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THE LIFE OF QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA .

VOL. I

THE LIFE OF QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA

By I. A. TAYLOR, Author of
"Lord Edward Fitzgerald," etc.

WITH 32 FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS AND
2 PHOTOGRAVURE FRONTISPIECES

VOL. I

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PREFATORY NOTE

AN attempt is made in the present volume to give an account of the life of Henrietta Maria de Bourbon, the general history of the time being dealt with only so far as is necessary for that purpose.

It is somewhat singular, taking into account the important part she has been charged with playing in the English "troubles" of the seventeenth century, that so little has been written with direct reference to the wife of Charles I. Since the life published at the time of the Restoration—"so sillily writ" that Pepys and his wife could do nothing but laugh at it—there have been no more than a few brief memoirs, in French and English, of which Carlo Cotolendi's is the fullest; followed in the last century by the biography included in Miss Strickland's *Lives of the Queens of England*, and the French life by the Comte de Baillon, mainly based upon the last.

On the other hand, materials for a biography are unusually ample. Mrs. Everett-Green expended infinite labour on deciphering, translating, and editing those of Henrietta's letters to Charles I. which have been preserved; whilst these and others have been printed by M. de Baillon in the original French. A work of

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hardly less importance was performed by M. Ferrero in the publication of the correspondence she carried on during most of her married life with her sister, Christine, Duchess of Savoy.

Besides the material furnished by Henrietta's letters, collections of state papers and other contemporary documents, as well as the copious memoirs of the day, French and English, are full of facts, incidents, and allusions making it possible to form a very clear conception of the woman who was loved by Charles I., as some have thought, to his undoing; of whom Charles II., notwithstanding the friction of earlier years, wrote that never any children had so good a mother; and who was declared by his brother James, in language more stilted, to excel in "all the good qualities of a good wife, a good mother, and a good Christian."

Such was the testimony of her sons. If her husband and her children loved her, the world did not; and the bitterness of the hatred she excited is not without its uses, positive and negative, in enabling a biographer to arrive at a just estimate of her character. The importance attaching to a large body of contemporary opinion cannot be overlooked. Condemnation of declared opponents of the royalist cause must indeed be accepted, if accepted at all, with reserve; but some of the most loyal adherents of her husband and son were amongst the severest of her critics; nor did they, especially in later days, practise any economy of truth with regard to her failings. Allowing for the natural jealousies existing between the several factions into which the royalist party was divided, the witness of these men must not be disregarded. On the other hand, whilst allowing it due weight, the very candour of their blame tends to exonerate the object of their dislike from faults of which they did not accuse her. Judging her even out of the mouth of her enemies, the evidence against her points rather to errors of the understanding than of the will; to rashness, unwisdom, and prejudice rather than to any more serious moral delinquencies. The distinction, it is true, may have been of little consequence, as affecting the damage inflicted on the cause with which she was identified, and a worse woman might have made a better counsellor. But with regard to Henrietta herself it is a different matter.

A short appendix, at the end of the book, sums up the scanty evidence available on the question of the Queen's marriage with Henry Jermyn. A list of the principal authorities consulted is also appended. I desire to express in especial my obligations to Mr. Gardiner's detailed history of the period and to the great assistance it has afforded me.

I. A. T.

CONTENTS

VOL. I

CHAPTER I

1609—1623

PAGE

Birth—Condition of Europe—Henri-Quatre's household—Henrietta's infancy—Marie de Medicis' coronation—The King's murder—The Queen's regency—Henrietta's childhood—At Blois—At court—Her marriage mooted—First and second missions to England—Changes at the French court—The Comte de Soisson's suit—Visit of Charles and Buckingham to Paris . . 1

CHAPTER II

1623—1625

Failure of marriage negotiations with Spain—Private mission to England—De Tillières and the *cordelier*—Lord Kensington at Paris—His letters—Joined by Lord Carlisle—Protracted negotiations—The Treaty of Marriage—Fresh difficulties—Betrothal and marriage—Buckingham and Anne of Austria 28

CHAPTER III

1625—1626

Henrietta's arrival in England—Meeting with Charles—Religious and domestic difficulties—Charles' first Parliament—Dissensions in the royal household—Buckingham's hostility—He is declined as envoy to Paris—Charles' complaints of his wife—He resolves to dismiss her French attendants 53

CHAPTER IV

1625—1626

PAGE

Popular discontent—Charles and Buckingham—Henrietta's refusal to be crowned—A fresh quarrel—Buckingham attacked by Parliament—The Queen's household dismissed—Henrietta's loneliness—Bassompierre's mission—His success—Buckingham forbidden to go to Paris—Preparations for war—The Rochelle expedition—Its failure—Improvement in the relations of King and Queen 77

CHAPTER V

1627—1630

The Duke's return—Harmony in the royal household—The new Parliament—Petition of Right—Wentworth's change of front—The Duke murdered—The Queen's future position—Birth and death of her first child—Domestic happiness—Ecclesiastical arrangements at court—Birth of Charles II.—Henrietta's description of him 95

CHAPTER VI

1630—1633

Exile of Marie de Medicis—Henrietta's growing influence—Charles still independent of it—His foreign policy—The Queen's hostility to Spain—Charles' refusal to receive her mother—The Chevalier de Jars—Letters of Henrietta's and Lord Holland's opened—Quarrels at court—Jermyn's misconduct—Birth of the Princess Royal—Charles crowned in Edinburgh—Birth of James II.—Letter from Wentworth 118

CHAPTER VII

1630—1634

The lull before the storm—The court—Henrietta—Charles—The Lord Treasurer, Weston—Laud—Wentworth—Hamilton—Holland—Lord and Lady Carlisle—Other courtiers—The Queen's Pastoral—Earl of Newcastle—His instructions to the Prince of Wales—Letters from the Queen and Prince—Henrietta and her sister 132

CHAPTER VIII

1634—1637

PAGE

Henrietta not concerned in Charles' foreign or home policy—Money difficulties—Puritan distrust—Panzani's mission—Panzani's relations with court and ministers—Hopeful reports sent to Rome—Conversions—Panzani and the Queen—Charles friendly—Con and Hamilton appointed agents to Urban and Henrietta—The Prince Palatine and Prince Rupert visit England—Royal visit to Oxford—Popular discontent—Departure of the Princes . 153

CHAPTER IX

1637—1638

The Pope's envoy, Con—Conversions at court—Laud's proclamation—Scottish affairs—Hampden's trial—Decision of the judges—Court gossip—Rivalry of Northumberland and Holland—Wentworth on Holland—Wentworth's own aims—Relations with Henrietta—The Scottish Covenant inaugurated—Arrival in England of Marie de Medicis—Her interview with de Bellièvre . . . 175

CHAPTER X

1639—1640

Wentworth's letter—Preparations for war—Need of money—Choice of officers—Wentworth and the Queen—Charles in the north—A treaty signed with the Scotch—Marie de Medicis and her son—Wentworth's growing influence—Becomes Earl of Strafford—Secretaryship conferred on Vane—Henrietta in opposition to Strafford—Rossetti papal agent in England—Departure of Duchesse de Chevreuse—The Short Parliament—Growing disaffection—Henrietta appeals to Rome—Failure of northern campaign 194

CHAPTER XI

1641

The Long Parliament—Henrietta's position—Strafford impeached—Death of Princess Anne—Suspicions of Parliament—Henrietta's endeavours to save Strafford—The Army Plot—Goring's treachery—Marriage of the Princess Royal—Strafford's execu-

PAGE

tion—Attitude of the Houses—The Queen and Rossetti—Parliament interferes to prevent her leaving the country—Charles goes to Scotland—Marie de Medicis' departure 216

CHAPTER XII

1641—1642

The Queen at Oatlands—Henrietta and Parliament—Rumoured plot—The Irish rising—Charles' return—His reception in London—Riots in London—The Remonstrance—Henrietta's unpacific attitude—Rumoured impeachment of the Queen—The five members—King and Queen leave London—Professions of the Prince of Orange—Digby's intercepted letter—The Queen takes the Princess to Holland 238

CHAPTER XIII

1642—1644

Henrietta at the Hague—Her labours—And letters—The royal standard set up—The Palatine Princes—The Queen in danger at sea—Letter from Charles—The Queen lands in England—Fired upon—Fairfax's offer of escort—Life with the troops—At York—The effects of her influence on Charles—Her impeachment in Parliament—Marches south—Joins the King 259

CHAPTER XIV

1643—1644

Meeting of King and Queen—Jermyn—At Oxford—Dissensions in the Royalist party—Overtures from the Earls of Holland and Bedford—Holland's double treason—Henrietta's letters to Newcastle—Death of Falkland—French professions—D'Harcourt's embassy—Solemn League and Covenant—Henrietta parts from the King—At Exeter—Birth of Henriette-Anne—Henrietta's letters to Charles—Her flight—Arrives in France . 286

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

VOL. I

QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA (*Photogravure*) . . . . . *Frontispiece*

Facing page

HENRIETTA MARIA AND HER SISTER 16

From a contemporary picture by an unknown painter.

JAMES HAY, EARL OF CARLISLE 36

From the picture by Van Dyck, by permission of Viscount Cobham.

GEORGE VILLIERS, FIRST DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM 50

After the picture by Gerard Honthorst in the National Portrait Gallery.

CHARLES THE FIRST 80

From the painting by Van Dyck at Windsor Castle.

GEORGE VILLIERS, FIRST DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM (AFTER HIS ASSASSINATION BY FELTON) 102

From the picture by Van Dyck, by permission of the Marquis of Northampton.

WILLIAM LAUD, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY 138

After a copy of Van Dyck's picture in the National Portrait Gallery.

CHARLES II. AS PRINCE OF WALES 150

From the picture by Van Dyck at Windsor Castle.

CHARLES LEWIS, PRINCE PALATINE 166

From an engraving after Van Dyck's picture.

ALGERNON PERCY, EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND 184

After a copy of Van Dyck's picture in the National Portrait Gallery.

MARY, PRINCESS OF ORANGE 208

After a picture by Van Dyck.

FIVE CHILDREN OF CHARLES I. 212

After a copy of Van Dyck's picture in the National Portrait Gallery.

Facing page

WILLIAM OF NASSAU, PRINCE OF ORANGE 226
From a painting by Gerard Honthorst at Windsor Castle.

THOMAS WENTWORTH, FIRST EARL OF STRAFFORD 230
From the picture by Van Dyck, by permission of the Earl of Home.

ELIZABETH, QUEEN OF BOHEMIA 262
After the picture by Miereveldt in the National Portrait Gallery.

MARIE DE MEDICIS 272
From a contemporary engraving.

HENRY RICH, EARL OF HOLLAND 294
After the picture by Van Dyck.

HENRIETTA MARIA

CHAPTER I

1609—1623

Birth — Condition of Europe — Henri-Quatre's household — Henrietta's infancy—Marie de Medicis' coronation—The King's murder—The Queen's regency—Henrietta's childhood—At Blois—At Court—Her marriage mooted—First and second missions to England—Changes at the French Court—The Comte de Soisson's suit—Visit of Charles and Buckingham to Paris.

ON November 25th, 1609, Henriette Marie de Bourbon was born at the Louvre, the youngest daughter of Henri of Navarre and his Italian wife, Marie de Medicis—a child destined to become the wife of one king, the mother of two, and who, claiming in years to come the title of "la reine malheureuse," asserted her pre-eminence in sorrow.

The welcome she received was a cold one. The King was said to have declared that he would have given a hundred thousand crowns had the child been another son, whilst to the people a daughter represented only an additional burden on the national finances. No public rejoicings celebrated the event, nor was it announced with the customary salute of cannon.

The usual formalities were, however, duly observed. Henri himself, with his ministers of State and the princes of the blood, were present at the birth; and the King, after the necessary recognition of the newborn infant as his own, handed her over in person to the care of the governess of the royal children, Madame de Monglat. This ceremony performed, he no doubt considered that his duty towards his unloved wife and her child had been discharged, and that he was at liberty to turn his attention elsewhere.

There was much in the condition of Europe at the moment to cause it to present an interesting study to eyes so keen and eager as those of Henrietta's father. The Evangelical Alliance and the Catholic League were standing over against one another, hostile forces, each seeking to enlist new allies, and awaiting an opportunity for settling their differences by an appeal to arms. To the ex-Huguenot King it was natural that the adherents of the new religion should look for support; whilst the attitude of the court of Spain towards him was, as ever, irreconcilable in its enmity. An open breach could not be much longer deferred, and Henri was ready, if not anxious, to take his part in the fray. In spite of the policy of peace he had consistently pursued for ten years past, fighting was his natural occupation—almost his recreation; and on the battlefield he was more at home than in a palace. For months he had been strenuously preparing for the contingency of a war, and actively engaged in raising money and collecting troops with a view to taking the field in person so soon as the right moment should arrive for striking a blow at the House of Austria. It was evident that that moment was approaching.

The internal affairs of France were meantime in a satisfactory condition. During the interval following the Peace of Vervins the financial condition of the country, under the management of the Duc de Sully, had been retrieved, the Crown debts paid, the revenue increased, and taxation diminished. Manufactures had been encouraged, commercial enterprise promoted, public works inaugurated. Both as soldier and statesman the King was in a position to look backwards with satisfaction, and onwards without alarm.

Coming to Henri's own household, there was less cause for congratulation. If he had been eminently successful in managing the affairs of France, the like success had not attended his domestic arrangements. The fault was largely his own. Greatness and littleness, weakness and strength, were blended in his character to a singular degree. He was a greater figure, says one of his biographers, seen from a distance than when regarded close at hand. If the criticism might apply to many, if not most, of the world's heroes, it was true in an unusual measure of Henri. His faults had brought their own retribution, and his domestic life was one of misery.

When the divorce obtained, after long delay, from Rome had enabled him to contract a second marriage, Henri had reluctantly consented to make Marie de Medicis, niece of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, his wife. The union, dictated by political expediency, had proved as unhappy as might have been anticipated. The Queen —" une femme grande, grosse, avec des yeux ronds et fixes," to quote Michelet's description, " l'air triste et dur, Espagnole de mise, Autrichienne d'aspect "—had wholly failed to win her husband's affection ; while she, for her part, was not a woman to accept with meekness the position forced upon her, or to forgive the insult she had been offered when, brought a bride to Paris, she had found herself compelled to live under the same roof as the King's reigning mistress, the Marquise de Verneuil.

Nor had she been without even more serious causes of disquietude than her husband's infidelities. The promise of marriage obtained from him by the Marquise was held in some quarters to throw a doubt upon the validity of his union with herself, and to raise a question as to the legitimacy of the royal children. It was known that Madame de Verneuil had a son whom she called her Dauphin, nor can the Queen have been ignorant that the possibility of obtaining a second divorce had more than once presented itself to Henri's mind. Under these circumstances his Tuscan wife was not likely to forget her wrongs, or to allow herself to be softened by the graceful and charming letters addressed to her by the King, than whom no man was a greater master in the art of such compositions. It might be well to be told that, were it *bienséant* to declare oneself in love with one's own wife, Henri could assure her that he was very much in that condition. But deeds, as well as protestations, would have been necessary to restore peace, and deeds were not forthcoming.

Political differences had widened the gulf opened by private dissensions. The year before Henrietta's birth a Spanish ambassador had arrived, charged with a proposal for the double marriage afterwards carried into effect, conditional on the King's abandonment of the Low Countries. The Queen had been eager to close with the offer, but Henri remained obdurate. Pledged by treaty to the enemies of Spain, he intended to continue true to his word. He attempted, however, to soften the Queen's resentment, and to restore some degree of harmony to their relations, by the suggestion, in February, 1609, of a domestic compromise. If Marie would consent to dismiss her Italian favourite, Concini, and his low-born wife, the Queen's foster-sister, Henri, for his part, offered to give up all connection with any woman but herself. The terms of the proposed arrangement were not carried out. Concini and his wife remained at court, their influence over the Queen dominant; whilst Henri's manner of life continued unaltered.

His promise, had it been accepted, would scarcely have proved binding upon a man of his habits and temperament. Almost at the very time that his overtures of conciliation had been made, a fresh element of discord must have been supplied by the passion he had conceived for Mademoiselle de Montmorency, then barely sixteen, and who a few months later became the wife of his nephew, the Prince de Condé. When, four days after Henrietta's birth, Condé, taking the safe-guarding of his wife's honour into his own hands, fled with her into the dominions of the King's enemy, the Archduke Charles, Henri's rage and despair knew no bounds. As uncontrolled in his passions as a boy of twenty, it has been believed by some historians that the vehemence of his desire to regain possession of the fugitives was more instrumental in finally determining him upon taking the field than any arguments of state policy.

It is certain that preparations for war were pushed vigorously forward during the first months of Henrietta's infancy. In the meantime the latest addition to the royal nursery had probably vindicated, in her father's eyes, her right to existence. Henri was an affectionate father. His children, he once told Sully, were the prettiest in the world, adding that his happiest hours were spent in playing with them; and the journal of the Dauphin's domestic physician, Jean Héroard, is proof sufficient of the intimate personal relationship existing between himself and the sons and daughters, whether born in wedlock or not, he had brought into the world. For Henrietta it would seem that he had a special fondness, discerning, it may be, even in her babyhood, the likeness to himself said to have been traceable in his youngest child. His time for enjoying her society was to be short. Before she was six months old he was in his grave.

The infancy of the royal children was chiefly passed at the old Château of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, where, as later on at Fontainebleau or the Louvre, they were strangely associated with the sons and daughter of Gabrielle d'Estrées and with Madame de Verneuil's son. Of Henrietta the glimpses to be obtained are few. We are shown the baby, on the very evening of her birth, inspected by the eight-year-old Dauphin. "Playing with her hand," records Héroard, "he said to her, 'Laugh, laugh, my sister; laugh, laugh, little child. See how she squeezes my hand!'" But a blank follows, when her movements are for the most part included by the chronicler in those of "Messieurs et Mesdames" the King's younger children, only those of the heir-apparent being considered worthy of separate mention.

The first public appearance of the little Henrietta was at the tardy coronation of her mother in the May following her birth. Her second, coming all too closely upon it, was at her great father's funeral.

Shortly before the birth of her youngest child Marie had wrung from her husband a promise that her *Sacre*, deferred for ten long years, should at length take place. The performance of this function, carrying with it the public recognition of her position as Henri's lawful wife, and the consequent legitimacy of her children, was the more urgently necessary owing to the claims of the Marquise de Verneuil, whose endeavours to induce the King to withhold from his wife her undeniable rights had hitherto been successful. But Marie was no less determined than her rival, and Henri had found himself at last unable to oppose a further resistance to her just demands.

Months, nevertheless, passed by, and the ceremony, in spite of the Queen's importunities, was still postponed, when the course of events furnished Marie with fresh arguments in favour of the accomplishment of her desire. War was imminent; Henri was expected to take the field in person, and his wife was to fill the post of Regent during his absence. The appointment of a Council of State to assist and control her had been already a cause of offence, and, failing the possession of undivided authority, it was essential in her opinion that she should not occupy the anomalous position of an uncrowned Queen. The reasoning was unanswerable; yet it was not without extreme reluctance that Henri yielded, and consented to the ceremony taking place before his departure.

