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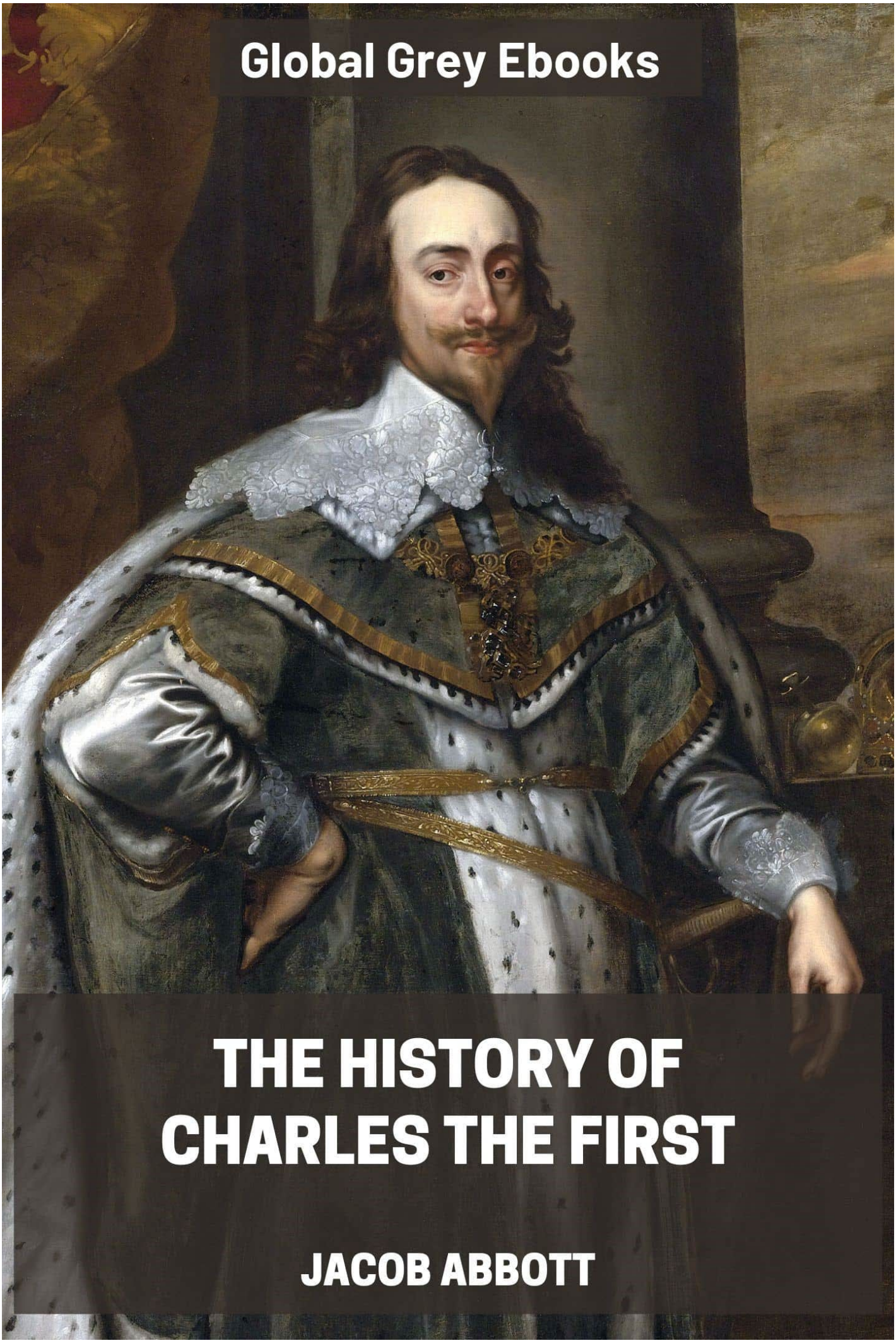

THE HISTORY OF CHARLES THE FIRST

JACOB ABBOTT

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Preface

The history of the life of every individual who has, for any reason, attracted extensively the attention of mankind, has been written in a great variety of ways by a multitude of authors, and persons sometimes wonder why we should have so many different accounts of the same thing. The reason is, that each one of these accounts is intended for a different set of readers, who read with ideas and purposes widely dissimilar from each other. Among the twenty millions of people in the United States, there are perhaps two millions, between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five, who wish to become acquainted, in general, with the leading events in the history of the Old World, and of ancient times, but who, coming upon the stage in this land and at this period, have ideas and conceptions so widely different from those of other nations and of other times, that a mere republication of existing accounts is not what they require. The story must be told expressly for them. The things that are to be explained, the points that are to be brought out, the comparative degree of prominence to be given to the various particulars, will all be different, on account of the difference in the situation, the ideas, and the objects of these new readers, compared with those of the various other classes of readers which former authors have had in view. It is for this reason, and with this view, that the present series of historical narratives is presented to the public. The author, having had some opportunity to become acquainted with the position, the ideas, and the intellectual wants of those whom he addresses, presents the result of his labors to them, with the hope that it may be found successful in accomplishing its design.

1. His Childhood And Youth

1600-1622

King Charles the First was born in Scotland. It may perhaps surprise the reader that an English king should be born in Scotland. The explanation is this:

They who have read the history of Mary Queen of Scots, will remember that it was the great end and aim of her life to unite the crowns of England and Scotland in her own family. Queen Elizabeth was then Queen of England. She lived and died unmarried. Queen Mary and a young man named Lord Darnley were the next heirs. It was uncertain which of the two had the strongest claim. To prevent a dispute, by uniting these claims, Mary made Darnley her husband. They had a son, who, after the death of his father and mother, was acknowledged to be the heir to the British throne, whenever Elizabeth's life should end. In the mean time he remained King of Scotland. His name was James. He married a princess of Denmark; and his child, who afterward was King Charles the First of England, was born before he left his native realm.

King Charles's mother was, as has been already said, a princess of Denmark. Her name was Anne. The circumstances of her marriage to King James were quite extraordinary, and attracted great attention at the time. It is, in some sense, a matter of principle among kings and queens, that they must only marry persons of royal rank, like themselves; and as they have very little opportunity of visiting each other, residing as they do in such distant capitals, they generally choose their consorts by the reports which come to them of the person and character of the different candidates. The choice, too, is very much influenced by political considerations, and is always more or less embarrassed by negotiations with other courts, whose ministers make objections to this or that alliance, on account of its supposed interference with some of their own political schemes.

As it is very inconvenient, moreover, for a king to leave his dominions, the marriage ceremony is usually performed at the court where the bride resides, without the presence of the bridegroom, he sending an embassador to act as his representative. This is called being married by proxy. The bride then comes to her royal husband's dominions, accompanied by a great escort. He meets her usually on the frontiers; and there she sees him for the first time, after having been married to him some weeks by proxy. It is true, indeed, that she has generally seen his *picture*, that being usually sent to her before the marriage contract is made. This, however, is not a matter of much consequence, as the personal predilections of a princess have generally very little to do with the question of her marriage.

Now King James had concluded to propose for the oldest daughter of the King of Denmark and he entered into negotiations for this purpose. This plan, however, did not please the government of England, and Elizabeth, who was then the English queen, managed so to embarrass and interfere with the scheme, that the King of Denmark gave his daughter to another claimant. James was a man of very mild and quiet temperament, easily counteracted and thwarted in his plans; but this disappointment aroused his energies, and he sent a splendid embassy into Denmark to demand the king's second daughter, whose name was Anne. He prosecuted this suit so vigorously that the marriage articles were soon agreed to and signed. Anne embarked and set sail for Scotland. The king remained there, waiting for her arrival with great impatience. At length, instead of his bride, the news came that the fleet in which Anne had sailed had been dispersed and driven back by a storm, and that Anne herself had landed on the coast of Norway.

James immediately conceived the design of going himself in pursuit of her. But knowing very well that all his ministers and the officers of his government would make endless objections to his going out of the country on such an errand, he kept his plan a profound secret from them all. He ordered some ships to be got ready privately, and provided a suitable train of attendants, and then embarked without letting his people know where he was going. He sailed across the German Ocean to the town in Norway where his bride had landed. He found her there, and they were married. Her brother, who had just succeeded to the throne, having received intelligence of this, invited the young couple to come and spend the winter at his capital of Copenhagen; and as the season was far advanced, and the sea stormy, King James concluded to accept the invitation. They were received in Copenhagen with great pomp and parade, and the winter was spent in festivities and rejoicings. In the spring he brought his bride to Scotland. The whole world were astonished at the performance of such an exploit by a king, especially one of so mild, quiet, and grave a character as that which James had the credit of possessing.

Young Charles was very weak and feeble in his infancy. It was feared that he would not live many hours. The rite of baptism was immediately performed, as it was, in those days, considered essential to the salvation of a child dying in infancy that it should be baptized before it died. Notwithstanding the fears that were at first felt, Charles lingered along for some days, and gradually began to acquire a little strength. His feebleness was a cause of great anxiety and concern to those around him; but the degree of interest felt in the little sufferer's fate was very much less than it would have been if he had been the oldest son. He had a brother, Prince Henry, who was older than he, and, consequently, heir to his father's crown. It was not probable, therefore, that Charles would ever be king; and the importance of every thing connected with his birth and his welfare was very much diminished on that account.

It was only about two years after Charles's birth that Queen Elizabeth died, and King James succeeded to the English throne. A messenger came with all speed to Scotland to announce the fact. He rode night and day. He arrived at the king's palace in the night. He gained admission to the king's chamber, and, kneeling at his bedside, proclaimed him King of England. James immediately prepared to bid his Scotch subjects farewell, and to proceed to England to take possession of his new realm. Queen Anne was to follow him in a week or two, and the other children, Henry and Elizabeth; but Charles was too feeble to go.

In those early days there was a prevailing belief in Scotland, and, in fact, the opinion still lingers there, that certain persons among the old Highlanders had what they called the gift of the second sight—that is, the power of foreseeing futurity in some mysterious and incomprehensible way. An incident is related in the old histories connected with Charles's infancy, which is a good illustration of this. While King James was preparing to leave Scotland, to take possession of the English throne, an old Highland laird came to bid him farewell. He gave the king many parting counsels and good wishes, and then, overlooking the older brother, Prince Henry, he went directly to Charles, who was then about two years old, and bowed before him, and kissed his hand with the greatest appearance of regard and veneration. King James undertook to correct his supposed mistake, by telling him that that was his second son, and that the other boy was the heir to the crown. "No," said the old laird, "I am not mistaken. I know to whom I am speaking. This child, now in his nurse's arms, will be greater than his brother. This is the one who is to convey his father's name and titles to succeeding generations." This prediction was fulfilled; for the robust and healthy Henry died, and the feeble and sickly-looking Charles lived and grew, and succeeded, in due time, to his father's throne.

Now inasmuch as, at the time when this prediction was uttered, there seemed to be little human probability of its fulfillment, it attracted attention; its unexpected and startling character made every one notice and remember it; and the old laird was at once an object of interest and wonder. It is probable that this desire to excite the admiration of the auditors, mingled insensibly with a sort of poetic enthusiasm, which a rude age and mountainous scenery always inspire, was the origin of a great many such predictions as these; and then, in the end, those only which turned out to be true were remembered, while the rest were forgotten; and this was the way that the reality of such prophetic powers came to be generally believed in.

Feeble and uncertain of life as the infant Charles appeared to be, they conferred upon him, as is customary in the case of young princes, various titles of nobility. He was made a duke, a marquis, an earl, and a baron, before he had strength enough to lift up his head in his nurse's arms. His title as duke was Duke of Albany; and as this was the highest of his nominal honors, he was generally known under that designation while he remained in Scotland.

When his father left him, in order to go to England and take possession of his new throne, he appointed a governess to take charge of the health and education of the young duke. This governess was Lady Cary. The reason why she was appointed was, not because of her possessing any peculiar qualifications for such a charge, but because her husband, Sir Robert Cary, had been the messenger employed by the English government to communicate to James the death of Elizabeth, and to announce to him his accession to the throne. The bearer of good news to a monarch must always be rewarded, and James recompensed Sir Robert for his service by appointing his wife to the post of governess of his infant son. The office undoubtedly had its honors and emoluments, with very little of responsibility or care.

One of the chief residences of the English monarchs is Windsor Castle. It is situated above London, on the Thames, on the southern shore. It is on an eminence overlooking the river and the delightful valley through which the river here meanders. In the rear is a very extensive park or forest, which is penetrated in every direction by rides and walks almost innumerable. It has been for a long time the chief country residence of the British kings. It is very spacious, containing within its walls many courts and quadrangles, with various buildings surrounding them, some ancient and some modern. Here King James held his court after his arrival in England, and in about a year he sent for the little Charles to join him.

The child traveled very slowly, and by very easy stages, his nurses and attendants watching over him with great solicitude all the way. The journey was made in the month of October. His mother watched his arrival with great interest. Being so feeble and helpless, he was, of course, her favorite child. By an instinct which very strongly evinces the wisdom and goodness which implanted it, a mother always bestows a double portion of her love upon the frail, the helpless, and the suffering. Instead of being wearied out with protracted and incessant calls for watchfulness and care, she feels only a deeper sympathy and love, in proportion to the infirmities which call for them, and thus finds her highest happiness in what we might expect would be a weariness and a toil.

Little Charles was four years old when he reached Windsor Castle. They celebrated his arrival with great rejoicings, and a day or two afterward they invested him with the title of Duke of York, a still higher distinction than he had before attained. Soon after this, when he was perhaps five or six years of age, a gentleman was appointed to take the charge of his education. His health gradually improved, though he still continued helpless and feeble. It was a long time before he could walk, on account of some malformation of his limbs. He learned to talk, too, very late and very slowly. Besides the general feebleness of his

constitution, which kept him back in all these things, there was an impediment in his speech, which affected him very much in childhood, and which, in fact, never entirely disappeared.

As soon, however, as he commenced his studies under his new tutor, he made much greater progress than had been expected. It was soon observed that the feebleness which had attached to him pertained more to the body than to the mind. He advanced with considerable rapidity in his learning. His progress was, in fact, in some degree, promoted by his bodily infirmities, which kept him from playing with the other boys of the court, and led him to like to be still, and to retire from scenes of sport and pleasure which he could not share.

The same cause operated to make him not agreeable as a companion, and he was not a favorite among those around him. They called him *Baby* Charley. His temper seemed to be in some sense soured by the feeling of his inferiority, and by the jealousy he would naturally experience in finding himself, the son of a king, so outstripped in athletic sports by those whom he regarded as his inferiors in rank and station.

The lapse of a few years, however, after this time, made a total change in Charles's position and prospects. His health improved, and his constitution began to be confirmed and established. When he was about twelve years of age, too, his brother Henry died. This circumstance made an entire change in all his prospects of life. The eyes of the whole kingdom, and, in fact, of all Europe, were now upon him as the future sovereign of England. His sister Elizabeth, who was a few years older than himself, was, about this time, married to a German prince, with great pomp and ceremony, young Charles acting the part of brideman. In consequence of his new position as heir-apparent to the throne, he was advanced to new honors, and had new titles conferred upon him, until at last, when he was sixteen years of age, he was made Prince of Wales, and certain revenues were appropriated to support a court for him, that he might be surrounded with external circumstances and insignia of rank and power, corresponding with his prospective greatness.

In the mean time his health and strength rapidly improved, and with the improvement came a taste for manly and athletic sports, and the attainment of excellence in them. He gradually acquired great skill in all the exploits and performances of the young men of those days, such as shooting, riding, vaulting, and tilting at tournaments. From being a weak, sickly, and almost helpless child, he became, at twenty, an active, athletic young man, full of life and spirit, and ready for any romantic enterprise. In fact, when he was twenty-three years old, he embarked in a romantic enterprise which attracted the attention of all the world. This enterprise will presently be described.

There was at this time, in the court of King James, a man who became very famous afterward as a favorite and follower of Charles. He is known in history under the name of the Duke of Buckingham. His name was originally George Villiers. He was a very handsome young man, and he seems to have attracted King James's attention at first on this account. James found him a convenient attendant, and made him, at last, his principal favorite. He raised him to a high rank, and conferred upon him, among other titles, that of Duke of Buckingham. The other persons about the court were very envious and jealous of his influence and power; but they were obliged to submit to it. He lived in great state and splendor, and for many years was looked up to by the whole kingdom as one of the greatest personages in the realm. We shall learn hereafter how he came to his end.

If the reader imagines, from the accounts which have been given thus far in this chapter of the pomp and parade of royalty, of the castles and the ceremonies, the titles of nobility, and the various insignia of rank and power, which we have alluded to so often, that the mode of life which royalty led in those days was lofty, dignified, and truly great, he will be very greatly

deceived. All these things were merely for show—things put on for public display, to gratify pride and impress the people, who never looked behind the scenes, with high ideas of the grandeur of those who, as they were taught, ruled over them by a divine right. It would be hard to find, in any class of society except those reputed infamous, more low, gross, and vulgar modes of life than have been exhibited generally in the royal palaces of Europe for the last five hundred years. King James the First has, among English sovereigns, rather a high character for sobriety and gravity of deportment, and purity of morals; but the glimpses we get of the real, every-day routine of his domestic life, are such as to show that the pomp and parade of royalty is mere glittering tinsel, after all.

The historians of the day tell such stories as these. The king was at one time very dejected and melancholy, when Buckingham contrived this plan to amuse him. In the first place, however, we ought to say, in order to illustrate the terms on which he and Buckingham lived together, that the king always called Buckingham *Steeny*, which was a contraction of Stephen. St. Stephen was always represented in the Catholic pictures of the saints, as a very handsome man, and Buckingham being handsome too, James called him Steeny by way of a compliment. Steeny called the king *his dad*, and used to sign himself, in his letters, "your slave and dog Steeny." There are extant some letters which passed between the king and his favorite, written, on the part of the king, in a style of grossness and indecency such that the chroniclers of those days said that they were not fit to be printed. They would not "blot their pages" with them, they said. King Charles's letters were more properly expressed.

To return, then, to our story. The king was very much dejected and melancholy. Steeny, in order to divert him, had a pig dressed up in the clothes of an infant child. Buckingham's mother, who was a countess, personated the nurse, dressed also carefully for the occasion. Another person put on a bishop's robes, satin gown, lawn sleeves, and the other pontifical ornaments. They also provided a baptismal font, a prayer-book, and other things necessary for a religious ceremony, and then invited the king to come in to attend a baptism. The king came, and the pretended bishop began to read the service, the assistants looking gravely on, until the squealing of the pig brought all gravity to an end. The king was *not* pleased; but the historian thinks the reason was, not any objection which he had to such a profanation, but to his not happening to be in a mood for it at that time.

There was a negotiation going on for a long time for a marriage between one of the king's sons, first Henry, and afterward Charles, and a princess of Spain. At one time the king lost some of the papers, and was storming about the palace in a great rage because he could not find them. At last he chanced to meet a certain Scotchman, a servant of his, named Gib, and, like a vexed and impatient child, who lays the charge of a lost plaything upon any body who happens to be at hand to receive it, he put the responsibility of the loss of the papers upon Gib. "I remember," said he, "I gave them to you to take care of. What have you done with them?" The faithful servant fell upon his knees, and protested that he had not received them. The king was only made the more angry by this contradiction, and kicked the Scotchman as he kneeled upon the floor. The man rose and left the apartment, saying, "I have always been faithful to your majesty, and have not deserved such treatment as this. I can not remain in your service under such a degradation. I shall never see you again." He left the palace, and went away.

A short time after this, the person to whose custody the king had really committed the papers came in, and, on learning that they were wanted, produced them. The king was ashamed of his conduct. He sent for his Scotch servant again, and was not easy until he was found and brought into his presence. The king kneeled before him and asked his forgiveness, and said he should not rise until he was forgiven. Gib was disposed to evade the request, and urged the

king to rise; but James would not do so until Gib said he forgave him, in so many words. The whole case shows how little of dignity and noble bearing there really was in the manners and conduct of the king in his daily life, though we are almost ready to overlook the ridiculous childishness and folly of his fault, on account of the truly noble frankness and honesty with which he acknowledged it.

Thus, though every thing in which royalty appeared before the public was conducted with great pomp and parade, this external magnificence was then, and always has been, an outside show, without any thing corresponding to it within. The great mass of the people of England saw only the outside. They gazed with admiration at the spectacle of magnificence and splendor which royalty always presented to their eyes, whenever they beheld it from the distant and humble points of view which their position afforded them. Prince Charles, on the other hand, was behind the curtain. His childhood and youth were exposed fully to all the real influences of these scenes. The people of England submitted to be governed by such men, not because they thought them qualified to govern, or that the circumstances under which their characters were formed were such as were calculated to form, in a proper manner, the minds of the rulers of a Christian people. They did not know what those circumstances were. In their conceptions they had grand ideas of royal character and life, and imagined the splendid palaces which some saw, but more only heard of, at Westminster, were filled with true greatness and glory. They were really filled with vulgarity, vice, and shame. James was to them King James the First, monarch of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, and Charles was Charles, Prince of Wales, Duke of York, and heir-apparent to the throne. Whereas, within the palace, to all who saw them and knew them there, and really, so far as their true moral position was concerned, the father was “Old Dad,” and the son, what his father always called him till he was twenty-four years old, “Baby Charley.”

2. The Expedition Into Spain

1623

In order that the reader may understand fully the nature of the romantic enterprise in which, as we have already said, Prince Charles embarked when he was a little over twenty years of age, we must premise that Frederic, the German prince who married Charles's sister Elizabeth some years before, was the ruler of a country in Germany called the Palatinate. It was on the banks of the Rhine. Frederic's title, as ruler of this country, was Elector Palatine. There are a great many independent states in Germany, whose sovereigns have various titles, and are possessed of various prerogatives and powers.

Now it happened that, at this time, very fierce civil wars were raging between the Catholics and the Protestants in Germany. Frederic got drawn into these wars on the Protestant side. His motive was not any desire to promote the progress of what he considered the true faith, but only a wish to extend his own dominions, and add to his own power, for he had been promised a kingdom, in addition to his Palatinate, if he would assist the people of the kingdom to gain the victory over their Catholic foes. He embarked in this enterprise without consulting with James, his father-in-law, knowing that he would probably disapprove of such dangerous ambition. James was, in fact, very sorry afterward to hear of Frederic's having engaged in such a contest.

The result was quite as disastrous as James feared. Frederic not only failed of getting his new kingdom, but he provoked the rage of the Catholic powers against whom he had undertaken to contend, and they poured a great army into his own original territory, and made an easy conquest of it. Frederic fled to Holland, and remained there a fugitive and an exile, hoping to obtain help in some way from James, in his efforts to recover his lost dominions.

The people of England felt a great interest in Frederic's unhappy fate, and were very desirous that James should raise an army and give him some efficient assistance. One reason for this was that they were Protestants, and they were always ready to embark, on the Protestant side, in the Continental quarrels. Another reason was their interest in Elizabeth, the wife of Frederic, who had so recently left England a blooming bride, and whom they still considered as in some sense pertaining to the royal family of England, and as having a right to look to all her father's subjects for protection.

But King James himself had no inclination to go to war in such a quarrel. He was inactive in mind, and childish, and he had little taste for warlike enterprises. He undertook, however, to accomplish the object in another way. The King of Spain, being one of the most powerful of the Catholic sovereigns, had great influence in all their councils. He had also a beautiful daughter, Donna Maria, called, as Spanish princesses are styled, the Infanta. Now James conceived the design of proposing that his son Charles should marry Donna Maria, and that, in the treaty of marriage, there should be a stipulation providing that the Palatinate should be restored to Frederic.

These negotiations were commenced, and they went on two or three years without making any sensible progress. Donna Maria was a Catholic, and Charles a Protestant. Now a Catholic could not marry a Protestant without a special dispensation from the pope. To get this dispensation required new negotiations and delays. In the midst of it all, the King of Spain, Donna Maria's father, died, and his son, her brother, named Philip, succeeded him. Then the negotiations had all to be commenced anew. It was supposed that the King of Spain did not

wish to have the affair concluded, but liked to have it in discussion, as it tended to keep the King of England more or less under his control. So they continued to send embassies back and forth, with drafts of treaties, articles, conditions, and stipulations without number. There were endless discussions about securing to Donna Maria the full enjoyment of the Catholic religion in England, and express agreements were proposed and debated in respect to her having a chapel, and priests, and the right to celebrate mass, and to enjoy, in fact, all the other privileges which she had been accustomed to exercise in her own native land. James did not object. He agreed to every thing; but still, some how or other, the arrangement could not be closed. There was always some pretext for delay.

At last Buckingham proposed to Charles that they two should set off for Spain in person, and see if they could not settle the affair. Buckingham's motive was partly a sort of reckless daring, which made him love any sort of adventure, and partly a desire to circumvent and thwart a rival of his, the Earl of Bristol, who had charge of the negotiations. It may seem to the reader that a simple journey from London to Madrid, of a young man, for the purpose of visiting a lady whom he was wishing to espouse, was no such extraordinary undertaking as to attract the attention of a spirited young man to it from love of adventure. The truth is, however, that, with the ideas that then prevailed in respect to royal etiquette, there was something very unusual in this plan. The prince and Buckingham knew very well that the consent of the statesmen and high officers of the realm could never be obtained, and that their only alternative was, accordingly, to go off secretly and in disguise.

It seemed, however, to be rather necessary to get the king's consent. But Buckingham did not anticipate much difficulty in this, as he was accustomed to manage James almost like a child. He had not, however, been on very good terms with Charles, having been accustomed to treat him in the haughty and imperious manner which James would usually yield to, but which Charles was more inclined to resist and resent. When Buckingham, at length, conceived of this scheme of going into Spain, he changed his deportment toward Charles, and endeavored, by artful dissimulation, to gain his kind regard. He soon succeeded, and then he proposed his plan.

He represented to Charles that the sole cause of the delays in settling the question of his marriage was because it was left so entirely in the hands of embassadors, negotiators, and statesmen, who involved every thing in endless mazes. "Take the affair into your own hands," said he, "like a man. Set off with me, and go at once into Spain. Astonish them with your sudden and unexpected presence. The Infanta will be delighted at such a proof of your ardor, courage, and devotion, and will do all in her power to co-operate with you in bringing the affair at once to a close. Besides, the whole world will admire the originality and boldness of the achievement."

Charles was easily persuaded. The next thing was to get the king's consent. Charles and Buckingham went to his palace one day, and watching their opportunity when he was pretty merry with wine, Charles said that he had a favor to ask, and wished his father to promise to grant it before he knew what it was. James, after some hesitation, half in jest and half in earnest, agreed to it. They made him promise that he would not tell any one what it was, and then explained their plan. The king was thunderstruck; his amazement sobered him at once. He retracted his promise. He never could consent to any such scheme.

