any grant from Parliament, and the parties of the Court and the people became more decided and distinct. The demerits and defects of

Buckingham, now especially, became daily more obvious, and roused in the minds of all noble Englishmen growing indignation. We have already spoken of the ascent of this man to power—it is unlike anything in our history: he simply had the grace and beauty of a woman, without a woman's prescience and tact. He delighted in dependants and suitors, never got beyond the Court, and could not understand the people. He could not comprehend that the reign of favourites was passed, and the reign of statesmen begun; and that, as Eliot says, "the old genius of the kingdom is re-awakening." Having very little of the statesman himself, he seems to have looked with covetous eye and hand on the gains of the buccaneer, whilst utterly unpossessed of the buccaneer's grasp and strength. He was fond of a show of mystery, and kept it up, as Eliot says, "with scarce a covering for his ears, supposing his whole body under shadow." The time was come when his wild outrages on English liberty would be tolerated no longer. In speaking of this Parliament, Phillipps, one of its most accomplished orators, exclaimed,—

"England is the last monarchy that yet retains her liberties. Let them not perish now. Let not posterity complain that we have done for them worse than our fathers did for us. Their precedents are the safest steps we tread in. Let us not now forsake them, lest their fortunes forsake us. Wisdom and counsel made *them* happy, and the like causes now will have for us the like effects."

The whole House was, to quote the words of Milton, "a grand shop of war;" anvils and hammers kept incessantly working to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth; and if the House were resolute to maintain its rights, not less obstinate was the king. Frequent were his messages to stay votes and censures, and this very Parliament was in this way dissolved. Its last debate was broken in upon while it was engaged in drawing up a paper reminding the king of his and the kingdom's hazards,—a respectful, obedient, and loyal paper, warning him of the danger of holding counsel with those who would poison his ear against it. While the Chairman was reading it, and the House sitting in committee, the Black Rod was heard at the door. The Speaker rose to resume his chair, and admit the royal messenger. There was a general shout, "No! no!" Other members rose to prevent him. The protest was put to the vote, and passed, and hastened to the king, who immediately dissolved the House. These were daring doings for a young king not yet crowned; but he had Laud by his side, to eke out the imbecility of Buckingham. Parliament was dissolved. During the period of its dissolution, Eliot was active in the work of his vice-admiralty, engaged in the fitting out and sailing of the fleet for the Cadiz expedition. The levying of tonnage and poundage still went on, although the assent had been refused to the Bill which would have made the levying legal; and Eliot's father-in-law was pressed upon with special hardness to meet the demands of one of the Privy Seals, a dangerous application of an old expedient. We cannot give the whole circumstances connected with the *St. Peter*, of Newhaven. We have described Buckingham as a kind of courtly buccaneer; he desired by his agents to seize money and goods almost anywhere and anyhow. He laid a hand of rapacity on the men of property at home, and he seized, without any legal expedient, rich property on the sea. The *St. Peter*, of Newhaven, was a French ship, with a cargo of extraordinary value, and it was seized by the Lord High Admiral under the pretence of her carrying Spanish goods, her cargo being made the object of plunder and extortion. It created an immense excitement, for of course France instantly made sharp reprisals. The ships of English merchants were seized in French ports. Eliot, upon the meeting of Parliament, took a very strong and decided position upon this enormous transaction, denouncing not only the wickedness but the impolicy of making an enemy of a great nation, and the facts he brought out in successive examinations were startling. The *St. Peter* contained silver, gold, jewels to the value of £40,000 sterling, and, without condemnation from any judge or court, was stripped and carried up to the Tower. The Duke's conduct was not more remarkable in the exhibition of this one great extortion than were the minor extortions of his subordinates. Upon the final decision of the court in favour of the ship, by which it was ordered to be carried back and legally discharged, the favourite not only dared to detain it in opposition to express verdict, but it was proved that his subordinates had attempted to sell to some of the Frenchmen who were losers in the vessel their interest—as much as £80 for £5. It was at the same time, too, that the Duke won a perfect holocaust of obloquy for the failure of the great Cadiz expedition ; in plain words, it was only an attempt to fill the king's coffers by a piratical raid on the wealth of Spain. The expedition consisted of ninety sail, large and small ships, five thousand seamen and ten thousand soldiers. The fleet sailed, but it failed, and there fell upon the towns of the West of England a great disaster. Hundreds of seamen and soldiers landed at Plymouth in a dying state, and a thousand were said to have perished at sea before they entered the harbour. For months the appalling extent of the disaster showed itself in every road and town on the western coast; above all in the streets of Plymouth, as the ships came straggling back.

There was one living in the West at that time, "Bottomless Bagge," Sir James Bagge, and it is to no other than Archbishop Laud that he must be thankful for his characteristic patronymic. Did our space permit, we should like to devote a page or two to the development of the character of this worthy. He was Buckingham's choice, and a most worthy agent for the West; he had a profound genius for servilities, meannesses, and rascalities of every kind; he was a man who could lick the blacking off a great man's boots, and swear that it was better than port wine; it was he who offered the £5 to the Frenchmen for their £80. We see in him the cur constantly snapping round about the heels of Eliot, and always with the same sinuous sanctity—his fragrant name is an ointment poured forth, with a large flavouring of asafœtida; a truculent rascal, a genuine Barnacle, a great high-priest of the Circumlocution Office, embodying in himself a premature aptitude of chicane and red tape, which might make him a study even in these modern days. The rascal does not seem to have got the worst of it. Eliot was often imprisoned; Coke, Phillipps, and other brave men, as we know, suffered, and that joyfully, the spoiling of their goods and their persons; but "Bottomless Bagge," with an admirable eel-like slipperiness, always found himself on some comfortable couch of glittering mud. The character of the man is well portrayed in Mr. Forster's "Life of Eliot": his peculations, his servilities, his smiling face before, his stealthy hand behind the curtain, his hints about his own family, his personal meritorious demerits. He seems to have feathered himself well from the failing of the Cadiz expedition: he victualled the ships, and one contemporary speaks of his conduct in that matter as worthy of the halter. But, bad as Bagge was, it was necessary to strike higher. A cry of shame and indignation rose from the whole nation, and Eliot led up and organized the Parliament to a charge upon Buckingham as the one grand delinquent. The king interposed for his favourite, and wrote an autograph letter to the House, in reply to their demand for redresses before they granted new supplies.

"I must let you know," he continued, suddenly letting loose the thought he could no longer mask or control, "that I will not allow any of my servants to be questioned amongst you, much less such as are of eminent place and near unto me. . . . I see you especially aim at the Duke of Buckingham. I wonder what hath so altered your affection towards him? . . . What hath he done since the last Parliament of my father's time, to alter and change your minds? I wot not; but can assure you he hath not meddled or done anything concerning the public, or commonwealth, but by special directions and appointment, and as my servant. . . . I would you would hasten for my supply, or else it will be worse for yourselves; for if any evil happen, I think I shall be the last that shall feel it."

Grandly Eliot remarked to the House, when the letter of the king was read, "We have had a representation of great fear, but I hope it will not darken our understandings." The message of the king seems only to have led Eliot to a piercing and most eloquent analysis in the House of the nature of monarchy and kingly office. This speech produced an immense excitement. The next day the mad-headed king called the Houses to attend him at Whitehall. He told them he had "to give thanks to the Lords, but none to the Commons, whose fault it was his purpose to control." He demanded supplies sufficient and unconditional. If not granted, the House would be dissolved. "Remember," said the king, "that Parliaments are altogether in my power for their calling, sitting, and dissolution; and therefore, as I find the fruits of them good or evil, they are to continue or not to be." We can ourselves conceive how great was the consternation which must have been produced by such a speech. The next day the House met, sat with locked doors, placed the key in the Speaker's hands, and forbade any member to leave the House, a practice then very unusual. Then Eliot rose, a resolute man, through whose lips how much more kingly a soul expressed itself, than that of the weak, pettish, and merely obstinate king! He said, "The House met neither to do what the king should command them, nor to abstain where he should forbid them, and therefore they should continue constant to maintain their privileges, and not do either more or less for what had been said to them." And while uttering these and like words, and moving a remonstrance to the king, the House cried, "Well spoken, Sir John Eliot!" And then, of course, what should follow but the impeachment of the duke?

No doubt the speech in which Buckingham was impeached is a great speech. Probably nothing of which we have any knowledge or recollection could have so expressed the natural indignation of the House and of the whole enraged kingdom. Wrath which had been gathering for years broke forth; crimes patent to all knowledge, unblushing in their effrontery, were pointed to and brought out into the clear light of the parliamentary countenance; nor did the speaker hesitate for a moment in his dignified career of accusation because he knew the impossibility of delivering such a crimination and denunciation without, in some measure, impeaching the king, and placing himself, not only beneath royal displeasure, but within the reach of royal punishment. All came in for condemnation: the *St. Peter*, of Newhaven; the treason of Rochelle; the extortions and exactions upon East Indian and other merchants. "No right, no interest, may withstand him. Through the powers of state and justice he has dared ever to strike at his own ends. Your lordships have had this sufficiently expressed in the case of the *St. Peter*, and by the ships at Dieppe." He then advanced to the astounding illustration of the personal aggrandizement of the man: "I am raised," he exclaimed, "to observe a wonder—a wonder both in policy and nature."

"My lords, I have done. YOU SEE THE MAN! What have been his actions, whom he is like, YOU KNOW. I leave him to your judgments. This only is conceived by us, the knights, citizens, and burgesses of the Commons House of Parliament, that by him came all our evils, in him we find the causes, and on him must be the remedies. To this end we are now addressed to your lordships, in confidence of your justice, to which some late examples and your wisdoms invite us. We cannot doubt your lordships. The greatness, the power, the practice of the whole world, we know to be all inferior to your greater judgments; and from thence we take assurance. To that, therefore, we now refer him; there to be examined, there to be tried; and in due time from thence we shall express such judgment as his cause merits."

The king's wrath broke all bounds, and early the next day Eliot was in the Tower. When a reference by Eliot to Sejanus had been reported to the king, he exclaimed, "Implicitly he must intend me for Tiberius!" He hastened to the Lords. With Buckingham by his side he vindicated himself and his minister from the "vile and malicious calumnies of the Commons." The arrest of Eliot had been swift and secret. Arrested in the House, still his imprisonment, with that of Digges, was for a short time unknown. When it did become known, although Mr. Pym rose to counsel moderation, the House would not hear him. "Rise! rise! rise!" was shouted on all sides. "No business till we are righted in our liberties." It was the same the next day when the Speaker attempted to proceed with the business of the House. "Sit down, sit down!" was the universal cry. "No business till we are righted in our liberties!" Digges was instantly liberated, against him nothing could be alleged in comparison with the high misdemeanours of Eliot. As he resumed his seat, the House turned itself into a grand committee concerning Sir John Eliot. His papers had been seized, efforts were made to prove him the head of a conspiracy,. and it was resolved to put him to the question. So still in the Commons went on the indignation, and in the Tower the examination, and the Commons pertinaciously would attend to no business, nor be quiet, until he was released. He was released, and took his place again amidst the joyful manifestations of his fellow members; rising directly in his place, and requesting to hear what was charged against him, that he might show by his answer whether he was worthy to sit there. The poor king, as in every movement of his political life, lost greatly by this transaction; and yet it produced so little good upon his own mind, that years after he was none the less willing to jeopardise his position by attempting to arrest Hampden and Pym. Clamour and debate went on within the House, and men's hearts failed them for fear without. While the Remonstrance was passing, a wild storm broke over London. Wind and hail, rain, lightning and thunder, the like of it was never known in the memory of living man: the churchyard walls were broken down, the earth rent and torn from the graves, revealing, so it is said, the faces of the dead; supernatural shapes in the mist hung brooding over the Thames, and the superstitious saw misty shape and storm and tempest bearing on and beating against the house of the Duke of Buckingham, its stairs and its walls. Storms were moving towards York House too. The next day the House was summoned by the king to hear the commission of dissolution. The Commons knew their crafty king. They had passed in haste their remonstrance. The Speaker was instructed how to act; he approached the throne holding up the "Great Remonstrance" as he approached, and craved compliance with its "humble petition for the removal of that great person, the Duke of Buckingham, from access to your royal presence." Without a word the dissolution followed. And even while the commission was read, members were seen reading copies of this which has been through all time called the "Great Remonstrance;" and so the House, led on by Eliot, had done its determined work. The Remonstrance had been accomplished just in time; in a few days it would be in the hands of the people, and would tell why the king had once more so rudely dismissed his Parliament.

For two years the king governed by prerogative, and it may be supposed that the failure to punish Eliot would not make the king and his minister the more pleasant and affectionate in their feelings towards the patriot. "Bottomless Bagge" and Buckingham, between them, devised a form of conspiracy against Eliot. He still held his office of Vice-Admiral, and an effort was made to get up a case against him in connection with his office; and there was a draft of a paper of a peculiar kind, inquiring "whether Sir John may not be sequestered in the meantime;" in fact, whether he could not be struck without the awkwardness of being heard. Eliot stood between a Hamburgh merchantman and a gang of Welsh pirates; this again seemed to be in some way an infraction of the Lord Admiral's designs and ideas. Several cases are recited during this period of the government by prerogative, in which "Bottomless Bagge's" foul play, and the vile connivance of the Council are brought out conspicuously. "Honesty among them," says Mr. Forster, "was only a commodity to deal in—too scarce to be wasted; and to any share of it such people as Sir John Eliot could have no claim." We next find Eliot, in those days of prerogative, refusing the loan, the celebrated loan, of which John Hampden said, "I could be content to lend as well as others, but I should fear to draw upon myself the curse in Magna Charta, which should be read twice a year, against those who infringe it." Eliot issued a public appeal through the West against the loan, and grounded his resistance to it upon its essentially unconstitutional character. Bagge, who in addition to being a rascal, was an exceeding ass, wrote to show that the much-vaunted Magna Charta, which Eliot magnified, was a mere abortion; he laughed at the Barons and their rebellious armies in the meadows of Staines, and called their meeting together "satanical," and Eliot is "satanical," too, for citing it. About this business Eliot found his way into the Gate-house. The nation raised a loud outcry for a Parliament. It had been hoped that Eliot might have been outlawed; at any rate, it was hoped that he might be excluded from a Parliament. Alas! when he was released, it was only to be received with rapture throughout Cornwall, and to be returned, not as member for Newport, but as knight of the shire. Thus the man most disaffected to the Duke and the Court appeared with half the country at his heels in the third Parliament of Charles I.; that ominous Parliament, than which only another was more fearful to the king. It met in March, 1628. Eliot was then thirty-eight years old, and had only four more years to live at all. How much to be done in those four years! The king at once told his Commons that he only called them together that they should vote him sufficient supply. He trusted they would not give way to the follies of particular men. The "particular men," however, entered the House with the same resolution they exhibited two years before. Eliot was one of the first speakers upon those grounds of offence growing out of the resistance of Nonconformity to prelatical assumptions. How eloquent are the following words, and how do their forcible expressions enlighten us on the character of the man!

"Religion," he proceeded, "is the chief virtue of a man, devotion and religion; and of devotion, prayer and fasting are the chief characters. Let these be corrupted in their use, the devotion is corrupt. If the devotion be once tainted, the religion is impure.

It then, denying the power of godliness, becomes but an outward form; and, as it is concluded in the text, a religion that is in vain. Of such religion in this place, or at these times, I impeach no man. Let their own consciences accuse them. Of such devotion I make no judgment upon others, but leave them to the Searcher of all hearts. This only for caution I address to you: that if any of us have been guilty in this kind, let us now here repent it. And let us remember that repentance is not in words. It is not a '*Lord! Lord!*' that will carry us into heaven, but the doing the will of our Father which is in heaven. And to undo our country is not to do that will. It is not that Father's will that we should betray that mother. Religion, repentance, prayer, these are not private contracts to the public breach and prejudice. There must be a sincerity in it all; a throughout integrity and perfection, that our words and works be answerable. If our actions correspond not to our words, our successes will not be better than our hearts. When such near kindred differ, strangers may be at odds; and the prevention of this evil is the chief reason that I move for. Nor is it without cause that this motion does proceed. If we reflect upon the former passages of this place, much might be thence collected to support the propriety of the caution. But the desire is better, to reform errors than to remember them. My affections strive for the happiness of this meeting, but it must be had from God. It is His blessing though our crown. Let us for Him, therefore, in all sincerity expect it; and if any by vain shadows would delude us, let us distinguish between true substances and those shadows. It is religion, and not the name of religion, that must guide us; that in the truth thereof we may with all unity be concordant: not turning it into subtlety and art, playing with God as with the powers of men; but in the sincerity of our souls doing that work we came for. Which now I most humbly move, and pray for that blessing from above."

His attacks upon the illegalities of the last two years were as brave as before: the state of maritime affairs—the suspension and violation of statutes. With much condemnation, however, a vote of five subsidies was granted to the king; but the time when the collection was to be made, or the Bill introduced, was not mentioned. The House immovably resolved that both were to depend on the good faith of the king. It was the greatest grant ever made in Parliament. The Secretary, on behalf of the king, proceeded to thank the House, but coupled thanks of Buckingham with thanks of the king. Sir John Eliot leaped up, and taxed Mr. Secretary with intermingling a subject's speech with the king's message: "in that House they knew of no other distinction but that of king and subjects." Whereupon many of the House made exclamation, "*Well spoken, Sir John Eliot!*"

There were, to our minds, some extraordinary subjects of debate, especially on the king's claim to commit without cause shown on the face of the warrant. "The greatest question," exclaimed Pym, "that ever was in this place or elsewhere!" Selden and Coke both spoke upon it. "What," answered Coke, "shall I accept such law? Shall I have a state of inheritance for life, or for years, in my land, and shall I be a tenant at will, for my liberty! A freeman to be a tenant at will for his freedom! There is no such tenure in all Littleton." We follow with earnest interest those discussions in which Eliot took so great and prominent a part, out of which came into existence the immortal Petition of Rights. These are great debates, greater debates are not recorded in history. "Magna Charta is such a fellow," said Coke, "he will have no Sovereign." The great charter of the people's liberties was upheld and strengthened by the Petition of Rights.

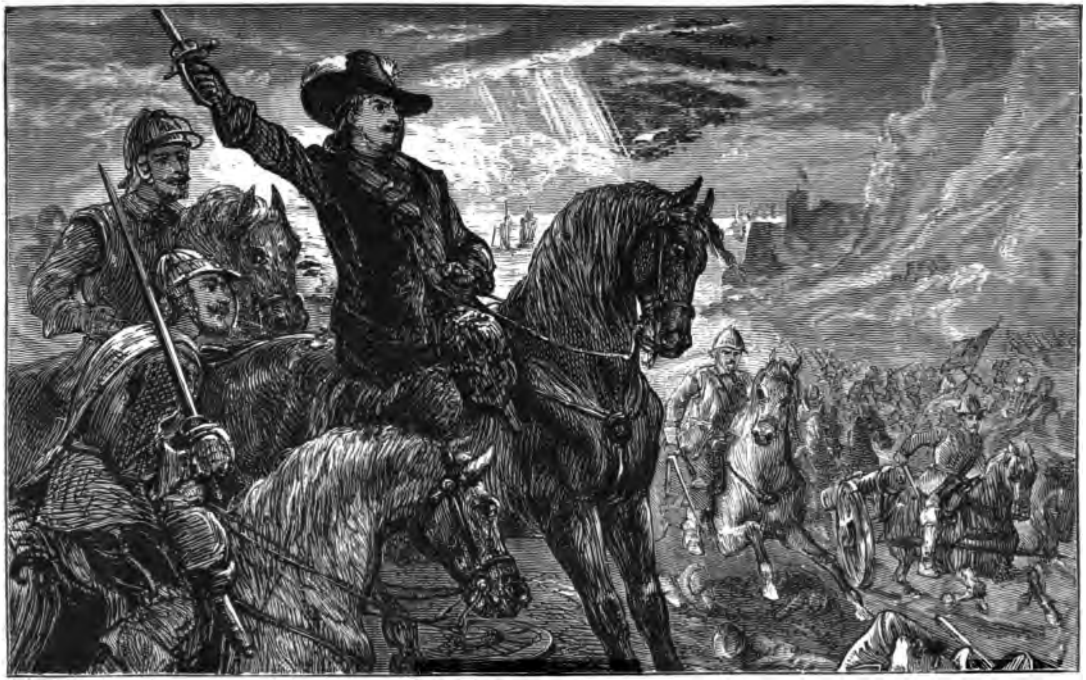
And it is in the course of these debates that the stately form of Wentworth, afterwards Earl of Strafford, rises to the life. Wentworth's was no vulgar ambition; there is little reason to think that any such spirit, textured as his was, could have any hearty sympathies with the people or with freedom. True, his voice was also heard in favour of the great Petition of Rights; but Mr. Forster has very distinctly brought out the reason of this. He had been thwarted by Buckingham, and the majestic and powerful man—to whom, in the great gallery of statesmen, Buckingham bore some such resemblance as a butterfly might bear to an eagle—taught the favourite more rightly to estimate his power. Wentworth had been refused the

Presidentship of York. He became the most ardent supporter of the Petition of Rights. He was insulted by Buckingham. He revenged, in an instant and remarkable manner, the insult. It was speedily atoned, and as speedily forgiven; and then Wentworth is before us with a cloud of eloquent words, attempting to evaporate, or pour some haze round, an apparent burst of indignant eloquence, when he found himself on a previous night in company with the great voices of the defenders of the people. It is a picture on which we like to look—these two unquestionably foremost men of their parties, Eliot and Wentworth, in their famous duel. Eliot rose immediately with ease, to measure himself with his formidable antagonist. In a noble speech, he appealed to Wentworth against Wentworth. There was no man in the House better fitted to appreciate the singular dignity and grandeur of Eliot's spirit than this dark, majestic complotter against the liberties of England. Eliot printed himself ineffaceably on Wentworth's mind; and twelve years later, when the mesh was almost woven, he nerved himself for conflict—when Eliot was all dust beneath the Tower Green, and hours of danger were leaping rapidly upon himself—by calling up the image of his old antagonist; and no finer tribute was offered to the memory of Eliot than Wentworth uttered when he said, "Sound or lame, I shall be with you before the beginning of Parliament. I should not fail, though Sir John Eliot were living" In the discussion on which we are now looking, Eliot obtained an easy victory over the dark, ambitious man, whose day was hastening on, though not yet come. As we read the story of his life, it stirs feelings of pride for our country, and homage for the men who have glorified and adorned it. We must pass over the strong language and persistent remonstrances to the king on the conduct of his minister. The report of the Committee of Trade was a lamentable one. The losses by pirates continued to be amazing; two hundred and forty-eight ships, of a hundred tons and upwards, had been seized and lost between Dover and Newcastle. Seamen were wronged by inadequate wages and uncertain payment, and the want of hospitals for their reception was shown. As the events drive forward through the House, what scenes those are which meet us—a whole House in tears, and such a House! Not a congregation of weak, feeble minds, but strong sagacious lawyers, daring, resolute men, all aghast at the desolation falling on the country. Speeches were interdicted by messages from the king, until at last, in response to a speech of the octogenarian Sir Edward Coke, that "the author of all these miseries was the Duke of Buckingham," strange shouts arose on every side, and a loud cry was heard of "The Duke, the Duke! 'tis he, 'tis he!" In the midst of all, while Eliot was engaged in unwebbing the abominations and the intricacies of the Court, death served his adversaries a good turn. A heavy calamity fell upon Eliot. We read on Friday, June 20th, in the Commons' Journal, a notice, " Sir John Eliot, in respect of the death of his wife, has leave to go down into the country;" and the impeachment of the great national foe was set aside by another unexpected circumstance, too, on the 23rd of August, this 1628. A man went into "the church which stood by the conduit in Fleet Street," and left his name to be prayed for on the Sunday following, as a man disordered in his mind; then he went to a cutler's shop on Tower Hill, and bought a tenpenny dagger-knife, and upon a paper which he pinned to the lining of his hat he wrote the name "John Felton," afterwards the assassin of Buckingham, and these words:—

"That man is cowardly, base, and deserveth not the name of a gentleman or soldier, that is not willinge to sacrifice his life for the honor of his God, his kinge, and his countrie. Lett noe man commend me for doinge of it, but rather discommend themselves as the cause of it, for if God had not taken away our hearts for our sinnes, he would not have gone so longe unpunished."

We shall soon be with Eliot in his last scenes. He arrived in London for the last time on the 30th of December, 1628. Things were getting worse and worse. We come at last to the scene of the 29th of March, 1629; then Eliot made his last speech. Although the Speaker had the king's command for adjournment, Eliot continued to speak, Denzil, Holles, and Valentine meantime holding the Speaker in his chair. Amidst gathering excitement, he presented the Declaration drawn up by the Committee of Trade; the Speaker refused to receive it, the clerk refused to read it. Against the call of the most distinguished members, the Speaker still refused. Still the Declaration was eventually read and put to the vote, and the House was in an uproar.

In the history of the House of Commons, the scene which was now acting stands upon the pages of our great national story as not only one of the most exciting and memorable, but one of the most important. Eliot stands out as the chief actor in that great scene. A messenger from the king came down to the House, but sought in vain to obtain an entrance; amidst the din Eliot's voice rose clear, firm, and strong; he carried the Declaration by a vast majority; amidst the repeated knockings of the Black Rod seeking admittance at the door, and with prophetic pathos, he said, "As for myself, I further protest, as I am a gentleman, if my fortune be ever again to meet in this honourable assembly, where I now leave I will begin again anew." A shout of assent carried the Declaration against all illegal taxation, and against all innovations in the religion of the State. Then the doors were opened, and the members rushed out, carrying away with them the king's officers who were standing and waiting for admission. It was the last time Eliot appeared in Parliament. The next day he was a close prisoner in the Tower, and from the grip of Charles he never escaped again alive. There was not another Parliament for eleven years.



CROMWELL AT DUNBAR.

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Eliot was fined £2,000; he very likely increased the spite of the king by taking precautions against his pouncing upon this valuable little peculation; he said he had two cloaks, a few books, a few pair of boots, and that was all his personal substance, and if they could turn this into £2,000, much good might it do them. So the sheriffs appointed to seize upon his possessions in Cornwall, for the king, were obliged to return a *nihil.* He secured his property in trust for his sons, and those he committed to the care of John Hampden; and he directed his upholsterer to do what could be done to make his cell comfortable in the Tower, there he took up his residence, there he spent the remainder of his days, there he wrote the "Monarchy of Man," which Mr. John Forster has now made tolerably familiar to English readers, and which shows the master of the eloquent tongue to have been equally master of the eloquent pen and eloquent prose, and whose stateliness places its writer on the same level with the authors of "Areopagitica," and the first books of the "Ecclesiastical Polity." Our knowledge of Sir John Eliot has largely in-increased since Disraeli the elder wrote his Commentaries; in fact, at that time, the story of Eliot was almost a blank in our history. Disraeli said, "The harshness of Charles towards Eliot, to me indicates a cause of offence either of a deeper dye or of a more personal nature than perhaps we have yet discovered." In fact, it was Disraeli's desire to show that the great affairs in which Eliot took part moved upon the wheels of private grudges, and such private grudges are manifest enough in the conduct of Charles, but not in that of Eliot; the most careful investigation only shows how ardently patriotic and pure were the motives of this great herald of the Revolution.

Through all the shuffling of judges, and the dodging of courtiers, and their "Bottomless Bagges," we cannot follow the imprisoned patriot's history. When a mean spirit gets a majestic one into its power, we know what follows. A cat would care for a nightingale, a tiger for an antelope, as little as Charles Stuart cared for John Eliot, and their relations were very similar. The pretexts for his detention were various and singular. Then came hours of sickness—the frame was broken down with cold and watching, but the spirit was unbroken still. All his efforts to obtain release were in vain, and the Tower finally closed upon him. Eliot was dying of consumption, Charles was repeatedly petitioned, but petitioned in vain, to remit some portion of the cheerless discomfort of his illegal imprisonment. He died the 27th of November, 1632. The king was petitioned by Eliot's son that he would permit the body of his father to be carried to the ancestral vaults in Cornwall; the king coldly replied, "Let Sir John Eliot's body be buried in the church of the parish where he died." His dust lies in the chapel of the Tower. How welcome the tidings were at Whitehall that the great juror on the crimes of tyrants, the vindicator of the freedom of the people, had gone away, we can well believe; he would torment tyrants and traitors and parasites and Stuarts no more. He died in his forty-third year. And yet there are those even still living, who maintain that the Revolution was unnecessary, and call Charles an injured and martyred king. Eliot was the great precursor who showed the necessity for Cromwell; was it not time that Cromwell should come?

IV

CROMWELL, "THE LORD OF THE FENS," AND FIRST APPEARANCE IN PARLIAMENT.

CHAPTER IV.

CROMWELL, "THE LORD OF THE FENS," AND FIRST APPEARANCE IN PARLIAMENT.

FROM our discursive view of the times and character of James and the earlier and obscure years of the life of Cromwell, we now enter upon his more public career. The first occasion of his appearance in any service connected with the public, was upon the attempt made by the needy Charles to wrest, for the purposes of his exchequer, from the Earl of Bedford and the people, the fens which had been drained. The case has been variously stated. The brief history is somewhat as follows:—

In those days some millions of acres of the finest plains in the counties of Cambridge, Huntingdon, Northampton, and Lincoln, lay undrained. Several years before the period to which we now refer, the Earl of Oxford and other noblemen of that day had proposed to drain large portions of them, and in fact had done so. The Bedford Level, containing nearly 400,000 acres, had been completed, when it was found necessary to call in other aid; and a proposition was made to the Crown, offering a fair proportion of the land for its assistance and authority in the completion of the whole.

Until now all had gone on well; but hungry Charles saw here an opportunity of gratifying his cupidity. A number of commissioners came from the king to Huntingdon; they, instructed by the king's own letter, proceeded to lay claim under various pretexts, such as corrupt and servile ministers know how to use, to 95,000 acres of land already drained. Cromwell stepped upon the stage of action, and the draining of the fens was entirely stopped. Many writers affect to put a bad construction upon this first public act of Cromwell's; while, to any but horny eyes, the reason of the whole business is most obvious.

"The Protector's enemies would persuade us, that his opposition to Charles's interference arose out of the popular objection, supported by him, to the project itself; and, that the end he proposed to himself, and obtained, was its hindrance; forgetting, that if his, or the general wish, had been to impede the work, the time that would have been chosen for the attempt would have been at the revival of the idea, some seven or eight years previously, and not that, when so large a portion of it was accomplished in the completion (nearly) of the real Bedford Level. But the obvious utility of the undertaking would alone render the idea of extended opposition to it, grounded on its own merits, unlikely; and particularly as to Cromwell, from his known approbation and encouragement afterwards afforded to all such public-spirited schemes, and the thanks he actually received from William, the next Earl of Bedford, for his promotion of this identical one. It is proper to observe, that though the above-given account of this whole transaction is from Nalson Cole, who as "Register to the Corporation of Bedford Level," was doubtless generally well informed, yet that it differs from that writer in stating the drainage of the Level to have been *nearly*, and not fully, completed at the time of the king's interposition. That it was not then fully completed appears from an Act, *much forwarded by Cromwell*, in 1649, which runs: "And whereas Francis, late Earl of Bedford, did undertake the said work, and had ninety-five thousand acres, parcel of the said great level, decreed and set forth, in the thirteenth of the late King Charles, in recompense thereof; and he and his participators, and their heirs and assigns had made a good progress therein."[1]

Even Mr. Forster puts a forced construction upon Cromwell's opposition to the king; for he roused up the country, and the draining now became impossible. His name was sounded to and fro as a second Hereward. He was long after, and is to this day, called "the Lord of the Fens." Why was this? There could be nothing in the mere fact of opposing the making the watery wastes habitable calculated to arouse so stormy an opposition. The thing was most desirable; but, to drain them so—to give additional power to the bad Crown—nay, to consent to the dishonest forfeiture of the lands of the men who laboured first at this desirable scheme! Here was the cause!—the claim of the king is unjust! It is not wise nor right that the king should have power here. Resist him and his commissioners. Cromwell did; as Hampden said, "He set well at the mark," defeated monarch and commissioners; and, after acquiring no small degree of notice and fame, he retired again into obscurity and silence.

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[1] Thomas Cromwell's "Life of Cromwell," pp. 70, 71.

Not long! His days of silence and quiet were now well-nigh over. Charles was compelled to "summon a Parliament," he wanted money; he only wanted a Parliament to help him to get it;—it was long since a Parliament had met. Parliament, when it met, determined that there were other things to which to attend besides granting the king money; that ominous short Parliament was a memorable one, and contained in it many memorable men, Knolles, Hampden, Eliot, Selden, and Cromwell as member for Huntingdon. This appearance of our hero was but for a very brief period, but it would introduce him to the most noticeable men of the popular interest. Forster has drawn a portrait in which there is great mingled power, freedom, and truth; it is an imaginary sketch of Oliver's first appearance in Parliament, in company with his cousin, John Hampden.

"Let us suppose," says he, "that he and Hampden entered the House together at the momentous opening of that famous Parliament,—two men already linked together by the bonds of counsel and friendship, yet more than by those of family, but presenting how strange a contrast to each other in all things save the greatness of their genius. The one of exquisite mild deportment, of ever civil and affable manners, with a countenance that at once expressed the dignity of his intellect, and the sweetness of his nature; and even in his dress, arranged with scrupulous nicety and care, announcing the refinement of his mind. The other, a figure of no mean mark, but oh, how unlike that! His gait clownish, his dress ill-made and slovenly, his manners coarse and abrupt, and face such as men look on with a vague feeling of admiration and dislike! The features cut, as it were, out of a piece of gnarled and knotty oak; the nose large and red; the cheeks coarse, warted, wrinkled, and sallow; the eyebrows huge and shaggy, but, glistening from beneath them, eyes full of depth and meaning, and, when turned to the gaze, pierced through and through the gazer; above these, again, a noble forehead, whence, on either side, an open flow of hair 'round from his parted forelock manly hangs,' clustering; and over all, and pervading all, that undefinable aspect of greatness, alluded to by the poet Dryden when he spoke of the face of Cromwell as one that

. . . 'did imprint an awe,
And naturally all souls to his did bow,
As wands of divination downward draw,
And point to beds where sovereign gold doth grow.'

Imagine, then, these two extraordinary men, now for the first time together passing along the crowded lobbies of that most famous assembly,—Hampden greeting his friends as he passes, stopping now and then, perhaps, to introduce his country kinsmen to the few whose curiosity had mastered the first emotion inspired by the singular stranger, but pushing directly forward towards a knot of active and eager faces that are clustered round a little spot near the bar of the House, on the right of the Speaker's chair, in the midst of which stand Sir John Eliot, Sir Robert Philips, and Pym. The crowd made way for Hampden—the central figures of that group receive him amongst them with deference and gladness—he introduces his cousin Cromwell—and, among the great spirits whom that little spot contains, the clownish figure, the awkward gait, the slovenly dress, pass utterly unheeded; for in his first few words they have discovered the fervour, and perhaps suspected the greatness, of this accession to their cause."

The brief interruption to Cromwell's silent life, his return for the borough of Huntingdon, was, as we have seen and said, the only one, until he took his seat in the fourth Parliament of Charles I. for Cambridge. His election was most obstinately contested, and he was returned at last by the majority of a single vote; his antagonist was Cleaveland, the poet. "That vote," exclaimed Cleaveland, "hath ruined both Church and kingdom."

One is inclined to inquire, what then had been the consequence had Cromwell not been returned; yet, perhaps, the consequence had not been materially different, for the Parliamentary duties appear to have sat very lightly upon him. He spoke but seldom, and briefly; it was without, in the world, amongst the people in decided action, that he appeared greatest. The particulars of him at this time are very full. A Royalist contemporary, Sir Philip Warwick, writes thus: "The first time I ever took notice of him, was in the beginning of the Parliament held in November, 1640, when I vainly thought myself a courtly young gentleman (for we courtiers valued ourselves much upon our good clothes). I came into the House one morning, well clad, and perceived a gentleman speaking whom I knew not, very ordinarily apparelled; for it was a plain cloth suit, which seemed to have been made by an ill country tailor; his linen was plain, and not very clean; and I remember a speck or two of blood upon his little band, which was not much larger than his collar; his hat was without a hat-band. His stature was of a good size; sword stuck close to his side; his countenance swollen and reddish; his voice sharp and untuneable; and *his eloquence full of fervour*—for the subject matter would not bear much of reason, it being in behalf of a servant of Mr. Prynne's, who had dispersed libels against the Queen for her dancing, and such like innocent and courtly sports; and he aggravated the imprisonment of this man by the council table to that height, that one would have believed the very Government itself had been in great danger by it. I sincerely profess it lessened my reverence unto that great council, *for he was very much hearkened unto.* And yet I lived to see this very gentleman, whom, out of no ill will to him, I thus describe, by multiplied good success, and by real but usurped power (having had a better tailor, and more converse among good company) in my own eye, when for six weeks together I was a prisoner in his sergeant's hands, and daily waited at Whitehall, appear of a great and majestic deportment and comely presence."[1]

This description of Cromwell's negligence in the article of dress is corroborated by the story we have already told that Lord Digby, one day going down the stairs of the Parliament House with Hampden, and inquiring of the latter, not knowing Oliver personally, who "that sloven" was—"That *sloven*," replied Hampden, "whom you see before you, that *sloven*, I say, if we should ever come to a breach with the king, which God forbid!—in such a case, I say, that *sloven* will be the greatest man in England."

And to quote once more: a passage from one of Dr. South's sermons will give us a hint of the general estimation of the appearance of the future Protector; that same South, by the bye, who wrote a fine Latin eulogy upon the "bankrupt, beggarly fellow" at the time Cromwell was Chancellor of Oxford and Magistrate of Great Britain. "Who," said that conscientious divine, "who that had beheld such a *bankrupt beggarly fellow* as Cromwell, first entering the Parliament House, with a *threadbare torn coat and a greasy hat* (and perhaps neither of them paid for), could have suspected that in the course of so few years he should by the murder of one king and the banishment of another, ascend the throne, be invested with royal robes, and want nothing of the state of a king but the changing of his hat into a crown." "'Odds fish, Lory!' exclaimed the laughing Charles, when he heard this from the divine who had panegyrised the living Protector; 'odds fish, man! your chaplain must be a bishop. Put me in mind of him at the next vacancy.' Oh, glorious time for the Church! Oh, golden age for the Profligate and the Slave!"[1]

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[1] See "Memoirs of Sir Philip Warwick."

There, then, you see him in the House, that famous Long Parliament—the most remarkable Parliament ever summoned to sit in the history of the English nation. By this time, you may be sure, Cromwell and Hampden were the two most noted men of the popular party: the one the defeater of the king in the lordship of the fens, and the other a still more celebrated man from his supposed defeat by the king in the affair of the ship-money, an unjust subsidy levied by the king, and stoutly challenged by John Hampden on behalf of all England. There was need for action; the king had extended the forests of the country, at the same time he cut down from the forest land the trees, and thus destroyed the store of the country's shipping. By the gross illegal seizure of ship-money, he secured to himself £700,000 per annum, while our seas were left unguarded, and Turkish pirates ranged them uncontrolled. Charles was determined to govern by prerogative, and not by Parliament. He sold privileges for every unjust exaction. A patent for the manufacture of soap was sold; a very sad affliction indeed, for, in addition to the costly price from the existence of the monopoly for which £10,000 had been paid, the linen had been burnt, and the flesh as well, in the washing; so that the city of London was visited by an insurrection of women, and the Lord Mayor was reprimanded by the king because he gave them his sympathy. Every item almost was taxed. Hackney coaches were prohibited because sedan chairs appeared for the first time,—Sir Sanders Duncombe having purchased from the king the right to carry people up and down in them. We cannot catalogue all the profitable items of little tyranny. It was an exasperating time.

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[1] Forster.

And in that Long Parliament, what things were to pass before Cromwell's eye before the last decisive steps were taken! How must even his energetic mind have received new and invigorating impulses from finding himself surrounded by so many brave and daring companions. Scarcely, indeed, had the Parliament met, before it proceeded to impeach Strafford, that mighty master-stroke, by which the powerful oppressor was in a moment cast down,—a prisoner in the hands of the people whose liberties he had so repeatedly outraged, and so daringly and contemptuously scoffed at and insulted—a prisoner, until liberated only by the hands of the executioner. Daring indeed were the deeds of this Parliament: "A Bill was proposed," says Guizot, in his summary "History of the English Revolution," "January 19th 1641, which prescribed the calling a Parliament 'every three years, at most.' If the king did not convoke one, twelve peers, assembled in Westminster, might summon one without his co-operation; in default of this, the sheriffs and municipal officers were to proceed with the elections. If the sheriffs neglected to see to it, the citizens had a right to assemble and elect representatives. No Parliament could be dissolved or adjourned without the consent of the two Houses, till fifty days after its meeting; and to the Houses alone belonged the choice of their respective Speakers. At the first news of this Bill, the king quitted the silence in which he had shut himself up, and assembling both Houses at Whitehall, January 23rd, said: 'I like to have frequent Parliaments, as the best means to preserve that right understanding between me and my subjects which I so earnestly desire. But to give power to sheriffs and constables, and I know not whom, to do my office, that I cannot yield to.' The House only saw in these words a new motive to press forward the adoption of the Bill. None dared counsel the king to refuse it; he yielded, but in doing so, thought it due to his dignity to show the extent of his displeasure. He said, 'I do not know for what you can ask, that I can hereafter make any question to yield unto you; so far, truly, I have had no encouragement to oblige you, for you have gone on in that which concerns yourselves, and not those things which merely concern the strength of this kingdom. You have taken the government almost to pieces, and I may say, it is almost off its hinges. A skilful watchmaker, to make clean his watch will take it asunder, and when it is put together again it will go all the better, so that he leaves not out one pin of it. Now, as I have done my part, you know what to do on yours.'—Feb. 16th, 1641.

"The Houses passed a vote of thanks to the king, and forthwith proceeded in the work of reform, demanding, in successive motions, the abolition of the Star Camber, of the North Court, of the Ecclesiastic Court of High Commission, and of all extraordinary tribunals."

Charles found that the dismissal of his previous Parliament was one of the most ill-judged actions of his life. In this Long Parliament the same men were brought together, all of them who possessed any influence or power; but whereas they came first prepared to conciliate and deal with the king generously and loyally, they came now prepared to trim down to the utmost all his prerogatives, and to extend and assert to the utmost the power of the people. It was the great battle-time of liberty and absolutism —the trial of monarchy and democracy. The king, beyond all question, pushed and urged his power to extremes, and so hurried the popular party on far beyond their original intention and design. We have the famous "Remonstrance of the state of the kingdom," which, after a debate, stormy beyond all precedent, was carried through the House by the small and little satisfactory majority of *nine;* only this remonstrance was a direct elevation of the democratic over the aristocratic interests of the country. It was ordered to be printed and published, with the concurrence of the upper House, and was, in fact, an appeal to the people against the king. But this, which so many have deprecated as wickedly unloyal and traitorous, was called for by the conduct of the king, who, during his absence in Scotland, in the time of its preparation, was known to be attempting to curb the power of the Parliament by the raising of a northern army.