If his distaste was primarily due to the influence of the Marquise, other causes contributed to it. His mind was strongly possessed by the conviction that the impending solemnity would be fraught with danger to himself. It was an age of superstition; and astrologers and soothsayers had, with such rare consonance of opinion, connected the approaching event with his own death, that incessant reiteration of prophecies of evil had taken effect upon his brain, keen and sagacious though it was.

His nervous depression deepened as the date fixed for the coronation drew near.

"Ah, my friend," he once said to Sully, "how displeasing to me is this *Sacre*! I know not wherefore, but my heart tells me ill will come of it."

"They have told me," he said another time, "that I shall be slain at my first great pageant, and that I am to die in a coach."

Sully, half infected by his master's forebodings, would have had the affair deferred. Henri would have been only too willing.

"But what will my wife say?" he asked; "for she has a marvellous desire for this *Sacre*."

"Let her say what she likes," was the minister's blunt rejoinder; adding his conviction, scarcely justified by the circumstances, that in the face of the King's presentiments of evil the Queen would not press for the performance of his promise.

Henri was possibly better acquainted with his wife's temper than his friend. At any rate, the preparations were continued and the fatal day drew near.

May 13th had been fixed for the ceremony. The court slept the previous night at Saint-Denis, and in the morning the coronation took place with all due magnificence. Surrounded by her children, Marie de Medicis vindicated her claim to be recognised as Henri's lawful wife and as Queen of France. Her three sons and her three daughters were all present, the two youngest, Gaston, Duc d'Anjou, and little Henrietta, in their nurses' arms, taking their share in the show. Their father, for once playing a part subordinate to his wife's, was remarked to be unusually gay. A contemporary, nevertheless, notes that on entering the church—the sun was shining brightly outside—and finding it thronged from end to end by a crowd, all keeping a great silence, he observed that he was reminded by the scene of the last great judgment—for which, he added, might all men prepare!

The day went by without disaster. Though passing a sleepless night, Henri's good spirits were still noticeable in the morning. Yet, walking back to the palace, after having heard mass, the subject of death crept again into his discourse.

"I shall one day die," he told his companions, perhaps half in jest; "and when you have lost me, you will know my worth."

Bassompierre, by whom the conversation is recorded, took him to task. When would the King, he asked, cease to trouble his friends by talking of his approaching death? With God's help he would live for many happy years; proceeding to remind his master of those possessions which should contribute to make life desirable. The King sighed.

"My friend," he said, "all that must be left behind."

It must be admitted that, to a man oppressed by a presentiment of his approaching end, and for the moment, presumably, under the influence of religious sentiment, Bassompierre's enumeration of the blessings he enjoyed, including the wife he had wronged and the women he had preferred to her, was not calculated to prove reassuring. At any rate, being very melancholy, he caused Henrietta, with her brother Gaston, scarcely more than a year older, to be brought to him, in the hope of diverting his thoughts from disquieting channels. The expedient was possibly successful, and playing with his children he may have succeeded in dismissing his forebodings; for presently, disregarding the warnings he had received, he went out with the intention of driving to the Arsenal, where Sully lived, to pay a visit to the minister. Not an hour later his dead body was brought back to the Louvre, stabbed to the heart by the hand of the religious maniac, Ravaillac. Henrietta had lost her father.

Panic at first prevailed, both in the palace and in Paris. It was apprehended that the crime had been the work, not of a single fanatic, but of an organised conspiracy. The ministers of the Crown, more sternly perhaps than would have been the case had Marie de Medicis' regrets carried greater conviction to their minds, forbade her to indulge in vain demonstrations of sorrow. Her children must be her first care.

"The King is dead," she cried.

"Pardon me, Madame," the Chancellor replied, "the kings of France never die. Restrain your tears till you have ensured your own safety and that of your children."

No time was lost in placing the new Government upon a secure footing. That very afternoon the Dauphin was recognised as King and Marie made Regent. At supper little Louis, not nine years old, was served, as befitted his new dignity, by his attendants on their knees. The child, surprised, at first gave a laugh; then, recollecting himself, he burst into tears.

"I would I were not King," he cried; "I would it were my brother. They will kill me as they have killed the King my father."

That night the six royal children, closely guarded, were gathered together. For the most part they were fortunately too young to be aware of impending peril; and Henrietta, at least, will have been unconscious of certain loss and possible danger.

It was soon clear that the fears entertained of concerted action on the part of the authors of the crime were groundless. Whoever might be responsible for the murder, it was to prove an isolated act. On the following day the King was taken in person to meet his Parliament, and the regency of the Queen-Mother was formally confirmed. A new reign and a less fortunate era had begun for France.

One more scene closes the short chapter of Henrietta's life connected with her father. Carried in the arms of Madame de Monglat, she was taken, with her brothers and sisters, to pay the ultimate honours to the great dead King. As the solemn procession passed on its way it was observed that, whilst the little Dukes of Orleans and Anjou never ceased sobbing, the boy-King remained tearless. One after another the children of France sprinkled their father's corpse with holy water. Last of all the asperge was placed in Henrietta's hand, and she too performed her part in the prescribed ceremonial. Five days later the body of Henri-Quatre was borne in state to Saint-Denis and sepulchred amongst the kings of France.

Into the question of the forces put in motion to compass the death of the leader of Protestant Europe this is not the place to enter. Whether, as some suspected, the Queen herself had been privy to the designs upon his life—in a contemporary record it is significantly observed that she was not sufficiently surprised by the catastrophe; whether the crime was perpetrated at the instigation of opponents political or religious; or whether the King was the victim of pure fanaticism or madness, have been matters much debated. The answer to be given to such questions does not affect the importance of the event as regards Henrietta Maria and her future.

There is a certain interest attaching to the speculation, unprofitable though it may be, as to the difference it might have made to the destinies of Henri's youngest daughter, and through her to those of England, had the assassin's knife missed its aim. The principles of the great opportunist, in matters of religion, were in striking opposition to the line of conduct unflinchingly pursued by Henrietta. A kingdom was well worth a mass, said the Bearnois. A mass, one imagines that Henrietta would have unhesitatingly declared, was well worth a kingdom. But Henri was dead, and his daughter, for good or for ill, was to learn her lessons of religion and state-craft from the wife he had never loved.

Marie de Medicis did not fail, during her first weeks of widowhood, to make a decent and becoming show of grief.

"Thou didst come," she told the Tuscan secretary, Cioli, sent on a mission of condolence, "to my wedding. Thou wast present at the beginning of my joys. Thou hast once more come now that they have had an end." To her cousin, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, she wrote that in her grief and affliction she needed all the consolation to be obtained from God and her friends. After which, the necessary tribute having been paid to the memory of the dead, she set herself to make the most of the good fortune fallen, unexpectedly or not, to her share.

The policy pursued during the years of her regency was what might have been expected from her character and sympathies. "C'est la France," says Michelet, "retournée comme un gant." Extravagance replaced economy. Sully was succeeded in power and influence by Concini, now Marquis d'Ancre, and his wife. The Spanish alliance and double marriage, rejected by Henri, were soon to follow. Public works were discontinued, manufactures discouraged. The insolence of the nobles reached its height. In 1613, and again two years later, unable to tolerate Concini's supremacy, they broke into open insurrection; and when peace had been nominally restored, Condé, first prince of the blood, was consigned to the Bastille. There followed the young King's revolt against his mother's domination, instigated by the Duc de Luynes, formerly his page and now his favourite; the arrest and murder of Concini; and the exile of Marie herself to Blois.

It was in the midst of these stormy scenes that Henrietta's earlier childhood was passed. Little mention of her is made in the records of the time. The youngest and for the moment the least important of the children of Henri-Quatre, she is for the most part passed over. We are told of her beauty; of her passionate affection for her mother; her love of music, painting, and dancing; and of her distaste for more weighty studies. We are informed—and considering how ample were to be her opportunities for serious reflection in after life, one could find it in one's heart to be glad of it—that there was in her nature more "d'enjouement que de sérieux"; and we catch an occasional glimpse of the small royal figure as she takes part in some solemn state pageant.

Thus she is first found assisting, borne in the arms of the young Princesse de Condé, at her brother's coronation in the autumn succeeding her father's murder. Then no more is seen of her till the following year, when the first gap was made in the royal nursery by the death of her second brother, Henri d'Orléans. Always a delicate child, nothing in the circumstances warranted the suspicion of foul play; but it was a time when poison, freely employed, was always suspected, and the anxiety and disquiet caused by his death was such that the Regent—as usual in a condition of hostility to the princes of the blood—was compelled to invite them in a body to visit the remaining children of France, and to assure themselves, by ocular demonstration, of their safety and welfare. Two years later Henrietta played a chief part in a religious function. It was the custom of the day that the royal children, having been baptized or *ondoyé* at their birth, should be publicly christened at a later date, and she was four years old when the ceremony, shared by her brother Gaston, was performed. In a *Discours* addressed to her mother, and printed the same year, an account of the affair is given.

"Seeing the favour of nature in all points of perfection," wrote the anonymous author, "stamped upon the countenances of Monsieur the King's brother and of little Madame, and bearing witness to the excellence of their souls, your Majesty, in order to free them entirely from the power of Satan and to heap upon them the graces of God, ordered holily that on June 15th, 1614, the remaining acts and ceremonies of the Sacrament of Baptism should be administered to them at the Louvre by the illustrious Cardinal de Bonzy, your two children being dressed in white satin."

Marguerite de Valois, his father's divorced wife, was the godmother chosen for Monsieur, whilst Henrietta's sponsors were her own eldest sister and the Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld.

Marie de Medicis—the fat banker, as she was called by her insolent rival, Madame de Verneuil, in allusion to her Medicean origin—was a devoted mother, and accustomed to bestow her personal supervision upon the training of her sons and daughters. It was her endeavour to inspire them from the first with a high conception of their own importance, causing them early to receive the visits of ambassadors and other personages of rank, and only allowing access to her son, even whilst he was still Dauphin, to those prepared to pay due respect to his position and prospects.

Such a system was not calculated to lighten the labours of the officials entrusted with the education of the children, and to judge by Héroard's account of the relations of the little Dauphin with the *gouvernante*, Madame de Monglat, collisions of the child's will with lawful authority were not infrequent. It is said, nevertheless, that her charges remained much attached to this lady; and to her daughter, Madame de Saint-George, Henrietta clung in after life with characteristic tenacity of affection. It is to the *gouvernante* that the first letter from her pen, preserved at St. Petersburg, is addressed, containing an affectionate apology for some childish outbreak.

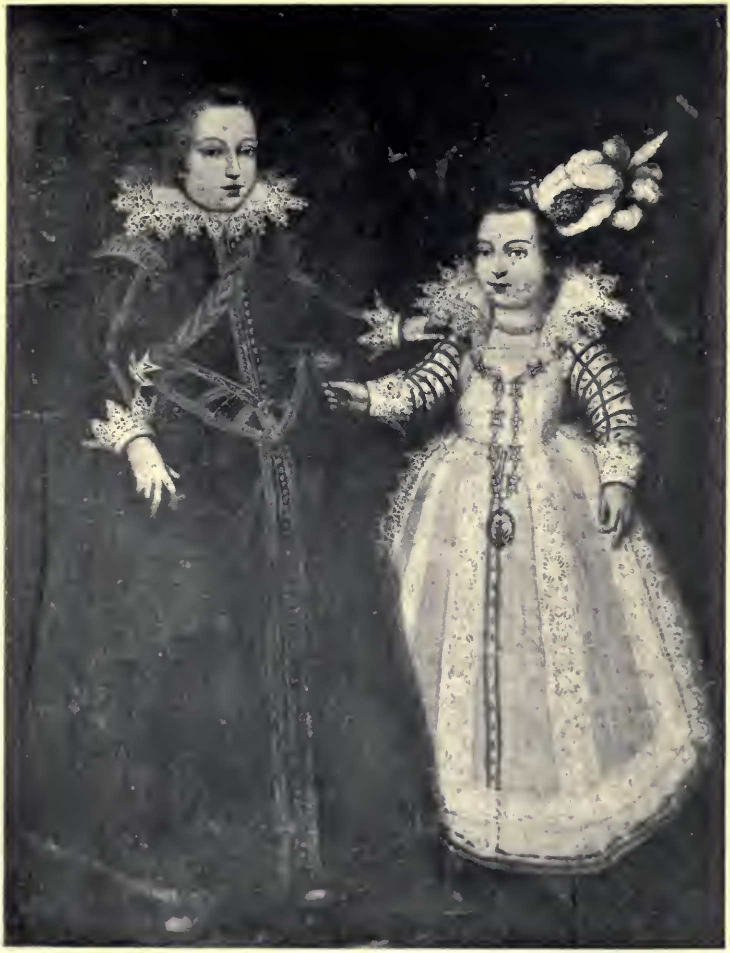
" Mamangat," wrote the penitent Princess, " I pray you to excuse me if you perceived the little *vertingo* which had possession of me this morning. I cannot be good all at once, but I will do all I can to content you; and I pray you to be no longer angry with me, who am and will be all my life, Mamangat, your affectionate friend, Henriette."

Of her relations with the preceptor, M. de Brèves, by whom her education, with that of her brother, Gaston, was superintended, less is known. It is certain that, to her lasting regret in after years, she profited but little by his instructions. Had she displayed more ardour in the pursuit of knowledge than was the case, it would have been no easy matter, under the circumstances, to acquire it. The spoilt child of her mother, and doubtless of her mother's court, lessons must have been constantly subject to interruptions from the state ceremonials in which she continued to take her part. At six years old she was present at Bordeaux when her sister Elisabeth was handed over to her boy-bridegroom, Philip of Spain, and the Infanta, Anne of Austria, became Queen of France ; and she also assisted at the grand entry into Paris in honour of the reconciliation between Marie de Medicis and the princes of the blood. The prominence given to the child upon these occasions has been considered to demand an explanation ; and it has been suggested that her mother sought to make capital out of her youngest daughter's popularity to counterbalance the dislike entertained by the French people for herself.

Marie's pre-eminence in the State was not of long duration. When Henrietta was no more than eight it was terminated by her open breach with the young King, and her banishment to Blois.

To the Queen-Mother the blow was crushing. Concini, to whom, in spite of all opposition, she had remained obstinately faithful for close upon twenty years, had been murdered in the streets of Paris. His wife, her foster-sister and constant companion, was publicly executed two months later. The reins of government were violently wrested from her hands, to be transferred to those of her son's upstart favourite, de Luynes ; and she herself, ambitious and power-loving, was reduced, after seven years of supremacy, to watch, in helpless inaction, the course of events.

The change, so far as the Queen-Mother was concerned, was startlingly complete. It must also have taken effect upon her little daughter. During the period when Henrietta was keeping her mother company in her forced retreat, the two cannot have failed to be more intimately associated than was possible whilst the Regent had been absorbed by affairs of State. In those earlier days the younger children had for the most part remained at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, paying only occasional visits to Paris ;



From a contemporary picture by an unknown painter.

HENRIETTA MARIA AND HER SISTER.

[*To face p.* 16.

but mother and daughter must now have been thrown constantly together, and whilst the affection of the child was thereby concentrated and developed, Marie will have enjoyed exceptional opportunities of impressing upon her the lessons she conceived it well that she should learn, and of laying the foundations of an influence maintained and strengthened in later years. If, in the purity of her after-life, Henrietta presented a singular contrast to the standard of morals prevailing at the French court, the effect of Marie de Medicis' tutelage was nevertheless markedly and unhappily apparent in the future. Unlike her mother in much, the two were united by a bond of love unaffected by time or separation ; and to it may be traced, not too fancifully, many of the articles of those creeds, political and religious, which contributed so materially to wreck the cause of monarchy in her adopted country.

The period spent by Henrietta in comparative retirement at Blois was not unduly prolonged ; yet, in a century when womanhood was apt to be lamentably ante-dated, it may be assumed that, with her strain of Italian blood and the training received in the hothouse atmosphere of the French court, she had already begun to leave her childhood behind her when she next emerges into sight. This was in Paris, at the marriage of her sister Christine with the Duke of Savoy. It is said that Saint Francis de Sales, watching the child on this occasion and noting her pleasure at the sight of the bridal pageant, took the opportunity of pointing a moral. A more solid glory, he told her, would one day be hers, hazarding the further prediction that she was destined by God to uphold in the future the glory of His Church.

Whether the saint or the biographer was responsible for the prophecy, the thoughts of the little Princess appear to have been occupied at the moment with more mundane matters. The marriages at which she had successively assisted, when the chief actors had been little older than herself, may naturally have directed her speculations to her own matrimonial prospects; and it is recorded in an early biography that, after this marriage, "she durst not follow her mother to the displeasure of her brother, lest she might injure her own." It is possible that she was given no choice in the matter. As the sole remaining marriageable daughter of France she had materially gained in importance, and Louis and his advisers may have preferred to withdraw her from the hostile influence of the Queen-Mother. It is certain that not until a final reconciliation took place in the following year between Marie de Medicis and her son was Henrietta restored to her care.

In the meantime, her transference from Blois to the Louvre was a change not likely, in spite of the separation involved, to prove altogether distasteful to the gay little girl. Judging by the woman she afterwards became, she will have been, at eleven, an eager and interested spectator of all that was going forward and of the vivid life of the day—a time when a sentiment took rank as an affair of State, and the fate of a nation might be determined by a love-affair.

Of amusement and entertainment there would have been no lack. If Anne of Austria, in religious matters, was a congenial companion to the pupil of the saintly Carmelite, Mère Madeleine, to whom Henrietta had been taught to refer the solution of spiritual problems, she was also gay, fond of innocent diversion, and one of the most beautiful women of a day when beauty, in men and women alike, was a force to be reckoned with. At this time, too, peace and harmony prevailed at the palace. Anne, it was true, had begun her married life with a robust hatred of her husband's favourite, the Duc de Luynes; but she had afterwards conceived so strong an affection for his wife, better known by her later title as the Duchesse de Chevreuse, that, not altogether to her own advantage or profit, she had adopted her as her chosen companion and friend, thus sealing a treaty of amity in which the Duke was included. To a court, therefore, that, "if lacking in prudence, was not lacking in joy, since youth and beauty reigned there supreme," Henrietta, after her three years of partial seclusion, was introduced.

Until the question of her marriage brought her into prominence it is left chiefly to the imagination to form a conception of the child destined to play so important a part in English history. But it was not long before that question was raised. In the year 1619, gravely weighing the risk to her prospects should she give offence to her brother, Henrietta is represented as electing to remain at Paris rather than return to share her mother's retirement. By the following year the selection of her husband was under practical consideration.