Buckingham here interposed with his aid. He told the king it was perfectly safe for the prince to go, and that this measure was the only plan which could bring the marriage treaty to a close. Besides, he said, if he and the prince were there, they could act far more effectually than any embassadors in securing the restoration of the Palatinate to Frederic. James could

not withstand these entreaties and arguments, and he finally gave a reluctant consent to the plan.

He repented, however, as soon as the consent was given, and when Charles and Buckingham came next to see him, he said it must be given up. One great source of his anxiety was a fear that his son might be taken and kept a prisoner, either in France or Spain, and detained a long time in captivity. Such a captive was always, in those days, a very tempting prize to a rival power. Personages of very high rank may be held in imprisonment, while all the time those who detain them may pretend not to confine them at all, the guards and sentinels being only marks of regal state, and indications of the desire of the power into whose hands they have fallen to treat them in a manner comporting with their rank. Then there were always, in those days, questions and disputes pending between the rival courts of England, France, and Spain, out of which it was easy to get a pretext for detaining any strolling prince who might cross the frontier, as security for the fulfillment of some stipulation, or for doing some act of justice claimed. James, knowing well how much faith and honor were to be expected of kings and courts, was afraid to trust his son in French or Spanish dominions. He said he certainly could not consent to his going, without first sending to *France*, at least, for a safe-conduct—that is, a paper from the government, pledging the honor of the king not to molest or interrupt him in his journey through his dominions.

Buckingham, instead of attempting to reassure the king by fresh arguments and persuasions, broke out into a passion, accused him of violating his promise not to reveal their plan to any one, as he knew, he said, that this new opposition had been put into his head by some of his counselors to whom he had made known the design. The king denied this, and was terrified, agitated, and distressed by Buckingham's violence. He wept like a child. His opposition at length gave way a second time, and he said they might go. They named two attendants whom they wanted to go with them. One was an officer of the king's household, named Collington, who was then in the anteroom. They asked the king to call him in, to see if he would go. When Collington came in, the king accosted him with, "Here's Steeny and Baby Charley that want to go to Spain and fetch the Infanta. What think you of it?" Collington did not think well of it at all. There followed a new relapse on the part of the king from his consent, a new storm of anger from Buckingham, more sullen obstinacy on the part of Charles, with profane criminations and recriminations one against another. The whole scene was what, if it had occurred any where else than in a palace, would have been called a brawl.

It ended, as brawls usually do, in the triumph of the most unreasonable and violent. James threw himself upon a bed which was in the room, weeping bitterly, and saying that they would go, and he should lose his Baby Charley. Considering that Charles was now the monarch's only child remaining at home, and that, as heir to the crown, his life was of great consequence to the realm, it is not surprising that his father was distressed at the idea of his exposing himself to danger on such an expedition; but one not accustomed to what is behind the scenes in royal life would expect a little more dignity and propriety in the mode of expressing paternal solicitude from a king.

Charles and Buckingham set off secretly from London; their two attendants were to join them in different places—the last at Dover, where they were to embark. They laid aside all marks of distinction in dress, such as persons of high rank used to wear in those days, and took the garb of the common people. They put on wigs, also, the hair of which was long, so as to shade the face and alter the expression of their countenances. These external disguises, however, were all that they could command. They could not assume the modest and quiet air and manner of persons in the ordinary walks of life, but made such displays, and were so liberal in the use of their money, and carried such an air and manner in all that they did and

said, that all who had any intercourse with them perceived that they were in disguise. They were supposed to be wild blades, out on some frolic or other, but still they were allowed to pass along without any molestation.

They were, however, stopped at Dover, where in some way they attracted the attention of the mayor of the town. Dover is on the Channel, opposite to Calais, at the narrowest point. It was, of course, especially in those days, the point where the principal intercourse between the two nations centered. The magistrates of the two towns were obliged, consequently, to be on the alert, to prevent the escape of fugitives and criminals, as well as to guard against the efforts of smugglers, or the entrance of spies or other secret enemies. The Mayor of Dover arrested our heroes. They told him that their names were Tom Smith and Jack Smith; these, in fact, were the names with which they had traveled through England thus far. They said that they were traveling for amusement. The mayor did not believe them. He thought they were going across to the French coast to fight a duel. This was often done in those days. They then told him that they were indeed persons of rank in disguise, and that they were going to inspect the English fleet. He finally allowed them to embark.

On landing at Calais, they traveled post to Paris, strictly preserving their incognito, but assuming such an air and bearing as to create the impression that they were not what they pretended. When they reached Paris, Buckingham could not resist the temptation of showing Charles a little of life, and he contrived to get admitted to a party at court, where Charles saw, among other ladies who attracted his attention, the Princess Henrietta. He was much struck with her beauty and grace, but he little thought that it was this princess, and not the Infanta whom he was going in pursuit of, who was really to become his wife, and the future Queen of England.

The young travelers thought it not prudent to remain long in Paris, and they accordingly left that city, and pressed forward as rapidly as possible toward the Spanish frontier.
They managed, however, to conduct always in such a way as to attract attention. Although they were probably sincerely desirous of not having their true rank and character known, still they could not resist the temptation to assume such an air and bearing as to make people wonder who they were, and thus increase the spirit and adventure of their journey. At Bourdeaux they received invitations from some grandees to be present at some great gala, but they declined, saying that they were only poor gentlemen traveling to inform their minds, and were not fit to appear in such gay assemblies.

At last they approached Madrid. They had, besides Collington, another attendant who spoke the Spanish language, and served them as an interpreter. They separated from these two the day before they entered Madrid, so as to attract the less attention. Their attendants were to be left behind for a day, and afterward were to follow them into the city. The British embassador at Madrid at this time was the Earl of Bristol. He had had charge of all the negotiations in respect to the marriage, and to the restoration of the Palatinate, and believed that he had brought them almost to a successful termination. He lived in a palace in Madrid, and, as is customary with the embassadors of great powers at the courts of great powers, in a style of the highest pomp and splendor.

Buckingham took the prince directly to Bristol’s house. Bristol was utterly confounded at seeing them. Nothing could be worse, he said, in respect to the completion of the treaty, than the prince’s presence in Madrid. The introduction of so new and extraordinary an element into the affair would undo all that had been done, and lead the King of Spain to begin anew, and go over all the ground again. In speaking of this occurrence to another, he said that just as he was on the point of coming to a satisfactory conclusion of his long negotiations and toils, a

demon in the shape of Prince Charles came suddenly upon the stage to thwart and defeat them all.

The Spanish court was famous in those days—in fact, it has always been famous—for its punctilious attention to etiquette and parade; and as soon as the prince's arrival was known to the king, he immediately began to make preparations to welcome him with all possible pomp and ceremony. A great procession was made through the Prado, which is a street in Madrid famous for promenades, processions, and public displays of all kinds. In moving through the city on this occasion, the king and Prince Charles walked together, the monarch thus treating the prince as his equal. There was a great canopy of state borne over their heads as they moved along. This canopy was supported by a large number of persons of the highest rank. The streets, and the windows and balconies of the houses on each side, were thronged with spectators, dressed in the gay and splendid court dresses of those times. When they reached the end of the route, and were about to enter the gate of the palace, there was a delay to decide which should enter first, the king and the prince each insisting on giving the precedence to the other. At last it was settled by their both going in together.

If the prince thus, on the one hand, derived some benefit in the gratification of his pride by the Spanish etiquette and parade, he suffered some inconvenience and disappointment from it, on the other hand, by its excluding him from all intercourse or acquaintance with the Infanta. It was not proper for the young man to see or to speak to the young lady, in such a case as this, until the arrangements had been more fully matured. The formalities of the engagement must have proceeded beyond the point which they had yet reached, before the bridegroom could be admitted to a personal interview with the bride. It is true, he could see her in public, where she was in a crowd, with other ladies of the court, and where he could have no communication with her; but this was all. They arranged it, however, to give Charles as many opportunities of this kind as possible. There were shows, in which the prince could see the Infanta among the spectators; and they arranged tiltings and ridings at the ring, and other athletic sports, such as Charles excelled in, and let him perform his exploits in her presence. His rivals in these contests did not have the incivility to conquer him, and his performances excited expressions, at least, of universal admiration.

But the prince and Buckingham did not very willingly submit to the stiffness and formality of the Spanish court. As soon as they came to feel a little at home, they began to act with great freedom. At one time the prince learned that the Infanta was going, early in the morning, to take a walk in some private pleasure grounds, at a country house in the neighborhood of Madrid, and he conceived the design of gaining an interview with her there by stealth. He accordingly repaired to the place, got admitted in some way within the precincts of the palace, and contrived to clamber over a high wall which separated him from the grounds in which the Infanta was walking, and so let himself down into her presence. The accounts do not state whether she herself was pleased or alarmed, but the officer who had her in charge, an old nobleman, was very much alarmed, and begged the prince to retire, as he himself would be subject to a very severe punishment if it were known that he had allowed such an interview. Finally they opened the door, and the prince went out. Many people were pleased with this and similar adventures of the prince and of Buckingham, but the leading persons about the court were displeased with them. Their precise and formal notions of propriety were very much shocked by such freedoms.

Besides, it was soon found that the characters of these high-born visitors, especially that of Buckingham, were corrupt, and their lives very irregular. Buckingham was accustomed to treat King James in a very bold, familiar, and imperious manner, and he fell insensibly into the same habits of intercourse with those about him in Spain. The little reserve and caution

which he manifested at first soon wore off, and he began to be very generally disliked. In the mean time the negotiation was, as Bristol had expected, very much put back by the prince's arrival. The King of Spain formed new plans, and thought of new conditions to impose. The Catholics, too, thought that Charles's coming thus into a Catholic country, indicated some leaning, on his part, toward the Catholic faith. The pope actually wrote him a long letter, the object of which was to draw him off from the ranks of Protestantism. Charles wrote a civil, but rather an evasive reply.

In the mean time, King James wrote childish letters from time to time to his two dear boys, as he called them, and he sent them a great many presents of jewelry and splendid dresses, some for them to wear themselves, and some for the prince to offer as gifts to the Infanta. Among these, he describes, in one of his letters, a little mirror, set in a case which was to be worn hung at the girdle. He wrote to Charles that when he gave this mirror to the Infanta, he must tell her that it was a picture which he had had imbued with magical virtue by means of incantations and charms, so that whenever she looked into it, she would see a portrait of the most beautiful princess in England, France, or Spain.

At last the great obstacle in the way of the conclusion of the treaty of marriage, which consisted in the delays and difficulties in getting the pope's dispensation, was removed. The dispensation came. But then the King of Spain wanted some new guarantees in respect to the privileges of Catholics in England, under pretense of securing more perfectly the rights of the Infanta and of her attendants when they should have arrived in that country. The truth was, he probably wished to avail himself of the occasion to gain some foothold for the Catholic faith in England, which country had become almost entirely Protestant. At length, however, all obstacles seemed to be removed, and the treaty was signed. The news of it was received with great joy in England, as it seemed to secure a permanent alliance between the two powerful countries of England and Spain. Great celebrations took place in London, to do honor to the occasion. A chapel was built for the Infanta, to be ready for her on her arrival; and a fleet was fitted out to convey her and her attendants to her new home.

In the mean time, however, although the king had signed the treaty, there was a strong party formed against the marriage in Spain. Buckingham was hated and despised. Charles, they saw, was almost entirely under his influence. They said they would rather see the Infanta in her grave than in the hands of such men. Buckingham became irritated by the hostility he had awakened, and he determined to break off the match entirely. He wrote home to James that he did not believe the Spanish court had any intention of carrying the arrangement really into effect; that they were procrastinating the affair on every possible pretext, and that he was really afraid that, if the prince were to attempt to leave the country, they would interpose and detain him as a prisoner. King James was very much alarmed. He wrote in the greatest trepidation, urging "the lads" to come away immediately, leaving a proxy behind them, if necessary, for the solemnization of the marriage. This was what Buckingham wanted, and he and the prince began to make preparations for their departure.

The King of Spain, far from interposing any obstacles in the way, only treated them with greater and higher marks of respect as the time of their separation from his court drew nigh. He arranged great and pompous ceremonies to honor their departure. He accompanied them, with all the grandees of the court, as far as to the Escurial, which is a famous royal palace not far from Madrid, built and furnished in the most sumptuous style of magnificence and splendor. Here they had parting feasts and celebrations. Here the prince took his leave of the Infanta, Bristol serving as interpreter, to translate his parting speeches into Spanish, so that she could understand them. From the Escurial the prince and Buckingham, with a great many

English noblemen who had followed them to Madrid, and a great train of attendants, traveled toward the seacoast, where a fleet of vessels were ready to receive them.

They embarked at a port called St. Andrew. They came very near being lost in a storm of mist and rain which came upon them while going out to the ships, which were at a distance from the shore, in small boats provided to convey them. Having escaped this danger, they arrived safely at Portsmouth, the great landing point of the British navy on the southern shores of England, and thence proceeded to London. They sent back orders that the proxy should not be used, and the match was finally abandoned, each party accusing the other of duplicity and bad faith.

King James was however, very glad to get his son safe back again, and the people made as many bonfires and illuminations to celebrate the breaking up of this Catholic match, as they had done before to do honor to its supposed completion.

As all hope of recovering the Palatinate by negotiation was now past, the king began to prepare for the attempt to conquer it by force of arms.

3. Accession To The Throne

1625

King James made slow progress in his military preparations. He could not raise the funds without the action of Parliament, and the houses were not in very good humor. The expenses of the prince's visit to Spain had been enormous, and other charges, arising out of the pomp and splendor with which the arrangements of the court were maintained, gave them a strong feeling of discontent. They had other grievances of which they were disposed to complain, and they began to look upon this war, notwithstanding its Protestant character, as one in which the king was only striving to recover his son-in-law's dominions, and, consequently, as one which pertained more to his personal interests than to the public welfare of the realm.

While things were in this state the king fell sick. The mother of the Duke of Buckingham undertook to prescribe for him. It was understood that Buckingham himself, who had, in the course of the Spanish enterprise, and since his return, acquired an entire ascendency over Charles, was not unwilling that his old master should leave the stage, and the younger one reign in his stead; and that his mother shared in this feeling. At any rate, her prescriptions made the king much worse. He had the sacrament administered to him in his sick chamber, and said that he derived great comfort from it. One morning, very early, he sent for the prince to come and see him. Charles rose, dressed himself, and came. His father had something to say to him, and tried to speak. He could not. His strength was too far gone. He fell back upon his pillow, and died.

Charles was, of course, now king. The theory in the English monarchy is, that the king never dies. So soon as the person in whom the royal sovereignty resides ceases to breathe, the principle of supremacy vests immediately in his successor, by a law of transmission entirely independent of the will of man. The son becomes king by a divine right. His being proclaimed and crowned, as he usually is, at some convenient time early in his reign, are not ceremonies which *make* him king. They only acknowledge him to be so. He does not, in any sense, derive his powers and prerogatives from these acts. He only receives from his people, by means of them, a recognition of his right to the high office to which he has already been inducted by the fiat of Heaven.

It will be observed, thus, that the ideas which prevailed in respect to the nature and province of government, were very different in England at that time, from those which are entertained in America at the present day. With us, the administration of government is merely a *business*, transacted for the benefit of the people by their agents—men who are put in power for this purpose, and who, like other agents, are responsible to their principals for the manner in which they fulfill their trusts. But government in England was, in the days of the Stuarts—and it is so to a great extent at the present day—a *right* which one family possessed, and which entitled that family to certain immunities, powers, and prerogatives, which they held entirely independent of any desire, on the part of the people, that they should exercise them, or even their *consent* that they should do so. The right to govern the realm of Great Britain was a sort of estate which descended to Charles from his ancestors, and with the possession and enjoyment of which the community had no right to interfere.

This seems, at first view, very absurd to us, but it is not particularly absurd. Charles's lawyers would say to any plain proprietor of a piece of land, who might call in question his right to govern the country, The king holds his crown by precisely the same tenure that you hold your farm. Why should you be the exclusive possessor of that land, while so many poor beggars

are starving? Because it has descended to you from your ancestors, and nothing has descended to them. And it is precisely so that the right to manage the fleets and armies, and to administer the laws of the realm, has descended, under the name of *sovereignty*, to him, and no such political power has descended to you.

True, the farmer would reply; but in matters of government we are to consider what will promote the general good. The great object to be attained is the welfare and happiness of the community. Now, if this general welfare comes into competition with the supposed rights of individuals, arising from such a principle as hereditary succession, the latter ought certainly to yield.

But why, might the lawyer reply, should rights founded on hereditary succession yield any more readily in the case of *government* than in the case of *property*? The distribution of property influences the general welfare quite as much as the management of power. Suppose it were proved that the general welfare of your parish would be promoted by the division of your land among the destitute there. You have nothing to oppose to such a proposition but your hereditary right. And the king has that to oppose to any plan of a division of his prerogatives and powers among the people who would like to share them.

Whatever may be thought of this reasoning on this side of the Atlantic, and at the present day, it was considered very satisfactory in England two or three centuries ago. The true and proper jurisdiction of an English monarch, as it had existed from ancient times, was considered as an *absolute right*, vesting in each successive inheritor of the crown, and which the community could not justly interfere with or disturb for any reasons less imperious than such as would authorize an interference with the right of succession to private property. Indeed, it is probable that, with most men at that time, an inherited right to *govern* was regarded as the most sacred of the two.

The fact seems to be, that the right of a son to come into the place of his father, whether in respect to property, power, or social rank, is not a natural, inherent, and indefeasible right, but a *privilege* which society accords, as a matter of convenience and expediency. In England, expediency is, on the whole, considered to require that all three of these things, viz., property, rank, and power, in certain cases, should descend from father to son. In this country, on the other hand, we confine the hereditament to property, abrogating it in the case of rank and power. In neither case is there probably any absolute natural right, but a conventional right is allowed to take its place in one, or another, or all of these particulars, according to the opinion of the community in respect to what its true interests and the general welfare, on the whole, require.

The kings themselves of this Stuart race—which race includes Mary Queen of Scots, the mother of the line, and James I., Charles I., Charles II., and James II.—entertained very high ideas of these hereditary rights of theirs to govern the realm of England. They felt a determination to maintain these rights and powers at all hazards. Charles ascended the throne with these feelings, and the chief point of interest in the history of his reign is the contest in which he engaged with the English people in his attempts to maintain them.

The body with which the king came most immediately into conflict in this long struggle for ascendency, was the Parliament. And here American readers are very liable to fall into a mistake by considering the houses of Parliament as analogous to the houses of legislation in the various governments of this country. In our governments the chief magistrate has only to execute definite and written laws and ordinances, passed by the Legislature, and which the Legislature may pass with or without his consent; and when enacted, he must be governed by them. Thus the president or the governor is, in a certain sense, the agent and officer of the

legislative power of the state, to carry into effect its decisions, and this *legislative* power has really the control.

By the ancient Constitution of England, however, the Parliament was merely a body of counselors, as it were, summoned by the king to give him their advice, to frame for him such laws as he wished to have framed, and to aid him in raising funds by taxing the people. The king might call this council or not, as he pleased. There was no necessity for calling it unless he needed more funds than he could raise by his own resources. When called, they felt that they had come, in a great measure, to aid the king in doing his will. When they framed a law, they sent it to him, and if he was satisfied with it, he *made it law*. It was the king who really enacted it. If he did not approve the law, he wrote upon the parchment which contained it, "The king will think of it," and that was the end. The king would call upon them to assess a tax and collect the money, and would talk to them about his plans, and his government, and the aid which he desired from them to enable him to accomplish what he had himself undertaken. In fact, the king was the government, and the houses of Parliament his instruments to aid him in giving effect to his decrees.

The nobles, that is, the heads of the great families, and also the bishops, who were the heads of the various dioceses of the Church formed one branch of this great council. This was called the House of Lords. Certain representatives of the counties and of the towns formed another branch, called the House of Commons. These delegates came to the council, not from any right which the counties and towns were supposed to possess to a share in the government, but simply because they were summoned by the king to come and give him their aid. They were to serve without pay, as a matter of duty which they owed to the sovereign. Those that came from counties were called knights, and those from the towns burgesses. These last were held in very little estimation. The towns, in those days, were considered as mere collections of shopkeepers and tradesmen, who were looked down upon with much disdain by the haughty nobles. When the king called his Parliament together, and went in to address them, he entered the chamber of the House of Peers, and the commons were called in, to stand where they could, with their heads uncovered, to hear what he had to say. They were, in a thousand other ways, treated as an inferior class; but still their counsels might, in some cases, be of service, and so they were summoned to attend, though they were to meet always, and deliberate, in a separate chamber.

As the king could call the Parliament together at any time and place he pleased, so he could suspend or terminate their sittings at any time. He could intermit the action of a Parliament for a time, sending the members to their homes until he should summon them again. This was called a *prorogation*. Or he could dissolve the body entirely at any time, and then require new elections for a new Parliament whenever he wished to avail himself of the wisdom or aid of such a body again.

Thus every thing went on the supposition that the real responsibility for the government was with the king. He was the monarch, and the real sovereignty vested in him. He called his nobles, and a delegation from the mass of the people, together, whenever he wanted their help, and not otherwise. He was responsible, not to them nor to the people at large, but to God only, for the acts of his administration. The duty of Parliament was limited to that of aiding him in carrying out his plans of government, and the people had nothing to do but to be obedient, submissive, and loyal. These were, at any rate, the ideas of the kings, and all the forms of the English Constitution and the ancient phraseology in which the transactions are expressed, correspond with them.

We can not give a better proof and illustration of what has been said than by transcribing the substance of one of King James's messages to his Parliament, delivered about the close of his life, and, of course, at the period of which we are writing. It was as follows:

"My Lords spiritual and temporal, and you the Commons: In my last Parliament I made long discourses, especially to them of the Lower House. I did open the true thought of my heart. But I may say with our Savior, 'I have piped to you and ye have not danced; I have mourned to you and you have not lamented;' so all my sayings turned to me again without any success. And now, to tell the reasons of your calling and of this meeting, apply it to yourselves, and spend not the time in long speeches. Consider that the Parliament is a thing composed of a head and a body; the monarch and the two estates. It was, first, a monarchy; then, after, a Parliament. There are no Parliaments but in monarchical governments; for in Venice, the Netherlands, and other free governments there are none. The head is to call the body together; and for the clergy the bishops are chief, for shires their knights, for towns and cities their burgesses and citizens. These are to treat of difficult matters, and counsel their king with their best advice to make laws[1] for the commonweal and the Lower House is also to petition the king and acquaint him with their grievances, and not to meddle with the king's prerogative. They are to offer supply for his necessity, and he to distribute, in recompense thereof, justice and mercy. As in all Parliaments it is the *king's* office to make good laws, whose fundamental cause is the people's ill manners, so at this time.

"For a supply to my necessities, I have reigned eighteen years, in which I have had peace, and I have received far less supply than hath been given to any king since the Conquest. The last queen had, one year with another, above a hundred thousand pounds per annum in subsidies; and in all my time I have had but four subsidies and six fifteens[2]. It is ten years since I had a subsidy, in all which time I have been sparing to trouble you. I have turned myself as nearly to save expenses as I may. I have abated much in my household expenses, in my navies, and the charge of my munition."

After speaking about the affairs of the Palatinate, and calling upon the Parliament to furnish him with money to recover it for his son-in-law, he adds:

"Consider the trade for the making thereof better, and show me the reason why my mint, these eight or nine years, hath not gone. I confess I have been liberal in my grants; but if I be informed, I will amend all hurtful grievances. But whoever shall hasten after grievances, and desire to make himself popular he hath the spirit of Satan. I was, in my first Parliament, a novice; and in my last, there was a kind of beasts, called *undertakers*, a dozen of whom undertook to govern the last Parliament, and they led me. I shall thank *you* for your good office, and desire that the world may say well of our agreement."

This kind of harangue from the king to his Parliament seems not to have been considered at the time, at all extraordinary; though, if such a message were to be sent, at the present day, to a body of legislators, whether by a king or a president, it would certainly produce a sensation.

Still, notwithstanding what we have said, the Parliament did contrive gradually to attain to the possession of some privileges and powers of its own. The English people have a great deal of independence and spirit, though Americans traveling there, with ideas carried from this country, are generally surprised at finding so little instead of so much. The knights and burgesses of the House of Commons, though they submitted patiently to the forms of degradation which the lords and kings imposed upon them, gradually got possession of

[1] Meaning advice to him how he shall make laws, as is evident from what is said below.
[2] Species of taxes granted by Parliament.

certain powers which they claimed as their own, and which they showed a strong disposition to defend. They claimed the exclusive right to lay taxes of every kind. This had been the usage so long, that they had the same right to it that the king had to his crown. They had a right too, to petition the king for a redress of any grievances which they supposed the people were suffering under his reign. These, and certain other powers and immunities which they had possessed, were called their *privileges*. The king's rights were, on the other hand, called his *prerogatives*. The Parliament were always endeavoring to extend, define, and establish their privileges. The king was equally bent on maintaining his ancient prerogatives. King Charles's reign derives its chief interest from the long and insane contest which he waged with his Parliament on this question. The contest commenced at the king's accession to the throne, and lasted a quarter of a century: it ended with his losing all his prerogatives and his head.

This circumstance, that the main interest in King Charles's reign is derived from his contest with his Parliament, has made it necessary to explain somewhat fully, as we have done, the nature of that body. We have described it as it was in the days of the Stuarts; but, in order not to leave any wrong impression on the mind of the reader in regard to its present condition, we must add, that though all its external forms remain the same, the powers and functions of the body have greatly changed. The despised and contemned knights and burgesses, that were not worthy to have seats provided for them when the king was delivering them his speech, now rule the world; or, at least, come nearer to the possession of that dominion than any other power has ever done, in ancient or modern times. They decide who shall administer the government, and in what way. They make the laws, settle questions of trade and commerce, decide really on peace and war, and, in a word, hold the whole control, while the nominal sovereign takes rides in the royal parks, or holds drawing-rooms in the palaces, in empty and powerless parade. There is no question that the British House of Commons has exerted a far wider influence on the destinies of the human race than any other governmental power that has ever existed. It has gone steadily on for five, and perhaps for ten centuries, in the same direction and toward the same ends; and whatever revolutions may threaten other elements of European power, the British House of Commons, in some form or other, is as sure as any thing human can be of existence and power for five or ten centuries to come.

And yet it is one of the most remarkable of the strange phenomena of social life, that this body, standing at the head, as it really does, of all human power, submits patiently still to all the marks and tokens of inferiority and degradation which accompanied its origin. It comes together when the sovereign sends writs, *ordering* the several constituencies to choose their representatives, and the representatives to assemble. It comes humbly into the House of Peers to listen to the instructions of the sovereign at the opening of the session, the members in a standing position, and with heads uncovered.[3] It debates these suggestions with forms and in a phraseology which imply that it is only considering what *counsel* to give the king. It enacts nothing—it only recommends; and it holds its existence solely at the discretion of the great imaginary power which called it into being. These forms may, very probably, soon be changed for others more true to the facts; and the principle of election may be changed, so as to make the body represent more fully the general population of the empire; but the body itself will doubtless continue its action for a very long period to come.