The *Grand Remonstrance* has been but little understood. Yet what more natural, what more necessary, than the Remonstrance? It was the solemn call of the powerful spirits of the legislature to the king and to the nation to consider. The principles of the Remonstrance are now well known. It is a solemn catalogue of the evils and the tyranny beneath which the people groaned. Speaking of the taxes, Sir John Culpepper, a Royalist, says, "The taxes, like the frogs of Egypt, have gotten possession of our dwellings, and we have scarcely a room free from them. They sip in our cup, they dip in our dish, they sit by our fire; we find them in the dye vat, washing bowl, and powdering box; they share with the butler in the pantry, they have marked us from head to foot, they will not bate us a pin." The sovereign was bent on every illegal means of raising money. Yet the Long Parliament, after a very imperious speech from the king, voted him five subsidies, £350,000. It was an enormous sum for those days. Surely such men deserved some confidence. But the king would not halt on his grasping and suicidal way.

At this juncture the bishops precipitated matters by their unwise "Protestation," addressed, by twelve of their number, to the Upper House, a protestation which the peers themselves, in a conference they held upon the matter, declared to contain "matters of dangerous consequence, extending to the deep entrenching upon the fundamental privileges and being of parliaments." As to the bishops themselves, the Commons accused them of high treason, and on the next day ten of them were sent to the Tower, the two others, in regard to their great age, being committed to the custody of the Black Rod.

Rapidly now came on the tug of war. The king issued a declaration in reply to the Remonstrance. He sent the Attorney-General to the House of Lords to impeach one of the popular members, Lord

Kimbolton, together with Hampden, Pym, and three other members of the Lower House; and, as if determined that no act of his should be wanting to justify the opposition of his enemies, he went next day to the House of Commons, attended by desperadoes—"soldiers of fortune"—armed with partizan, pistol, and sword, to seize the members denounced. This scene has been so often described, that it were quite a work of supererogation to describe it again here. Let all be summed up in a word. Reconciliation between the king and the Parliament was now impossible. The privileges of the House had been violated in a manner in which no monarch had dared to violate them before. And *such* a Parliament!—men of the most distinguished courage and intelligence in the kingdom. The members he sought had escaped through the window. They fled in haste to the city. Thither the most distinguished members of the House followed them. They were protected by the Common Council from the king, who himself followed them to the city, demanding their bodies; but in vain. He was his own officer, both of military and police; but as he went along, the growls of "Privilege, privilege—privilege of Parliament," greeted him everywhere. One of the crowd, bolder than the rest, approached his carriage, shouting, "To your tents, O Israel!" The king had given the last drop to fill up the measure of contempt with which he was regarded. He had struggled with his Parliament, and he was unsuccessful. Here was a hint for such men to act upon; and petitions from all parts of the land poured in, from vast bodies of the people, declaring their intention to stand by the Parliament: from counties, cities, towns, parishes, trades; the *porters* petitioned; the *watermen* (*water-rats*, Charles called them) petitioned. And we may gather the state of domestic confusion from the fact that the women petitioned. The mind of the country was roused against the monarch. Meantime, the exiled members were brought back in triumph to the House, amidst the pealing of martial music, flags waving from the mast-heads of all the vessels on the river, the masts covered with shouting sailors, and the long procession of city barges—for at that day most great triumphal processions took place on the Thames; and while the five members stepped into the House, the House rising to receive them, Charles fled to Hampton Court, nor did he see his palace at Whitehall again until he beheld it as a prisoner, and stepped from its banqueting-house to a scaffold.

We have no idea, in these pages, of presenting to the reader a history of the times; but in this running stream of incident he will be able to gather the description of the platform preparing for the deeds of Cromwell. Of course the House was emboldened by its triumph. It no doubt judged that Charles, by his ignorance and his injudiciousness, had made himself unfit to guide the affairs of the nation, and the demands of the House were therefore now proportioned to their triumphs. They demanded the keeping of the Tower and all the principal fortresses of the kingdom. They demanded the choosing and control of the militia, the army and navy then being so called. And upon the king's refusal, the House conferred upon themselves the powers they had desired. He issued a proclamation against them, which was in turn declared to be void in law. The king now left Hampton Court, proceeding towards York. He appeared before Hull, hoping by surprise to obtain possession of a large quantity of military stores deposited there. Thus the king begun the work of insurrection. The Parliament, in anticipation of the king's design, directed the several counties to array, train, and muster the people, as in cases of domestic insurrection. And the king retorted upon the Parliament by issuing a proclamation for suppressing the rebellion; and shortly after, coming to Nottingham, he there erected his standard, August 25th, 1642, in the midst of a loud storm, which, as none failed to notice, blew it down the same evening. Thus he began the Civil War. Cromwell, at this time, was forty-three years of age.

It is not clear that even yet Charles suspected the dangers his rashness so persistently invoked. The reader has, perhaps, heard how, once upon a time, a London exquisite descended into a coal mine on a voyage of exploration and discovery; he saw everything—Davy lamps, blind horses, trucks of coal rolling along subterranean tramways. Seated on a cask to rest himself, he proceeded to question the swarthy miner, who was his conductor, concerning many things, and especially about the operation of blasting. "And whereabouts, my man," condescendingly said he, "whereabouts do you keep your powder?' "Please, sir," replied the swart one, "you're a-sittin' on it!" Charles was in a world to him all dark and subterranean, and sitting on a powder-mine, of the existence of which he had no knowledge, although it was beneath his throne.

EPISODE.

V.

CROMWELL'S CONTEMPORARIES: JOHN PYM.

CHAPTER V.

CROMWELL'S CONTEMPORARIES: JOHN PYM.

AS in a great picture, while some central character stands in the foreground, and is evidently understood to be the towering and commanding spirit around whom ultimately all the inferior characters revolve, yet nearer or more remote, more conspicuous or more dimly seen, a number of persons take their place on the canvas; so in the life of Cromwell there were precursors, heralds, men with whom he laboured, men who passed away, and left him, lonely, to meditate upon what they had done, and to take his own course as to what he must do. Lord Beaconsfield once said of Sir Robert Peel, that he was the greatest member of Parliament that ever lived. It was an amazing estimate, and in the memory of such men as Walpole, and the elder and the younger Pitt, not to mention more recent names, it must be regarded as an astonishing exaggeration; but there was a man during the vexed years of which we are writing of whom this might most truly be said. John Pym is, probably, the name of the greatest member of Parliament that ever lived; "King Pym" they called him in his own time, and indeed he looks, among the circumstances of his age, like the monarch of the scene. Like all of those men whom Charles managed to make his enemies, Pym was a gentleman, born of a good old family in Somersetshire, in the year 1584; he studied at Oxford in Pembroke College, but like Hampden and Vane and Cromwell, he left his University without taking his degree. Milton was almost the only exception, he took his B.A. and his M.A. Pym was very early distinguished for his eloquence and knowledge of common law; he soon took his seat in Parliament, serving in those held during the close of the reign of James I., and all those held in the reign of Charles I. It is true, that which has been so often said, that no business was too large, and none too small, for him. As one after another the men appear before our eyes with whom Charles I. arrayed himself in conflict, one cannot but feel pity for the king: in every way he seems so small and they appear so great. Of them all, to some Pym has seemed the greatest; and after his life of conflict, "he was buried," says Lord Bulwer Lytton, "at Westminster, amongst the monuments of kings feebler and less despotic than himself." It is said that he, too, in the earlier period of his career, was one of those who despaired of his country, and with Cromwell, Hampden, and others, desired to embark for America; the tradition is, as our readers doubtless know, that the ships in which they were about to sail were detained by order of Council. However this might be, it was Pym who at last, in the Long Parliament, attempted the great work of reformation; and Lord Clarendon recites a conversation he had with Pym in Westminster Hall, apparently in the early days of the Long Parliament, in which Pym said, "They must now be of another temper than they were the last Parliament; that they must 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; that they now had an opportunity to make their country happy by removing all grievances, and pulling up the causes of them by the roots, if all men would do their duties."

This Parliament met; it was long, many years, since Parliament had assembled last. What gaps Pym would notice in the lines of his early friends who had sat there when the House then assembled. The venerable Coke was dead; Sir John Eliot had died in prison, a martyr to the cause of which they had both been champions; Sir Thomas Wentworth, who had started in life with the same party, had fallen away—he was an apostate, he was now the Earl of Strafford, regarded as a fallen spirit, and as the deadliest, the most powerful and dangerous enemy of those who had been the friends of his youth. All these circumstances would add, if anything were needed to add, intensity and vehemence to his convictions and his determinations. It was Pym who commenced in this Parliament, and rapidly pushed on, the discussion of the grievances which oppressed the country; and on the 7th of November, the first day on which the House attended to business, it was Pym who made a long and elaborate speech, classing the grievances under privilege of Parliament, Religion, and Liberty of the Subject. On the 11th he made a sudden motion to the House with reference to that which had come to his knowledge of the imperious actions of Strafford both in England and in Ireland; and while at this very moment a message came from the Lords concerning a treaty with the Scots, and desiring a meeting of a Committee of both Houses that afternoon, it was at the instance of Pym a message was returned to the Lords that the House had taken into consideration their message, but that they were in agitation upon weighty and important business, that they could not give them the meeting they desired on that afternoon, but they would shortly send an answer by messengers of their own. And messengers they shortly sent, Pym himself being the chief, who was chosen to carry up on that very day the impeachment of Strafford for high treason. Dr. Southey calls the impeachment and the death of Strafford one of the deadly sins of the Long Parliament. The question may be asked, then, Why was Strafford impeached? Why did he suffer death? In one word, because he advised the king to resist his subjects, and to be so independent of and paramount over law, as to call in the aid of Irish forces, or any forces, to subdue his country: a dreadful counsel which, when we remember, we cannot but marvel at the apologists for its baseness. He, without doubt, advised the king that he was now absolved from all rule of Government, and entitled to supply himself out of the estates of his subjects without their consent. Did space permit, we ought to devote a more lengthy episode to the life and career of Strafford; he was a great man, but he was no match for Pym. As to the wisdom of his death, we shall forbear to express an opinion; he might have been banished, but everywhere, whilst he lived, he must have been dangerous.[1] Upon all this we need only dwell for the purpose of pointing out how Pym was the animating spirit in those transactions which brought about such tremendous results. It was after this that the king, no doubt attempting the dangerous work of reprisals and revenge, attempted to attach Pym and the other members for high treason. The attempt failed most miserably; but it should be remembered that when Pym commenced even his more aggressive career he was a moderate man. The king urged these men along, by his unwisdom and imprudence, on the course they were compelled to take; and thus Pym was rapidly carried along in a course of action far outstripping the theoretical opinions he professed to hold. He insisted originally on the sanctity of the Constitution, and he laboured to maintain it; but, when circumstances are thrown into vehement agitation and strife, it becomes impossible to regulate action by that calm and quiet settlement of affairs dictated either in the stillness of the study, or when events flow along imperturbed by the excitements and passions of great party strife.

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[1] Those who would prosecute these studies further, should read Dr. John Stoughton's volumes of the "History of the Church under the Civil Wars." They are delightful reading, but he sums up against the policy of Strafford's death.

VI.

THE TRAINING OF THE IRONSIDES.

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BUT before this time Cromwell had foreseen the destinies of the contest, and from among the freeholders and their sons in his own neighbourhood he formed his immortal troop of Ironsides, those men who in many a well-fought field turned the tide of conflict, men who "jeopardized their lives on the high places of the field." These men were peculiarly moulded; their training was even more religious than military; they were men of position and character. Oliver preached to them, prayed with them, directed their vision to all the desperate and difficult embroilments of the times. These men were Puritans all; Independents; men who, however painful it may be to our more Christian notions, used their Bible as a matchlock, and relieved their guard by revolving texts of Holy Writ, and refreshed their courage by draughts from God's Book.

Oliver said, at a later time, he saw that all the cavaliers were a dissipated, godless race of men; there could be no hope for success but in religious and godly men. He allied the cause of Puritanism to such an enthusiasm, such a blaze of martial glory, that indeed they could be no other than irresistible. They grasped the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God; they held communion with the skies, these men. What! shall we compare Tancreds, and Ivanhoes, and Red Cross Knights with these realities, this band of Puritan Havelocks? Not soldiers of a tournament were they; in very deed fighting against "principalities, and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places;" theirs was a piety exasperated to enthusiasm, and blazing at last into warlike vehemence! Then the Civil War was up in earnest, and Oliver soon found work. Since the last civil wars, the battles of the Roses, several generations had passed away, and England had grown in wealth and power; but widely different were the interests represented by the two contests to the mind: this was the struggle, indeed, with the last faint life of feudalism. In some sort the contest of the city and the castle was represented even by the Wars of the Roses; but much more here, and hence over the whole land soon passed the echoes of strife. Old villages that had slept quietly for centuries beneath the shadow of the church spire or tower; old halls, famous for the good cheer and merry songs of roistering Christmas time; fields, spreading wide with the rich herbage, and green meadow-land,—all these were dyed with blood. The river that had for ages crept lazily along through the woodland became choked with the bodies of the dead and crimsoned with the blood of the slain. Winding round many a graceful bend of the road, where nature had touched the scene with tenderness, the Roundhead, clad in iron, saw the waving plume of Cavalier. Soon the two straggling parties were locked in deadly conflict, and the spot became memorable for ages for the blood shed in a skirmish which could not be dignified by the name of a battle. Throughout the land family ties were severed; everywhere "a man's foes were of his own household." "Old armour came down from a thousand old walls, and clanked upon the anvil of every village smithy;" "boot and saddle!" was the order of the day and night; every buff coat, and every piece of steel that could turn, or deal a blow, became of value. Even the long-bow, the brown bill, and cross-bow, resumed their almost forgotten use; rude spears, and common staves, and Danish clubs assumed the rank of weapons. The trumpets of the Cavaliers rang out fearlessly through the half of England, and thrilled the spirits of the people with the cries of *loyalty;* responded to by the shrill blast of the Roundhead, and the cry of *liberty.* "Those," says Carlyle, "were the most confused months England ever saw;" in every shire, in every parish, in court-houses, alehouses, churches, and markets, wheresoever men were gathered together. England was, with sorrowful confusion in every fibre, tearing itself into hostile halves, to carry on the voting by pike and bullet henceforth. The spirit of war stalked forth; many times we find the record of men who slew an enemy, and found a parent in the corpse they were about to spoil. The face of nature became changed, and peaceful homesteads and quiet villages assumed a rough, hostile look; and the old familiar scene rang with the fatal, fascinating bugle-notes of war. Every house of strength became a fortress, and every household a garrison.

Romance and poetry have woven gay garlands and sung highly wrought and glowing melodies around the achievements of knighthood and chivalry; but romance and poetry shrink back startled and appalled before the deeds of the mighty Puritan heroes, the Ironsides of Cromwell, a race of Artegals, or Men in Iron. The carnal mind of the succeeding century has succeeded in defacing the features and soiling the fair fame of the knighthood of Puritanism; but do you not think that the soldiers of the Cross may deserve words as eloquent, and song as soul-kindling, as those which echoed around the rabble rout of the strange Red Cross knights of Norman feudalism?

While all these events were passing, we can very well believe that the clear eye of Cromwell saw where it must all shortly terminate; that, in fact, there was nothing for it but a battle-field; and he was amongst the most prompt and decisive of all the actors. His genius was too bold, too clear-sighted, to shine in the mazes of debate and the labyrinths of legal technicality. The battles against the king, with lawyers and verbal hair-splitters, were best fought by Pym and Hampden; but, outside in the affairs of the camp, and in that legislation that depends on a swift, clear eye and a strong, rapid arm—Cromwell was the man! He distributed arms in the town of Cambridge, which he represented. He raised a troop of horse out of that county and Huntingdonshire; and, as soon as he received his commission as captain, he began his career of conquest. It is believed that here he struck the first severe blows at the Royal party; for he seized the magazine of Cambridge for the use of the Parliament; and by stopping a quantity of plate on its way from the University to the king at York, he cut off the expected supplies. He utterly prevented the raising of a force for the king in the eastern counties; and arrested the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire at the very moment the latter was about to publish the proclamation of the king, declaring "the Parliament commanders all traitors!" The discipline of his troops, their bravery, and their sobriety, have been the admiration of men ever since.

It was about this time that the appellations of "Cavalier" and "Roundhead" came into general use to denote the opposite parties. The former, it is well known, designated the king's friends; and of the origin of the latter, Mrs. Hutchinson gives the following account:—

"When Puritanism grew into a faction, the zealots distinguished themselves, both men and women, by several affections of habit, looks, and words, which, had it been a real declension of vanity, and embracing of sobriety in all those things, had been most commendable in them. . . .

"Among other affected habits, few of the Puritans, what degree soever they were of, wore their hair long enough to cover their ears; and the ministers and many others cut it close round their heads, with so many little peaks, as was something ridiculous to behold. From this custom of wearing their hair, that name of 'Roundhead' became the scornful term given to the whole Parliament party; whose army indeed marched out so, but as if they had been sent out only till their hair was grown. Two or three years afterwards, however," she continues (the custom, it may be presumed, having declined), "any stranger that had seen them would have inquired the reason of that name."

These explanations have been introduced here because it has been usual to give the epithet "Roundhead" to Cromwell's soldiers on account of the shape of the helmet. Nothing can be more erroneous. The more usual term given to these soldiers immediately beneath Cromwell's own command, was "Ironsides." It is very important to notice the training of these men, for they again and again turned the tide of battle. They were not ordinary men; they were mostly freeholders, or freeholders' sons,—men who thought as Cromwell thought, and over whom he had acquired an influence, from their residing in his neighbourhood. To all of them the Civil War was no light game; it was a great reality;

it was a battle, not for carnal so much as spiritual things, and they went forth and fought therefor.

Hence, "I was," says Cromwell, "a person that, from my first employment, was suddenly preferred and lifted up from lesser trusts to greater, from my first being a captain of a troop of horse; and I did labour (as well as I could) to discharge my trust, and God helped me as it pleased Him, and I did truly and plainly, and then in a way of foolish simplicity (as it was judged by very great and wise men, and good men, too), desire to make my instruments to help me in this work; and I will deal plainly with you. I had a very worthy friend then, and he was a very noble person, and I know his memory is very grateful to all, Mr. John Hampden. At my first going out into this engagement I saw their men were beaten at every hand; I did indeed, and desired him that he would make some additions to my Lord Essex's army of some new regiments, and I told him I would be serviceable to him in bringing such men in as I thought had a spirit that would do something in the work. This is very true that I tell you, God knows I lie not; 'Your troops,' said I, 'are most of them old decayed serving-men and tapsters, and such kind of fellows; and,' said I, 'their troops are gentlemen's sons, younger sons, and persons of quality; do you think that the spirits of such base and mean fellows will be ever able to encounter gentlemen, that have honour and courage and resolution in them?' Truly, I presented him in this manner conscientiously, and truly did I tell him, 'You must get men of spirit. And take it not ill what I say (I know you will not), of a spirit that is likely to go on as far as gentlemen will go, or else I am sure you will be beaten still;' I told him so, I did truly. He was a wise and worthy person, and he did think that I talked a good notion, but an impracticable one; truly I told him I could do somewhat in it; I did so; and truly I must needs say that to you (impart it to what you please), I raised such men as had the fear of God before them, and made some conscience of what they did, and from that day forward, I must say to you, they were never beaten, and wherever they engaged against the enemy, they beat continually."[1]

How decisive a proof is this of Cromwell's genius, this enlisting the religious enthusiasm of the country on the side of the Parliament; thus fronting the idea of lofty birth with Divine ancestry,—loyalty to the king, with loyalty to God,—immense possessions, with heirship to a Divine inheritance,—and obedience to the laws and prerogative of the monarch, with obedience to those truths unengraven on the "tables of stone," but written by the Divine Spirit on "the fleshly table of the heart," in the heroism of discipline, and faith, and prayer.

"As for Noll Cromwell," said the editor of a newspaper of the day (the then celebrated Marchmont

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[1] See "Cromwell's Letters and Speeches."

Needham), with to the full as much truth as intended sarcasm, "he is gone forth in the might of his spirit, with all his train of disciples; every one of whom is as David, a man of war and a prophet; gifted men all, that resolve to do their work better than any of the sons of Levi." "At his first entrance into the wars," observes the *Reliquiæ Baxteriana*, "being but captain of horse, he had especial care to get *religious* men into his troop; these men were of greater understanding than common soldiers, and therefore were more apprehensive of the importance and consequences of the war. By this means, indeed, he sped better than he expected. Hereupon he got a commission to take some care of the associated counties; where he brought his troop into a double regiment of fourteen full troops, and all these as full of *religious* men as he could get; these, having more than ordinary wit and resolution, had more than ordinary success."

But Cromwell himself has given to us the history of these immortal troops; he tells us how he saw that the Parliamentarians must have been beaten unless a better race of men could be raised,—men who would match the high notions of chivalry and loyalty, and overreach them with a nobler and worthier feeling. Cromwell plainly saw that, even in battles, it is not brute force that masters, but invincible honour and integrity, and faith in the purity and truth of the cause.

"But, not contenting himself with the mere possession of religion in his men, 'he used them daily to look after, feed, and dress their horses; taught them to clean and keep their arms bright, and have them ready for service; to choose the best armour, and arm themselves to the best advantage.' Upon fitting occasions, and in order to inure their bodies to the service of the field, he also made them sleep together upon the bare ground; and one day, before they actually met the enemy, tried their courage by a stratagem. Leading them into a pretended ambuscade, he caused his seeming discovery of danger to be attended with all the 'noise, pomp, and circumstance' of a surrounding foe. Terrified at which, about twenty of the troop turned their backs and fled; and these he directly dismissed, desiring them, however, to leave their horses for such as would fight the Lord's battles in their stead. Thus trained, when the contest really ensued, Cromwell's horse 'excelled all their fellow-soldiers in feats of war, and obtained more victories over the enemy.' And if they excelled them in courage, so did they also in civility, order, and discipline. The Court journal, indeed, the *Mercurius Aulicus*, charged them with many cruelties and excesses, of which every circumstance proves the maliciousness and falsehood. For, while a very large number of the king's party, in sober truth, gave themselves up to every species of debauchery in their own persons, and to all manner of spoliation of the peaceable inhabitants, of whom they speedily became the terror and detestation, another contemporary print justly said of Cromwell's soldiers, 'No man swears, but he pays his twelve-pence; if he be drunk, he is set in the stocks, or worse; if one calls the other Roundhead, he is cashiered; insomuch, that the counties where they come leap for joy of them, and come in and join them. How happy were it if all the forces were thus disciplined.'"

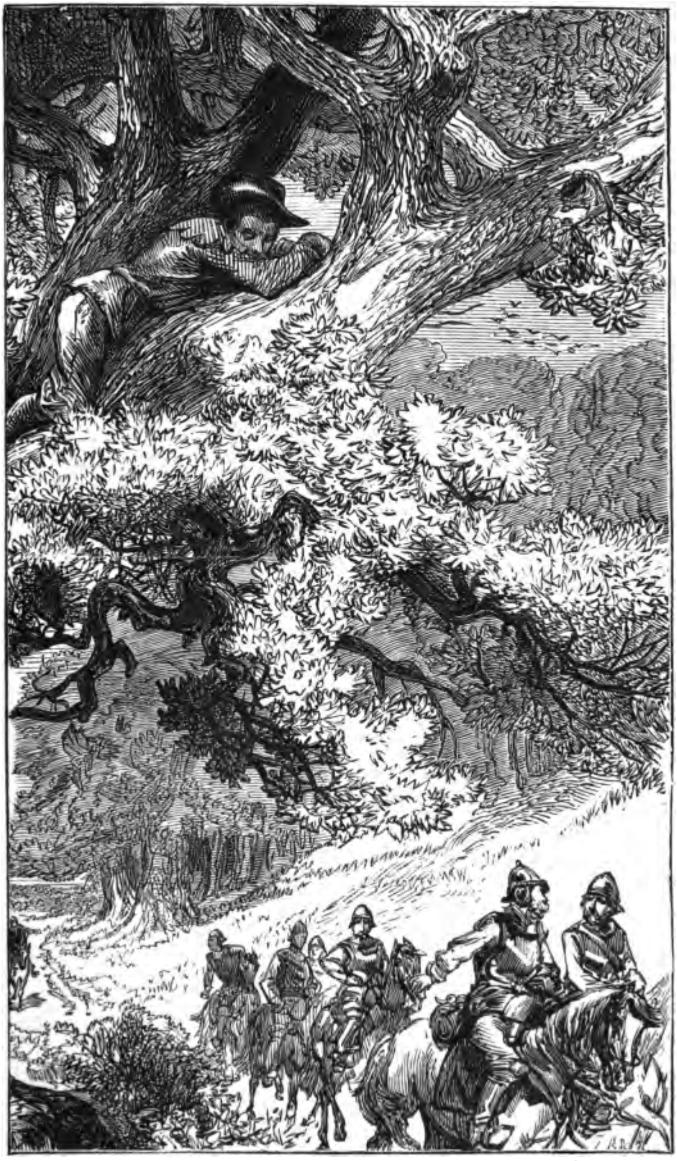
Nor will the reader fail to notice the practical eye, the fiery sincerity of this man.

"He told them," says Forster, "that he would not seek to perplex *them* (since other officers, he had heard, instructed their troops in the nice legal fictions of their civil superiors in Parliament) with such and such phrases as fighting for *king and Parliament;* it was for the Parliament alone they were now marching into military service; for himself, he declared that if he met King Charles in the body of the enemy, he would as soon discharge his pistol upon him as upon any private man; and for any soldier present, therefore, who was troubled with a conscience that might not let him do the like, he advised him to quit the service he was engaged in. A terrible shout of determined zeal announced no deserter on that score, and on marched Cromwell and his Ironsides—then the seed, and soon after the flower, of that astonishing army, which even Lord Clarendon could describe as 'one to which victory was entailed, and which, humbly speaking, could hardly fail of conquest whithersoever led—an army whose order and discipline, whose sobriety and manners, whose courage and success, made it famous and terrible all over the world.'"

Can our readers conceive these men? The writer is very desirous that they should do so; for they were the genius of the army. Let them be compared with Rupert and his soldiers. Prince Rupert, called also "Prince Robber"—called also "The Son of Plunder." We shall dwell at length upon this chief captain of Charles's army presently. These patronymics suggest very different reflections from those in which we have just indulged in reference to the Ironsides. Wherever the Cavaliers went, they were a scourge and a curse. In Gloucester, in Wilts, what histories have we of them and their depredations. They were, for the most part apparently, an undisciplined rabble, without bravery or determination, if we except their officers; and we shall see, from the course of the history, that Rupert was a madcap prince, and his imprudence the worst enemy Charles had, next to his own.

There is nothing more remarkable, in the course of this civil war, than the fact that men who had just come from the market and the plough, should meet the Cavaliers on their own ground and defeat them. The Royalists prided themselves on their military character; war was their trade and their boast; swordsmen, they professed to be skilled in all the discipline and practice of the field. It was their ancestral character; it was the crest and crown of their feudalism, and, defeated in war, they had nothing further to boast of. How was it? The history we have given in some degree explains it; but the principal reason, after all, is found in the higher faith. Look at the watchwords of the two armies as they rushed on to conflict: "Truth and Peace!" "God is with us!" "The Lord of Hosts!" such mottoes contrast favourably with "The King and Queen Mary!" "Hey! for Cavaliers!" or even that of "The Covenant!" These men charged in battle as if beneath the eye of God; to them it was no play, but business; they knew that they rushed on, many of them, to their death, but they heeded not, for their spirit's eye caught visions of waiting chariots of fire, and horses of fire, hovering round the field; and they advanced to the conflict, mingling with the roar of musketry and the clash of steel the sound of psalms and spiritual songs.

How little have these men been known. The novelist has delighted in decorating the tombs of their antagonists, but has cared little for them. Romance has spread its canvas, and Poetry her colours, to celebrate the deeds of Rupert and his merry men. Has it been ignorance? or that disposition of the human spirit which refuses to see the lofty piety and determined heroism of a religious soul? Looked at from that point of view from which most men would regard them, the Puritans, and the soldiers who fought the battles for them, must seem to be fanatics; for they believed steadily in another world, and lived and fought perpetually as beneath its influence. Of course every one individually was not *such* an one; but we judge of things by wholes—"by their fruit ye shall know them." What was their general character? It is not wonderful that we detect in them some exaggeration—a lofty spiritual pride, inflation of speech, hardness, insensibility to human passion. The school in which they were trained was a very severe one; their rules were binding by a most impressive authority. Let the man who would judge them, look at them not from the delineations of Sir Walter Scott, or James, but from the period in which they lived, from the circumstances by which their characters were fashioned and made, and to the men to whom they looked as leaders; or let him take the chronicles of the time, and he will be at no loss to spell out the glory of their name, "their enemies themselves being judges." We have already said romance has had it all its own way in depicting the Royalist and the Cavalier; to them have been given all the glow of the novelist, all the charm of the poet. We are just now beginning to do justice to the usages and manners of Puritan households, with which sweetness and romance, domestic tenderness and grace have been supposed to be incompatible; yet Puritan womanhood is one of the fairest of types, and far lovelier to the true artist's eye than any of the luscious lips and dainty love-locks which shed their meretricious charms over the canvases of Sir Peter Lely. We like to imagine those old country houses, the manors and mansions, up and down



CHARLES II. HIDDEN IN THE OAK TREE. [*Page* 259.

whose staircases of polished oak, Puritan wives and maidens were handed by wealthy husbands and ambitious lovers. It is singular to realize the regular family worship there; the presence of superstitious belief when men and women believed themselves to be nearer to a universe of invisible and mysterious influences than they do now; and stories and traditions of witchcraft and apparitions haunted the houses. The houses of those times were certainly romantic, and tenanted by a noteworthy race, even though, stepping from the household into the church, our sentiments are somewhat shocked by the undecorated service the Puritans loved to follow; and its chancels and aisles presenting the staid and unornamented appearance of those we know in Geneva, or Zurich, or Berne, only that no choir or organ was permitted to aid the song.

EPISODE.

VII.

CROMWELL'S CONTEMPORARIES: JOHN HAMPDEN.

CHAPTER VII.

CROMWELL'S CONTEMPORARIES: JOHN HAMPDEN.

AMONG the great names, shining with a very conspicuous lustre during this period of civil conflict, perhaps no name has commanded since a more universal interest, and even homage, than that of Cromwell's cousin, John Hampden. He was the representative of an ancient and highly honourable county family in Buckinghamshire; for centuries they had taken their name from their habitation, Great Hampden, in that county. William Hampden married the aunt of the Protector, Cromwell; he was the father of the patriot. The history of this Elizabeth Cromwell was a singular one: her husband died in the year 1597, she continued a widow until her death, sixty-seven years after, and she was buried in Great Hampden Church, 1664–5, having lived to the great age of ninety. It is surely affecting to think of the singular revolutions through which this lady passed; her years extended through the reigns of six sovereigns. She saw the great line of the Tudors expire, with her royal namesake Elizabeth; she saw the British sceptre united with that of the Scottish beneath James I.; she saw the trembling sceptre in the hand of Charles I., and beheld it wrested by the people from that weak and impolitic hand; she saw those men who had overawed the king, and conducted him to the scaffold, compelled to bow before, and see their sovereignty shivered to pieces in the presence of, her mighty nephew as he ascended the Protector's throne; she saw his power bequeathed to his incapable son, her great-nephew, Richard; and she beheld him driven into private life by the men of "the Rump" of the Long Parliament, whom her illustrious nephew had packed about their business; she saw those very men who had been so ignominiously deposed, those self-restored republicans, revive the monarchy by the restoration of Charles II. to the throne, so inaugurating the most disgraceful and shameful reign which desecrates the annals of our country's history.

What an affecting succession of national vicissitudes! She had two sons: Richard was the youngest, he survived his brother, dying in 1659. He appears to have been of the same patriotic faith and practice, but probably a comparatively weak man; he was one of the Council of Richard Cromwell. *The* Hampden was John. This youth received the natural training of an English gentleman of those days at a school in Thame. In 1609 he entered as a commoner at Magdalen College, Oxford, where certainly his attainments must have obtained for him some reputation; for it is a remarkable fact that he was chosen by Laud apparently, then master of St. John's, to write the gratulations of Oxford upon the marriage of the Elector Palatine with the Princess Elizabeth, the marriage which gave birth to Prince Rupert, who led the troops at Chalgrove Field, on which Hampden was slain! Hampden married in 1619, and his marriage seems to have been singularly happy; but he did not retain his wife long. He first represented the old borough of Grampound, in the eighteenth year of the reign of King James I.; then he represented Wendover, in the two Parliaments in the first and third years of the reign of Charles I.; but in the fifteenth and sixteenth years of the same reign he sat for the county of Buckinghamshire. His family was so eminent,—it traced itself in unbroken line from the earliest Saxon times, and derived even its name and possessions from Edward the Confessor,—that it is not singular that his mother was very desirous that he should increase the family dignity by attaining to that to which it would have been easy to attain, the peerage. This was before the great troubles set in. Hampden seems to have had no ambition of this kind, and saw clearly that the sphere in which he could most effectively serve his country was the House of Commons; and, in his rank as a country gentleman, he was perhaps equal in the several particulars of wealth, lineage, and intelligence to any commoner there. To the impressions of the present writer the character of Hampden seems to shine out with singular clearness, but many writers have affected to charge him with the indulgence of amitious rather than patriotic motives in the great truggle. This arises from the fact of the deep secretiveness of his character, a characteristic in which he was perhaps the equal of his mighty cousin, and, indeed, had he been preserved to the close of the war, the course of events after might have been different. He had far more practical sagacity, a far profounder knowledge of what the nation needed, than either Sir Harry Vane, Algernon Sidney, or Bradshaw. He was not an extreme man; he was probably, no more than Cromwell, a dreaming, theoretical republican. He desired to save the kingdom from the doom of intolerant and arbitrary government in Church and State; and as an upright member of Parliament, he threw himself at once into the struggle. He may be almost spoken of as certainly one of the very first who stood forward, with resolution and courage, as the champion of liberty, defying the sovereign in law, and denying his right to levy ship-money. He stood in the pathway of exorbitant power; he refused to pay a tax—trifling to him—because it was levied by the king without the consent of Parliament. He appealed to the laws, and he brought the question to a trial.

The Long Parliament has been called the fatal Parliament. It protected itself at once against dissolution by resolving that it would only be dissolved by its own act; for it had been abundantly proved that "with Charles no Parliament could be safe, much less useful to the country, that did not begin by taking the whole power of Government into its own hands."[1] To this Parliament Hampden's was a double return, for Wendover and for his own county of Buckinghamshire. He elected to sit for the latter; and it soon became very clear that this Parliament represented the indignation of a whole people thoroughly determined to redress long existing and grievous wrongs. We have sufficiently referred to this in preceding pages. Hampden was not a fierce or fiery spirit; indeed, both Hampden himself, and the men by whom he was surrounded, were characters not very easily read. Charles was as unequal to a conflict with them as a child. They had to deal with a man, the son of one who esteemed himself to be a specially adroit master in dissimulation, and who had certainly left to his son, as a legacy, his lessons and experiences in king-craft. We have seen that with Charles it was impossible to be clear or true; dissimulation was the weapon by which he had sought to circumvent the tactics of the great leaders. They were compelled to use the same weapons, and they vanquished him. Hume, speaking of Hampden and Sir Harry Vane, and including, of course, Cromwell, says, "Their discourse was polluted with mysterious jargon, and full of the lowest and most vulgar hypocrisy." The hypocrisy which Hume charges on Hampden and his fellow-workers, amounts to no more than that they were men thoroughly determined not to be circumvented, and to knock away the entire scaffolding which went to the support of arbitrary and illegal power; and they illustrated this at once, in resolving on the indissolubility of their own Parliament, and the impeachment which led to the death of Strafford. Inevitably the sword was unsheathed in the nation. May, in his "History of the Long Parliament," says, "The fire when once kindled cast forth, through every corner of the land, not only sparks but devouring flames; insomuch that the kingdom of England was divided into more seats of war than counties, nor had she more fields than skirmishes, nor cities than sieges; and almost all the palaces of lords, and other great houses, were turned everywhere into garrisons of war. Throughout England sad spectacles were seen of plundering and firing villages; and the fields, otherwise waste and desolate, were rich only, and terribly glorious, in camps and armies."

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[1] Lord Nugent's "Life of John Hampden."

Now comes a third great period of Hampden's life; for his life consists of three stages. First, when his mind was maturing its wishes and intentions, when he felt the dishonour and the distress of the country so much that it is said he meditated with Cromwell embarking for America; then came the second period, when he stood forth the bold and earnest counsellor, attempting to avert by his wisdom the overt acts of despotism on the one side, and the possibility of rebellion, so-called, on the other; then came the third period, when, under the woody brows of the Chiltern Hills, he sought to marshal the militia of his native county. With prodigious activity, unceasingly he laboured, and sought to form the union of the six associated midland counties. As might be expected from his character, he was mighty in organization, and he deserves the principal honour, perhaps, of having brought all those counties to act as one compacted machine. He gathered all his green-coats together, and formed them into a company which told with immense effect on the issues of the war. But he was one of the first who fell. It was on Sunday morning, the 18th of June, 1643, being in the second year of the war, he received a mortal wound in a skirmish on Chalgrove Field. It was near to the scenery of his school-boy life, Thame. It is a tradition that he was seen first moving in the direction of his father-in-law's house at Pyrton. Thither he was wont to go, when a youth, courting his first wife, whom he had very tenderly loved; from that house he had married her. It was thought that thither he would, had it been possible, have gone to die. But Rupert's cavalry were covering the plain between; so he rode back across the grounds of Hazeley, on his way to Thame. He paused at the brook which divides the parishes; he was afraid to dismount, as he felt the impossibility of remounting if he alighted. He summoned a momentary strength, cleared the leap; he was over, reaching Thame in great pain, and almost fainting. He found shelter in the house of one Ezekiel Brown, and six days after, having suffered cruelly, almost without intermission, he died; but during those days he wrote, or dictated, letters of advice to the Parliament, whose affairs had not, as yet, reached that state of prosperity which they presently attained. Then, like the religious man he was, he disposed himself solemnly for death; he received the Lord's Supper shortly before he died; he avowed his dislike, indeed, to the government of the Church of England,—that of course,—but his faith in her great doctrines; he died murmuring in prayer, "Lord Jesus!" he exclaimed in the last agony, "receive my soul! O Lord, save my country! O Lord, be merciful to——," but the prayer was unfinished, in that second the noble spirit passed away. Of course he was buried in his own parish church of Great Hampden, there his dust lies in the chancel. His soldiers followed their great leader to the grave bareheaded, with reversed arms and muffled drums; as they marched they sung the ninetieth Psalm, "that lofty and melancholy Psalm," says Lord Macaulay, "in which the fragility of human life is contrasted with the immutability of Him to whom a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is passed, or as a watch in the night." The great storm of war which rolled over the country had removed Hampden from his old house, and all the scenes of his early felicity. He never resided in Buckinghamshire after his second marriage; his Parliamentary duties compelled a residence in London, and he chose what was then the charming suburban retreat of Gray's Inn Lane. But the mansion, the ancestral home of his early days, still stands. From its seclusion, it is little known; but it stands upon a spot of singular beauty, from whence it commands a view of several counties. It reposes among green glades, and is enclosed within the shadowy stillness of old woods of box, juniper, and beech lining the avenues which lead to the old house of manifold architectures, blending the ancient Norman with the style of the Tudor, and mingling with these the innovations of later periods. It has been thought that the purity of Hampden's character might be seen in the fact that a spirit so quiet and so unambitious could forsake the stillness of so holy and beautiful a retreat, to mingle his voice amidst the crafts and collisions of Parliament, or the wild shock of warfare. The story of Hampden's life insensibly draws us to Samuel Rogers' charming picture of the patriot in "Human Life," and by Hampden's tomb we may well recur to the lines:—

"Then was the drama ended. Not till then,
So full of chance and change the lives of men,
Could we pronounce him happy. Then secure
From pain, from grief, and all that we endure,
He slept in peace—say, rather, soared to Heaven,
Upborne from earth by Him to whom 'tis given
In His right hand to hold the golden key
That opes the portals of Eternity.
When by a good man's grave I muse alone,
Methinks an angel sits upon the stone,
And, with a voice inspiring joy not fear,
Says, pointing upward, 'Know, he is not here!'"[1]

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[1] It almost shocks the sensibilities, even of not very sensitive persons, to know that from mere motives of curiosity the body

of the great patriot was, many years since, exhumed. Hampden's body was dragged from its dread abode, apparently for no other reason than to settle the cause of his death, which by many persons had been assigned to the bursting of his own pistol; the pistol had been a present to him from Sir Robert Pye, his son-in-law, and tradition had said that when Sir Robert visited his father-in-law, in his last illness, Hampden said to him, "Ah! Robin, your unhappy present has been my ruin!" It is certain that he met his death on the field as a brave man might, in the performance of his duty, and it certainly seems an idle and very insignificant reason, for the settlement of such a question, to have vexed and disturbed the repose of the sacred and venerable dead. However, it was done, and a copious account of the disentombment was inserted in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for August, 1828. It was Lord Nugent who conducted the examination, and he removed and unrolled the shroud from his venerable ancestor. The coffin was lifted from the vault and placed on tressels in the centre of the church. The examination does not appear to have resulted in any very distinctly satisfactory elucidations; but those who are interested in such matters may find a ghastly description of the appearance of the patriot after his long sepulture, if they turn back to the volume to which we have already given a reference. The author of the present work may be permitted to express his amazement that hands professing to be moved by reverence could engage in such an unseemly and self-imposed task.

VIII.

CROMWELL AND THE BATTLE OF MARSTON MOOR.

CHAPTER VIII.

CROMWELL: THE BATTLE OF MARSTON MOOR.

IT was on the field of Marston that the military genius of Cromwell first shone conspicuously. Marston Moor, seven miles from York. How came that battle to be fought at all? The old city of York is a venerable city; crowned with its tiara of proud towers, she stands, like an old queen, on the banks of the Ouse. And she has witnessed memorable things in the course of her history,—for she has a defined history approaching two thousand years,—but not one more memorable than that great fight in which, for the first time, the genius of Cromwell rose triumphant and complete upon the field. York, the old city, was in possession of the Royalists; and so weak were they, that it seemed the Roundheads, who lay encamped before the city, must soon find an entrance there. But just then the fiery Rupert came plunging across the Lancashire hills, after his cruel massacre at Bolton. He had with him 20,000 of the flower of the Royalist and Cavalier army; and the Puritan forces drew out from York to Marston Moor. Had Rupert contented himself with relieving and succouring York, the whole tide of conflict might have been different; but he did not know the strength of his foes. Charles, indeed, had written to him, "If York be lost, I shall esteem my crown to be little less [than lost]." There, outside of the city, lay the Royalist army,—lay the protecting host of Rupert; and there, yonder, along the moor, the armies of the Parliament. It was a calm summer evening, on the second of July, 1644. We can scarcely even now think that Rupert, in all his thoughtlessness, could have wished to hazard a battle when the advantages, so decidedly his own, could only have been jeoparded and risked by conflict; and yet, let us recollect that the letter of Charles to him was carried by him on his heart, to the day of his death, as his warrant for that well-fought, fatal field; and as we have said, he did not know the strength of that army of yeomen and volunteers; above all, he did not know Cromwell. The evening of the day closed in gloom, the heavens were covered with clouds, thick, black, murky masses swept over the sky. Hymns of triumph rose from the ranks of the Roundheads and the Parliament, while Prince Rupert would have a sermon preached before him and the army; and his chaplain took a text, which seemed to challenge the issue of the morrow, from Joshua: "The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, He knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if it be rebellion, or in transgression against the Lord, save us not this day." Still, dark and gloomy, and more gloomy, fell the evening; thunder muttered along the heavens, and the forked flame glanced on the mighty mass of iron-clad men.