A singular unanimity prevailed in France as to the desirability of cementing an alliance with England by means of a marriage between Henri-Quatre's youngest daughter and the heir to the British throne. The Duc de Luynes, still all-powerful with the King, had set his heart upon the plan; the Prince de Condé concurred in his views; and the Queen-Mother, on the recovery of her position and authority, likewise pronounced herself in favour of the design, the line adopted by her being doubtless dictated by Richelieu, then rising to paramount power in the State. Three hostile forces were ranged against him: the great nobles to whom, as an upstart adventurer, he was scarcely less obnoxious than his early patron, Concini; the Huguenots, always a threatening and disturbing element in the country; and the House of Austria. With a view to securing an ally in the event of a struggle with the last, and of weakening the hands of the Protestant party at home, the great ecclesiastic was ready, in spite of opposition from Rome, to effect an alliance with the most powerful anti-Catholic power in Europe.

But if it was mainly through his influence that the marriage eventually took place, Richelieu was not responsible for the abortive attempts to arrange the matter set on foot by the Duc de Luynes in 1620. These preliminary proceedings were, indeed, conducted after a fashion calculated to rouse the contempt of so consummate a diplomatist. It was well known that James was bent upon an alliance with Spain, hoping by that means to regain for his son-in-law, the Elector Palatine, the dominions of which he had been deprived by the House of Austria. The negotiations had gone so far as to render it practically impossible, even had such been his desire, to withdraw. Yet it was at this juncture that an envoy of no great weight or rank, named Du Buisson, was despatched to England to sound the King on the question of the French marriage. The enterprise was not likely to be attended with success.

The Comte de Tillières, ambassador then accredited to the court of St. James, has recorded, with the animus of an official passed over in a matter of importance, the history of Du Buisson's mission, and its result.

A purchase of horses for the Prince de Condé's stables had served as a pretext for the envoy's visit to England, and the ambassador, though not without suspicions of the fictitious nature of the errand, obeyed his instructions by facilitating the business in hand, and deputed his secretary to conduct the interloper to the King. The event must have gone far to console de Tillières for his scurvy treatment. Du Buisson was indeed received with courtesy at court ; but when he had introduced, after a blundering fashion totally inconsistent with diplomatic adroitness, the proposals with which he had come charged, the King replied that, whilst sensible of the honour done him by an offer he would gladly have accepted under other circumstances, he was too far pledged to Spain to enter at present upon fresh negotiations. The reply was a practical refusal.

When James, out hunting, communicated the matter to de Tillières, the Count did his best to save the dignity of France. Du Buisson's proposal, he assured the King, was quite unauthorised. It was not the custom, he added loftily, to seek husbands for the daughters of France. It was for any prince who desired to wed them to make the first advances, and de Tillières had no doubt that he would be charged with his master's disavowal of what had taken place.

The disavowal was promptly authorised, and there the matter might have ended. But de Luynes was not to be so easily discouraged. Throwing the blame of the miscarriage upon his agent, he determined upon another attempt, his own brother, the Maréchal de Cadenet, being now charged with the delicate mission. Though proceeding with more caution than Du Buisson, de Cadenet met with no better success. Buckingham and his subordinate, Doncaster, showed themselves so unfavourably disposed towards a re-opening of the question that the envoy did not so much as dare to broach it to the King, and took his departure, having failed in his object, and, moreover, offended all the susceptibilities of the Comte de Tillières by the arrogance of an upstart, coupled with a determination to learn nothing from the lessons in manners and diplomacy which the ambassador was desirous of giving him.

On de Tillières' return to London, after speeding the unwelcome guest on his homeward journey, the good effects of the mission, he observes ironically, were apparent. Friends of France were in disgrace for having lent a favourable ear to the marriage project; James, instigated by the Spanish ambassador, had taken umbrage at de Cadenet's proceedings, and the Spanish negotiations were more advanced than before. Fate and diplomacy appeared to have joined hands to keep the crown of England from Henrietta's head. It might have been to her advantage had they succeeded.

Whether the person chiefly concerned in their success or failure found leisure and opportunity to watch the proceedings of her brother's agents on the opposite side of the Channel there are few indications to show. One of her first recorded sayings points to the fact that she was not without opinions of her own on the subject. "A wife," she is reported to have declared, when it was suggested that religion might prove an obstacle to her marriage—"a wife ought to have no will but that of her husband." The expression of the sentiment—singularly out of harmony with the principles governing her conduct in after-life—goes to prove that her brain was already occupied, at eleven years old, with speculations as to her probable future; but it was not until three years later that she was brought for a moment into something like personal contact with the man destined to become her husband.

During these years many changes had taken place at the French court, no doubt affecting in some degree the King's sister. The reconciliation between Marie de Medicis and her son had had a destructive influence upon the domestic happiness of the young King and Queen. So long as the ex-Regent had remained at a distance from the court, if no strong bond of affection had united the pair, their relations had not been wanting in harmony. With Marie's return, the death of the Duc de Luynes, and her recovery of influence and power, matters underwent a change. "Le paix entre la mère et le fils," says Madame de Motteville, "brouilla le mari et la femme"—a sequence of cause and effect not unknown in domestic life. The Queen-Mother's policy in seeking to produce estrangement between her son and his wife was attended with marked success. Thrown upon her own resources and finding her chief consolation in the society of the Duchesse de Chevreuse, Anne was not always wise in her methods of pleasure-seeking. The Duchess was eminently fitted to serve as purveyor of amusement to her mistress; and though said to have complained of the difficulty she found in instilling into Anne a proper appreciation of the uses of life and love, she succeeded to a certain extent in the endeavour, and under her guidance, according to Madame de Motteville, it became the custom for the most serious matters to furnish material for pleasantry.

At a court thus reconstructed the future Queen of England was receiving the training designed to fit her, at fifteen, to fill the place at Whitehall occupied by her sister-in-law at the Louvre. When this is borne in mind it will be found less astonishing that she should have made mistakes than that she should have been guilty of nothing worse. It is true that the influence of the Queen-Mother had encouraged the pretty spoilt child to set herself in opposition to her brother's wife; but the fact that she was accompanied to England by the Duchesse de Chevreuse, and that that lady remained at her court for some considerable time, is proof that the leader of the revels at the Louvre had not been unsuccessful in ingratiating herself with little Madame.

Whilst all the world, in jest or earnest, was engaged in making love around her, Henrietta was not likely to remain unprovided with a lover. The part was played by her young cousin, the Comte de Soissons, of whom it is stated that he "pretended to Madame," and that his "respects for her were not thought fit to be discouraged till a seasonable condition offered itself." The intervention of Charles Stuart as a suitor was, in other words, fatal to the hopes entertained by the young Count.

In the month of February, 1623, an incident occurred causing a revival of the desires and regrets that had attended the unsuccessful missions to St. James' three years earlier. It was at this time that the first meeting took place between Henrietta and her future husband. The occasion was the rehearsal of a ballet shortly to be performed at court, the Queen, her fourteen-year-old sister-in-law, and nineteen other ladies being included amongst the dancers. The principal *rôle*—that of Juno—was of course assigned to Anne; whilst that of Iris was bestowed upon Madame. The child acquitted herself of her performance to the great satisfaction of the court, and received an ovation. But the circumstance distinguishing this special entertainment from others of the same sort was the presence of two unexpected guests who, under the pseudonyms of John Brown and Tom Smith, had obtained permission to witness it. These strangers were in truth the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Buckingham, then passing through Paris on the celebrated journey to Spain, undertaken with the double object of affording Charles an opportunity of winning the personal affections of his bride, and of bringing the protracted marriage negotiations to a successful end.

Finding themselves on the spot, and hearing of the projected rehearsal, the travellers had conceived the idea of assisting at it *incognito*, and had contrived, by means of periwigs and other appliances, to carry their purpose into effect. Whether the identity of the two Englishmen with the heir to the throne and James' powerful favourite had remained altogether unsuspected must continue undetermined. The facility with which a couple of unknown foreigners, bearing no credentials and under a purposely plebeian disguise, obtained admission to the Court entertainment, seems to cast a doubt upon the matter. At any rate, Charles was enabled to inspect at close quarters the bride so persistently offered for his acceptance; whilst Buckingham saw for the first time the woman for whom he afterwards conceived so violent a passion.

At a later stage, when he was addressing Henrietta as his betrothed, a letter from Charles rested the tribute he then offered to her personal attractions not only upon reports transmitted to him by others, but upon the witness of his own eyes, he himself having been permitted, though unknown, to look upon her. It is also alleged in an early memoir that the Prince, seeing her dance in the memorable ballet, "as she could rarely well . . . took in by the eyes that love which he preserved inviolable for her till his death." Both statements must alike be regarded in the light of polite fiction. The description given by Charles of the impression made upon him by the fourteen-year-old charms of Madame may have been, under the circumstances, a pardonable departure from strict adherence to fact; but that it strained the truth does not admit of doubt. At the time of the incident his heart was wholly occupied by the thought of the unseen bride whom he had set himself, in romantic fashion, to win; and had it been otherwise, Henrietta would have been eclipsed by the more mature beauty of the young Queen. If proof were wanting, it is to be found in the letter written to his father on the following day, when, mentioning his presence at the ballet, he added that of all the ladies taking part in it the Queen was the fairest, and that the sight of Anne had quickened his desire to see her sister, the Infanta.

When the stranger guests had gone their way there was trouble and regret in Paris. The real quality and station of the disguised spectators of the dance had quickly become known, and for different reasons more than one person felt injured. The English ambassador, Lord Herbert, who had not been let into the secret, was naturally perturbed—partly probably owing to the slight put upon himself, partly lest danger should threaten the heir-apparent on his adventurous journey. It was annoying to be asked by a casual Scot, named Andrews, whether he had seen the Prince, and to have given evidence of his ignorance by asking what prince was in question; and more annoying still to be informed by the French secretary that "his Prince" had left that morning for Spain. Nor was it Lord Herbert alone who felt aggrieved. Anne of Austria—having, it would appear, the interests of France and of little Madame more at heart than those of her own sister in Spain—

expressed her regret, later on, that Henrietta had not been seen to greater advantage than was possible by a dim light and at a distance, her face and figure gaining in beauty when viewed close at hand. Whilst Madame herself is reported to have observed, with a sigh, that the Prince need not have gone so far as Madrid to look for a wife.

It is further said that, this remark having come to the ears of the Comte de Soissons, he was much disordered, till such time as Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld "dealt freely with his mother," telling her that if they thought the King would give his sister to the young Count in marriage they were much mistaken. If this incident is correctly reported it seems likely that this free dealing with Madame de Soissons would have taken place after the failure of the Spanish expedition, and the consequent revival of hope with regard to the cherished projects of the French court. For the events of the ensuing year put an end once for all to her young cousin's pretensions to Henrietta's hand.

CHAPTER II

1623—1625

Failure of marriage negotiations with Spain—Private mission to England—De Tillières and the *cordelier*—Lord Kensington at Paris—His letters—Joined by Lord Carlisle—Protracted negotiations—The Treaty of Marriage—Fresh difficulties—Betrothal and marriage—Buckingham and Anne of Austria.

BEFORE many months had passed all the world was aware that Charles' adventurous journey had been taken to no purpose and that the marriage negotiations with Spain were practically, though not formally, at an end. Every attempt had been made by the English Government to meet the Spanish demands; concessions had been granted to which it would have been difficult in any case to reconcile the belligerent spirit of British Protestantism, but all had proved vain. It was clear that it was not intended at Madrid that the marriage should take place. The Prince of Wales returned home, to all intents and purposes, a free man.

The events following the arrival of Charles and the favourite in England made the position patent to every one. A Parliament was summoned, and it joined with Buckingham and the Prince in demanding from the King a declaration of war with Spain. A treaty was concluded with Holland, and negotiations were set on foot with the Protestant princes of Germany. Under these circumstances it was not difficult to foresee where next a bride for Charles would be sought. If France was

Catholic it was also the inveterate enemy of Spain, the champion *par excellence* of Catholicism in Europe ; nor does any marriage for the heir-apparent save one with Henrietta appear to have been so much as in question. Whilst he was yet in Spain, and when it must have been becoming evident that the negotiations there carried on were doomed to failure, the young Queen, in the course of one of the few private conversations with Charles permitted by the rigidity of Spanish etiquette, had suggested to him the substitution of her own sister for her husband's. She wished, Elisabeth had said, that he would marry Henrietta. What response was made by Charles does not appear ; and upon his expressing a desire for another interview Elisabeth declined his request, on the sufficient grounds that it was a Spanish custom to poison any man suspected of gallantry towards the Queen. She had, for the rest, only given utterance to a wish felt by many.

The course of events had been carefully followed in France. The French Secretary of State, whilst giving the English ambassador the assurance he had demanded that the Prince should be permitted to proceed unmolested from Paris to Spain, had added that he could not promise not to despatch those in the wake of the travellers who would keep the French Government informed as to the success attending the journey. The collapse of the negotiations would in any case have been hailed with the utmost satisfaction at Paris. As rendering possible the marriage upon which the French authorities had long been bent, it opened out new vistas of hope.

For information as to the next step taken by the French court, on receiving the intelligence of Charles' departure from Spain, it is necessary to rely chiefly upon the account given by the ill-used ambassador, M. de Tillières.

It was three years since Du Buisson and de Cadenet had successively been sent to interfere with his cautious and methodical diplomacy. The envoy now entrusted with a mission to England was yet more unsuitable. An English *cordelier* who had been resident at Madrid, he had—"after the fashion of monks," says the indignant ambassador, "who love intrigues, and are mostly restless spirits"—brought to Paris the welcome news of the termination of Charles' visit to Spain, and had, moreover, suggested his own fitness to act as intermediary between the French Government and the Duke of Buckingham on the subject of the English marriage, grounding this astonishing proposal upon certain facilities he represented himself as possessing for gaining access to the Duke. By the Queen-Mother, with whom he succeeded in obtaining an interview, he was sent to Richelieu, now her chief adviser, and received from the Cardinal, according to de Tillières, both leave to proceed to England and carry his proposal into effect, and sufficient money for the journey. Acting upon his instructions, he appears to have put himself into communication with Buckingham, and to have met with a favourable reception from the Duke—the latter preferring, as de Tillières surmises, to treat with an ignorant monk rather than with a practised diplomatist.

The progress of events was first made known to the accredited ambassador by the adventurer himself. Informed one afternoon that an "honest Englishman" desired speech with him, he was met by the *cordelier* with the request that a packet containing important communications, and addressed to a lady attached to the royal household, might find a place in the ambassadorial bag.

When, in reply to this demand, "digne d'un maniaque," the Count required to be informed of the nature of its contents, his visitor introduced himself in the character of the agent selected by Richelieu and the Queen-Mother to conduct negotiations undeniably more fitted to be entrusted to their official representative. Whereupon the enraged Count not only refused to forward his visitor's papers, but told the reverend envoy that, being "half an ambassador," he could employ a courier of his own.

De Tillières would have done better, in his own interest, to keep his temper. The complaints he proceeded to address to head quarters only elicited a disavowal from the Queen-Mother of her complicity in the matter. Admitting that the errant monk had been the bearer of a communication from Spain, she denied that he had had her authority for his subsequent proceedings. The disclaimer may be taken for what it is worth, but there seems no reason to doubt de Tillières' account of the affair, rendered more probable by the fact that, the French Court being, on his hypothesis, anxious rather to hasten the marriage than to conduct matters with dignity, he himself was shortly removed from his post.

It is true that, remembering the issue of the Spanish negotiations, protracted over years only to end in total failure, the alleged desire of the French authorities to accelerate those now to be set on foot is not without excuse. The mission of Lord Kensington, afterwards Earl of Holland, marks the next stage in the progress of events.

The agent selected for the purpose of sounding the French Government before a formal proposal of marriage should be hazarded was admirably adapted for the task. Coupled by Sir John Eliot with the Duke of

Buckingham, his patron and friend, both are described by the national leader as "young and gamesome, fitter for sports than for business." Yet Kensington showed himself adroit and skilful in the matter of the marriage negotiations. He was also eminently successful in turning to account the opportunity afforded him of securing for himself the favour of the future Queen. In the years that were to follow, and until it had been proved beyond doubt that he was undeserving of her confidence, Henrietta remained faithful to the friendship inaugurated at the time of his embassy; and the part played by the envoy in her future life was an important one.

By Clarendon's account, as accomplished a courtier as any to be found in the palaces of all the princes of Europe, Kensington was also versed in affairs of State, domestic and foreign; and—what was scarcely of less consequence in his present employment—was "of a lovely and winning presence, and gentle conversation." Wise in his generation, he had not only sedulously cultivated the goodwill of the all-powerful favourite, but had refrained from any endeavour to establish a personal relationship between himself and James. The success of this line of conduct was apparent in the fact that "the King scarce made more haste to advance the Duke than the Duke did to promote the other." He is, indeed, said to have been the only man at court, not of Buckingham's own kin, whom the favourite loved and trusted. The Duke's confidence was now shown by his appointment to fill the post of ambassador extraordinary, in all but the name, to the court of France.

In February, 1624, the envoy reached Paris. On the day following his arrival he sent an account of his reception to the Duke, his patron.

It had been on a Sunday evening that he had found himself at his destination; and hearing that the young King was expected to leave Paris the next day he determined to lose no time in presenting himself at court, that he might kiss Louis' hands before his departure and assist at the Queen's masque, arranged to take place that night. To the palace he therefore repaired on the evening of his arrival.

In the chamber of the Duc and Duchesse de Chevreuse, to whom he seems first to have gone to pay his respects, he found husband and wife engaged in dressing for the performance. An hour later the Queen herself, with Madame Henriette, joined the party and stayed "a great while." And it was observed, adds Kensington, "that Madam hath seldom put on a more cheerful countenance than that night." He might guess, he was told, at the cause. On the envoy Madame made a most favourable impression. She was, according to his account, lovely and sweet. Her growth, it was true, was not great, but her shape was perfect, and every one swore her sister, now tall and goodly, had been no taller at her age.

No business could be done that night, especially as Kensington was at some pains to disown any more important errand than one of mere goodwill. In his next letter to the Duke, however, he is able to report progress. The Queen-Mother, whom he finds to be the chief power at Court, is favourable to the English interests, and had given him explicitly to understand that she had not lost her inclination for the proposed marriage: "More than this she could not, she thought, well say, it being most natural for the woman to be demanded and sought."

To the Prince himself, in a letter of February 26th, the envoy gave additional details as to his proposed bride.

"Sir, if your intentions proceed this way, as by many reasons of State and wisdom (there is cause now rather to press than slacken it), you will find a lady of as much loveliness and sweetness to deserve your affection as any creature under Heaven can do. And, Sir, by all her fashions since my being here, and by what I hear from the ladies, it is most visible to me, her infinite value and respect unto you. . . . I must somewhat more say of admiration for the person of Madam, for the impressions I had of her were but ordinary; but the amazement extraordinary to find her, as I protest before God I did, the sweetest creature in France. Her growth is very little short of her age, and her wisdom infinitely beyond it. I heard her discourse with her mother and the ladies about her with extraordinary discretion and quickness. She dances (the which I am a witness of) as well as ever I saw any creature. They say she sings most sweetly; I am sure she looks so."