According to the view of the subject which we have presented, it would of course follow, as the real sovereignty was mainly in the king's hands, that at the death of one monarch and the

[3] Even in the case of a committee of conference between the two houses, the lords have *seats* in the committee-room and wear their hats. The members from the commons must *stand*, and be uncovered during the deliberations!

accession of another, the functions of all officers holding their places under the authority of the former would cease. This was actually the case. And it shows how entirely the Parliament was considered as the instrument and creation of the king, that on the death of a king, the Parliament immediately expired. The new monarch must make a new Parliament, if he wished one, to help him carry out his own plans. In the same manner almost all other offices expired. As it would be extremely inconvenient or impossible to appoint anew all the officers of such a realm on a sudden emergency, it is usual for the king to issue a decree renewing the appointments of the existing incumbents of these offices. Thus King Charles, two days after his father's death, made it his first act to renew the appointments of the members of his father's privy council, of the foreign embassadors, and of the judges of the courts, in order that the affairs of the empire might go on without interruption. He also issued summonses for calling a Parliament, and then made arrangements for the solemnization of his father's funeral.

The scene of these transactions was what was, in those days, called Westminster. Minster means cathedral. A cathedral church had been built, and an abbey founded, at a short distance west from London, near the mouth of the Thames. The church was called the West *minster*, and the abbey, Westminster Abbey. The town afterward took the same name. The street leading to the city of London from Westminster was called the Strand; it lay along the shore of the river. The gate by which the city of London was entered on this side was called Temple Bar, on account of a building just within the walls, at that point, which was called the Temple. In process of time, London expanded beyond its bounds and spread westward. The Strand became a magnificent street of shops and stores. Westminster was filled with palaces and houses of the nobility, the whole region being entirely covered with streets and edifices of the greatest magnificence and splendor. Westminster is now called the West End of London, though the jurisdiction of the city still ends at Temple Bar.

Parliament held its sessions in a building near the shore, called St. Stephen's. The king's palace, called St. James's Palace, was near. The old church became a place of sepulture for the English kings, where a long line of them now repose. The palace of King James's wife, Anne of Denmark, was on the bank of the river, some distance down the Strand. She called it, during her life, Denmark House, in honor of her native land. Its name is now Somerset House.

King James's funeral was attended with great pomp. The body was conveyed from Somerset House to its place of repose in the Abbey, and attended by a great procession. King Charles walked as chief mourner. Two earls attended him, one on each side, and the train of his robes was borne by twelve peers of the realm. The expenses of this funeral amounted to a sum equal to two hundred thousand dollars.

One thing more is to be stated before we can consider Charles as fairly entered upon his career, and that is the circumstance of his marriage. His father James, so soon as he found the negotiations with Spain must be finally abandoned, opened a new negotiation with the King of France for his daughter Henrietta Maria. After some delay, this arrangement was concluded upon. The treaty of marriage was made, and soon after the old king's death, Charles began to think of bringing home his bride.

He accordingly made out a commission for a nobleman, appointed for the purpose, to act in his name, in the performance of the ceremony at Paris. The pope's dispensation was obtained, Henrietta Maria, as well as the Infanta, being a Catholic. The ceremony was performed, as such ceremonies usually were in Paris, in the famous church of Notre Dame, where Charles's grandmother, Mary Queen of Scots, had been married to a prince of France about seventy years before.

There was a great theater, or platform, erected in front of the altar in the church, which was thronged by the concourse of spectators who rushed to witness the ceremony. The beautiful princess was married by proxy to a man in another kingdom, whom she had never seen, or, at least, never known. It is not probable that she observed him at the time when he was, for one evening, in her presence, on his journey through Paris. The Duke of Buckingham had been sent over by Charles to conduct home his bride. Ships were waiting at Boulogne, a port nearly opposite to Dover, to take her and her attendants on board. She bade farewell to the palaces of Paris, and set out on her journey.[4]

The king, in the mean time, had gone to Dover, where he awaited her arrival. She landed at Dover on the day after sailing from Boulogne, sea-sick and sad. The king received his bride, and with their attendants they went by carriages to Canterbury, and on the following day they entered London. Great preparations had been made for receiving the king and his consort in a suitable manner; but London was, at this time, in a state of great distress and fear on account of the plague which had broken out there. The disease had increased during the king's absence, and the alarm and anxiety were so great, that the rejoicings on account of the arrival of the queen were omitted. She journeyed quietly, therefore, to Westminster, and took up her abode at Somerset House, which had been the residence of her predecessor. They had fitted it up for her reception, providing for it, among other conveniences, a Roman Catholic chapel, where she could enjoy the services of religion in the forms to which she had been accustomed.

[4] See portrait at the commencement of this volume.

4. Buckingham

1625-1628

Charles commenced his reign in 1625. He continued to reign about twenty-four years. It will assist the reader to receive and retain in mind a clear idea of the course of events during his reign, if we regard it as divided into three periods. During the first, which continued about four years, Charles and the Parliament were both upon the stage, contending with each other, but just at open war. Each party intrigued, and maneuvered, and struggled to gain its own ends, the disagreement widening and deepening continually, till it ended in an open rupture, when Charles abandoned the plan of having Parliaments at all, and attempted to govern alone. This attempt to manage the empire without a legislature lasted for ten years, and is the second period. After this a Parliament was called, and it soon made itself independent of the king, and became hostile to him, the two powers being at open war. This constitutes the third period. Thus we have four years spent in getting into the quarrel between the king and Parliament, ten years in an attempt by the king to govern alone, and, finally, ten years of war, more or less open, the king on one side, and the Parliament on the other.

The first four years—that is, the time spent in getting really into the quarrel with Parliament, was Buckingham's work, for during that time Buckingham's influence with the king was paramount and supreme; and whatever was done that was important or extraordinary, though done in the king's name, really originated in him. The whole country knew this and were indignant that such a man, so unprincipled, so low in character, so reckless, and so completely under the sway of his impulses and passions, should have such an influence over the king, and, through him, such power to interfere with and endanger the mighty interests of so vast a realm.

It must not be supposed, however, in consequence of what has been said about the extent of the regal power in England, that the daily care and responsibility of the affairs of government, in its ordinary administration, rested directly upon the king. It is not possible that any one mind can even comprehend, far less direct, such an enormous complication of interests and of action as is involved in the carrying on, from day to day, the government of an empire. Offices, authorities, and departments of administration spring up gradually, and all the ordinary routine of the affairs of the empire are managed by them. Thus the navy was all completely organized, with its gradations of rank, its rules of action, its records, its account books, its offices and arrangements for provisionment and supply, the whole forming a vast system which moved on of itself, whether the king were present or absent, sick or well, living or dead. It was so with the army; it was so with the courts; it was so with the general administration of the government, at London. The immense mass of business which constituted the work of government was all systematized and arranged, and it moved on regularly, in the hands of more or less prudent and careful men, who governed, themselves, by ancient rules and usages, and in most cases managed wisely.

Every thing, however, was done in the king's *name*. The ships were his majesty's ships, the admirals were his majesty's servants, the war was his majesty's war, the court was the *King's* Bench. The idea was, that all these thousands of officers, of all ranks and grades, were only an enormous multiplication of his majesty; that they were to do his will and carry on his administration as he would himself carry it on were he personally capable of attending to such a vast detail; subject, of course, to certain limits and restrictions which the laws and customs of the realm, and the promises and contracts of his predecessors, had imposed. But

although all this action was theoretically the king's action, it came to be, in fact, almost wholly independent of him. It went on of itself, in a regular and systematic way, pursuing its own accustomed course, except so far as the king directly interposed to modify its action.

It might be supposed that the king would certainly take *the general direction* of affairs into his own hands, and that this charge, at least, would necessarily come upon him, as king, day by day. Some monarchs have attempted to do this, but it is obvious that there must be some provision for having this general charge, as well as all the subordinate functions of government, attended to independently of the king, as his being always in a condition to fulfill this duty is not to be relied upon. Sometimes the king is young and inexperienced; sometimes he is sick or absent; and sometimes he is too feeble in mind, or too indolent, or too devoted to his pleasures, to exercise any governmental care. There has gradually grown up, therefore, in all monarchies, the custom of having a central board of officers of state, whom the king appoints, and who take the general direction of affairs in his stead, except so far as he chooses to interfere. This board, in England, is called the Privy Council.

The Privy Council in England is a body of great importance. Its nature and its functions are, of course, entirely different from those of the two houses of Parliament. *They* represent, or are intended to represent, the nation. The Parliament is, in theory, the nation, assembled at the king's command, to give him their advice. The Privy Council, on the other hand, represents the king. It is the king's Privy Council. They act in his name. They follow his directions when he chooses to give any. Whatever they decide upon and decree, the king signs—often, indeed, without any idea of its nature. Still he signs it, and all such decrees go forth to the word as the king's orders in council. The Privy Council, of course, would have its meetings, its officers, its records, its rules of proceeding, and its various usages, and these grew, in time, to be laws and rights; but still it was, in theory, only a sort of expansion of the king, as if to make a kind of artificial being, with one soul, but many heads and hands, because no natural human being could possibly have capacities and powers extensive and multifarious enough for the exigencies of reigning. Charles thus had a council who took charge of every thing, except so far as he chose to interpose. The members were generally able and experienced men. And yet Buckingham was among them. He had been made Lord High Admiral of England, which gave him supreme command of the navy, and admitted him to the Privy Council. These were very high honors.

This Privy Council now took the direction of public affairs, attended to every thing, provided for all emergencies, and kept all the complicated machinery of government in motion, without the necessity of the king's having any personal agency in the matter. The king might interpose, more or less, as he was inclined; and when he did interpose, he sometimes found obstacles in the way of immediately accomplishing his plans, in the forms or usages which had gradually grown into laws.

For instance, when the king began his reign, he was very eager to have the war for the recovery of the Palatinate go on at once; and he was, besides, very much embarrassed for want of money. He wished, therefore, in order to save time, that the old Parliament which King James had called should continue to act under his reign. But his Privy Council told him that that could not be. That was *James's* Parliament. If he wanted one for his reign, he must call upon the people to elect a new Parliament for him.

The new Parliament was called, and Charles sent them a very civil message, explaining the emergency which had induced him to call them, and the reason why he was so much in want of money. His father had left the government a great deal in debt. There had been heavy expenses connected with the death of the former king, and with his own accession and marriage. Then there was the war. It had been engaged in by his father, with the approbation

of the former Parliament; and engagements had been made with allies, which now they could not honorably retract. He urged them, therefore, to grant, without delay, the necessary supplies.

The Parliament met in July, but the plague was increasing in London, and they had to adjourn, early in August, to Oxford. This city is situated upon the Thames, and was then, as it is now, the seat of a great many colleges. These colleges were independent of each other in their internal management, though united together in one general system. The name of one of them, which is still very distinguished, was Christ Church College. They had, among the buildings of that college, a magnificent hall, more than one hundred feet long, and very lofty, built in a very imposing style. It is still a great object of interest to all who visit Oxford. This hall was fitted up for the use of Parliament, and the king met the two houses there. He made a new speech himself, and others were made by his ministers, explaining the state of public affairs, and gently urging the houses to act with promptness and decision.

The houses then separated, and each commenced its own deliberations. But, instead of promptly complying with the king's proposals they sent him a petition for redress of a long list of what they called grievances. These grievances were, almost all of them, complaints of the toleration and encouragement of the Catholics, through the influence of the king's Catholic bride. She had stipulated to have a Catholic chapel, and Catholic attendants, and, after her arrival in England, she and Buckingham had so much influence over the king, that they were producing quite a change at court, and gradually through all ranks of society, in favor of the Catholics. The Commons complained of a great many things, nearly all, however, originating in this cause. The king answered these complaints, clause by clause, promising redress more or less distinctly. There is not room to give this petition and the answers in full, but as all the subsequent troubles between Charles and the people of England arose out of this difficulty of his young wife's bringing in so strong a Catholic influence with her to the realm, it may be well to give an abstract of some of the principal petitions, with the king's answers.

The Commons said:

That they had understood that popish priests, and other Catholics, were gradually creeping in as teachers of the youth of the realm, in the various seminaries of learning, and they wished to have decided measures taken to examine all candidates for such stations, with a view to the careful exclusion of all who were not true Protestants.

King.—Allowed. And I will send to the archbishops and all the authorities to see that this is done.

Commons.—That more efficient arrangements should be made for appointing able and faithful men in the Church—men that will really devote themselves to preaching the Gospel to the people; instead of conferring these places and salaries on favorites, sometimes, as has been the case, several to the same man.

The king made some explanations in regard to this subject, and promised hereafter to comply with this requisition.

Commons.—That the laws against sending children out of the country to foreign countries to be educated in Catholic seminaries should be strictly enforced, and the practice be entirely broken up.

King.—Agreed; and he would send to the lord admiral, and to all the naval officers on the coast, to watch very carefully and stop all children attempting to go abroad for such a

purpose; and he would issue a proclamation commanding all the noblemen's children now on the Continent to return by a given day.

Commons.—That no Catholic (or, as they called him, popish *recusant*, that is, a person *refusing* to subscribe to the Protestant faith, recusant meaning *person refusing*) be admitted into the king's service at court; and that no *English* Catholic be admitted into the queen's service. They could not refuse to allow her to employ her own *French* attendants, but to appoint English Catholics to the honorable and lucrative offices at her disposal was doing a great injury to the Protestant cause in the realm.

The king agreed to this, with some conditions and evasions.

Commons.—That all Jesuits and Catholic priests, owing allegiance to the See of Rome, should be sent away from the country, according to laws already existing, after fair notice given; and if they would not go, that they should be imprisoned in such a manner as to be kept from all communication with other persons, so as not to disseminate their false religion.

King.—The laws on this subject shall be enforced.

The above are sufficient for a specimen of these complaints and of the king's answers. There were many more of them, but they have all the same character—being designed to stop the strong current of Catholic influence and ascendency which was setting in to the court, and through the court into the realm, through the influence of the young queen and the persons connected with her. At the present day, and in this country, the Commons will be thought to be in the wrong, inasmuch as the thing which they were contending against was, in the main, merely the toleration of the Catholic religion. But then the king was in the wrong too, for, since the laws against this toleration stood enacted by the consent and concurrence of his predecessors, he should not have allowed them to be infracted and virtually annulled through the influence of a foreign bride and an unworthy favorite.

Perhaps he felt that he was wrong, or perhaps his answers were all framed for him by his Privy Council. At all events, they were entirely favorable to the demands of the Commons. He promised every thing. In many things he went even beyond their demands. It is admitted, however, on all hands, that, so far as he himself had any agency in making these replies, he was not really sincere. He himself, and Buckingham, were very eager to get supplies. Buckingham was admiral of the fleet, and very strongly desired to enlarge the force at his command, with a view to the performing of some great exploit in the war. It is understood, therefore, that the king intended his replies as promises merely. At any rate, the promises were made. The Commons were called into the great hall again, at Christ Church, where the Peers assembled, and the king's answers were read to them. Buckingham joined in this policy of attempting to conciliate the Commons. He went into their assembly and made a long speech, explaining and justifying his conduct, and apologizing, in some sense, for what might seem to be wrong.

The Commons returned to their place of deliberation, but they were not satisfied. They wanted something besides promises. Some were in favor of granting supplies "in gratitude to his majesty for his gracious answer." Others thought differently. They did not see the necessity for raising money for this foreign war. They had greater enemies at home (meaning Buckingham and popery) than they had abroad. Besides, if the king would stop his waste and extravagance in bestowing honors and rewards, there would be money enough for all necessary uses. In a word, there was much debate, but nothing done. The king, after a short time, sent a message to them urging them to come to a decision. They sent him back a declaration which showed that they did not intend to yield. Their language, however, was of

the most humble character. They called him “their dread sovereign,” and themselves “his poor commons.” The king was displeased with them, and dissolved the Parliament. They, of course, immediately became private citizens, and dispersed to their homes.

After trying some ineffectual attempts to raise money by his own royal prerogatives and powers, the king called a new Parliament, taking some singular precautions to keep out of it such persons as he thought would oppose his plans. The Earl of Bristol, whom Buckingham had been so jealous of, considering him as his rival, was an influential member of the House of Peers. Charles and Buckingham agreed to omit him in sending out the royal writs to summon the peers. He petitioned Parliament, claiming a right to his seat. Charles then sent him his writ, but gave him a command, as his sovereign, not to attend the session. He also selected four of the prominent men in the House of Commons, men whom he considered most influential in opposition to him and to Buckingham, and appointed them to offices which would call them away from London; and as it was the understanding in those days that the sovereign had a right to command the services of his subjects, they were obliged to go. The king hoped, by these and similar means, to diminish the influence against him in Parliament, and to get a majority in his favor. But his plans did not succeed. Such measures only irritated the House and the country. After another struggle this Parliament was dissolved too.

Things went on so for four or five years, the breach between the king and the people growing wider and wider. Within this time there were four Parliaments called, and, after various contentions with them, they were, one after another, dissolved. The original subject of disagreement, viz., the growing influence of the Catholics, was not the only one. Other points came up, growing out of the king’s use of his prerogative, and his irregular and, as they thought, illegal attempts to interfere with their freedom of action. The king, or, rather, Buckingham using the king’s name, resorted to all sorts of contrivances to accomplish this object. For instance, it had long been the custom, in case any member of the House of Peers was absent, for him to give authority to any friend of his, who was also a member, to vote for him. This authority was called a *proxy*. This word is supposed to be derived from *procuracy*, which means action in the place of, and in behalf of, another. Buckingham induced a great number of the peers to give him their proxies. He did this by rewards, honors, and various other influences, and he found so many willing to yield to these inducements, that at one time he had thirty or forty proxies in his hands. Thus, on a question arising in the House of Lords, he could give a very large majority of votes. The House, after murmuring for some time, and expressing much discontent and vexation at this state of things, finally made a law that no member of the House should ever have power to use more than *two* proxies.

One of the Parliaments which King Charles assembled at length brought articles of impeachment against Buckingham, and a long contest arose on this subject. An impeachment is a trial of a high officer of state for maladministration of his office. All sorts of charges were brought against Buckingham, most of which were true. The king considered their interfering to call one of his ministers to account as wholly intolerable. He sent them orders to dismiss that subject from their deliberations, and to proceed immediately with their work of laying taxes to raise money, or he would dissolve the Parliament as he had done before. He reminded them that the Parliaments were entirely “in his power for their calling, sitting, and dissolution, and as he found their fruits were for good or evil, so they were to continue, or not to be.” If they would mend their errors and do their duty, henceforward he would forgive the past; otherwise they were to expect his irreconcilable hostility.

This language irritated instead of alarming them. The Commons persisted in their plan of impeachment. The king arrested the men whom they appointed as managers of the

impeachment, and imprisoned them. The Commons remonstrated, and insisted that Buckingham should be dismissed from the king's service. The king, instead of dismissing him, took measures to have him appointed, in addition to all his other offices, Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, a very exalted station. Parliament remonstrated. The king, in retaliation, dissolved the Parliament.

Thus things went on from bad to worse, and from worse to worse again; the chief cause of the difficulties, in almost all cases, being traceable to Buckingham's reckless and arbitrary conduct. He was continually doing something in the pursuit of his own ends, by the rash and heedless exercise of the vast powers committed to him, to make extensive and irreparable mischief. At one time he ordered a part of the fleet over to the coast of France, to enter the French service, the sailors expecting that they were to be employed against the Spaniards. They found, however, that, instead of going against the Spaniards, they were to be sent to Rochelle. Rochelle was a town in France in possession of the Protestants, and the King of France wished to subdue them. The sailors sent a remonstrance to their commander, begging not to be forced to fight against their brother Protestants. This remonstrance was, in form, what is called a *Round Robin*.

In a Round Robin a circle is drawn, the petition or remonstrance is written within it, and the names are written all around it, to prevent any one's having to take the responsibility of being the first signer. When the commander of the fleet received the Round Robin, instead of being offended, he inquired into the facts, and finding that the case was really as the Round Robin represented it, he broke away from the French command and returned to England. He said he would rather be hanged in England for disobeying orders than to fight against the Protestants of France.

Buckingham might have known that such a spirit as this in Englishmen was not to be trifled with. But he knew nothing, and thought of nothing, except that he wished to please and gratify the French government. When the fleet, therefore, arrived in England, he peremptorily ordered it back, and he resorted to all sorts of pretexts and misrepresentations of the facts to persuade the officers and men that they were not to be employed against the Protestants. The fleet accordingly went back, and when they arrived, they found that Buckingham had deceived them. They were ordered to Rochelle. One of the ships broke away and returned to England. The officers and men deserted from the other ships and got home. The whole armament was disorganized, and the English people, who took sides with the sailors, were extremely exasperated against Buckingham for his blind and blundering recklessness, and against the king for giving such a man the power to do his mischief on such an extensive scale.

At another time the duke and the king contrived to fit out a fleet of eighty sail to make a descent upon the coast of Spain. It caused them great trouble to get the funds for this expedition, as they had to collect them, in a great measure, by various methods depending on the king's prerogative, and not by authority of Parliament. Thus the whole country were dissatisfied and discontented in respect to the fleet before it was ready to sail. Then, as if this was not enough, Buckingham overlooked all the officers in the navy in selecting a commander, and put an officer of the army in charge of it; a man whose whole experience had been acquired in wars on the land. The country thought that Buckingham ought to have taken the command himself, as lord high admiral; and if not, that he ought to have selected his commander from the ranks of the service employed. Thus the fleet set off on the expedition, all on board burning with indignation against the arbitrary and absurd management of the favorite. The result of the expedition was also extremely disastrous. They had an excellent opportunity to attack a number of ships, which would have made a very rich

prize; but the soldier-commander either did not know, or did not dare to do, his duty. He finally, however, effected a landing, and took a castle, but the sailors found a great store of wine there, and went to drinking and carousing, breaking through all discipline. The commander had to get them on board again immediately, and come away. Then he conceived the plan of going to intercept what were called the Spanish galleons, which were ships employed to bring home silver from the mines in America, which the Spaniards then possessed. On further thoughts he concluded to give up this idea, on account of the plague, which, as he said, broke out in his ships. So he came back to England with his fleet disorganized, demoralized, and crippled, and covered with military disgrace. The people of England charged all this to Buckingham. Still the king persisted in retaining him. It was his prerogative to do so.

After a while Buckingham got into a personal quarrel with Richelieu, who was the leading manager of the French government, and he resolved that England should make war upon France. To alter the whole political position of such an empire as that of Great Britain, in respect to peace and war, and to change such a nation as France from a friend to an enemy, would seem to be quite an undertaking for a single man to attempt, and that, too, without having any reason whatever to assign, except a personal quarrel with a minister about a love affair. But so it was. Buckingham undertook it. It was the king's prerogative to make peace or war, and Buckingham ruled the king.

He contrived various ways of fomenting ill will. One was, to alienate the mind of the king from the queen. He represented to him that the queen's French servants were fast becoming very disrespectful and insolent in their treatment of him, and finally persuaded him to send them all home. So the king went one day to Somerset House, which was the queen's residence—for it is often the custom in high life in Europe for the husband and wife to have separate establishments—and requested her to summon her French servants into his presence, and when they were assembled, he told them that he had concluded to send them all home to France. Some of them, he said, had acted properly enough, but others had been rude and forward, and that he had decided it best to send them all home. The French king, on hearing of this, seized a hundred and twenty English ships lying in his harbors in retaliation of this act, which he said was a palpable violation of the marriage contract, as it certainly was. Upon this the king declared war against France. He did not ask Parliament to act in this case at all. There was no Parliament. Parliament had been dissolved in a fit of displeasure. The whole affair was an exercise of the royal prerogative. Nor did the king now call a Parliament to provide means for carrying on the war, but set his Privy Council to devise modes of doing it, through this same prerogative.

The attempts to raise money in these ways made great trouble. The people resisted, and interposed all possible difficulties. However some funds were raised, and a fleet of a hundred sail, and an army of seven thousand men, were got together. Buckingham undertook the command of this expedition himself, as there had been so much dissatisfaction with his appointment of a commander to the other. It resulted just as was to be expected in the case of seven thousand men, and a hundred ships, afloat on the swelling surges of the English Channel, under the command of vanity, recklessness, and folly. The duke came back to England in three months, bringing home one third of his force. The rest had been lost, without accomplishing any thing. The measure of public indignation against Buckingham was now full.

Buckingham himself walked as loftily and proudly as ever. He equipped another fleet, and was preparing to set sail in it himself, as commander again. He went to Portsmouth, accordingly, for this purpose, Portsmouth being the great naval station then, as now, on the

southern coast of England. Here a man named Felton, who had been an officer under the duke in the former expedition, and who had been extremely exasperated against him on account of some of his management there, and who had since found how universal was the detestation of him in England, resolved to rid the country of such a curse at once. He accordingly took his station in the passage-way of the house where Buckingham was, armed with a knife. Buckingham came out, talking with some Frenchmen in an angry manner, having had some dispute with them, when Felton thrust the knife into his side as he passed, and, leaving it in the wound, walked away, no one having noticed who did the deed. Buckingham pulled out the knife, fell down, and died. The bystanders were going to seize one of the Frenchmen, when Felton advanced and said, “I am the man; you are to arrest me; let no one suffer that is innocent.” He was taken. They found a paper in his hat, saying that he was going to destroy the duke, and that he could not sacrifice his life in a nobler cause than by delivering his country from so great an enemy.

King Charles was four miles off at this time. They carried him the news. He did not appear at all concerned or troubled, but only directed that the murderer—he ought to have said, perhaps, the *executioner*—should be secured, and that the fleet should proceed to sail. He also ordered the treasurer to make arrangements for a splendid funeral.

The treasurer said, in reply, that a funeral would only be a temporary show, and that he could hereafter erect a *monument* at half the cost, which would be a much more lasting memorial. Charles acceded. Afterward, when Charles spoke to him about the monument, the treasurer replied, What would the world say if your majesty were to build a monument to the Duke before you erect one for your father? So the plan was abandoned, and Buckingham had no other monument than the universal detestation of his countrymen.

5. The King And His Prerogative

1628-1636

The great difficulty in governing without a Parliament was the raising of funds. By the old customs and laws of the realm, a tax upon the people could only be levied by the action of the House of Commons; and the great object of the king and council during Buckingham's life, in summoning Parliaments from time to time, was to get their aid in this respect. But as Charles found that one Parliament after another withheld the grants, and spent their time in complaining of his government, he would dissolve them, successively, after exhausting all possible means of bringing them to a compliance with his will. He would then be thrown upon his own resources.