Between the two armies lay a drain. On the opposite bank to the Royalist forces, in the centre, stood Leven and Fairfax, the commanders of the Parliament; on the left yonder, Cromwell and his Ironsides. Rupert had, with wild, furious, characteristic energy, fallen upon the centre, and his life-guards had scattered and routed them, so that amidst the storm of shot, the maddening shouts, the thundering hoof, pursuing and pursued, they swept across yonder field, cutting down remorselessly all, scattering the whole host like leaves before the storm-wind. Goring, the other Royalist general, was not idle; his desperadoes charged on, and with wild, tumultuous rout they hewed down the fugitives by scores. Two-thirds of the field were gained for Rupert and for Charles. Lord Fairfax was defeated. He fled through the field, through the hosts of the Cavaliers, who supposed him to be some Royalist general; he posted on to Cawood Castle, arrived there, and in the almost or entirely deserted house he unbooted and unsaddled himself, and went like a wise old soldier to bed. But amidst all that rout, the carnage and flying confusion, ONE man held back his troops. Cromwell, there to the left, when he saw how the whole Royalist force attacked the centre, restrained the fiery impatience of his Ironsides; he drew them off still farther to the left; his eye blazed all on fire, till the moment he uttered his short, sharp passionate word to the troops, "CHARGE, IN THE NAME OF THE MOST HIGH!" Beneath the clouds, beneath the storm, beneath the night heavens flying along, he scattered the whole mass. We know it was wondrous to see him in those moods of highly-wrought enthusiasm; and his watchword always struck along the ranks. "Truth and Peace!" he thundered along the lines; "Truth and Peace!" in answer to the Royalist cries of "God and the King!" "Upon them—upon them!" That hitherto almost unknown man, and his immortal hosts of Puritans, poured upon the Cavaliers. The air was alive with artillery. Cromwell seized the very guns of the Royalists, and turned them upon themselves. Thus, when the Royalists returned from the scattering the one wing of their foes, they found the ground occupied by victors. The fight was fought again, but fought in vain; in vain was Rupert's rallying cry, "For God and for the King!" Through the black and stormy night was seen the gleaming steel of other hostile lines. The Cavaliers were scattered far and wide over the plain—over the country; while amidst the fire, thousands of the dead lying there, and the shattered carriages, Rupert made the last effort of flying from the field to York; across the bean-field, over the heath, the agonized young fiery-heart made his way. And there, amidst the gathering silence, and amidst the groans of the dying, rises the magnificent military genius of Cromwell!

Marston Moor was the first most decided collision of the hostile armies. We have given in a few touches a concise and succinct account of this great and momentous conflict; but, even in so brief a life of Cromwell as the present, it ought not to be so hastily dismissed. A graphic pencil might employ itself in a description of the fine old city, besieged for three months, where provisions were growing scarce, and in whose beautiful minster that day—it was a Sabbath-day—affecting accents had given tender pathos to the liturgies imploring aid from Heaven. It would be no difficult task to realize and describe the streets of the ancient and magnificent city as they were on that day, and if Rupert had been wise, it seems as if the city might have been relieved and Cromwell's great opportunity lost; but the two vast ironclad masses lay out beyond there—nearly fifty thousand men, all natives of the same soil—stretching away almost to Tadcaster—skirting Bramham Moor, upon which, ages before Mother Shipton had prophesied that a great battle would be fought,—a prophecy which, in this instance, received very creditable approximation to fulfilment. It was, as we have said, on the 2nd of July, 1644, The day wore on while successive movements and counter movements took place. Scarcely a shot had been fired. When both armies were completely drawn up, it was after five in the evening, and nearly another hour and a half passed with little more than a few cannon shots. The lazy and nonchalant Newcastle considered all was over for that day, and had retired to his carriage, to prepare himself by rest for whatever might betide on the morrow. Even Rupert and Cromwell are believed to have expected that their armies would pass the night on the field. It was a bright summer evening, closing apparently in storm;

there was light enough still for the work of destruction to proceed, and that mighty host—46,000 men, children of one race, subjects of one king—to mingle in bloody strife, and lay thousands at rest, "to sleep the sleep that knows no waking," on that fatal night in July, on Long Marston Moor. It has been surmised, with considerable probability, that a stray cannon shot, which proved fatal to young Walton, Oliver Cromwell's nephew, by rousing in him every slumbering feeling of wrath and indignation, mainly contributed to bring on the general engagement. Certain it is that he was the first to arrange his men for decisive attack. We suppose it was during the period of inaction, in the evening, that Prince Rupert examined a stray prisoner whom his party had taken, as to who were the leaders of the opposing army; the man answered, "General Leven, Lord Fairfax, and Sir Thomas Fairfax." "Is Cromwell there?" exclaimed the Prince, interrupting him; and being answered that he was, "Will they fight?" said he; "if they will, they shall have fighting enough." Then the prisoner was released, and going back to his own army told the generals what had passed, and Cromwell that the Prince had asked for him in particular, and had said, "They should have fighting enough." "And," exclaimed Cromwell, "if it please God, so they shall!"

It was, then, within a quarter to seven on that evening of July, when the vast army, that spread along the wide area of Marston Moor, began to be stirred by rapid movements to the front. Along a considerable part of the ground that lay immediately between the advanced posts of the Parliamentary forces, there ran a broad and deep ditch, which served to protect either party from sudden surprise. Towards this, it has been said by some that a body of Cromwell's cavalry was seen to move rapidly from the rear, followed by a part of the infantry. Prince Rupert met this promptly by bringing up a body of musketeers, who opened on them a murderous fire as they formed in front of the ditch which proteted Rupert's musketeers from the cavalry, while a range of batteries advantageously planted on a height to the rear, kept up an incessant cannonading on the whole line.

It was the first meeting of Cromwell and Rupert. And on Cromwell, as we have seen, descends the glory of the victory. His eye detected the movements in the Royalist army. He and his Ironsides (first named Ironsides on this famous field) broke the cavalry of General Goring. The Scots, indeed, had been defeated by Rupert early in the battle. He poured upon them a torrent of irresistible fire. But while he was confident that the field was won, the Ironsides again poured over Rupert's own cavalry, and swept them from the field.

The victory was complete, the Royalist army was entirely broken and dispersed; fifteen hundred of their number remained prisoners. The whole of their arms and artillery, their tents, baggage, and military chest remained the spoils of the victors. Prince

Rupert's own standard, and more than a hundred others, had fallen into their hands; and York, which Rupert had entered only three days before in defiance of their arms, now lay at their mercy. A strange and fearful scene spread out beneath the sky on that summer, now dark with midnight storm, on Long Marston Moor. Five thousand men lay dead or dying there; born of the same lineage, and subjects of one king, who had yet fallen by one another's hands. It was the bloodiest battle of the whole war, and irretrievably ruined the king's hopes in the north.

Long after midnight, Rupert and Newcastle re-entered York. They exchanged messages without meeting, Rupert intimating his intention of departing southward on the following morning with as many of the horse and foot as he had kept together; and Newcastle returning word that he intended immediately to go to the sea-side, and embark for the Continent—a desertion rendered justifiable when we remember that his advice had been contemptuously slighted, and his command superseded by the rash nephew of Charles, acting under the king's orders. Each kept his word, and in a fortnight thereafter York was in possession of their opponents.

Many representatives of noble houses lay stretched stark and cold on the dreadful field. The eminent Roman Catholic family of Townley, of Burnley, in Lancashire, have a tradition of the day. Mary, daughter of Sir Francis Trapper, had married Charles Townley; he was one of those killed in this battle.

During the engagement, his wife was with her father at Knaresborough, there she heard of her husband's fate, and came upon the field the next morning to search for his body, while the attendants of the camp were stripping and burying the dead. Here she was accosted by a general officer, to whom she told her melancholy story; he heard her with great tenderness, but he earnestly implored her to leave a scene not only so distressing to witness, but where she might also herself be insulted. She complied, and he called for a trooper, mounted her on horseback in the trooper's company, and sent her back in safety to Knaresborough. Inquiring of the trooper, on the way, the name of the officer to whom she had been indebted, she learned that it was Cromwell! This story is preserved in the archives of the Townley family. She survived, a widow, until 1690; died at Townley, and was buried at Burnley at the age of ninety-one.

And here is a letter from Cromwell, full of tenderness. The strong man could weep with those who wept. And you notice, although he had turned on that field the fortunes of England, he makes no mention of himself, nor any mention of a severe wound he had received in the neck. D'Aubigné says it bears indubitable marks of a soldier's bluntness, but also of the sympathy of a child of God. In Oliver these two elements were never far apart. It was addressed to his brother-in-law, Colonel Valentine Walton, the husband of his younger sister Margaret, and contained the account of the victory, and of his own son's being among the slain, the same whose fate, it is thought, by rousing Oliver to the charging point, brought on the general engagement.

"*5th July*, 1644.

"Dear Sir,—

"It's our duty to sympathise in all mercies, and to praise the Lord together in all chastisements or trials, so that we may sorrow together.

"Truly England and the Church of God hath had a great favour from the Lord, in this great victory given unto us, such as the like never was since this war began. It had all the evidence of an absolute victory, obtained, by the Lord's blessing, upon the godless party principally. We never charged but we routed the enemy. The left wing, which I commanded, being our own horse, saving a few Scots in our rear, beat all the prince's horse. God made them as stubble to our swords. We charged their regiments of foot with our horse, and routed all we charged. The particulars I cannot relate now; but I believe, of twenty thousand, the prince hath not four thousand left. Give glory, all the glory, to God.

"Sir, God hath taken away your eldest son by a cannon shot. It brake his leg. We were necessitated to have it cut off, whereof he died.

"Sir, you know my own trials this way; but the Lord supported me in this—that the Lord took him[1] into the happiness we all pant for, and live for.

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[1] His own son, Oliver, who had been killed not long before.

There is your precious child full of glory, never to know sin or sorrow any more. He was a gallant young man, exceedingly gracious. God give you His comfort. Before his death he was so full of comfort, that to Frank Russel and myself he could not express it—'it was so great above his pain.' This he said to us. Indeed it was admirable. A little after he said, one thing lay upon his spirit. I asked him what that was? He told me it was, that God had not suffered him to be any more the executioner of His enemies. At his fall, his horse being killed with the bullet, and, as I am informed, three horses more, I am told he bid them open to the right and left, that he might see the rogues run. Truly he was exceedingly beloved in the army, of all that knew him. But few knew him, for he was a precious young man, fit for God. You have cause to bless the Lord. He is a glorious saint in heaven, wherein you ought exceedingly to rejoice. Let this drink up your sorrow, seeing these are not feigned words to comfort you, but the thing is so real and undoubted a truth. You may do all things by the strength of Christ. Seek that, and you shall easily bear your trial. Let this public mercy to the Church of God make you to forget your private sorrow. The Lord be your strength; so prays—

"Your truly faithful and loving brother
"OLIVER CROMWELL.

"My love to your daughter, and my cousin Percival, sister Desbrow, and all friends with you."

Thus ended the battle of Marston Moor. It was the most decisive blow Charles had yet received; but far from being so decisive now as it might have been. We have again to notice the indecision of the generals, Earls Manchester and Essex. Nearly half the kingdom was in the possession of the Parliamentary party. The reasons for this vacillation it may be now well to notice. The nobility—it began ere this time to appear,—notwithstanding they had very generally come into the earlier measures of opposition to Charles's government, both from their old hereditary jealousy of the Crown, and unusual oppressions and neglects ever since the accession of Henry VII., were every day becoming more convinced that they had unwittingly contributed to place the people, under the guidance of their Commons' House, upon such a footing of equality with themselves as had already engendered rivalry, and threatened mastership. They had now, therefore, every disposition possible to coalesce with the Scots in entering into a *peace* with the king that should at once secure him in the possession of his "just power and greatness," and confirm in themselves those privileges of rank and birth whose best support, next to that of legitimate popular freedom, they saw to be legitimate monarchical prerogative. But they went much farther; for the Earls of Essex and Manchester, who had been entrusted with the command of the Parliament's forces, and who might be said to be the representatives of the great body of the nobles with the army, had seemed, since the battle of Marston Moor, to neutralize the efforts of their soldiers, as though they were unwilling to make the popular cause too eminent; and, though not actually to allow themselves to be beaten by the king, to make little advantage of his failures, and occasionally even to permit him to avail himself of a drawn battle, or a positive defeat, as though it had been to him a victory. Owing to these causes, it had become apparent that the Parliament, instead of approaching the state of things they so much desired, and by which they had once hoped effectually to give law to their sovereign, were even yet losing ground in the contest. Essex endured a complete and total failure. He allowed himself to be pushed on to the west, until disbanding his troops, he took boat from Plymouth, and escaped to London, where, however, he was well received by the Parliament. Meantime Cromwell and Manchester were together in Berkshire, and Manchester had certainly met with precisely the same success but for Cromwell. As it was, the latter could only partially secure the success of the Parliament, because compelled to act under the command of the Earl. Newbury had already been the scene of one contest; its neighbourhood was destined to be the scene of another. It might have been decisive. Cromwell saw this, and he implored Manchester to allow him to make an effort to prostrate the king; but the Earl refused. It was a golden opportunity, this, for retrieving all the losses of Essex, and finishing the campaign gloriously,—so gloriously began by the battle of Marston Moor. The event of this skirmish, too, convinces us that had Charles more frequently commanded in person, he would more frequently have been victor

It was a moonlight night following the fight of Donnington. The ground all round was strewed with dead bodies; and the day closed, leaving it in possession of the Royalists. They occupied a central position, well fortified by nature and by art:

"It was a moonlight night which followed, and anxious thoughts occupied both camps of the desperate strife that must decide the morrow. Suddenly the penetrating and sleepless eye of Cromwell saw the Royalists move. It was so. Charles having utterly lost his left position, had despaired of the poor chance that remained to him in the face of such a foe. His army were now busy in that moonlight, conveying into the castle by a circuitous route their guns and heavy stores; while behind, battalion after battalion was noiselessly quitting its ground, and marching off as silently in the direction of Oxford. Over and over again Cromwell entreated Manchester to suffer him to make a forward movement with his cavalry. At that critical moment he would have prostrated Charles. Manchester refused. A show was made next morning of pursuit, but of course without effect. Charles, with all his material and prisoners, had effected a clear escape. Nor was this all. While the Castle of Donnington remained unmolested amidst the dreadful dissensions which from this event raged through the Parliamentarian camp, the king, having been reinforced by Rupert and an excellent troop of horse, returned twelve days after, assumed the offensive in the face of his now inactive conquerors, carried off all his cannon and heavy stores from out of the castle, coolly and uninterruptedly fell back again, and marched unmolested into Oxford."

And so thus unsuccessfully ended the work which was begun so successfully at Marston Moor. Well might Cromwell thereupon say, "There will never be a good time in England till we have done with lords!" Manchester and Cromwell came to a quarrel after this second Newbury fight. Their opposition was very marked.

"They in fact come to a quarrel here," says Carlyle, "these two, and much else that was represented by them came to a quarrel: Presbytery and Independency, to wit. Manchester was reported to have said, if they lost this army pursuing the king, they had no other. The king might hang them. To Cromwell and the thorough-going party it had become very clear that high Essexes and Manchesters, of limited notions and large estates and anxieties—who, besides their fear of being beaten utterly, and forfeited and 'hanged,' were afraid of beating the king too well—would never end this cause in a good way."

Again we have arrived at a pausing point, where the reader may look round him and notice the scenery, and reconnoitre the state of parties, and the three great personalities meeting him here, Presbyterianism, Independency, and Cromwell. We have seen that the Scots marched into England to the aid of the Parliament. We shall now see that they desired, in the subversion of Episcopacy; the elevation of Presbyterianism. Meantime there had arisen a large party, representing at that time, indeed, the mind of England—INDEPENDENTS, who thought with Milton that *presbyter* was only *priest* writ large, who continued to plead for the right of private judgment and universal toleration in religion, setting the will of individual churches as the rule and ordinance in church matters. Of this large party, Cromwell was the representative; of the other, the Earls we have mentioned, as the generals of the Parliamentary army, may be regarded as the representatives in the camp. There were, therefore, two deterring motives preventing them from aiming at entire success. As members of the House of Peers, they feared lest they should raise up too formidable a rival in the Commons; and they saw, or seemed to see, in the Presbyterian party the means of holding in check the power they dreaded. We may not, however, so much charge them with real treachery, as an utter want of enthusiasm.

But whatever was the cause of failure, hitherto the Parliamentary cause had comparatively failed—failed in the midst of successes,—failed evidently from the simple want of decision and rapid energy. It became necessary to change the tactics of war. Cromwell no doubt felt that he could bring the matter to an issue and decision at once; and that he would do so was feared, apparently, by the leaders of the army and by the Presbyterians. He was now powerful enough to excite jealousy. It was probably felt that he was the strongest man in the kingdom, and the wisest in these councils and debates; for this reason, many efforts were made to set him on one side, to this the Scots Commissioners especially aimed. It was known that Cromwell was a thorough Englishman,—that he was likely to increase in power and influence. A conspiracy, therefore, was set on foot to crush him, of which Whitelock gives to us the particulars. The conspiracy aimed at the reputation, perhaps at the very life, of Cromwell. The record given by Whitelock is very curious, more especially as he has preserved so entirely the colloquial form. One evening, very late, he informs us, he was sent for by the Lord-General Essex, "and there was no excuse to be admitted, nor did we know before the occasion of our being sent for. When we came to Essex House, we were brought to the Lord-General, and with him were the Scots Commissioners, Mr. Holles, Sir Philip Stapylton, Sir John Meyrick, and divers others of his special friends. After compliments, and that all were set down in council, the Lord-General having requested the Lord Chancellor of Scotland, as the better orator, to explain the object of the meeting, the latter spake to this effect;—

"Mr. Maynard and Mr. Whitelock . . . you ken vary weel that Lieutenant-General Cromwell is no friend of ours; and, since the advance of our army into England, he hath used all underhand and cunning means to take from our honour and merit of this kingdom; an evil requital for all our hazards and services: but so it is; and we are, nevertheless, fully satisfied of the affections and gratitude of the gude people of this nation in the general.

"It is thought requisite for us, and for the carrying on of the cause of the twa kingdoms, that this obstacle, or remora, *may be removed out of the way;* whom, we foresee, will otherwise be no small impediment to us, and the gude design we have undertaken.

"He not only is no friend to us, and to the government of our church, but he is also no well-wisher to His Excellency, whom you all have cause to love and honour; and, if he be permitted to go on his ways, it may be, I fear, endanger the whole business: therefore, we are to advise of some course to be taken for the prevention of that mischief.

"You ken vary weel the accord 'twixt the twa kingdoms, and the union by the solemn league and covenant; and it may be an *incendiary* between the twa nations, how is he to be proceeded against? Now, the matter wherein we desire your opinions, is, what you tak the meaning of this word 'incendiary' to be; and whether Lieutenant-General Cromwell be not sic an incendiary, as is meant thereby;

and whilke way wud be best to take to proceed against him, if he be proved to be sic an incendiary, and that will clepe his wings from soaring to the prejudice of our cause.

"Now you may ken that, by our law in Scotland, we 'clepe him an incendiary wha kindleth coals of contention, and raiseth differences, in the state, to the public damage; and he is *tanquam publicus hostis patriæ:* whether your law be the same or not, you ken best, who are mickle learned therein, and therefore, with the favour of His Excellency, we desire your judgment thereon."

But the lawyers were wary; moreover they perhaps knew the madness of this attempt, and saw into its design, and their answer brought the plot to a standstill.

Whitelock replied, "that if such proofs could 'be made out,' then he was 'to be proceeded against for it by Parliament, upon his being there accused of such things.' He added, that he took '*Lieutenant-General Cromwell to be a gentleman of quick and subtle parts, and one who had, especially of late, gained no small interest in the House of Commons: nor was he wanting in friends in the House of Peers; nor of abilities in himself, to manage his own part or defence to the best advantage.*' In conclusion, he could not 'advise that, at that time, he should be accused for an incendiary; but rather that direction might be given to collect such passages relating to him, by which their lordships might judge whether they would amount to prove him an incendiary or not.' Maynard, afterwards speaking, observed that '*Lieutenant-General Cromwell was a person of great favour and interest with the House of Commons, and with some of the House of Peers likewise;*' and that, therefore, 'there must be proofs, and the more clear and evident, against him, to prevail with the Parliament to adjudge him to be an incendiary;' which he believed would 'be more difficult than perhaps some might imagine to fasten upon him.'"

While this plot was in movement, Cromwell certainly appears to have been himself labouring to curtail the power of the General Earls. He impeached Manchester with backwardness in entrance upon engagements. He appears in his speech, in the House of Commons, to have run over a series of charges, certainly affecting the fitness of his commander for his post. Manchester in turn accused Cromwell of saying that "it would never be well with England until the Earl was plain Mr. Montague; that the Scots had crossed the Tweed only for the purpose of establishing Presbyterianism; and that, in that cause, he would as soon draw his sword against them as against the king; and sundry other things."

The charges against both, on both sides, dropped; but the House of Commons resolved itself into a committee, for the purpose of considering how best to bring the war to an issue.

On this occasion the speech of Cromwell was masterly in the extreme; he concluded by calling for a remodelling of the whole army, a stricter discipline, and a measure aiming at the dismissal of the Earls of Essex, Manchester, and Denbigh. This was the famous Self-denying Ordinance, by which all members of the Senate were incapacitated for serving in the army. The Lords protested against this, because it would effectually cut off all their body from being perpetually peers; but this was its very object. Sir Thomas Fairfax, not a member, was for that reason elected to supreme command; and thus, it appeared, that some obstacles were removed. Could it be imagined that the power and place of Cromwell were also suspended? The Parliament, at any rate in his instance, suspended the Self-denying Ordinance; was not this a proof that it was perceived that he was the most capable man in the kingdom?

EPISODE.

IX.

CROMWELL'S CONTEMPORARIES: PRINCE RUPERT.

CHAPTER IX.

CROMWELL'S CONTEMPORARIES: PRINCE RUPERT.

PRINCE RUPERT has often been called the evil genius of Charles, but it would perhaps be quite as true, if not more so, to designate Charles as the evil genius of Rupert. There is, no doubt, a not unnatural prejudice against the prince, as a foreigner, commanding the royal army against the arms of the Parliament and the people; and his name has something of a mythical character attaching to it; he springs suddenly upon us and upon our nation as something even like a wild hunter. Our readers ought to make themselves distinctly acquainted with this singular person, who seems to hold much the same place—however inferior in capacity and command—in the royal armies which Cromwell held in that of the Parliament. Who was this Prince Rupert? Our readers will perhaps remember the magnificent festivities which gladdened the Court and the nation when, in 1613, the marriage of Elizabeth of England, the daughter of James I., was solemnized, in her sixteenth year, with the Prince Palatine, the Elector of Bohemia. If we may judge from contemporaneous chronicles, the beauty of this only surviving sister of Charles was singular; she was called the "Pearl of Britain," and the "Queen of Hearts;" while the charming symmetry of her form and features are said to have been enhanced by the exquisite play of soft expression over her face. It has been said that history borrows the colours of romance when she paints this fair young princess on the morning of her marriage, as she passed along to the chapel over a gallery raised for the purpose, glowing in all the lights of loveliness and majesty, arrayed in white, her rich dark hair falling over her shoulders, and on her head a crown of pure gold; one hand locked in that of her brother Charles, and the other leaning on the arm of the old Earl of Northampton; her train of noble bridesmaids followed on her steps. It is said that England had never seen the equal to the sumptuous splendour of this marriage; the bravery and riches were incomparable, the gold, the silver, the pearls, the diamonds and every variety of jewels. The king's, queen's, and prince's jewels were valued alone at £900,000 sterling. Then came magnificent masques, and the mock fight upon the Thames; and then some gay masque representing the marriage of the Thames and the Rhine; and at night fireworks blazing over London. For the marriage was very popular, and was supposed to be a good omen for the cause of Protestantism. And when the fair princess reached the country of her adoption, the same romantic and festive lights for some time shone round her; the grand old ruins of

Heidelberg still retain the memories of her residence there, and romantic fiction has sought to charm the old walls and rooms of the famous ruin with her presence.

She was the mother of Prince Rupert. He was born at Prague, in 1619; his father had claimed to be, and had got himself and his fair young queen crowned, king and queen of Bohemia, so that the prince was born with all the assumptions of royalty around him. But his genealogist says, "He began to be illustrious many years before his birth, and we must look back into history, above two thousand years, to discover the first rays of his glory. We may consider," continues the writer, "him very great, being descended from the two most illustrious and ancient houses of Europe, that of England and Palatine of the Rhine." And then the writer goes on to trace up his ancestry to Atilla, Charlemagne, and so down through a succession of Ruperts, Louis, Fredericks. The facts after the birth of Rupert are an affecting satire upon all this. All the festive chambers became but the rooms in a house of mourning; the poor Queen Elizabeth shortly became a widow, an exile from the land of her birth, an outcast from the country of her adoption and ambition; all the dark destinies of the Stuarts were realized in her story. When Rupert reached manhood, she appears to have been a pensioner on Holland; her brother Charles had attained to the English crown, his troubles had not yet commenced, so as to prevent him from giving some help to his sister; but he appears to have given none, and only invited her to England with so much indifference that the cold hospitality was refused.

Rupert was in the army of the Netherlands, attaining some little experience in war; but on the whole passing in those young days a restless and purposeless life. Then he became an Austrian prisoner in the grim old castle of Lintz, and a long time passed on in obscurity and silence, illuminated, however, by a pleasing, apparently innocent and romantic love story. The Count Kuffstein, the governor of Lintz, had a daughter, an only daughter; and the old governor, his stern imagination somewhat touched by the misfortunes of his royal prisoner, charged his daughter to care for him, watch over him, and minister some comfort to him—to do which, perhaps, the young lady was not indisposed. So, however, went on some love passages in the dark rooms of the old castle hanging over the rolling Danube, passages which the prince seems not to have forgotten through the future years and vicissitudes of his strange career. At length the time of his release came, apparently chiefly through the pathetic interest of his mother. Then the storm rose in England, and Rupert accepted in good time an invitation from his Uncle Charles.

He reached England at the time when the queen, Henrietta Maria, was meditating her flight, and he attended her to Holland, and thence, returning again, he joined the poor little Court of his uncle in the old castle of Nottingham; and from this moment his name figures prominently in the story of the times. It is only just to him to remember that, after all the experiences through which he had passed, he was not yet twenty-three years of age. We can very well believe the accounts which represent him as an accession of no ordinary kind to the company of friends and counsellors gathered round the king. There was little cheerfulness in that assembly, naturally enough, the spirits of the king were dark and drooping. We need not suppose that the young prince brought much wisdom to the councils, but his daring impetuosity, the promptitude and vigorous decision in the character of the young man, must have been like a gale of new life; he did not come of a wise and thoughtful race, but, on the other hand, there does seem to have been a dash of magnanimity in his character which seldom shone, and only in occasional gleams, in the more distinguished representatives of the Stuart race. Recklessness was his vice; but the portraits of him at this period present quite an ideal cavalier, and perhaps he has always been regarded as the representative cavalier. His moral and intellectual nature would seem to have been derived from his mother: the handsome physique, the high-bred Norman nose, the supercilious upper lip, the handsome stately form, seem to bear testimony to his father's race. Assuredly, a figure more unlike to that grotesque piece of humanity, his grandfather, James I., it is impossible to conceive; the long love-locks of the cavalier fell over his shoulders, and he is described as altogether such a person as Vandyke loved to transfer to his canvases, and ladies would regard with attractive interest. Of the great questions, the profound matters, which led to the solemn discussions of his uncle with the people of England, we may believe him to be utterly ignorant; it is not saying too much to assert that they were quite beyond the comprehension of a nature like that of Prince Rupert. It is worthy of notice that the mighty enjoyment of his life was a hunt; to him might have been applied the words of the Danish ballad,—

> "With my dogs so good
> I hunt the wild deer in the wood."

And every conflict in which he engaged on English ground seems merely to have been regarded by him as a kind of wild hunt. Off he started in the impetuosity of the fight, and, as we shall see again and again, having left the field as he supposed in the possession of his army, and started off in mad pursuit, he returned to discover that he had missed his opportunity, and the field was lost. Such was Prince Rupert, such his relationship to Charles, and the circumstances which brought him to the Royalist army.

X.

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY.

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NOW we shall push on more rapidly. The Self-denying Ordinance is regarded as a masterpiece of duplicity originating from the mind of Cromwell. The superseding of the most illustrious officers in the People's army was hailed by the Royalists as a sure prelude to their thorough routing. The king was in high hopes. It was about this time he wrote to the queen, "I may, without being too much sanguine, affirm, that since the rebellion my affairs were never in so fair and hopeful a way." Cromwell, certainly, could not suppose that he long could be dispensed with; but neither could he at all have known how soon his services would be required, and how important those services were to be. The supreme power, we have seen, was vested in the hands of Fairfax. It is quite noticeable that his commission was worded differently from the way in which all previous commissions had been worded. It was made in the name of the Parliament alone, not in that of the king and Parliament.

"Towards the end of April," says M. Guizot, "Fairfax announced that in a few days he should open the campaign. Cromwell went to Windsor, to kiss, as he said, the general's hand, and take him his resignation. On seeing him enter the room, Fairfax said, 'I have just received from the Committee of the Two Kingdoms an order which has reference to you. It directs you to proceed directly with some horse to the road between Oxford and Worcester, to intercept communications between Prince Rupert and the king.' The same evening Cromwell departed on his mission, and in five days, before any other corps of the new army had put itself in motion, he had beaten the Royalists in three encounters (April 24th, at Islip Bridge; 26th, at Witney; 27th, at Bampton Bush), taken Bletchington (April 24th), and sent to the House a full report of his success. 'Who will bring me this Cromwell, dead or alive!' cried the king; while in London all were rejoicing that he had not yet given in his resignation.

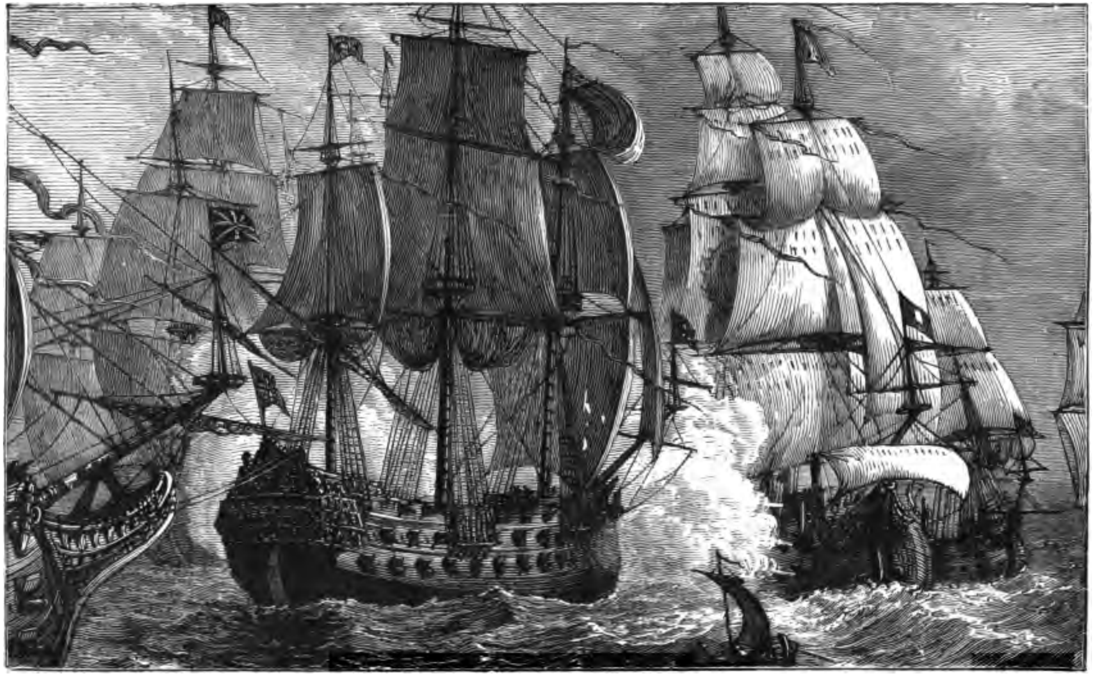
"A week had scarcely passed, and the Parliament had already made up its mind that he should not resign. The campaign had commenced (April 30th). The king quitted Oxford (May 7th), had rejoined Prince Rupert, and was proceeding toward the north, either to raise the siege of Chester, or give battle to the Scottish army, and regain on that side its former advantages. If he succeeded, he would be in a position to threaten, as he pleased, the east or the south; and Fairfax, then on his way to the west to deliver the important town of Taunton, closely invested by the Prince of Wales, could not oppose his progress.

Fairfax was recalled (May 5th); but, meantime, Cromwell alone was in a condition to watch the king's movements. Notwithstanding the Ordinance, he received orders to continue his service forty days (May 10th)."

The country was alarmed at the idea of Cromwell resigning at such a juncture as this. The Common Council petitioned Parliament, demanding a free discretion to be given to the General, and the permanent restoration of Cromwell to his former command. The latter was confirmed by an application, signed by General Fairfax and sixteen of his chief officers, for Cromwell to join him as an officer indispensably needed to command the cavalry.

On the 12th of June, 1645, a reconnoitring party of the Parliamentary cavalry unexpectedly came upon a detachment of the Royal army, leisurely returning from the north, on the news of the threatened blockade of Oxford. The king was flushed with the highest hopes. The success of Montrose in the north promised to free him from all fear in that direction, and he anticipated a body of troops to join him from the west. The meeting of outposts of the two armies was in the neighbourhood of Northampton; but the king fell back immediately towards Leicester, to allow his whole forces to draw together. On the following day Cromwell joined Fairfax amid shouts from the whole army, and, a few hours afterwards, the king learned that the squadrons under his command were already harassing the rear. Prince Rupert advised an immediate attack on the enemy. A council of war was held, and many of the officers urged delay until the expected reinforcements should join them; but Rupert's advice prevailed. On the field of Naseby the two armies met once more in deadly fight early on the morning of the 14th of June.

On the field of Marston the genius of Cromwell shone forth, as we have said, for the first time, amazing by its majesty alike the army of the Parliament and the king. On the field of Naseby the bâton of Cromwell struck down the sceptre from the hand of Charles, never in his day to be lifted by royal hands again. Naseby, we know, is a little village town in Leicestershire, near Market Harborough, and remains, we understand, to this day very much what it was on the day of the battle in June, 1645. A wide, wavy, open country it is, and between two elevations, hardly to be dignified by the name of hills, lies the field,—spot of battle, spot of doom, "valley of the shadow of death" to how many brave men! They still show the old table at Naseby where the guards of Rupert—the Cavaliers—sat the night before the battle,—an old oak table, deeply indented and stained with the carousals of ages. The battle of Marston field was decided by about ten o'clock at night; the battle of Naseby began about ten in the morning, a bright summer morning. When they met there, those two armies, amidst the green heraldry of indignant Nature, beneath the song of the startled lark, and the gay varieties of the green earth, and the dappled sky,



SKIRMISH BETWEEN BLAKE AND VAN TROMP. [*Page* 317.

and the springing corn, there rose the Royalists' cry of " Queen Mary !" answered by the stern, gruff battle-shout of the Ironsides, "God is with us!" Rupert knew that Cromwell was on the field, and sought to bring his troops against the mighty Roundhead; but he found Ireton instead—a soldier who afterwards, as Cromwell's son-in-law, exhibited much of the iron resolve of his yet more illustrious father. If any field could have been won by passion alone, Rupert would have won not only Naseby, but many another field; but we know that, as passion is one of the most frail elements of our nature, so Rupert was one of the most frail of men. At the head of his Cavaliers, in white sash and plume, he indeed flamed in brilliant gallantry over the field, shouting, "Queen Mary! Queen Mary!" while the more rough, unknightly soldiers thundered, " God is with us! God is with us!" Beholding Cromwell flying from one part of the field to another like lightning, breaking the enemy's lines, it might seem that he too, like Rupert, was only impersonated passion; but his vision included the whole field, and held all that passion in mastery and in check. At one moment, a commander of the king's, knowing Cromwell, advanced briskly from the head of his troops to exchange a single bullet with him. They encountered, their pistols discharged, and the Cavalier, with a slanting back blow of the sword, cut the string of Oliver's helmet, or morion. He was just about to repeat the stroke, but some of Cromwell's party passed by, rescued him, and one of them threw his headpiece on his saddle. Hastily Cromwell caught it, and placed it on his head the wrong way, and so through the day he wore it; and everywhere his words, "God is with us!" struck like light over his soldier's hearts,—like lightning over his enemies. What was there in the poor cry, "Queen Mary!" (and such a Mary!) to kindle feelings like that! Then, at last, the tide of the day turned, and the Royalists sunk, or attempted to retain a retreating fight among the gorse bushes and the rabbit warrens, which checked the Roundheads' charge. But on this field the passionate Rupert, as at Marston, supposed that he had won the day, and, thinking the victory all his own, he clove his way back to the spot where the poor helpless king was cheering his dismayed troopers. Indeed; we can almost weep as we hear that cry from the king: "One charge more, gentlemen! One charge more, in the name of God! and the day is ours." He placed himself at the head of the troopers, and a thousand of them prepared to follow him. One of his courtiers snatched his bridle, and turned him from the path of honour to that of despair. "Why," says one writer, "was there no hand to strike that traitor to the ground?" Alas! if the king's own hand could not strike that traitor to the ground, was it possible that another's could? Who would have dared to have taken Cromwell's bridle at such a moment? And so, at the battle of Naseby, the crown fell from the king's head and the sceptre from his hand, and he was henceforth never more in any sense a king.

Poor king! "Who will bring me," cried he in despair, "this Cromwell, dead or alive?" Alas! your majesty, *who?*

Everywhere Rupert was Charles's evil genius. Everywhere his impetuosity injured himself, his cause, and his royal master. He galloped forward two miles to ascertain the intentions of Fairfax; and returning, sent word through the line that he was retreating. It was a ruse of Cromwell's. He had merely put in motion a few of his troops. Charles, trusting to the miserable deceiving and self-deception of Rupert, relinquished the favourable ground he occupied, and led his battalions into the plain. Here the great generals had fixed themselves in a remarkably strong position. Here they were thundering out their hymns in the very enthusiasm of a triumph, rather than in expectation of a battle. Upon the field altogether there were about 36,000 men. Rupert began the battle. He charged Ireton with such boldness, that even that lion-like officer sank before his terrible and bold and passionate onslaught. Fairfax that day, abandoning the privileges of a general, performed feats of valour in the thickest of the fight, bareheaded. He everywhere flamed resolution and courage over every part of the field, and especially among the ranks of his own men. But he failed to turn the fortune of the day. Ireton, on the left, was routed. Fairfax, in the centre, remained struggling, the fate of his men undecided. Cromwell and his Ironsides stood there, upon the right. They were attacked by Sir Marmaduke Langdale—he might as well have attacked a rock,—when the Royalists recoiled. The Ironsides in turn attacked them, poured over them a terrible and heavy fire, routed them, sent three squadrons after them to prevent their rallying, and with the remaining four hastened to Fairfax, and, with an overpowering shock, dashed through, scattered, and cut down the Royalists, hoping for victory in the centre. In vain Charles, with remarkable bravery, sought to recover the fortune of the fight. He no doubt felt at that moment the hopeless ruin of his cause.

"One more charge," said the poor defeated king, "and we recover the day."

This is the moment which Lord Macaulay has seized in his fine lyric, "The Battle of Naseby," too lengthy to quote entire. The following verses commence with the rout of the Roundheads, and the sudden rush down of Oliver with his Ironsides :—

"They are here! They rush on! We are broken! We are gone!
Our left is borne before them like stubble on the blast.
O Lord, put forth Thy might! O Lord, defend the right!
Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it to the last.

"Stout Skippon, hath a wound; the centre hath given ground:
Hark! hark! What means the trampling of horsemen on our rear?
Whose banner do I see, boys? 'Tis he, thank God, 'tis he boys!
Bear up another minute: brave Oliver is here.

"Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a row,
Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on the dykes,
Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the accurst,
And at a shock have scattered the forest of his pikes.

"Fast, fast the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple Bar;
And he,—he turns, he flies; shame on those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture, and dare not look on war."

Never was rout more thorough and complete. Two thousand men were left dead on the field. "God is with us!" had been the noble watchword of the Parliamentarians; "Queen Mary!" was the watchword of the Royalists. Is there not something very significant in the different success of such mottoes? The king here lost all. The prisoners taken were five thousand foot and three thousand horse. They captured the whole of Charles's artillery, eight thousand stand of arms, above a hundred pair of colours, the royal standard, the king's cabinet of letters (alas!), and the whole spoil of the camp. That cabinet of letters revealed, beyond all question, the perfidy of the king; proved that he never desired peace, and made his favourite exclamation, "On the word of a king," a bye-word, and, for some time, the synonym of a lie. The letters were all published, after having been read aloud to the assembled citizens in Guildhall, that all the people might satisfy themselves of their monarch's probity. This battle was fought on the 14th of June, 1645, and increased Cromwell's influence amazingly.

And now we follow him through a long series of most daring and brilliant adventures, conquests, and expeditions. Rapidly he covered—he overspread the land with his victorious men of iron. His vigilance was wonderful. Town after town was taken. He swept over the country like a tempest. Leicester, and thence to Bridgewater, Shaftesbury, Bristol, Devizes. Summoning the last-mentioned town to surrender: "Win it, and wear it," said the governor. Cromwell did both. He then stormed Berkeley Castle, and threw himself before Winchester. The last-named place surrendered by capitulation. While here he very courteously sent in to the Bishop of Winchester, and offered him a guard to secure his person; but the bishop, flying into the castle, refused his courtesy. Afterwards when the castle began to be battered by two pieces of ordnance, he sent to the lieutenant-general, thanking him for the great favour offered to him, and being now more sensible what it was, he desired the enjoyment of it. To whom the wise lieutenant-general replied, that since he made not use of the courtesy, but wilfully ran away from it, he must now partake of the same conditions as the others who were with him in the castle; and if he were taken, he must expect to be used as a prisoner of war. Another interesting incident illustrates Cromwell's strict severity in exacting compliance, from his own army, with its articles. When information was laid before him *by the vanquished* that they had been plundered by some of his soldiers on leaving the city, contrary to the terms granted to them, he ordered the offenders to be tried by a court-martial, at which they were sentenced to death. Whereupon he ordered the unfortunate men, who were six in number, to cast lots for the first sufferer; and after his execution, sent the remaining five, with a suitable explanation, to Sir Thomas Glenham, Governor of Oxford, requesting him to deal with them as he thought fit: a piece of conduct which so charmed the Royalist officer, that he immediately returned the men to Cromwell, with a grateful compliment, and expression of much respect.