In the meantime Kensington himself, partly no doubt in his character of envoy, but also owing to personal attraction, was winning golden opinions at the French court. Though addressing himself in the first place, according to his instructions, to Maria de Medicis, he had evidently succeeded in ingratiating himself through Madame de Chevreuse with her mistress, the young Queen; and so well had he excited the imaginations of both with regard to the Duke of Buckingham in particular, that he was able to announce that a reception beyond the usual terms of courtesy was awaiting his patron whenever it should please him to visit France. His letters home continued, on the other hand, to be well calculated to take effect upon Charles' romantic disposition, and to increase his desire that the fresh marriage project should be brought to a successful conclusion.

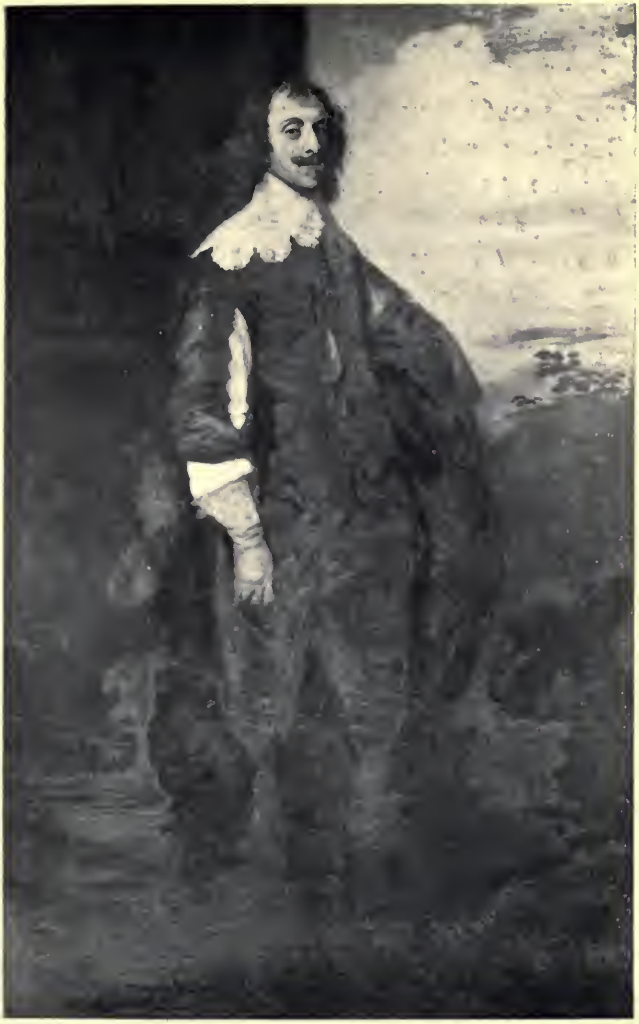
A quasi-message from the young Queen contains a curious congratulation upon his escape from Spain and from the negotiations which had had for their object a match with her own sister. "She says," Lord Kensington reported, "she durst say you were weary with being [in Spain], and so should she, though she be a Spaniard." It was again clear that Anne of Austria had, in biblical phrase, forgotten her own country and her father's house, and was ready to throw herself into the interests of her husband's family. She made Kensington display the Prince's portrait, showed it to her ladies with infinite commendation, and added her hopes that some good occasion might bring Charles to Paris, so that they might see him "like himself."

Henrietta, not unnaturally, felt it hard that she alone should be debarred from the contemplation of the Prince's portrait—"she whose heart was nearer it than any of the others." Accordingly, she contrived that it should be secretly borrowed from the owner and brought to her, when, retiring to her cabinet with a single witness, she opened it in haste and blushing, kept it for an hour, and made herself well acquainted with the features of the man to whom circumstances pointed as her future husband. "Sir," adds Kensington, after relating the incident, "this is a business so fit for your secrecy as I know it shall never go further than to the King your father, my Lord Duke of Buckingham, and my Lord of Carlisle's knowledge. . . . I would rather die a thousand times than it should be published, since I am by this young lady trusted, that is for beauty and goodness an angel."

So far all was going as well as could be wished. Kensington may fairly have congratulated himself upon the success of his diplomacy. The attempts made by the Spanish ambassador to interpose hindrances by "letting them know that the Prince cannot have two wives, for the Infanta is surely his," completely failed in their object ; and so favourably had the preliminary mission prospered that Kensington was before long joined in Paris by the Earl of Carlisle, his own close and intimate friend, both being formally invested with the character of ambassadors extraordinary, instructed to carry on the marriage negotiations.

Kensington's new colleague was a Scot, brought by James to England at the time of his accession. Bred in France, he had been regarded with more favour by the King's new subjects than any other of his unpopular nationality ; and his master's efforts had secured for him two wealthy wives—the first the heiress of Lord Denny, and the second the beautiful Lady Lucy Percy, daughter of the Earl of Northumberland, and afterwards Henrietta's own ill-chosen friend. "A very fine gentleman and a most accomplished courtier," Carlisle was noted for his habits of luxurious extravagance, and was no less well adapted than Kensington to produce a good impression at the Louvre.

The single discordant element at court was represented by Henrietta's disappointed lover, Soissons. As the hopes of those desirous of the English alliance rose higher, the patience of Madame's young cousin became exhausted. Irritated at the magnificent reception accorded to Charles' delegates, the lad not only stormed against the match, but manifested his indignation "more fully than discreetly" by a refusal to acknowledge Kensington's salute. Taken to task for this exhibition



From the picture by Van Dyck, by permission of Viscount Cobham.

JAMES HAY, EARL OF CARLISLE.

[*To face p.* 35.

of temper, he replied that it was caused by no personal ill-will towards the envoy, but only to his errand, which went so near his heart that, had it not been on behalf of so great a prince, he would have cut Kensington's throat. After this outbreak the young Count seems to have quieted down and reconciled himself to the inevitable, since he is next found accepting the present of an English horse offered him by the ambassador. With this one exception unanimity prevailed as to the desire that the negotiations should be brought to a successful issue. But though Kensington, by whom the vicarious courtship appears still to have been chiefly carried on, was permitted greater frequency of access than before to Madame, and was allowed to entertain her "with a more free and amorous language" on behalf of his master, the state arrangements, dealing with practical difficulties rather than with sentiment, made slow progress. In a conversation with the Queen-Mother the envoy took her lightly to task for the treatment his Prince was receiving. In adverting to the miscarriage of the Spanish alliance, Marie de Medicis had observed—not, one imagines, without satisfaction—that Charles had been used ill in Spain.

Kensington admitted the fact.

"So he was," he allowed; "but not in his entertainment . . . but in their frivolous delays and . . . unreasonable conditions. . . . And yet," he added, smiling, "you here, Madam, use him far worse."

"And how so?" questioned the Queen.

"In pressing upon him the same, and even more unreasonable, conditions than Spain," answered the ambassador boldly. After which he demanded permission to entertain Madame with his master's commands.

Marie made difficulties. What, she questioned, would Kensington say to her?

"Nay, then, Madam," rejoined the envoy, again smiling; "your Majesty would impose on me the like law that they did in Spain upon his Highness"—in refusing Charles freedom of intercourse with the Infanta.

The case, the Queen contended, was different. The Prince was not now present in person, but only by deputy.

"But a deputy representing his person," Kensington urged.

The Queen, one fancies, began to lose patience.

"Mais pour tout cela, qu'est-ce que vous direz?" she insisted.

"Rien qui ne soit digne des oreilles d'une si vertueuse Princesse," returned Kensington loftily. Pressed again, he consented to furnish Henrietta's mother with an outline of the second-hand love-making he had prepared. Having been granted more liberty of language than before, he obeyed his Prince's command in presenting his service to Henrietta, not now out of mere compliment, but prompted by the passion and affection kindled in him by her outward and inward beauty. Such was to be the drift of his remarks, together with the expression of Charles' determination to do all he could in furtherance of the alliance.

Marie was pleased to approve.

"Allez, allez," she exclaimed graciously, "il n'y a pas de danger en tout cela. Je me fie de vous."

Proceeding to seek Henrietta herself, Kensington accordingly made his speech, "amplifying it a little more," though not abusing the confidence placed in him by the Queen-Mother. Madame, for her part, courtesying low in acknowledgment, declared herself extremely obliged to his Highness, and would think herself happy in an occasion of meriting her place in his good grace's affections.

This was all very well, and is no doubt an example of what was taking place day by day through the long months occupied by tedious controversy and diplomatic finesse. But the negotiations still halted. Fresh conditions were made by the French Government. The Pope disliked the match, and the religious difficulty threatened to prove insuperable. On August 24th, in an angry letter to Carlisle, Charles bade his envoy dally no more, and if necessary break off the marriage treaty, though preserving if possible friendly relations with the Government. A further effort was, indeed, to be made to bring matters to a successful conclusion, "for I respect the person of the lady as being a worthy creature, fit to be my wife; but as you love me, put it to a quick issue."

To "Captain Coxcomb," as he calls Kensington, the Prince wrote that the Monsieurs had played so scurvy a trick that, were it not out of respect for Madame, he would not care a farthing for their friendship.

Charles' spirit and determination may have borne good fruit and convinced the "Monsieurs" that they were in danger of over-reaching themselves. By the latter part of September Kensington was able to report success. General satisfaction prevailed, and the commissioners had gone straight to the Queen's chamber to carry the good news and to announce that the marriage was made.

The King had been out hunting at the time; but not only the two Queens, but little Madame herself, had been present when they were admitted, and a description is furnished of the demeanour of all three.

The Queen-Mother's joy was excessive. Anne of Austria, always eager for the match, had declared that, had she been presented with a kingdom, she would have been less rejoiced. All eyes were then turned towards Madame, to note how the person principally concerned was affected by the news—or rather, as Kensington phrased it, how she would carry her joy. The child's looks and smiles were expressive enough, "though she would fain have kept her gravity"; and "she straight went to her lodging, being unwilling to continue in that constraint . . . for she had a desire to enjoy her joy by her liberty and mirth." So soon as she had escaped from the Queen's apartment, Henrietta was joined by her young brother, Gaston d'Orléans, who, having also heard the good news, had hastened to offer his congratulations. Taking her aside, he asked his sister whether she thought not this day the happiest that ever she had, and Kensington had been assured her answer was in the affirmative.

All, therefore, seemed to be going smoothly. The Queen-Mother was doing her utmost to create in the bride-elect a sense that she was the favourite of fortune. Her ladies were directed to sing the Prince's praises, as the noblest and best in the world, and Henrietta listened with "an unspeakable joy." Kensington, for his part, lost no opportunity of performing a like office by his master, and increasing by his reports the ardour of Charles' suit. Thus he wrote one day that it had been his fortune to enter Madame's chamber as she was singing with her master, and, her back being towards the door, he had come up softly unperceived, and, listening, had been amazed at her skill. He added that he had already been told of her musical talent, but had discounted the praises lavished upon it, attributing them in part to her position. Now he found there had been no exaggeration in the matter, and that she sang as no one else.

Kensington was doubtless aware that to a man of Charles' artistic tastes such an accomplishment was of no small moment. Carlisle, too, had his own accounts to give to the Prince of his future wife. Writing in November to say that all remaining difficulties had been removed, it is to be inferred from his letter that Madame had been at this time displaying some embarrassment or shyness; for the Queen-Mother had sent for her, and whilst commending her conduct hitherto as having given her infinite contentment, she had added that she must not now make *la petite bouche.*

"Rejoice, my daughter," she had told her, "as I myself do, with all my heart."

Marie's admonition, if such it was, had taken effect; for when the English envoys came to make their reverence to their future mistress, her joy was so full that she could not give it expression, but, laughing and in few words, rendered them thanks.

"*Eh bien*, Madame," said Kensington, now preferred to the earldom of Holland, "to-day you will laugh; to-morrow you will speak; after that you will sing."

Whereupon, smiling, she promised, on their next meeting, to do the visitors that honour.

So far as the French Government was concerned there was ample cause for self-congratulation. It had practically succeeded in obtaining all it had demanded; nor is it easy, reading the articles of the Treaty of Marriage, signed in November, 1624, to believe that James can ever have intended them to be carried out fully, or that he conceived it possible that it should be done.

By the stipulations contained in this astonishing document—some of its clauses were, indeed, kept private—it was provided that Madame should be supplied with a chapel in all the royal palaces, as well as in any place where she might reside. A bishop and twenty-eight priests were to be included in her household. Her domestic establishment was to consist exclusively of French Catholics; and the children born of the marriage were to be brought up by their mother till they reached the age of thirteen. So far the terms of the engagement, if thoroughly obnoxious to British prejudice, were, nevertheless—except perhaps for the French constitution of her household—what might have been expected, should Charles choose for his wife the sister of the Most Christian King. Conditions dealing with the treatment of British subjects were a different matter, conceding as they did to a foreign power the right to intermeddle in domestic affairs, and admitting a principle unlikely to be tolerated by any self-respecting people. There had, nevertheless, been inserted in the treaty private or secret articles, requiring the liberation of all Catholics imprisoned since the breach with Spain (when persecution had begun afresh), and furthermore stipulating that they should remain for the future unmolested, and that the goods they had forfeited should be restored to them.

Such were the main provisions of the contract. When the temper of the English people at the time is taken into account, it is almost incredible that either James or Charles, when he personally endorsed the terms of the treaty, should have consented to them. The document was, however, duly signed, and the Père de Bérulle despatched to Rome to sue for a dispensation.

Meantime, fresh difficulties had arisen. In March Carlisle was railing at "these base perfidious Monsieurs," and impressing on his master the fact that "a Monsieur is to be ridden with a discreet high hand." Not content with all that had been already obtained, new demands had been made upon the English Government, which the ambassador begged the Prince to be firm in refusing. He would, Carlisle felt no doubt, obtain his incomparable mistress, but he must change his manner of pursuit; she was worth the roaring for.

Little Madame herself was plainly perturbed. "These accidents"—the unreasonable requirements of the French authorities—had begotten in her much amazement and grief. Though kept in ignorance of part of what was going forward, she divined that all was not right, and her ladies found a great perplexity in her. If a day passed without bringing about a meeting with the English envoys, she feared they were discontented, "the which in this case is death to her." She was, however, revived and comforted by the letters Charles continued to write. Before the end of March, acting on the advice of his ambassadors, he had given an explicit refusal to the fresh conditions proposed to him, and Carlisle's forecast was justified. He was able to report to his master that all was finally arranged.

Pope Urban had not granted the necessary dispensation willingly; and when at length it was obtained, his consent was apparently dictated rather by the fear lest the marriage, in default of it, should take place without the papal blessing, than from any approval of the match. Proceeding to make the best of a bad business, he addressed a letter to the bride, impressing upon her the motive by which he had been actuated—namely, a hope that she would prove the guardian angel of English Catholics. The eyes of both worlds, earthly and spiritual, were, he told her, upon her. There was no danger that Henrietta would forget his admonitions. In reply she gave the Pope "her faith and word of honour" that only those of her own religion should attend upon her children, and her promise to care for the welfare of Catholics in England. So far as she could compass it, her pledge was redeemed.

The necessary arrangements were thus completed. Upon his father's death in March, 1625, Charles at once renewed in his own person the marriage treaty, and all promised well. The accession of the new King had been the occasion of an outburst of popular enthusiasm, and Sir Benjamin Rudyard only gave expression to the passionate loyalty of Parliament and people when he declared that from the present sovereign everything was to be hoped. It was not a moment when the nation was inclined to be critical. If a Protestant Queen would have been still more acceptable to the country, its confidence in Charles was sufficient to reconcile public opinion to the match. The country trusted the King, and was content to allow him to choose his own bride.

On May 8th the solemn betrothal was celebrated in Paris, the Duc de Chevreuse, Charles' own kinsman, acting as his proxy. On the following Sunday, May 11th —the old English May-day—the marriage itself took place; Henriette Marie de Bourbon had become Queen of England, and had gained the crown afterwards to prove so heavy a burthen. It was well that, as the child sat at the great state banquet between her brother the King and her husband's representative, those who loved her could not foresee her future fate.

On the same day Carlisle sent an account of the affair to the King. His marriage had been fully accomplished, with dignity and infinite acclamation of the

French people. The new Queen would now, after some fitting ceremonies, hasten to cast herself into her husband's arms. Moreover, the two French Queens were intending to accompany the bride as far as Dover in order to see Charles and contemplate his virtues—an honour greater than that enjoyed by Solomon, since the Jewish King was visited by but one Queen of Sheba, and no less than three were to pay the like tribute to the writer's master. And Carlisle is confident—a little anxiety is apparent in this and other letters—that the King will have everything so prepared for their reception that they, like the Queen of Sheba, may admire.

The project of the French Queens was not carried into effect; and Carlisle hints at a doubt, in a subsequent letter, whether the suggestion had not been thrown out in the hope of luring Charles to a meeting at Boulogne, a plan strongly deprecated by the ambassador. In the meantime Henrietta had given no proof of the longing ascribed to her to hasten her departure for England. Whether owing to indisposition on the part of her brother, who was to have accompanied her as far as Amiens, or to other causes, a delay not unfruitful in results intervened before the new Queen set out on her journey. Before she had left Paris an event took place causing general surprise. This was the arrival of the Duke of Buckingham. The reasons of his sudden visit can only be matter of conjecture. By some it was attributed to the King's desire to ascertain the causes of the delay. By others it was supposed that he was merely despatched by his master to serve as escort to Henrietta, and as the bearer of presents from Charles to his bride. A letter from the Duke himself seems to point to the former reason being the true one.

Writing to the King on the day when he had his first audiences, he states that he had found the travellers unresolved, owing to Louis' illness, on a date of departure. He had obtained "thus much, or rather thus little"—since he knew that it would not answer to his master's expectations—that the journey should be begun on the following Wednesday. It would be the Duke's endeavour to hasten as much as possible a meeting between "the two perfectest creatures in the world." Notwithstanding this somewhat perfunctory tribute, when Buckingham descends to more detail in the way of a description of the bride, there is a marked absence of the extravagance of praise characteristic of the letters of Carlisle and Holland. He could not yet send the measure of Henrietta's height, but hoped to get it the following day. She had been sick, and was still looking lean and pale, but was now mending fast, assured of her happiness. With these cursory observations the Duke dismissed the important subject of the Queen's appearance.

If his first interview with Henrietta had taken place in the presence of her sister-in-law, Buckingham may not have had as much attention to spare for his master's bride as might otherwise have been the case. The sojourning of the favourite in France, short though it was, was fraught with serious consequences.