The king had *some* resources of his own. These were certain estates, and lands, and other property, in various parts of the country, which belonged to the crown, the income of which the king could appropriate. But the amount which could be derived from this source was very small. Then there were certain other modes of raising money, which had been resorted to by former monarchs, in emergencies, at distant intervals, but still in instances so numerous that the king considered precedents enough had been established to make the power to resort to these modes a part of the prerogative of the crown. The people, however, considered these acts of former monarchs as irregularities or usurpations. They denied the king's right to resort to these methods, and they threw so many difficulties in the way of the execution of his plans, that finally he would call another Parliament, and make new efforts to lead them to conform to his will. The more the experiment was tried, however, the worse it succeeded; and at last the king determined to give up the idea of Parliaments altogether, and to compel the people to submit to his plans of raising money without them.

The final dissolution of Parliament, by which Charles entered upon his new plan of government, was attended with some resistance, and the affair made great difficulty. It seems that one of the members, a certain Mr. Rolls, had had some of his goods seized for payment of some of the king's irregular taxes, which he had refused to pay willingly. Now it had always been considered the law of the land in England, that the person and the property of a member of Parliament were sacred during the session, on the ground that while he was giving his attendance at a council meeting called by his sovereign, he ought to be protected from molestation on the part either of his fellow-subjects or his sovereign, in his person and in his property. The House of Commons considered, therefore, the seizure of the goods of one of the members of the body as a breach of their privilege, and took up the subject with a view to punish the officers who acted. The king sent a message immediately to the House, while they were debating the subject, saying that the officer acted, in seizing the goods, in obedience to his own direct command. This produced great excitement and long debates. The king, by taking the responsibility of the seizure upon himself, seemed to bid the House defiance. They brought up this question: "Whether the seizing of Mr. Rolls's goods was not a breach of privilege?" When the time came for a decision, the speaker, that is, the presiding officer, refused to put the question to vote. He said he had been commanded *by the king* not to do it! The House were indignant, and immediately adjourned for two days, probably for the purpose of considering, and perhaps consulting their constituents on what they were to do in so extraordinary an emergency as the king's coming into their own body and interfering with the functions of one of their own proper officers.

They met on the day to which they had adjourned, prepared to insist on the speaker's putting the question. But he, immediately on the House coming to order, said that he had received the king's command to adjourn the House for a week, and to put no question whatever. He was then about to leave the chair, but two of the members advanced to him and held him in his place, while they read some resolutions which had been prepared. There was great confusion and clamor. Some insisted that the House was adjourned, some were determined to pass the resolutions. The resolutions were very decided. They declared that whoever should counsel or advise the laying of taxes not granted by Parliament, or be an actor or instrument in collecting them, should be accounted an innovator, and a capital enemy to the kingdom and Commonwealth. And also, that if any person whatever should voluntarily pay such taxes, he should be counted a capital enemy also. These resolutions were read in the midst of great uproar. The king was informed of the facts, and sent for the sergeant of the House—one of the highest officers—but the members locked the door, and would not let the sergeant go. Then the king sent one of his own officers to the House with a message. The members kept the door locked, and would not let him in until they had disposed of the resolutions. Then the House adjourned for a week.

The next day, several of the leading members who were supposed to have been active in these proceedings were summoned to appear before the council. They refused to answer out of Parliament for what was said and done by them in Parliament. The council sent them to prison in the Tower.

The week passed away, and the time for the reassembling of the Houses arrived. It had been known, during the week, that the king had determined on dissolving Parliament. It is usual, in dissolving a Parliament, for the sovereign not to appear in person, but to send his message of dissolution by some person commissioned to deliver it. This is called dissolving the House by commission. The dissolution is always declared in the House of Lords, the Commons being summoned to attend. In this case, however, the king attended in person. He was dressed magnificently in his royal robes, and wore his crown. He would not deign, however, to send for the Commons. He entered the House of Peers, and took his seat upon the throne. Several of the Commons, however, came in of their own accord, and stood below the bar, at the usual place assigned them. The king then rose and read the following speech. The antiquity of the language gives it an air of quaintness now which it did not possess then.

"My Lords,—I never came here upon so unpleasant an occasion, it being the Dissolution of a Parliament. Therefore Men may have some cause to wonder why I should not rather chuse to do this by Commission, it being a general Maxim of Kings to leave harsh Commands to their Ministers, Themselves only executing pleasing things. Yet considering that Justice as well consists in Reward and Praise of Virtue as Punishing of Vice, I thought it necessary to come here to-day, and to declare to you and all the World, that it was merely the undutiful and seditious Carriage in the Lower House that hath made the dissolution of this Parliament. And you, my Lords, are so far from being any Causers of it, that I take as much comfort in your dutiful Demeanour, as I am justly distasted with their Proceedings. Yet, to avoid their Mistakings, let me tell you, that it is so far from me to adjudge all the House alike guilty, that I know there are many there as dutiful subjects as any in the World it being but some few Vipers among them that did cast this mist of Undutifulness over most of their Eyes. Yet to say Truth, there was good Number there that could not be infected with this Contagion.

"To conclude, As those Vipers must look for their Reward of Punishment, so you, my Lords, may justly expect from me that Favor and Protection that a good King oweth to his loving and faithful Nobility. And now, my Lord Keeper, do what I have commanded you."

Then the lord keeper pronounced the Parliament dissolved. The lord keeper was the keeper of the great seal, one of the highest officers of the crown.

Of course this affair produced a fever of excitement against the king throughout the whole realm. This excitement was kept up and increased by the trials of the members of Parliament who had been imprisoned. The courts decided against them, and they were sentenced to long imprisonment and to heavy fines. The king now determined to do without Parliaments entirely; and, of course, he had to raise money by his royal prerogative altogether, as he had done, in fact, before, a great deal, during the intervals between the successive Parliaments. It will not be very entertaining, but it will be very useful to the reader to peruse carefully some account of the principal methods resorted to by the king. In order, however, to diminish the necessity for money as much as possible, the king prepared to make peace with France and Spain; and as they, as well as England, were exhausted with the wars, this was readily effected.

One of the resorts adopted by the king was to a system of *loans*, as they were called, though these loans differed from those made by governments at the present day, in being apportioned upon the whole community according to their liability to taxation, and in being made, in some respects, compulsory. The loan was not to be absolutely collected by force, but all were expected to lend, and if any refused, they were to be required to make oath that they would not tell any body else that they had refused, in order that the influence of their example might not operate upon others. Those who did refuse were to be reported to the government. The officers appointed to collect these loans were charged not to make unnecessary difficulty, but to do all in their power to induce the people to contribute freely and willingly. This plan had been before adopted, in the time of Buckingham, but it met with little success.

Another plan which was resorted to was the granting of what was called monopolies: that is, the government would select some important and necessary articles in general use, and give the exclusive right of manufacturing them to certain persons, on their paying a part of the profits to the government. Soap was one of the articles thus chosen. The exclusive right to manufacture it was given to a company, on their paying for it. So with leather, salt, and various other things. These persons, when they once possessed the exclusive right to manufacture an article which the people must use, would abuse their power by deteriorating the article, or charging enormous prices. Nothing prevented their doing this, as they had no competition. The effect was, that the people were injured much more than the government was benefited. The plan of granting such monopolies by governments is now universally odious.

Another method of taxation was what was called *tonnage and poundage*. This was an ancient tax, assessed on merchandise brought into the country in ships, like the *duties* now collected at our custom-houses. It was called tonnage and poundage because the merchandise on which it was assessed was reckoned by weight, viz., the ton and the pound. A former king, Edward III., first assessed it to raise money to suppress piracy on the seas. He said it was reasonable that the merchandise protected should pay the expense of the protection, and in proper proportion. The Parliament in that day opposed this tax. They did not object to the tax itself, but to the king's assessing it by his own authority. However, they granted it themselves afterward, and it was regularly collected. Subsequent Parliaments had granted it, and generally made the law, once for all, to continue in force during the life of the monarch. When Charles commenced his reign, the Peers were for renewing the law as usual, to continue throughout his reign. The Commons desired to enact the law only for a year at a time, so as to keep the power in their own hands. The two houses thus disagreed, and nothing

was done. The king then went on to collect the tax without any authority except his own prerogative.

Another mode of levying money adopted by the king was what was called *ship money*. This was a plan for raising a navy by making every town contribute a certain number of ships, or the money necessary to build them. It originated in ancient times, and was at first confined to seaport towns which had ships. These towns were required to furnish them for the king's service, sometimes to be paid for by the king, at other times by the country, and at other times not to be paid for at all. Charles revived this plan, extending it to the whole country; a tax was assessed on all the towns, each one being required to furnish money enough for a certain number of ships. The number at one time required of the city of London was twenty.

There was one man who made his name very celebrated then, and it has continued very celebrated since, by his refusal to pay his ship money, and by his long and determined contest with the government in regard to it, in the courts. His name was John Hampden. He was a man of fortune and high character. His tax for ship money was only twenty shillings, but he declared that he would not pay it without a trial. The king had previously obtained the opinion of the judges that he had a right, in case of necessity, to assess and collect the ship money, and Hampden knew, therefore, that the decision would certainly, in the end, be against him. He knew, however, that the attention of the whole country would be attracted to the trial, and that the arguments which he should offer, to prove that the act of collecting such a tax on the part of the king's government was illegal and tyrannical, would be spread before the country, and would make a great impression, although they certainly would not alter the opinion of the judges, who, holding their offices by the king's appointment, were strongly inclined to take his side.

It resulted as Hampden had foreseen. The trial attracted universal attention. It was a great spectacle to see a man of fortune and of high standing, making all those preparations, and incurring so great expense, on account of a refusal to pay five dollars, knowing too, that he would have to pay it in the end. The people of the realm were convinced that Hampden was right, and they applauded and honored him very greatly for his spirit and courage. The trial lasted twelve days. The illegality and injustice of the tax were fully exposed. The people concurred entirely with Hampden, and even some of the judges were convinced. He was called the patriot Hampden, and his name will always be celebrated in English history. The whole discussion, however, though it produced a great effect at the time, would be of no interest now, since it turned mainly on the question what the king's rights actually were, according to the ancient customs and usages of the realm. The question before mankind now is a very different one; it is not what the powers and prerogatives of government have been in times past, but what they ought to be now and in time to come.

The king's government gained the victory, ostensibly, in this contest, and Hampden had to pay the money. Very large sums were collected, also, from others by this tax, and a great fleet was raised. The performances and exploits of the fleet had some influence in quieting the murmurs of the people. The fleet was the greatest which England had ever possessed. One of its exploits was to compel the Dutch to pay a large sum for the privilege of fishing in the narrow seas about Great Britain. The Dutch had always maintained that these seas were public, and open to all the world; and they had a vast number of fishing boats, called herring-busses, that used to resort to them for the purpose of catching herring, which they made a business of preserving and sending all over the world. The English ships attacked these fleets of herring-busses, and drove them off; and as the Dutch were not strong enough to defend them, they agreed to pay a large sum annually for the right to fish in the seas in question,

protesting, however, against it as an extortion, for they maintained that the English had no control over any seas beyond the bays and estuaries of their own shores.

One of the chief means which Charles depended upon during the long period that he governed without a Parliament, was a certain famous tribunal or court called the *Star Chamber.* This court was a very ancient one, having been established in some of the earliest reigns; but it never attracted any special attention until the time of Charles. His government called it into action a great deal, and extended its powers, and made it a means of great injustice and oppression, as the people thought; or, as Charles would have said, a very efficient means of vindicating his prerogative, and punishing the stubborn and rebellious.

There were three reasons why this court was a more convenient and powerful instrument in the hands of the king and his council than any of the other courts in the kingdom. First, it was, by its ancient constitution, composed of members of the *council*, with the exception of two persons, who were to be judges in the other courts. This plan of having two judges from the common law courts seems to have been adopted for the purpose of securing some sort of conformity of the Star Chamber decisions with the ordinary principles of English jurisprudence. But then, as these two law judges would always be selected with reference to their disposition to carry out the king's plans, and as the other members of the court were all members of the government itself, of course the court was almost entirely under governmental control.

The second reason was, that in this court there was no jury. There had never been juries employed in it from its earliest constitution. The English had contrived the plan of trial by jury as a defense against the severity of government. If a man was accused of crime, the judges appointed by the government that he had offended were not to be allowed to decide whether he was guilty or not. They would be likely not to be impartial. The question of his guilt or innocence was to be left to twelve men, taken at hazard from the ordinary walks of life, and who, consequently, would be likely to sympathize with the accused, if they saw any disposition to oppress him, rather than to join against him with a tyrannical government. Thus the jury, as they said, was a great safeguard. The English have always attached great value to their system of trial by jury. The plan is retained in this country, though there is less necessity for it under our institutions. Now, in the Star Chamber, it had never been the custom to employ a jury. The members of the court decided the whole question; and as they were entirely in the interest of the government, the government, of course, had the fate of every person accused under their direct control.

The third reason consisted in the nature of the crimes which it had always been customary to try in this court. It had jurisdiction in a great variety of cases in which men were brought into collision with the government, such as charges of riot, sedition, libel, opposition to the edicts of the council, and to proclamations of the king. These and similar cases had always been tried by the Star Chamber, and these were exactly the cases which ought not to be tried by such a court; for persons accused of hostility to government ought not to be tried by government itself.

There has been a great deal of discussion about the origin of the term Star Chamber. The hall where the court was held was in a palace at Westminster, and there were a great many windows in it. Some think that it was from this that the court received its name. Others suppose it was because the court had cognizance of a certain crime, the Latin name of which has a close affinity with the word star. Another reason is, that certain documents, called *starra*, used to be kept in the hall. The prettiest idea is a sort of tradition that the ceiling of the hall was formerly ornamented with stars, and that this circumstance gave name to the hall. This supposition, however, unfortunately, has no better foundation than the others; for

there were no stars on the ceiling in Charles's time, and there had not been any for a hundred years; nor is there any positive evidence that there ever were. However, in the absence of any real reason for preferring one of these ideas over the other, mankind seem to have wisely determined on choosing the most picturesque, so that it is generally agreed that the origin of the name was the ancient decoration of the ceiling of the hall with gilded stars.

However this may be, the court of the Star Chamber was an engine of prodigious power in the hands of Charles's government. It aided them in two ways. They could punish their enemies, and where these enemies were wealthy, they could fill up the treasury of the government by imposing enormous fines upon them. Sometimes the offenses for which these fines were imposed were not of a nature to deserve such severe penalties. For instance, there was a law against turning tillage land into pasturage. Land that is tilled supports men. Land that is pastured supports cattle and sheep. The former were a burden, sometimes, to landlords, the latter a means of wealth. Hence there was then, as there is now, a tendency in England, in certain parts of the country, for the landed proprietors to change their tillage land to pasture, and thus drive the peasants away from their homes. There were laws against this, but a great many persons had done it notwithstanding. One of these persons was fined four thousand pounds; an enormous sum. The rest were alarmed, and made *compositions*, as they were called; that is, they paid at once a certain sum on condition of not being prosecuted. Thirty thousand pounds were collected in this way, which was then a very large amount.

There were in those days, as there are now, certain tracts of land in England called the king's forests, though a large portion of them are now without trees. The boundaries of these lands had not been very well defined, but the government now published decrees specifying the boundaries, and extending them so far as to include, in many cases, the buildings and improvements of other proprietors. They then prosecuted these proprietors for having encroached, as they called it, upon the crown lands, and the Star Chamber assessed very heavy fines upon them. The people said all this was done merely to get pretexts to extort money from the nation, to make up for the want of a Parliament to assess regular taxes; but the government said it was a just and legal mode of protecting the ancient and legitimate rights of the king.

In these and similar modes, large sums of money were collected as fines and penalties for offenses more or less real. In other cases very severe punishments were inflicted for various sorts of offenses committed against the personal dignity of the king, or the great lords of his government. It was considered highly important to repress all appearance of disrespect or hostility to the king. One man got into some contention with one of the king's officers, and finally struck him. He was fined ten thousand pounds. Another man said that a certain archbishop had incurred the king's displeasure by desiring some toleration for the Catholics. This was considered a slander against the archbishop, and the offender was sentenced to be fined a thousand pounds, to be whipped, imprisoned, and to stand in the pillory at Westminster, and at three other places in various parts of the kingdom.

A gentleman was following a chase as a spectator, the hounds belonging to a nobleman. The huntsman, who had charge of the hounds, ordered him to keep back, and not come so near the hounds; and in giving him this order, spoke, as the gentleman alleged, so insolently, that he struck him with his riding-whip. The huntsman threatened to complain to his master, the nobleman. The gentleman said that if his master should justify him in such insulting language as he had used, he would serve him in the same manner. The Star Chamber fined him ten thousand pounds for speaking so disrespectfully of a lord.

By these and similar proceedings, large sums of money were collected by the Star Chamber for the king's treasury, and all expression of discontent and dissatisfaction on the part of the

people was suppressed. This last policy, however, the suppression of expressions of dissatisfaction, is always a very dangerous one for any government to undertake. Discontent, silenced by force, is exasperated and extended. The outward signs of its existence disappear, but its inward workings become wide-spread and dangerous, just in proportion to the weight by which the safety-valve is kept down. Charles and his court of the Star Chamber rejoiced in the power and efficacy of their tremendous tribunal. They issued proclamations and decrees, and governed the country by means of them. They silenced all murmurs. But they were, all the time, disseminating through the whole length and breadth of the land a deep and inveterate enmity to royalty, which ended in a revolution of the government, and the decapitation of the king. They stopped the hissing of the steam for the time, but caused an explosion in the end.

Charles was King of Scotland as well as of England. The two countries were, however, as countries, distinct, each having its own laws, its own administration, and its own separate dominions. The sovereign, however, was the same. A king could inherit two kingdoms, just as a man can, in this country, inherit two farms, which may, nevertheless, be at a distance from each other, and managed separately. Now, although Charles had, from the death of his father, exercised sovereignty over the realm of Scotland, he had not been crowned, nor had even visited Scotland. The people of Scotland felt somewhat neglected. They murmured that their common monarch gave all his attention to the sister and rival kingdom. They said that if the king did not consider the Scottish crown worth coming after, they might, perhaps, look out for some other way of disposing of it.

The king, accordingly, in 1633, began to make preparations for a royal progress into Scotland. He first issued a proclamation requiring a proper supply of provisions to be collected at the several points of his proposed route, and specified the route, and the length of stay which he should make in each place. He set out on the 13th of May with a splendid retinue. He stopped at the seats of several of the nobility on the way, to enjoy the hospitalities and entertainments which they had prepared for him. He proceeded so slowly that it was a month before he reached the frontier. Here all his English servants and retinue retired from their posts, and their places were supplied by Scotchmen who had been previously appointed, and who were awaiting his arrival. He entered Edinburgh with great pomp and parade, all Scotland flocking to the capital to witness the festivities. The coronation took place three days afterward. He met the Scotch Parliament, and, for form’s sake, took a part in the proceedings, so as actually to exercise his royal authority as King of Scotland. This being over, he was conducted in great state back to Berwick, which is on the frontier, and thence he returned by rapid journeys to London.

The king dissolved his last Parliament in 1629. He had now been endeavoring for four or five years to govern alone. He succeeded tolerably well, so far as external appearances indicated, up to this time. There was, however, beneath the surface, a deep-seated discontent, which was constantly widening and extending, and, soon after the return of the king from Scotland, real difficulties gradually arose, by which he was, in the end, compelled to call a Parliament again. What these difficulties were will be explained in the subsequent chapters.

6. Archbishop Laud

1633-1639

In getting so deeply involved in difficulties with his people, King Charles did not act alone. He had, as we have already explained, a great deal of help. There were many men of intelligence and rank who entertained the same opinions that he did, or who were, at least, willing to adopt them for the sake of office and power. These men he drew around him. He gave them office and power, and they joined him in the efforts he made to defend and enlarge the royal prerogative, and to carry on the government by the exercise of it. One of the most prominent and distinguished of these men was Laud.

The reader must understand that *the Church*, in England, is very different from any thing that exists under the same name in this country. Its bishops and clergy are supported by revenues derived from a vast amount of property which belongs to the Church itself. This property is entirely independent of all control by the people of the parishes. The clergyman, as soon as he is appointed, comes into possession of it in his own right; and he is not appointed by the people, but by some nobleman or high officer of state, who has *inherited* the right to appoint the clergyman of that particular parish. There are bishops, also, who have very large revenues, likewise independent; and over these bishops is one great dignitary, who presides in lofty state over the whole system. This officer is called the Archbishop of Canterbury. There is one other archbishop, called the Archbishop of York; but his realm is much more limited and less important. The Archbishop of Canterbury is styled the Lord Primate of all England. His rank is above that of all the peers of the realm. He crowns the kings. He has two magnificent palaces, one at Canterbury and one at London, and has very large revenues, also, to enable him to maintain a style of living in accordance with his rank. He has the superintendence of all the affairs of the Church for the whole realm, except a small portion pertaining to the archbishopric of York. His palace in London is on the bank of the Thames, opposite Westminster. It is called Lambeth Palace.

The city of Canterbury, which is the chief seat of his dominion, is southeast of London, not very far from the sea. The Cathedral is there, which is the archbishop’s church. It is more than five hundred feet in length, and the tower is nearly two hundred and fifty feet high. The magnificence of the architecture and the decorations of the building correspond with its size. There is a large company of clergymen and other officers attached to the service of the Cathedral. They are more than a hundred in number. The palace of the archbishop is near.

The Church was thus, in the days of Charles, a complete realm of itself, with its own property, its own laws, its own legislature, and courts, and judges, its own capital, and its own monarch. It was entirely independent of the mass of the people in all these respects, as all these things were wholly controlled by the bishops and clergy, and the clergy were generally appointed by the noblemen, and the bishops by the king. This made the system almost entirely independent of the community at large; and as there was organized under it a vast amount of wealth, and influence, and power, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who presided over the whole, was as great in authority as he was in rank and honor. Now Laud was Archbishop of Canterbury.

King Charles had made him so. He had observed that Laud, who had been advanced to some high stations in the Church by his father, King James, was desirous to enlarge and strengthen the powers and prerogatives of the Church, just as he himself was endeavoring to do in respect to those of the throne. He accordingly promoted him from one post of influence and

honor to another, until he made him at last Archbishop of Canterbury. Thus he was placed upon the summit of ecclesiastical grandeur and power.

He commenced his work, however, of strengthening and aggrandizing the Church, before he was appointed to this high office. He was Bishop of London for many years, which is a post, in some respects, second only to that of Archbishop of Canterbury. While in this station, he was appointed by the king to many high civil offices. He had great capacity for the transaction of business, and for the fulfillment of high trusts, whether of Church or state. He was a man of great integrity and moral worth. He was stern and severe in manners but learned and accomplished. His whole soul was bent on what he undoubtedly considered the great duty of his life, supporting and confirming the authority of the king and the power and influence of English Episcopacy. Notwithstanding his high qualifications, however, many persons were jealous of the influence which he possessed with the king, and murmured against the appointment of a churchman to such high offices of state.

There was another source of hostility to Laud. There was a large part of the people of England who were against the Church of England altogether. They did not like a system in which all power and influence came, as it were, from above downward. The king made the noblemen, the noblemen made the bishops, the bishops made the clergy, and the clergy ruled their flocks; the flocks themselves having nothing to say or do but to submit. It is very different with Episcopacy in this country. The people here choose the clergy, and the clergy choose the bishops, so that power in the Church, as in every thing else here, goes from below upward. The two systems, when at rest, look very similar in the two countries; but when in action, the current of life flows in contrary directions, making the two diametrically opposite to each other in spirit and power. In England, Episcopacy is an engine by which the people are ecclesiastically governed. Here, it is the machinery by which they govern. Thus, though the forms appear similar, the action is very diverse.

Now in England there was a large and increasing party that hated and opposed the whole Episcopal system. Laud, to counteract this tendency, attempted to define, and enlarge, and extend that system as far as possible. He made the most of all the ceremonies of worship, and introduced others, which were, indeed, not exactly new, but rather ancient ones revived. He did this conscientiously, no doubt, thinking that these forms of devotion were adapted to impress the soul of the worshiper, and lead him to feel, in his heart, the reverence which his outward action expressed. Many of the people, however, bitterly opposed these things. They considered it a return to popery. The more that Laud, and those who acted with him, attempted to magnify the rites and the powers of the Church, the more these persons began to abhor every thing of the kind. They wanted Christianity itself, *in its purity*, uncontaminated, as they said, by these popish and idolatrous forms. They were called *Puritans*.

There were a great many things which seem to us at the present day of very little consequence, which were then the subjects of endless disputes and of the most bitter animosity. For instance, one point was whether the place where the communion was to be administered should be called the communion table or the altar; and in what part of the church it should stand; and whether the person officiating should be called a priest or a clergyman; and whether he should wear one kind of dress or another. Great importance was attached to these things; but it was not on their own account, but on account of their bearing on the question whether the Lord's Supper was to be considered only a ceremony commemorative of Christ's death, or whether it was, whenever celebrated by a regularly authorized priest, *a real renewal* of the sacrifice of Christ, as the Catholics maintained. Calling the communion table an altar, and the officiating minister a priest, and clothing him

in a sacerdotal garb, countenanced the idea of a renewal of the sacrifice of Christ. Laud and his co-adjutors urged the adoption of all these and similar usages. The Puritans detested them, because they detested and abhorred the doctrine which they seemed to imply.

Another great topic of controversy was the subject of amusements. It is a very singular circumstance, that in those branches of the Christian Church where rites and forms are most insisted upon, the greatest latitude is allowed in respect to the gayeties and amusements of social life. Catholic Paris is filled with theaters and dancing, and the Sabbath is a holiday. In London, on the other hand, the number of theaters is small, dancing is considered as an amusement of a more or less equivocal character, and the Sabbath is rigidly observed; and among all the simple Democratic churches of New England, to dance or to attend the theater is considered almost morally wrong. It was just so in the days of Laud. He wished to encourage amusements among the people, particularly on Sunday, after church. This was partly for the purpose of counteracting the efforts of those who were inclined to Puritan views. They attached great importance to their sermons and lectures, for in them they could address and influence the people. But by means of these addresses, as Laud thought, they put ideas of insubordination into the minds of the people, and encroached on the authority of the Church and of the king. To prevent this, the High-Church party wished to exalt the *prayers* in the Church service, and to give as little place and influence as possible to the sermon, and to draw off the attention of the people from the discussions and exhortations of the preachers by encouraging games, dances, and amusements of all kinds.

The judges in one of the counties, at a regular court held by them, once passed an order forbidding certain revels and carousals connected with the Church service, on account of the immoralities and disorders, as they alleged, to which they gave rise; and they ordered that public notice to this effect should be given by the bishop. The archbishop, Laud, considered this an interference on the part of the civil magistrates, with the powers and prerogatives of the Church. He had the judges brought before the council, and censured there; and they were required by the council to revoke their order at the next court. The judges did so, but in such a way as to show that they did it simply in obedience to the command of the king’s council. The people, or at least all of them who were inclined to Puritan views, sided with the judges, and were more strict in abstaining from all such amusements on Sunday than ever. This, of course, made those who were on the side of Laud more determined to promote these gayeties. Thus, as neither party pursued, in the least degree, a generous or conciliatory course toward the other, the difference between them widened more and more. The people of the country were fast becoming either bigoted High-Churchmen or fanatical Puritans.