Still on! on! After Winchester, Basing fell before him; this was thought to be one of the most impregnable of fortresses. Then Salisbury; then Exeter, where he fought Lord Wentworth and took five hundred prisoners and six standards, one of which was the king's; then pouring along Cornwall, he scattered the last remnants of the Royalist army; and, by-and-by, after innumerable other victories, entered London, greeted with extraordinary honours. The instant he entered the House, all the members rose to receive him, and the Speaker pronounced a long and elaborate eulogium, closing with "the hearty thanks of the House for his many services." An annuity of £2,500 appears to have been granted to Cromwell and his family, including estates escheated to the Parliamentary cause. In the presence of all this, Hume's sneer at him as an inferior general is as laughable as it is contemptible and mean. Of those days of Cromwell's rapid flights hither and thither, all England retains to this day the footmarks. No wonder that Essex and Manchester did not move sufficiently rapid for him. Cromwell, we see, decided the popular cause. Royalism now lay prostrate before his feet by a series of the most astounding victories of which our kingdom ever had the impress or told the tale. His presence was certain victory. Invincible! we surely may call him. There is no corner of England where ruins of old feudal state or monastic grandeur are not coupled with the name of Cromwell; and while, doubtless, his name will be mentioned in connection with spots he never saw, it yet gives to us an idea of the wonderful universality of his power and conquest.

XI.

CROMWELL IN IRELAND.

CHAPTER XI.

CROMWELL IN IRELAND.

BUT it has been said that there is one place where we dare not follow him—Ireland. Let us see. The Irish Roman Catholics had broken out in rebellion, and had massacred (according to various accounts) from fifty thousand to two hundred thousand victims. This was the Hibernian St. Bartholomew. The Irish, indeed, at this time determined on erasing every vestige of the English name from their country.

This great insurrection had broken out in 1640; it was not until after a long succession of murders, pillages, wild conflagrations, and excommunications that Cromwell was called upon by the Parliament, in 1649, to go there as Lord-Lieutenant, to attempt what really must be a difficult conquest. Guizot says, "The Protestants of Ireland had been ejected from their houses, hunted down, slaughtered, and exposed to all the tortures that religious and patriotic hatred could invent; a half-savage people, passionately attached to their barbarism, eager to avenge, in a day, ages of outrage and misery, with a proud joy committed excesses which struck their ancient masters with horror and dismay." And, in fact, Cromwell undertook the task with great reluctance, and probably foresaw that there would be terrible reprisals.

"In fact," writes Merle D'Aubigné, "the Catholics burnt the houses of the Protestants, turned them out naked in the midst of winter, and drove them, like herds of swine, before them. If, ashamed of their nudity, and desirous of seeking shelter from the rigour of a remarkably severe season, these unhappy wretches took refuge in a barn, and concealed themselves under the straw, the rebels instantly set fire to it and burned them alive. At other times they were led without clothing to be drowned in rivers; and if, on the road, they did not move quick enough, they were urged forward at the point of the pike. When they reached the river or the sea, they were precipitated into it, in bands of several hundreds, which is doubtless an exaggeration. If these poor wretches arose to the surface of the water, men were stationed along the brink to plunge them in again with the butts of their muskets, or to fire at and kill them. Husbands were cut to pieces in the presence of their wives; wives and virgins were abused in the sight of their nearest relations; and infants of seven or eight years were hung before the eyes of their parents. Nay, the Irish even went so far as to teach their own children to strip and kill the children of the English, and dash out their brains against the stones. Numbers of Protestants were buried alive, as many as seventy in one trench. An Irish priest, named MacOdeghan, captured forty or fifty Protestants, and persuaded them to abjure their religion on a promise of quarter. After their abjuration, he asked them if they believed that Christ was bodily present in the Host, and that the Pope was head of the Church? and on their replying in the affirmative, he said, 'Now, then, you are in a very good faith!' and, for fear they should relapse into heresy, he cut all their throats."

Let these facts always be borne in mind when we look on Cromwell in Ireland.

This rebellion, which broke out in 1640, had through the necessity of the times been much neglected till 1649. The Parliament, indeed, had long before got possession of Dublin, which was delivered up to them by the Marquis of Ormond, who was then obliged to come over to England. But being recalled by the Irish, Ormond made a league with them in favour of the king, and brought over most of the kingdom into a union with the Royalists. Londonderry and Dublin were the only places that held out for the Parliament, and the latter was in great danger of being lost. This compelled Colonel Jones, the Governor, to send over to England for succour; and a considerable body of forces was thereupon ordered for Ireland. The command of these was offered to Cromwell, who accepted it with seeming reluctance; professing "that the difficulty which appeared in the expedition, was his chief motive for engaging in it; and that he hardly expected to prevail over the rebels, but only to preserve to the Commonwealth some footing in that kingdom."

The Parliament was so pleased with his answer, that, on the 22nd of June, 1649, it gave him a commission to command all the forces that should be sent into Ireland, and to be Lord-Governor of that kingdom for three years, in all affairs both civil and military. From the very minute of his receiving this charge, Cromwell used an incredible expedition in the raising of money, providing of shipping, and drawing the forces together for their intended enterprise. The soldiery marched with great speed to the rendezvous at Milford Haven, there to expect the new Lord-Deputy, who followed them from London on the 10th of July. His setting out was very pompous, being drawn in a coach with six horses, and attended by many members of the Parliament and Council of State, with the chief of the army; his life-guard, consisting of eighty men who had formerly been commanders, all bravely mounted and accoutred, both they and their servants.

He was received with extraordinary honours at Bristol. Thence he went to Wales, and embarked for Ireland from the lovely and magnificent haven of Milford, and at last arrived in Dublin. Reviewing his army of twelve thousand men—apparently a small army, indeed, for such a work!—there, he advanced to Drogheda, or Tredagh, which he took by storm. His advance through the country was a continued triumph, a repetition of the same wonderful career which closed the war with Charles in England. The taking of Tredagh was a feat of extraordinary strength; so much so, that the brave O'Neal swore a great oath, "That if Cromwell had taken Tredagh, if he could storm hell, he would take it also!" Terrible also was the contest of Clonmell, before which Cromwell sat down with the resolution of fighting and of conquest.

Many persons were here taken, and among them the celebrated fighting Bishop of Ross, who was carried to a castle kept by his own forces, and there hanged before the walls, in sight of the garrison; which so discouraged them that they immediately surrendered to the Parliament's forces. This bishop was used to say, "There was no way of curing the English, but by hanging them."

For all this tremendous havoc, the most terrible oath an Irishman knows to the present day is "The curse of Cromwell!." And the massacres and the besiegements are ever called in to blacken the great general's memory by writers, for instance, like Clarendon. And what did Cromwell do *first?* All husbandmen, and labourers, ploughmen, artificers, and others of the meaner sort of the Irish nation, were to be exempted from question in reference to the eight years of blood and misery, now ended. As to the ringleaders, indeed, and those who could be proved to be really concerned in the massacre of

1641, there was for these a carefully graduated scale of punishments—banishment, death,—but only after exact inquiry and proof. Those in arms at certain dates against the Parliament, but not in the massacre, these were not to forfeit their estates, but lands, to a third of their value, in Connaught were to be assigned to them. Others not well affected to Parliament were to forfeit one-third of their estates, and to remain quiet at their peril. The Catholic aristocracy, we see, were to be punished for their guilty bloodsheddings, but the "ploughmen, husbandmen, and artificers of the meaner sort were to be exempted from all question." Clarendon admitted that Ireland flourished under this arrangement to a surprising extent; and Thomas Carlyle well says, "This curse of Cromwell, so called, is the only gospel of veracity I can yet discover to have been ever fairly afoot there."

Cromwell returned to London in the month of May, 1650, as a soldier who had gained more laurels and done more wonders in nine months than any age or history could parallel, and sailed home, as it were, in triumph. At Bristol he was twice saluted by the great guns, and welcomed back with many other demonstrations of joy. On Hounslow Heath he was met by General Fairfax, many members of Parliament, and officers of the army, and multitudes of the common people. Coming to Hyde Park, he was received by the Lord Mayor and Corporation of the City of London; the great guns were fired off, and

Colonel Barkstead's regiment, which was drawn up for that purpose, gave him several volleys with their small arms. Thus in a triumphant manner he entered London, amidst a crowd of attendants, and was received with the highest acclamations. And after resuming his place in Parliament, the Speaker, in an eloquent speech, returned him the thanks of the House for his great and faithful services in Ireland; after which, the Lord-Lieutenant gave them a particular account of the state and condition of that kingdom. It was while he rode thus in state through London, that Oliver replied to some sycophantic person, who had observed, "What a crowd comes out to see your lordship's triumph!" "Yes; but if it were to see me hanged, how many more would there be!" Here is a clear-headed, practical man.

But it was a busy life; his three years Lord-Lieutenancy had evidently been remitted; for other and urgent matters demanded such a bâton as he alone could wield; and when he had struck down the rebellion, the Parliament recalled him, and he arrived in London, May 31st, 1650. On the 29th of June, within a single month of his arrival at home, he set forth on his great military expedition to Scotland. The Parliament had wished Lord Fairfax to take command, and set things right there; but, although Fairfax was an Independent, his wife was a Presbyterian, and she would not allow her husband to go. We believe that it was very well that it was so.

XII.

SCOTLAND, AND CROMWELL IN THE BATTLE OF DUNBAR.

CHAPTER XII.

CROMWELL AT DUNBAR.

MR ANDREW BISSET has written at greater length probably than any other recent historian, concerning what he calls Cromwell's invasion of Scotland, and especially concerning the battle of Dunbar. The description of that battle-field, our readers do not need to be told, is one of Carlyle's noblest battle-pieces. Mr. Bisset, however, writes in the earnest desire in some measure to account for, and to cover the disgrace of, that defeat. Nor does he altogether fail. He entertains a pleasant idea that Cromwell was a poor general; that he never on any occasion, not even at Dunbar, exhibited that higher military genius which dazzles and excites. He believes that his merit as a general was confined to his raising a body of troops who were well fed and well disciplined. Cromwell, he thinks, had a fertile genius in craft, and, to use historian Bisset's words, "There are many villains who owe their success, both in public and private life, to the same arts by which Oliver Cromwell overreached his friends and his party, and made himself absolute ruler of England, Scotland, and Ireland." It is singular that, according to the theory of Mr. Bisset, the amazing craft which he unquestionably possessed in council, he never displayed on the field. He remarks again: "The battle of Dunbar was the only battle in these wars, except those battles fought by Montrose, in which any considerable degree of generalship was shown. Most of the battles of this great Civil War were steady, pounding matches, where the hostile armies drew up in parallel lines, and fought till one was beaten." It is not necessary to stay a moment to refute this eminently foolish verdict of a really very well-informed man; still, had we any personal acquaintance with Mr. Bisset, we should like to lay before him the strategic plans of the fields of Marston, Naseby, and others, which perhaps would demonstrate that they were no more mere "pounding matches" than were any of the great fields of Marlborough or of Wellington. It certainly does appear that David Leslie, the commander of the Scots at Dunbar, found his hands tied by a committee; and any kind of battle anywhere may be lost, but, probably, no battle of any kind was ever gained, by a committee. The English army reached Dunbar on the night of Sunday the 1st of September, 1650; it was rainy and tempestuous weather; the poor army drew up amidst swamps and bogs, but could not pitch a tent; the expressions in Cromwell's letter seem to show that he felt himself reduced to extremities. To those extremities we may refer presently. A dispassionate glance, however, at the state of affairs, does not permit us to suppose that, under the most favourable circumstances, the Scots could have been successful. A piece of grim folly it appears, to constitute a Committee of Estates, or a Committee of Court Commissioners into a council of war, to regulate and coerce the will of a commander or general of forces. But this was actually the case; and it was to this Committee Cromwell was indebted for that false move which Leslie made, and which the vigilant eye of the great English commander so soon perceived and turned to fearful account. But it appears clearly the case that, if Leslie had not made this disadvantageous move, he could have had little chance against the inferior numbers of the English army. Cromwell's soldiers were no doubt in uncomfortable circumstances amidst the swamps and the bogs, but they were well appointed, well trained and disciplined, well fed, and well armed; in fact, they had come forth, as Mr. Bisset pleases to call it, to invade Scotland! but in reality to repel the Scotch invasion of England; and the English nation was behind them.

The Scottish country in those days was not charming; the contrast is strongly expressed by some of the invaders of their impressions of the Scottish as contrasted with the English villages. For the English village, even in those days, was perhaps not less romantic and picturesquely pleasant than now; nay, perhaps, in innumerable instances even more so. The pleasant village green, the old stone church, even then of many generations, the—compared with our times—rough but yet well-to-do farm, perhaps generally of that style we call the "watling plaster," the straggling labourers' cottages, running along the village for a mile, with their gardens, if not trim and neat, yet, from what we know of the Culpeppers and other such writers of the time, redundant in their wealth of herbs and flowers; the old villages of the England of that day look quite as attractive, beneath their lines of rugged elms and their vast yew trees' shade, as now. Those belonging to the Protector's army who have recorded their impressions, contrast all this with that which greeted their eyes in Scottish villages as they passed along. They saw nothing to remind them of the beauty of the English village; for the most part these were assemblages of mere clay or mud hovels. Land, it seemed, was too valuable in Scotland to be wasted on cottage gardens and village greens. And from such homes as these the inhabitants were dragged forth by their lairds with no very good will of their own, and they appear, as they gathered into their ranks, to have been badly fed and badly accoutred. All this may partly apologise for the exceedingly irascible language historian Bisset indulges in when he says, "In the long black catalogue of disasters brought upon Scotland, during a period of five hundred years, by rulers whom God in His wrath had sent to be her curse, her scourge, and her shame, there is none greater or more shameful than this rout of Dunbar." The good historian Bisset, it would seem, has some personal strong feelings which irritate him as he attempts to depreciate the merits of the victory of Cromwell at Dunbar. Our readers will perhaps think his notes of depreciation very slight when he alleges, that Cromwell had not gained the victory probably, only that in the first instance he availed himself of Leslie's bad move, and in the next instance in the conflict he "had the advantage of the initiative," which also seems very foolish reasoning on the part of historian Bisset. Whether in all the battles he fought, he took the initiative or not, it is not necessary here to discuss; but he watched the moment, whenever that moment might be, and then, striking sudden, swift, and sharp, with all the celerity of lightning, this was certainly a way, and for his enemies a very unpleasant way, Cromwell had.

But disposing of and dismissing Mr. Historian Bisset, it still remains true, that to see Cromwell in the full height of his greatness, we must follow him to Scotland, to Dunbar.

It is tolerably easy to understand the state of the question. We have seen the Scots aiding the Parliament and doing battle with the king,—nay, selling him. But they desired the victory of Presbyterianism; Cromwell was opposed to the elevation of any sect. This was one chief cause of the antipathy of the Scotch. Then they invited Charles, son of the late king, from Holland, and proclaimed him king of the Scots; they did not know when they invited him, that, with the perfidy and villainy hereditary in his family, he had issued a commission empowering Montrose to raise troops and to subdue the country by force of arms. Our readers have not to learn, now, that Charles II. was perhaps in a deeper degree than any of his ancestors or descendants, false, treacherous, and licentious. He signed the Solemn League and Covenant of Scotland, supporting the Protestant religion, at the very moment he was in attempted negotiation with Rome for befriending the Papacy. He was, however, proclaimed king of the Scots, and the Scots had a perfect right to elect him to be their monarch; but he aimed at the recovery of Scotland in order to recover the crowns of the three kingdoms. To win Scotland to help him in this, he would not only sign the Covenant, he proffered to sign a declaration by which he renounced all Papacy and Episcopacy. But pledged word or oath were of very little account with him.

It was surely a strange procedure, that in Scotland where Jenny Geddes had hurled her cutty stool against Popery, and where first the storm had raged forth against the despotism and tyranny of the Stuarts; it was surely strange, that there, of all places in the British Empire, Charles II. should be received. It is clearly obvious that the aim of the Scotch clergy was to impose Presbyterianism upon the whole of the empire. Scotland looks very bad in this business. However, Cromwell, now proclaimed Lord-General of the Parliamentary forces, has to march away with all speed to settle, as best he may, these new and final differences. He entered Scotland on the 23rd or July, 1650, with 11,000 horse and foot, commanded under him by Generals Fleetwood, Lambert, and Whally; and Colonels Pride, Overton, and Monk. He found before him, whithersoever he went, a desolation; the Scotch preachers had described the English soldiers as monsters, delighting in the murder or the mutilation of women and children. The peasantry having destroyed what they must have been compelled to leave, fled with whatever they could remove. How far they misunderstood the character of their great enemy, we shall by-and-by see; indeed, it appears that very soon the Scots came to know him better. There had come before him a report that the English army intended to put all the men to the sword, and to thrust hot irons through the women's breasts; but the general's proclamation soon eased them upon that score, and according to the documents of Whitelock, it appears that the women stayed behind their husbands, to provide bread and drink, by baking and brewing, for the English army.

For a vivid, accurate knowledge—nay, more, for a bright, gleaming canvas cartoon, or picture, of the great battle of Dunbar, let any one read the account as given us by Carlyle.[1] So vivid is the picture, that we can see the disposition of those armies, and the full array of all that magnificent scenery, upon Monday, the 2nd of September, 1650. The little town of Dunbar comes out plainly before us, on its high and windy hill, overlooking its ancient castle, and its rocky promontories stretching along the sea, fishing villages, and indenting bays. On the hills, see the long array of Leslie's army—one of the largest and most important Scotland ever mustered, twenty-seven thousand men skirting the Lammermuirs; and there, down beneath, near where the peninsula stretches out to the sea, there is Oliver, with his less than eleven thousand. He never was in so critical a position before. There is no retreat, behind him is the sea. In front of him is Leslie and the heath—continents of bog and swamp, where none but the mountain sheep can, with any safety, travel—the Lammermoor. Well may we ask, What is Oliver to do now?

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[1] Cromwell's "Letters and Speeches," vol. iii. p. 38.

What is Oliver to do now? It does appear as if he is to be annihilated here, in this wilderness; for wide all round looms the desolation over the whole ground occupied by the contending armies. It appears there were then only two houses and farmsteads. On this Monday there had been some slight skirmishing. Leslie's horse dashed across those little huts, occupied by Lambert's, or Pride's foot and horse, and seized three prisoners, one a musketeer, a spirited fellow, with a wooden arm. On being brought before Leslie, he was asked, "Do the enemy intend to fight?" The man replied, "What do you think we come here for? We come for nothing else."

"Soldier," said Leslie, "how will you fight, when you have shipped half your men and all your great guns?" The answer was, "Sir, if you please to draw down your men, you shall find both men and great guns too." To one of the officers who asked him how he dared reply so saucily to the general, he said, "I only answer the question put to me." Leslie sent him across, free again, by a trumpet; and making his way to Cromwell, he reported what had passed, adding, "I for one have lost twenty shillings by the business, plundered from me in this skirmish." Thereupon the Lord-General gave him two pieces, which are forty shillings, and sent him away rejoicing.

It will be well also to read the following letter, in which we have so mingled a tone of cheerfulness and caution. He evidently was preparing for the worst, and yet looked forward to the probability of some interposition for help and deliverance.

"*To Sir Arthur Hazlerig, Governor of Newcastle: These.*

"DUNBAR, *2nd September*, 1650.

"DEAR SIR,

"We are here upon an engagement very difficult. The enemy hath blocked up our way at the Pass at Copperspath, through which we cannot go without almost a miracle. He lieth so upon the hills that we know not how to come that way without great difficulty; and our lying here daily consumeth our men, who fall sick beyond imagination.

"I perceive your forces are not in a capacity for present release. Wherefore, whatever becomes of us, it will be well for you to get what forces you can together; and the south to help what they can. The business nearly concerneth all good people. If your forces had been in a readiness to have fallen upon the back of Coppersgate, it might have occasioned supplies to have come to us. But the only wise God knows what is best. All shall work for good. Our spirits [minds] are comfortable, praised be the Lord, though our present condition be as it is. And indeed we have much hope in the Lord; of whose mercy we have had large experience.

"Indeed, do you get together what forces you can against them. Send to friends in the south to help with more. Let H. Vane know what I write. I would not make it public, lest danger should accrue thereby. You know what use to make hereof. Let me hear from you. I rest,

"Your servant,
"OLIVER CROMWELL."

"P.S. It is difficult for me to send to you. Let me hear from you after 'you receive this.'"

But hope, we have said, did by no means desert the general; in the army of Leslie, and among the preachers accompanying the army, there was confidence, and the presumption generated from confidence; they expected soon to destroy the army of Cromwell, and to scatter it over the moors and over the sea, perhaps to have the illustrious general in their power; they expected to march on without interruption to London with the king. "But," says Cromwell, in one of his despatches, "in what they were thus lifted up, the Lord was above them. The enemy lying in the posture before mentioned, having these advantages, we lay very near to him, being sensible of our disadvantages, having some weakness of flesh, and yet consolation and support from the Lord Himself to our poor weak faith, wherein, I believe, not a few amongst us shared,—that because of their numbers, because of their advantages, because of their confidence, because of our weakness, because of our strait, WE WERE IN THE MOUNT, and in the mount the Lord would be seen, and that He would find out a way of deliverance and salvation for us; and indeed we had our consolations and our hopes."

What language do you call this? Is it fanaticism? Is it hypocrisy?

Urged, it is said, by the clergy, who were admitted far too much to their councils,—as a warrior and a general, Leslie appears to have made a movement in the disposition of his army which was fatally wrong. He is spoken of as a wise, clear-sighted man, and upon many previous occasions he had shown himself to be so; and it is possible that had he seized upon all the advantages of his position, he might have been master of the field, but for that fatal movement of the enemy, scarcely noticed by any eye but the active, penetrating glance of Cromwell's. "With wonderful foresight," says Mr. Forster, "that almost justified the inspiration attributed to him, he anticipated some movement by which they might now be enabled to attempt the enemy, and secure the advantage of a first attack; and, as he beheld it, he exclaimed in one of those strong bursts of enthusiasm which ever and anon fell upon him! 'THE LORD HATH DELIVERED THEM INTO OUR HANDS!'"

Yes, with a vigour only equalled by Shakespeare's descriptions of night on the fields of Agincourt and Bosworth, Carlyle has sketched for us the disposition of those defiant hosts on this night of the 2nd of September, a wild, wet night: "The harvest moon wades deep among clouds of sleet and hail. Whoever has a heart for prayer, let him pray now, for the wrestle of death is at hand. Pray, and withal, keep his powder dry! and be ready for extremities, and quit himself like a man. We English have some tact, the Scots have none. The hoarse sea moans bodeful, swinging low and heavy against those Whinstone cliffs; the sea and the tempests are abroad, all else asleep but we,—and there is ONE that rides on the wings of the wind."

The orders of the Scots were to extinguish their matches, to cower under the shocks of corn, and seek some imperfect shelter and sleep; to-morrow night, for most of them, the sleep will be perfect enough, whatever the shelter may be. The order to the English was, to stand to their arms, or to lie within reach of them all night. Some waking soldiers in the English army were holding prayer-meetings too. By moonlight, as the grey heavy morning broke over St. Abb's Head its first faint streak, the first peal of the trumpets ran along the Scottish host. But how unprepared were they then for the loud reply of the English host, and for the thunder of their cannons upon their lines.

Terrible was the awakening of the Scottish soldiers; and their matches all out: the battle-cry rushed along the lines—"The Covenant! The Covenant!" but it soon became more and more feeble, while yet high and strong, amid the war of the trumpets and the musketry, arose the watchword of Cromwell: "The Lord of Hosts! The Lord of Hosts!" The battle-cry of Luther was in that hour the charging word of the English Puritans.

Terrible! but short as terrible! Cromwell had seized the moment and the place. The hour and the man met there; in overthrowing the one flank of the enemy's line, he made them the authors of their own defeat. A thick fog, too, had embarrassed their movements; their very numbers became a source of confusion. But now over St. Abb's Head the sun suddenly appeared, crimsoning the sea, scattering the fogs away. The Scottish army were seen flying in all directions—flying, and so brief a fight! "They run!" said Cromwell; "I protest they run!" and catching inspiration, doubtless, from the bright shining of the daybeam,—"Inspired," says Mr. Forster, "by the thought of a triumph so mighty and resist-less, his voice was again heard, 'NOW LET GOD ARISE, AND LET HIS ENEMIES BE SCATTERED!'"

It was a wonderful victory; wonderful even among wonderful triumphs! To hear the shout sent up by the united English army; to see the general make a halt, and sing the one hundred and seventeenth Psalm upon the field. Wonderful that that immense army should thus be scattered—10,000 prisoners taken, about 3,000 slain, 200 colours, 15,000 stand of arms, and all the artillery!—and that Cromwell should not have lost of his army twenty men!

It is very beautiful to notice the humanity of Cromwell. He had been indisposed to fight these men, for their faith was very near to his own. They had denounced his party and his designs, as "sectaries," "malignants," and yet had elevated the Prince of Malignants to a place of honour and authority over them, and had sought to crush out all religious liberty by imposing their ecclesiastical polity upon England. This Oliver had attempted to resist by peaceable means, as best he could. He wrote (as his letters and the public documents bear testimony) in the spirit of a Christian, to the men whom he looked upon as Christian brethren. "I do beseech you in the bowels of Christ," he writes, "do believe that you may be mistaken!" They persisted we know, so they had to abide the consequences of, assuredly, a piece of illimitable folly; and there was one Christian and Puritan army opposed to another. The sight was painful to Oliver. It is evident he would have avoided the battle-field, but it could not be avoided. He was standing there for the invaded liberties of England; and, however hostile to war the man was, the men who would build up the throne of Charles Stuart must understand that it was only with their own they had a right to meddle.

Hence he writes to General Leslie:

"*From the Camp at Pentland Hills,*
"14*th August*, 1650.

"SIR,—

"I received yours of the 13th instant, with the paper you mentioned therein enclosed, which I caused to be read in the presence of so many officers as could well be gotten together, to which your trumpet can witness. We return you this answer; by which I hope, in the Lord, it will appear that we continue the same we have professed ourselves to the honest people in Scotland; wishing to them as to our own souls; it being no part of our business to hinder any of them from worshipping God in that way they are satisfied in their consciences by the Word of God they ought, though different from us.

"But that under the pretence of the Covenant, mistaken, and wrested from the most native intent and equity thereof, a king should be taken in by you to be imposed upon us; and this be called 'the cause of God and the kingdom;' and this done upon 'the satisfaction of God's people in both nations,' as is alleged,—together with a disowning of malignants;

although he [Charles Stuart] who is the head of them, in which all their hope and comfort lies, be received; who, at this very instant, hath a popish army fighting for and under him in Ireland; hath Prince Rupert, a man who hath had his hand deep in the blood of many innocent men in England, now in the head of our ships, stolen from us on a malignant account; hath the French and Irish ships daily making depredations on our coast; and strong combinations by the malignants in England, to raise armies in our bowels, by virtue of his commissions, who hath of late issued out very many for that purpose;—how the godly interest you pretend you have received him upon, and the malignant interests in their ends and consequences all centering in this man, can be secured, we cannot discern.

"And how we should believe, that whilst known and notorious malignants are fighting and plotting against us on the one hand, and you declaring for him on the other, it should *not* be an 'espousing of a malignant party's quarrel or interest;' but be a mere 'fighting upon former grounds and principles, and in the defence of the cause of God and the kingdoms,' as hath been these twelve years last past; as you say; how this should be for the security and satisfaction of God's people in both nations, or how the opposing of this should render us enemies to the godly with you, we cannot well understand."

These citations, and others which might be given, illustrate the pacific and upright dispositions, both in the mind of the general and the party he represented. And upon the field of battle, after Dunbar fight was over, his heart moved with pity to the helpless and hapless crowds crushed down in the death struggle, he issued the following—

"PROCLAMATION.

"Forasmuch, as I understand there are several soldiers of the enemy's army yet abiding in the field, who by reason of their wounds could not march from thence:

"These are therefore to give notice to the inhabitants of this nation, That they may have, and hereby have, free liberty to repair to the fields aforesaid: and, with their carts, or in any other peaceable way, to carry away the said soldiers to such places as they shall think fit:—provided they meddle not with, or take away, any of the arms there. And all officers and soldiers are to take notice that the same is permitted.

"Given under my hand, at Dunbar, 4th September, 1650.

"OLIVER CROMWELL."

The neighbouring peasantry came with eight waggons, and these mournful funeral trains retired in peace with their wretched burdens.

It is also very beautiful to turn from the general to the husband, and to find on the morrow after the battle, while yet on the field, so tender a line as the following—so unaffected, no boasting, scarce an allusion to the difficulty or the deliverance, but a simple gleam of affection playing forth from the heart of the strong man.

"*For my beloved wife, Elizabeth Cromwell, at the Cockpit:*[1] *These.*

"DUNBAR,
"*4th September*, 1650.

"MY DEAREST,—

"I have not leisure to write much. But I could chide thee that in many of thy letters thou writest to me, that I should not be unmindful of thee and thy little ones. Truly, if I love thee not too well, I think I err not on the other hand much. Thou art dearer to me than any other creature: let that suffice.

"The Lord hath showed us an exceeding mercy; who can tell how it is! My weak faith has been upheld. I have been in my inward man marvellously supported, though, I assure thee, I grow an old man, and feel infirmities of age marvellously creeping on me. Would my corruptions did as fast decrease! Pray on my behalf in the latter respect. The particulars of our late success Harry Vane or

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[1] The Cockpit was then and long afterwards a sumptuous royal lodging in Whitehall: Henry VIII.'s place of cock-fighting. Cromwell's family removed thither, by vote of the Commons, during the Irish campaign. The present Privy Council office is built on its site.

Gilbert Pickering will impart to thee. My love to all dear friends. I rest thine,

"OLIVER CROMWELL."

The letters on that 4th of September are various pious words hastily penned. Here are some of his words to Ireton in Ireland :—

"I remember you at the throne of grace. I heard of the Lord's good hand with you in reducing Waterford, Duncannon, and Carlow : His name be praised.

"We have been engaged upon a service fullest of trial ever poor creatures were upon. We made great professions of love, knowing we were to deal with many who were godly, and who pretended to be stumbled at our invasion. We were rejected again and again."

By letters like these we are admitted into the most inner sanctuary of Cromwell's life ; and nowhere do we more clearly see its beauty. Beauty ! To many this term will seem strange, applied to this man ; but does not beauty ever dwell with strength ?—and tenderness, is it not the companion of power ? The weak and luxurious Charles could not write such letters. It is very charming to find such fresh and beautiful feelings playing round and through the spirit of a man who was faded and worn down with the burden of overwhelming power, who had ascended to the very highest height of earthly authority. Here is another letter to his wife, bearing nearly the same date :—

"MY DEAREST,—

"I praise the Lord that I have increased in strength in my outward man; but that will not satisfy me, except I get a heart to love and serve my heavenly Father better, and get more of the light of His countenance, which is better than life, and more power over my corruptions. In these hopes I wait, and am not without expectation of a gracious return. Pray for me; truly I do daily for thee and the dear family; and God Almighty bless you all with His spiritual blessings.

"Mind poor Betty of the Lord's great mercy. Oh, I desire her not only to seek the Lord in her necessity, but in deed and in truth to turn to the Lord, and to keep close to Him, and to take heed of a departing heart, and of being cozened with worldly vanities, and worldly company, which I doubt she is too subject to. I earnestly and frequently pray for her, and for him. Truly they are dear to me, very dear; and I am in fear lest Satan should deceive them, knowing how weak our hearts are, and how subtle the adversary is, and what way the deceitfulness of our hearts and the vain world make for his temptations. The Lord give them truth of heart to Him. Let them take Him in truth, and they shall find Him.

"My love to the dear little ones; I pray for them. I thank them for their letters; let me have them often.

"Beware of my Lord Herbert's resort to your house. If he do so, it may occasion scandal, as if I were bargaining with him. Indeed, be wise; you know my meaning. Mind Sir Harry Vane of the business of my estate; Mr. Floyd knows my mind in that matter.

"If Dick Cromwell and his wife be with you, my dear love to them. I pray for them. They shall, God willing, hear from me. I love them very dearly. Truly I am not able as yet to write much; I am weary, and rest thine,

"OLIVER CROMWELL."

We have also another short epistle sent to the same lady next month.

"MY DEAREST,—

"I could not satisfy myself to omit this post, although I have not much to write; yet, indeed, I love to write to my dear, who is very much in my heart. It joys me to hear thy soul prospereth. The Lord increase His favours to thee more and more. The greatest good thy soul can wish is, that the Lord lift upon thee the light of His countenance, which is better than life. The Lord bless all thy good counsel and example to all those about thee, and hear thy prayers, and accept thee always.

"I am glad to hear thy son and daughter are with thee. I hope thou wilt have some good opportunity of good advice to him. Present my duty to my mother, my love to all the family. Still pray for thine,

"OLIVER CROMWELL."

Indeed, at this point in Cromwell's history, we might pause long, and notice many touches—traces of his love for the various members of his family. We might run back through the several past years of his life, and notice the combination of affection, piety, and purity developed in his correspondence. He never writes to his daughters without guiding them to the best life. He never writes to his son without an effort to lead him to the best thoughts and noblest actions, and this with no spirit of acrimony or sternness, but with real cheerfulness. This is very noticeable, among other things, the real kindliness of the man, the homeliness of his feelings, the play of sunny good humour through his thoughts, and through his pen also. Here is a letter which it may be interesting to read:—

"*For my beloved daughter, Bridget Ireton, at Cornbury, the General's Quarters: These.*

" LONDON,
"25*th October*, 1646.

"DEAR DAUGHTER,—

" I write not to thy husband; partly to avoid trouble, for one line of mine begets many of his, which I doubt makes him sit up too late; partly because I am myself indisposed [i.e. *not in the mood*] at this time, having some other considerations.

"Your friends at Ely are well; your sister Claypole is, I trust in mercy, exercised with some perplexed thoughts. She sees her own vanity and carnal mind —bewailing it. She seeks after (as I hope also) what will satisfy. *And thus to be a seeker is to be one of the best sect next to a finder; and such a one shall every faithful humble seeker be at the end.* Happy seeker, happy finder! Who ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, without some sense of self, vanity, and badness? Who ever tasted that graciousness of His, and could go less in desire [i.e. *become less desirous*], less pressing after full enjoyment? Dear heart, press on; let not thy husband, let not anything cool thy affections after Christ. I hope he [*thy husband*] will be an occasion to inflame them. That which is best worthy of love in thy husband is that of the image of Christ he bears. Look on that, and love it best, and all the rest for that. I pray for thee and him; do so for me.

"My service and dear affections to the General and Generaless. I hear she is very kind to thee; it adds to all other obligations. I am,

"Thy dear father,
"OLIVER CROMWELL."

"Delicacy of sentiment," says Dr. D'Aubigné, "the domestic virtues, and paternal love, are among the features by which Cromwell is best characterised." Here again is a letter to one of his daughters, when the writer was on board the *John*, on his expedition to Ireland:—

"MY DEAR DAUGHTER,—

"Your letter was very welcome to me. I like to see anything from your hand; because, indeed, I stick not to say I do entirely love you. And, therefore, I hope a word of advice will not be unwelcome nor unacceptable to thee.

"I desire you both to make it, above all things, your business to seek the Lord; to be frequently calling upon Him that He would manifest Himself to you in His Son; and be listening what returns He makes to you, for He will be speaking in your ear and your heart if you attend thereunto. I desire you to provoke your husband thereunto. As for the pleasure of this life and outward business, let that be upon the bye. Be above all these things by faith in Christ, and then you shall have the true use and comfort of them, and not otherwise. I have much satisfaction in hope your spirit is this way set; and I desire you may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and that I may hear thereof. The Lord is very near, which we see by His wonderful works; and, therefore, He looks that we of this generation draw near to Him. This late great mercy of Ireland is a great manifestation thereof; your husband will acquaint you with it. We should be much stirred up in our spirits to thankfulness. We much need the spirit of Christ to enable us to praise God for so admirable a mercy.

"The Lord bless thee, my dear daughter!

"I rest, thy loving father,

"OLIVER CROMWELL."

These, then, are the letters of this man (in the which we have been drawn away by the letter to his wife after Dunbar, and have a little confused dates), and he has been regarded as a kind of ogre by all historians! These are the letters of the warrior ; do they not reveal the Christian ? Do they not show a character strong in its simplicity, as we have beheld it before—strong in its mailed armour of proof and in its sagacity? Cromwell has been judged from a wrong centre. Could a kid-skinned time-server like Clarendon understand him? Could a sceptic like Hume understand him ? Could a prejudiced partizan like Forster understand him ? Let the reader, at this point of Cromwell's history, look at the great Maccabæus of the Commonwealth, and let him glance at the circumstances of the history too, and the times. What would have been the state of the land had there been no Cromwell, or had Cromwell been killed on the field of Dunbar or Worcester?—for with the battle of Worcester, which we are presently to recite, terminated the Second Civil War? Charles II. fled in hopeless desolation to France, to exist as the pensioned pauper of the French king. The royal power was now fairly beaten down in England. Let the malignant sneerer, who has no words but commonplace abuse to bestow upon the great English hero, attempt to realize what the land would have been, must have been, without him, rent in factions, almost all equally strong. An army then without a leader, dreamy speculators determined to impose their theories upon the kingdom, and so inflict upon the land the miseries of anarchy, as in the French Revolution; or the horrors of persecution, as in Boston and the New England States. Cromwell was the power raised up by Providence to save England from this. Never in the history of the world had a man a more difficult task to perform; but he performed it, because he brought to the task, in addition to the most remarkable combination of mental requisites ever assembled together in one man—forming a sort of mythic personage, and reminding us of Theseus or Hercules,—in addition to these, we say, he brought piety of the sublimest order, and singleness of purpose lofty as that of a Hebrew prophet, but conjoined to a largeness of toleration for all religious differences, for which we know not where to find a parallel.

XIII.

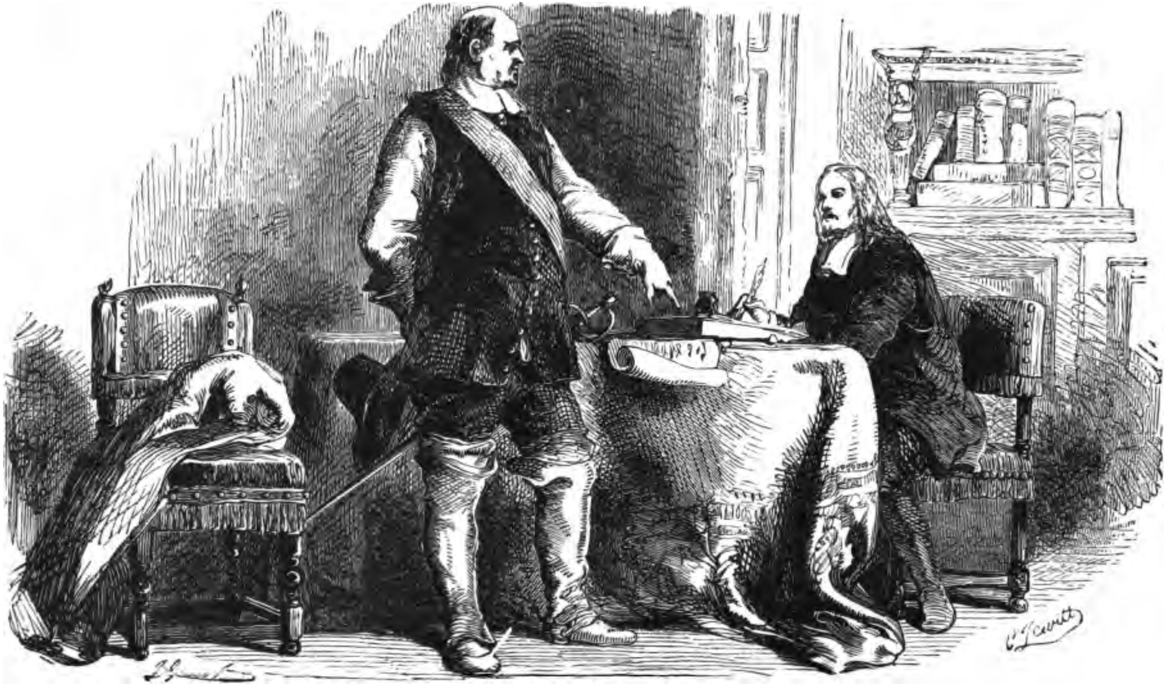
CROMWELL, THE BATTLE OF WORCESTER, AND THE ROMANCE OF BOSCOBEL.

CHAPTER XIII.

CROMWELL AT WORCESTER, AND THE ROMANCE OF BOSCOBEL.

WHOEVER advised Charles, the young king of Scots, after the battle of Dunbar and the entire conquest of the Presbyterian cause by Cromwell, to invade England, had but little ability to read in the book of passing events. There was surely little to encourage such an attempt in the history of what had recently been achieved, in the character of Cromwell, or in the determination of the English people; probably the most encouraging circumstance was, that immediately after the battle of Dunbar, Cromwell was struck down by a serious and protracted illness. The young king came across the Border, reached Lancashire, in spite of very sorry success, apparently in hopeful and buoyant spirits. He had passed by Kendal and Preston to Warrington, there he received a check from Harrison and Lambert; he forced on his way, called on Shrewsbury, in passing, to surrender, but without effect. He then pushed on to Worcester. The city opened its gates and received the king and his army with every demonstration of affection, they provided for their many and grievous wants, and the mayor and aldermen, with all the solemnity and circumstance they could command, attended the Herald who proclaimed Charles king of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland. Vain and empty boastfulness! But there was a stir of terror in England; London especially gave way to fearful alarms. A measure of success, and Charles and the army, which had pushed on from Scotland so far into one of the chief midland cities of England, would speedily be before the metropolis; and Cromwell and his strong men were away. Even lion-hearted Bradshaw was in fear. How was it that Cromwell had permitted this strange stride to be taken by the young man and his foolish advisers? The fidelity of Cromwell was suspected; a universal panic of fear was spreading on every hand. It is quite noticeable how, as in this instance, writers like Mrs. Hutchinson, who never miss their opportunity of uttering their bitterness or their suspicions concerning Cromwell, are as full of alarm when he is absent from the spot which his genius alone could save. In this case there was little need for their fear; even while they were in their panic of wonder Cromwell had already saved them. He came on with a tremendous army, nearly three times as large as that which had conquered at Dunbar.