Although Holland and Carlisle, with their ally the Duchesse de Chevreuse, had contrived that their patron should be cordially received at court, the pleasure caused by his arrival was by no means unmixed. Brienne, the King's secretary, who had been sent to England on business connected with the marriage treaty, and had enjoyed opportunities there of cultivating the Duke's acquaintance, could clearly have dispensed with its renewal; and the prejudice he already entertained received a sensible increase when the favourite made his appearance at the Louvre—"l'esprit rempli," said the secretary, "de beaucoup de chimères." The nature of one at least of these "chimères" must soon have been patent to the entire court. Buckingham spent no more than a week in Paris; but during that space of time he conceived the passion for the young Queen of Louis XIII. subsequently exercising, in the opinion of most authorities, so powerful an influence upon his policy.

People in England were meantime growing impatient. In Paris, too, it must have been recognised that there was nothing to justify further postponement in delivering over Henrietta to her husband's keeping; whilst, as to her fresh escort, every one—save, perhaps, the person most nearly concerned—was in haste to be quit of "cet étranger présomptueux."

It had been found necessary, in consequence of King Louis' indisposition, to modify the original intention that he should accompany his sister part of the way to the coast. When it became apparent that he would proceed no further with her than to Compiègne, the discreet Brienne represents himself as having pointed out to Anne of Austria, a little officiously, that she would do well, under the circumstances, to relinquish her own intention of making one of the royal party who were to attend Henrietta to Calais, and to remain instead with her husband.

He was undoubtedly right. Nevertheless, the Queen, disregarding his counsels, elected to pursue her way towards the sea-coast. Before it was reached another delay was rendered inevitable by the serious illness of Marie de Medicis, in consequence of which the whole bridal train were detained at Amiens.

In spite of the Queen-Mother's condition time seems to have passed gaily at the provincial town. A grand christening took place, Buckingham standing godfather to the son of the Duchesse de Chaulmes. The event was celebrated by a ball, when Anne outshone all others present—including, one cannot but feel, little Henrietta herself, by rights the central figure of the show—and took every one by surprise by her dazzling beauty. Under these circumstances, to some at least of the royal party, the Queen-Mother's illness may not have been wholly matter of regret. Buckingham's own conduct was ambiguous. Whilst appearing to wish to hasten the journey, he let it be understood that he had orders to await her Majesty's recovery. Altogether, "la manière d'agir de cet étranger," says Brienne severely, "me déplut beaucoup." This masculine point of view contrasts curiously with that of Madame de Motteville, who learnt the facts from Anne herself. It is evident that, if in her opinion the Queen's heart was not untouched, she had many excuses. Was it surprising, she asks, if Buckingham, with his beautiful face, his great soul, the glamour of the position he occupied in England, and his noble if blameworthy desires, should have had the happiness of obtaining from the Queen the avowal that, had it been possible for a good woman to love any man save her husband, he alone would have been able to win her grace?

However this might be, it was becoming clear that the situation could not be further prolonged. An intimation to that effect having been given by the Queen-Mother, the Duke made a virtue of necessity and requested permission to resume the journey, Henrietta being apparently consulted by no one on the subject. There was a leave-taking between the Queen and her lover—Anne in her coach and the Duke at the door—

when Buckingham's tears are said to have flowed freely, and the Princesse de Conti, present on the occasion, afterwards observed that, though ready to answer to the King for his wife's virtue, she suspected her at least of pity.

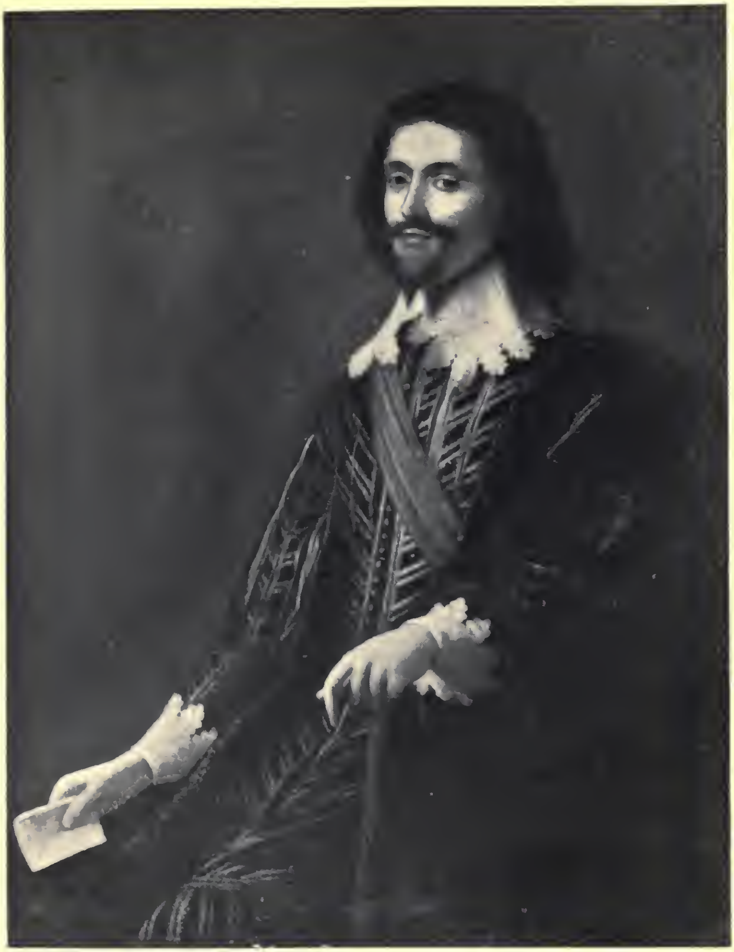
Another parting had likewise taken place—the inevitable separation of Henrietta from her mother. At that last farewell Marie de Medicis placed in her daughter's hands a lengthy epistle, purporting to contain her own final counsels and admonitions. The true author of this document appears to have been the Queen-Mother's confessor, Père de Bérulle, and the paper, of some literary merit and not lacking in a certain eloquence, bears the mark of a hand more practised in the art of composition than that of the Italian Queen. Admirable as are its precepts and its exhortations to the performance of the duties of a wife—principles, one observes in passing, upon which Marie de Medicis' own conduct had been in no wise based—the main object of the writer was clearly to safeguard the fifteen-year-old Queen from influences adverse to her faith, to kindle her to greater religious zeal, and to enlist her sympathies on behalf of the English Catholics. Henrietta is exhorted to mould her conduct upon that of her ancestor St. Louis, and to be, like him, firm and zealous for the Christian religion, in defence of which he exposed his life, dying faithful amongst infidels.

"I must end," concludes a document containing close upon three thousand words. "I must let you go, weeping and praying God to let you know what I am unable to say and what my tears, if I wrote it, would efface. I leave you to the guardianship of God and of His angel. I give you to Christ, our Lord and Redeemer. I implore the Virgin, whose name you bear, to vouchsafe to be the Mother of your soul, as she is the Mother of your God and Saviour. Adieu, once more and many times, adieu. You belong to God. Remain God's for ever."

Thus was Henrietta sent forth into the world to fight her battles for God and for the Church. The sequel leaves no room for doubt that the child took to heart the lessons she had received.

One other event marks this journey. It closes the episode of Anne of Austria's intercourse with George Villiers. The parting witnessed by the Princesse de Conti was not to be their last. The Duke was no man to let his own interest or pleasure wait upon that of a king or of a kingdom. At all costs he determined to see the Queen once again. Making a pretext of urgent business, he therefore left Henrietta at her next halting-place and hurried back to Amiens. Finding the Queen-Mother still confined to her bed, he demanded an interview, transacted the business he had alleged as his excuse, and then requested an audience of her daughter-in-law. Anne, also in bed, and become, a little suddenly, discreet, at first declined to grant his petition—relenting afterwards so far as to send her maid-of-honour, the Comtesse de Lanoy, to ask the Queen-Mother's advice as to whether the "étranger présomptueux" should be accorded the grace he besought.

Madame de Lanoy, "wise, virtuous, and old," deprecated the visit. Marie de Medicis disagreed with her. Considering the part she had played in fomenting dissension between her son and his wife, it may be doubted whether she would not have been ready to welcome any action of the Queen's, innocent in itself, to which Louis would be likely to take exception. In answer to the representations of the Countess, she



After the picture by Gerard Honthorst in the National Portrait Gallery.
Photo by Emery Walker.

GEORGE VILLIERS, FIRST DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM

[*To face p.* 50.

asked why, since she herself had granted the Duke an interview, Anne should not do likewise? Madame de Lanoy, prudently refraining from pointing out the obvious reasons, returned to her mistress, defeated. forced to withdraw her opposition, the wise, virtuous, and aged lady took her measures. Investing the interview with the formality of a state ceremonial, she assembled a miniature court in Anne's bed-chamber; and when Buckingham, disregarding the presence of witnesses and throwing himself on his knees beside the Queen, kissed the bed-coverings, Lanoy requested him to rise and to take the seat to which he was entitled by his rank, explaining severely that the attitude he had assumed was not customary in France. The Duke protested. He was not French, he said, nor compelled to yield obedience to French laws. Then, addressing himself to the Queen, "lui dit tout haut les choses du monde les plus tendres."

The Queen herself had, it appears, hitherto played a passive part in the melodrama. "She did me the honour to say that she was embarrassed," says Madame de Motteville; and embarrassment, joined to some indignation, kept her at first silent. When she at last spoke, it was to blame the Duke's temerity, and—"though perhaps without overmuch anger"—to order him to rise and leave her.

Thus ended, with the exception of a public leave-taking on the following day, an episode fraught, in the opinion of most historians, with momentous consequences. The Duke had effectually barred his way to a return to France. On three separate occasions the French authorities were explicit in their refusal to receive him as ambassador. It remained, if his parting with Anne at Amiens was not to prove final, for him to force his way to Paris in the character of an enemy. To this end it is believed that his future policy was directed. What that policy was is well known. For the present he returned to his duty of escorting Henrietta to England.

CHAPTER III

1625—1626

Henrietta's arrival in England—Meeting with Charles—Religious and domestic difficulties—Charles' first Parliament—Dissensions in the royal household—Buckingham's hostility—He is declined as envoy to Paris—Charles' complaints of his wife—He resolves to dismiss her French attendants.

THE arrival of the young Queen in England did not, after all, take place till towards the end of June. Her meeting with the King, as well as the opening scenes of their life together, are described in detail by authorities French and English. It is curious to compare the different interpretations placed upon each incident according to the bias of the chronicler.

The Comte de Tillières and his wife were attached to Henrietta's household, and the ex-ambassador, in his character of chamberlain, has left an exhaustive account of the slights he conceives to have been put upon the bride and her train. His complaints must be accepted with reservation, but though naturally prejudiced in his mistress's favour, so far as the disputes between herself and the King are concerned, he would appear to have been an honest man. Nor would he have had any temptation to make it appear that the marriage for which he had laboured so industriously was likely to prove a failure. Punctilious on matters of etiquette he undoubtedly was ; and the very departures from rigid conventionality commending themselves to the spirit of romance evidenced by

Charles' Spanish expedition, would be regarded by his wife's chamberlain as lacking in respect to the bride.

It should be borne in mind that the two chief actors in the drama now beginning were little more than boy and girl: that Henrietta was a spoilt child of fifteen, a stranger in a foreign land, and not inexcusably disposed to cling with unwise tenacity to all that savoured of the life she had left behind her; whilst Charles, the two-months King, entertained pronounced notions of a husband's authority, and was young enough not to make due allowance for the petulant wilfulness of the lonely child committed to his care. In matters of religion he had already given unmistakable proofs of the strength of the prejudice entertained by him against his wife's faith. One of his initial measures as King had been to give orders that no recusant Papist, of what rank soever, should be provided with mourning; whilst a court gossip adds that not only had the High Sheriff of Nottingham been deprived of his office in consequence of his having left the judges at the door of the Protestant church, but that, furthermore, a certain Irish earl had received his dismissal from court owing to his refusal to attend the King's devotions. "If he will not come to my prayers," said Charles, "let him get out of my house." The frame of mind thus indicated was scarcely such as to incline him to look with a favourable eye upon the train of bishops, priests, and lay Catholics, masculine and feminine, by whom his wife came attended.

By a comparison of the French and English accounts it is possible to gain a fairly clear impression of the first days spent by Henrietta in England, supplying the key to much that followed.

The salvos of artillery announcing the embarkation at Boulogne of the Queen and her escort, did not find

King Charles at Dover. He had indeed resorted thither some weeks earlier, when the arrival of his bride had been expected to take place at once; but repeated delays had wearied him out, and he had withdrawn to join the expectant court at Canterbury. His impatience had been fully shared by his subjects.

"We do very little here," says a news-letter from London, "but expect the Queen's coming and marvel it is so long deferred. The lords and ladies waiting for her at Canterbury are in great trouble and chagrin. But the King cheers them up almost every day with messages from Dover, and persuades them to patience."

On June 20th Henrietta was reported to have reached Boulogne, a letter written on that day by the Mayor of Dover to Lord Conway serving to emphasise the youth of the traveller. News had been brought by a mariner of her arrival at the French seaport about five o'clock on the previous afternoon, when the man himself had seen her viewing the sea at such close quarters that it had been bold to kiss her feet. Her Majesty had indeed been over-shoes, returning from the shore with great pleasure.

Charles himself was at Canterbury when a messenger, riding very swiftly, brought tidings that the Queen had at length landed upon English soil. It is said that it was in deference to her mother's expressed wishes that he put off the meeting with his bride until she should have had time to recover from the effects of her first sea-voyage; but the thoughtfulness of mother and husband alike was probably misplaced, and the absence of a welcome must have struck Henrietta coldly. Nor did the arrangements made for her reception at Dover find favour in the eyes of her chamberlain. The castle was "un vieux bâtiment fait à l'antique"; the

Queen was ill lodged, and her apartments badly furnished.[1] There was a total absence of that splendour represented by the ambassadors as awaiting her in England; and it was, perhaps, scarcely to be wondered at that, fresh from the gorgeous Parisian fêtes in her honour, Henrietta should have experienced a chilling sense of disappointment.

By ten o'clock the next morning Charles had reached the castle. Breakfast was proceeding, but disregarding the King's suggestion that it should not be interrupted, Henrietta rose hastily from the table upon hearing of his arrival, and, running downstairs to meet him, would have knelt to kiss his hand, had he not instead "wrapt her up in his arms with many kisses." She had, however, been too well primed in her part not to attempt the little set speech with which she had come prepared.

"Sire," she began, "I am come to this country of your Majesty's to be made use of and commanded by you;" but before she could proceed further, nervousness and excitement had got the upper hand and she broke into a passion of tears.

Charles—not, one imagines, without some masculine dismay—led her into an inner chamber, and, with more kisses, did his best to soothe her. Finding her, to use the language of an old biographer, "somewhat surprised" at her position as the bride of a bridegroom hitherto unknown, he set himself to reassure her. She was not fallen, he said, into the hands of enemies and strangers; it was God's will that she should leave her kindred and cleave to her husband, and he himself would be no longer master than whilst he was her servant.

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[1] The Comte de Brienne, also included in Henrietta's train, took, it is fair to say, a much more favourable view. He mentions the magnificence of the banquet prepared, and also the fact that the Crown furniture was in use.

It was gracefully said, and Henrietta appears to have recovered her self-command quickly. Charles, taking stock of the wife provided for him, had glanced down at her feet. Although she only reached as high as his shoulder, so much stress had been laid by the ambassadors upon her lowness of stature, that he had probably formed an exaggerated idea of it, since he seemed surprised to find her no shorter. Henrietta's quick wit divined what was passing in his mind.

"Sire," she said gaily, displaying her shoes, "I stand upon mine own feet. I have no help from art. Thus high am I, neither higher nor lower."

The interview tends to show that the King's method of seeking his bride, and the absence of state ceremonial, had answered the purpose of setting her at her ease. De Tillières, nevertheless, as court functionary, was strong in his disapproval. Charles, he complains, had come badly dressed and worse accompanied; he had "une mine triste," and in her chamberlain's opinion the Queen, after a little conversation, had been no less disappointed in his intelligence than in his appearance.

No record remains to tell whether de Tillières was right. Charles, at any rate, was fully satisfied with the result of the interview. "At my first meeting her at Dover," he wrote to Henrietta's mother at a later date, sadly contrasting her behaviour on her arrival with her subsequent conduct, "I could not expect more testimony of love and respect than she showed me. To give you one instance, her first request to me in private was that, she being young and coming to a strange country, both by her years and ignorance of the customs might commit many errors; therefore she entreated that I would not be angry with her for her faults of ignorance, before I had with my instructions learned her to avoid them, and desired me, in these cases, to employ no third person, but to tell her myself when I found she did anything amiss. I both granted her request and thanked her for it, but desired she would treat me as she asked me to treat her."

So far, in spite of de Tillières, it may be concluded that all had gone well. But it was not long before the elements of future discord became apparent. Their private conversation over and Henrietta's tears dried, she proceeded to present to the King the several members of her household. What Charles' opinion of them became later on is well known, and for Madame de Saint-George in particular, the daughter of Henrietta's *gouvernante* and her own personal attendant and friend, he unfortunately conceived from the first a marked aversion.

To another member of the young Queen's train, Madame de Chevreuse, he might have objected with more justice. It was hinted that her presence in England served the double object of relieving the French court from her gay intrigues, and of affording her with the opportunity of renewing relations with Lord Holland. It may likewise have come to Charles' ears that she had done her best to further Buckingham's suit with Anne of Austria; and he may excusably have suspected her of a readiness to turn her attention towards providing Henrietta with similar pastimes. "Never had woman," says the Cardinal de Retz, "a greater contempt for what is called scruple and duty; she knew no other duty but that of pleasing her lover." It is obvious that a less desirable companion could scarcely have been provided for a bride of fifteen. But whatever may have been Charles' knowledge or suspicions, the Duchesse was too distinguished a guest not to command a welcome, and it was accordingly duly offered her.

When the time came to set out for Canterbury, where the night was to be spent, an incident occurred suggestive of disturbing possibilities in the future. Whatever may have been the rights of the case, it was ill-judged on Charles' part to provoke an altercation on the very first day of his meeting with his bride, by insisting that Madame de Saint-George should yield her place in the Queen's carriage to Englishwomen no better born than herself. Henrietta promptly indicated her temper of mind, as also the precise value of the professions of submission she had just made, by an emphatic refusal to assent to the arrangement. It was, however, not in deference to her protest, but only through the intervention of the French ambassadors, that the lady of the bedchamber was permitted to retain her place ; Henrietta's display of resentment being, even in de Tillières' partial eyes, "un peu trop vif." The first disagreement between her and her husband had taken place.

On the road to Canterbury Henrietta held her first drawing-room. "A goodly train of ladies," Howell records, "attended her coming upon the bowling-green of Barram Downs, who divided themselves into two rows," and thus offered a welcome to the bride. "Methought," adds the chronicler of the scene, "the country ladies outshined the courtiers." By the time Canterbury was reached the Queen had evidently forgotten her late cause of offence, and peace had been restored, since at the banquet there provided she insisted, in spite of the admonitions of her chaplain, who stood at her elbow and reminded her that it was a fast-day, upon partaking of the venison and pheasant carved for her by Charles himself. It may be, nevertheless, that the presence of the priest, as well as the trifling trial of strength, served the King as an object-lesson of the probability of future battles.