Laud employed the power of the Star Chamber a great deal in the accomplishment of his purpose of enforcing entire submission to the ecclesiastical authority of the Church. He even had persons sometimes punished very severely for words of disrespect, or for writings in which they censured what they considered the tyranny under which they suffered. This severe punishment for the mere expression of opinion only served to fix the opinion more firmly, and disseminate it more widely. Sometimes men would glory in their sufferings for this cause, and bid the authorities defiance.

One man, for instance, named Lilburne, was brought before the Star Chamber, charged with publishing seditious pamphlets. Now, in all ordinary courts of justice, no man is called upon to say any thing against himself. Unless his crime can be proved by the testimony of others, it can not be proved at all. But in the Star Chamber, whoever was brought to trial had to take an oath at first that he would answer all questions asked, even if they tended to criminate himself. When they proposed this oath to Lilburne, he refused to take it. They decided that this was contempt of court, and sentenced him to be whipped, put in the pillory, and

imprisoned. While they were whipping him, he spent the time in making a speech to the spectators against the tyranny of bishops, referring to Laud, whom he considered as the author of these proceedings. He continued to do the same while in the pillory. As he passed along, too, he distributed copies of the pamphlets which he was prosecuted for writing. The Star Chamber, hearing that he was haranguing the mob, ordered him to be gagged. This did not subdue him. He began to stamp with his foot and gesticulate; thus continuing to express his indomitable spirit of hostility to the tyranny which he opposed. This single case would be of no great consequence alone, but it was not alone. The attempt to put Lilburne down was a symbol of the experiment of coercion which Charles in the state, and Laud in the Church, were trying upon the whole nation; it was a symbol both in respect to the means employed, and to the success attained by them.

One curious case is related, which turned out more fortunately than usual for the parties accused. Some young lawyers in London were drinking at an evening entertainment, and among other toasts they drank confusion to the Archbishop of Canterbury. One of the waiters, who heard them, mentioned the circumstance, and they were brought before the Star Chamber. Before their trial came on, they applied to a certain nobleman to know what they should do. “Where was the waiter,” asked the nobleman, “when you drank the toast?” “At the door.” “Oh! very well, then,” said he; “tell the court that he only heard a part of the toast, as he was going out; and that the words really were, ‘Confusion to the Archbishop of Canterbury’s enemies.’” By this ingenious plea, and by means of a great appearance of humility and deference in the presence of the archbishop, the lawyers escaped with a reprimand.

Laud was not content with establishing and confirming throughout all England the authority of the Church, but attempted to extend the same system to Scotland. When King Charles went to Scotland to be crowned, he took Laud with him. He was pleased with Laud’s endeavors to enlarge and confirm the powers of the Church, and wished to aid him in the work. There were two reasons for this. One was, that the same class of men, the Puritans, were the natural enemies of both, so that the king and the archbishop were drawn together by having one common foe. Then, as the places in the Church were not hereditary, but were filled by appointments from the king and the great nobles, whatever power the Church could get into its hands could be employed by the king to strengthen his own authority, and keep his subjects in subjection.

We must not, however, censure the king and his advisers too strongly for this plan. They doubtless were ambitious; they loved power; they wished to bear sway, unresisted and unquestioned, over the whole realm. But then the king probably thought that the exercise of such a government was necessary for the order and prosperity of the realm, besides being his inherent and indefeasible right. Good and bad motives were doubtless mingled here, as in all human action; but then the king was, in the main, doing what he supposed it was his duty to do. In proposing, therefore, to build up the Church in Scotland, and to make it conform to the English Church in its rites and ceremonies, he and Laud doubtless supposed that they were going greatly to improve the government of the sister kingdom.

There was in those days, as now, in the English Church, a certain prescribed course of prayers, and psalms, and Scripture lessons, for each day, to be read from a book by the minister. This was called the Liturgy. The Puritans did not like a Liturgy. It tied men up, and did not leave the individual mind of the preacher at liberty to range freely, as they wished it to do, in conducting the devotional services. It was on this very account that the friends of strong government *did* like it. They wished to curtail this liberty, which, however, they called license, and which they thought made mischief. In extemporaneous prayers, it is often easy to

see that the speaker is aiming much more directly at producing a salutary effect on the minds of his hearers than at simply presenting petitions to the Supreme Being. But, notwithstanding this evil, the existence of which no candid man can deny, the enemies of forms, who are generally friends of the largest liberty, think it best to leave the clergyman free. The friends of forms, however, prefer forms on this very account. They like what they consider the wholesome and salutary restraints which they impose.

Now there has always been a great spirit of freedom in the Scottish mind. That people have ever been unwilling to submit to coercion or restraints. There is probably no race of men on earth that would make worse slaves than the Scotch. Their sturdy independence and determination to be free could never be subdued. In the days of Charles they were particularly fond of freely exercising their own minds, and of speaking freely to others on the subject of religion. They thought for themselves, sometimes right and sometimes wrong; but they would think, and they would express their thoughts; and their being thus unaccustomed, in one particular, to submit to restraints, rendered them more difficult to be governed in others. Laud thought, consequently, that *they*, particularly, needed a Liturgy. He prepared one for them. It was varied somewhat from the English Liturgy, though it was substantially the same. The king proclaimed it, and required the bishops to see that it was employed in all the churches in Scotland.

The day for introducing the Liturgy was the signal for riots all over the kingdom. In the principal church in Edinburgh they called out "*A pope! A pope!*" when the clergyman came in with his book and his pontifical robes. The bishop ascended the pulpit to address the people to appease them, and a stool came flying through the air at his head. The police then expelled the congregation, and the clergyman went through with the service of the Liturgy in the empty church, the congregation outside, in great tumult, accompanying the exercises with cries of disapprobation and resentment, and with volleys of stones against the doors and windows.

The Scotch sent a sort of embassador to London to represent to the king that the hostility to the Liturgy was so universal and so strong that it could not be enforced. But the king and his council had the same conscientious scruples about giving up in a contest with subjects, that a teacher or a parent, in our day, would feel in the case of resistance from children or scholars. The king sent down a proclamation that the observance of the Liturgy must be insisted on. The Scotch prepared to resist. They sent delegates to Edinburgh, and organized a sort of government. They raised armies. They took possession of the king's castles. They made a solemn covenant, binding themselves to insist on religious freedom. In a word, all Scotland was in rebellion.

It was the custom in those days to have, connected with the court, some half-witted person, who used to be fantastically dressed, and to have great liberty of speech, and whose province was to amuse the courtiers. He was called the *king's jester*, or, more commonly, *the fool*. The name of King Charles's fool was Archy. After this rebellion broke out, and all England was aghast at the extent of the mischief which Laud's Liturgy had done, the fool, seeing the archbishop go by one day, called out to him, "My lord! who is the fool now!" The archbishop, as if to leave no possible doubt in respect to the proper answer to the question, had poor Archy tried and punished. His sentence was to have his coat pulled up over his head, and to be dismissed from the king's service. If Laud had let the affair pass, it would have ended with a laugh in the street; but by resenting it, he gave it notoriety, caused it to be recorded, and has perpetuated the memory of the jest to all future times. He ought to have joined in the laugh, and rewarded Archy on the spot for so good a witticism.

The Scotch, besides organizing a sort of civil government, took measures for summoning a general assembly of their Church. This assembly met at Glasgow. The nobility and gentry flocked to Glasgow at the time of the meeting, to encourage and sustain the assembly, and to manifest their interest in the proceedings. The assembly very deliberately went to work, and, not content with taking a stand against the Liturgy which Charles had imposed, they abolished the fabric of Episcopacy—that is, the government of bishops—altogether. Thus Laud's attempt to perfect and confirm the system resulted in expelling it completely from the kingdom. It has never held up its head in Scotland since. They established Presbyterianism in its place, which is a sort of republican system, the pastors being all officially equal to each other, though banded together under a common government administered by themselves.

The king was determined to put down this rebellion at all hazards. He had made such good use of the various irregular modes of raising money which have been already described, and had been so economical in the use of it, that he had now quite a sum of money in his treasury; and had it not been for the attempt to enforce the unfortunate Liturgy upon the people of Scotland, he might, perhaps, have gone on reigning without a Parliament to the end of his days. He had now about two hundred thousand pounds, by means of which, together with what he could borrow, he hoped to make one single demonstration of force which would bring the rebellion to an end. He raised an army and equipped a fleet. He issued a proclamation summoning all the peers of the realm to attend him. He moved with this great concourse from London toward the north, the whole country looking on as spectators to behold the progress of this great expedition, by which their monarch was going to attempt to subdue again his *other* kingdom.

Charles advanced to the city of York, the great city of the north of England. Here he paused and established his court, with all possible pomp and parade. His design was to impress the Scots with such an idea of the greatness of the power which was coming to overwhelm them as to cause them to submit at once. But all this show was very hollow and delusive. The army felt a greater sympathy with the Scots than they did with the king. The complaints against Charles's government were pretty much the same in both countries. A great many Scotchmen came to York while the king was there, and the people from all the country round flocked thither too, drawn by the gay spectacles connected with the presence of such a court and army. The Scotchmen disseminated their complaints thus among the English people, and finally the king and his council, finding indications of so extensive a disaffection, had a form of an oath prepared, which they required all the principal persons to take, acknowledging allegiance to Charles, and denying that they had any intelligence or correspondence with the enemy. The Scotchmen all took the oath very readily, though some of the English refused.

At any rate, the state of things was not such as to intimidate the Scotch, and lead them, as the king had hoped, to sue for peace. So he concluded to move on toward the borders. He went to Newcastle, and thence to Berwick. From Berwick he moved along the banks of the Tweed, which here forms the boundary between the two kingdoms, and, finding a suitable place for such a purpose, the king had his royal tent pitched, and his army encamped around him.

Now, as King Charles had undertaken to subdue the Scots by a show of force, it seems they concluded to defend themselves by a show too, though theirs was a cheaper and more simple contrivance than his. They advanced with about three thousand men to a place distant perhaps seven miles from the English camp. The king sent an army of five thousand men to attack them. The Scotch, in the mean time, collected great herds of cattle from all the country around, as the historians say, and arranged them behind their little army in such a way as to make the whole appear a vast body of soldiers. A troop of horsemen, who were the advanced part of the English army, came in sight of this formidable host first, and, finding their

numbers so much greater than they had anticipated, they fell back, and ordered the artillery and foot-soldiers who were coming up to retreat, and all together came back to the encampment. There were two or three military enterprises of similar character, in which nothing was done but to encourage the Scotch and dishearten the English. In fact, neither officers, soldiers, nor king wished to proceed to extremities. The officers and soldiers did not wish to fight the Scotch, and the king, knowing the state of his army, did not really dare to do it.

Finally, all the king's council advised him to give up the pretended contest, and to settle the difficulty by a compromise. Accordingly, in June, negotiations were commenced, and before the end of the month articles were signed. The king probably made the best terms he could, but it was universally considered that the Scots gained the victory. The king disbanded his army, and returned to London. The Scotch leaders went back to Edinburgh. Soon after this the Parliament and the General Assembly of the Church convened, and these bodies took the whole management of the realm into their own hands. They sent commissioners to London to see and confer with the king, and these commissioners seemed almost to assume the character of embassadors from a foreign state. These negotiations, and the course which affairs were taking in Scotland, soon led to new difficulties. The king found that he was losing his kingdom of Scotland altogether. It seemed, however, as if there was nothing that he could do to regain it. His reserved funds were gone, and his credit was exhausted. There was no resource left but to call a Parliament and ask for supplies. He might have known, however, that this would be useless, for there was so strong a fellow-feeling with the Scotch in their alleged grievances among the people of England, that he could not reasonably expect any response from the latter, in whatever way he might appeal to them.

7. The Earl Of Strafford

1621-1640

During the time that the king had been engaged in the attempt to govern England without Parliaments, he had, besides Laud, a very efficient co-operator, known in English history by the name of the Earl of Strafford. This title of Earl of Strafford was conferred upon him by the king as a reward for his services. His father's name was Wentworth. He was born in London, and the Christian name given to him was Thomas. He was educated at the University of Cambridge, and was much distinguished for his talents and his personal accomplishments. After finishing his education, he traveled for some time on the Continent, visiting foreign cities and courts, and studying the languages, manners, and customs of other nations. He returned at length to England. He was made a knight. His father died when he was about twenty-one, and left him a large fortune. He was about seven years older than King Charles, so that all these circumstances took place before the commencement of Charles's reign. For many years after this he was very extensively known in England as a gentleman of large fortune and great abilities, by the name of Sir Thomas Wentworth.

Sir Thomas Wentworth was a member of Parliament in those days, and in the contests between the king and the Parliament he took the side of Parliament. Charles used to maintain that *his* power alone was hereditary and sovereign; that the Parliament was his council; and that they had no powers or privileges except what he himself or his ancestors had granted and allowed them. Wentworth took very strong ground against this. He urged Parliament to maintain that their rights and privileges were inherent and hereditary as well as those of the king; that such powers as they possessed were their own, and were entirely independent of royal grant or permission; and that the king could no more encroach upon the privileges of Parliament, than Parliament upon the prerogatives of the king. This was in the beginning of the difficulties between the king and the Commons.

It will, perhaps, be recollected by the reader, that one of the plans which Charles adopted to weaken the opposition to him in Parliament was by appointing six of the leaders of this opposition to the office of sheriff in their several counties. And as the general theory of all monarchies is that the subjects are bound to obey and serve the king, these men were obliged to leave their seats in Parliament and go home, to serve as sheriffs. Charles and his council supposed that the rest would be more quiet and submissive when the leaders of the party opposed to him were taken away. But the effect was the reverse. The Commons were incensed at such a mode of interfering with their action, and became more hostile to the royal power than ever.

Wentworth himself, too, was made more determined in his opposition by this treatment. A short time after this, the king's plan of a forced loan was adopted, which has already been described; that is, a sum of money was assessed in the manner of a tax upon all the people of the kingdom, and each man was required to lend his proportion to the government. The king admitted that he had no right to make people *give* money without the action of Parliament, but claimed the right to require them to *lend* it. As Sir Thomas Wentworth was a man of large fortune, his share of the loan was considerable. He absolutely refused to pay it. The king then brought him before a court which was entirely under royal control, and he was condemned to be imprisoned. Knowing, however, that this claim on the part of the king was very doubtful, they mitigated the punishment by allowing him first a range of two miles around his place of confinement, and afterward they released him entirely.

He was chosen a member of Parliament again, and he returned to his seat more powerful and influential than ever. Buckingham, who had been his greatest enemy, was now dead, and the king, finding that he had great abilities and a spirit that would not yield to intimidation or force, concluded to try kindness and favors.

In fact, there are two different modes by which sovereigns in all ages and countries endeavor to neutralize the opposition of popular leaders. One is by intimidating them with threats and punishments, and the other buying them off with appointments and honors. Some of the king's high officers of state began to cultivate the acquaintance of Wentworth, and to pay him attentions and civilities. He could not but feel gratified with these indications of their regard. They complimented his talents and his powers, and represented to him that such abilities ought to be employed in the service of the state. Finally, the king conferred upon him the title of baron. Common gratitude for these marks of distinction and honor held him back from any violent opposition to the king. His enemies said he was bought off by honors and rewards. No doubt he was ambitious, and, like all other politicians, his supreme motive was love of consideration and honor. This was doubtless his motive in what he had done in behalf of the Parliament. But all that he could do as a popular leader in Parliament was to acquire a general ascendency over men's minds, and make himself a subject of fame and honor. All places of real authority were exclusively under the king's control, and he could only rise to such stations through the sovereign's favor. In a word, he could acquire only *influence* as a leader in Parliament, while the king could give him *power*.

Kings can exercise, accordingly, a great control over the minds of legislators by offering them office; and King Charles, after finding that his first advances to Wentworth were favorably received, appointed him one of his Privy Council. Wentworth accepted the office. His former friends considered that in doing this he was deserting them, and betraying the cause which he had at first espoused and defended. The country at large were much displeased with him, finding that he had forsaken their cause, and placed himself in a position to act against them.

Persons who change sides in politics or in religion are very apt to go from one extreme to another. Their former friends revile them, and they, in retaliation, act more and more energetically against them. It was so with Strafford. He gradually engaged more and more fully and earnestly in upholding the king. Finally, the king appointed him to a very high station, called the Presidency of the North. His office was to govern the whole north of England—of course, under the direction of the king and council. There were four counties under his jurisdiction, and the king gave him a commission which clothed him with enormous powers—powers greater, as all the people thought, than the king had any right to bestow.

Strafford proceeded to the north, and entered upon the government of his realm there, with a determination to carry out all the king's plans to the utmost. From being an ardent advocate of the rights of the people, as he was at the commencement of his career, he became a most determined and uncompromising supporter of the arbitrary power of the king. He insisted on the collection of money from the people, in all the ways that the king claimed the power to collect it by authority of his prerogative; and he was so strict and exacting in doing this, that he raised the revenue to four or five times what any of his predecessors had been able to collect. This, of course, pleased King Charles and his government extremely; for it was at a time during which the king was attempting to govern without a Parliament, and every accession to his funds was of extreme importance. Laud, too, the archbishop, was highly gratified with his exertions and his success, and the king looked upon Laud and Wentworth as the two most efficient supporters of his power. They were, in fact, the two most efficient promoters of his destruction.

Of course, the people of the north hated him. While he was earning the applause of the archbishop and the king, and entitling himself to new honors and increased power, he was sewing the seeds of the bitterest animosity in the hearts of the people every where. Still he enjoyed all the external marks of consideration and honor. The President of the North was a sort of king. He was clothed with great powers, and lived in great state and splendor. He had many attendants, and the great nobles of the land, who generally took Charles's side in the contests of the day, envied Wentworth's greatness and power, and applauded the energy and success of his administration.

Ireland was, at this time, in a disturbed and disordered state, and Laud proposed that Wentworth should be appointed by the king to the government of it. A great proportion of the inhabitants were Catholics, and were very little disposed to submit to Protestant rule. Wentworth was appointed lord deputy, and afterward lord lieutenant, which made him king of Ireland in all but the name. Every thing, of course, was done in the name of Charles. He carried the same energy into his government here that he had exhibited in the north of England. He improved the condition of the country astonishingly in respect to trade, to revenue, and to public order. But he governed in the most arbitrary manner, and he boasted that he had rendered the king as absolute a sovereign in Ireland as any prince in the world could be. Such a boast from a man who had once been a very prominent defender of the rights of the people against this very kind of sovereignty, was fitted to produce a feeling of universal exasperation and desire of revenge. The murmurs and muttered threats which filled the land, though suppressed, were very deep and very strong.

The king, however, and Laud, considered Wentworth as their most able and efficient co-adjutor; and when the difficulties in Scotland began to grow serious, they recalled him from Ireland, and put that country into the hands of another ruler. The king then advanced him to the rank of an earl. His title was the Earl of Strafford. As the subsequent parts of his history attracted more attention than those preceding his elevation to this earldom, he has been far more widely known among mankind by the name of Strafford than by his original name of Wentworth, which was, from this period, nearly forgotten.

To return now to the troubles in Scotland. The king found that it would be impossible to go on without supplies, and he accordingly concluded, on the whole, to call a Parliament. He was in serious trouble. Laud was in serious trouble too. He had been indefatigably engaged for many years in establishing Episcopacy all over England, and in putting down, by force of law, all disposition to dissent from it; and in attempting to produce, throughout the realm, one uniform system of Christian faith and worship. This was his idea of the perfection of religious order and right. He used to make an annual visitation to all the bishoprics in the realm; inquire into the usages which prevailed there; put a stop, so far as he could, to all irregularities; and confirm and establish, by the most decisive measures, the Episcopal authority. He sent in his report to the king of the results of his inquiries, asking the king's aid, where his own powers were insufficient, for the more full accomplishment of his plans. But, notwithstanding all this diligence and zeal, he found that he met with very partial success. The irregularities, as he called them, which he suppressed in one place, would break out in another; the disposition to throw off the dominion of bishops was getting more and more extensive and deeply seated; and now, the result of the religious revolution in Scotland, and of the general excitement which it produced in England, was to widen and extend this feeling more than ever.

He did not, however, give up the contest, He employed an able writer to draw up a defense of Episcopacy, as the true and scriptural form of Church government. The book, when first prepared, was moderate in its tone, and allowed that in some particular cases a Presbyterian

mode of government might be admissible; but Laud, in revising the book, struck out these concessions as unnecessary and dangerous, and placed Episcopacy in full and exclusive possession of the ground, as the divinely instituted and only admissible form of Church government and discipline. He caused this book to be circulated; but the attempt to reason with the refractory, after having failed in the attempt to coerce them, is not generally very successful. The archbishop, in his report to the king this year of the state of things throughout his province, represents the spirit of non-conformity to the Church of England as getting too strong for him to control without more efficient help from the civil power; but whether it would be wise, he added, to undertake any more effectual coercion in the present distracted state of the kingdom, he left it for the king to decide.

Laud proposed that the council should recommend to the king the calling of a Parliament. At the same time, they passed a resolution that, in case the Parliament "should prove peevish, and refuse to grant supplies, they would sustain the king in the resort to extraordinary measures." This was regarded as a threat, and did not help to prepossess the members favorably in regard to the feeling with which the king was to meet them. The king ordered the Parliament to be elected in December, but did not call them together until April. In the mean time, he went on raising an army, so as to have his military preparations in readiness. He, however, appointed a new set of officers to the command of this army, neglecting those who were in command before, as he had found them so little disposed to act efficiently in his cause. He supplied the leader's place with Strafford. This change produced very extensive murmurs of dissatisfaction, which, added to all the other causes of complaint, made the times look very dark and stormy.

The Parliament assembled in April. The king went into the House of Lords, the Commons being, as usual, summoned to the bar. He addressed them as follows:

"My Lords and gentlemen,—There was never a King who had a more great and weighty Cause to call his People together than myself. I will not trouble you with the particulars. I have informed my lord keeper, and now command him to speak, and I desire your Attention."

The keeper referred to was the keeper of the king's seals, who was, of course, a great officer of state. He made a speech, informing the houses, in general terms, of the king's need of money, but said that it was not necessary for him to explain minutely the monarch's plans, as they were exclusively his own concern. We may as well quote his words, in order to show in what light the position and province of a British Parliament was considered in those days.

"His majesty's kingly resolutions," said the lord keeper, "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 Phaeton, that the distance between Sovereignty and Subjection should not bar you of that filial freedom of Access to his Person and Counsels; only let us beware how, with the Son of Clymene, we aim not at the guiding of the Chariot, as if that were the only Testimony of Fatherly Affection; and let us remember, that though the King sometimes lays by the Beams and Rays of Majesty, he never lays by Majesty itself."

When the keeper had finished his speech, the king confirmed it by saying that he had exaggerated nothing, and the houses were left to their deliberations. Instead of proceeding to the business of raising money, they commenced an inquiry into the grievances, as they called them—that is, all the unjust acts and the maladministration of the government, of which the country had been complaining for the ten years during which there had been an intermission of Parliaments. The king did all in his power to arrest this course of procedure. He sent them message after message, urging them to leave these things, and take up first the question of

supplies. He then sent a message to the House of Peers, requesting them to interpose and exert their influence to lead the Commons to act. The Peers did so. The Commons sent them back a reply that their interference in the business of supply, which belonged to the Commons alone, was a breach of their privileges. “And,” they added, “therefore, the Commons desire their lordships in their wisdom to find out some way for the reparation of their privileges broken by that act, and to prevent the like infringement in future.”

Thus repulsed on every hand, the king gave up the hope of accomplishing any thing through the action of the House of Commons, and he suddenly determined to dissolve Parliament. The session had continued only about three weeks. In dissolving the Parliament the king took no notice of the Commons whatever, but addressed the Lords alone. The Commons and the whole country were incensed at such capricious treatment of the national Legislature.

The king and his council tried all summer to get the army ready to be put in motion. The great difficulty, of course, was want of funds. The *Convocation*, which was the great council of the Church, and which was accustomed in those days to sit simultaneously with Parliament, continued their session afterward in this case, and raised some money for the king. The nobles of the court subscribed a considerable amount, also, which they lent him. They wished to sustain him in his contest with the Commons on their own account, and then, besides, they felt a personal interest in him, and a sympathy for him in the troubles which were thickening around him.

The summer months passed away in making the preparations and getting the various bodies of troops ready, and the military stores collected at the place of rendezvous in York and Newcastle. The Scots, in the mean time, had been assembling their forces near the borders, and, being somewhat imboldened by their success in the previous campaign, crossed the frontier, and advanced boldly to meet the forces of the king.

They published a manifesto, declaring that they were not entering England with any hostile intent toward their sovereign, but were only coming to present to him their humble petitions for a redress of their grievances, which they said they were sure he would graciously receive as soon as he had opportunity to learn from them how great their grievances had been. They respectfully requested that the people of England would allow them to pass safely and without molestation through the land, and promised to conduct themselves with the utmost propriety and decorum. This promise they kept. They avoided molesting the inhabitants in any way, and purchased fairly every thing they consumed. When the English officers learned that the Scotch had crossed the Tweed, they sent on immediately to London, to the king, urging him to come north at once, and join the army, with all the remaining forces at his command. The king did so, but it was too late. He arrived at York; from York he went northward to reach the van of his army, which had been posted at Newcastle, but on his way he was met by messengers saying that they were in full retreat, and that the Scotch had got possession of Newcastle.

The circumstances of the battle were these. Newcastle is upon the Tyne. The banks at Newcastle are steep and high, but about four miles above the town is a place called Newburn, where was a meadow near the river, and a convenient place to cross. The Scotch advanced in a very slow and orderly manner to Newburn, and encamped there. The English sent a detachment from Newcastle to arrest their progress. The Scotch begged them not to interrupt their march, as they were only going to *present petitions to the king*! The English general, of course, paid no attention to this pretext. The Scotch army then attacked them and soon put them to flight. The routed English soldiers fled to Newcastle, and were there joined by all that portion of the army which was in Newcastle, in a rapid retreat. The Scotch took possession of

the town, but conducted themselves in a very orderly manner, and bought and paid for every thing they used.

The poor king was now in a situation of the most imminent and terrible danger. Rebel subjects were in full possession of one kingdom, and were now advancing at the head of victorious armies into the other. He himself had entirely alienated the affections of a large portion of his subjects, and had openly quarreled with and dismissed the Legislature. He had no funds, and had exhausted all possible means of raising funds. He was half distracted with the perplexities and dangers of his position.