With nearly 30,000 men, on the 28th of August, 1651, he reached Worcester, and had all his regiments in position within two miles of the city. As to the condition of the royal army, hope and con-



CROMWELL AND MILTON.

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fidence appear to have made them so presumptuous that their chief officers could not abstain from some internal dissentions. "There was no good understanding," says Clarendon, "between the officers of the army." The army was mostly composed of Scots; and yet, by Clarendon's testimony, there was a proposal to supersede old David Leslie in the command, and Buckingham, by the same authority, appears to have been desirous that the honour of the chief command should be conferred upon himself, urging that as it was unreasonable, while they were in Scotland, to put any other in command over Leslie, so now it was unreasonable, while they were in England, and hoped to increase the army by the access of the English, upon whom their principal dependence would be, to expect they would be willing to serve under Leslie; and it would not consist with the honour of any peer of England to receive his orders. Charles was surprised, and urged against the duke his youth; the duke, with sufficient self-confidence, urged again, that Henry IV. of France had won a great battle when he was younger. The king, however, refused to listen to the counsels of his ill-adviser, and the duke did not recover from his ill humour while the army remained in Worcester. The army itself, which in truth must have been a strange array of ragged regiments, felt comfortable; they liked their quarters, and did not desire to quit them till they should be thoroughly refreshed. They were not desirous of marching farther on; Worcester was a good post, standing in a fertile region in the very heart of the kingdom; and if Cromwell must be met, it appears to have been generally thought it would be better to meet him there. So Charles abandoned his first intention to proceed on to London, and every effort was made to strengthen the position by repairing the breaches of the walls, and throwing up forts; and it is impossible to resist the impression that there was a generally diffused faith that, in this place the tide of conflict and conquest was to turn, and now "the king would enjoy his own again."

Even yet they did not know the man who was marching upon them, they did not understand as yet the shrewdness of that eye, and the resources of that brain. The battle of Worcester, it will be seen at once, differs from any of the other great battles which Cromwell fought, and where his genius rose victorious. Marston and Naseby, and even Dunbar, were on the open plain; but Worcester was a city in possession, and the Royalists no doubt expected, from the security of their position, a protracted siege. Worcester stands, as the reader knows, on the right bank of the Severn, and something had been done by the Royalists to increase its means of resistance. Cromwell, of course, found all the bridges broken down and destroyed; not a boat or punt was to be seen, while, apparently securely fortified, there on the opposite side were seen the heights of the beautiful old city, not less strong than beautiful. Even Clarendon seems scarcely able to repress his feelings of admiration, as he says, "Cromwell, without troubling himself with the formality of a siege, marched directly on as to a prey, and possessed himself at once of the hill and all the other places of advantage with very little opposition." How did he perform this feat? It may be supposed he knew what he would do before he arrived on the scene of action. While the Royalists felt their security from the broad river of the Severn, and the narrower river of the little Teme, the great general had no sooner arrived than he proceeded at once to throw his army astride across the two rivers by means of pontoons; then he laid a bridge across the Teme close to its junction with the Severn. He used no delay, none of the circumspection which it was supposed he would so naturally and necessarily employ. He soon forced his way through the surprised and weak defenders against the ingress, as the troops landed by the bridges; and in fact, the battle of Worcester may be said to have been fought in Worcester streets. Cromwell himself soon seized upon the guns of what was called the royal fort, and played them upon the fugitives. The battle raged all round, at every point, although it appears to have been decided under the walls of the town. There Cromwell, with his own Ironsides around him, held the conflict for three hours, "as stiff a contest," he wrote afterwards, "for many hours, including both sides of the river, as he had ever seen."

Some attempts have been made to show that Charles acquitted himself with extraordinary bravery on this occasion; the effort is not successful, the description of the king's heroism at the battle of Worcester has no clear foundation. It is more probable that he looked down upon the rout of battle from the Cathedral tower; and at last, seeing all hope gone and all courage lost, he cried out, "I had rather that you would shoot me than keep me alive to see the sad consequences of this fatal day." The army was cut to pieces, most of the great generals and leaders were taken prisoners, the streets were filled with the bodies of horses and men. By six in the evening Charles had fled through St. Martin's gate. Just outside the town he tried to rally his men; but it was to no purpose, Worcester lay behind him, its houses pillaged, its citizens slain for his sake, and he forced to fly for his life. And who could have expected any other ending? A boy like Charles, with such an army, a handful of men badly supplied with ammunition, the leaders of the army quarrelling among themselves; and these before a veteran like Cromwell, with all England at his back The bravery and devotedness of the men who followed Charles may command respect, and shed some lustre over what must be regarded as a worthless cause, but that is all. So Charles fled through the streets in piteous despair on the evening of that third of September, Cromwell's fortunate day, the anniversary of the battle of Dunbar. At ten o'clock at night he sat down, as he says, weary and scarcely able to write; yet he wrote to the Parliament of England: "The dimensions of this mercy are above my thoughts, it is for aught I know a crowning mercy." They still remember that day in Worcester, and still point out many of the places connected with the story of the battle: and in Perry Wood, where Cromwell first took up his position, there is a tree, which the peasant shows to those who desire to see it, where the devil, Cromwell's intimate friend, appeared to him and gave him the promise of victory. The railway indeed runs over the ground where the hottest engagement took place; Sidbury and St. Martin's have disappeared, and large lime trees grow on the site of the Royal Fort, where the Royalist guns were seized by Cromwell and turned upon the Royalist army; but the rooms are still shown where Charles slept, and where the Duke of Hamilton, who was wounded in the action, died. Powick old bridge, which occupies a conspicuous place in the story of the battle, still stands crooked and narrow, spanning with massive arches and abutments the famous streams of the Teme and Laughern. Perhaps the most curious item memorializing the famous conflict is in the corporation records, with reference to the poor Scotch soldiers: "Paid for pitch and rosin to perfume the Hall after the Scots, two shillings." Indeed that fine old Hall needed perfuming and cleansing, for it was drenched with blood, but rather the blood of the English than the

Scotch; for it was within its walls that the English Cavaliers made a last and desperate resistance, and they were all cut to pieces or made prisoners. This was the last and great decisive conflict; the defeat of Worcester settled the Royal cause, and doomed it, with its chief and his adherents, to banishment, until the strong victor who had scattered the royal rabble at Worcester, should himself be conquered by death.

And here, before we pass on with the stream of circumstance in Cromwell's life, shall we turn for a few moments to the singular episode of the strange adventures of the Royal fugitive Charles, after the battle of Worcester? We may well do so if we are disposed to accept the words of Clarendon, who says, "It is a great pity that there was never a journal made of that miraculous deliverance, in which there might be seen so many visible impressions of the immediate hand of God!" But this language is quite a modest estimate compared with what is said by Mistress Wyndham, the wife or sister of Colonel Wyndham, who took a considerable share in the preservation of the king; this lady says, "It is a story in which the constellations of Providence are so refulgent, that their light is sufficient to confute all the atheists in the world, and to enforce all persons whose faculties are not pertinaciously depraved to acknowledge the watchful eye of God from above, looking upon all actions of men here below, making even the most wicked subservient to His just and glorious designs. For the Almighty so closely covered the king with the wing of His protection, and so clouded the understandings of his cruel enemies, that the most piercing eye of malice could not see, nor the most barbarous bloody hand offer violence to, his sacred person, God smiting his pursuers as once he did the Sodomites, with blindness." The language of Mistress Wyndham is certainly pitched in an exalted key, but the story is as certainly very remarkable. A story is told, how many years since, before the age of railways, a nobleman and his lady, with their infant child, travelling in a wild neighbourhood, were overtaken by a snowstorm and compelled to seek shelter in a rude shepherd's hut; when the nurse, who was in attendance upon her lord and lady, began undressing the infant by the side of the warm fire, the inhabitants of the hut gazed in awe and silence at the process. As the little one was disrobed of its silken frock and fine linen, and rich dress after dress was taken away, still the shepherd and his wife gazed with awe, until, when the process of undressing was completed, and the naked baby was being washed and warmed by the fire, when all the wrappages and outer husks were peeled off, the shepherd and his wife exclaimed, "Why, it's just like one of ours!" But it is a very difficult thing to understand that kings and queens and princes are just like one of us when their state robes are off; and thus the adventures of Charles derive their interest and sanctity from the supposed importance of the person, and the worship with which he is regarded arises from the sense of the place he fills, and his essential importance to the future schemes of Almighty Providence. And still it certainly is one of the most interesting pieces of English folklore. It has been said, but we a little doubt the truth of the saying, that there is no country where, in so small a space as in England, so much and so many relics of the past are crowded together; and it is farther often said, that of all romantic tales in English history, that of King Charles's flight is the most so. Hairbreadth escapes, sufferings, surprises, and disguises shed quite a fictitious halo around one who was, after all, a very mean and commonplace character. The adventures of Charles, however, are indeed full of interest, and the volume of Boscobel Tracts is a charming story of old halls, many of them now gone, many of them still standing, grey and weather-worn, full of hiding-places, where the prince found a refuge. The escape of Charles is one of those stories which the English peasant has in many parts of England told pleasantly in his own rude way. It is a wonderful story of human fidelity, for though a thousand pounds was set upon the capture of Charles, and perhaps more than a score of people knew the route he was taking, not one of them ever revealed it, not one broke faith, peasant and peer were equally true; cottage and hall were equally open to the royal fugitive; indeed, it is a story which if told of a better man might bring tears into the eyes. From that fatal evening when flying along from Worcester he threw his blue ribbon and garter and princely ornaments away, when his long black hair was cropped off country fashion, when he climbed up into the Boscobel oak, and amidst its thick boughs could look down, and peep, and see the red coats of his enemies passing beneath them, till

"When all the paths were dim,
And far below the Roundhead rode
And hummed a surly hymn,"

until, by a strangely circuitous route, he reached Brighthelmstone, or Brighton, and from thence embarked in Captain Tattersal's little vessel from Shoreham,[1] it is a constant succession of adventures which from that day to this have furnished subjects for the writers of fiction. Lord Clarendon devotes a good many pages to the story of these adventures; but he gives no honour to the humbler agents who secured the king's escape: the Penderels, for instance, to whom the king always expressed so much gratitude, they are unmentioned; nor does the faithful Jane Lane receive the notice she deserves; quite worthy she appears of all the fame which has waited upon Flora Macdonald, who took a similar part in rescuing a later member of the house of Stuart from similar dangers. There is a quiet and unassuming grace about Jane Lane which gives a real charm to her character. The way was beset with stories; and it must have been an anxious time to Charles. But some of his retreats standing still, glow with the lights of the old romantic days: the old house at Trent, for instance, in whose secret chambers he stayed so long, and from whence he heard a Roundhead soldier boasting that he had slain the king with his own hands, and from whence he could see the bonfires the people kindled in their joy, and hear his own death knell rung from the old church tower. Sometimes the king was "Will Jones," a woodman; then he was changed into "Will Jackson," a groom, clad in grey cloth. Once he had to take Jane Lane's horse to a smithy, it had cast a shoe, and the smith began wailing the non-capture of that rogue Charles Stuart, and the king chimed in, that if that rogue could only be taken, he deserved hanging more than all the rest, for bringing in the Scots. Once, close to Stratford, "Will Jackson," in pursuance of his disguise, was sent into the kitchen, where the cook-maid, who was providing supper, desired him to wind up the jack; he was obedient, but he did not do it in the right way, which led the maid with some passion to ask, "What countryman are you, that you know not how to wind up a jack?" "Will Jackson" appears to have answered very satisfactorily: "I am a poor tenant's son of Colonel Lane, in Staffordshire; we seldom have roast meat, and when we have, we don't make use of a jack," and so the maid's anger was appeased. That old jack is still hanging up beside the fireplace, but those who have seen it within the last few years say that it would now puzzle a wiser man than Charles to wind it up. Another story tells how the king was hard pressed by soldiers in pursuit of him, and how they sought for him all over the house, and in the kitchen too; but here the girl in the kitchen knew him, for indeed he was there, and as they entered, he looked with trepidation round him, perhaps giving up all for lost now; but the cook hit him a smart rap with the basting ladle, exclaiming, "Now, then, go on with thy work; what art thou looking about for?" And the manœuvre was effectual, and the soldiers started on another track. The wanderings seem to have been long, nor was it until Wednesday, October 15th, the same day on which the gallant Lord Derby laid his head upon the scaffold at Bolton, in Lancashire, and probably about the same time in the day, that the king was able to set sail for the coast of Normandy. The language of Lord Clarendon concerning the adventures and ultimate restoration of the king reads so like a piece of mere grim satire, that we cannot but pause for a moment to quote them here:—

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[1] In reference to this a ballad, by the present writer, called a *Farewell to Brighton Bells*, sings:—

"Again the old bells clang'd and clash'd, to greet the merry day.
When scapegrace Charles came back again, that twenty-ninth of May;
And in the Old King's Head a group of merry fishers chat,
Whilst pointing to the chair in which, disguised, the monarch sat!
And many a tale that night was told,—the tankard's power prevail'd,—
How, but for Brighton's loyalty, e'en Boscobel had fail'd;
I doubt me much that Brighton ale display'd a tyrant's power,
In drinking bold Dick Tattersal, the hero of the hour!"

"We may tell those desperate wretches, who yet harbour in their thoughts wicked designs against the sacred person of the king, in order to the compassing of their own imaginations, that God Almighty would not have led him through so many wildernesses of afflictions of all kinds, conducted him through so many perils by sea, and perils by land, snatched him out of the midst of this kingdom when it was not worthy of him, and when the hands of his enemies were even upon him, when they thought themselves so sure of him that they would bid so cheap and so vile a price for him: He would not in that article have so covered him with a cloud, that he travelled even with some pleasure and great observation through the midst of his enemies: He would not so wonderfully have new modelled that army; so inspired their hearts, and the hearts of the whole nation, with an honest and impatient longing for the return of their dear sovereign, and in the meantime have exercised him (which had little less of Providence in it than the other) with those unnatural, or at least unusual, disrespects and reproaches abroad, that he might have a harmless and an innocent appetite to his own country, and return to his own people, with a full value, and the whole unwasted bulk of his affections, without being corrupted and biased by extraordinary foreign obligations; God Almighty would not have done all this but for a servant whom He will always preserve as the apple of His own eye, and always defend from the most secret machinations of his enemies."

When the king came back, shall we say that it was to his honour that he remembered with gratitude the services of Jane Lane—by that time Lady Fisher—and the Penderels? It would have been an addition to his perpetual dishonour had he forgotten them, had he not sought them out with the intention to distinguish them. He even settled a sum upon them in acknowledgment of their services and fidelity to him; but these promises appear in a short time to have failed in fulfilment. But the interviews they had with the king in London are interesting. Charles wrote a very handsome letter to Lady Fisher, before the Restoration, full of respect and gratitude, and signing himself, "Your most assured and constant friend." Richard Penderel, Charles introduced to his Court saying, "The simplest rustic who serves his sovereign in the time of need to the utmost extent of his ability, is as deserving of our commendation as the victorious leader of thousands. Friend Richard," continued the king, "I am glad to see thee; thou wert my preserver and conductor, the bright star that showed me to my Bethlehem, for which kindness I will engrave thy memory on the tablet of a faithful heart." Turning to the lords the king said, "My lords, I pray you respect this good man for my sake. Master Richard, be bold and tell these lords what passed amongst us when I had quitted the oak at

Boscobel to reach Pit Leason." Altogether the king—who is assuredly no favourite with this present writer, who also much wonders at the Providence which saved him, if he may say it without irreverence, when so many better men fell as sacrifices to the passion, the caprice, or the indignation of the hour—may be more favourably viewed in his adventures through those old villages, ancient halls, and wayside inns, and in his dealings with the humble attendants who risked for him their lives in their obscure service, than in any other of the incidents and chapters of his discreditable career.

XIV.

CROMWELL THE USURPER.

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PASSING over much else, there is one circumstance and scene in the life of Cromwell which has ever been surrounded with difficulty, his great act of usurpation when he assumed the power. We suppose that scene is one of the most memorable of any; it is written upon our recollection from our early reading. The Long Parliament is associated with much that is most illustrious in the annals of those days; but we must remember that those achievements were associated with its very early annals. When Cromwell laid his hand so rudely on the symbols of power, Pym and Hampden were dead, and many besides, who, although less known, had given effect to its administrative character. The talk then held about the settlement of Government, the unending source of interminable talk, had degenerated into a mere republican jangle. Wild theories were woven through the foggy archways of dreamy brains. Say what we will of that Long Parliament, it had exercised lately little power in governing the nation; a noisy, garrulous, chattering, self-opinionated old Parliament. Henry Hallam, whose witness is so true that from his verdict there is seldom any appeal, has said, "It may be said, I think, with not greater severity than truth, that scarce two or three public acts of justice, humanity, or generosity, and very few of political wisdom and courage, are recorded of them, from their quarrel with the king to their expulsion by Cromwell." This is always necessary to be borne in mind. The memories of many readers are so confused in the supposition that the Long Parliament which Cromwell so rudely scattered was the same House which, in the earlier years of its history, had achieved for the country services so remarkable. Indeed, it was the same House, but how different. Its greatest spirits, as we have seen, were departed: Pym was dead, Hampden was dead. Cromwell, as he looked along its benches, would notice many a place vacated where once sat some strong friend of order and of freedom. It had so shrunken from honour that it had come to be called "the Rump," and reminds us of Sheridan's description of a ministry in his day, of which only one faithful member was left, "that all the honourable parts had vanished, and only left the sitting member behind." It is true there were great and honourable names, but these also were associated with the most wild and fantastic dreams and schemes. Then, if the reader should desire to approve the present writer's justice, let him turn to review the various questions which, while most urgent and weighty matters were pressing, this "Rump" devoted its time to discuss.

Not indisposed itself to enter upon the work of persecution, it became unpopular throughout the land; it was attacked by all parties; it was urged even to dissolve itself. This, it persistently determined not to do; and while accomplishing nothing for Government or for the people, on the twentieth of April, 1653, while Cromwell was quietly sitting in his own "lodgings" in Whitehall, there was brought to him a message, that at that very moment a Bill was being hurried through the House, by which this most comely piece of Government was resolving its own indefectible perpetuity, and thus attempting a great act of usurpation. Let the reader, therefore, distinctly understand that it was the usurpation of capability against incapability; the House must be checkmated. Cromwell therefore immediately gathered his officers round him, and walked down to the assembly.

Moments there assuredly are when the destiny of the nation hangs on one strong and supremely capable man; when a nation can no more be saved, than a universe can be governed, by a Committee of Ways and Means. Committees are a fine expedient—a parliament is only a large national committee or club—but, in moments of great exigency and danger, a *chief* is wanted. Looking through all England at that moment, we cannot find another man who could have been the great leader. Look round upon their ranks. There are men fiery in battle, and there are men with the clear and calm mind; but England needed at that time a man of prompt and decisive instinct, and in Cromwell we behold such a man. He could not have written the *Monarchy of Man* with Sir John Eliot, nor the *Science of Government* of Algernon Sydney, nor the *Meditations* of Sir Harry Vane. But these men saw only in a straight line; they saw only their own idea; they were content to become—they all did become—martyrs to their idea. Cromwell's eye swept the horizon, and he saw that England wanted equitable government, the rule of justice. He ruled not by the Presbyterian or the Republican or the Independent theory of justice. He instinctively apprehended the wants of men; and hence, while he was, no doubt, in many directions hated—and perhaps few felt that his views exactly squared with theirs,—all were compelled to feel that he alone was able to hold the restive horses along the dizzy and difficult crag; he alone was able to govern without a theory, and therefore justly.

It is something striking to contrast the two men going down to the same House. Charles was a king, and he went to arrest the members and to assert that there was no law in England save his will; but he went as king *Nominal.* Cromwell went with no royalty about him, yet he went as king *Real;* and he, too, went for the still more amazing purpose of daring that whole House, and turning it out into the streets. The intelligence which we have seen reached him that morning certainly might well fill him with alarm. It was the news of what would, if carried out, materially increase the difficulties of his position; and he determined on the venture. Therefore, in his plain suit of black, with his grey worsted stockings, he went down to the House, and took his ordinary seat. But why do we describe the scene which has been described so often? How restlessly he sat there. How he assayed several times to rise, and sunk back again upon his seat. How, at last, as the motion was about to be put, he sprang from his place, threw off his hat and began to speak; and how he began to speak in commendation of the Parliament; then launched out in condemnation of their sins; then, with most memorable words, took the Speaker from the chair, turned the members out, threw away the mace, emptied the celebrated chamber, locked the door, and walked away with the key in his pocket!

The inarticulateness of Cromwell has been commented upon. He speaks, but you cannot fathom all his meaning. Is not this the surest type and token of the master-man, be he statesman, or any kind of man? Not even to himself surely was all his meaning revealed; how could it be to those to whom he spoke? Even to all the mightiest souls does thought lie deeper far than any speech. In all his words there is the heavy roll of a deep sea; but this, when the fit of inspiration was upon him, was especially the case. Then, while the bright forks of lightning pierced far and deep through his words, he yet used many which were unintelligible to those to whom he spoke. It seems as though he could not always see, at the moment, what he was saying, but worked out his meaning into action through his speech. Nothing has been more commented upon than the reserve of Cromwell, as certain slanderers choose to call it, his "hypocrisy." Of course there was reserve; secretiveness, if the reader will; a poor statesman he if he have not this. Test of all power to command is the possibility of intellectual reserve in combination with moral sympathy. A famous instance of that we have in an interview with Ludlow; a memorable afternoon. It was after there had been held a Council of State, and Cromwell whispered him that he wished to speak to him. Cromwell was just on his way to Scotland, to that sublime campaign of his in which occurred the grand episode of Dunbar. He took Ludlow into the queen's guard-room, and there he talked to him some time, denouncing the tortuous jungle of English law; speaking of the great providences of God in England, and what might be done by a good brave man. In particular, he talked in a most unintelligible manner of the 110th Psalm. It is not so unintelligible to us now.

And we think this is the moment to say a few words upon that other ever difficult problem: What were Cromwell's intentions with reference to himself and to Charles? We cannot see that there is foundation for any other thought than that Cromwell especially intended to preserve English law; and to him, we dare say, a king was not more sacred than a man, and a lawless king not so sacred as an obedient and law-keeping man. Yet we see no reason to think that he was beckoned on by any shades of unlawful ambition, nor do we see any reason to doubt that he did at one time fully intend to save the king. There is an important principle, to which we have already alluded, in Guizot's story of the English Commonwealth, which we believe to be substantially sound and just; namely, "That God does not grant to great men, who have set on disorder the foundations of their greatness, the power to regulate at their pleasure and for centuries, even according to their better desires, the government of nations." This is true substantially. But it is also true that Charles had really set on disorder the foundations of his greatness. The race of men who first confronted Charles—Eliot, Pym, and Hampden especially—were men of law; they no doubt desired to see the government settled in a constitutional manner. We do not believe that those first actors were republicans. Certainly not in the sense in which John Milton, Sir Harry Vane, Algernon Sydney, and Harrington were republicans. To them the great thing that England wanted was good, just, equitable law; they were men who would have made some such arrangement as that which was actually made when William III. ascended the throne. The king threw all this desire into a hopeless embroglio. The raising of his banner, and the subsequent civil war created a hopeless anarchy. Cromwell, although he had some education for the law, and was originally intended for the legal profession, had little of the lawyer in his nature.

Casuistries and subtleties enough might spin their cobwebs through his brain, but they were not such as lawyers love, in catches and in technicalities. He had, we believe, a strong love of English justice. He had, we believe, a resolute desire to see things established by law. Does any one suppose that had power and ambition been his mark, he might not have achieved it in a far readier way than by that sophistical and doubtful Protectorate? If the king would have allowed himself to be saved—if, we say, he could have been honest—Cromwell would have served him and saved him. And had he not prized the happiness of his daughter too highly, what was to prevent his acceptance of the offer of Charles Stuart, the exile, in which case the name of Cromwell might have been associated with the royal line of kings? But we think little of these things. Can we think that the man who struck down the majesty of England at Marston and Naseby, who laid Ireland groaning at his feet, and crushed even the haughty presbytery at Dunbar, can we suppose that any feelings of fear restrained him from decking his brows with the round of sovereignty? That the idea of monarchy came to him again and again we can well believe. But we can believe also, and do believe, that nothing but the purity of his own purposes restrained his hand from grasping the crown. Be sure of this, no fantastic republican was he. He knew the mind of England too well. He knew human nature too well. He knew history too well;

for let us not forget that he had received the education of a scholar and a gentleman, and scholars admired his magnificent and well-selected library in a day when the collection of books was not a fashion. But having conquered Charles, he saw, of course, that power and responsibility must reside somewhere, and in some person. Where? In that House whom he retained in existence, whose greatest spirits were all dead, or, if remaining there, with their theories of impracticable governments, framed on Grecian models or Italian oligarchies, surrounding their whole conceptions with a mist and a haze? What that Long Parliament was fitted to be we see by what it was when he appeared in its midst, and by what he did when once more it assembled, and laid England under so damnable and disgraceful a tyranny that every nerve in English flesh thrills with pain and shame when we think that our land has known such atrocious and iniquitous misrule. Cromwell, we believe, all along used the circumstances as they transpired as best he could. What would we have had him do? When the king was conquered, would we have had him place the conquered tyrant once more upon the throne, without any promise or constitution? We have seen that there was no reliance on his faith; yet there are those who have ever a good word for him. But he could not be true, he could not be sincere. "I wonder you don't leave off this abominable custom of lying, George," said Lord Muskerry to the celebrated George Rooke, when they were sailing together. "I can't help it," said George. "Pooh! pooh!" said his lordship; "it may be done by degrees. Suppose you were to begin by uttering one truth a day!" If Charles had only told the truth "*by degrees*," had he been sincere only now and then, he might have been saved! He signed the death-warrant of his best friend and strongest servant, Lord Strafford, after he had most faithfully pledged that he would rather lose his crown than perform such an act of unfealty, and "*on the word of a king*" became a proverb and by-word from that circumstance through all ages. Then came the revelations of the letters seized on the field of Naseby. Then, when the king was in the power of the Parliament, Cromwell desired to save him, and Cromwell was willing to do so. The king had appealed to him, in his despair, from the Isle of Wight; and the letters, in the saddle-bags of the king's private messenger, to the queen in France, seized at the Blue Boar, in Holborn, revealed the king as saying of Cromwell, whose hand was graciously, at its own peril, attempting to save him, "He thinks that I may confer upon him the *Garter* and *Star*, but I shall know, in good time, how to fit his neck to a *halter!*" Even Mrs. Hutchinson, no friend to Cromwell, confessed her belief in the faithfulness of his desire to save the king, a desire defeated by the king's own unfaithfulness.

Charles the First disposed of—what then? Charles Stuart the Second, should he place him on the throne? No; we may well believe this child of light had no fellowship with that Belial. The House was composed only of about seventy members. They were passing an Act that they would not be dissolved but by their own consent. They would by that Act have been sitting there now! Cromwell would not trust that weakness. He had also, we believe, no great regard for his own head; still, we dare say, he thought it fitted its own neck very well, and he determined to do his best to keep it there. On the whole he saw, we believe, that the people must return to their ancient monarchy; but many prejudices and much ill blood must die out first. He determined to watch over the interests of England like the sentinel of Providence, and he called himself the Lord Protector. Well did he deserve the name!

Well, he has, then, done the deed, call him what you will; he *has* really ascended the throne. He did, no doubt, that which the best spirits of his own day did perceive to be wisest and best; but let no person see in this any inauguration of freedom, or homage to complete suffrage; it was homage to power. He took that place by right of the ablest, and we may now follow him a few paces into the great acts of his government. We have called him the Protector. That word, you will perceive, does adequately represent what he was, and what he dared to be—the guardian genius of England's Commonwealth; the name as we believe most venerable for his age in the annals of civil and religious freedom; man of widest heart and shrewdest eye.

Some have compared him with Napoleon—Napoleon the First—to his disadvantage. But we shall soon see the justice of that criticism which finds the greatness of Napoleon rather in that he did his work on stilts; he performed his work in a large, ambitious manner, and strode to and fro in self-conscious exaggeration before the eyes of Europe. Cromwell performed his work on our own island, but he did not leave it. He humbled the proud empires of Europe by a glance. It took battles to raise himself to his place of Protector, but he became the Dictator of Europe by the magnetism of a great intelligence, From his council-chamber in Whitehall he dictated his own terms. Always let it be remembered that Napoleon the First, in order to retain his power, directed all the energies of his country away from any, even the slightest, attempt at domestic reform of his own land, where reforms of every kind were so much needed; and he decimated the unhappy people of his own land by embroiling them in wars with every nation in Europe; he kindled the conflagrations of martial glory, and carried everywhere the banners and eagles of conquest, in order that he might dazzle by the fame of his great military dictatorship. To our indignant humanity, Napoleon looks like a poor, self-exaggerating child, contrasted with the farmer of St. Ives. Macaulay well points out how greatly it would have been to the interests of Cromwell's ambition to have plunged his country into a great European war, and how fertile were the occasions for such a war! And had he constituted himself the armed as he was the peaceful, protector of Protestantism in Europe, like another Gustavus Adolphus, how prompt at his call for such a cause would have leaped up that mighty army of which he was the chief, and which had regarded his voice, through so many well-fought fields, as the very voice of the Lord of Hosts speaking to men. He had no such ambition; only to serve his country as best he could, and Protestantism always, in all peaceful sincerity.

Cromwell has often been compared, and to his disadvantage, with Washington; in fact, there can be no comparison, the two men and their entire careers are all a contrast. How easy, how simple the work of the illustrious founder of the United States compared with that of the great soldier of the Commonwealth of England! Cromwell rises as on a mighty rock, a great upheaval from a mob of kings. He rises solitary from the sea of Time behind him; but, again, the sea of old Mediævalism and Feudalism rises, and rolls around the rock on which he stands solitary and alone. Washington stands high on his rock; but it is like a breakwater, or a peninsula of some great continent, and from it there spreads, not the moaning sea around it, but there extends from it the road along which marches victorious humanity. It is understood that they both refused the crown: Cromwell in the council chamber, Washington in the camp. The witchery of that separation of royalty had no power to detain either from the high behests of duty, or to delude them to the path in which they might have found themselves in treason against the rights of man. Washington rose amidst the acclamations and love of the United States; Cromwell knew that he only leashed, and held in check the gorgons, hydras, and chimeras of persecution, despotism, and tyranny. Washington beheld all conflicting interests combining in one happy, prosperous nationality; Cromwell stood strong, holding the balances and scales of toleration and justice, between a hundred sects, all prepared to fly at each other's throats, and every one of which hated him because he was strong. Washington died in peace, and rests in an honoured grave; scarcely was Cromwell laid in his tomb when his body was torn from the grave, and the fiends, who could not touch the living lion, like jackals or hyenas tore the dead body limb from limb, and affixed his venerable head over Westminster Hall. Widely different was the work of Cromwell from that of Washington; and widely different his heart of passion and fire from Washington's calm, still spirit. Yet Cromwell was, as has been most truly said, the greatest human force ever directed to a moral purpose, and he seems to look across the ocean and even to anticipate Washington. He still rises on his rock forecasting coming years. The men, the results of whose work are most remote, must wait longest for the reward and vintage of their toil. Hence the work of Washington met with its immediate reward. He, indeed, laid the foundation of a Constitution which should abide secure in the future; but its immediate worth was recognised, he had nothing to do with settling the rights of conscience, the claims of distracting opinions, and the conflicts of Church and State. The space which Cromwell filled was so large that only when far removed could his greatness be seen; and to him, perhaps, almost beyond any other mortal, most truly applies the often-quoted words of the sweet English poet whom Mr. Matthew Arnold is now attempting to teach the English nation to despise,—

"As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds be spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head!"

XV.

CROMWELL THE PROTECTOR: HEART, HOME, AND HAND.

CHAPTER XV.

CROMWELL THE PROTECTOR.

APRIL, 1653, he dissolved "the Rump!" "We did not hear a dog bark at their going," he said afterwards in one of his speeches, and it expresses the very truth of the event. Henceforth, until 1658—a brief parenthesis of time, indeed, in the history of the country—he governed the country absolutely. In a history so brief as this we shall not attempt to detail the circumstances of those troublesome years. Alas! all his battles had been easy to win compared with the task of ruling the distracted realm. He called "the little Parliament," or the short, as its predecessor had been called "the long." It had been resolved in a council of the chief officers and eminent persons of the realm—but no doubt by Cromwell's own desire,—that the Commonwealth should be in a single person, that that person should be Cromwell, under the title of the Lord Protector of England, Scotland, and Ireland, to be advised and assisted by "a council of not more than twenty-one able, discreet, and godly persons." His inauguration took place on the 16th of December of that year, in the presence of the Lords Commissioners of the Great Seal of England, the

Barons of the Exchequer, and all the judges in their robes, the Council of State, the Lord Mayor, Recorder, and Aldermen of the City of London in their scarlet gowns, and the chief officers of the army; a chair of state was set in the midst of the Court of Chancery, and on the left side of it stood Cromwell in a plain suit of black velvet. An instrument of Government was read to him, to which he attached his signature, and in which he declared, in the presence of God, that he would not violate or infringe the matters and things therein contained, and to which he set his name. He then sat down in the chair of state, which was while he filled it the strongest throne in Europe; next day he was proclaimed Protector, by sound of trumpet, in the Palace Yard, Westminster, and at the Royal Exchange in the City.

What manner of man was he at this period—fifty-four years of age? See him standing there, before all England, and all following ages, a man of some five feet ten or more, of massive, stout stature, and large massive head, dignified military carriage; "of leonine aspect," says Carlyle, "a figure of sufficient impressiveness, not lovely to the man milliner, nor pretending to be so; an expression of valour and devout intelligence, energy, and delicacy on a basis of simplicity; wart above the right eyebrow, nose of considerable blunt aquiline proportions; strict, yet copious lips, full of all tremulous sensibilities, and also, if need were, of all fierceness and rigours; deep loving eyes—call them grave, call them stern,—looking from those craggy brows as if in life-long sorrow, and yet not thinking it sorrow, thinking it only labour and endeavour." Thus Hampden's prophecy at last was realized, and "that sloven" had made himself the greatest man in the kingdom.[1]

Cromwell called Parliaments from time to time, but they gave him no satisfaction, nor the nation either; the members spent their time very much in useless and idle chatter. But, again and again, he was urged by the Council and by the Commons to take the Crown: this formed no part of the plan in his mind. We have seen that he probably knew that the nation would settle itself beneath its ancient monarchy again, and he had no ambition to form or found a phantom royal dynasty.

The following is a very characteristic letter to his son-in-law, and seems to admit us, in a very clear manner, into the mind of the Protector on this subject:—

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[1] Concerning likenesses of Cromwell, it cannot be uninteresting, I think, to say that, probably, my excellent friend, the Rev. D. Kewer Williams, of Hackney, London (England), has the largest and most curious collection of every kind—engravings, paintings, etc., etc.—in the world; in fact, he has a real Cromwellian museum. Let a committee be formed for the purchase of these; let all other possible obtainable Cromwell memorials be added, and some such monument reared to the Protector's memory as that of Robert Burns in Edinburgh, as Göethe's house in Frankfort, as Michael Angelo's in Florence.

"*To the Lord Fleetwood, Lord-Deputy of Ireland,*

"WHITEHALL,
22nd June, 1655.

"DEAR CHARLES,—

"I write not often: at once I desire thee to know I most dearly love thee; and, indeed, my heart is plain to thee, as thy heart can well desire; let nothing shake thee in this. The wretched jealousies that are amongst us, and the spirit of calumny, turn all into gall and wormwood. My heart is for the people of God; that the Lord knows, and will in due time manifest; yet thence are my wounds; which though it grieves me, yet through the grace of God doth not discourage me totally. Many good men are repining at everything; though indeed very many good are well satisfied, and satisfying daily. The will of the Lord will bring forth good in due time.

"It's reported that you are to be sent for, and Harry to be Deputy; which, truly, never entered into my heart. The Lord knows my desire was for him and his brother to have lived private lives in the country; and Harry knows this very well, and how difficultly I was persuaded to give him his commission for his present place. This I say as from a simple and sincere heart. *The noise of my being crowned, etc., are similar malicious figments.* . . .

"Dear Charles, my dear love to thee; and to my dear Biddy, who is a joy to my heart, for what I hear of the Lord in her. Bid her be cheerful and rejoice in the Lord once and again; if she knows the covenant (of grace), she cannot but do so. For that transaction is without *her;* sure and steadfast, between the Father and the Mediator in His blood. Therefore, leaning upon the Son, or looking to Him, thirsting after Him, and embracing Him, we are His seed, and the covenant is sure to all the seed. The compact is for the seed; God is bound in faithfulness to Christ, and in Him, to us. The covenant is without *us;* a transaction between God and Christ. Look up to *it.* God engageth in it to pardon us; to write His law in our heart; to plant His fear so that we shall never depart from Him. We, under all our sins and infirmities, can daily offer a perfect Christ; and thus we have peace and safety, and apprehension of love, from a Father in covenant; who cannot deny Himself. And truly in this is all my salvation; and this helps me to bear my great burdens.

"If you have a mind to come over with your dear wife, take the best opportunity for the good of the public and your own convenience. The Lord bless you all. Pray for me, that the Lord would direct and keep me, His servant. I bless the Lord I am not my own; but my condition to flesh and blood is very hard. Pray for me; I do for you all. Commend me to all friends.

"I rest, your loving father,
"OLIVER P."

On the 13th of April, 1657, the Protector delivered his eleventh recorded speech, in reply to the reasons which had been urged upon him by the House of Commons, and the great lawyers, to take upon himself the designation of king:—

"I undertook the place I am now in, not so much out of hope of doing any good, as out of a desire to prevent mischief and evil; which I did see was imminent on the nation. I say, we were running headlong into confusion and disorder, and would necessarily have run into blood; and I was passive to those that desired me to undertake the place which I now have.

"And, therefore, I am not contending for one name compared with another; and therefore, have nothing to answer to any arguments that were used for preferring the name of kingship to protectorship. For I should almost think any name were better than my name; and I should altogether think any person fitter than I am for such business; and I compliment not, God knows it.

"But this I should say, that I do think you, in the settling of the peace and liberties of this nation, which cries as loud upon you as ever nation did for somewhat that may beget a consistence, ought to attend to that; otherwise the nation will fall in pieces! And in that, so far as I can, *I am ready to serve, not as a king, but as a constable,* if you like! For truly I have, as before God, often thought that I could not tell what my business was, nor what I was in the place where I stood in, save comparing myself to a good constable set to keep the peace of the parish.

"I say, therefore, I do judge for myself there is no such necessity of this name of king.

"I must say a little; I think I have somewhat of conscience to answer as to the matter, and I shall deal seriously as before God.

"If you do not all of you, I am sure some of you do, and it behoves me to say that I do 'know my calling from the first to this day.' I was a person who, from my first employment, was suddenly preferred and lifted up from lesser trusts to greater; from my first being a captain of a troop of horse; and did labour as well as I could to discharge my trust; and God blessed me therein as it pleased Him. And I did truly and plainly—and in a way of foolish simplicity, as it was judged by very great and wise men, and good men too—desire to make my instruments help me in that work. I had a very worthy friend then; and he was a very noble person, and I know his memory is very grateful to all,—Mr. John Hampden. At my going out into this engagement [enterprise], I saw our men were beaten at every hand. I did indeed; and desired him that he would make some additions to my Lord Essex's army, of some new regiments; and I told him I would be serviceable to him in bringing such men in as I thought had a spirit that would do something in the work. This is very true that I tell you; God knows I lie not. 'Your troops,' said I, are most of them old decayed serving men and tapsters, and such kind of fellows; and, said I, 'their troops are gentleman's sons, younger sons, and persons of quality; do you think that the spirits of such base and mean fellows will ever be able to encounter gentlemen, that have honour and courage, and resolution in them? You must get men of spirit; and take it not ill what I say,—I know you will not,—of a spirit that is likely to go as far as gentlemen will go;—or else you will be beaten still.' I told him so; I did truly. He was a wise and worthy person; and he did think that I talked a good notion, but an impracticable one. Truly I told him that I could *do* somewhat in it; I did so, and the result was,—impute it to what you please,—I raised such men as had the fear of God before them, as made some conscience of what they did; and from that day forward, I must say to you, they were never beaten, and wherever they were engaged against the enemy, they beat continually. And truly this is matter of praise to God: and it hath some instruction in it, to own men who are religious and godly. And so many of them as are peaceably, and honestly, and quietly disposed to live within rules of government, and will be subject to those gospel rules of obeying magistrates—I reckon no godliness without that circle! Without that the spirit is diabolical,—it is devilish,—it is from diabolical spirits,—from the depth of Satan's wickedness.

"I will be bold to apply this (what I said to Mr. Hampden) to our present purpose; because there are still such men in this nation; godly men of the same spirit, men that will not be beaten down by a worldly or carnal spirit while they keep their integrity. And I deal plainly and faithfully with you, when I say: I cannot think that God would bless an undertaking of anything (kingships or whatever else) which would, justly and with cause, grieve *them*. I know that very generally good men do not swallow this title. It is my duty and my conscience to beg of you that there may be no hard things put upon me; things, I mean, hard to *them*, which they cannot swallow. By showing a tenderness even possibly (if it be their weakness) to the weakness of those who have integrity, and honesty, and uprightness, you will be the better able to root out of this nation all those who think their virtue lies in despising and opposing authority."[1]

It sometimes seems to the present writer as if, amidst the wild scenery of impotent sectarian jealousy and mad intolerance, Cromwell was the only man who had an enlarged sense of true freedom. Freedom of conscience, in the sense of most persons of that time, appears to have been that they should have the right to it themselves, without any claim upon them for its exercise towards others; persecution was not wrong in fact, only it was wrong when exercised against themselves. This was especially the case with the Presbyterian party of that time; but almost all are involved in the same reprobation; while we write this, upon our table lies the treatise of Thomas Edwards, "A Treatise against Toleration, and Pretended Liberty of Conscience," written for the express purpose of showing that toleration is against the whole current, scope, and sense of all Scripture, and sets up the polluted, defiled conscience of men above the Scriptures, pleading for the power of the magistrate to punish heresy, and indeed invoking the severest statutes of the old Jewish law, and even statutes yet more severe, as applicable to Christian society. No Papist ever went farther than this writer, and many others of his time, in his attempt to develop a perfect science of persecution. The same doctrines are unfolded at greater length in his "Gangrena," of which the following passage is a fair sample and illustration :—

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[1] The reader will remember that some of the above sentences were quoted in the chapter on "Cromwell and his Ironsides;" but in the connection in which they now stand, it can scarcely be regarded as superfluous that they are quoted again.