That evening, in the great hall of St. Augustine, the English marriage was celebrated, after which Henrietta retired to rest, attended by Madame de Chevreuse ; and, as one may believe, so thoroughly tired out by the events of the long day as to take no exception to the bed grudgingly admitted by her chamberlain to be "moins infâme" than that prepared for her at Dover.

The following day the royal party proceeded to Gravesend, resting that night at a house belonging to the Duchess of Lennox. Henrietta, it was observed, was very melancholy on the journey. Possibly she had drawn disquieting conclusions from the early masterfulness displayed by Charles. Or it may well be that, the first excitement of her arrival over, a realisation of her own practical loneliness may have been gaining on the poor foreign child.

The royal entry into London was made by water, for which an inspection of the fleet lying at anchor served as an excuse, the true reason being the desirability of avoiding, so far as was possible, the infection of the plague then raging in the city. The weather had changed from unseasonable cold to the thunder-heat of a London June, and rain was falling heavily as the royal barge passed up the river. Again the impressions received by the foreign visitors were unfavourable. In spite of the hundreds of vessels forming part of the procession, of the salutes of cannons, of pealing bells and blazing bonfires, all, to French eyes, was melancholy; nor were any *gentillesses* or *galanteries* displayed. To an English eyewitness the progress wore a different aspect, and the King had never looked so merrily as when he stood, his bride at his side and her head just reaching to his shoulder. "She is young enough to grow taller," added the spectator hopefully.

Returning to de Tillières' lugubrious narrative, on the arrival of the Queen at the palace, where at least she might have looked to find the "lits de parade" denied her in the country, it was discovered that she was expected to make use of a bed which, having belonged to Queen Elizabeth, was made after so antique a fashion that the oldest person living could not recall the time when it had been the mode.

Amongst matters more important than the shape of a bed, the religious difficulty was already, thus early, beginning to loom large. It is true that Henrietta—Queen Mary, as she was called at this time and for long after[1]—besides her promising display of insubordination on the matter of fasting, had replied with spirit, when asked if she could endure a Huguenot, by inquiring why not, since her father had belonged to that religion—a solitary instance, as it has been observed, of a token of religious toleration on her part. But the priests in her train, with the young Bishop of Mendes, not yet thirty, at their head, were already making ready for battle; nor was the King meeting them in a pacific spirit. So early as June 25th a news-letter states that the new Queen's priests were importunate to have the chapel at St. James' completed, but that the King was said to have replied that if the Queen's closet was not large enough they could have mass in the great chamber; that were it not wide enough, they might use the garden; if that would not serve their turn, then the park was the fittest place. "So," added the detailer of the news complacently, "they wish themselves at home again."

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[1] She was thus prayed for in English churches after the Restoration.

It must be confessed that, if the young Queen's ecclesiastical advisers showed themselves unwisely impatient, proceedings in England had not been calculated to allay any suspicions they may have conceived that the provisions of the marriage treaty were to be evaded. So far from these stipulations having been as yet put into force, on the very day of Henrietta's arrival certain members of the religion she professed had been thrown into prison. Such a sign boded ill for the future; and the general aspect of affairs suggests the speculation whether, now that Charles was in actual possession of his bride, he may not have begun to entertain doubts as to the wisdom of his choice. In any case, it was too late to indulge in such questionings. The marriage was an accomplished fact. It remained to render it a success.

Meantime, all eyes were turned with interest upon the newcomer, and her subjects were busily forming their conclusions with regard to the King's French wife. Opinions, as was natural, differed. D'Ewes, for instance, was so much struck by her sweet and humble deportment to her women-servants, that he "could not refrain from deep-fetched sighs to consider that she wanted the knowledge of the true religion." Whilst one Mordaunt, sending his impressions of the new Queen to a correspondent, draws a different picture. "However little in stature," he wrote, "[she] is of a most charming countenance when pleased, but full of spirit, and seems to be of more than ordinary resolution. With one frown, divers of us being at Whitehall to see her, she drove us all out of the chamber, the room being somewhat over-heated with fire and company. I suppose none but a queen could have cast such a scowl." The court was to have no limited experience of the frowns of its mistress. On one point, however, most authorities were agreed—namely, on her beauty and grace. "A beautiful little creature," says Carlyle, "if Ritter Van Dyke lie not to us, beautiful and sprightly, with her bright hazel eyes, with her long white fingers, and dainty looks and ways." She was, wrote Howell enthusiastically, "of a lovely and lasting complexion, a dark brown; she hath eyes that sparkle like stars; and for her physiognomy, she may be said to be a mirror of perfection."

Men commonly find what they expect to find. Notwithstanding the distrust felt from the first of Henrietta's foreign train, the full difficulties of the situation were but dimly apprehended, and London had been prepared to give a warm welcome to its Queen.

On June 29th, immediately after her arrival, she was present at the opening of Parliament, assisting for the first time at a great public function in the land of her adoption. Many whose names, had she but known it, were to become painfully familiar to her ears in days to come, stood before her on that occasion, listening to the King's speech and making their observations upon his young wife. Pym, Hampden, and Eliot, Charles' great opponents in the coming struggle, were there, with many another of their comrades. Amongst the peers her eyes will have lighted upon at least two or three familiar faces—those of the Earls of Holland and Carlisle, with her husband's friend, the Duke of Buckingham. "In a place below the corner of the seats" was her own countrywoman, the Duchesse de Chevreuse, with her husband, who already, at a banquet at Whitehall of "unspeakable bravery," had eclipsed by his magnificence all the Englishmen present.

Charles addressed the Houses briefly and to the point, paying a tribute to their religious zeal, and likewise to that matchless fidelity to their King which was the ancient honour of the nation. The speech was received with approval. Parliament, as well as the nation at large, were still indulging the hope that Charles would indeed prove the sovereign for whom they had waited and prayed. Nevertheless, before the close of the very first sitting, a shadow had crept over the gladness of its welcome, when the fact transpired that the principal object for which it had been called together was to vote supplies. Two days later, the dawning discontent was accentuated by the intimation that the Houses were not to be impatient as to the question of priests, Jesuits, and recusants, but were to leave it wholly to his Majesty's direction for matter, manner, and time.

The proceedings of that Parliament belong to history. They must have made it clear to Charles that, in spite of the recent outburst of loyalty, the nation had no intention of allowing itself to be browbeaten. By August the perilous remedy of a dissolution had been applied by Charles and his favourite to its discontents.

If the political horizon was not without its clouds, domestic dissensions had already supplied another element of discomfort in the royal household. It is not necessary to follow de Tillières through his detailed account of the incidents belonging to the months succeeding Henrietta's arrival in England. The fact is that the situation at the moment came near to being an impossible one.

In order to appreciate to the full its difficulties, the condition of religious feeling, not only in England but throughout the whole of Europe, must be borne in mind. The broad sundering line separating nation from nation was that of faith. The Continent was divided into two camps. On the one side stood the Catholic Church, with the peoples owing it allegiance; on the other the combined forces of Protestantism. In England itself the fires of Smithfield and the Marian persecution on the one hand, and on the other the roll-call of the many priests who, more recently, had suffered torture and death under Elizabeth, were well remembered, and served to accentuate the differences severing the partisans of the rival creeds. Looking back across not more than three-score years, men were under no temptation to minimise the diversities of faith for which Englishmen had been willing to die. Further, the enthusiasm hailing Charles' accession had been in no small measure due to the fact that to him was attributed the breach with Spain, chief representative of Catholicism in Europe; and, apart from his own personal dislike to Rome, Charles must have been aware that he would do well to avoid any act calculated to offend the spirit of Protestantism abroad, or liable to be construed into an indication of sympathy with his wife's religion.

Under these circumstances he found himself upon the horns of a dilemma. On his return from Spain he had pledged his word, in response to a petition from the Commons, that, in the event of his marrying a Catholic, "no advantages to the recusants at home" should accrue from the match. On the other hand, by the secret articles appended to the marriage treaty, as binding as his own signature and his father's could make them, he had given his promise that English Catholics should be released from prison, and should suffer no further molestation. He had, therefore, to choose between the alternatives of breaking faith either with Parliament and the nation or with France and

Henrietta. He took the middle course of a wavering policy by which each pledge was in turn infringed; appearing, as Mr. Gardiner points out, incapable of appreciating the position of the young Queen, who, sent to England on the distinct understanding that her coming was to bring peace and security to those professing her own faith, would feel that she, no less than they, had suffered betrayal.

Whilst the rival parties were pitted against each other over the length and breadth of the civilised world, the court itself, no less than the country, was a miniature battlefield of warring creeds. The Queen, with her French attendants, ecclesiastical and lay, were pledged to further, by all means in their power, the interests of a body regarded by the bulk of the nation with abhorrence, the popular sentiments being shared to the full by the King, his favourite, and the majority of his ministers. Each concession obtained by the Catholics was regarded, not as an individual grace freely conferred, but as a triumph wrested from the enemy. It will thus be seen that it would not have been easy for the King, however adroit in steering his course, to avoid collisions. To carry out to the full his ante-nuptial pledges would have been, taking into account the conditions of public feeling, barely possible; whilst the attempt to evade them excited the hot indignation of the Queen's guides and counsellors, and, through them, her own. With tact and patience it is possible that a *modus vivendi* might have been found. But in these qualities all parties concerned were lamentably lacking; and in the Queen, at least, there was a disposition to accentuate rather than minimise the difficulties of the situation.

The truth of the story concerning the pilgrimage to Tyburn undertaken by Henrietta a year after her marriage has never been established. She herself denied it. Bassompierre, sent to England later on to restore peace between husband and wife, refused it credence. His account of what had actually taken place is likely to be approximately true. That Henrietta had walked in St. James' Park was, he said, probable. That she had thence passed into Hyde Park he also admitted. But that she had approached nearer to the gallows than a distance of fifty feet, or that her evening walk and that of her companions had been of the nature of a religious ceremony, he explicitly refused to allow. For the rest, "to have thought a little of God" at the sight of the gibbet seemed to the marshal a small offence. He denied, he added, that they had prayed for the malefactors hung there; but had they done so, they would have done well, since the victims had been condemned to death but not to damnation. His reply to the Queen's accusers was, in fact, a formal denial of the act, accompanied by an offer to prove that "l'on eust très bien fait de la commettre."

Whether or not Bassompierre was right, Charles believed that the incident had taken place, making use of it, further, as an excuse for the expulsion from the country of the priest, de Sancy, charged with its responsibility. But, accepting the hypothesis that the accusation had been invented with a view to the discrediting of the Queen's spiritual advisers, it must be admitted that it represented little more than an exaggerated instance of the spirit displayed by those surrounding her. Trifle after trifle, insignificant in themselves, serve to indicate the fashion in which insular prejudice was wantonly and ostentatiously outraged. On one occasion it is the Queen's chaplain, who, stealing a march upon the Protestant clergyman, succeeds in saying grace at the royal table; whereupon the King, to mark his displeasure, takes his wife by the hand and leads her away, refusing to partake of meat thus irregularly blessed. Or again, Henrietta herself is the culprit; as, offended by the officious zeal of the Duke's sister, Lady Denbigh, who had arranged that a *prêche* should take place in the hall of the house where she was staying, she passes twice through the apartment, talking and laughing with her attendants, to the scandal of those present, engaged in their devotions. It is not difficult to conceive that such incidents, not likely to lose by repetition, added to the difficulties of the situation.

Those difficulties were seriously enhanced by the position at court of the Duke of Buckingham. Madame de Motteville goes so far as to assert, upon Henrietta's own authority, that not only had he fomented the dissensions between husband and wife, but that he had openly avowed to the Queen that such was his deliberate intention. Whether or no he is to be credited with so perilous a candour, it can scarcely be doubted that his attitude was that of an opponent. Nor were the events of the autumn such as to diminish his hostility.

The brief spell of popularity he had shared with Charles on the collapse of the marriage negotiations with Spain had been quickly overpast; and in the October following upon the dissolution he made an attempt to regain public favour by organising a descent upon Cadiz, to be accompanied by an alliance with Holland. The Spanish expedition, so far from answering his purpose in planning it, only contributed by its failure to embitter the sentiments of the country towards him; whilst a still more personal cause of disappointment was supplied by Richelieu's refusal to accept him as ambassador at the

French court. The sentiments entertained towards the Duke in Paris may be inferred from a letter from Lord Holland, who, in the winter of 1625-6, filled, in conjunction with Sir Dudley Carleton, the post coveted by Buckingham.

"My dearest Lord," wrote the envoy, "all the joy I have hath such a flatness set upon it in your absence from hence as I protest before God I cannot relish it as I ought." Proceeding to treat of Buckingham's own affairs, and making use of somewhat transparent hieroglyphics in case the letter should fall into hands other than the Duke's, he informs his patron that the King—a crown being substituted for the word—continues suspicious, often discourses of the matter, and is willing to be told that the Heart—another hieroglyphic—"hath infinite affections, you imagine which way." The Duke is the "most happy unhappy man alive, for the Heart is beyond imagination right, and would do things to destroy her fortune, rather than want satisfaction in her mind. . . . Do what you will, I dare not advise you. To come is dangerous, not to come is unfortunate."

The Duke was not mad enough to disregard Richelieu's prohibition; but, disappointed in his hopes of re-visiting Paris, it may well be believed that he was not thereby the more inclined to act as peace-maker between Charles and the sister of the French King; and the account given by Henrietta to Madame de Motteville of his line of conduct is corroborated, not only by de Tillières' narrative, but by a further letter of Lord Holland's, where he quotes the Queen-Mother—never able to speak of her daughter without tears—as declaring that, having made the marriage, the Duke was now resolved to destroy his own work.

Buckingham's bearing towards Henrietta appears to have been, with brief intervals, one almost of menace. With the ostensible object of warning her as to the danger of the course she was pursuing, he arrogated to himself the office of her mentor, taking her again and again to task, now in the character of the King's friend and representative, now in his own person. At times his tone was sufficiently threatening to have intimidated a less wilful and fearless spirit than Henrietta's. The King, he told her, would not long endure his present manner of life; if she did not change it, means would be taken to make her do so; and she would render herself the most unhappy woman alive. She lived, he complained on another occasion, "en petite demoiselle et non pas en reine."

This last charge may have been in allusion to pleasures, innocent enough in themselves, but to which Charles had taken exception—to water-parties and *promenades*, or perhaps to amusements of the nature of a stolen visit, incognito, recorded a little later, to the Royal Exchange, where she had gone to make her own purchases in *bourgeoise* fashion—"a French trick," says an ill-natured contemporary letter, "like the washing in the Thames last summer," when the Duchesse de Chevreuse had performed the feat of swimming across the river, to the scandal of English beholders, unused to the sight of outdoor bathing.

The fact was that matters had reached a pass when every incident that took place was liable to misconstruction. If Henrietta was cold in her manners to her husband, he took umbrage at it. If she made an attempt to improve their relations, he suspected the change to be due to the instructions and influence of those about her.

"As for news," he wrote to Buckingham some time in the autumn of this year, "my wife begins to mend her manners. I know not how long it will continue, for they say it is by advice. But the best of all is, they say the Monsieurs desire to return home. I will not say this for certain, for you know nothing they say can be so."

It may have been at the time of this armistice that Sir George Goring, afterwards attached to Henrietta's household as vice-chamberlain, wrote that the Queen began to find that it was a gentle way and not frowns that could prevail with a great King and a prudent husband; adding that the "small disgusts" at court were so well repaired as it were a sin to commemorate them. The period of peace can have been but brief. Nor must it be denied that if Charles displayed a total inaptitude, during these early days, for dealing with the wilful child he had married, he was not without more serious causes of displeasure than were furnished by water-parties and shopping expeditions. Even the Bishop of Mendes, in no ways inclined to over-conciliation, was forced to admit that it would be *à propos* should the Queen show a greater degree of courtesy to the King and to his dignitaries of State, adding that to none, of what rank soever, did she so much as pay a compliment. At a moment when all eyes were jealously fixed upon the court, her chapel had been made a rallying-point for English Catholics, and it had become necessary to place pursuivants at the doors in order to exclude and take them into custody; whilst members of her household had acquired houses in the neighbourhood of London, where it was intended to send boys and girls as a preliminary to despatching them to receive their education in foreign seminaries.

It was, perhaps, at this period—no date is given—that Henrietta's desire to effect a return to her native country gave rise to a temporary cessation of hostilities between herself and the favourite. Aware of the Duke's longing to see her sister-in-law once more, she communicated to him her own wish to revisit France, the compact being that, in return for his good offices with the King, Henrietta should gain permission from her mother to bring Buckingham with her to Paris. Her request being met with a refusal, the Duke's interest in the matter was at an end, and the plan came to nothing.

In a memorial of Charles' own, sent in the summer of 1626 to Marie de Medicis in order that it might serve as justification for the apparent harshness of his measures, his causes of complaint are recapitulated, and a graphic description is furnished of the condition of the royal *intérieure* during the first year of marriage. Plainly intended for the eyes of the Queen-Mother and her son, it is ostensibly addressed to some representative of his own, probably Sir Dudley Carleton, sent to Paris "to satisfy the King and Queen" as to Charles' conduct with regard to Henrietta and her French suite. Though it does not seem to have answered the purpose it was meant to serve, Carleton being very ill received at court, an impartial reader will be driven to confess that Henrietta's husband was not without legitimate grounds for discontent.

It was not unknown to the King and his mother, Charles wrote, what unkindness and distastes had fallen out between his wife and himself. Hitherto he had borne all with patience, as all the world knew, knowing her to be but young and hoping for amendment. Recurring to the initial cause of dispute in the exclusion of Madame de Saint-George from the royal carriage, he attributes to that incident Henrietta's subsequent attitude towards himself. For "from that very hour to this," says the unfortunate King, writing on July 12th, 1626, "no man can say that ever she used me two days together with so much respect as I deserved of her." On the contrary, such numerous disrespects had been shown him that it would be impossible to recount them all. He proceeds, however, to give samples of his wife's behaviour.