His deciding on dissolving Parliament in the spring was a hasty step, and he bitterly regretted it the moment the deed was done. He wished to recall it. He deliberated several days about the possibility of summoning the same members to meet again, and constituting them again a Parliament. But the lawyers insisted that this could not be done. A dissolution was a dissolution. The Parliament, once dissolved, was no more. It could not be brought to life again. There must be new orders to the country to proceed to new elections. To do this at once would have been too humiliating for the king. He now found, however, that the necessity for it could no longer be postponed. There was such a thing in the English history as a council of peers alone, called in a sudden emergency which did not allow of time for the elections necessary to constitute the House of Commons. Charles called such a council of peers to meet at York, and they immediately assembled.

In the mean time the Scotch sent embassadors to York, saying to the king that they were advancing to lay their grievances before him! They expressed great sorrow and regret at the victory which they had been compelled to gain over some forces that had attempted to prevent them from getting access to their sovereign. The king laid this communication before the lords, and asked their advice what to do; and also asked them to counsel him how he should provide funds to keep his army together until a Parliament could be convened. The lords advised him to appoint commissioners to meet the Scotch, and endeavor to compromise the difficulties; and to send to the city of London, asking that corporation to lend him a small sum until Parliament could be assembled.

This advice was followed. A temporary treaty was made with the rebels, although making a treaty with rebels is perhaps the most humiliating thing that a hereditary sovereign is ever compelled to do. The Earl of Strafford was, however, entirely opposed to this policy. He urged the king most earnestly not to give up the contest without a more decisive struggle. He represented to him the danger of beginning to yield to the torrent which he now began to see would overwhelm them all if it was allowed to have its way. He tried to persuade the king that the Scots might yet be driven back, and that it would be possible to get along without a Parliament. He dreaded a Parliament. The king, however, and his other advisers, thought that they must yield a little to the storm. Strafford then wanted to be allowed to return to his post in Ireland, where he thought that he should probably be safe from the terrible enmity which he must have known that he had awakened in England, and which he thought a Parliament would concentrate and bring upon his devoted head. But the king would not consent to this. He assured Strafford that if a Parliament should assemble, he would take care that they should not hurt a hair of his head. Unfortunate monarch! How little he foresaw that that very Parliament, from whose violence he thus promised to defend his favorite servant so completely as to insure him from the slightest injury, would begin by taking off his favorite’s head, and end with taking off his own!

8. Downfall Of Strafford And Laud

1640-1641

The Parliament assembled in November, 1640. The king proceeded to London to attend it. He left Strafford in command of the army at York. Active hostilities had been suspended, as a sort of temporary truce had been concluded with the Scots, to prepare the way for a final treaty. Strafford had been entirely opposed to this, being still full of energy and courage. The king, however, began to feel alarmed. He went to London to meet the Parliament which he had summoned, but he was prepared to meet them in a very different spirit from that which he had manifested on former occasions. He even gave up all the external circumstances of pomp and parade with which the opening of Parliament had usually been attended. He had been accustomed to go to the House of Lords in state, with a numerous retinue and great parade. Now he was conveyed from his palace along the river in a barge, in a quiet and unostentatious manner. His opening speech, too, was moderate and conciliatory. In a word, it was pretty evident to the Commons that the proud and haughty spirit of their royal master was beginning to be pretty effectually humbled.

Of course, now, in proportion as the king should falter, the Commons would grow bold. The House immediately began to attack Laud and Strafford in their speeches. It is the theory of the British Constitution that the king can do no wrong; whatever criminality at any time attaches to the acts of his administration, belongs to his *advisers*, not to himself. The speakers condemned, in most decided terms, the arbitrary and tyrannical course which the government had pursued during the intermission of Parliaments, but charged it all, not to the king, but to Strafford and Laud. Strafford had been, as they considered, the responsible person in civil and military affairs, and Laud in those of the Church. These speeches were made to try the temper of the House and of the country, and see whether there was hostility enough to Laud and Strafford in the House and in the country, and boldness enough in the expression of it, to warrant their impeachment.

The attacks thus made in the House against the two ministers were made very soon. Within a week after the opening of Parliament, one of the members, after declaiming a long time against the encroachments and tyranny of Archbishop Laud, whose title, according to English usage, was “his Grace,” said he hoped that, before the year ran round, his grace would either have more grace or no grace at all; “for,” he added, “our manifold griefs do fill a mighty and vast circumference, yet in such a manner that from every part our lines of sorrow do meet in him, and point at him the center, from whence our miseries in this Church, and many of them in the Commonwealth, do flow.” He said, also, that if they must submit to a pope, he would rather obey one that was as far off as the Tiber, than to have him come as near as the Thames.

Similar denunciations were made against Strafford, and they awakened no opposition. On the contrary, it was found that the feeling of hostility against both the ministers was so universal and so strong, that the leaders began to think seriously of an impeachment on a charge of high treason. High treason is the greatest crime known to the English law, and the punishment for it, especially in the case of a peer of the realm, is very terrible. This punishment was generally inflicted by what was called a bill of attainder, which brought with it the worst of penalties. It implied the perfect destruction of the criminal in every sense. He was to lose his life by having his head cut off upon a block. His body, according to the strict letter of the law, was to be mutilated in a manner too shocking to be here described. His children were disinherited, and his property all forfeited. This was considered as the consequence of

the *attainting* of the blood, which rendered it corrupt, and incapable of transmitting an inheritance. In fact, it was the intention of the bill of attainder to brand the wretched object of it with complete and perpetual infamy.

The proceedings, too, in the impeachment and trial of a high minister of state, were always very imposing and solemn. The impeachment must be moved by the Commons, and tried by the Peers. A peer of the realm could be tried by no inferior tribunal. When the Commons proposed bringing articles of impeachment against an officer of state, they sent first a messenger to the House of Peers to ask them to arrest the person whom they intended to accuse, and to hold him for trial until they should have their articles prepared. The House of Peers would comply with this request, and a time would be appointed for the trial. The Commons would frame the charges, and appoint a certain number of their members to manage the prosecution. They would collect evidence, and get every thing ready for the trial. When the time arrived, the chamber of the House of Peers would be arranged as a court room, or they would assemble in some other hall more suitable for the purpose, the prisoner would be brought to the bar, the commissioners on the part of the Commons would appear with their documents and their evidence, persons of distinction would assemble to listen to the proceedings, and the trial would go on.

It was in accordance with this routine that the Commons commenced proceedings against the Earl of Strafford, very soon after the opening of the session, by appointing a committee to inquire whether there was any just cause to accuse him of treason. The committee reported to the House that there was just cause. The House then appointed a messenger to go to the House of Lords, saying that they had found that there was just cause to accuse the Earl of Strafford of high treason, and to ask that they would sequester him from the House, as the phrase was, and hold him in custody till they could prepare the charges and the evidence against him. All these proceedings were in secret session, in order that Strafford might not get warning and fly. The Commons then nearly all accompanied their messenger to the House of Lords, to show how much in earnest they were. The Lords complied with the request. They caused the earl to be arrested and committed to the charge of the *usher of the black rod*, and sent two officers to the Commons to inform them that they had done so.

The usher of the black rod is a very important officer of the House of Lords. He is a sort of sheriff, to execute the various behests of the House, having officers to serve under him for this purpose. The badge of his office has been, for centuries, a black rod with a golden lion at the upper end, which is borne before him as the emblem of his authority. A peer of the realm, when charged with treason, is committed to the custody of this officer. In this case he took the Earl of Strafford under his charge, and kept him at his house, properly guarded. The Commons went on preparing the articles of impeachment.

This was in November. During the winter following the parties struggled one against another, Laud doing all in his power to strengthen the position of the king, and to avert the dangers which threatened himself and Strafford. The animosity, however, which was felt against him, was steadily increasing. The House of Commons did many things to discountenance the rites and usages of the Episcopal Church, and to make them odious. The excitement among the populace increased, and mobs began to interfere with the service in some of the churches in London and Westminster. At last a mob of five hundred persons assembled around the archbishop’s palace at Lambeth. This palace, as has been before stated, is on the bank of the Thames, just above London, opposite to Westminster. The mob were there for two hours, beating at the doors and windows in an attempt to force admission, but in vain. The palace was very strongly guarded, and the mob were at length repulsed. One of the ringleaders was taken and hanged.

One would have thought that this sort of persecution would have awakened some sympathy in the archbishop's favor; but it was too late. He had been bearing down so mercilessly himself upon the people of England for so many years, suppressing, by the severest measures, all expressions of discontent, that the hatred had become entirely uncontrollable. Its breaking out at one point only promoted its breaking out in another. The House of Commons sent a messenger to the House of Lords, as they had done in the case of Strafford, saying that they had found good cause to accuse the Archbishop of Canterbury of treason, and asked that he might be sequestered from the House, and held in custody till they could prepare their charges, and the evidence to sustain them.

The archbishop was at that time in his seat. He was directed to withdraw. Before leaving the chamber he asked leave to say a few words. Permission was granted, and he said in substance that he was truly sorry to have awakened in the hearts of his countrymen such a degree of displeasure as was obviously excited against him. He was most unhappy to have lived to see the day in which he was made subject to a charge of treason. He begged their lordships to look at the whole course of his life, and he was sure that they would be convinced that there was not a single member of the House of Commons who could really think him guilty of such a charge.

Here one of the lords interrupted him to say that by speaking in that manner he was uttering slander against the House of Commons, charging them with solemnly bringing accusations which they did not believe to be true. The archbishop then said, that if the charge must be entertained, he hoped that he should have a fair trial, according to the ancient Parliamentary usages of the realm. Another of the lords interrupted him again, saying that such a remark was improper, as it was not for him to prescribe the manner in which the proceedings should be conducted. He then withdrew, while the House should consider what course to take. Presently he was summoned back to the bar of the House, and there committed to the charge of the usher of the black rod. The usher conducted him to his house, and he was kept there for ten weeks in close confinement.

At last the time for the trial of Strafford came on, while Laud was in confinement. The interest felt in the trial was deep and universal. There were three kingdoms, as it were, combined against one man. Various measures were resorted to by the Commons to diminish the possibility that the accused should escape conviction. Some of them have since been thought to be unjust and cruel. For example, several persons who were strong friends of Strafford, and who, as was supposed, might offer testimony in his favor, were charged with treason and confined in prison until the trial was over. The Commons appointed thirteen persons to manage the prosecution. These persons were many months preparing the charges and the evidence, keeping their whole proceedings profoundly secret during all the time. At last the day approached, and Westminster Hall was fitted up and prepared to be the scene of the trial.

Westminster Hall has the name of being the largest room whose roof is not supported by pillars, in Europe. It stands in the region of the palaces and the Houses of Parliament at Westminster, and has been for seven centuries the scene of pageants and ceremonies without number. It is said that ten thousand persons have been accommodated in it at a banquet.[5] This great room was fitted up for the trial. Seats were provided for both houses of Parliament; for the Commons were to be present as accusers, and the Lords as the court. There was, as usual, a chair of state, or throne, for the king, as a matter of form. There was also a private gallery,

[5] It is two hundred and seventy feet long, seventy-five wide, and ninety high.

screened from the observation of the spectators, where the king and queen could sit and witness the proceedings. They attended during the whole trial.

One would have supposed that the deliberate solemnity of these preparations would have calmed the animosity of Strafford's enemies, and led them to be satisfied at last with something less than his utter destruction. But this seems not to have been the effect. The terrible hostilities which had been gathering strength so long, seemed to rage all the more fiercely now that there was a prospect of their gratification. And yet it was very hard to find any thing sufficiently distinct and tangible against the accused to warrant his conviction. The commissioners who had been appointed to manage the case divided the charges among them. When the trial commenced, they stated and urged these charges in succession. Strafford, who had not known beforehand what they were to be, replied to them, one by one, with calmness and composure, and yet with great eloquence and power. The extraordinary abilities which he had shown through the whole course of his life, seemed to shine out with increased splendor amid the awful solemnities which were now darkening its close. He was firm and undaunted, and yet respectful and submissive. The natural excitements of the occasion; the imposing assembly; the breathless attention; the magnificent hall; the consciousness that the opposition which he was struggling to stem before that great tribunal was the combined hostility of three kingdoms, and that the torrent was flowing from a reservoir which had been accumulating for many years; and that the whole civilized world were looking on with great interest to watch the result; and perhaps, more than all, that he was in the unseen presence of his sovereign, whom he was accustomed to look upon as the greatest personage on earth; these, and the other circumstances of the scene, filled his mind with strong emotions, and gave animation, and energy, and a lofty eloquence to all that he said.

The trial lasted eighteen days, the excitement increasing consistently to the end. There was nothing proved which could with any propriety be considered as treason. He had managed the government, it is true, with one set of views in respect to the absolute prerogatives and powers of the king, while those who now were in possession of power held opposite views, and they considered it a matter of necessity that he should die. The charge of treason was a pretext to bring the case somewhat within the reach of the formalities of law. It is one of the necessary incidents of all governmental systems founded on force, and not on the consent of the governed, that when great and fundamental questions of policy arise, they often bring the country to a crisis in which there can be no real settlement of the dispute without the absolute destruction of one party or the other. It was so now, as the popular leaders supposed. They had determined that stern necessity required that Laud and Strafford must die; and the only object of going through the formality of a trial was to soften the violence of the proceeding a little, by doing all that could be done toward establishing a legal justification of the deed.

The trial, as has been said, lasted eighteen days. During all this time, the leaders were not content with simply urging the proceedings forward energetically in Westminster Hall. They were maneuvering and managing in every possible way to secure the final vote. But, notwithstanding this, Strafford's defense was so able, and the failure to make out the charge of treason against him was so clear, that it was doubtful what the result would be. Accordingly, without waiting for the decision of the Peers on the impeachment, a bill of attainder against the earl was brought forward in the House of Commons. This bill of attainder was passed by a large majority—yeas 204, nays 59. It was then sent to the House of Lords. The Lords were very unwilling to pass it.

While they were debating it, the king sent a message to them to say that in his opinion the earl had not been guilty of treason, or of any attempt to subvert the laws; and that several things which had been alleged in the trial, and on which the bill of attainder chiefly rested,

were not true. He was willing, however, if it would satisfy the enemies of the earl, to have him convicted of a misdemeanor, and made incapable of holding any public office from that time; but he protested against his being punished by a bill of attainder on a charge of treason.

This interposition of the king in Strafford's favor awakened loud expressions of displeasure. They called it an interference with the action of one of the houses of Parliament. The enemies of Strafford created a great excitement against him out of doors. They raised clamorous calls for his execution, among the populace. The people made black lists of the names of persons who were in the earl's favor, and posted them up in public places, calling such persons Straffordians, and threatening them with public vengeance. The Lords, who would have been willing to have saved Strafford's life if they had dared, began to find that they could not do so without endangering their own. When at last the vote came to be taken in the House of Lords, out of eighty members who had been present at the trial, only forty-six were present to vote, and the bill was passed by a vote of thirty-five to eleven. The thirty-four who were absent were probably all against the bill, but were afraid to appear.

The responsibility now devolved upon the king. An act of Parliament must be signed by the king. He really enacts it. The action of the two houses is, in theory, only a recommendation of the measure to him. The king was determined on no account to give his consent to Strafford's condemnation. He, however, laid the subject before his Privy Council. They, after deliberating upon it, recommended that he should sign the bill. Nothing else, they said, could allay the terrible storm which was raging, and the king ought to prefer the peace and safety of the realm to the life of any one man, however innocent he might be. The populace, in the mean time, crowded around the king's palace at Whitehall, calling out "*Justice! justice!*" and filling the air with threats and imprecations; and preachers in their pulpits urged the necessity of punishing offenders, and descanted on the iniquity which those magistrates committed who allowed great transgressors to escape the penalty due for their crimes.

The queen, too, was alarmed. She begged the king, with tears, not any longer to attempt to withstand the torrent which threatened to sweep them all away in its fury. While things were in this state, Charles received a letter from Strafford in the Tower, expressing his consent, and even his request, that the king should yield and sign the bill.

The Tower of London is very celebrated in English history. Though called simply by the name of the Tower, it is, in fact, as will be seen by the engraving in the frontispiece, an extended group of buildings, which are of all ages, sizes, and shapes, and covering an extensive area. It is situated below the city of London, having been originally built as a fortification for the defense of the city. Its use for this purpose has, however, long since passed away.

Strafford's letter to the king.

"To set your Majesty's conscience at Liberty, I do most humbly beseech your Majesty for Prevention of Evils, which may happen by your Refusal, to pass this Bill. Sir, My Consent shall more acquit you herein to God, than all the World can do besides; To a willing Man there is no Injury done; and as by God's Grace, I forgive all the World, with a calmness and Meekness of infinite Contentment to my dislodging Soul, so, Sir, to you I can give the Life of this World with all the cheerfulness imaginable, in the just Acknowledgment of your exceeding Favors; and only beg that in your Goodness you would vouchsafe to cast your gracious Regard upon my poor Son and his three sisters, less or more, and no otherwise than as their unfortunate Father may hereafter appear more or less guilty of this Death. God long preserve your Majesty."

On receiving this letter the king caused the bill to be signed. He would not do it with his own hands, but commissioned two of his council to do it in his name. He then sent a messenger to Strafford to announce the decision, and to inform him that he must prepare to die. The messenger observed that the earl seemed surprised; and after hearing that the king had signed the bill, he quoted, in a tone of despair, the words of Scripture, “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the sons of men, for in them is no salvation.” Historians have thought it strange that Strafford should have expressed this disappointment when he had himself requested the king to resist the popular will no longer; and they infer from it that he was not sincere in the request, but supposed that the king would regard it as an act of nobleness and generosity on his part, that would render him more unwilling than ever to consent to his destruction, and that he was accordingly surprised and disappointed when he found that the king had taken him at his word. It is said, however, by some historians, that this letter was a forgery, and that it was written by some of Strafford’s enemies to lead the king to resist no longer. The reader, by perusing the letter again, can perhaps form some judgment whether such a document was more likely to have been fabricated by enemies, or really written by the unhappy prisoner himself.

The king did not entirely give up the hope of saving his friend, even after the bill of attainder was signed. He addressed the following message to the House of Lords.

My Lords,—I did yesterday satisfy the Justice of this Kingdom by passing the Bill of Attainder against the Earl of Strafford: but Mercy being as inherent and inseparable to a King as Justice, I desire at this time in some measure to show that likewise, by suffering that unfortunate Man to fulfill the natural course of his Life in a close Imprisonment: yet so, if ever he make the least Offer to escape, or offer directly or indirectly to meddle in any sort of public Business, especially with Me either by Message or Letter, it shall cost him his Life without farther Process. This, if it may be done without the Discontentment of my People, will be an unspeakable Contentment to me.

“I will not say that your complying with me in this my intended Mercy, shall make me more willing, but certainly ‘twill make me more cheerful in granting your just Grievances: But if no less than his Life can satisfie my People, I must say Let justice be done. Thus again recommending the consideration of my Intention to you, I rest,

“Your Unalterable and Affectionate Friend,

“Charles R.”

The Lords were inexorable. Three days from the time of signing the bill, arrangements were made for conducting the prisoner to the scaffold. Laud, who had been his friend and fellow-laborer in the king’s service, was confined also in the Tower, awaiting his turn to come to trial. They were not allowed to visit each other, but Strafford sent word to Laud requesting him to be at his window at the time when he was to pass, to bid him farewell, and to give him his blessing. Laud accordingly appeared at the window, and Strafford, as he passed, asked for the prelate’s prayers and for his blessing. The old man, for Laud was now nearly seventy years of age, attempted to speak, but he could not command himself sufficiently to express what he wished to say, and he fell back into the arms of his attendants. “God protect you,” said Strafford, and walked calmly on.

He went to the place of execution with the composure and courage of a hero. He spoke freely to those around him, asserted his innocence, sent messages to his absent friends, and said he was ready and willing to die. The scaffold, in such executions as this, is a platform slightly raised, with a block and chairs upon it, all covered with black cloth. A part of the dress has to be removed just before the execution, in order that the neck of the sufferer may be fully

exposed to the impending blow. Strafford made these preparations himself, and said, as he did so, that he was in no wise afraid of death, but that he should lay his head upon that block as cheerfully as he ever did upon his pillow.

Charles found his position in no respect improved by the execution of Strafford. The Commons, finding their influence and power increasing, grew more and more bold, and were from this time so absorbed in the events connected with the progress of their quarrel with the king, that they left Laud to pine in his prison for about four years. They then found time to act over again the solemn and awful scene of a trial for treason before the House of Peers, the passing of a bill of attainder, and an execution on Tower Hill. Laud was over seventy years of age when the ax fell upon him. He submitted to his fate with a calmness and heroism in keeping with his age and his character. He said, in fact, that none of his enemies could be more desirous to send him out of life than he was to go.

9. Civil War

1641-1646

The way in which the king came at last to a final rupture with Parliament was this. The victory which the Commons gained in the case of Strafford had greatly increased their confidence and their power, and the king found, for some months afterward, that instead of being satisfied with the concessions he had made, they were continually demanding more. The more he yielded, the more they encroached. They grew, in a word, bolder and bolder, in proportion to their success. They considered themselves doing the state a great and good service by disarming tyranny of its power. The king, on the other hand, considered them as undermining all the foundations of good government, and as depriving him of personal rights, the most sacred and solemn that could vest in any human being.

It will be recollected that on former occasions, when the king had got into contention with a Parliament, he had dissolved it, and either attempted to govern without one, or else had called for a new election, hoping that the new members would be more compliant. But he could not dissolve the Parliament now. They had provided against this danger. At the time of the trial of Strafford, they brought in a bill into the Commons providing that thenceforth the Houses could not be prorogued or dissolved without their own consent. The Commons, of course, passed the bill very readily. The Peers were more reluctant, but they did not dare to reject it. The king was extremely unwilling to sign the bill; but, amid the terrible excitements and dangers of that trial, he was overborne by the influences of danger and intimidation which surrounded him. He signed the bill. Of course the Commons were, thereafter, their own masters. However dangerous or destructive the king might consider their course of conduct to be, he could now no longer arrest it, as heretofore, by a dissolution.

He went on, therefore, till the close of 1641, yielding slowly and reluctantly, and with many struggles, but still all the time yielding, to the resistless current which bore him along. At last he resolved to yield no longer. After retreating so long, he determined suddenly and desperately to turn back and attack his enemies. The whole world looked on with astonishment at such a sudden change of his policy.

The measure which he resorted to was this. He determined to select a number of the most efficient and prominent men in Parliament, who had been leaders in the proceedings against him, and demand their arrest, imprisonment, and trial, on a charge of high treason. The king was influenced to do this partly by the advice of the queen, and of the ladies of the court, and other persons who did not understand how deep and strong the torrent was which they thus urged him to attempt to stem. They thought that if he would show a little courage and energy in facing these men, they would yield in their turn, and that their boldness and success was owing, in a great measure, to the king's want of spirit in resisting them. "Strike boldly at them," said they; "seize the leaders; have them tried, and condemned, and executed. Threaten the rest with the same fate; and follow up these measures with energetic and decisive action, and you will soon make a change in the aspect of affairs."

The king adopted this policy, and he did make a change in the aspect of affairs, but not such a change as his advisers had anticipated. The Commons were thrown suddenly into a state of astonishment one day by the appearance of a king's officer in the House, who rose and read articles of a charge of treason against five of the most influential and popular members. The officer asked that a committee should be appointed to hear the evidence against them which the king was preparing. The Commons, on hearing this, immediately voted, that if any person

should attempt even to seize the papers of the persons accused, it should be lawful for them to resist such an attempt by every means in their power.

The next day another officer appeared at the bar of the House of Commons, and spoke as follows. “I am commanded by the king’s majesty, my master, upon my allegiance, that I should come to the House of Commons, and require of Mr. Speaker five gentlemen, members of the House of Commons; and those gentlemen being delivered, I am commanded to arrest them in his majesty’s name, on a charge of high treason.” The Commons, on hearing this demand, voted that they would take it into consideration.

The king’s friends and advisers urged him to follow the matter up vigorously. Every thing depended, they said, on firmness and decision. The next day, accordingly, the king determined to go himself to the House, and make the demand in person. A lady of the court, who was made acquainted with this plan, sent notice of it to the House. In going, the king took his guard with him, and several personal attendants. The number of soldiers was said to be five hundred. He left this great retinue at the door, and he himself entered the House. The Commons, when they heard that he was coming, had ordered the five members who were accused to withdraw. They went out just before the king came in. The king advanced to the speaker’s chair, took his seat, and made the following address.

“Gentlemen,—I am sorry for this occasion of coming unto you. Yesterday I sent a Sergeant at Arms upon a very important occasion to apprehend some that by my Command were accused of High Treason; whereunto I did expect Obedience and not a message. And I must declare unto you here, that albeit no king that ever was in England shall be more careful of your Privileges, to maintain them to the uttermost of his Power, than I shall be; yet you must know that in cases of Treason no Person hath a Privilege; and therefore I am come to know if any of those Persons that were accused are here. For I must tell you, Gentlemen, that so long as these Persons that I have accused (for no slight Crime, but for Treason) are here, I can not expect that this House will be in the right way that I do heartily wish it. Therefore I am come to tell you that I must have them wherever I find them.”

After looking around, and finding that the members in question were not in the hall, he continued:

“Well! since I see the Birds are flown, I do expect from you that you shall send them unto me as soon as they return hither. But I assure you, on the Word of a King, I never did intend any Force, but shall proceed against them in a legal and fair way, for I never meant any other.

“I will trouble you no more, but tell you I do expect, as soon as they come to the House, you will send them to me, otherwise I must take my own course to find them.”

The king’s coming thus into the House of Commons, and demanding in person that they should act according to his instructions, was a very extraordinary circumstance—perhaps unparalleled in English history. It produced the greatest excitement. When he had finished his address, he turned to the speaker and asked him where those men were. He had his guard ready at the door to seize them. It is difficult for us, in this country, to understand fully to how severe a test this sudden question put the presence of mind and courage of the speaker; for we can not realize the profound and awful deference which was felt in those days for the command of a king. The speaker gained great applause for the manner in which he stood the trial. He fell upon his knees before the great potentate who had addressed him, and said, “I have, sir, neither eyes to see, nor tongue to speak, in this place, but as the House is pleased to direct me, whose servant I am. And I humbly ask pardon that I can not give any other answer to what your majesty is pleased to demand of me.”

The House was immediately in a state of great excitement and confusion. They called out "*Privilege! privilege!*" meaning that their privileges were violated. They immediately adjourned. News of the affair spread every where with the greatest rapidity, and produced universal and intense excitement. The king's friends were astonished at such an act of rashness and folly, which, it is said, only *one* of the king's advisers knew anything about, and he immediately fled. The five members accused went that night into the city of London, and called on the government and people of London to protect them. The people armed themselves. In a word, the king found at night that he had raised a very threatening and terrible storm.