"A Toleration is the grand design of the devil—his masterpiece, and chief engine he has at this time, to uphold his tottering kingdom. It is the most compendious, ready, sure way to destroy all religion, lay all waste, and bring in all evil. It is a most transcendent, catholic and fundamental evil for this kingdom of any that can be imagined. As original sin is the most fundamental sin, having the seed and spawn of all in it; so a toleration hath all errors in it, and all evils. It is against the whole stream and current of Scripture both in the Old and New Testament; both in matters of faith and manners; both general and particular commands. It overthrows all relations, political, ecclesiastical, and economical. And whereas other evils, whether of judgment or practice, be but against some one or two places of Scripture or relation, this is against all—this is the Abaddon, Apollyon, the destroyer of all religion, the abomination of all desolation and astonishment, the liberty of perdition, and therefore the devil follows it night and day; working mightily in many by writing books for it, and other ways;—all the devils in hell, and their instruments, being at work to promote a toleration."

This is exceedingly pleasant and comfortable writing! and it may give some idea of the spirit which was abroad in that time, and which the Lord Protector felt himself raised up resolutely to hold in check. The Fifth Monarchy men constituted another amiable section, with Rogers at their head —an amazing nuisance in the nation; indeed, a catalogue of the rival sects in Cromwell's army would be an astonishing compilation.

Cromwell's whole ideas of religious liberty rose and ranged far beyond those of most of the men of his age. How impressively this comes out in his correspondence with the Scotch Commissioners and Presbyterian clergymen after the battle of Dunbar. "You say," he writes, "that you have just cause to regret that men of civil employments should usurp the calling and employment of the ministry to the scandal of the Reformed Kirks. Are you troubled that Christ is preached? Is preaching so exclusively your function? I thought the Covenant and these professors of it' could have been willing that any should speak good of the name of Christ; if not, it is no covenant of God's approving; nor are these Kirks you mention in so much the spouse of Christ. Where do you find in the Scripture a ground to warrant such an assertion that preaching is exclusively your function? Though an approbation from men hath order in it, and may do well, yet he that hath no better warrant than that hath none at all. I hope He that ascended up on high may give His gifts to whom He pleases; and if those gifts be the seal of mission, be not you envious though Eldad and Medad prophecy. You know who bids us '*covet earnestly the best gifts*, but chiefly that we may prophesy;' which the apostle explains there to be a speaking to instruction, and edification, and comfort; which speaking, the instructed, the edified, and comforted can best tell the energy and effect of. Your pretended fear lest error should step in will be found to be an unjust and unwise jealousy to deprive a man of his natural liberty, upon a supposition he may abuse it. When he *doth* abuse it, judge. If a man speak foolishly, ye suffer him gladly because ye are wise; if erroneously, the truth more appears by your conviction of him. Stop such a man's mouth by sound words which cannot be gainsaid. If we speak blasphemously, or to the disturbance of the public peace, let the civil magistrate punish him;

if truly, rejoice in the truth. The ministers in England are supported, and have liberty to preach the Gospel; though not to rail, nor under pretence thereof, to overtop the civil power or abuse it as they please. No man hath been troubled in England or in Ireland for preaching the Gospel; nor has any minister been molested in Scotland since the coming of the army hither. Then speaking truth becomes the ministers of Christ." These last words are in reply to a charge made by the Scotch Commissioners that Cromwell had prevented the holding of religious services, and the charge very singularly occurs in reply to Cromwell's warrant in which immediately after the battle of Dunbar he says, by his secretary Edward Whalley, "I have received command from my Lord-General to desire you to let the ministers of Edinburgh, now in the Castle, know that they have your liberty granted them, if they please to take the pains to preach in their several churches, and that my lord hath given special command both to officers, and soldiers, that they shall not in the least be molested." But such liberty as this, as our readers will know, did not satisfy the Presbyterian mind of that day, which demanded not only the right to the expression of their own convictions, but also the repression of all who followed not with them. Did not Milton say of them that, "Presbyter was priest spelt large." Indeed, in that day there was a universal disposition to persecute and repress; it was not that persecution, in itself, was judged a crime, only when it assailed the order of particular opinion. Toleration was regarded by Episcopalian and Presbyterian as an abominable Erastianism, or latitudinarian and Laodicean half-heartedness; and Oliver alone stood forth vindicating liberty of conscience to all.

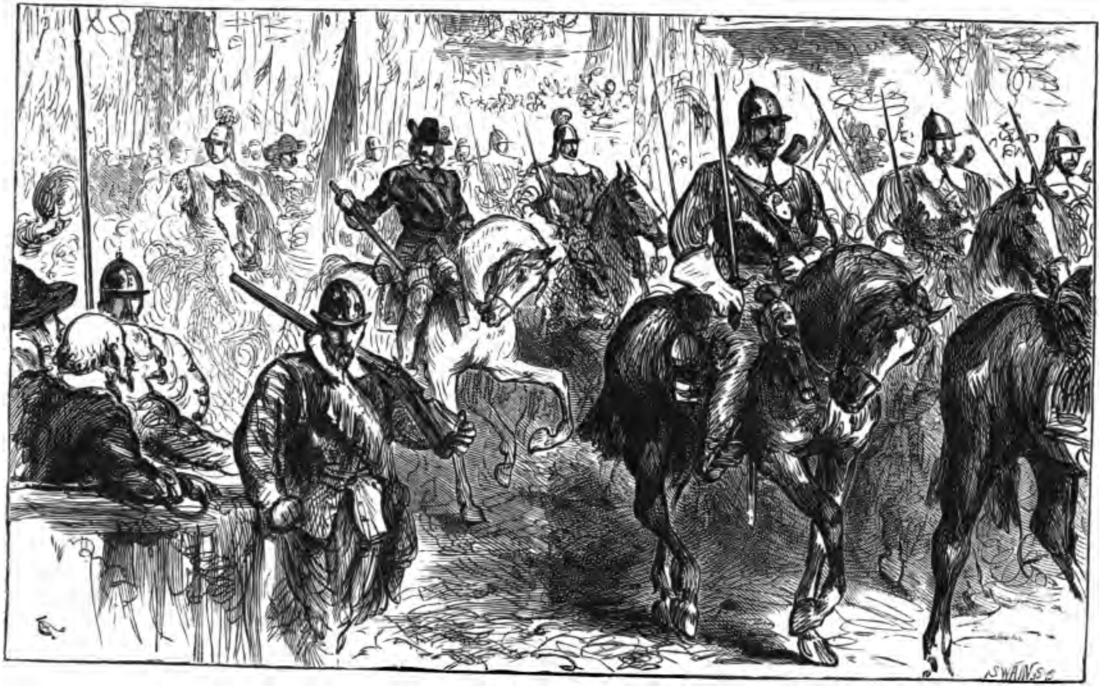
In his fifth recorded speech, delivered on the 17th of September, 1656, we find him expressing his opinions strongly as to the maintenance of religious liberty, and the equality of all:—

"I will tell you the truth: our practice since the last Parliament hath been to let all this nation see that whatever pretensions to religion would continue quiet, peaceable, they should enjoy conscience and liberty to themselves; and *not* to make religion a pretence for arms and blood. All that tends to combination, to interests and factions, we shall not care by the Grace of God, *whom* we meet withal, though never so specious, if they be not quiet! And truly I am against all liberty of conscience repugnant to *this*. If men will profess—be they those under baptism, be they those of the Independent judgment simply, or of the Presbyterian judgment—in the name of God, encourage them so long as they do plainly continue to be thankful to God, and to make use of the liberty given them to enjoy their own consciences! For as it was said to-day [in Dr. Owen's sermon before Parliament], undoubtedly 'this is the peculiar interest all this while contended for.'

"Men who believe in Jesus Christ, and walk in a profession answerable to that Faith; men who believe in the remission of sins through the blood of Christ, and free justification by the blood of Christ; who live upon the grace of God,—are members of Jesus Christ, and are to Him the apple of His eye. Whoever has this *Faith*, let his *form* be what it will; he walking peaceably without prejudice to others under other forms—it is a debt due to God and Christ; and He will require it, if that Christian may not enjoy his liberty.

"If a man of one form will be trampling upon the heels of another form; if an Independent, for example, will despise him who is under baptism, and will revile him, and reproach him and provoke him,—I will not suffer it in him. . . . God gave us hearts and spirits to keep things *equal*. Which, truly I must profess to you hath been my temper. I have had some boxes on the ear, and rebukes, —on the one hand and on the other. I have borne my reproach; but I have, through God's mercy, not been unhappy in hindering any one religion to improve upon another."

He was constantly under the necessity of so watching over the sacred rights of religious liberty, that as we know he sometimes had to interpose his authority to protect and guard; so again he had to interpose his severe condemnation against words and measures which appeared to him to be fatal to the rights of conscience. It is thus we find him speaking on the 22nd of January 1655, when he summoned the House to meet him in the Painted Chamber: "Is there not yet upon the spirits of men a strange itching? Nothing will satisfy them unless they can press their finger upon their brethren's consciences, to pinch them there. To do this was no part of the contest we had with the common adversary. And wherein consisted this more than in obtaining that liberty from the tyranny of the bishops to all species of Protestants to worship God according to their own light and consciences? For want of which many of our brethren forsook their native countries to seek their bread from strangers, and to live in howling wildernesses; and for which also many that remained here were imprisoned, and otherwise abused and made the scorn of the nation. Those that were sound in the Faith, how proper was it for them to labour for liberty, for a just liberty, that men might not be trampled upon for their consciences! Had not they themselves laboured, but lately, under the weight of persecution? And was it fit for them to sit heavy upon others? Is it ingenuous to ask liberty, and not give it? . . . What greater hypocrisy than for those who were oppressed by the bishops to become the greatest oppressors themselves, so soon as their yoke was removed? I could wish that they who call for liberty now also had not too much of that spirit, if the power were in their hands! As for profane persons, blasphemous, such as preach sedition; the contentious railers, evil-speakers, who seek by evil



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words to corrupt good manners, persons of loose conversation—punishment from the civil magistrate ought to meet with these."

But we must give a few swift glances into the inner life of this great heart—the domestic life. He has been assailed here too. We love to look at Cromwell after the hard, scarred face and the strong mailed hand have revealed themselves. We love to think of him as husband, father, grandfather, and master of a family. "His letters reveal all," says Eliot Warburton, when he mentions the discovery of the letters of Charles I., after Naseby, and the perfidy they revealed, transforming ever after the phrase, "On the word of a king," into the synonym of a lie. "And," says that lively and prejudiced writer (we have quoted this expression already), "if all the letters of the dark Cromwell could have been opened, what would they have revealed?" Well, they all have been discovered, all have been opened; and we suppose never, in the history of man, has there been presented such a transparent wholeness. It is *one* mirror of simple nobleness: every little note, and every family epistle, and every letter to the state officers, all reveal the same man. "A single eye, and a whole body full of light." Of course, in his letters as in his speeches, he says no more than he has to say; he never labours for any expression. He is not a man who can use a flowing imaginative diction. His words are strong, stiff, unbendable beings, but they convey a meaning and speak out a full, determined heart.

The great crime which has been charged upon Cromwell in his household, is that it was too Puritanical; that is, that it was a consistent, religious home. Let "Lord Will-be-will" say what he will, Cromwell knew nothing of those temporizing policies by which, in the present day, we argue that great place must accommodate itself to the world and to the world's ways. We have pictures given to us of his household. Upon the occasion of the signing of the treaty of peace with Holland, the ambassador gives an account of his reception at the Protector's Court. How calm and quiet and dignified the account of that reception! Music, indeed, was playing while they were dining, but after that the Protector gave out a hymn; and as he handed the book to the ambassador, he told him "that was the best paper that had passed between them as yet." Dignified and beautiful is the account of the gentle behaviour of the Protector to the wife and daughter of the ambassador. Then, after a walk on the banks of the river for half an hour, the prayers in the family; and so the evening closed,—very much, indeed, such a simple evening as we and our friends might spend together.

Of course Cromwell's was a Puritan household,—a household not so unpleasant for the imagination to linger upon as some may think. The life of the Puritan home reveals the Church life of the period: even the air was laden with mysticism, a floating mysticism pervaded almost the whole theology of the time: and a mystic can never be a very merry man. The recreations of Puritan homes were reduced to the narrowest compass compatible with good sense and taste. Wakes were abolished, maypoles pulled down and cockfights and bear baitings brought to an end. Meantime, the Puritan was not destitute of recreation: there were nice flower gardens for the ladies, and brave field sports for the gentlemen; but the daily life of the Puritan was brought within a compass which, while it did not prohibit the joke and the merry laugh, must, we fancy, have often and usually shaded down life to a sternness and habitual severity very much in harmony, it may be, with the seriousness of the times, but not reflecting that cheerfulness which a wiser and wider view of God and truth and nature would create and permit.

Cromwell well knew what of ceremony to abate, and what to retain. "Ceremony keeps up all things," said John Selden. We can see through it. True; so we can see through the glass, "the penny glass which holds some rich essence, or refined water; but without the frail glass, the essence, the real value, would be lost." We may have too little ceremony as well as too much. It does not matter much, but we do rather like our servant to tap at our study door before coming in, although we do not care about her handing our letters on a silver salver. When ambassadors crowded Cromwell's Court from all the States of Europe, some of them, in deference to the usualties of royalty, desired to kiss his hand; but, with manly dignity, he retired back two or three steps higher, to his throne, bowed to the deputation, and so closed the audience. A man, we see, who will not bate an inch of his nation's dignity, nor wear more than his manhood for his own. As he would not adopt the designation, so he would not permit himself to play at being a king.

Shall we say how he defended learning and scholarship? He had a wonderfully omniscient eye for the discovery of great men; not merely great generals or great statesmen, but for every kind of learning and scholarship. We know that his two secretaries were John Milton and Andrew Marvel. We know that he sought the friendship of Baxter. When he first met with Dr. Owen, he said, "Sir, you are the person I must be acquainted with," and took him by the hand and led him into the garden. And after a long conversation with John Howe, nothing would satisfy him but that seraphic man must become his chaplain. How graciously and kindly he listened to George Fox also, when he spoke, and desired to see and to talk with him again. He surrounded his house and table with the holiest and most scholarly men of his time. He committed the University of Oxford to Owen. We know what it was when he went there. We know that scholarship was expelled; that it was the haunt of Comus and his crew; and we know what he made it. It is to his immortal honour that the "*Biblia Polyglotta Waltoni*," perhaps the most valuable and important biblical book ever issued from the British press, owed the existence of its gigantic volumes to Cromwell. It was a most precious compendium of Scriptural criticism and interpretation. Everything of that time, previously attempted, had been performed for the Catholic Church, and at the expense of Catholic princes. No Protestant prince had ever been able to undertake such a work. Dr. Owen at first opposed it, looking upon it with suspicion. It is very characteristic that Cromwell, respecting Owen as he did, encouraged it, assisted in defraying the expense of publishing it, and admitted five thousand reams of paper free of duty, and so saved the author from loss by its publication. It was published during the Protectorate, and dedicated to Cromwell. But its mean and dastardly compiler, upon the return of Charles Stuart, erased the dedication to the man who had so substantially aided him, and inserted that of the king, who cared neither for the project, its scholarship, nor the Bible. He delighted to gather round him great minds. John Milton was his familiar friend and Latin or Foreign Secretary; he encouraged the young genius of honest Andrew Marvel, the patriot and the poet; Hartlib, a native of Poland, the bosom friend of Milton, and one of the foremost advocates of a wise education, was honoured and pensioned by him; he was the steadfast friend, notwithstanding episcopacy, of Archbishop Ushter; and far removed as his own sentiments were from Universalism, he shielded from persecution John Biddle, called the Father of Unitarians, and in consideration of his worth, even granted him a pension of one hundred crowns a year. Even Sir Kenelm Digby, Royalist, as he was, found himself at the Protector's table, who no doubt, enjoyed the mystical wanderings of his mind, and certainly did honour to his literary merits. He invited to his table, sometimes, men disaffected to himself—notably more than once he invited several of the nobility, and after dinner told them, to their surprise, where they had lately been, what company they had lately kept, and advised them the next time they drank the health of Charles Stuart and the members of the royal family, to do it a little more secretly, as the knowledge might not be so safe with some as with him. Such things as these might be mentioned to the too great extension of this chapter, but, from every aspect, it seems the character of a reverent and faithful man shines out upon us. In one of his speeches, he says, "I have lived the latter part of my life in, if I may say so, the fire, in the midst of troubles; but, truly, my comfort in all my life hath been that the burdens which have lain heavy on me, were laid on me by the hand of God." It is often said, a man can only do a man's work; but, as the man's work was very great, so was the man great who was set to perform it, and of him that is especially true which the poet Browning has so well taught in that which is, perhaps, his greatest poem, *Sordello*, that—

"Ends accomplished, turn to means."

To live is indeed to strive, but the chief idea of life is not always realized in the sense of the mere realist; his sense of the thing done is limited by that which stands present, complete, and accomplished to the eye; to him, therefore, all failure or incompleteness, is baffled or foiled existence. But the great poet, to whom we have referred, teaches us that it is not so. There is a world of work which is out of sight, which has told upon, and borne along, the individual soul, and it may be, the soul of the age or ages, along with it; and hence at the close of Cromwell's day, or life, as with Sordello, so it may be yet more truly said of him,—

> "The real way seemed made up of all the ways,
> Mood after mood of the one mind in him;
> Tokens of the existence, bright or dim,
> Of a transcendent and all-bracing sense
> Demanding only outward influence:
> A soul above his soul,
> Power to uplift his power, this moon's control
> Over the sea depths."

XVI.

THE FOREIGN POLICY AND POWER OF CROMWELL.

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FOREIGN POLICY AND POWER OF CROMWELL.

REFERRING to the foreign policy of Cromwell, the wisdom of which several wise little critics have chosen to call in question, it will be in the memory of our readers how he once said, "He hoped he should make the name of an Englishman as great as ever that of a Roman had been." It is not too much to say that England had never before so overawed the nations of Europe as during the reign of Cromwell. Perhaps some readers will say, What right has any nation, or any man, to overawe other nations or other princes? This is very plausible, but in Cromwell's case it does not correctly state the matter. It should be remembered that in that age, in Cromwell's time, the strong nations of Europe were set upon crushing the principles of freedom as represented by Protestant principles and in Protestant states. France and Spain were almost equally obnoxious to freedom, but in those days Spain was incomparably the strongest power; true, her power was on the wane, but she had the traditional inheritance of amazing empire, and she had the actual possession of the greatest and most wealthy colonies. The cruelty of her intolerance to Protestantism, and to all civil and religious liberty, had been written literally in letters of fire and blood, in the stakes and tortures of the Inquisition, in the more than decimation, the destruction, of towns and villages; nor was it so long since that the huge Armada was floated against England in the name of all papistry and despotism. All Cromwell's conduct shows the good will he had to, and the sympathy he had with, the Netherlands. It is quite likely that France and her statesmen were by no means charming to him; but he judged Spain to be as more worthy of his sword in virtue of her own more equal power, so also more deserving of his vengeance as the oppressor of the saints of the Lord, and the cruel foe to every form of freedom. One of the great instruments he chose to this end is one of the most illustrious names in the annals of the English navy, Robert Blake, Admiral Blake. What a splendid halo of chivalric memories gathers round the name of that great commander! there is scarcely another name in our nautical annals so fresh, so full of all the romance and poetry of the sea. One of the greatest of Cromwell's contemporaries, we must devote a page to the story of the life of the man who did as much as any of his time to make England respected and feared by her hereditary foes.

Robert Blake was born at Bridgewater, the son of a respectable Somersetshire merchant. We believe the old house is still standing, and shown, where he first drew breath; its gardens run to the river, and its windows look out on the Quantock Hills. Moreover, his young eyes early became familiar with the masts of the vessels of many nations, suggesting visions of the distant purple seas and recently discovered isles. He came of a Puritan stock; he received an university education, and is said to have gone farther in the knowledge of classics and books than has usually fallen to the lot of the sons of the sea. Blake in his early life appears to have been a thorough Puritan, and also very much of a Republican. He was returned member for Bridgewater to what is called the Short Parliament, which met on Monday, the 13th of April, 1640; and he no doubt heard the pleasant words with which the Lord Keeper Finch opened that Parliament: "His Majesty's kingly resolutions are seated in the ark of his sacred breast, and it were a presumption of too high a nature for any *Uzzah* uncalled to touch it: yet His Majesty is now pleased to lay by the shining beams of majesty, as Phœbus did to Phæton, that the distance between sovereignty and subjection should not barr you of that filial freedom of access to his person and counsels." But the time had come when this style of language was no longer to be endured by the Commons, and so they determined, before they would give to the king any supplies, they would seek the redress of many grievances. The astonished king dissolved this Parliament in little more than a fortnight, and then in the same year assembled the Long Parliament, of which, however, Blake was not returned member until 1645, when he took his seat for Taunton, and then when the war broke out, and the king raised his standard at Nottingham, while Cromwell marshalled his Ironsides in Huntingdonshire, Blake hurried down to the Western counties, and with celerity raised a troop of dragoons, with which he dashed to and fro, and did good service to the cause of the Parliament in the West. He soon rose high in the esteem of those for whom he was acting; he was appointed colonel, and also one of the Committee of Ways and Means for Somerset. To those who have only known Blake as one of our great English sea kings, it seems singular to think of him as a commander on the field. His conflicts seem to have been in the West with Prince Maurice, Prince Rupert's brother. He forced his way into his native town of Bridgewater, and a pathetic story tells how there he lost his brother, Samuel Blake, in a skirmish. He defended the little seaport town of Lyme besieged by Maurice, and he compelled the Prince to give up the siege after the loss of 2,000 men. He attempted to force Plymouth; and he did relieve Taunton when a sudden attack had been made upon that town, the refuge of a multitude of Puritans of that region. The whole region round Taunton appears to have been devastated and desolated by Goring's ferocious troops, generally called "Goring's crew." Blake summarily scattered these Royalist ruffians, for which he received the thanks of Parliament, and a special vote of £500. It was indeed a great triumph. This was not long before the battle of Naseby; then the king's game was up, and Blake appears for a short time to have retreated into the quietude of private life.

Blake was a man who had no disposition to take upon himself the management or direction of the complications of State. He was a moderate man, heartily anti-royalist, but with no wish to see the king beheaded. All the accounts that we have of him set him before us in a pleasant and beautiful light. He was a Puritan, but not morose; a cheerful country gentleman, orderly and pious, ready with good and holy words when such were needed in his household, but fond of a hearty laugh, a cup of sack, and a pipe of tobacco; a straightforward man, who very likely despised all high-flying notions, and only wished to see Government settled in such a manner as should have been for the good of all. Just the sort of man, says one writer, in commenting upon him, as would have ordered Maximilien Robespierre into the stocks, had he made his appearance talking any of his fine-spun orations, in his sky-blue coat, in the good old town of Taunton.

Such was Robert Blake when, at fifty years of age, he was called forth to an entirely new world of work, and from a general on the field to tread the deck as an admiral on the seas. Excellent as the service was which he had rendered as a soldier, we should scarcely have heard his name but that he added to all that had gone before the renown of a sailor whose name shines as an equal by the side of Drake, Nelson, Collingwood, and Hood; and yet how strange it seems that he should rise to the rank of a first-rate English seaman after his fiftieth year! strange that he should have been equal to such victorious fights!—and yet, probably, in our day he would not have passed either a civil or an uncivil service examination.

It has been the fashion with some writers to assert that Cromwell and Blake were hostile to each other. It is perfectly certain that the reverse was quite the case, Blake and Cromwell were friends; we read of the great pair dining together at Cromwell's house after he became Protector. The pursuits of the two men were different: Blake did not trouble himself with governing troublesome people, his work lay in fighting England's enemies and maintaining England's honour on the seas. First we find him in conflict again with an old land foe, Prince Rupert, who had also betaken himself to the waters. Blake followed him to the Tagus, trailing after him the Commonwealth's men-of-war with their homely names of *The Tiger*, *The Tenth Whelp*, *John*, *Signet*; homely vessels no doubt, but they succeeded in scattering Rupert's vessels with their finer names, and the Prince, with the fragments of his fleet, hurried away to the West Indies. Blake appears to have soon found himself as much at home inside the oak bulwarks, the black rigging, and the maze of masts, as behind the trenches or at the head of dragoons. He acquitted himself so well that the Council of State, after this his first expedition, made him Warden of the Cinque Ports. Blake became a naval reformer: he brought it about that his men were better paid, and received a more equitable distribution of prize-money; also he appears to have fought for and obtained better diet for his men, good provisions instead of the too often rank and foul food provided for them. It was beneath Blake's pennon that England first asserted the supremacy of the seas, a supremacy which she had soon to lower when Cromwell's pleasant successor ascended the English throne. We are not telling the story of Blake, and it is not therefore necessary that we should dwell upon the conflict with Holland and the Netherlands, represented by Blake and Van Tromp; and when at first, off the Ness, in Essex, Blake was worsted, Van Tromp proclaimed himself master of the Channel, and passed the English coast in triumph with a broom at the mast head. Blake, as we know, called for inquiry from the State into the conduct of several of his captains, and with a fleet which was afterwards fitted out, he quite retrieved the English navy from its momentary disgrace, and added immensely to his country's glory and fame. This was the occasion on which the old tradition says that Blake mounted a horse-whip as his standard, as he swept the Channel, in humorous response to Van Tromp's standard of the broom.

But it is farther away from home we have to follow him, to track the splendour of his great achievements. Throughout the Papal States, and along the coasts of the Mediterranean, the people trembled at the name of the heretic Admiral and his line of conquering ships. At Leghorn he demanded and obtained compensation in money for the owners of vessels that had been sold there by the Princes Rupert and Maurice; then he demanded and received compensation from the Pope, Alexander VII., for vessels sold by the same princes in Roman ports; he received on board his sixty-gun ship, *The George*, 20,000 pistoles, which his demands had produced from the Holy See. He urged freedom of worship for Protestants on the Grand Duke of Tuscany; then sailed away to the coast of Africa to have a word with the Dey of Tunis. From him he demanded compensation for prizes taken from the English. The Dey refused; Blake retired, put all his vessels in order, returned, cannonaded all the forts, and set fire to the corsair ships. Then away he sailed for Tripoli, where he found his fame had preceded him; the Dey there was manageable; and when, after this, he called in at Tunis again, he found the Dey of Tunis so renewed in the spirit of his mind, that he was glad to conclude a treaty of peace to save himself from further molestation. In the midst of all these arduous conquests he was tired and ill, and he writes affectingly to the Protector, describing some trials his brave sailors had to bear, and lightly referring to his own sufferings: "Our only comfort is that we have a God to lean upon, although we walk in darkness, and see no light. I shall not trouble Your Highness with any complaints of myself, of the indisposition of my body, or troubles of my mind; my many infirmities will one day, I doubt not, sufficiently plead for me, or against me, so that I may be free of so great a burden, consoling myself in the meantime in the Lord, and in the firm purpose of my heart, with all faithfulness and sincerity, to discharge the trust reposed in me."

Soon after this he ran home to refit and to be in more thorough readiness for the great silver fleets which were crossing the Atlantic from the Spanish colonies. And now followed, when he again set sail, his most remarkable triumphs. It was against those splendid Spanish galleons and India-built merchantmen, their holds full of the choicest products of the far West, gold and silver, pearls and precious stones, hides, indigo, cochineal, sugar, and tobacco, that he and his men set forth; and abundant were the treasures of sparkling silver-pieces which fell into the horny hands of Blake's men. He made his first seizure on this venture and sent it home; the bullion was conveyed to London, under the charge of soldiers, and eight-and-thirty waggon-loads of silver reeled along through the streets of London to the Tower, amidst the cheerful applause of the multitude. Blake did not come home, he was still out on those distant seas waiting for, and ready to pounce upon, more prizes. Perhaps many of our readers will think it a difficult thing to conceive of this war-like sailor as a God-fearing man, following up all this mischief against the Spaniards in the fear of the Lord; but it was even so, not an oath was heard on board his vessel or vessels, the ordinances of religion were followed up punctiliously. Why not? he was fighting the cause of freedom and faith against popery and absolutism, and their persecutions; and, whereas Spain and Rome had made Protestants everywhere tremble, this Gustavus of the seas, in turn, made Spain and Rome to tremble, and perhaps stirred some new thoughts about Protestant heroism within their cruel souls. He appears to have seen plainly the sphere in which he had to play his part: "It is not for us," said he, "to mind State affairs, but to keep the foreigners from fooling us," and his name became as terrible to the foes of England on the sea as Cromwell's on the land. Numerous and rapid were his victories over Holland, and Spain, and Portugal. It is melancholy to linger over the achievements of warriors; but it is certainly a source of pride and triumph to feel how the victories of Blake contributed to the peace of the world. He swept the Mediterranean clear of pirates, and enabled the commerce of Europe and the world to perform its work in that day in silence and quiet and respect. The Deys of Tunis, Algiers, and Tripoli were startled from the slumber of their despotism, as the noise of Blake's triumphant career rolled on their ears; and great must have been the astonishment of England, and especially that part of England contained in the cities of London and Westminster, to behold again the thirty-eight waggon-loads of silver rumbling over the stones of the old city, all taken by Blake from the king of Spain at Santa Cruz, amidst "whirlwinds of fire and iron hail," beneath the old Peak of Teneriffe. He had, before that, compelled the Dutch to do homage to England, as the Mistress of the Seas, defeating Van Tromp and De Ruyter. The Protector sent to him, after his last victory, a jewelled ring of the value of £500, and great would have been the acclamation greeting him on his return to his native land. But it was not decreed that he should stand upon her shores again. He returned homewards, and coveted a sight of old England's shores once more, and once more he beheld them—and that was all. He expired as his fleet was entering Plymouth Sound, on the 27th of August, 1657. A true model of a British sailor—he died poor. After all his triumphs and opportunities of accumulating wealth, he was not worth £500! A magnificent public funeral, and a resting-place in Henry VII.'s chapel was decreed for him; and there were few in the country who did not feel that his strength had been a mighty bulwark to the land But when Charles II. returned to the country, the purely national glory which surrounded the memory of this great English hero did not exempt his body from the indecent and inhuman indignities which were heaped upon the remains of the great Republicans. By the king's command the remains of this, perhaps the greatest English Admiral that ever walked a deck, were torn from the tomb and cast into a pit in St. Margaret's churchyard. "There," says Wood, "it lies, enjoying no other monument than what is reared by his own valour, which time itself can hardly deface." But even Lord Clarendon cannot forbear a slight tribute to his memory; he says of Blake: "Despising those rules which had been long in practice, to keep his ships and men out of danger, as if the principal art requisite in a naval captain had been to come safe home again, he was the first who brought ships to contemn castles on shore, which had ever before been thought formidable, and taught his men to fight in fire as well as upon water;" and adds his lordship, "though he has been very well imitated and followed, he was the first that gave the example of that kind of naval courage, and bold and resolute achievements."

But from Blake we return to Cromwell, and rightly to estimate his power our readers must remember that at that time England had never been more than a third-rate power in Europe; and the other nations were in the height and heat of their grandeur and fame. Spain, with a population of about thirty millions—it had declined recently, in the time of Charles V. its population had been about thirty-six millions, and the population of England at this time could not have been six millions—was the kingdom of the Inquisition, the chief land of the Romish power; with her continents of golden isles in the west, her possessions of gold in her own country; haughty, defiant, and strong. Spain, Cromwell determined to crush. France was powerful. Only recently had she known the monarchy of Henry of Navarre and the statesmanship of Richelieu. Her destinies were now guided by the wiliest man, and most fox-like statesman in Europe, Cardinal Mazarin. Him Cromwell treated as a valet or a footman; and his power lay humbled and stricken before the genius of the bluff farmer-statesman. Our readers may talk, if they will, about the craft and cunning of Cromwell, but his letters to Mazarin flow like transparent waves before the inky turbidity of that cuttle-fish, that *Sepia* among statesmen. A dry humour, nay, sometimes a most droll humour, guides his dealings with him. Mazarin was, we know, a most miserable miser, a kind of griffon in threadbare wings, watching his heaps and cellars of gold. How well Cromwell knew him. He sent presents to Cromwell, we find,—the richest and the stateliest presents of hangings and pictures and jewels. Whereupon Cromwell came out generously too, and sent the Frenchman what he knew, to his market eye, would be of more value than hangings, pictures, or books; he sent him some tons of British tin! Was it not characteristic of the shrewdness of the man? The supple Mazarin never found himself so perplexed.

Did our readers ever read the anecdote of Cromwell and the Quaker? It occurs in a speech, made in the House of Commons in the early part of the eighteenth century, by Mr. Pulteney, in a debate on the complaints of the West Indian merchants against Spain ; and certainly it showed no ordinary bravery to introduce the example of Cromwell to the notice of kings and ministers in those days.

"This was what Oliver Cromwell did," said the speaker, "in a like case, that happened during his government, and in a case where a more powerful nation was concerned than ever Spain could pretend to be. In the histories of his time we are told that an English merchant ship was taken in the chops of the Channel, carried into St. Malo, and there confiscated upon some groundless pretence. As soon as the master of the ship, who was an honest Quaker, got home, he presented a petition to the Protector in Council, setting forth his case, and praying for redress. Upon hearing the petition, the Protector told his Council he would take that affair upon himself, and ordered the man to attend him next morning. He examined him strictly as to all the circumstances of his case, and finding by his answers that he was a plain, honest man, and that he had been concerned in no unlawful trade, he asked him if he could go to Paris with a letter? The man answered he could. 'Well, then,' says the Protector, 'prepare for your journey, and come to me to-morrow morning.' Next morning he gave him a letter to Cardinal Mazarin, and told him he must stay but three days for an answer. 'The answer I mean,' says he, 'is the full value of what you might have made of your ship and cargo; and tell the Cardinal, that if it is not paid you in three days, you have express orders from me to return home.' The honest, blunt Quaker, we may suppose, followed his instructions to a tittle; but the cardinal, according to the manner of ministers when they are any way pressed, began to shuffle; therefore the Quaker returned, as he was bid. As soon as the Protector saw him, he asked, 'Well, friend, have you got your money?' And upon the man's answering he had not, the Protector told him, 'Then leave your direction with my Secretary, and you shall soon hear from me.' Upon this occasion that great man did not stay to negotiate, or to explain, by long, tedious memorials, the reasonableness of his demand. No; though there was a French minister residing here, he did not so much as acquaint him with the story, but immediately sent a man-of-war or two to the Channel, with orders to seize every French ship they could meet with. Accordingly, they returned in a few days with two or three French prizes, which the Protector ordered to be immediately sold, and out of the produce he paid the Quaker what he demanded for his ship and cargo. Then he sent for the French minister, gave him an account of what had happened, and told him there was a balance, which, if he pleased, should be paid in to him, to the end that he might deliver it to those of his countrymen who were the owners of the French ships that had been so taken and sold." [1]

Cromwell never assumed the title of "Defender of the Faith," but, beyond all princes of Europe, he was the bulwark and barrier against the cruelties of Rome. In all the persecutions of the French Protestants, how nobly his conduct contrasts with that of Elizabeth upon the occasion of the massacre of St. Bartholomew! She received the ambassador, but Cromwell wrung from the persecutors aid and help for the victims.

The Duke of Savoy raised a new persecution of the Vaudois; many were massacred, and the rest driven from their habitations; whereupon Cromwell sent to the French Court, demanding of them to oblige that duke, whom he knew to be in their power, to put a stop to this unjust fury, or otherwise he must break with them. The cardinal objected to this as unreasonable: he would do good offices, he said, but could not answer for the effects. However, nothing would satisfy the Protector till they obliged the duke to restore all he had taken from his Protestant subjects, and to renew their former privileges. Cromwell wrote on this occasion to the duke himself, and by mistake omitted the title of "Royal Highness" on his letter; upon which the major part of the Council of Savoy were for returning it unopened. But one of them representing that Cromwell would not pass by such an affront, but would certainly lay Villa Franca in ashes, and set the Swiss Cantons on Savoy, the letter was read, and, with the cardinal's influence, had the desired success. The Protector also raised money in England for the poor sufferers, and sent over an agent to settle all their affairs. He was moved to tears when he heard of the sufferings of the people of the valleys. He sent immediately the sum of £2,000 from his own purse to aid the exiles. He appointed a day of humiliation to be held throughout the kingdom, and a general collection on their behalf. The people heartily responded to his call, and testified their sympathy with their distressed brethren by raising the sum of £40,000 for distribution among them.

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[1] Any person desirous of authenticating this truly remarkable instance, will find it by referring back to the Parliamentary Debates of the period.

At another time there appeared a tumult at Nismes, wherein some disorder had been committed by the Huguenots. They being apprehensive of severe proceedings upon it, sent one over, with great expedition and secrecy, to desire Cromwell's intercession and protection. This express found so good a reception, that Cromwell the same evening despatched a letter to the Cardinal, with one endorsed to the king; also instructions to his ambassador, Lockhart, requiring him either to prevail for a total immunity of that misdemeanour, or immediately to come away. At Lockhart's application the disorder was overlooked; and though the French Court complained of this way of proceeding as a little too imperious, yet the necessity of their affairs made them comply. This Lockhart, a wise and gallant man, who was Governor of Dunkirk and ambassador at the same time, and in high favour with the Protector, told Bishop Burnet that when he was sent afterwards, as ambassador by King Charles, he found he had nothing of that regard that was paid to him in Cromwell's time. Had Cromwell been on the throne of England when Louis XIV. dared to revoke what had been called the Irrevocable Edict of Nantes, and by this act to inaugurate a protracted and horrible reign of terror, the revocation would never have taken place; or that apparition, which Mazarin always dreaded lest he should see, would have been beheld—namely, Cromwell at the gates of Paris.

There was yet a further design, very advantageous to the Protestant cause, wherewith Cromwell intended to have begun his kingship, had he taken it upon him; and that was the instituting a council for the Protestant religions, in opposition to the *Congregation de Propaganda Fide* at Rome. This body was to consist of seven councillors, and four secretaries for different provinces. The secretaries were to have £500 salary a-piece, to keep correspondence everywhere. Ten thousand pounds a year was to be a fund for ordinary emergencies; further supplies were to be provided as occasions required; and Chelsea College, then an old ruinous building, was to be fitted up for their reception. This was a great design, and worthy of the man who had formed it.

It was at the very period of the massacre of the Piedmontese, that a treaty with France had been matured, after long and tedious negotiation. One demand after another had been conceded to Cromwell by Louis and his crafty adviser, the Cardinal Mazarin. John Milton, Oliver's Private and Foreign Secretary, had conducted the negotiation to a successful issue, and the French ambassador waited with the treaty ready for signature, when Cromwell learned of the sufferings of the Vaudois. He forthwith despatched an ambassador, on their behalf, to the Court of Turin, and refused to sign the treaty with France, until their wrongs were redressed. The French ambassador was astonished and indignant. He remonstrated with Cromwell, and urged that the question bore no connection with the terms of the treaty; nor could his sovereign interfere, on any plea, with the subjects of an independent State. Mazarin took even bolder ground. He did not conceal his sympathy with the efforts of the Duke of Savoy to coerce these Protestant rebels,—declared his conviction that in truth "the Vaudois had inflicted a hundred times worse cruelties on the Catholics than they had suffered from them;" and altogether took up a very high and haughty position. Cromwell remained unmoved. New protestations met with no better reception. He told his majesty of France, in reply to his assurances of the impossibility of interfering, that he had already allowed his own troops to be employed as the tools of the persecutors; which, though very much like giving his Christian Majesty the lie, was not without its effect. Cromwell would not move from the sacred duty he had assumed to himself, as the defender of the persecuted Protestants of Europe. The French ambassador applied for an audience to take his leave, and was made welcome to go. Louis and Mazarin had both to yield to his wishes at last, and became the unwilling advocates of the heretics of the valleys.

Indeed, of the whole foreign policy of Cromwell, in which Milton bore so conspicuous a share, a very slight sketch may suffice. It is altogether such as every Englishman may be proud of. Not an iota of the honours due to a crowned head would he dispense with when negotiating, as the Protector of England, with the proudest monarchs of Europe. Spain yielded, with little hesitation, to accord to him the same style as was claimed by her own haughty monarchs; but Louis of France sought, if possible, some compromise. His first letter was addressed to "His Most Serene Highness Oliver, Lord Protector," etc., but Cromwell refused to receive it. The more familiar title of "Cousin," was in like manner rejected, and Louis and his crafty minister, the Cardinal Mazarin, were compelled to concede to him the wonted mode of address between sovereigns: "To our Dear Brother Oliver." "What!" exclaimed

Louis to his minister, "shall I call this base fellow my brother?" "Aye," rejoined his astute adviser, "or your father, if it will gain your ends, or you will have him at the gates of Paris!"

Again, when those of the Valley of Lucerne had unwarily rebelled against the Duke of Savoy, which gave occasion to the Pope and the neighbouring princes of Italy to call and solicit for their extirpation, and their prince had positively resolved upon it, Cromwell sent his agent to the Duke of Savoy, a prince with whom he had no correspondence or commerce, and also engaged the Cardinal, and even terrified the Pope himself, without so much as doing any grace to the English Roman Catholics (nothing being more usual than his saying, "that his ships in the Mediterranean should visit Civita Vecchia, and that the sound of his cannon should be heard in Rome"), that the Duke of Savoy thought it necessary to restore all he had taken from them, and did renew all those privileges they had formerly enjoyed and newly forfeited.

"Cromwell," says a celebrated writer, "would never suffer himself to be denied anything he ever asked of the Cardinal, alleging, 'that people would be otherwise dissatisfied;' which the Cardinal bore very heavily, and complained of to those with whom he would be free. One day he visited Madame Turenne; and when he took his leave of her, she, according to her custom, besought him to continue gracious to the churches. Whereupon the Cardinal told her "that he knew not how to behave himself: if he advised the king to punish and suppress their insolence, Cromwell threatened him to join with the Spaniard; and if he showed any favour to them, at Rome they accounted him a heretic.'"

The proceedings the Cardinal did adopt leave no room to doubt the conclusion he finally arrived at, as to whether it was most advisable to attend to the threats of the Pope of Rome or of the Lord Protector of England.

The prince who bears the closest resemblance to Cromwell is Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden. He, too, was the lion of the Protestant cause, and his camp, like that of the great British farmer, was the scene of piety and extraordinary bravery. Like Cromwell, he was rapid, and irresistible as a mountain torrent, on the field. Like Cromwell, he alarmed the councils of the Roman Pontiff and struck terror into the Imperialist cabinet. Far inferior to Cromwell,—for who of all generals or statesmen equalled him?—yet both regarded themselves as set apart and consecrated for the defence of Protestantism against the encroachments and cruelties of Popery. This idea largely entered into the mind of the Protector. He saw the state of Europe; he felt for its wrung and lacerated condition. In his age he was the only Protestant prince; the so-called Protestant statesmen were in league with Rome. He raised his banner against the Vatican, declared his side and his convictions, and made the tyrants and diplomatists of Europe quail and shrink before the shadow of his power and the terror of his name. In the history of Protestantism he occupies the distinguished place, in the very foreground. That we are entitled to say thus much of him is proved by a reference to his own words, as well as to the better evidence of his deeds.