Soon after their marriage the court had adjourned to Hampton Court, and on their arrival there the King seems to have sent to her a deputation of his council, bringing with them the regulations that had been in use at court in his mother's time, and desiring that Henrietta's chamberlain would see that the same were now observed. To require conformity to the arrangements of a dead mother-in-law was, perhaps, an unwise test to apply to the obedience of a new made queen. Henrietta's reply was not conciliatory. It was to the effect that she hoped "the King would give her leave to order her house as she listed herself." That this discourteous reply should have been publicly returned to his communication was, in Charles' eyes, an aggravation of the offence. Had she answered that she would speak with him privately, he would have found no fault with her, so he stated, imputing what she might then have said to ignorance of business matters. "But I could not imagine," he added, "that she should affront me so as to refuse me in such a thing publicly." As it was, he took an opportunity, "when I thought we had leisure to dispute it out by ourselves," to tell her calmly of her fault, and further, set himself to convince her of her mistake with regard to the business in hand. Whereupon Henrietta, in lieu of a humble acknowledgment of error, gave him so ill an answer that he omitted to repeat it—especially as he had much more of the same nature to relate. Coming to specific charges, he complained that, if he had any request to make, it was necessary to manage her servants first, otherwise he was sure to be denied. The English language was neglected by her, no less than the nation itself. Of one particular affront—probably the reported visit to Tyburn—he forbore to speak, enough having been already said on that subject, and the author of it being now in France. Omitting much else, the King went on to give a graphic account of a scene between himself and Henrietta, when the nomination of the officers for her revenue was in question.

It was late one night when the Queen took occasion to produce the list of those she desired to have appointed, and Charles, being already in bed, not unnaturally wished to defer its perusal until morning, informing her meantime that the nominations rested, by the French agreement, in his own hands. When it further transpired that countrymen of her own were included in the list, the King lost no time in negativing the possibility of his consent being given to the employment of foreigners in the capacity suggested. Whereupon a fierce quarrel ensued, Henrietta telling him that he could keep his lands (from which her revenue was to be drawn) to himself, if she had no power to appoint whom she would, and he might give her what he thought fit in pension. Charles retorted by desiring his wife to remember to whom she was speaking, telling her that she ought not to use him so; and the scene was closed with a "passionate discourse" from Henrietta, who declared she was miserable, would not so much as listen to the King, and told him "she was not of that base quality to be used so ill."

If the account thus furnished by Charles himself is to be accepted as a fair picture of the state of affairs during his first year of married life, the most long-suffering of men would have found cause enough to question the wisdom of the marriage upon which so many hopes had been based. Already, in November 1625, less than six months after the Queen's arrival in England, Charles' patience had been so far exhausted that he had decided upon the drastic measure of a wholesale dismissal of his wife's French retinue, upon whom he charged the responsibility for her misconduct. It says much for his reluctance to precipitate matters, that his intention was not carried into effect till the following July. Two letters, however, addressed to Buckingham, abroad at the time, and hoping in all probability to be able to carry out his project of proceeding from the Hague to Paris, make it clear that his determination had been taken at the earlier date. They also afford evidence that Charles' action was not in this case the result of pressure from the Duke.

The one letter is plainly intended for the eyes of the favourite himself alone, the other being meant for those of the Queen-Mother. Both bear the date of November 20th. Charles had already written, he says in the first, to tell the Duke that he expected soon to have to put away "the Monsers," either for attempting to steal away his wife or by reason of their plots. The designs upon Henrietta thus strangely attributed to them had been hindered; the second offence he believed to be still carried on. Under these circumstances he intended to seek no further grounds "to cashier my Monsers," sending the enclosed letter in order that the Duke, should he think fit, might advertise Henrietta's mother—to whom Charles had had many obligations—of the matter in hand, that she might not take it unkindly. He would do nothing further until he heard from Buckingham; but would meanwhile think of the best way of proceeding in the business, since he was resolved that it must be done, and that shortly.

The second letter is to the same purpose, though couched in more cautious language. In this document Charles lays stress upon the persuasions of the Duke himself to tolerance and indulgence, designing by this means, doubtless, to smooth the path of his intermediary. He likewise expresses the vain wish that Marie de Medicis could induce Henrietta's train themselves to take the initiative, since their removal has, in any case, been determined upon. It was a natural desire, but unlikely to meet with gratification. Whether or not this letter was shown to the Queen-Mother by Holland when he passed from the Hague into France, the Duke was not the bearer of it ; and upon his return to England he and his master had too much upon their hands to admit of their attention being given at once to the contemplated domestic *coup d'état.*

CHAPTER IV

1625—1626

Popular discontent—Charles and Buckingham—Henrietta's refusal to be crowned—A fresh quarrel—Buckingham attacked by Parliament—The Queen's household dismissed—Henrietta's loneliness—Bassompierre's mission—His success—Buckingham forbidden to go to Paris—Preparations for war—The Rochelle expedition—Its failure—Improvement in the relations of King and Queen.

BOTH King and minister must have had much, besides Charles' private affairs, to occupy their attention during the winter of 1625-6. The prevailing distrust of the Duke was gathering volume every day. Not alone his mismanagement of the Cadiz expedition, but the fact that certain merchant vessels lent by the Government to the French King had been employed against the insurgent Rochellese had excited popular indignation to fever-heat, and only opportunity was wanting for that indignation to find open expression. Such an occasion would be afforded by the assembling of a new Parliament—a step, in the present state of the Exchequer, not to be much longer delayed.

Charles had done his best to propitiate public opinion. He had furthered a policy of conciliation between Louis and his Huguenot subjects; and he had thrown the English Catholics to the wolves, steps being taken in the autumn to enforce the penal laws against them. But he must, nevertheless, have felt that the situation, especially as regarded Buckingham, was one to cause disquiet.

The steadfast affection with which, through good report and ill, Charles clung to the man he had chosen for his friend, is one of the most attractive features of his early life, tending also to discredit the view that the Duke was little more than a brilliant libertine. His beauty, his fascination, the phenomenal rapidity of his rise, and his position as favourite to father and son in succession, have caused him to be included in a class to which, by nature and talents, he did not belong. He was, says a competent judge, a minister, though an incapable minister, rather than a favourite, and he also possessed that quality of personal gallantry not always the accompaniment of a life of luxury. If his schemes were marked by a rashness coming near to being criminal, he did not leave it to others to carry them out. Ostentatious, vain, and extravagant, he was always brave, masking, to quote Clarendon, under his effeminate exterior "so terrible a courage as would safely protect all his sweetnesses." Such was the man whose fall every Englishman, broadly speaking, would have hailed with satisfaction, and at whom the first blow was soon to be struck.

The coronation was to take place on February 2nd, and Parliament had been summoned for four days later. The first was a somewhat melancholy solemnity, shorn of its usual magnificence, and partaking rather of the nature of a private formality than of a great public pageant. Economy was doubtless one explanation of this. The royal finances were not in a condition to encourage profuseness in expenditure. But the absence of the Queen will also have tended to lend to the function a certain incompleteness, and Henrietta had not only refused to be crowned by non-Catholic ecclesiastics or with Protestant rites, but had declined so much as to assist as a spectator at the ceremony. It was in vain that a latticed place apart in the church was made ready for her. It remained untenanted. The English people are said never to have forgiven her absence; whilst the consequent refusal of the French ambassador to be present at a ceremonial from which his master's sister had elected to exclude herself was a blow dealt at the cordiality between the two courts.

Laud, soon to be supreme in the English Church, crowned the King. The late Lord Keeper, Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, would, in his capacity of Dean of Westminster, have been the proper person to officiate; but being out of favour with Buckingham, his claims, though not without protest on his part, were disallowed.

"I never yet was brought into the presence of a king by any saint except yourself," he wrote to the Duke in a strain of adulation which must have fallen strangely upon the favourite's ears; "turn me not over to offer my prayers at other altars."

The Duke remained obdurate, and Laud occupied the Dean's place. The day was marked, in the eyes of the superstitious, by not a few ominous circumstances. Charles having made a false step upon entering the church, the Duke would have given him his hand.

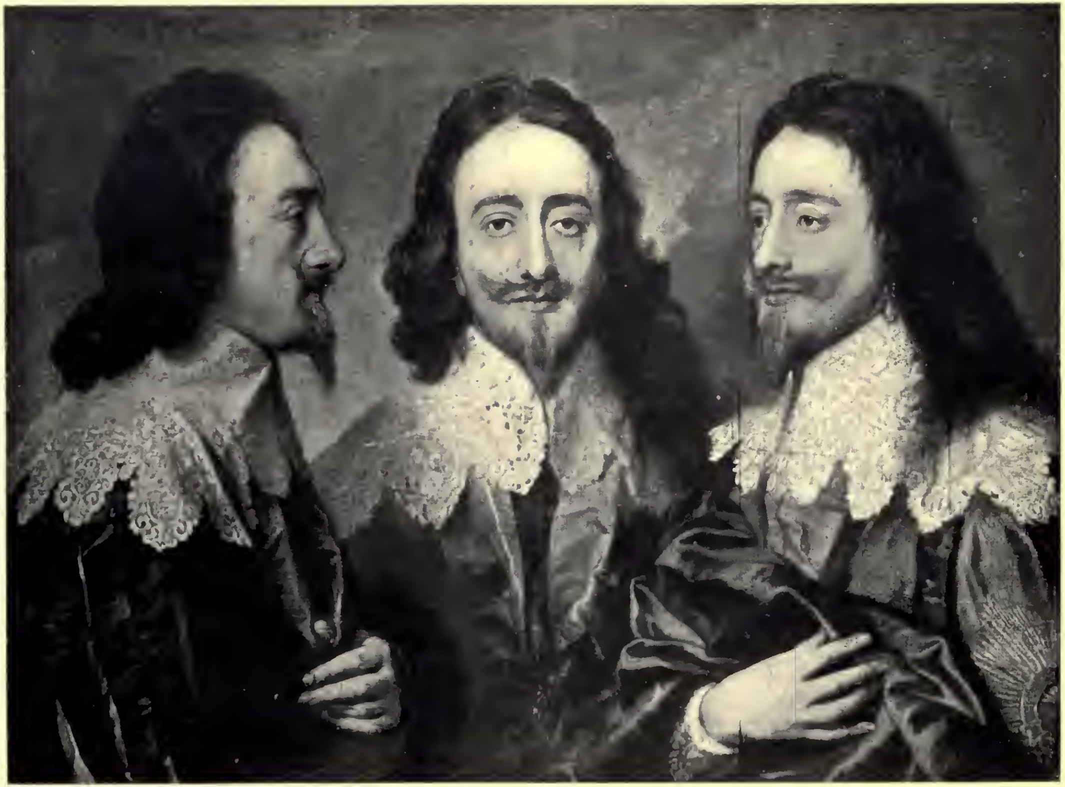
"I have as much need to help you as you to assist me," answered the King lightly. The words were remembered afterwards. So were other incidents of the day. The fact that Charles, discarding the customary purple, was dressed in white, seemed to some spectators emblematic of a loss of sovereignty; whilst the text of the preacher, "I will give thee a crown of life," was, somewhat strangely, considered a sinister choice.

And all this time the Queen was standing, a foreigner in a foreign land, at the window of the Gate-house at

Palace Yard to watch the procession come and go. A news-letter of the time records that her ladies spent the time in dancing before her, but there is no mention of her taking part in their proceedings. It is not unlikely that, having made her protest and carried her point, she was sad enough at heart as she waited wearily for the long service within the Abbey to end. Conscience, assisted by temper, may have been strong enough to induce her to forego her place in the pageant—no light sacrifice at sixteen—but scarcely to forego it cheerfully; and the conduct of her attendants may have been an ill-considered attempt to drive away her regrets.

It was the eve of the conflict. On February 6th Parliament was opened. Four days later it met for business. Yet, during that brief interval, another quarrel had rendered yet more strained the relations of husband and wife. In this case, at least, it would seem that Charles was principally in fault.

Henrietta, according to the arrangements which had been made, was to view the procession to the Houses of Parliament from Whitehall. On the King, however, expressing a desire that she should witness it instead from the house of the Duke's mother, she had prepared, with unusual docility, to act upon his wishes, when, perceiving that it was raining, and apprehensive of possible damage to the arrangement of her hair, she requested permission to adhere to her original intention. Charles, after making some demur on the grounds of a mistaken belief that no rain was falling, acknowledged that she was right and conceded the point. There the matter would have ended, had not Buckingham and Carlisle taken upon themselves to taunt their master with his failure to enforce obedience, producing in him thereby such a degree of indignation that Blainville,



From the painting by Van Dyck at Windsor Castle. *Photo by Franz Hanfstaengl, Munich.*

CHARLES THE FIRST.

[*To face p.* 80.

the French ambassador, called into council, advised that his original command should be carried out. All might have been supposed to be thus satisfactorily settled : but the King, unfortunately, far from being appeased, only took fresh umbrage at the deference shown by Henrietta to her countryman's opinion ; sent forthwith to desire his wife's instant return to Whitehall ; and, further, refused to see her until such time as his pardon had been duly craved.

An end was put to the childish squabble by a statement on Henrietta's part that she only needed to know her fault to beg forgiveness ; and when the King, finding it difficult to discover a plausible cause of offence, replied that she had said it was raining when he had asserted that it did not, the little Queen returned the answer, with commendable gentleness, that, though her conduct in that respect would not have appeared to her offensive, yet, since he thought it had been, she would think so likewise, and begged him to forget it. Charles, upon this, kissed her, and a reconciliation took place.

It is fair to remember, in the King's excuse, that not only was the dispute no isolated incident, but that it occurred at a moment of great nervous strain. Though nothing had as yet passed in the House to give open expression to its temper, he must have been well aware of what he had to expect. By February 10th the first move had been made. Sir John Eliot, the popular leader, had arraigned the conduct of the Cadiz expedition, and had demanded an inquiry into the causes of its failure. The Duke had not as yet been mentioned by name ; but it was abundantly clear that it was at the King's favourite that the blow was directed. Charles was quick to accept the challenge.

"I see you aim at the Duke of Buckingham," he wrote to the House—letting it further know that none of his servants, least of all those near to him, would he permit to be called in question.

The Commons held their ground, the King's wrath notwithstanding. By May the Duke's impeachment had been carried to the House of Lords. It was a time when menaces were freely employed. Not long before, Buckingham, in one of his quarrels with the Queen, had told her she should repent her conduct, adding that "there had been queens in England who had lost their heads." Now, as from his place in the Upper House, a brilliant figure in his magnificent dress, he himself listened with a laugh to the twelve charges preferred against him, Sir Dudley Digges, the spokesman of the Commons, turned fiercely upon the scoffer. "My Lord, do you jeer?" he asked. "I can show you when a man of a greater blood than your lordship, as high as you in place and power, and as deep in the favour of the King, hath been hanged for as small a crime as the least of these articles contain."

Two days later Eliot followed, with a passionate and powerful invective, and the articles of impeachment were laid upon the table of the Lords.

By the next morning the King had made his answer. With the Duke standing at his side, he declared that he himself was a witness to clear him from every charge. His were the actions of which his minister stood accused; his was also the responsibility. When, in ten days more, the Commons had prepared their remonstrance, including in it the request that the Duke should receive a permanent dismissal, a dissolution was Charles' reply.

The proceedings of Parliament will not have been conducive to a calm and judicial temper on Charles' part. Yet comparative peace seems to have prevailed in the royal household during the session. Buckingham, according to de Tillières, had made overtures to Madame de Saint-George, going so far as to suggest that the two should combine in an endeavour to produce greater harmony at Whitehall; and the King and Henrietta had appeared for a time to be upon more friendly terms. It was impossible, however, for the Queen's chamberlain to give the Duke credit for good intentions, and he prefers against him the charge of having at this date made love to Henrietta herself "en termes aussi libres que la difference de leurs conditions le pouvait souffrir."

The accusation contains its own refutation. Buckingham had made it abundantly clear that, in his eyes, difference of station presented no bar in such matters; and de Tillières, in whose opinion the Duke was capable of every villainy, would have been ready to place the worst interpretation upon any show of friendliness. What is more probable is the further accusation that, desiring to increase the King's hostility to the Queen's foreign retinue, he had first urged Madame de Saint-George to advise her to show herself more demonstrative towards her husband, and had then cited Henrietta's obedience as a proof of the dangerously strong influence exercised over her by her lady-in-waiting.

So, occupied in petty bickerings, the months passed by. On June 26th, or thereabouts, occurred the pilgrimage to Tyburn, or the incident thus construed; and there can be little doubt that this finally determined the King to postpone no longer the ejectment of the Queen's French servants. A letter of July 1st gives an account of the manner in which the business was carried out.

At three o'clock on the previous Monday Charles had gone to Henrietta's apartments at Whitehall, where dancing was going on, and, taking her hand, led her into his own, locking the door after him and shutting out all but the Queen herself. Henrietta was probably ignorant at first of what was intended. Her retinue were soon acquainted with the truth. Dealing first with the clergy attached to the household, Lord Conway called them out into St. James' Park, and there told them that it was the King's pleasure that all her Majesty's domestics, young and old, should leave the kingdom. When the Bishop made an indignant protest, in his character of ambassador, against his own expulsion, he was told roughly that if he were unwilling to go, force enough would be forthcoming to make him.

Proceeding next to the Queen's apartments, Lord Conway announced to those gathered together there the King's commands that they should betake themselves to Somerset House and await his orders. The scene has often been described, the "howling and lamenting" of the women being ended by the interposition of the yeomen of the guard, who thrust them out and locked the doors behind them.

Charles' own task had been a more difficult one. Henrietta received his explanation with sobs and tears, and entreaties that some of her friends might remain near her. Then, wild with grief, and determined at least to bid them farewell, she dashed her hands against the window-panes, shivering the glass in the endeavour to communicate with her departing servants.

It was a painful scene. The King, observes an early biographer, "endeavoured by all sweet and gentle persuasions to pacifie her, but finding her inexorable, he resolves to be so too." It was his wisest course, and Henrietta seems to have submitted at length to the inevitable, for "since, I hear," adds a contemporary narrator of the incident, "her rage is appeased, and the King and she, since they went together to Nonsuch, have been very jocund together."

That Henrietta's spirits recovered with so much rapidity may well be questioned; but the sequel proves that, if an action is justified by its success, Charles could plead such justification. The dismissal of his wife's attendants had been an ungracious task, roughly performed. It was undoubtedly a breach of the marriage treaty. Yet it can scarcely be denied that the presence of the French colony was incompatible with domestic peace, and that its banishment would, sooner or later, have been a necessity.

The work effected remained incomplete so long as the Queen's late domestics remained on English soil. It was difficult to enforce their immediate departure, and not until some weeks later was this finally accomplished. One pretext or another served to delay the exodus. Money was wanting for the journey; wages were unpaid; debts incurred on behalf of the Queen had not been settled. It is unnecessary to enter into the petty recriminations, the accusations and counter-accusations, made by one party and the other. The King's patience was at last exhausted, and on August 7th he sent his final instructions to the Duke.

"I command you," he wrote, "to send all the French away to-morrow out of the town, if you can by fair means (but stick not long in disputing); otherways force them away, driving them away like so many wild beasts until you have shipped them, and so the devil go with them. Let me hear no answer, but of the performance of my command. Your faithful, constant, loving friend, Charles R."

A show of resistance was made on the following day;

but when it was seen that, in case of necessity, force would be employed, the occupants of Somerset House thought it well to submit, and suffered themselves to be dislodged, their departure being witnessed by a large and demonstrative crowd collected outside.