The Commons met the next morning, but did not attempt to transact business. They simply voted that it was useless for them to proceed with their deliberations, while exposed to such violations of their rights. They appointed a committee of twenty-four to inquire into and report the circumstances of the king's intrusion into their councils, and to consider how this breach of their privileges could be repaired. They ordered this committee to sit in the city of London, where they might hope to be safe from such interruptions, and then the House adjourned for a week, to await the result of the committee's deliberations.

The committee went to London. In the mean time, news went all over the kingdom that the House of Commons had been compelled to suspend its sittings on account of an illegal and unwarrantable interference with their proceedings on the part of the king. The king was alarmed; but those who had advised him to adopt this measure told him that he must not falter now. He must persevere and carry his point, or all would be lost.

He accordingly did persevere. He brought troops and arms to his palace at Whitehall, to be ready to defend it in case of attack. He sent in to London, and ordered the lord mayor to assemble the city authorities at the Guildhall, which is the great city hall of London; and then, with a retinue of noblemen, he went in to meet them. The people shouted, "*Privileges of Parliament! privileges of Parliament!*" as he passed along. Some called out, "*To your tents, O Israel!*" which was the ancient Hebrew cry of rebellion. The king, however, persevered. When he reached the Guildhall, he addressed the city authorities thus:

"Gentlemen,—I am come to demand such Persons as I have already accused of High Treason, and do believe are shrouded in the City. I hope no good Man will keep them from Me. Their Offenses are Treason and Misdemeanors of a high Nature. I desire your Assistance, that they may be brought to a legal Trial." Three days after this the king issued a proclamation, addressed to all magistrates and officers of justice every where, to arrest the accused members and carry them to the Tower.

In the mean time, the committee of twenty-four continued their session in London, examining witnesses and preparing their report. When the time arrived for the House of Commons to meet again, which was on the 11th of January, the city made preparations to have the committee escorted in an imposing manner from the Guildhall to Westminster. A vast amount of the intercommunication and traffic between different portions of the city then, as now, took place upon the river, though in those days it was managed by watermen, who rowed small wherries to and fro. Innumerable steamboats take the place of the wherries at the present day, and stokers and engineers have superseded the watermen. The watermen were then, however, a large and formidable body, banded together, like the other trades of London, in one great organization. This great company turned out on this occasion, and attended the committee in barges on the river, while the military companies of the city marched along the streets upon the land. The committee themselves went in barges on the water, and all London flocked to see the spectacle. The king, hearing of these arrangements, was alarmed for his

personal safety, and left his palace at Whitehall to go to Hampton Court, which was a little way out of town.

The committee, after entering the House, reported that the transaction which they had been considering constituted a high breach of the privileges of the House, and was a seditious act, tending to a subversion of the peace of the kingdom; and that the privileges of Parliament, so violated and broken, could not be sufficiently vindicated, unless his majesty would be pleased to inform them who advised him to do such a deed.

The king was more and more seriously alarmed. He found that the storm of public odium and indignation was too great for him to withstand. He began to fear for his own safety more than ever. He removed from Hampton Court to Windsor Castle, a stronger place, and more remote from London than Hampton Court; and he now determined to give up the contest. He sent a message, therefore, to the House, saying that, on further reflection, since so many persons had doubts whether his proceedings against the five members were consistent with the privileges of Parliament, he would waive them, and the whole subject might rest until the minds of men were more composed, and then, if he proceeded against the accused members at all, he would do so in a manner to which no exception could be taken. He said, also, he would henceforth be as careful of their privileges as he should be of his own life or crown.

Thus he acknowledged himself vanquished in the struggle, but the acknowledgment came too late to save him. The excitement increased, and spread in every direction. The party of the king and that of the Parliament disputed for a few months about these occurrences, and others growing out of them, and then each began to maneuver and struggle to get possession of the military power of the kingdom. The king, finding himself not safe in the vicinity of London, retreated to York, and began to assemble and organize his followers. Parliament sent him a declaration that if he did not disband the forces which he was assembling, they should be compelled to provide measures for securing the peace of the kingdom. The king replied by proclamations calling upon his subjects to join his standard. In a word, before midsummer, the country was plunged in the horrors of civil war.

A civil war, that is, a war between two parties in the same country, is generally far more savage and sanguinary than any other. The hatred and the animosities which it creates, ramify throughout the country, and produce universal conflict and misery. If there were a war between France and England, there might be one, or perhaps two invading armies of Frenchmen attempting to penetrate into the interior. All England would be united against them. Husbands and wives, parents and children, neighbors and friends, would be drawn together more closely than ever; while the awful scenes of war and bloodshed, the excitement, the passion, the terror, would be confined to a few detached spots, or to a few lines of march which the invading armies had occupied.

In a civil war, however, it is very different. Every distinct portion of the country, every village and hamlet, and sometimes almost every family, is divided against itself. The hostility and hatred, too, between the combatants, is always far more intense and bitter than that which is felt against a foreign foe. We might at first be surprised at this. We might imagine that where men are contending with their neighbors and fellow-townsmen, the recollection of past friendships and good-will, and various lingering ties of regard, would moderate the fierceness of their anger, and make them more considerate and forbearing. But this is not found to be the case. Each party considers the other as not only enemies, but traitors, and accordingly they hate and abhor each other with a double intensity. If an Englishman has a *Frenchman* to combat, he meets him with a murderous impetuosity, it is true, but without any special bitterness of animosity. He *expects* the Frenchman to be his enemy. He even thinks he has a sort of natural right to be so. He will kill him if he can; but

then, if he takes him prisoner, there is nothing in his feelings toward him to prevent his treating him with generosity, and even with kindness. He hates him, but there is a sort of good-nature in his hatred, after all. On the other hand, when he fights against his countrymen in a civil war, he abhors and hates with unmingled bitterness the traitorous ingratitude which he thinks his neighbors and friends evince in turning enemies to their country. He can see no honesty, no truth, no courage in any thing they do. They are infinitely worse, in his estimation, than the most ferocious of foreign foes. Civil war is, consequently, always the means of far wider and more terrible mischief than any other human calamity.

In the contention between Charles and the Parliament, the various elements of the social state adhered to one side or the other, according to their natural predilections. The Episcopalians generally joined the king, the Presbyterians the Parliament. The gentry and the nobility favored the king; the mechanics, artisans, merchants, and common people the Parliament. The rural districts of country, which were under the control of the great landlords, the king; the cities and towns, the Parliament. The gay, and fashionable, and worldly, the king; the serious-minded and austere, the Parliament. Thus every thing was divided. The quarrel ramified to every hamlet and to every fireside, and the peace and happiness of the realm were effectually destroyed.

Both sides began to raise armies and to prepare for war. Before commencing hostilities, however, the king was persuaded by his counselors to send a messenger to London and propose some terms of accommodation. He accordingly sent the Earl of Southampton to the House of Peers, and two other persons to the House of Commons. He had no expectation, probably, of making peace, but he wanted to gain time to get his army together, and also to strengthen his cause among the people by showing a disposition to do all in his power to avoid open war. The messengers of the king went to London, and made their appearance in the two houses of Parliament.

The House of Lords ordered the Earl of Southampton to withdraw, and to send his communication in writing, and in the mean time to retire out of London, and wait for their answer. The House of Commons, in the same spirit of hostility and defiance, ordered the messengers which had been sent to them to come to the bar, like humble petitioners or criminals, and make their communication there.

The propositions of the king to the houses of Parliament were, that they should appoint a certain number of commissioners, and he also the same number, to meet and confer together in hope of agreeing upon some conditions of peace. The houses passed a vote in reply, declaring that they had been doing all in their power to preserve the peace of the kingdom, while the king had been interrupting and disturbing it by his military gatherings, and by proclamations, in which they were called traitors; and that they could enter into no treaty with him until he disbanded the armies which he had collected, and recalled his proclamations.

To this the king replied that he had never intended to call them traitors; and that when they would recall their declarations and votes stigmatizing those who adhered to him as traitors, he would recall his proclamations. Thus messages passed back and forth two or three times, each party criminating the other, and neither willing to make the concessions which the other required. At last all hope of an accommodation was abandoned, and both sides prepared for war.

The nobility and gentry flocked to the king’s standard. They brought their plate, their jewels, and their money, to provide funds. Some of them brought their servants. There were two companies in the king’s guard, one of which consisted of gentlemen, and the other of their servants. These two companies were always kept together. There was the greatest zeal and

enthusiasm among the upper classes to serve the king, and equal zeal and enthusiasm among the common people to serve the Parliament. The war continued for four years. During all this time the armies marched and countermarched all over the kingdom, carrying ruin and destruction wherever they went, and plunging the whole country in misery.

At one of the battles which was fought, the celebrated John Hampden, the man who would not pay his ship money, was slain. He had been a very energetic and efficient officer on the Parliamentary side, and was much dreaded by the forces of the king. At one of the battles between Prince Rupert, Charles's nephew, and the army of the Parliament, the prince brought to the king's camp a large number of prisoners which he had taken. One of the prisoners said he was confident that Hampden was hurt, for he saw him riding off the field before the battle was over, with his head hanging down, and his hands clasping the neck of his horse. They heard the next day that he had been wounded in the shoulder. Inflammation and fever ensued, and he died a few days afterward in great agony.

This Prince Rupert was a very famous character in all these wars. He was young and ardent, and full of courage and enthusiasm. He was always foremost, and ready to embark in the most daring undertakings. He was the son of the king's sister Elizabeth, who married the Elector Palatine, as narrated in a preceding chapter. He was famous not only for his military skill and attainments, but for his knowledge of science, and for his ingenuity in many philosophical arts. There is a mode of engraving called mezzotinto, which is somewhat easier of execution than the common mode, and produces a peculiar effect. Prince Rupert is said to have been the inventor of it, though, as is the case with almost all other inventions, there is a dispute about it. He discovered a mode of dropping melted glass into water so as to form little pear-shaped globules, with a long slender tail. These globules have this remarkable property, that if the tip of the tail is broken off ever so gently, the whole flies into atoms with an explosion. These drops of glass are often exhibited at the present day, and are called Prince Rupert's drops. The prince also discovered a very tenacious composition of metals for casting cannon. As artillery is necessarily very heavy, and very difficult to be transported on marches and upon the field of battle, it becomes very important to discover such metallic compounds as have the greatest strength and tenacity in resisting the force of an explosion. Prince Rupert invented such a compound, which is called by his name.

There were not only a great many battles and fierce encounters between the two great parties in this civil war, but there were also, at times, temporary cessations of the hostilities, and negotiations for peace. But it is very hard to make peace between two powers engaged in civil war. Each considers the other as acting the part of rebels and traitors, and there is a difficulty, almost insuperable, in the way of even opening negotiations between them. Still the people became tired of the war. At one time, when the king had made some propositions which the Parliament would not accept, an immense assemblage of women collected together, with white ribbons in their hats, to go to the House of Commons with a petition for peace. When they reached the door of the hall their number was five thousand. They called out, "Peace! peace! Give us those traitors that are against peace, that we may tear them to pieces." The guards who were stationed at the door were ordered to fire at this crowd, loading their guns, however, only with powder. This, it was thought, would frighten them away; but the women only laughed at the volley, and returned it with stones and brickbats, and drove the guards away. Other troops were then sent for, who charged upon the women with their swords, and cut them in their faces and hands, and thus at length dispersed them.

During the progress of the war, the queen returned from the Continent and joined the king. She had some difficulty, however, and encountered some personal danger, in her efforts to return to her husband. The vice-admiral, who had command of the English ships off the coast,

received orders to intercept her. He watched for her. She contrived, however, to elude his vigilance, though there were four ships in her convoy. She landed at a town called Burlington, or Bridlington, in Yorkshire. This town stands in a very picturesque situation, a little south of a famous promontory called Flamborough Head, of which there is a beautiful view from the pier of the town.

The queen succeeded in landing here. On her arrival at the town, she found herself worn down with the anxiety and fatigue of the voyage, and she wished to stop a few days to rest. She took up her residence in a house which was on the quay, and, of course, near the water. The quay, as it is called, in these towns, is a street on the margin of the water, with a wall but no houses next the sea. The vice-admiral arrived at the town the second night after the queen had landed. He was vexed that his expected prize had escaped him. He brought his ships up near to the town, and began to fire toward the house in which the queen was lodging.

This was at five o'clock in the morning. The queen and her attendants were in their beds, asleep. The reports of the cannon from the ships, the terrific whistling of the balls through the air, and the crash of the houses which the balls struck, aroused the whole village from their slumbers, and threw them into consternation. The people soon came to the house where the queen was lodging, and begged her to fly. They said that the neighboring houses were blown to pieces, and that her own would soon be destroyed, and she herself would be killed. They may, however, have been influenced more by a regard to their own safety than to hers in these injunctions, as it must have been a great object with the villagers to effect the immediate removal of a visitor who was the means of bringing upon them so terrible a danger.

These urgent entreaties of the villagers were soon enforced by two cannon-balls, which fell, one after another, upon the roof of the house, and, crashing their way through the roof and the floors, went down, without seeming to regard the resistance, from the top to the bottom. The queen hastily put on her clothes, and went forth with her attendants on foot, the balls from the ships whistling after them all the way.

One of her servants was killed. The rest of the fugitives, finding their exposure so great, stopped at a sort of trench which they came to, at the end of a field, such as is dug commonly, in England, on one side of the hedge to make the barrier more impassable to the animals which it is intended to confine. This trench, with the embankment formed by the earth thrown out of it, on which the hedge is usually planted, afforded them protection. They sought shelter in it, and remained there for two hours, like besiegers in the approaches to a town, the balls passing over their heads harmlessly, though sometimes covering them with the earth which they threw up as they bounded by. At length the tide began to ebb, and the vice-admiral was in danger of being left aground. He weighed his anchors and withdrew, and the queen and her party were relieved. Such a cannonading of a helpless and defenseless woman is a barbarity which could hardly take place except in a civil war.

The queen rejoined her husband, and she rendered him essential service in many ways. She had personal influence enough to raise both money and men for his armies, and so contributed very essentially to the strength of his party. At last she returned to the Continent again, and went to Paris, where she was still actively employed in promoting his cause. At one of the battles in which the king was defeated, the Parliamentary army seized his baggage, and found among his papers his correspondence with the queen. They very ungenerously ordered it to be published, as the letters seemed to show a vigorous determination on the part of the king not to yield in the contest without obtaining from the Parliament and their adherents full and ample concessions to his claims.

As time rolled on, the strength of the royal party gradually wasted away, while that of Parliament seemed to increase, until it became evident that the latter would, in the end, obtain the victory. The king retreated from place to place, followed by his foes, and growing weaker and more discouraged after every conflict. His son, the Prince of Wales, was then about fifteen years of age. He sent him to the western part of the island, with directions that, if affairs should still go against him, the boy should be taken in time out of the country, and join his mother in Paris. The danger grew more and more imminent, and they who had charge of the young prince sent him first to Scilly, and then to Jersey—islands in the Channel—whence he made his escape to Paris, and joined his mother. Fifteen years afterward he returned to London with great pomp and parade, and was placed upon the throne by universal acclamation.

At last the king himself, after being driven from one place of refuge to another, retreated to Oxford and intrenched himself there. Here he spent the winter of 1646 in extreme depression and distress. His friends deserted him; his resources were expended; his hopes were extinguished. He sent proposals of peace to the Parliament, and offered, himself, to come to London, if they would grant him a safe-conduct. In reply, they *forbade* him to come. They would listen to no propositions, and would make no terms. The case, they saw, was in their own hands, and they determined on unconditional submission. They hemmed the king in on all sides at his retreat in Oxford, and reduced him to despair.

In the mean time, the Scots, a year or two before this, had raised an army and crossed the northern frontier, and entered England. They were against monarchy and Episcopacy, but they were, in some respects, a separate enemy from those against whom the king had been contending so long; and he began to think that he had perhaps better fall into their hands than into those of his English foes, if he must submit to one or to the other. He hesitated for some time what course to take; but at last, after receiving representations of the favorable feeling which prevailed in regard to him in the Scottish army, he concluded to make his escape from Oxford and surrender himself to them. He accordingly did so, and the civil war was ended.

10. The Captivity

1646-1648

The circumstances of King Charles's surrender to the Scots were these. He knew that he was surrounded by his enemies in Oxford, and that they would not allow him to escape if they could prevent it. He and his friends, therefore, formed the following plan to elude them.

They sent word to the commanders of each of the several gates of the city, on a certain day, that during the ensuing night three men would have to pass out on business of the king's, and that when the men should appear and give a certain signal, they were to be allowed to pass. The officer at each gate received this command without knowing that a similar one had been sent to the others.

Accordingly, about midnight, the parties of men were dispatched, and they went out at the several gates. The king himself was in one of these parties. There were two other persons with him. One of these persons was a certain Mr. Ashburnham, and the king was disguised as his servant. They were all on horseback, and the king had a valise upon the horse behind him, so as to complete his disguise. This was on the 27th of April. The next day, or very soon after, it was known at Oxford that his majesty was gone, but no one could tell in what direction, for there was no means even of deciding by which of the gates he had left the city.

The Scotch were, at this time, encamped before the town of Newark, which is on the Trent, in the heart of England, and about one hundred and twenty miles north of London. There was a magnificent castle at Newark in those days, which made the place very strong. The town held out for the king; though the Scots had been investing it for some time, they had not yet succeeded in compelling the governor to surrender. The king concluded to proceed to Newark and enter the Scottish camp. He considered it, or, rather, wished it to be considered that he was coming to join them as their monarch. *They* were going to consider it surrendering to them as their prisoner. The king himself must have known how it would be, but it made his sense of humiliation a little less poignant to carry this illusion with him as long as it was possible to maintain it.

As soon as the Parliament found that the king had made his escape from Oxford, they were alarmed, and on the 4th of May they issued an order to this effect, "That what person soever should harbor and conceal, or should know of the harboring or concealing of the king's person, and should not immediately reveal it to the speakers of both houses, should be proceeded against as a traitor to the Commonwealth, and die without mercy." The proclamation of this order, however, did not result in arresting the flight of the king. On the day after it was issued, he arrived safely at Newark.

The Scottish general, whose name was Lesley, immediately represented to the king that for his own safety it was necessary that they should retire toward the northern frontier; but they could not so retire, he said, unless Newark should first surrender. They accordingly induced the king to send in orders to the governor of the castle to give up the place. The Scots took possession of it, and, after having garrisoned it, moved with their army toward the north, the king and General Lesley being in the van.

They treated the king with great distinction, but guarded him very closely, and sent word to the Parliament that he was in their possession. There ensued long negotiations and much debate. The question was, at first, whether the English or Scotch should have the disposal of the king's person. The English said that *they*, and not the Scots, were the party making war

upon him; that they had conquered his armies, and hemmed him in, and reduced him to the necessity of submission; and that he had been taken captive on English soil, and ought, consequently, to be delivered into the hands of the English Parliament. The Scots replied that though he had been taken in England, he was their king as well as the king of England, and had made himself their enemy; and that, as he had fallen into their hands, he ought to remain at their disposal. To this the English rejoined, that the Scots, in taking him, had not acted on their own account, but as the allies, and, as it were, the agents of the English, and that they ought to consider the king as a captive taken for them, and hold him subject to their disposal.

They could not settle the question. In the mean time the Scottish army drew back toward the frontier, taking the king with them. About this time a negotiation sprung up between the Parliament and the Scots for the payment of the expenses which the Scottish army had incurred in their campaign. The Scots sent in an account amounting to two millions of pounds. The English objected to a great many of the charges, and offered them two hundred thousand pounds. Finally it was settled that four hundred thousand pounds should be paid. This arrangement was made early in September. In January the Scots agreed to give up the king into the hands of the English Parliament.

The world accused the Scots of selling their king to his enemies for four hundred thousand pounds. The Scots denied that there was any connection between the two transactions above referred to. They received the money on account of their just claims; and they afterward agreed to deliver up the king, because they thought it right and proper so to do. The friends of the king, however, were never satisfied that there was not a secret understanding between the parties, that the money paid was not the price of the king's delivery; and as this delivery resulted in his death, they called it the price of blood.

Charles was at Newcastle when they came to this decision. His mind had been more at ease since his surrender to the Scots, and he was accustomed to amuse himself and while away the time of his captivity by various games. He was playing chess when the intelligence was brought to him that he was to be delivered up to the English Parliament. It was communicated to him in a letter. He read it, and then went on with his game, and none of those around him could perceive by his air and manner that the intelligence which the letter contained was any thing extraordinary. Perhaps he was not aware of the magnitude of the change in his condition and prospects which the communication announced.

There was at this time, at a town called Holmby or Holdenby, in Northamptonshire, a beautiful palace which was known by the name of Holmby House. King Charles's mother had purchased this palace for him when he was the Duke of York, in the early part of his life, while his father, King James, was on the throne, and his older brother was the heir apparent. It was a very stately and beautiful edifice. The house was fitted up in a very handsome manner, and all suitable accommodations provided for the king's reception. He had many attendants, and every desirable convenience and luxury of living; but, though the war was over, there was still kept up between the king and his enemies a petty contest about forms and punctilios, which resulted from the spirit of intolerance which characterized the age. The king wanted his own Episcopal chaplains. The Parliament would not consent to this, but sent him two Presbyterian chaplains. The king would not allow them to say grace at the table, but performed this duty himself; and on the Sabbath, when they preached in his chapel, he never would attend.

One singular instance of this sort of bigotry, and of the king's presence of mind under the action of it, took place while the king was at Newcastle. They took him one day to the chapel in the castle to hear a Scotch Presbyterian who was preaching to the garrison. The Scotchman preached a long discourse pointed expressly at the king. Those preachers prided themselves

on the fearlessness with which, on such occasions, they discharged what they called their duty. To cap the climax of his faithfulness, the preacher gave out, at the close of the sermon, the hymn, thus: “We will sing the fifty-first Psalm:

“‘Why dost thou, tyrant, boast thyself,
Thy wicked works to praise?’”

As the congregation were about to commence the singing, the king cast his eye along the page, and found in the fifty-sixth hymn one which he thought would be more appropriate. He rose, and said, in a very audible manner, “We will sing the fifty-*sixth* Psalm:

“‘Have mercy, Lord, on me I pray,
For men would me devour.’”

The congregation, moved by a sudden impulse of religious generosity extremely unusual in those days, immediately sang the psalm which the king had chosen.

While he was at Holmby the king used sometimes to go, escorted by a guard, to certain neighboring villages where there were bowling-greens. One day, while he was going on one of these excursions, a man, in the dress of a laborer, appeared standing on a bridge as he passed, and handed him a packet. The commissioners who had charge of Charles—for some of them always attended him on these excursions—seized the man. The packet was from the queen. The king told the commissioners that the letter was only to ask him some question about the disposal of his son, the young prince, who was then with her in Paris. They seemed satisfied, but they sent the disguised messenger to London, and the Parliament committed him to prison, and sent down word to dismiss all Charles’s own attendants, and to keep him thenceforth in more strict confinement.

In the mean time, the Parliament, having finished the war, were ready to disband the army. But the army did not wish to be disbanded. They would not be disbanded. The officers knew very well that if their troops were dismissed, and they were to return to their homes as private citizens, all their importance would be gone. There followed long debates and negotiations between the army and the Parliament, which ended, at last, in an open rupture. It is almost always so at the end of a revolution. The military power is found to have become too strong for the civil institutions of the country to control it.

Oliver Cromwell, who afterward became so distinguished in the days of the Commonwealth, was at this time becoming the most influential leader of the army. He was not the commander-in-chief in form, but he was the great planner and manager in fact. He was a man of great sternness and energy of character, and was always ready for the most prompt and daring action. He conceived the design of seizing the king’s person at Holmby, so as to take him away from the control of the Parliament, and transfer him to that of the army. This plan was executed on the 4th of June, about two months after the king had been taken to Holmby House. The abduction was effected in the following manner.

Cromwell detached a strong party of choice troops, under the command of an officer by the name of Joyce, to carry the plan into effect. These troops were all horsemen, so that their movements could be made with the greatest celerity. They arrived at Holmby House at midnight. The cornet, for that was the military title by which Joyce was designated, drew up his horsemen about the palace, and demanded entrance. Before his company arrived, however, there had been an alarm that they were coming, and the guards had been doubled. The officers in command asked the cornet what was his name and business. He replied that he was Cornet Joyce, and that his business was to speak to the king. They asked him by whom he was sent, and he replied that he was sent by *himself*, and that he must and would see the king. They then commanded their soldiers to stand by their arms, and be ready to fire

when the word should be given. They, however, perceived that Joyce and his force were a detachment from the army to which they themselves belonged, and concluding to receive them as brothers, they opened the gates and let them in.

The cornet stationed sentinels at the doors of those apartments of the castle which were occupied by the Scotch commissioners who had the king in charge, and then went himself directly to the king's chamber. He had a pistol loaded and cocked in his hand. He knocked at the door. There were four grooms in waiting: they rebuked him for making such a disturbance at that time of the night, and told him that he should wait until the morning if he had any communication to make to the king.

The cornet would not accede to this proposition, but knocked violently at the door, the servants being deterred from interfering by dread of the loaded pistol, and by the air and manner of their visitor, which told them very plainly that he was not to be trifled with. The king finally heard the disturbance, and, on learning the cause, sent out word that Joyce must go away and wait till morning, for he would not get up to see him at that hour. The cornet, as one of the historians of the time expresses it, "huffed and retired." The next morning he had an interview with the king.

When he was introduced to the king's apartment in the morning, the king said that he wished to have the Scotch commissioners present at the interview. Joyce replied that the commissioners had nothing to do now but to return to the Parliament at London. The king then said that he wished to see his instructions. The cornet replied that he would show them to him, and he sent out to order his horsemen to parade in the inner court of the palace, where the king could see them from his windows; and then, pointing them out to the king, he said, "These, sir, are my instructions." The king, who, in all the trials and troubles of his life of excitement and danger, took every thing quietly and calmly looked at the men attentively. They were fine troops, well mounted and armed. He then turned to the cornet, and said, with a smile, that "his instructions were in fair characters, and could be read without spelling." The cornet then said that his orders were to take the king away with him. The king declined going, unless the commissioners went too. The cornet made no objection, saying that the commissioners might do as they pleased about accompanying him, but that he himself must go.

The party set off from Holmby and traveled two days, stopping at night at the houses of friends to their cause. They reached Cambridge, where the leading officers of the army received the king, rendering him every possible mark of deference and respect. From Cambridge he was conducted by the leaders of the army from town to town, remaining sometimes several days at a place. He was attended by a strong guard, and was treated every where with the utmost consideration and honor. He was allowed some little liberty, in riding out and in amusements, but every precaution was taken to prevent the possibility of an escape.