Nor must we fail to glance at the sea. During the time of Charles, pirates infested our own coast, scoured Devonshire and the Channel. Beneath the Protectorate things were speedily amended. The guns of the enemy rolled no more round the British coast till Cromwell was dead, and Charles Stuart came back; and then, indeed, even London herself heard them thundering up the Medway and the Thames. Turks, pirates, and corsairs, these were swept away of course; but, in those days, Spain herself was but a kingdom of robbers and buccaneers. Waves of old golden romance; what imagination does not kindle over the stories of the Spanish Main! The power of Spain was there; Spain, the bloodiest power of Europe; Spain, the land of the Inquisition; Spain, the disgraced, degraded; land of every superstition. Against her Cromwell declared war. Alliance with France, hostility to Spain, and we have seen how the immortal Blake and his fire-ships scoured those distant seas. That great sea-king! Have we not seen the action of the Port of Santa Cruz, beneath the Peak of Teneriffe?—the thundering whirlwinds of fire and flying iron hail. Sixteen war-ships, full of silver, all safely moored, as it seemed, in that grand castellated and unassailable bay; the whole eight castles, a very Sebastopol there! See Blake entering beneath that living thunder, all starting from its sleep; see him, with his ships silencing the castles, sinking the mighty gun-ships, and sailing quietly from Santa Cruz bay again. Those were the days, too, in which Oliver possessed England of Jamaica, and asserted the right of England, also, in those seas. It was thus that His Highness grappled with the Spanish Antichrist; and it must be admitted that Spanish Antichrist has never been, from the day of Cromwell to this hour, what it was before.

XVII.

THE LAST DAYS OF CROMWELL.

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"*YET is their strength labour and sorrow;*" this, after all, must be said even of this great and most successful man. Our conception of him is such that we can well believe he longed to be at rest. It was an amazing work, that in which he was the actor; but with what toil and endurance and sleepless energy had he to travail day and night! The honour of knighthood and £500 a year for ever, was offered by a proclamation, by Charles Stuart, from his vile, ragged, and filthy Court in Paris, to any who would take the life of the Protector; and there were many in England who longed to see the mighty monarch dethroned. In his palace chambers lived his noble mother, nearly ninety, now trembling at every sound, lest it be some ill to her noble and royal son.

We are not surprised at the absence of much that seems, to our minds, happiness in those last days. The higher we go, brother, in the great kingdom of duty, the less we must expect to enjoy, apparently, in the picturesque villages of happiness. Ah! but the sense brightens and sweetens within; for there are they "who taste and see that the Lord is good." "Do you not see," says our anti-Cromwell friend, "a Divine compensation in this unhappiness of Cromwell?" No, we do not. What, in his old age was Baxter happier? or Vane? or were the last days of Owen more sweetly soothed? On the contrary. Weak Richard Cromwell—who does nothing—steps into the bye-lanes of life, and goes serenely off the stage. Would you rather, then, be Richard than Oliver?—rather have Richard's quiet than Oliver's unrest? It is well to sigh for calm; but to sigh for it, indeed, we must deserve it. Easy it is for us who do nothing worth calling a deed, to take our Rhine journeys, to stand in Venice, or to see the broad sun shine on us from Ben Mucdhui or Loch Lomond, or the moon rise over Grasmere. But men who have done a thousand times over our work never know that hour of rest. What then, they are rewarded better than we are, and shall be! No, thou caitiff, coward Royalist! Say not to us, "See, here is the life thou callest a brave one going out in ashes. What is Oliver, the just and the holy, better than I with my songs, and my harlots, and my dice?" And we say, "Thou poor, halt, and maimed rascal, he is every way better; for he has peace." Oh, doubtless, then, the hard, rough hand of the old Marston and Naseby soldier would take once more the gentle hand of Elizabeth, clasped tightly thirty-eight years ago; floods of tenderness would come over him as they come over all such men. In those last days it was that he said to his Parliament: "There is not a man living can say I sought this place—not a man or woman living on English ground. I can say in the presence of God, in comparison with whom we are like creeping ants upon the earth, I would have been glad to have lived under my woodside, and have kept a flock of sheep, rather than have undertaken such a government as this." Yes; you can see him there, in the great, stately palace, in some quiet room, talking with Elizabeth over the old, free, healthy, quiet days at Huntingdon, and St. Ives, and Ely, and Ramsey—days surely, never to be known again until the deeper quiet of eternity is reached. Do you not sympathise with that quiet, timid, lady-like wife, in her dove-like beauty, trembling near the eagle heart of her great husband, and wondering, "When he is gone, what will, what can become of me?" As we walk in fancy through the old palace chambers, we think many such things about them.

Death threw his shadow over Oliver's palace before he broke in. The following of Thurloe is touching: "My Lord Protector's mother, of ninety-four years old, died last night. A little before her death she gave my lord her blessing in these words: 'The Lord cause His face to shine upon you, and comfort you in all your adversities, and enable you to do great things for the glory of your most high God, and to be a relief unto His people. My dear son, I leave my heart with thee. Good-night.'"

"*Taken from the evil to come.*" One is glad she went first, before the great change. Then his heart was shaken by the death of the Lady Elizabeth, his beloved daughter, Mrs. Claypole. This broke down his heart. Her long illness; his tenderness, as father, so extreme; his constant watching by her side, the spectator of her violent convulsive fits: the strong soldier, who had ridden his war-charger conquering over so many fields, bowed before the blow when her death came.

And, therefore, only a few days after, when he was seized with illness at Hampton Court, he felt that it was for death; and that death-bed is one of the most profoundly memorable, even as that life was one of the most illustrious and glorious. But it was more than the death-bed of a hero; it was the death-bed of a Christian. In that death-chamber prayers—deep, powerful, long—went up, and men sought to lay hold on God that He might spare him; but, says one, "We could not be more desirous he should abide than he was content and willing to be gone. He called for his Bible, and desired an honourable and godly person there, with others present, to read unto him that passage in Phil. iv. 11–13: 'Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.' Which read, said he, to use his own words as near as we can remember them, 'This Scripture did once save my life, when my eldest son, poor Oliver, died, which went as a dagger to my heart, indeed it did.' And then, repeating the words of the text himself, and reading the tenth and eleventh verses, of St, Paul's contentment and submission to the will of God in all conditions, said he, 'It's true, Paul, you have learned this, and attained to this measure of grace; but what shall I do? Ah, poor creature, it is a hard lesson for me to take out! I find it so.' But reading on to the thirteenth verse, where Paul saith, 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me,' then faith began to work, and his heart to find support and comfort, and he said thus to himself, 'He that was Paul's Christ is my Christ too;' and so 'he drew water out of the wells of salvation.'"

"Oliver, we find," says Carlyle, "spoke much of 'the covenants,' which, indeed, are the grand axes of all, in that Puritan universe of his. Two covenants; one of works, with fearful judgment for our shortcomings therein, one of grace, with unspeakable mercy; gracious engagements, covenants which the eternal God has vouchsafed to make with his feeble creature, man. Two—and by Christ's death they have become one—there, for Oliver, is the divine solution of this our mystery of life. 'They were two,' he was heard ejaculating—'but put into one before the foundation of the world!' And again: 'It is holy and true, it is holy and true, it is holy and true! Who made it holy and true? The Mediator of the covenant.' And again: 'The covenant is but one. Faith in the covenant is my only support, and, if I believe not, He abides faithful.' When his wife and children stood weeping round him, he said, 'Love not this world!' 'I say unto you, it is not good that you should love this world!' No. 'Children, live like Christians; I leave you the covenant to feed upon!' Yes, my brave one, even so. The covenant, and eternal soul of covenants, remains sure to all the faithful; deeper than the foundations of this world, earlier than they, and more lasting than they."

"Look also at the following; dark hues and bright; immortal light beams struggling amid the black vapours of death. Look, and conceive a great sacred scene, the sacredest this world sees—and think of it; do not speak of it in these mean days which have no sacred word. 'Is there none that says, Who will deliver me from this peril?' moaned he once. Many hearts are praying, O wearied one! 'Man can do nothing,' rejoins he: 'God can do what He will.' Another time, again thinking of the covenant, 'Is there none that will come and praise God, whose mercies endure for ever?'"

Here also are ejaculations caught up at intervals, undated, in those final days. "Lord, Thou knowest, if I do desire to live, it is to show forth Thy praise and to declare Thy works!" Once he was heard saying, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!" "This was spoken three times," says Maidston, "his repetitions usually being very weighty, and with great vehemency of spirit." Thrice over he said this, looking into the eternal kingdoms. But again: "All the promises of God are in Him yea, and in Him amen; to the glory of God by us in Jesus Christ." "The Lord hath filled me with as much assurance of His pardon and His love as my soul can hold.' "I think I am the poorest wretch that lives; but I love God, or rather am beloved of God." "I am a conqueror, and more than a conqueror, through Christ that strengtheneth me!"

On the 30th of August, however (having in the interim been removed from Hampton Court to Whitehall), he had so far changed his sentiments as to think it necessary to declare his eldest son Richard his successor in the Protectorate. And, on the evening before his departure, in the same doubtful temper of mind, though still greatly supported by his enthusiasm, he uttered the following prayer:—

"Lord, although I am a wretched and miserable creature, I am in covenant with Thee through grace, and I may, I will, come unto Thee for my people. Thou hast made me a mean instrument to do them some good, and Thee service; and many of them have set too high a value upon me, though others wish and would be glad of my death. But, Lord, however Thou dost dispose of me, continue to go on, and do good for them. Give them consistency of judgment, one heart, and mutual love; and go on to deliver them, and with the work of reformation, and make the name of Christ glorious in the world. Teach those who look too much upon Thy instruments to depend more upon Thyself. Pardon such as desire to trample upon the dust of a poor worm, for they are Thy people too; and pardon the folly of this short prayer, for Jesus Christ His sake, and give us a good night if it be Thy pleasure."

It was the 3rd of September, 1658, the anniversary of his famous battles of Dunbar and Worcester; a day always celebrated by rejoicings in honour of these important victories. When the sun rose Oliver was speechless, and between three and four o'clock in the afternoon he expired. God shattered all his strength on this festival of his glory and his triumphs.

The sorrow of the Protector's friends and of the majority of the nation cannot be described. "The consternation and astonishment of all people," wrote Fauconberg to Henry Cromwell, "are inexpressible; their hearts seem as if sunk within them. And if it was thus abroad, your lordship may imagine what it was in the family of His Highness and other near relations. My poor wife (Mary, Oliver's third daughter), I know not what in the earth to do with her. When seemingly quieted, she bursts out again into passions that tears her very heart in pieces; nor can I blame her, considering what she has lost.

It fares little better with others. God, I trust, will sanctify this bitter cup to us all." "I am not able to speak or write," said Thurloe. "This stroke is so sore, so unexpected, the providence of God is so stupendous; considering the person that has fallen, the time and season wherein God took him away, with other circumstances, I can do nothing but put my mouth in the dust and say, It is the Lord. . . . It is not to be said what affliction the army and the people show to his late Highness; his name is already precious. Never was there any man so prayed for."

"Hush! poor weeping Mary," says Carlyle, after reading the foregoing extract, here is a life-battle right nobly done. Seest thou not—

"The storm is changed into a calm
  At his command and will;
So that the waves which raged before,
  Now quiet are and still?

"Then are they glad, because at rest,
  And quiet now they be;
So to the haven he them brings,
  Which they desired to see."

"'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.' Blessed are the valiant that have lived in the Lord. 'Amen,' saith the spirit, Amen! They 'rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.'"

And what is the verdict upon all these amazing faculties of mind? Mr. Forster says, "They failed in their mission upon earth." Failed! then Gustavus at Lutzen failed; then every martyr in every age has failed. No! we will not call that life a failure. It was success; it was success in itself, and in what followed it. Cromwell has been called the armed soldier of democracy. No, he was not that; he was the armed soldier of Puritanism. His knighthood was religious; and if you judge him accurately, he bears just the same relation to the consolidation and settlement of our constitution that William the Conqueror bears to the consolidation and settlement of feudalism. Oliver, the Conqueror, in himself, and in what he marks, is an epoch in the development of English law.

Cromwell was the greatest and most illustrious instance of reaction, in the great and rising middle-class, against feudal tyranny. The contest was carried on between the king and his people alone. In other, and not less deserving agitations, the cause of tyranny had received aid from neighbouring monarchs; in this case the battle was fought by the representatives of the soil alone. The struggles of the Netherlands, beneath leaders whose power and eloquence and sagacity have been the subjects of romance and poetry, from that time to this hour, were unsuccessful; but not unsuccessful were we.

It is mournful that every chapter of constitutional law has been inaugurated by the sword. The sword of Cromwell alone gave victory to the people over the king in the first days of the contest. Had not those victories been obtained, this land would have been at the feet of a cold and cruel tyrant. The king's nature was so well known, that his *friends* dreaded a victory upon his side. The country would have been one widespread scene of decimation and attainder. Victory on the banners of Charles would have sealed the enslavement of our land for long ages. When the will of the king became the tyrannizer of the country, and over the whole population of the land there seemed to be no hope for enfranchisement, or escape, then Cromwell arose—as Prince Arthur, by the side of the enchanted lake, beheld suddenly arise the hand bearing the sword, the good sword Excalibur. So law was beaten down. When, in Church and State, spread one wide waste of desolation, then, out of the ranks of the people, arose Cromwell! You may refuse his monument a niche in the House of Lords; you may allow his name to be cast out. It matters not; he marks an era in the history of English law! In the next generation the tide of tyranny arose again, and beat in storms upon the people. It matters not! William I. does not more surely mark an epoch in the history of England than Cromwell does; his memory and his name tower aloft over the ages. Read his deeds, and you will find that while he conquered, he defined the new and enlarged limits of English representation. He conquered Great Britain and Ireland, and united both in one peaceful government. He indicated the destiny of the West Indies. A born child of justice and of rectitude, he glanced along all the headlands of unrighteousness, and declared their corruption and their ruin. He shivered absolutism, while making himself the most absolute prince. He broke the wand of feudalism and cast it into the deep sea.

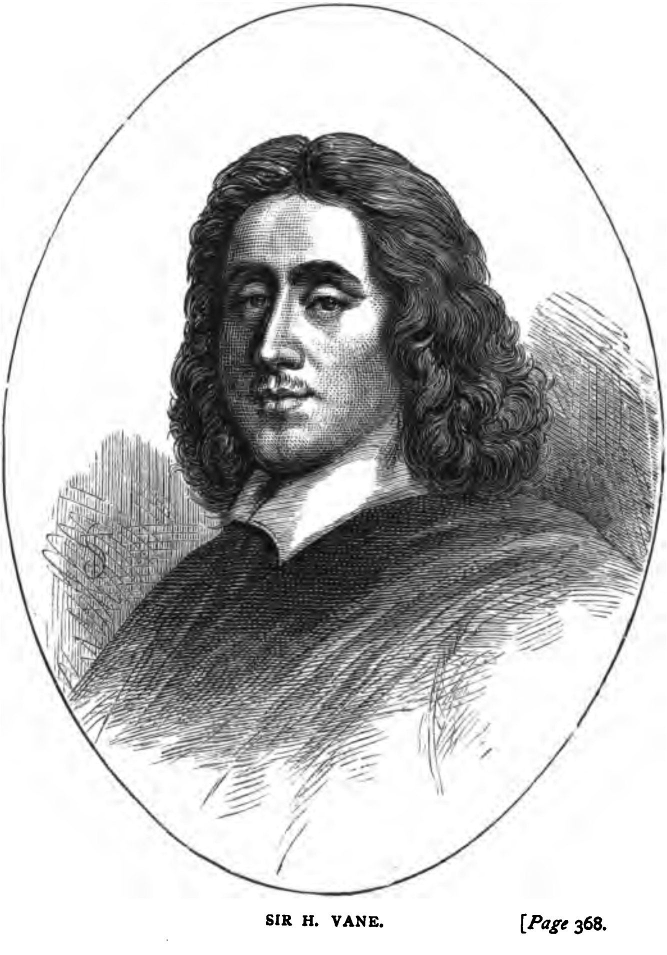
We will leave him now. They gave him a magnificent funeral in the old Abbey, where they had buried Blake, and the Protector's mother. But when Charles Stuart returned, the bodies were taken up and buried at Tyburn, the head of Cromwell exposed over Westminster Hall. The dastards and the fools! But after all, it is not certain that the body buried in the Abbey was his body. In a rare old volume we have, one hundred and sixty years old, it is confidently asserted, on the authority of the nurse of Cromwell, that he was privately buried by night in the Thames, in order to avert the indignities which it was foreseen would be wreaked on his body; and this by his own direction. Other rumours assign another spot to his burial. Ah, well! it matters little. We know where his work is, and how far that is buried. We see him standing there, ushering in a new race of English kings. True, as Rufus or Henry Beauclerc seemed to carry England no further in the career of progress than before the Norman accession, so, in the mad cruelty of the succeeding kings to Cromwell, all seemed lost. But no! He was the breakwater of tyranny. By his Parliament we have seen he amended English representation. He held aloft in his hand the charter to guide, he knew he could not give. Show us almost any act of legislative greatness, and we will show it you as anticipated by Cromwell. Of course there was a wild outbreak and outcry when Charles came from Dover to London, and blazing bonfires, and maypoles, and fireworks, and garlands, inaugurating a new despotism; not the despotism of God and goodness, not the despotism of power and majesty, but the despotism of lust and licentiousness, of cruelty and cowardice, of fraud and intolerance, of Nell Gwynne and Castlemaine and Portsmouth; and good men gave up all for lost. But that royal monarch whose bones had been insulted, and whose memory had been cursed, *he* was not dead! Even Clarendon was compelled to contrast his royal master's throne with that ungarnished one; and men who, like Baxter, had only irritated and annoyed and weakened his Government by their bilious maundering, threw back glances of sadness to those days, and thought and spoke of their lost happiness with a sigh. Of Baxter this is especially true, and it is representatively true. We always feel, after reading his irritable attempts to annoy the Government of the great Protector during his life, that there is a fine but a just compensation in the tones in which he bewails the dead Protector' memory, and the decency and order of England in that departed day; not to speak of his own arrest and trial, and the attempts made by the wicked Jeffries upon the honour and life of the venerable old saint.

But the shadow of the great Protector was over the land still. Tear him limb from limb—behead him—affix his head to any gibbet—you cannot get rid of his work so. He failed, says Mr. Forster!

> "They never fail who die in a great cause.
> The block may soak their gore,
> Their head be strung to city gates or castle walls,
> But still their spirit walks abroad!"

As the mad voluptuary rode down to the House, did he never gaze up to that head he believed to be his powerful conqueror's, and see in the scowl of the skeleton skull the avenging genius of the country, whose holy altars he had profaned, and whose rights he had outraged? The mind of Cromwell was abroad, and the genius of freedom, as represented by him, conquered once more.

But now, for the present, we leave him, to our imagination, calm in his uncrowned majesty; surrounded by his illustrious compatriots; friend, and fellow-labourer of Hampden, and Pym; of Selden and of Hale; whose friendly hand employed and fostered the genius of Milton and of Marvell; whose holy hours were solaced by the sacred converse of Owen and of Howe, of Manton and of Goodwyn and Caryl; whose strong arm shielded his own land; whose awful spirit overshadowed with fear the greatest nations and greatest statesmen of his age; by whose command Blake dashed in pieces the sceptre of Spain, and bowed even the nobility of Holland. Some there are who find a fitting com-



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parison between his deeds and those of some despots of later date. As well compare rats to lions. For around his name so distinct an aureole of light gathers, that we shall refuse to see the justice of the comparison with even the greatest statesmen of antiquity. And while we rejoice that the exigency of our nation, since his age, has not needed such a man, we shall see in him, and his appearance, a Providence not less distinct than that which scattered the Armada; which maps out the great predispositions and predestinations of history; which gave us an English birth; which disposes all great events, and has resources of great men to answer and bless a people's prayer.

EPILOGUE.

XVIII.

CROMWELL'S CONTEMPORARIES: SIR HARRY VANE.

CHAPTER XVIII.

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THE name of Sir Harry Vane is better known to the greater number of English readers, probably, from Cromwell's well-known ejaculation when he was dissolving the Long Parliament, than from any other association. His life has not been often written, his works have not been reprinted, and, of the great statesmen of the age to which he belonged, his name is perhaps the most seldom pronounced. Wordsworth has indeed included him in his famous sonnet—

> "Great men have been among us; hands that penned
> And tongues that uttered wisdom—better none:
> The later Sidney, Marvell, Harrington,
> *Young Vane*, and others who called Milton friend."

Especially the lovers of true freedom should treat reverently the name of Vane; it should be had in everlasting remembrance. No character of his times is more consistent; it was elevated by the beauty of holiness. We have no doubt that his views were far too ideal and abstract for practical statesmanship; he demanded too much from human nature beneath the influence of other principles; there was very much of the crochetiness and impossibility of Baxter in him, but no man was more elevated and unselfish in all his aims. It would be difficult to find a character so confessedly unselfish. He was, in an eminent degree, possessed of that virtue we denominate magnanimity; his views were great, his plans were great, and he was prepared to a corresponding self-sacrifice in order to realize and achieve them.

While this was the case—while in a most true and comprehensive sense he was a Christian, and while Christianity was to him not an intellectual system of barren speculative opinions—he was so unfortunate as to be only, in his life, a target for malignity to shoot its sharp arrows at; and since his martyrdom, or murder, men like Drs. Manton and Cotton Mather, who might have been expected to treat his name with tenderness, have been among his maligners. The account of him by Baxter is in that excellent man's usual vein of narrowness and bitterness when writing of those whose opinions were adverse to his own. He is only a "fanatic democrat," almost a papist, and quite a juggler; while Hume, when he comes to touch upon his life and writings, only finds them "absolutely unintelligible" (it is not necessary to suppose that he had ever looked at or attempted to read one of them) "exhibiting no traces of eloquence or common sense." While Clarendon was only able to sneer at him, and at his memory, as "a perfect enthusiast, and, without doubt, did believe himself inspired." "Anthony Wood," as Forster says, "foams at the mouth" (there was much of the mad dog in that Wood) when he even mentions him. "In sum, he was the Proteus of his times, a mere hotch-potch of religion, a chief ringleader of all the frantic sectarians, of a turbulent spirit and a working brain, of a strong composition of choler and melancholy, an inventor not only of whimseys in religion, but also of crotchets in the State (as his several models testify), and composed only of treason, ingratitude, and baseness." Glad should we have been had Mr. John Forster do for the memory of Sir Harry Vane what he has done for that of Sir John Eliot. From a load of calumny and misrepresentation heaped over his murdered remains, it is the duty of all who reverence the rights of conscience to relieve his name. Few of those who have ascended the scaffold for freedom deserve more fervent and affectionate regards at the hands of those they have blessed by their heroism than he. Perhaps few of the innumerable travellers who turn aside to walk through Raby Woods, or to survey the magnificent masses of Raby Castle, the great northern seat of the Duke of Cleveland, call to mind the fact that he is the lineal descendant of that Vane who, for maintaining precisely that which gave to the peer a dukedom, with all its heraldries, expiated that which was in his age an offensive crime by losing his head on Tower Hill.

We have been unable, with any satisfaction, to discover whether the patriot was born in Raby Castle;

but the only worthy likeness we have seen of him hangs in the recess in the beautiful drawing-room there. There, no doubt, many of his days were passed; it was his patrimony and inheritance; thence he issued several of those tracts which startled, even if they did not enlighten, his contemporaries; thence especially issued his famous *Healing Question*, which so aroused the ire of Cromwell.

His father, the elder Sir Harry Vane, was the first of his family who possessed Raby Castle; he does not commend himself much to any higher feelings of our nature. The mother of Vane was a Darcey, and his name mingles with some of the noblest families of England. His father was high in favour at Court; but very early it became manifest that the son, neither in the affairs of Church or State, was likely to follow the prescriptions of mere tradition and authority. At the age of fourteen or fifteen, he says on his trial, "God was pleased to lay the foundation or groundwork of repentance in me, for the bringing me home to Himself by His wonderful rich and free grace, revealing His Son in me, that, by the knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent, I might, even whilst here in the body, be made partaker of eternal life, in the firstfruits of it." He studied at Westminster School, then at Magdalen College, Oxford; then he travelled in France, and spent some time in Geneva. What was wanting to confirm the impressions he had received was given to him there; he came home to perplex and astonish his father, who was simply a vain vacillating courtier, only desirous to stand well with, whatever might be likely to pay best. Laud took the young recusant in hand, we may believe with astonishing results; exactly what we might conceive from an interview of calm, clear reason, with that ridiculous old archprelatical absurdity. Vane sought the home and the counsels of Pym. If the lawyer was not likely to help or to deepen his purely religious convictions, at any rate he would not interfere with them; while the touch of his political wisdom would be like a spark of purifying fire upon his mind, consuming all the false and confusing notions which must inevitably have sought to nestle there beneath such an influence as that his father would seek to exercise over him. He went to America. Bold in conception, with a rich, only too dreamy imagination, perhaps little prognosticating the strange career through which England was to pass, impatient of conventionalities, sick to the soul of the divisions and heartburnings of the Church, forecasting and dreading the ambition of Strafford, and the cruel, narrow resolution of the king; the wretched superstition of Laud, rocking to and fro in his old Gothic chair of abuses, like an Archimage with his dim blear eyes;—it seemed natural to the young man that America should furnish him with all he needed.

America was the hope of the world then. It was the sanctuary and the shrine of freedom, especially of free faith and opinion. The young dreamer reached Boston early in 1635, and was admitted to the freedom of Massachusetts on the 3rd of March in the same year, and he became Governor of Massachusetts the following year. He was but a youth in years, but the creed of his future life was remarkably brought out and illustrated in the story of his government. It was a brief period too, for he took his passage home in August 1637. He did not, as Richard Baxter so wrongly says, steal away by night, but he stepped on board openly, with marks of honour from his friends; large concourses of people followed him to the ship with every demonstration and mark of esteem, and parting salutes were fired from the town and castle. He, no doubt, found the dreams he had entertained when he set foot on those shores dissolve; who has not known such dreams and such dissolutions? There was little space for freedom of opinion to thrive in there; his great thought of and faith in universal toleration was intolerable, even to many of the noblest people of that age, and especially to the ruling minds of Massachusetts. Vane, even in those earliest years, when he was getting his harness on, was clear in his perceptions of the rights of the human soul. We do not enter here into the incidents of his government of the young colony; we do not even touch upon his conduct with reference to his vindication of Mrs. Hutchinson, a proceeding which brought him so severe a measure of reprehension then and after. We believe he was nobly right, and only in advance of his age. He, no doubt, learnt much in the period of his residence in New England, which fitted him for service on a larger and far more important field. A nobler career awaited him very shortly after his return.

After a short period of retirement, during which he married Frances Wray, daughter of Sir Christopher Wray, of Ashby, in Lincolnshire, we find him elected, in 1640, member for the borough of Kingston-upon-Hull, illustrious predecessor of Andrew Marvell in the representation of that place. This step, which gave him the opportunity for a prominent use of his eminent abilities, filled the Court, the king, and his father too, with alarm, and instant steps were taken "to propitiate the possible hostility of the young and resolute statesman." He received the honour of knighthood, he was elevated to the office of Treasurer of the Navy, with Sir William Russell. Again, in the same year, he was elected member for Hull, to serve in the Long Parliament; but his own course was clear and unswerving. When the appeal to arms was made by Charles, he resigned the patent of office, but was instantly reappointed Treasurer of the Navy by the Parliament, and he gave a singular instance of his patriotism. The fees of his office were great in times of peace, but in times of war they became enormous, amounting to about £30,000 per annum. These vast emoluments he resigned, only stipulating that a thousand a year should be paid to a deputy. Before this he had acquired a notoriety which many have thought not enviable, as being the chief means, the most distinct witness, in proving the intended treason of Strafford: he discovered in the red velvet cabinet those papers, the notes of a conference, in which Strafford's counsels had been of such a nature, that Vane could only, as a patriot, reveal them to Pym. Pym, upon the occasion of the great impeachment, revealed them, and Vane avowed the authenticity of the revelation. It decided the fate of the Earl. It must also have been, if that were wanting, a more inevitable step, deciding Vane's political relations also; henceforth he became a star in the Parliamentary firmament, and with incessant activity he committed himself to the affairs of his country. He soared, indeed, above party strifes, or if he served with a party, it was with that which we identify with the names of Pym and Hampden. For the lower sections of political dispute he had no ear, neither had he any ear for any of the innumerable frays of opinion in religion, with which, in those days, the kingdom rung from end to end. There was no life for him but in conviction; he ever lived too much aloof from those walks in which inferior minds were to be found. On his trial he says, referring to the part he took in his mission to Edinburgh, where he assisted in framing the Solemn League and Covenant with Scotland:—

"Nor will I deny but that, as to the manner of the prosecution of the Covenant to other ends than itself warrants, and with a rigid oppressive spirit (to bring all dissenting minds and tender consciences under one uniformity of Church discipline and government), *it was utterly against my judgment.* For I always esteemed it more agreeable to the Word of God, that the ends and work declared in the Covenant should be promoted in a spirit of love and forbearance to differing judgments and consciences, that thereby we might be approving ourselves in doing that to others which we desire they should do to us, and so, though on different principles, be found joint and faithful advancers of the reformation contained in the Covenant, both public and personal."

For a long period Vane wrought with Cromwell in seeking to bring the affairs of the Civil Wars to an issue. He and Cromwell wrought together the plan of the celebrated Self-denying Ordinance, in 1644–1645; it decided, as our readers remember, the campaign; and, from 1649 to 1653, it has been truly said the power and ability of his executive ruled England: he was the director of those great achievements in which Blake asserted and maintained the supremacy of England on the seas; his genius devised the means by which the Dutch flag, which had waved triumphantly and insolently in defiance, suffered signal humiliation. Those were the days, as we have seen, when Van Tromp, after having driven Blake into harbour with the loss of two sail only, although the Dutch admiral had eighty and the English only thirty-seven perfectly equipped ships under his command, hoisted a broom at his masthead, as if he had swept his antagonists from their own waters. Sir Harry Vane presented his estimates and demands for supplies, and he procured a resolution that £40,000 per month should be appropriated to the arsenals and navy yards; he prepared and brought in a Bill; he met with singular bravery and sagacity the great national emergency. Blake was set afloat with no less than fourscore ships of war, and Van Tromp was in turn, as we know, driven from the English Channel.

He also devised a Bill for the reform of English representation, in its particulars exceedingly like that known as the English Reform Bill of our day. A bold and most remarkable measure; for it was the design of this great spirit all along to secure for the country constitutional liberty; its aim was to make it impossible for a tyrant like Charles to dominate again over English freedom. Was the country prepared for any such measure? Surely the result of a few years abundantly proved it was not; but noble men, and free pure minds are wont to estimate the average mind from their own standard—it is the error of lofty intelligences in all things. Vane was moving ever in the lofty light of the Empyrean. Perhaps he knew, theoretically, that the heart is deceitful, and that man is fallen; but he was wont to act as trusting man; thus he gave to the political suffrages of the people immense additions by his proposed measure. It was, however, not destined to receive the endorsement of legal sanction. It has been usual to be very severe on Cromwell; but no doubt he knew the art of governing, and its depths and demands, better than the pure and spiritual Vane. It is one point to bid our readers to notice how, at this time and in these matters, the brain of Cromwell and the hand of Vane worked together. It was probably at this period that Milton addressed to Vane his well-known sonnet, with the strength of which is combined also a fine discrimination of the great statesman's character, and those various marks of eminence and goodness which give to him so considerable a claim upon our admiration:—

"Vane, young in years, but in sage counsel old,
  Than whom a better senator ne'er held
  The helm of Rome, when gowns, not arms, repelled
The fierce Epirot and the Afric bold;
Whether to settle peace, or to unfold
  The drift of hollow states hard to be spelled;
  Then to advise how War may, best upheld,
Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
  In all her equipage: besides to know
Both spiritual power and civil, what each means,
  What severs each, how hast thou learned, which few
    have done:
  The bounds of either sword to thee we owe;
Therefore, on thy firm hands Religion leans
  In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son."

A fine, ethereal, abstract spirit: we see how, when forced by immediate and pressing necessity, he was compelled to deal with the difficulties of the hour, such as the raising of £40,000 a month to fit out the fleet for Blake to sweep the Hollanders from our seas, he came down upon his necessities like swift lightning, astounding the House by his bold and daring methods for raising the money; and in a similar spirit of swift and clear-glancing intelligence, he recast the representation of England.

We are constrained to think that the moment selected for the introduction of this measure was very unpropitious. It led to the final rupture between Vane and Cromwell. Cromwell, as we know, dissolved the House, was guilty of that great crime, or conquest, which has divided the opinions of historians since, which some have called Usurpation, while some have called it the illegitimate exercise of power for saving and patriotic purposes. It was then those words were uttered, "Sir Harry Vane! Sir Harry Vane! the Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!" Cromwell alluded to Vane when he said, "One person might have prevented all this, but he was a juggler, and had not common honesty; the Lord had done with him, however, and chosen honester and worthier instruments for carrying on his work." How can we ever adequately estimate the misconceptions and the misunderstandings of great, good men? We believe in Vane, and we believe in Cromwell. How can the faiths be reconciled? Only in the remembrance that Vane was eminently and consistently a Republican; Cromwell never was. Mr. Forster seems ever to forget this in his lives of the statesmen of the period. Was it not as possible for Cromwell to be true to his conception of Reformation and Government as the Republicans? Cromwell never desired the dissolution of the ancient monarchy. He would have saved Charles, but that the treason and faithlessness of Charles made it impossible; the king was his own destroyer. We know how the nation was split into parties. Cromwell desired to restore the nation to unity, and he took such a course as best enabled it to rise to this restoration. A few days after the so-called usurpation found Vane quietly settled in Raby Castle; and, shortly after, at Belleau, in Lincolnshire, he prosecuted those studies of learning, philosophy, and religion, or, as his biographer says, "waited patiently for the first fitting occasion for striking another stroke for the good old cause."

He was a restless spirit. He was restless with the restlessness of Baxter, his old foe. We see many points of resemblance between him and Baxter, in his keen metaphysics, his earnest impracticable practicalness, his incessant activity, his intense desire to see his own ideas realized, his impatience of other men's ideas. We do not charge him with the querulousness of Baxter. His mind moved in so large and healthful an orbit that there was imparted a grand manliness to all his designs. His mind and understanding have been likened to the laboratory in a vast palace, where all his readings and speculations, the results of his experience and learning, were undergoing analysis, and falling into the proportion of symmetrical grandeur. Within that palace, who looks may behold all in perfect order, peace, and consistent restfulness. We have said the youth who at twenty-three was Governor of Massachusetts, had arrived so early at the knowledge of, and faith in, the principles for which he contended throughout his life, and for which, in the very prime and fulness of manhood, he died a martyr's death. This has not been sufficiently noticed. Hence, when from his retirement among the woods and towers of Raby he sent out his bold impeachment of Cromwell's Government, especially that piece called *A Healing Question*, in which he suggested the idea of a fundamental constitution, pleaded for what, no doubt, was regarded, and in fact was, a visionary form of organization, anticipating that which Washington so many years after gave to America, we are not to see a mere restless agitator, but one who, having been second to no person in the nation, possessed of the means of princely rest, with tastes the highest and most cultivated, was ready to imperil all for his dream. We have said both of the great men have our affectionate gratitude and admiration. We quite see how it was that while Cromwell was, no doubt, startled in Whitehall by the apparition of the *Healing Question* from Raby,—while the fame, the high services, the eminent rank and great genius of the writer might cast a shade over that royal face, a sadness over that noble heart, they did not permit him to hesitate. His old friend was instantly summoned before the Council. He made his appearance directly, and, having been briefly questioned concerning his authorship of the *Healing Question*, and having refused to give a security in a bond of £5,000, to do nothing to the prejudice of the present Government and Commonwealth, he was committed prisoner to Carisbrooke Castle, the chambers of which had been so recently tenanted by the deposed and discrowned king. Why, what else could Cromwell do? That was no moment for playing off ethereal, fanciful pictures of phantom republics before the eyes of the nation. It may be all very well for Mr. Forster, and writers of that school, to whine and cant about the purity of Washington, the tyranny of the Usurper, and such kind of stuff. There go two facts to all this. Washington was, no doubt, very pure; but he had a whole, united people with him. At the worst there were but two parties—those who were in secrecy with the English Government; and the vast united mind of the people, one with themselves! But England was torn into factions innumerable; this is no moment to say how many. Numberless little coteries of hissing snakes and slippery eels were wriggling and twisting towards desired eminence. As we have said, Cromwell never was a republican,—less so now than ever. Shouts of "Usurper!" "Tyrant!" "Traitor!" "Deceiver!" from other factions; "Detestable wretch!" "Murderer!" were met by the calm lightning of that deep, clear grey eye. "Very likely, gentlemen; just as you please, about all such pleasant epithets. Meantime, distinctly understand that I am here somehow or other. I have some notion that I have been put here by the Eternal God, who raiseth up and casteth down.

Noble natures, you will please to understand that I am ruler here to save you from clammy eels or hissing snakes; and you, Messieurs Eels and Snakes, put yourselves into the smallest compass, if you please, or, by that Eternal God that sent me, so much the worse for you!" The poor, dear Cromwell! we can quite conceive that an infinite grief came over him as he sent his old friend to Carisbrooke. Again, we say, what else could he have done? Vane would not promise allegiance, and Cromwell would stand no nonsense. Noble, royal creatures both! The world would be a poor world without dreamy, visionary Vanes, forecasting by their faith and holiness and self-sacrifice the horoscope of future ages; but we stand by Cromwell. There are moments in the histories of nations when the resolute hand of a statesman, not less strong than wise, not less sagacious than kind, is needed to repair the breaches, to strengthen the bulwarks, and even the rather to do the work of to-day than that of to-morrow. Still, we are not eulogizing Cromwell now; but we are not disposed to treat this diversity of the two great men as if either of them were inconsistent with himself.

How long he continued a prisoner in Carisbrooke Castle no documents before us very distinctly specify. He certainly was there for such a period that he was able to follow the course of his meditations through several works, which found their way into print. From thence he published his treatise *On the Love of God and Union with God;* and as just then Harrington published his famous *Oceana*, Sir Harry wrote his *Needful Corrective; or, Balance in Popular Government.* The writings of Sir Harry Vane, like many of those of his illustrious contemporaries, lie now forgotten and unreprinted. That with which his name is especially connected is *The Retired Man's Meditations.* In the intolerant spirit of the age in which he lived, and in which he had so little part, this work was sometimes called "a wicked book." "A piece of mystical divinity;" Cotton Mather, in his *Magnalia,* expresses himself thus of it, citing the opinions of no less a person than Dr. Manton. We must express wonder ourselves that it is not better known; but it belongs to an order of books of that period very little studied. How many of our readers are acquainted with the writings of Peter Sterry, Cromwell's chaplain? His *Rise, Race, and Royalty of the Children of God,* or his *Freedom of the Will?* How many are acquainted with Everard's *Gospel Treasury,* or with the *Evangelical Essays* of George Sykes, Vane's close and intimate friend and biographer? It is to this order of books we must assign *The Retired Man's Meditations.* It seems, although its preface is dated from Belleau, to have been written at Raby, where he spent the first and most peaceful portion of his time after Cromwell's assumption of power; it was probably, what its title purports, *a retired man's meditations.* We purpose in some few words to vindicate the book from Hume's sneer of being "absolutely unintelligible, without any trace of eloquence or common sense." We do not believe Hume ever attempted to read the book. Hume's method of writing his history and arriving at his conclusions is now very well known. Lord Clarendon, more bitter in his hatred of Vane, as is most natural, than Hume, after all his depreciating malignity, expressed the ground of the truth when he said, "The subject-matter of Vane's writing is of so delicate a nature that it requires another kind of preparation of mind, and, it may be, another kind of diet, than men are ordinarily supplied with." No doubt the book is mystical; few of the writers we prize of that period were not mystical. What more mystical than the *Pilgrim's Progress?* We do not find the *Retired Man's Meditations* more mystical than *The Saints' Everlasting Rest.* Some years since, a very able and interesting paper appeared in the *Westminster Review,* suggesting some points of analogy between Vane and Bunyan. The testimony from such a quarter is most remarkable, and as just as it is remarkable.

Cromwell died, as we know, on the anniversary day of his great battles of Worcester and Dunbar, September 3rd, 1658. Richard Cromwell, as we also know, attempted that which, whatever might have been his personal excellence, was utterly impossible to his placid and unstatesmanlike genius, —the government of the country in the hour when every breaker and billow of the political ocean was beating upon its shores. Of course we are not in this place prepared to discuss at any length the causes of his memorable failure, only so far as the circumstances are related to our subject. Vane, naturally, emerged instantly from his retirement, and became an object of terror, certainly of alarm, to the new Protector; for Vane carried with him an amazing popularity and consideration with many great parties of the nation, especially of that strong but humbled republican party, the members of which, now that the strong warrior-prince was dead, were mustering together from their country-seats and places of exile. Vane offered himself as a candidate for his old borough of Kingston-upon-Hull,—for which place he, indeed, claimed to be considered as the lawful representative, as neither he nor his party acknowledged the dissolution of the Long Parliament, although compelled to submit to it,—and he was returned by a majority of votes, but the Cromwell party gave the certificate of his election to another. He then proceeded to Bristol, with exactly the same results. He then stood for Whitechurch, in Hampshire, and by his return for this really inconsiderable borough he was now able to occupy the place which the Cromwell party had so much dreaded in the House of Commons. This is the circumstance to which Baxter so ungenerously alludes when he speaks of him as "the rejected of three boroughs," which, however, was not the case. As we read the story of that brief and mournful struggle, whatever admiration we may give to the magnanimity of Vane and his coadjutors, we are unable to spare much sympathy. We become impatient and exasperated while we behold these heroic and splendid strugglers, men of large capacity, of immense faith in their principles, pouring about their oratory, declamation, and invective; spinning their clever tactics for displacing Richard Cromwell, and rearing their phantom republics, while the subtle Monk was hatching his schemes, and the dastardly Charles Stuart cracking his jokes over his intended feats of murder and treason. And for these brave spirits the wood was being prepared for the scaffold, and the headsmen sharpening their axes and preparing their ropes! Oh, it is a mournful business—strange! How different is the aspect of affairs to posterity than to the living actors in a great drama! With Vane as their chief, wrought Algernon Sidney, and other such masculine and majestic men. If ever there existed men who seem to our minds to realize the colossal type of Roman, Coriolanus-like greatness, these were the men. They thought they were acting to prevent the vile Stuarts' return; we suppose of any party there now scarcely lives one who does not see that they took exactly the course to hasten it. The clear, ringing eloquence, especially of Sir Harry Vane, sounds like the mournful toll of English freedom; high, great sentiments heave out in that instantaneous attack he organized upon the Government, and the right of Richard Cromwell, immediately on taking his seat in the House. He resisted the Government, especially from the fear that it would, by its weakness, accelerate the return of the king. Again and again he exclaims, "Shall we be underbuilders to supreme Stuart? Shall we lay the foundation of a system that must bring a Charles the Second back to us, sooner or later?" Much of his language has a scorn, a personal invective, of so bitter a kind, that we grieve to hear it from the lips of Vane. Here is a passage:—

"Mr. Speaker,—among all the people of the universe, I know none who have shown so much zeal for the liberty for their country as the English at this time have done; they have, by the help of Divine Providence, overcome all obstacles, and have made themselves free. We have driven away the hereditary tyranny of the House of Stuart, at the expense of much blood and treasure, in hopes of enjoying hereditary liberty, after shaking off the yoke of kingship; and there is not a man amongst us who could have imagined that any person would be so bold as to dare to attempt the ravishing from us that freedom, which cost us so much blood and so much labour. But so it happens, I know not by what misfortune, we are fallen into the error of those who poisoned the Emperor Titus to make room for Domitian, who made away with Augustus that they might have Tiberius, and changed Claudius for Nero. I am sensible these examples are foreign from my subject, since the Romans in those days were buried in lewdness and luxury; whereas the people of England are renowned, all over the world, for their great virtue and discipline, and yet suffer an idiot without courage, without sense, nay, without ambition, to have dominion in a country of liberty! One could bear a little with Oliver Cromwell, though, contrary to his oath of fidelity to the Parliament, contrary to his duty to the public, contrary to the respect he owed that venerable body from whom he received his authority, he usurped the Government. His merit was so extraordinary, that our judgments, our passions, might be blinded by it. He made his way to empire by the most illustrious actions; he had under his command an army that had made him a conqueror, and a people that had made him their general. But as for Richard Cromwell, his son, who is he?—what are his titles? We have seen that he had a sword by his side; but did he ever draw it? And what is of more importance in this case, is *he* fit to get obedience from a mighty nation, who could never make a footman obey him? Yet we must recognise this man as our king, under the style of Protector!—a man without birth, without courage, without conduct. For my part, I declare, sir, it shall never be said that I made that man my master."