The people collected every where into the places through which he had to pass, and his presence-chamber was constantly thronged. This was not altogether on account of their respect and veneration for him as king, but it arose partly from a very singular cause. There is a certain disease called the scrofula, which in former times had the name of the King's Evil. It is a very unmanageable and obstinate disorder, resisting all ordinary modes of treatment; but in the days of King Charles, it was universally believed by the common people of England, that if a *king* touched a patient afflicted with this disease, he would recover. This was the reason why it was called the king's evil. It was the evil that kings only could cure. Now, as kings seldom traveled much about their dominions, whenever one did make such a journey, the people embraced the opportunity to bring all the cases which could possibly be

considered as scrofula to the line of his route, in order that he might touch the persons afflicted and heal them.

In the course of the summer the king was conducted to Hampton Court, a beautiful palace on the Thames, a short distance above London. Here he remained for some time. He had an interview here with two of his children. The oldest son was still in France. The two whom he saw here were the Duke of Gloucester and the Princess Elizabeth. He found that they were under the care of a nobleman of high rank, and that they were treated with great consideration. Charles was extremely gratified and pleased with seeing these members of his family again, after so long a separation. His feelings of domestic affection were very strong.

The king remained at Hampton Court two or three months. While he was here, London, and all the region about it, was kept in a continual state of excitement by the contentions of the army and Parliament, and the endless negotiations which they attempted with each other and with the king. During all this time the king was in a sort of elegant and honorable imprisonment in his palace at Hampton Court; but he found the restraints to which he was subjected, and the harassing cares which the contests between these two great powers brought upon him, so great, that he determined to make his escape from the thraldom which bound him. He very probably thought that he could again raise his standard, and collect an army to fight in his cause. Or perhaps he thought of making his escape from the country altogether. It is not improbable that he was not decided himself which of these plans to pursue, but left the question to be determined by the circumstances in which he should find himself when he had regained his freedom.

At any rate, he made his escape. One evening, about ten o'clock, attendants came into his room at Hampton Court, and found that he had gone. There were some letters upon the table which he had left, directed to the Parliament, to the general of the army, and to the officer who had guarded him at Hampton Court. The king had left the palace an hour or two before. He passed out at a private door, which admitted him to a park connected with the palace. He went through the park by a walk which led down to the water, where there was a boat ready for him. He crossed the river in the boat, and on the opposite shore he found several officers and some horses ready to receive him. He mounted one of the horses, and the party rode rapidly away.

They traveled all night, and arrived, toward morning, at the residence of a countess on whose attachment to him, and fidelity, he placed great reliance. The countess concealed him in her house, though it was understood by all concerned that this was only a temporary place of refuge. He could not long be concealed here, and her residence was not provided with any means of defense; so that, immediately on their arrival at the countess's, the king and the few friends who were with him began to concert plans for a more secure retreat.

The house of the countess was on the southern coast of England, near the Isle of Wight. There was a famous castle in those days upon this island, near the center of it, called Carisbrooke Castle. The ruins of it, which are very extensive, still remain. This castle was under the charge of Colonel Hammond, who was at that time governor of the island. Colonel Hammond was a near relative of one of King Charles's chaplains, and the king thought it probable that he would espouse his cause. He accordingly sent two of the gentlemen who had accompanied him to the Isle of Wight to see Colonel Hammond, and inquire of him whether he would receive and protect the king if he would come to him. But he charged them not to let Hammond know where he was, unless he would first solemnly promise to protect him, and not subject him to any restraint.

The messengers went, and, to the king's surprise, brought back Hammond with them. The king asked them whether they had got his written promise to protect him. They answered no, but that they could depend upon him as a man of honor. The king was alarmed. "Then you have betrayed me," said he, "and I am his prisoner." The messengers were then, in their turn, alarmed at having thus disappointed and displeased the king, and they offered to kill Hammond on the spot, and to provide some other means of securing the king's safety. The king, however, would not sanction any such proceeding, but put himself under Hammond's charge, and was conveyed to Carisbrooke Castle. He was received with every mark of respect, but was very carefully guarded. It was about the middle of November that these events took place.

Hammond notified the Parliament that King Charles was in his hands, and sent for directions from them as to what he should do. Parliament required that he should be carefully guarded, and they appropriated £5000 for the expenses of his support. The king remained in this confinement more than a year, while the Parliament and the army were struggling for the possession of the kingdom.

He spent his time, during this long period in various pursuits calculated to beguile the weary days, and he sometimes planned schemes for escape. There were also a great many fruitless negotiations attempted between the king and the Parliament, which resulted in nothing but to make the breach between them wider and wider. Sometimes the king was silent and depressed. At other times he seemed in his usual spirits. He read serious books a great deal, and wrote. There is a famous book, which was found in manuscript after his death among his papers, in his handwriting, which it is supposed he wrote at this time. He was allowed to take walks upon the castle wall, which was very extensive, and he had some other amusements which served to occupy his leisure time. He found his confinement, however, in spite of all these mitigations, wearisome and hard to bear.

There were some schemes attempted to enable him to regain his liberty. There was one very desperate attempt. It seems that Hammond, suspecting that the king was plotting an escape, dismissed the king's own servants and put others in their places—persons in whom he supposed he could more implicitly rely. One of these men, whose name was Burley, was exasperated at being thus dismissed. He went through the town of Carisbrooke, beating a drum, and calling upon the people to rise and rescue their sovereign from his captivity. The governor of the castle, hearing of this, sent out a small body of men, arrested Burley, and hanged and quartered him. The king was made a close prisoner immediately after this attempt.

Notwithstanding this, another attempt was soon made by the king himself, which came much nearer succeeding. There was a man by the name of Osborne, whom Hammond employed as a personal attendant upon the king. He was what was called gentleman usher. The king succeeded in gaining this person's favor so much by his affability and his general demeanor, that one day he put a little paper into one of the king's gloves, which it was a part of his office to hold on certain occasions, and on this paper he had written that he was at the king's service. At first Charles was afraid that this offer was only a treacherous one; but at length he confided in him. In the mean time, there was a certain man by the name of Rolf in the garrison, who conceived the design of enticing the king away from the castle on the promise of promoting his escape, and then murdering him. Rolf thought that this plan would please the Parliament, and that he himself, and those who should aid him in the enterprise, would be rewarded. He proposed this scheme to Osborne, and asked him to join in the execution of it.

Osborne made the whole plan known to the king. The king, on reflection, said to Osborne, "Very well; continue in communication with Rolf, and help him mature his plan. Let him

thus aid in getting me out of the castle, and we will make such arrangements as to prevent the assassination." Osborne did so. He also gained over some other soldiers who were employed as sentinels near the place of escape. Osborne and Rolf furnished the king with a saw and a file, by means of which he sawed off some iron bars which guarded one of his windows. They were then, on a certain night, to be ready with a few attendants on the outside to receive the king as he descended, and convey him away.

In the mean time, Rolf and Osborne had each obtained a number of confederates, those of the former supposing that the plan was to assassinate the king, while those of the latter understood that the plan was to assist him in escaping from captivity. Certain expressions which were dropped by one of this latter class alarmed Rolf, and led him to suspect some treachery. He accordingly took the precaution to provide a number of armed men, and to have them ready at the window, so that he should be sure to be strong enough to secure the king immediately on his descent from the window. When the time came for the escape, the king, before getting out, looked below, and, seeing so many armed men, knew at once that Rolf had discovered their designs, and refused to descend. He quickly returned to his bed. The next day the bars were found filed in two, and the king was made a closer prisoner than ever.

Some months after this, some commissioners from Parliament went to see the king, and they found him in a most wretched condition. His beard was grown, his dress was neglected, his health was gone, his hair was gray, and, though only forty-eight years of age, he appeared as decrepit and infirm as a man of seventy. In fact, he was in a state of misery and despair. Even the enemies who came to visit him, though usually stern and hard-hearted enough to withstand any impressions, were extremely affected at the sight.

11. Trial And Death

1648

As soon as the army party, with Oliver Cromwell at their head, had obtained complete ascendency, they took immediate measures for proceeding vigorously against the king. They seized him at Carisbrooke Castle, and took him to Hurst Castle, which was a gloomy fortress in the neighborhood of Carisbrooke. Hurst Castle was in a very extraordinary situation. There is a long point extending from the main land toward the Isle of Wight, opposite to the eastern end of it. This point is very narrow, but is nearly two miles long. The castle was built at the extremity. It consisted of one great round tower, defended by walls and bastions. It stood lonely and desolate, surrounded by the sea, except the long and narrow neck which connected it with the distant shore. Of course, though comfortless and solitary, it was a place of much greater security than Carisbrooke.

The circumstance of the king's removal to this new place of confinement were as follows: In some of his many negotiations with the Parliament while at Carisbrooke, he had bound himself, on certain conditions, not to attempt to escape from that place. His friends, however, when they heard that the army were coming again to take him away, concluded that he ought to lose no time in making his escape out of the country. They proposed the plan to the king. He made two objections to it. He thought, in the first place, that the attempt would be very likely to fail; and that, if it did fail, it would exasperate his enemies, and make his confinement more rigorous, and his probable danger more imminent than ever. He said that, in the second place, he had promised the Parliament that he would not attempt to escape, and that he could not break his word.

The three friends were silent when they heard the king speak these words. After a pause, the leader of them, Colonel Cook, said, "Suppose I were to tell your majesty that the army have a plan for seizing you immediately, and that they will be upon you very soon unless you escape. Suppose I tell you that we have made all the preparations necessary—that we have horses all ready here, concealed in a pent-house—that we have a vessel at the Cows[6] waiting for us—that we are all prepared to attend you, and eager to engage in the enterprise—the darkness of the night favoring our plan, and rendering it almost certain of success. Now," added he, "these suppositions express the real state of the case, and the only question is what your majesty will resolve to do."

The king paused. He was distressed with perplexity and doubt. At length he said, "They have promised *me*, and I have promised *them*, and I will not break the promise first." "Your majesty means by *they* and *them*, the Parliament, I suppose?" "Yes, I do." "But the scene is now changed. The Parliament have no longer any power to protect you. The danger is imminent, and the circumstances absolve your majesty from all obligation."

But the king could not be moved. He said, come what may, he would not do any thing that looked like a breaking of his word. He would dismiss the subject and go to bed, and enjoy his rest as long as he could. His friends told him that they feared it would not be long. They seemed very much agitated and distressed. The king asked them why they were so much

[6] There were two points or headlands, on opposite sides of an inlet from the sea, on the northern side of the Isle of Wight, which in ancient times received the name of *Cows*. They were called the East Cow and the West Cow. The harbor between them formed a safe and excellent harbor. The name is now spelled Cowes, and the port is, at the present day, of great commercial importance.

troubled. They said it was to think of the extreme danger in which his majesty was lying, and his unwillingness to do any thing to avert it. The king replied, that if the danger were tenfold more than it was, he would not break his word to avert it.

The fears of the king's friends were soon realized. The next morning, at break of day, he was awakened by a loud knocking at his door. He sent one of his attendants to inquire what it meant. It was a party of soldiers come to take him away. They would give him no information in respect to their plans, but required him to dress himself immediately and go with them. They mounted horses at the gate of the castle. The king was very earnest to have his friends accompany him. They allowed one of them, the Duke of Richmond, to go with him a little way, and then told him he must return. The duke bade his master a very sad and sorrowful farewell, and left him to go on alone.

The escort which were conducting him took him to Hurst Castle. The Parliament passed a vote condemning this proceeding, but it was too late. The army concentrated their forces about London, took possession of the avenues to the houses of Parliament, and excluded all those members who were opposed to them. The remnant of the Parliament which was left immediately took measures for bringing the king to trial.

The House of Commons did not dare to trust the trial of the king to the Peers, according to the provisions of the English Constitution, and so they passed an ordinance for attainting him of high treason, and for appointing *commissioners*, themselves, to try him. Of course, in appointing these commissioners, they would name such men as they were sure would be predisposed to condemn him. The Peers rejected this ordinance, and adjourned for nearly a fortnight, hoping thus to arrest any further proceedings. The Commons immediately voted that the action of the Peers was not necessary, and that they would go forward themselves. They then appointed the commissioners, and ordered the trial to proceed.

Every thing connected with the trial was conducted with great state and parade. The number of commissioners constituting the court was one hundred and thirty-three, though only a little more than half that number attended the trial. The king had been removed from Hurst Castle to Windsor Castle, and he was now brought into the city, and lodged in a house near to Westminster Hall, so as to be at hand. On the appointed day the court assembled; the vast hall and all the avenues to it were thronged. The whole civilized world looked on, in fact, in astonishment at the almost unprecedented spectacle of a king tried for his life by an assembly of his subjects.

The first business after the opening of the court was to call the roll of the commissioners, that each one might answer to his name. The name of the general of the army, Fairfax, who was one of the number, was the second upon the list. When his name was called there was no answer. It was called again. A voice from one of the galleries replied, "He has too much wit to be here." This produced some disorder, and the officers called out to know who answered in that manner, but there was no reply. Afterward, when the impeachment was read, the phrase occurred, "Of all the people of England," when the same voice rejoined, "No not the half of them." The officers then ordered a soldier to fire into the seat from which these interruptions came. This command was not obeyed, but they found, on investigating the case, that the person who had answered thus was Fairfax's wife, and they immediately removed her from the hall.

When the court was fully organized, they commanded the sergeant-at-arms to bring in the prisoner. The king was accordingly brought in, and conducted to a chair covered with crimson velvet, which had been placed for him at the bar. The judges remained in their seats, with their heads covered, while he entered, and the king took his seat, keeping his head

covered too. He took a calm and deliberate survey of the scene, looking around upon the judges, and upon the armed guards by which he was environed, with a stern and unchanging countenance. At length silence was proclaimed, and the president rose to introduce the proceedings.

He addressed the king. He said that the Commons of England, deeply sensible of the calamities which had been brought upon England by the civil war, and of the innocent blood which had been shed, and convinced that he, the king, had been the guilty cause of it, were now determined to make inquisition for this blood, and to bring him to trial and judgment; that they had, for this purpose, organized this court, and that he should now hear the charge brought against him, which they would proceed to try.

An officer then arose to read the charge. The king made a gesture for him to be silent. He, however, persisted in his reading, although the king once or twice attempted to interrupt him. The president, too, ordered him to proceed. The charge recited the evils and calamities which had resulted from the war, and concluded by saying that "the said Charles Stuart is and has been the occasioner, author, and continuer of the said unnatural, cruel, and bloody wars, and is therein guilty of all the treasons, murders, rapines, burnings, spoils, desolations, damages, and mischiefs to this nation acted and committed in the said wars, or occasioned thereby."

The president then sharply rebuked the king for his interruptions to the proceedings, and asked him what answer he had to make to the impeachment. The king replied by demanding by what authority they pretended to call him to account for his conduct. He told them that he was their king, and they his subjects; that they were not even the Parliament, and that they had no authority from any true Parliament to sit as a court to try him; that he would not betray his own dignity and rights by making any answer at all to any charges they might bring against him, for that would be an acknowledgment of their authority; but he was convinced that there was not one of them who did not in his heart believe that he was wholly innocent of the charges which they had brought against him.

These proceedings occupied the first day. The king was then sent back to his place of confinement, and the court adjourned. The next day, when called upon to plead to the impeachment, the king only insisted the more strenuously in denying the authority of the court, and in stating his reasons for so denying it. The court were determined not to hear what he had to say on this point, and the president continually interrupted him; while he, in his turn, continually interrupted the president too. It was a struggle and a dispute, not a trial. At last, on the fourth day, something like testimony was produced to prove that the king had been in arms against the forces of the Parliament. On the fifth and sixth days, the judges sat in private to come to their decision; and on the day following, which was Saturday, January 27th, they called the king again before them, and opened the doors to admit the great assembly of spectators, that the decision might be announced.

There followed another scene of mutual interruptions and disorder. The king insisted on longer delay. He had not said what he wished to say in his defense. The president told him it was now too late; that he had consumed the time allotted to him in making objections to the jurisdiction of the court, and now it was too late for his defense. The clerk then read the sentence, which ended thus: "For all which treasons and crimes this court doth adjudge that he, the said Charles Stuart, is a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and public enemy, and shall be put to death by the severing of his head from his body." When the clerk had finished the reading, the president rose, and said deliberately and solemnly,

"The sentence now read and published is the act, sentence, judgment, and resolution of the whole court."

And the whole court rose to express their assent.

The king then said to the president, “Will you hear me a word, sir?”

President. ”Sir, you are not to be heard after the sentence.”

King. ”Am I not, sir?”

President. ”No, sir. Guards, withdraw the prisoner!”

King. ”I may speak after sentence by your favor, sir. Hold—I say, sir—by your favor, sir—If I am not permitted to speak—”

The other parts of his broken attempts to speak were lost in the tumult and noise. He was taken out of the hall.

One would have supposed that all who witnessed these dreadful proceedings, and who now saw one who had been so lately the sovereign of a mighty empire standing friendless and alone on the brink of destruction, would have relented at last, and would have found their hearts yielding to emotions of pity. But it seems not to have been so. The animosities engendered by political strife are merciless, and the crowd through which the king had to pass as he went from the hall scoffed and derided him. They blew the smoke of their tobacco in his face, and threw their pipes at him. Some proceeded to worse indignities than these, but the king bore all with quietness and resignation.

The king was sentenced on Saturday. On the evening of that day he sent a request that the Bishop of London might be allowed to assist at his devotions, and that his children might be permitted to see him before he was to die. There were two of his children then in England, his youngest son and a daughter. The other two sons had escaped to the Continent. The government granted both these requests. By asking for the services of an Episcopal clergyman, Charles signified his firm determination to adhere to the very last hour of his life to the religious principles which he had been struggling for so long. It is somewhat surprising that the government were willing to comply with the request.

It was, however, complied with, and Charles was taken from the palace of Whitehall, which is in Westminster, to the palace of St. James, not very far distant. He was escorted by a guard through the streets. At St. James’s there was a small chapel where the king attended divine service. The Bishop of London preached a sermon on the future judgment, in which he administered comfort to the mind of the unhappy prisoner, so far as the sad case allowed of any comfort, by the thought that all human judgments would be reviewed, and all wrong made right at the great day. After the service the king spent the remainder of the day in retirement and private devotion.

During the afternoon of the day several of his most trusty friends among the nobility called to see him, but he declined to grant them admission. He said that his time was short and precious, and that he wished to improve it to the utmost in preparation for the great change which awaited him. He hoped, therefore, that his friends would not be displeased if he declined seeing any persons besides his children. It would do no good for them to be admitted. All that they could do for him now was to pray for him.

The next day the children were brought to him in the room where he was confined. The daughter, who was called the Lady Elizabeth, was the oldest. He directed her to tell her brother James, who was the second son, and now absent with Charles on the Continent, that he must now, from the time of his father’s death, no longer look upon Charles as merely his older brother, but as his sovereign, and obey him as such; and he requested her to charge them both, from him, to love each other, and to forgive their father’s enemies.

“You will not forget this, my dear child, will you?” added the king. The Lady Elizabeth was still very young.

“No,” said she, “I will never forget it as long as I live.”

He then charged her with a message to her mother, the queen, who was also on the Continent. “Tell her,” said he, “that I have loved her faithfully all my life, and that my tender regard for her will not cease till I cease to breathe.”

Poor Elizabeth was sadly grieved at this parting interview. The king tried to comfort her. “You must not be so afflicted for me,” he said. “It will be a very glorious death that I shall die. I die for the laws and liberties of this land, and for maintaining the Protestant religion. I have forgiven all my enemies, and I hope that God will forgive them.”

The little son was, by title, the Duke of Gloucester. He took him on his knees, and said, in substance, “My dear boy, they are going to cut off your father’s head.” The child looked up into his father’s face very earnestly, not comprehending so strange an assertion.

“They are going to cut off my head,” repeated the king, “and perhaps they will want to make you a king; but you must not be king as long as your brothers Charles and James live; for if you do, very likely they will, some time or other, cut off your head.” The child said, with a very determined air, that then they should never make him king as long as he lived. The king then gave his children some other parting messages for several of his nearest relatives and friends, and they were taken away.

In cases of capital punishment, in England and America, there must be, after the sentence is pronounced, written authority to the sheriff, or other proper officer, to proceed to the execution of it. This is called the warrant, and is usually to be signed by the chief magistrate of the state. In England the sovereign always signs the warrant of execution; but in the case of the execution of the sovereign himself, which was a case entirely unprecedented, the authorities were at first somewhat at loss to know what to do. The commissioners who had judged the king concluded finally to sign it themselves. It was expressed substantially as follows:

“At the High Court of Justice for the trying and judging of Charles Stuart, king of England, January 29th, 1648:

“Whereas Charles Stuart, king of England, has been convicted, attainted, and condemned of high treason, and sentence was pronounced against him by this court, to be put to death by the severance of his head from his body, of which sentence execution yet remaineth to be done; these are, therefore, now to will and require you to see the said sentence executed in the open street before Whitehall, upon the morrow, being the thirtieth day of this instant month of January, between the hours of ten in the morning and five in the afternoon of the said day, with full effect; and for so doing this shall be your sufficient warrant.”

Fifty-nine of the judges signed this warrant, and then it was sent to the persons appointed to carry the sentence into execution.

That night the king slept pretty well for about four hours, though during the evening before he could hear in his apartment the noise of the workmen building the platform, or scaffold as it was commonly called, on which the execution was to take place. He awoke, however, long before day. He called to an attendant who lay by his bedside, and requested him to get up. “I will rise myself,” said he, “for I have a great work to do to-day.” He then requested that they would furnish him with the best dress, and an extra supply of under clothing, because it was a cold morning. He particularly wished to be well guarded from the cold, lest it should cause him to shiver, and they would suppose that he was trembling from fear.

“I have no fear,” said he. “Death is not terrible to me. I bless God that I am prepared.”

The king had made arrangements for divine service in his room early in the morning, to be conducted by the Bishop of London. The bishop came in at the time appointed, and read the prayers. He also read, in the course of the service, the twenty-ninth chapter of Matthew, which narrates the closing scenes of our Saviour’s life. This was, in fact, the regular lesson for the day, according to the Episcopal ritual, which assigns certain portions of Scripture to every day of the year. The king supposed that the bishop had purposely selected this passage, and he thanked him for it, as he said it seemed to him very appropriate to the occasion. “May it please your majesty,” said the bishop, “it is the proper lesson for the day.” The king was much affected at learning this fact, as he considered it a special providence, indicating that he was prepared to die, and that he should be sustained in the final agony.

About ten o’clock, Colonel Hacker, who was the first one named in the warrant of execution of the three persons to whom the warrant was addressed, knocked gently at the king’s chamber door. No answer was returned. Presently he knocked again. The king asked his attendant to go to the door. He went, and asked Colonel Hacker why he knocked. He replied that he wished to see the king.

“Let him come in,” said the king.

The officer entered, but with great embarrassment and trepidation. He felt that he had a most awful duty to perform. He informed the king that it was time to proceed to Whitehall, though he could have some time there for rest. “Very well,” said the king; “go on; I will follow.” The king then took the bishop’s arm, and they went along together.

They found, as they issued from the palace of St. James into the park through which their way lay to Whitehall, that lines of soldiers had been drawn up. The king, with the bishop on one side, and the attendant before referred to, whose name was Herbert, on the other, both uncovered, walked between these lines of guards. The king walked on very fast, so that the others scarcely kept pace with him. When he arrived at Whitehall he spent some further time in devotion, with the bishop, and then, at noon, he ate a little bread and drank some light wine. Soon after this, Colonel Hacker, the officer, came to the door and let them know that the hour had arrived.

The bishop and Hacker melted into tears as they bade their master farewell. The king directed the door to be opened, and requested the officer to go on, saying that he would follow. They went through a large hall, called the banqueting hall, to a window in front, through which a passage had been made for the king to his scaffold, which was built up in the street before the palace. As the king passed out through the window, he perceived that a vast throng of spectators had assembled in the streets to witness the spectacle. He had expected this, and had intended to address them. But he found that this was impossible, as the space all around the scaffold was occupied with troops of horse and bodies of soldiers, so as to keep the populace at so great a distance that they could not hear his voice. He, however, made his speech, addressing it particularly to one or two persons who were near, knowing that they would put the substance of it on record, and thus make it known to all mankind. There was then some further conversation about the preparations for the final blow, the adjustment of the dress, the hair, &c., in which the king took an active part, with great composure. He then kneeled down and laid his head upon the block.

The executioner, who wore a mask that he might not be known, began to adjust the hair of the prisoner by putting it up under his cap, when the king, supposing that he was going to strike, hastily told him to wait for the sign. The executioner said that he would. The king spent a few minutes in prayer, and then stretched out his hands, which was the sign which he had

arranged to give. The axe descended. The dissevered head, with the blood streaming from it, was held up by the assistant executioner, for the gratification of the vast crowd which was gazing on the scene. He said, as he raised it, “Behold the head of a traitor!”

The body was placed in a coffin covered with black velvet, and taken back through the window into the room from which the monarch had walked out, in life and health, but a few moments before. A day or two afterward it was taken to Windsor Castle upon a hearse drawn by six horses and covered with black velvet. It was there interred in a vault in the chapel, with an inscription upon lead over the coffin:

KING CHARLES
1648.

After the death of Charles, a sort of republic was established in England, called the Commonwealth, over which, instead of a king, Oliver Cromwell presided, under the title of Protector. The country was, however, in a very anomalous and unsettled state. It became more distracted still after the death of the Protector, and it was only twelve years after beheading the father that the people of England, by common consent, called back the son to the throne. It seems as if there could be no stable government in a country where any very large portion of the inhabitants are destitute of property, without the aid of that mysterious but all controlling principle of the human breast, a spirit of reverence for the rights, and dread of the power of an hereditary crown. In the United States almost every man is the possessor of property. He has his house, his little farm, his shop and implements of labor, or something which is his own, and which he feels would be jeopardized by revolution and anarchy. He dreads a general scramble, knowing that he would probably get less than he would lose by it. He is willing, therefore, to be governed by abstract law. There is no need of holding up before him a scepter or a crown to induce obedience. He submits without them. He votes with the rest, and then abides by the decision of the ballot-box. In other countries, however, the case is different. If not an actual majority, there is at least a very large proportion of the community who possess nothing. They get scanty daily food for hard and long-continued daily labor; and as change, no matter what, is always a blessing to sufferers, or at least is always looked forward to as such, they are ready to welcome, at all times, any thing that promises commotion. A war, a conflagration, a riot, or a rebellion, is always welcome. They do not know but that they shall gain some advantage by it, and in the mean time the excitement of it is some relief to the dead and eternal monotony of toil and suffering.

It is true that the revolutions by which monarchies are overturned are not generally effected, in the first instance, by this portion of the community. The throne is usually overturned at first by a higher class of men; but the deed being done, the inroad upon the established course and order of the social state being once made, this lower mass is aroused and excited by it, and soon becomes unmanageable. When property is so distributed among the population of a state that all have an *interest* in the preservation of order, then, and not till then, will it be safe to give to all a share in the *power* necessary for preserving it; and, in the mean time, revolutions produced by insurrections and violence will probably only result in establishing governments unsteady and transient just in proportion to the suddenness of their origin.

THE END

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