Well, words like these drove the naturally quiet man to his obscurity at Cheshunt. He abdicated, and never appeared in public again. And now rapidly hastened the movement of Monk, for in the brief period which remained in the inextricable coil of affairs, Vane became President of the Council of the nation; but Monk held the army, and the glorious moments of English freedom and justice were drawing to a close. Charles returned; an immense and most gracious indemnity was procured to all. Vane had taken no part in the trial and execution of Charles I., and when the king returned, he continued in his house at Hampstead; but he was one of the very first made to translate the king's sense of his promised Act of Indemnity; he was arrested in July, 1660, and flung into the Tower. There can be no doubt that Clarendon and Charles had determined on his murder from the very first. From many considerations he was, probably, the strongest man in England; it was a very difficult thing to find grounds for an indictment, and for two years he continued in prison. He was removed from the Tower to a lonely castle in one of the Scilly Isles. There, utterly severed from all communication with his family, or any of his great comrades, he was consigned, only to hear the winds raving round the turrets of his prison, or the moaning sea dashing at its base. In such states this great man seems to shine out with more dignity and beauty. What were his thoughts there, what his consolations or occupations, we have no means of very well knowing, excepting by the result, when those great traitors to English freedom, having procured a more supple Parliament, and having manipulated and manœuvred, with ingenious dexterity, their determination upon his life, recalled him to London. Meantime, his friends were in the grave or in exile; their bodies, like his, were immured in dungeons, or the scaffold had drunk their blood. A letter to his wife, too long to quote, furnishes proof of the fine texture of his character, reveals his own resolution, and in subtle and concealed hints, his assurance that he would soon be called to die. Some of his purest thoughts also occur in his paper, entitled "Meditations on Death." He was nerving himself for the inevitable end. Such passages as the following show this:—

HIS MEDITATION IN PRISON ON DEATH.

"Death is the inevitable law God and nature have put upon us. Things certain should not be feared Death, instead of taking away anything from us. gives us all, even the perfection of our natures; sets us at liberty both from our own bodily desires and others' domination; makes the servant free from his master. It doth not bring us into darkness, but takes darkness out of us, us out of darkness, and puts us into marvellous light. Nothing perishes or is dissolved by death but the veil and covering which is wont to be done away from all ripe fruit. It brings us out of a dark dungeon, through the crannies[1] whereof our sight of light is but weak and small, and brings us into an open liberty, and estate of light and life, unveiled and perpetual. It takes us out of that mortality which began in the womb of our mother, and now ends to brings us into that life which shall never end. This day, which thou fearest as thy last, is thy birthday into eternity.

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[1] It is impossible not to remember Waller's most charming lines, which seem an almost literal translation into verse of these words and sentiments of Vane:—

"The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Lets in new light through *chinks* which time has made;
Stronger by weakness, wiser we become,
As we draw near to our eternal home."

"Death holds a high place in the policy and great commonwealth of the world. It is very profitable for the succession and continuance of the works of nature."

Again:—

"It is most just, reasonable, and desirable, to arrive at that place towards which we are always walking. Why fearest thou to go whither all the world goes? It is the part of a valiant and generous mind, to prefer some things before life, as things for which a man should not doubt nor fear to die. In such a case, however matters go, a man must more account thereof than of his life. He must run his race with resolution, that he may perform things profitable and exemplary."

Thus the nobler English Seneca consoled and strengthened himself:—

"There is a time to live and a time to die. A good death is far better and more eligible than an ill life. A wise man lives but so long as his life is more worth than his death. The longer life is not always the better. To what end serves a long life? Simply to live, breathe, eat, drink, and see this world. What needs so long a time for all this? Methinks we should soon be tired with the daily repetition of these and the like vanities. Would we live long to gain knowledge, experience, and virtue? This seems an honest design, but is better to be had other ways by good men, when their bodies are in the grave."

Again :—

"It is a great point of wisdom to know the right hour and fit season to die. Many men have survived their own glory. That is the best death which is well recollected in itself, quiet, solitary, and attendeth wholly to what at that time is fittest.

"They that live by faith die daily. The life which faith teaches works death. It leads up the mind to things not seen, which are eternal, and takes it off, with its affections and desires, from things seen, which are temporary."

We pass over his pathetic, high-toned, and beautiful letter to his wife. We notice, however, such passages as the following :—

"Have faith and hope, my dearest. God's arm is not shortened; doubtless great and precious promises are yet in store to be accomplished in and upon believers here on earth, to the making of Christ admired in them. And if we cannot live in the power and actual possession of them, yet if we die in the foresight and embracing of them by faith, it will be our great blessing. This dark night and black shade which God hath drawn over His work in the midst of us, may be, for aught we know, the ground-colour to some beautiful piece that He is now exposing to the light.

* * * * *

"And why should such a taking up sanctuary in God, and desiring to continue a pilgrim and solitary in this world, whilst I am in it, afford still matter of jealousy, distrust, and rage, as I see it doth to those who are unwilling that I should be buried and lie quiet in my grave where I now am. They that press so earnestly to carry on my trial do little know what presence of God may be afforded me in, and issue out of it, to the magnifying of Christ in my body, by life or by death. Nor can they, I am sure, imagine how much I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ, which of all things that can befall me I account best of all. And till then, I desire to be made faithful in my place and station, to make confession of Him before men, and not deny His name, if called forth to give a public testimony and witness concerning Him, and to be herein nothing terrified."

He was removed from Scilly to the Tower of London, about March, 1662, and he was brought before the Court of King's Bench on the 2nd of June, 1662. The indictment, which he was not permitted to see before it was read, nor permitted to have a copy of afterwards, charged him with compassing and imagining the death of Charles II., and conspiring to subvert the ancient frame of the king by government of the realm. Even for that heinous year, when law was a mockery, the grounds of the indictment of Sir

Harry Vane are marvellous in their wickedness. Will it be believed now, by ordinary readers, that one of the first items of the impeachment was that which we have designated as his illustrious and majestic defence of the English seas; sweeping the waves of our narrow Channel free of Van Tromp, with his broom at the masthead. This report of "an estimate of the number of ships for the summer guard of the narrow seas;" a "levy of £20,000 on South Wales for the fitting out this fleet," which was "to be paid to Sir Harry Vane, as Treasurer of the Navy;" warrants for the production of firelocks and drums; warrants for the commission of officers of the army, bearing his authority; warrants for delivering arms and barrels of powder to regiments. Such were the items of this memorable indictment. Perhaps the more serious, although hypothetical, was the following:—

"Then one Marsh was produced a witness, who proves that Sir Henry Vane proposed the new model of Government, Whitlock being in the chair, in these particulars:—

"1. That the supreme power, delegated by the people to their trustees, ought to be in some fundamentals not dispensed with.

"2. That it is destruction to the people's liberties (to which by God's blessing they are restored) to admit any earthly king or single person to the legislative or executive power over the nation.

"3. That the supreme power delegated is not entrusted to the people's trustees, to erect matters of Faith or Worship, so as to exercise compulsion therein."

"Thomas Pury proves that he was at the debating of the two last of these propositions, and believes they were proposed to the Chairman Whitlock by Sir Henry Vane; but affirms confidently that Sir Henry Vane gave reasons to maintain them."

Of course, the argument with reference to the navy, proceeded upon the principle that to sustain the army and navy was to keep the king out of his possession. The trial was a nefarious business. Ludlow somewhere remarks in his interesting life, that upon his trial, Sir Harry Vane pleaded rather for the life and liberties of his country than for his own; he addressed himself to his task in a spirit of royal cheerfulness, and with overwhelming tact and eloquence set aside the validity of the charges. His convincing charges took from his prosecutors the power of reply, and the Chief Justice, Forster, was heard to say: "Though we know not what to say to him, we know what to do to him." After Vane's closing defence, the Solicitor-General, in a speech of singular execrable brutality, declared to the jury, that "the prisoner must be made a public sacrifice," and, in reply to Vane's protest that he had not been permitted to have the benefit of counsel, the same worthy asked, "What counsel did the prisoner think would, or durst speak for him, in such a manifest case of treason, unless he could call down the heads of his fellow-traitors from Westminster Hall." The Solicitor-General was even permitted to whisper to all the members of the jury as they left the box. They deliberated half an hour, and returned a verdict of "Guilty." There had been some foolish expectation that, even then, his life might be saved; but Charles and Clarendon were even nervously anxious for his murder. Mr. Forster produces the following letter from Charles to Clarendon, the day after his trial, and before his sentence:—

"The relation that has been made to me of Sir Henry Vane's carriage yesterday in the hall, is the occasion of this letter, which, if I am rightly informed, was so insolent as to justify all he had done, acknowledging no supreme power in England but a Parliament, and many things to that purpose. You have had a true account of all; and if he has given new occasion to be hanged, certainly he is too dangerous a man to let live, if we can honestly put him out of the way Think of this, and give me some account of it to-morrow, till then I have no more to say to you.—C. R."

Called up for his sentence, there were circumstances of considerable excitement in the court. He submitted, for instance, first, "Whether Parliament were accountable to any inferior Court." Second, "whether the king, being out of possession," here the Court broke in upon him with great vehemence declaring, "the king never was out of possession." With exceeding coolness he replied, that "the indictment against him, then, must inevitably fall to the ground, for the one charge alleged against him was that he endeavoured *to keep out* His Majesty." It was unanswerable. The excitement became intense; in the midst of it he desisted from all further attempts, folded up his papers, solemnly appealed from the tribunal to the judgment of God, reminding the judges that before that judgment they would all at last be brought, and expressed his willingness to die for his testimony. Abusive Serjeant Keeling broke in here, "So you may, sir, in good time, by the grace of God." This was he who, in a previous hour of the trial, when Vane was reading a passage from a volume of the Statutes, desiring to look at it, attempted to snatch it rudely from his hands. Vane withheld and closed the volume, exclaiming, "When I employ you as my counsel, sir, I will find you books." He was sentenced to execution on Tower Hill. English lawyers have, since then, pronounced the sentence "infamous." Even Justice Forster, who tried him, is quoted by Mr. Forster as, by implication, in his apology condemning the verdict. The case only stands on record as a selection of the most marked and conspicuous man in the nation as the subject of royal revenge. He was condemned on Wednesday; he was to die on Saturday.

A little volume before us, from which we have already quoted, contains many of his occasional speeches; they ought to be better known. Sometimes in his speeches in the House of Commons, we have thought we detected the marks of irritation and petulance. But there are no such indications in these words; a calm, seraphic glow pervades them all, a full assurance of faith, a hope of glory. He does not condescend to indulge in any remarks, even upon either his adversaries or his unpropitious trial; there seems only, if that may be said, too great a desire to depart and to have done with it all. The prayer with his wife and children and some of his friends the night before his execution, which his friend Sykes has preserved, is a wonderful rapture of elevated and sustained and earnest devotion. It is full of pithy pieces; especially he prays, "Let thy servant see death shrink under him; what a glorious sight will this be, in the presence of many witnesses, to have death shrink under him, which he acknowledged to be only by the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, whom the bands of death could not hold down; let that spirit enter into us that will set us again upon our feet." He adores God the Father, because, "Thou art rending this veil and bringing us to a mountain that abides firm." He prayed for his family:—

"Prosper and relieve that poor handful that are in prisons and bonds, that they may be raised up and trample death under foot. Let my poor family that is left desolate, let my dear wife and children be taken into Thy care, be Thou a husband, father, and master to them. Let the spirits of those that love me be drawn out towards them. Let a blessing be upon these friends that are here at this time, strengthen them, let them find love and grace in thine eyes, and be increased with the increasings of God. Show Thyself a loving Father to us all, and do for us abundantly, above and beyond all we can ask or think, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

After this, at about midnight, came the warrant for his execution the following day; the next morning he said there was "no dismalness in it after the receipt of the warrant; I slept four hours so soundly, that the Lord hath made it sufficient for me, and now I am going to sleep my last, after which I shall need to sleep no more." He seems to have met his wife and children again that day early in the forenoon, and parting with them, said, "There is some flesh remaining yet, but I must cast it behind me, and press forward to my Father." The sheriff came to him and said he could not be ready for half an hour yet. "Then, sir," said Sir Harry, "it rests with you, for I have been ready this half-hour." It was thought at first that he would have to walk to execution; the sledge had not arrived; at length it came, and he said, "Any way, how they please; I long to be at home, to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is best of all." He went downstairs from his chamber and seated himself in the sledge, his friends and servants standing by him, and Sykes accompanying him to the close. As they passed along, it was like a royal procession; shouts and gestures were made to him; the tops of the houses were crowded, and all the windows thronged; even the prisoners of the Tower, as he passed along, and the thronging multitudes by his side, and the people looking down on the procession, exclaimed, "The Lord go with you; the great God of heaven and earth appear in you and for you." As he came within the rails of the scaffold, the pathetic voices of the people greeted him with like acclamations, crying out, "The Lord Jesus be with thy dear soul!" One voice shouted to him, "That is the most glorious seat you ever sat on!" "It is so, indeed," he replied in a cheerful voice. When he appeared in front of the scaffold, in his black suit and cloak, with scarlet silk waistcoat, the victorious colour, many supposed he was some person connected officially with the execution, or some looker on. They were amazed to find in that great and noble presence the prisoner who was to die. "How cheerful he is!" said some; "He does not look like a dying man!" said others; with other such astonishing speeches. The scene at his execution was, on the part of the Government, disgraceful. Vane was calm enough to attempt to address the multitude coherently; he had promised to say nothing reflecting on the king or Government, nor does it seem that he attempted to do so. He was hustled, his papers snatched from his hands, taken from his pocket; even then, in the midst of all, he preserved a serene and composed demeanour. When he attempted to speak, the trumpets sounded to drown his voice. Enthusiasm wept for him, while it admired him! At last he turned aside, exclaiming, "It is a bad cause which cannot hear the words of a dying man." He seems to have been permitted to pray a little in peace; such sentences as the following fell from him, recorded by Sykes: "Bring us, O Lord into the true mystical Sabbath, that we may cease from our works, rest from our labours, and become a meet habitation for Thy Spirit," etc., etc. His last words were, "Father, glorify Thy servant in the sight of men, that he may glorify Thee in the discharge of his duty to Thee and to his country." Thereupon he stretched out his arms; in an instant, swift fell the stroke, and the head of one of the greatest and purest beings that ever adorned our world, rolled on the scaffold! Old Pepys was there, and in his book he tells us how he had a room on Tower Hill, that he might see the whole affair. He testifies—and he was in a Government office at the time, as we know—that "Vane changed not his colour nor spirit to the last; spoke very confidently of his being presently at the right hand of Christ, and in all things appeared the most resolved man that ever died in that manner; and showed more of heat than cowardice, but yet, withal, humility and gravity." And the testimony from an imbecile time-server, like Pepys, has a little measure of historic worth in it.

So Sir Harry went away in his chariot to heaven, and Pepys tells us how *he* "went away to dinner"! A day or two after, he tells us how "the talk was that Sir Harry Vane must be gone to heaven, and that the king had lost more by that man's death than he will gain again a good while." Sykes beautifully and pathetically says, "Cromwell's victories are swallowed up of death; Vane has swallowed up death itself in victory. He let fall his mantle, left his body behind him, that he had worn for nine-and-forty years, and has gone to keep his everlasting jubilee in God's everlasting rest. It is all day with him now, no night nor sorrow more, no prison, nor death!" Burnet testifies, and Pepys also implies it, that his death made the foundations of the throne thrill, and almost shook it from its steadfastness.

The publishing of the little pamphlet of his trial, which was extensively circulated, and his most remarkable biography by Sykes, set him a-talking, in a wonderful manner, in men's consciences, after his death. February 11th, 1663, Pepys testifies: "At night my wife read Sir H. Vane's trial to me, and I find it a very excellent thing, worth reading, and him to have been a very wise man." Also Vane's pamphlets, his *Healing Question*, his *Balance of Government*, and the others, were being read in private meetings; and his spirit was at work, although his body was in the tomb. He was beheaded, but we may believe that the memory of his execution, joined to the recollection of his singularly noble and pure career, did something towards sweeping finally, and for ever, the execrable, execrated, and detested Stuarts from the throne. Clarendon makes it an article against Vane, that he was "a man independent of all parties;" and it is for this reason, since his death Vane has received far less justice, both at the hands of his contemporaries and posterity, than most of the great characters of that illustrious period of our history. Although he was of the Nonconformists, he was too broad and too high in his views to give them much satisfaction. If he opposed the bishops and forfeited their favour, he would not persecute Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, and he sacrificed the favour of the sectaries; religiously, while we have indicated the frequent mysticism of his views, he was immeasurably in advance of his age. We love Richard Baxter, but his account of Vane is singularly characteristic of the frequent narrowness, and half malignant querulousness of the dear old father. As Vane was before his age in religion—a matter very greatly to himself,—so also he was before his age in politics. We admire and reverence him, but for the interests of peace and for the well-ordering of the State we are compelled to side with Cromwell. But Vane's life is, altogether, one that does one good to read or to compile. There was not a shred nor thread of littleness in any part of his character; its only fault is its lofty ideality. Not one of his numerous assailants or adversaries has ever been able, by a breath, to touch or tarnish the pure mirror of that excellence. The only possible, doubtful circumstance, is the possession of that paper from the velvet case, which became evidence leading to the death of Strafford. We think it cannot be doubtful what any of our readers, in such a case, would have done; a movement of Providence seemed to guide his hands to that fatal case, and once possessed of its information, how could he do otherwise than reveal it to his country? Altogether, the whole character of Sir Harry Vane stands in its lucid and transparent satisfactoriness by the side of the few most really elevated men of the time. He represents, in full-orbed completeness, those principles in living embodiment which adorn the political pages of Milton, which shine also in the career of Marvel. He had the political righteousness which makes Pym and Hampden so venerable; while he seems to have combined, in a rare manner, that patient Biblical research, that life of devout thought and inquisition, which flames over the pages of Howe; the rarity of his character being, that beyond almost any other mighty politician to whom we can refer, he united the attributes of action, which made him powerful in Whitehall, with the attributes of contemplation, which, as they solaced his own spirit among the woods of Raby, the retirement of Belleau, or the dungeons of Scilly, prove even now attractive to those who begin to peruse his little known but animating pages.[1]

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[1] The bones of Vane seem to have been stirring lately in resurrection; two or three papers, in addition to the brief memoir by John Forster, have appeared within the last three

As, in the earlier pages of the present volume, the writer placed among the contemporaries of Cromwell the great Herald of the Revolution, Sir John Eliot, as illustrating the work which had to be done, and which needed Cromwell as the strong Knight-Commander and General in the conflict and on the field, so he closes the volume with this account of Cromwell's greatest contemporary, in whose death we behold the departure of the great prophet of the time. We have seen that the fine, pure, mystical, and abstract spirit of Vane quite vindicates and authenticates Cromwell's impatient ejaculation. The country eminently needed a strong, martial hand; and to what the policy of Vane would have conducted we see in what it came to at last. It built his own scaffold as well as the scaffold of all the great leaders of the party; and that Long Parliament, which in its earliest days presents us with one of the grandest chapters of parliamentary glory, in its latest days only compels us to a feeling of execration for what it effected in bringing back the detested Stuart. And this, but for Cromwell, Vane and the party with whom he worked would have

or four years. It is necessary, therefore, that the present writer should say that the paper upon Vane which closes this volume was substantially published by him about ten years since in the English *Eclectic Review*, of which he was then editor. But the memory of this great man still waits for an adequate biography, and the gathering up and reprinting of his various pieces.

effected earlier; and Cromwell—if it be possible to think that such a restoration could have taken effect whilst he lived—would have lost his head, as well as Vane. As Cromwell's career shows us distinctly what the great Protector did, so do the closing years of Vane's life show what that great Protector averted.

APPENDIX.

[The following Ballads are selected from "LAYS AND LEGENDS OF PURITAN HEROES," by the author of the present biography, privately printed but not published some years since; their insertion in this place may not seem inappropriate.]

THE FARMER OF ST. IVES.

II.
THE BATTLE OF DUNBAR.

III.
THE MARTYRDOM OF VANE.

THE FARMER OF ST. IVES.

SUGGESTED BY THE PROPOSAL TO ERECT A MONUMENT TO THE FARMER'S MEMORY.

"IN the care of the St. Ives Farm, he now not only sought employment for some portion of the ill-subdued energy which always craved in him for action, but also put to the proof the value of those thoughts we have attributed to him after the disastrous Dissolution of 1628. In the tenants that rented from him, in the labourer that took service under him, he sought to sow the seeds of his after-troop of Ironsides. He achieved an influence through the neighbourhood all round him, unequalled for piety and self-denying virtue. The greater part of his time, even upon his farm, was passed in devotional exercises, expositions, and prayer. Who prays best will work best; who preaches best will fight best. All the famous doctrines of his later and more celebrated years were tried and tested on the little Farm of St. Ives."—*Forster's Lives of the Statesmen of the Commonwealth.* "The shadow of Cromwell's name overawed the most confident and haughty. He intimidated Holland, he humiliated Spain, and he twisted the supple Mazarin, the ruler of France, about his finger. No agent of equal potency and equal moderation had appeared upon earth before. He walked into a den of lions, and scourged them, growling, out; Buonaparte was pushed in a menagerie of monkeys, and fainted at their grimaces."—*Walter Savage Landor.*

Raise up, raise up, the pillar! some grand old granite stone,
To the king without a sceptre, to the prince without a throne!
To the brave old English hero who broke our feudal gyves,
To the leader of the "good old cause," the Farmer of St. Ives.

The old Plantagenets brought us chains; the Tudors frowns
and scars;
The Stuarts brought us lives of shame; the Hanoverian wars;
But this brave man, with his strong arm, brought freedom to
our lives—
The best of Princes England had was the Farmer of St. Ives.

Oh, holy, happy homestead, there where the Farmer dwelt!
Around his hearth, around his board, the wearied labourers
knelt;
Not there the jest, the curse, the song,—in prayer each spirit
bides,
Till forth they came, a glorious throng, the brave old Ironsides.

Walk proudly past these hedges, for this is holy ground;
Amidst these lowly villages were England's bravest found;
With praying hearts and truthful, they left their homes and
wives,
And ranged, for freedom's cause, around the Farmer of St. Ives.

Hark! England feels his tramping, our own Achilles comes;
His Watchword, "GOD IS WITH US!" it thunders through our
homes.
High o'er the raging tumult, hark! 'tis the Farmer's cry,—
"FEAR NOT, BUT PUT YOUR TRUST IN GOD, AND KEEP YOUR
POWDER DRY."

Ho! Marston, 'neath the moonlight, thy thousands owned his
power.
Ho! Naseby! there the sceptre fell from out the monarch's
power.
Ho! Preston! Dunbar! Worcester! Lo, there his spirit
strives,—
Hurrah; the tyrants fly before the Farmer of St. Ives.

On many a Norman turret stern blows the hero dealt,
And many an old Cathedral nave his echoing footsteps felt:
In many a lonely mansion the legend still survives,
How prayers and blows *pell mell* came down from the Farmer
of St. Ives.

He wrapped the purple round him, he sat in chair of state,
And think ye was not *this* man King? The whole world name
him Great!
The wary fox of Italy, and Bourbon's sensual slave,
And the old bluff Dutchman, owned the power of England's
bold and brave.

He was the true defender of Freedom and of Faith;
When through the Vaudois valleys brave martyrs died the
death;
He threw his banner o'er their homes and wrapt in it their
lives;
And the Alpine summits sung the praise of the Farmer of
St. Ives.

His was the wizard power; he held it not in vain;
He broke the tyrants' iron rule and lashed them with their
chain.
Oh! the shade of earth's great heroes, in all their pomp look
dim,
When rose in Whitehall's Palaces our great Protector's hymn.

He died! the good old monarch died! Then to the land
returned
The cruel, crownèd, reptile thing, that men and angels spurned:
He seized the bones as reptiles seize upon the buried dead,
And a fiend's malice wrecked upon that venerable head.*

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* This act has been well described as one of barbarous malignity; and it is well known to have originated with the restored Monarch. It may be interesting to read the following from the *Gesta Brittanorum*, at the end of "Wharton's Almanac" for 1663—"January 30 O.S. The odious carcasses of O. Cromwell, H. Iretón, and J. Bradshaw, were drawn upon sledges to Tyburn, and being pulled out of their coffins, then hanged at the several angles of that triple tree until sunset; then taken down, and their loathsome trunks thrown into a deep hole under the gallows. The heads were afterwards set upon poles on the top of Westminster Hall." The following is the mason's receipt for taking up the bodies, as copied from the original by Dr. Cromwell Mortimer, Secretary of the Royal Society:—"May the 4th day, 1661. Recd. then in full, of the Worshipful Sergeant Norfolk, fiveteen shillings for taking up the corpses of Cromwell, and Ireton, and Bradshaw. Recd. by mee, John Lewis."

And England, while from age to age fresh freedom she achieved,
Forgot the hand that wrote the page in which her heart
believed;
From age to age earth held his dust, a life like other lives,
Lo, you! at length he breathes again, this Farmer of St. Ives.

His name shall *burn*—no meteor, no comet hurrying by—
It shall return to light our world to future liberty.
Let tyrants dare to trample hearts and liberties and lives;
One name shall bid them tremble yet—The Farmer of St. Ives.

Unfurl that drooping banner! So! let it float again;
Ye winds receive it in your clasp! waft it, thou surging main!
His watchword, "GOD IS WITH US!" see ye it still survives;
The pulse of England beats like his—The Farmer of St. Ives.

Raise up, raise up, the pillar! some grand old granite stone,
To the prince without a sceptre, to the king without a throne!
To the brave old English hero who broke our feudal gyves,
To the leader of the "good old cause," the Farmer of St. Ives.

WRITTEN IN RAMSEY CHURCHYARD,
HUNTINGDONSHIRE, 1848.

THE BATTLE OF DUNBAR.

(AS RECITED BY ONE OF THE PURITAN ARMY, 1686.)

COME, gather round this winter hearth, and I will tell a tale
Shall make the coldest heart beat high, and blanch the tyrant pale;
Shall bid all true hearts to be strong, since truth can never fail,
And warn the oppressor that *his* hour comes floating on the gale.
I'll tell you how, at freedom's call, arose the blast of war,—
I'll tell you how our Cromwell fought and conquered at Dunbar.

The Scots they sought to conquer us, tho' we had lent them aid
To rend the hated cassock off from their own mountain plaid:
They sought to gird our land within the Presbytery's shade,
And so, to crown Charles Stuart King, they led their Highland raid,—
To crush our faith the Highland clans came flocking near and far,
And we were there to conquer them, or perish, at Dunbar.

Each English heart that day beat high, with hope and courage rare,—
Such hope may England ever have, to make her foes despair.
Yet heavy was the cannon's roll and stern the trumpet's blare;
It was not fear, but faith to death—*I* know, for *I* was there.
This arm on many a foeman laid the bloody brand of war,
When our Protector, Cromwell, fought and conquered at Dunbar.

Like sheep for slaughter there we lay; alas! what power had we?
Behind us stretched, all drear and grim, the dread and awful sea;

And there the hosts of Leslie lay,—we could not fight nor flee;
We only knew the Lord of Hosts would our deliverer be.
We held His promise to our hearts, like good news from afar,
He saved on *Marston's* bloody field, and why not at *Dunbar?*

Then came the night—and such a night! The mists fell cold and chill,
The solemn tones of brooding winds were speaking on the hill.
The hum of those two mighty hosts made stillness yet more still,
And girt with mailèd bands the strength of every iron will.
I looked o'er all the cloudy heavens, but could not see a star,
As there we lay, beneath the shades and crags of old Dunbar.

It was a night for daring deeds! dark clouds, and wind, and rain;
The full moon faintly touched the clouds, then veil'd her face again;
The sea moaned hoarse, but audibly—'twas like a soul in pain;
And phantom sounds and phantom sights were scudding o'er the plain.
I looked o'er all the cloudy heavens—I could not see a star,
Nor light, save where a flickering torch shone o'er thy fields, Dunbar.

We knew to-morrow's sun would shine upon a bloody field;
We could not hope that we could make those haughty thousands yield;
We could but throw for our dear land our bodies as a shield,
And charter with our faith and blood the faith our fathers sealed.
If conquest fled afar from us, in this last gasp of war,
We'd leave our bones to bleach for faith and freedom at Dunbar.

The stertorous hum of drowsy life rose upwards through the calm,
And midst it rose from out the ranks some soldier's pious psalm;

And some, to quell their care, would list the preacher's loud alarm,
Or muse if they that day might change the hauberk for the palm,
Thus mount the fiery chariot, from the red smoke of war,
And pass to take the crown of joy, from thy dread field, Dunbar.

I could not sleep—I could not watch ; I passed the night alone.
I mused—I could not sing, nor preach, nor bide the preacher's tone.
Eternity seemed crowded there—things present, future, gone !
And dark and light, each sat by turns upon my spirit's throne.
I knew by many a well-fought field the doom and dread of war,
But never doom or doubt so deep as that of old Dunbar.

We thought of many a holy text and promise made of old,—
Of Daniel in the lions' den (a sheep within the fold):
And how for Israel's tribes the waves to walls of safety roll'd,
When they, like us, were hemmed and girt by foemen fierce and bold.
We held that story to our hearts, like good news from afar;
The Lord would rise in might for us and conquer at Dunbar.

We thought of him,—the captain strong, the mighty Jerubbaal,
Who met the Midianitish host with numbers small and frail,—
And while our lesser numbers lay along the misty vale,
We pray'd that Gideon's sword and Lord would o'er our foes prevail.
And while the moon roll'd murkily above thy fields, Dunbar,
We thought of Him who rode above, old Israel's awful *Jah!*

For me—old Gideon haunted me !—I saw his gleaming sword,—
I heard the shout, I heard the cry, I felt the Spirit's word.
I heard the falling pitchers break, with one distinct accord ;
I felt my own weak heart upheld by good news from the Lord ;
"Thou canst not fail in this dread hour," said I, "O Lord of War !
Oh nerve our Gideon's arm to strike and conquer at Dunbar !"

Should we so false or fickle prove, or do so mean a thing
As hail "the young man Charles" to be our own anointed king;
To bow the knee to those proud Scots when they their Prince
should bring,
His lecherous, craven, coward glance along our land to fling;
And we to sink to faithlessness, or bide the blast of war,—
Said I, No! let us rot to death beneath thy cliffs, Dunbar.

A tramp—a step—and then a voice: "Ha! Captain, who goes
there?
Why these, methinks, are precious hours to spend in words of
prayer."
Said I, "Lone hearts may catch the spark which numbers have
to share."
"'Tis well," said he, and grasped my hand—oh, honour high
and rare!
It was the Gideon of our hosts, who led our ranks to war,—
Our mighty Cromwell on his rounds the night before Dunbar.

* * * * *

Hark! was not that the bugle's blast? I grasped a comrade's
hand;
Again that wild, swift, piercing scream—it swept along the
strand;
It fell like lightning in the midst of Leslie's mighty band,—
And where with us the heart lay cold the breath of faith was
fanned;
It was the blast that summoned us to dare the blaze of war
And wave aloft a bloody sword, high o'er thy field, Dunbar.

Shout answered shout! blast answered blast! amidst the twilight dim,
The dark grey curtain of the dawn hung bodingly and grim;
Midst hailing shot and dying screams arose the sacred hymn.
My memory holds them—I was there—else all my senses swim;
But pride will pant within my heart, the pride and pomp of war,
Whene'er I think of fight so dread and bloody as Dunbar.

Then rose the hurtling cannon shower along the startled coasts,
Then dashed on Lambert's iron-hearts through Leslie's scattered posts;
Then rose their cry, "THE COVENANT!" mid sneers, and taunts, and boasts.
"THE LORD OF HOSTS!" our Captain cried: "THE LORD, THE LORD OF HOSTS!"
The Word that healed our aching hearts in many an ancient scar,—
That was the word by which we fought and conquered at Dunbar.

'Twas when the storm of fight was o'er, the battle almost done,
From forth the sea, beyond the rocks, looked up the great red sun,
Our General saw the flying hosts—"THEY RUN!" he cried, "THEY RUN!
LET GOD ARISE, AND LET HIS FOES BE SCATTERED!"—we had won.
High o'er the plain his voice arose, we heard it near and far;
So our good Lord Protector fought and conquered at Dunbar.

Then, halting on the battle plain, he raised, so clear and loud,
A psalm of praise. Its mighty voice peal'd o'er the awe-struck crowd;
The warrior dropped his blood-red sword, the helmèd head was bowed;
It reined at once the mailèd hand and checked the passion proud;
It still'd the clash of sounding swords; it still'd the passion's jar;—
Oh, never saw the world a field like that of old Dunbar!

Ah me! ah me! those days are o'er—the days of shame are here;
Our glorious Cromwell's mangled limbs, our Sydney's bloody bier;

Our land in chains, our faith proscribed,—forgive this falling
tear;
My heart is strong, my faith is firm, my soul is dead to fear.
A sword! a field! who knows but we might see hope's rising
star?
A sword! a field! our blow might be as stout as old Dunbar.

No, no! not that, those words are vain. War's bloody blazing
star,
It cannot light to freedom's world or melt the dungeon's bar.
Swords cannot hew a way for truth,—they cannot make, but
mar;
They cannot shiver nations' chains or dull hearts wake by war.
I know—for this right arm was red with conquering near and
far,
And fain would I unfurl again the banner of Dunbar.

NIBLEY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, 1856.

THE MARTYRDOM OF SIR HARRY VANE.

"Great men have been among us, hands that penned,
And tongues that uttered wisdom—better none,
YOUNG VANE, and others who called Milton friend.
These moralists could act and comprehend:
They knew how genuine glory was put on;
Taught us how rightfully a nation shone
In splendour: what strength was, that would not bend
But in magnanimous meekness."

— *Wordsworth.*

IT was thought at first that he would have to walk to execution; the sledge had not arrived. At length it came, and he said, "Any way, how they please; I long to be at home, to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is best of all." He went down stairs from his chamber, and seated himself in the sledge, his friends and servants standing by him, and Sykes, his friend and biographer, accompanying him to the close. As they passed along, it was like a royal procession; shouts and gestures were made to him; the tops of the houses were crowded, and all the windows thronged; even the prisoners of the Tower, as he passed along, and the thronging multitudes by his side, and the people looking down on the procession, exclaimed, "The Lord go with you; the great God of heaven and earth appear in you and for you." As he came within the rails of the scaffold, the pathetic voices of the people greeted him with like acclamations, crying out, "The Lord Jesus be with thy dear soul."

His last words were, "Father, glorify Thy servant in the sight of men, that he may glorify Thee, in the discharge of his duty to Thee and to his country." Thereupon he stretched out his arms, in an instant swift fell the stroke, and the head of one of the greatest and purest beings that ever adorned our world rolled on the scaffold. So Sir Harry went away in his chariot to Heaven; and Pepys tells us how he "went away to dinner!" A day or two after, he tells us how "the talk was that Sir Harry Vane must be gone to Heaven, and that the King had lost more by that man's death than he will gain again a good while." Sykes beautifully and pathetically says, "Cromwell's victories are swallowed up of death; Vane has swallowed up death itself in victory. He let fall his mantle, left his body behind him, that he had worn for nine-and-forty years, and has gone to keep his everlasting jubilee in God's everlasting rest. It is all day with him now,—no night nor sorrow more; no prison, nor death!"

Ho! Freemen of London, awake from your sleep!
Ho! Freemen! your slumbers are surely not deep!
Awake! there is treason afloat on the air.
The morning is bright and the heavens are fair,
But dark are the omens that mantle around,
There is boding and dread in each murmuring sound.
What turret gives yonder the boom of the bell?
'Tis the toll from the Tower, it is Liberty's knell,
And the sun should be curtain'd in darkness and rain,
For the day wakens up o'er the Scaffold of VANE.

'Twas the day when our Nero was throned for a king,
If Nero be named by so shameless a thing;—
When the land, like a lazar-house, lay in despair,
And vice, like a pestilence, haunted the air.
Not long since the bloodhounds lay chained in despair,
The lion was monarch; they shrank from his lair.
The lion was dead, but the bloodhounds for prey
Made a feast of the monarch who held them at bay;
But, to freshen their fangs with a blood rich in stain,
They howled and they leaped round the Scaffold of VANE.

'Twas his morning of death, but he lay in a sleep,
Like the slumbers of infancy, tranquil and deep;
And his face in his slumber reflected the light
Of the phantoms that passed by his pillow at night.

Sleep on ! 'tis thy last sleep—no more shall thine eye
Close on scenes of the earth till it wakes to the sky;
So freshen thy spirit, brave soldier, to bear
The last frown of sorrow, the last glance of care;
And gird up thy spirit to front thy last pain,
And let Time point with pride to the Scaffold of VANE.

Thro' the mind of the dreamer the shades of the past
Were crowding and flitting so thronging and fast:
Now the far Susquehanna's bright forests were seen,
And the camps of the wilderness, glowing and green.
He remembered the days of his youth; but no sigh
Proclaimed that remorse or confusion stood by.
He can look on the past, but his spirit is still;
He has mounted his Pisgah, and far o'er the hill
He beholds the contentions with sorrow, but joy,
For the soul is erect, and they cannot annoy.
The winds they blow keen from the past, but in vain;
They chill not the spirit or vision of VANE.

He dreamed he was borne in his slumbers away
To the proud hall of Rufus, so hoary and gray;
Whose rafters resounded, long ages agone,
To the shout and the wassail, the Conqueror's song.
And he saw as he saw it when spread for the doom
Of the King, and the judgment hung dark o'er the room;
And the phantoms of Cromwell and Bradshaw were there,
As if living,—unshaken, unshadowed by care.
And the King smiled in kindness, though sad as the day,
On the couch where the sleeper so peacefully lay.
It was but a moment, it brightened again,
And the sun shone in light round the Visions of VANE.

* * * * *

'Tis the first in the long Saturnalia of Blood;
The Tiger is back, he is crying for food.
The tongue of the Stuart is thirsting for gore,
And the sweet taste of this shall give relish for more.
For this shall his name, stiff with treason, go down
With a stain on his robe and a curse on his crown,

And the laureate that chanteth his glory shall be
A pander and traitor more bloody than he.
This alone, if no other, for ever shall stain:
He piled up the block and the Scaffold of VANE.

* * * * *

They drew him along on the sledge through the crowd;
Each head was uncovered and solemnly bowed.
Far up to the roofs of the houses were seen
Mute mourners, all wondering aghast at the scene.
The loving and tender withheld not their tears,
The faces of patriots were troubled with fears,
And the cheeks of some spirits blazed forth with disdain:
They, too, could have mounted the Scaffold with VANE.

They have drawn him along on his sledge through the crowd,
He has mounted the scaffold with spirit unbowed.
Some spirits can never their grandeur conceal;
The scourge and the scaffold their glory reveal;
And the eyes they strained deeply to glance on the frame
So wasted and feeble with sorrow and shame.
Oh! it was not as Rome's latest Roman was there,
'Twas the heart of the Christian defying despair,—
So brave, so unbending, o'er bale and o'er bane,
Oh! the throne of a king was the Scaffold of VANE.

How princely, how peerless he looked on that day,
When the scaffold scowled grimly in bloody array;
When the axe and the halberd so cruel and keen,
To honour the Hero and Martyr were seen;
And the soldiers stood gazing in wonder and awe
On the cheek that smiled calm o'er the axe and the law;
And wondered to note that the fear and the blame
Were the meed of the Sheriff and headsman; while shame
Shrunk timid afar from the scaffold, to keep
A Royal companionship, noisy and deep,
And left to the victim no sorrow or stain,
But curtained with beauty the Scaffold of VANE.

When tyrants their victims urge on to the tomb,
The hearts of the people sink throbbing to gloom;
But the gloom is the dawn of the morn, and they see
The RIGHT—starting forth where a scaffold should be.
Ho, tyrants! Ho, traitors! Behold it, for here
The poor headless body must wait for its bier.
What of that? He has conquered by dying. The truth
Has sprung from this block in the glow of its youth.
Ho! the chariot that waits when the martyrs are slain
Hath passed to the skies with the spirit of VANE.

Yet sad are our hearts when the noble and brave
Pass down in their garments of blood to the grave;
While satyrs and vampires malignant are seen
Dancing lewdly and wild where their grave should be green;
While Vice, decked with roses, sits gay on its throne,
And sings its lewd songs in its Bacchanal tone,
Meek Faith sinks to death with a spasm of pain,
Or sighs as she sighed by the Scaffold of VANE.

Yet better by far is the Scaffold of Vane
Than the couch where Charles Stuart sank shrieking with
pain;
With a lie in his mouth and a lie on his heart,
And a weak hand uplifted to ward off the dart;
And his harlot attendants, who pressed but to peep
And to pillage his form, as he slept his last sleep;
With scoundrels and traitors to curtain the gloom;
And a hireling Confessor to sneak through the room.
Great God! I had rather the Scaffold of VANE,
Or I'd rot to my death in a dungeon and chain.*

---

* It is, perhaps, needless to say that this last verse, severe as it seems or sounds, merely describes the death-bed of Charles the Second; a passage from John Evelyn's letters will, doubtless, occur to the memory of many readers.

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