The condition of the Queen, meanwhile, was little better than that of a homesick and desolate child. The King had so far relaxed his severity as to permit her to retain the services of her nurse, her dresser, and some few other servants; but the French ladies of her bedchamber were replaced by Englishwomen, and their mistress was very sad and solitary. She was passionately anxious to return to France, and to her mother. Failing that, she was desirous at the least to recover her chamberlain. The English, she wrote to Marie de Medicis, were very much afraid of the Count, and she was always treated better when an envoy from Paris was in the country. "I know not to whom to address myself," added the poor child, "if not to your Majesty, who will take pity on a poor wretched creature like myself, and will permit me again to beseech that I may have the honour of seeing you; for without that I cannot be happy." To Madame de Tillières she also wrote freely of her sorrows. It was not necessary to describe them—her correspondent knew them well. But since her friend had left England it had fared far worse with her. She had no longer any hope, save in God and in the Queen her mother. If only she could see the latter she would think herself the happiest person in the world; otherwise she was the most wretched. And she would love Madame de Tillières until she died. "Adieu, je ne saurois finir."

Marie de Medicis was wise enough to perceive that the last thing to be thought of, at the present juncture, was the return of her daughter to France. She sent instead de Tillières' brother-in-law, the Maréchal de Bassompierre, to England, that he might inquire into the causes of dissension, and, if possible, put the relationship of husband and wife upon a better footing.

The mediator was well chosen. The brother-in-arms of Henrietta's father, he was at once soldier and courtier, ready to withstand the King to his face when he conceived that the dignity of his office was threatened, yet equally prepared to point out her faults to the self-willed Queen. In no wise disposed to flatter her, he was as well adapted to act as peace-maker as the chamberlain, however well-intentioned, had been to foster strife. It is clear that he thought ill of the affair. The King, he told de Tillières, giving him an account of his reception in England, had expressed himself so resolutely with regard to the question of re-instating the French household, that, had he had permission to do so, he should have taken leave at once. He was also profoundly sorry for the daughter of his old friend. "I am so shocked and so grieved to see this little Queen, so good and so pretty, in danger of losing her religion, that I am in despair about it." The letter was written soon after the envoy's arrival in London. It may be doubted whether his compassion for the "little Queen" remained equally great after he had had personal experience of the difficulties to be encountered in dealing with her in her present temper.

Bassompierre's complaints, as set forth in his first note, were chiefly confined to two heads,—the breach of the articles of the marriage contract involved in the dismissal of Henrietta's household, lay and ecclesiastic; and furthermore, the non-observance of Charles' promises with regard to English Catholics.

The envoy had undertaken the mission with reluctance, but he did his best to bring it to a successful conclusion. The chances of his doing this had not been improved by the fact that de Sancy, the priest for whom Charles cherished a special aversion, had been, against his own judgment, attached to his suite ; and at first the King went so far as to refuse to receive him until the objectionable ecclesiastic should have left the kingdom. When at last the Marshal was admitted to a public audience, it was arranged beforehand that no business should be then discussed, lest, as Buckingham explained, Charles should give way to passion, " which would not be decent in the Chair of State," and the Queen to tears—a curious testimony to the excitement prevailing at court. An opportunity was afterwards taken for the practical discussion of grievances on either side, when Charles—being free from the obligations imposed by the Chair of State—did in truth " put himself into a great passion," making many complaints of the members of his wife's household. The same charges were repeated with greater formality by the English commissioners appointed to deal with the subject. Dissensions between Catholics and Protestants in England had been fomented. Mass had been said at illegal assemblies. The Queen's house had been made a *rendezvous* for Catholics and law-breakers. Interference had been practised between King and Queen, and " the gentle mind of the Queen " had been turned against her husband's orders or wishes. She had also been inspired with a contempt for the English nation, a dislike for English habits, and had been led to neglect the English language. These offences, with some others, had led to the dismissal of her servants. That such a dismissal had been a violation of the marriage treaty was denied, the conduct of the persons in question having rendered it necessary. The lengthy document concluded with a tribute to Bassompierre, the statement that "his visit and deportment had made him very agreeable to his Majesty" furnishing striking testimony to the Marshal's fitness for the difficult office he had filled.

To his strong good sense and plain dealing his own diary bears witness, as well as to the fact that he was not unduly biassed in Henrietta's favour.

"Went to see the Queen, where the King was, with whom she picked a quarrel," he records drily on one occasion; adding that Charles had afterwards taken him to his own chamber and talked much with him, making complaints of his wife.

On the morrow a grand reconciliation took place. The Marshal conducted Buckingham to the Queen, and peace was made between the two, "which I had brought about with infinite trouble. The King afterwards came in, and he also was reconciled with her, and caressed her very much; thanked me for having reconciled the Duke and his wife, then took me to his chamber, where he showed me his jewels."

The very day after this armistice had been proclaimed the envoy himself fell out with the Queen, no doubt not without good reason. His patience was becoming exhausted, as it is easy to perceive from his account of a scene taking place a little later, when his bearing was rather that of the man who had been the friend of Henrietta's father and had known her from babyhood than of a courtier.

On this occasion the King and Queen had once more quarrelled, "and I afterwards," adds the Marshal, "with the Queen on that account; and told her that I should next day take leave of the King and return to France without finishing the business, and should tell the King (Louis) and the Queen, her mother, it was her fault." "I would not go to the Queen's," he records next day, "who had commanded me to do so."

Though Charles remained firm in his refusal to consent to the recall of the banished domestics, Bassompierre was justified in congratulating himself upon the final results of his diplomacy, summarised in a letter of his own. He had found Henrietta "on very bad terms with the King, her husband, and ourselves upon the point of entering upon open warfare in order to compel him to observe that which he had promised and sworn." Hampered by the presence of the priest, de Sancy, he had likewise had not only to contend with the condition of the Queen's own mind, but with her new English household, all hostile, on the one hand, and with the English Catholics, desirous of a war between England and France, upon the other. Added to all these difficulties there was the attitude of Charles himself to be overcome. Having enumerated the obstacles in the way of his mission of peace, he registered, with pardonable pride, its success. Rendered content and grateful, the Queen was living in perfect amity with her husband. She was to have a resident bishop, ten priests, a confessor, a coadjutor, and ten choristers. The chapel at St. James' was to be completed, and she had leave to build a second at Somerset House. Two ladies of the bedchamber were to be allowed her, three bedchamber women, a *lingère*, and a clear starcher, all of her own nationality, besides divers male officers of the household, making some fifty persons in all, lay and clerical.

The concessions seem large, but, even if they had been carried into effect, an immense reduction would have been made in the number of French by whom the

Queen had been surrounded. In matter of fact, the provisions of the arrangement were probably largely inoperative. Louis XIII., after much delay, refused to accept the conditions obtained by his ambassador, taking his stand upon the exact terms of the original marriage treaty ; whilst the ten Capuchins who had been selected as the priests to be attached to the household did not arrive in England till some four years later. War with France was already imminent when Bassompierre concluded his mission, and neither Government was inclined to be over-conciliatory. The danger, however, of an open rupture between the King and Queen had been averted, and the Marshal had earned the gratitude of both. When he took leave, magnificent entertainments were given in his honour, splendid gifts were presented, and a number of priests, released from captivity, were permitted to accompany him to France. After this crowning grace, it was hard upon Buckingham that, when it transpired that he was expecting shortly to follow, not only did the Marshal earnestly deprecate the step, but wrote from Paris to inform the impatient Duke that his coming would not be agreeable to the Queen, and to request him to desist from it. If Bassompierre's mission had been successful in arranging terms of pacification between King and Queen, the message he transmitted was calculated to operate in an opposite direction. When King Louis, soon after, not only disavowed the engagements entered into by his envoy, but went on to deal with an additional question of French and English vessels retained as prizes, the Duke's answer was scarcely adapted to promote peace. The King his master, he said, considered himself released by Louis' action from all obligations with regard to the Queen's household. Respecting the further question raised, France, having taken the initiative in making prizes, must be the first to offer reparation. It will thus be seen that the minister's attitude was the reverse of conciliatory. The direct connection between his reply to Louis' communication and the repulse he had personally received must remain uncertain. That, having failed in achieving his object by peaceful methods, it was solely or chiefly in order to force his way to Paris that he threw his previous policy to the winds, and involved both nations in the miseries of a conflict, may seem scarcely credible ; yet this view is adopted by many authorities, and some such motive was widely attributed to him at the time.

" At court," says Gardiner, " it was believed that the only object of his embassy was to enable him once more to make love to the Queen of France." Deprived of the opportunity of paying a pacific visit to Paris, it has been imagined that he conceived the idea of placing himself in a position enabling him to dictate his own terms.

Whether or not this was the case, graver motives probably contributed to make him anxious for war ; and the venture may have represented a last chance of retrieving his own position at home. Fatal as was a rupture with France to the wider interests of Protestantism in Europe—interests only to be safeguarded by a coalition of sufficient strength to stand against the House of Austria and its allies—an expedition undertaken with the ostensible object of calling Louis to account for his broken promises to his Huguenot subjects was well adapted to appeal to the more short-sighted of the British public. Such an appeal was at the moment of the last importance to the Duke. His unpopularity was at its height. The strenuous endeavours of the King to raise money without the assistance of Parliament had been met by a resistance as strenuous and as determined. In vain the Church seconded the King in his attempts to override opposition. Men were prepared to suffer every penalty rather than give what was required without constitutional authority. Hampden, with hundreds of lesser men, was earning his great fame in prison at the time when the Duke's intention of sailing for Rochelle was announced. But if the situation was desperate, the remedy, one would imagine, must have been recognised as little less so, and words spoken by Charles as, with his friend, he inspected at Deptford some of the ships made ready to take part in the expedition, seem to prove that he had become to some extent aware of the gravity of the struggle in progress.

"George," he said, "there are some that wish both these and thou might perish together. But care not for them. We will both perish together if thou dost."

The enterprise ended in absolute failure. The Duke gave proof both of his personal courage and of his incompetence to act as general. And his master gave proof no less striking of the loyalty of his affection. As news came home of defeat and disaster, and England, to quote Clarendon's description of the state of public feeling a little later, was "totally taken up with the thought of revenge upon the person who they thought had been the cause of their distress," the King never swerved from his attitude of love and trust.

"With whatsomever success ye shall come home," he wrote to the Duke, "ye shall be ever welcome, one of my greatest griefs being that I have not been with you in this time of suffering, for I know we should have much eased each other's griefs. . . . Every day I find new reasons to confirm me in being your loving, faithful friend, Charles R."

It is singular that it was at this juncture, when a war had been forced upon her brother by the husband with whom she had so persistently quarrelled, that Henrietta seems to have first assumed the character of a comforter in the midst of stress and anxiety. "I cannot omit to tell you," Charles wrote to Buckingham, "that my wife and I were never on better terms; she, upon this action of yours, showing herself so loving to me by her discretion on all occasions, that it makes us all wonder at and esteem her."

It was well that Charles could find comfort at home, for the time was rapidly approaching when he would find little elsewhere.

CHAPTER V

1627—1630

The Duke's return—Harmony in the royal household—The new Parliament—Petition of Right—Wentworth's change of front—The Duke murdered—The Queen's future position—Birth and death of her first child—Domestic happiness—Ecclesiastical arrangements at Court—Birth of Charles II.—Henrietta's description of him.

BY the middle of November the Duke was at home again, to be met with unchanged affection on the part of his master, and with hatred and detestation by the mass of the English people. So violent was the feeling against him that his life was considered to be in danger; and as he rode to London from Plymouth, where his landing had taken place, his nephew, young Fielding, riding with him, would have exchanged cloaks, so as to attract any meditated vengeance upon himself. Buckingham was no coward, and put the offer aside. It was, besides, an attack of a different nature to the blow of an assassin which will have seemed most menacing at the time. He must have been aware that the hour of reckoning with the representatives of the people was not far off. But the list of the sins to be laid to his charge was approaching completeness. Before another year had passed away, one of the chief actors in this early stage of Charles' reign was to be summoned to render his account elsewhere.

In the meantime, turning to the condition of the royal household, the removal of the mischief-makers by whom the young Queen had been surrounded, together with the wholesome admonitions administered by Bassompierre, had borne lasting fruit, and the amity described by Charles continued, in spite of the Duke's return, unbroken. In a letter from Lady Strange, afterwards Lady Derby, to her mother, incidental evidence of a condition of harmony is found. Discussing the chances of peace or war, she says that nothing is spoken of except the misfortune which had happened to the Duke ; but that he was not blamed for it, the fault being laid upon the delay of the intended succours.

"As for the Queen," Lady Strange adds, "she interferes with nothing, and thinks only of how to kill time. The King and she live very happily together."

Though it might be true that Henrietta, at seventeen, had no desire to intermeddle in matters belonging to the field of politics, she had unconsciously exercised a certain influence upon the relations of the two countries at war. Notwithstanding the refusal of Louis to endorse the arrangements of his ambassador, he had testified good feeling and a desire to promote amicable terms between his sister and her husband by the unconditional release of the English prisoners taken at Rochelle, sent home by him as a present to Henrietta. The olive-branch was accepted in London as it was intended, and M. de Meaux, entrusted with the charge of the better-born amongst the captives, with orders to deliver them into the Queen's hands, was received with cordiality and "feasted by the greatest." One entertainment in his honour did not, it is true, prove altogether successful, it being "taken unkindly at his hands that after his Grace [the Duke] had proffered and drank to him the King of France's health, he would not return the like respect to the King our master, but only to the Queen, who did much check him for that omission."

When it is borne in mind that help was still being despatched from England to the French insurgents, it cannot but be considered a pardonable lack of courtesy on the part of the envoy to decline to drink Charles' health ; and Henrietta's intervention in the character of a peace-maker must have been the rehearsal of a new part.

In February a contemporary letter again shows her in an attitude of conciliation. On this occasion she was acting as sponsor by her deputy, the Duchess of Richmond, to the Duke's infant heir, the King assisting in person at the ceremony, clad "in a long soldier's coat all covered with gold lace, and his hair all goffered and frizzled, which he never used before."

If things were going well in the interior of Whitehall, affairs outside were in a worse condition than before. By the spring it had become impossible to resist the popular demand for a Parliament. The methods devised by Charles and his ministers for raising money had proved wholly ineffective, and on March 17th the House met. Its temper was to be inferred from the fact that no single candidate who had suffered imprisonment owing to resistance to the forced loan exacted by Charles, had failed to win a seat. Opposition to the court had become the high road to popularity.

One of the members thus returned was Sir Thomas Wentworth, the future Earl of Strafford, destined to occupy later on, so far as it was ever filled, the place at present held by the Duke in Charles' confidence. Persistently excluded by Buckingham from the position at court which his brilliant gifts and personal charm might have obtained for him, his recent line of conduct had caused him to be regarded with suspicion by the King, and he had been included amongst the political leaders debarred from a seat in the last Parliament by their appointment to the office of sheriff. He now took his place in the House as an avowed defender of constitutional rights. "We must vindicate our ancient liberties," he cried, summarising the great work lying before himself and his colleagues; "we must reinforce the laws made by our ancestors; we must set such a stamp upon them as no licentious spirit will dare hereafter to invade them." The words were remembered against him later on.

The Petition of Right was the embodiment of the vindication to which the King's future minister pointed the way. When, from the discussion of the general condition of the country and the attacks upon its liberties, the House proceeded to give utterance to the fierce hatred entertained for the man held chiefly responsible for the invasion of the people's rights; when the Duke had been pointed out by name, amidst the acclamations of those present, as the author of all the miseries of the country, Charles, hitherto obdurate or evasive, gave way. He assented to the Petition of Right.

The concession came too late. The Commons refused to cancel the Remonstrance they had prepared, censure of the minister being explicitly included in it. But Charles was as unyielding as they. With the Duke himself standing at his side, he received the deputation come to present the Remonstrance, his demeanour on the occasion indicating his attitude towards the man at whom it was aimed. When the King had made cold response to the delegates, the Duke, falling on his knees, craved permission to make answer to his accusers.

"No, George, no," was Charles' reply, as, raising the culprit, he gave him his hand to kiss. The man he loved was not so much as to offer a defence to his enemies. The Houses were adjoined shortly after this scene, nor did they meet again till the close of the year.

The session, unfortunate in many respects, had witnessed one event supremely important to King and Queen. This was the defection of Wentworth from the popular party. The motives dictating his present course of action, as well as his former adoption of liberal principles, had probably been mixed. "If this man," says Mr. Forster, not unduly biassed in favour of the future minister, "had any passion as strong as that which from his earliest years impelled him to the service of the King, it was his impatience and scorn of the men about the court who for so many years had shut its doors upon him." Swayed by anger, he had thrown in his lot with the enemies of the favourite, to whom his exclusion was chiefly due. But passion is not principle, nor are the acts it dictates always a true index to character. "It was the true Wentworth who remained after this had cleared away—not the associate and fellow-patriot of Eliot, but the minister of Charles." His conduct might be devious; his nature was sincere. His final election was now made. On July 22nd he became a peer, under the title of Lord Wentworth, and was thenceforward a steady supporter of the Crown.[1]

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[1] The account given in J. R. Green's *Short History* of the transfer of Wentworth's service is a different one. "The death of Buckingham," he says (page 504), "had no sooner removed the obstacle that stood between his ambition and the end at which it had aimed throughout, than the cloak of patriotism was flung by." But it is fair to remember that, whilst the Duke doubtless stood in the way of the attainment of full power on Wentworth's part, the peerage, representing the earnest of court favour and indicating that he was already pledged to support the King, was conferred in July, and that Buckingham's murder did not take place till August.

It needed all the support which could be obtained. On June 26th Parliament had been prorogued, to reassemble, according to the present arrangements, in October. Charles and his minister were meanwhile face to face with a situation of overwhelming difficulty. Rochelle, encouraged to fresh resistance the previous year by the promise of English help, still held out, reduced to the utmost straits of misery and starvation. Should it be left to its fate, Buckingham was convicted of something perilously near to treachery. Should he, on the other hand, prosecute the war with France by going to its assistance, not only was success problematical, but, supposing it was achieved, the Huguenot interests throughout France might be rather injured than promoted. It would, at the same time, put out of the question any hope of French co-operation in the wider struggle with the great Catholic forces of Europe. But in spite of all that could be urged against it, the Duke had decided in favour of a fresh attempt to relieve the beleaguered city. In the anxiety, inconsistent as it was, he professed for peace with France, he was probably sincere. His past dogged him. He found himself committed in honour to a policy impossible to carry out with success. It was not he, however, who was fated to grapple with the difficulties he had created.

At Portsmouth the blow was struck by which he was removed from his place at the helm. The King himself, from a house in the neighbourhood of the seaport, had been superintending the preparation of the fleet to be led by the Duke to the relief of Rochelle. Even at this late stage fresh pressure had been brought to bear upon Buckingham by the Venetian ambassador to induce him to make peace with France. Soubise, the Huguenot leader, was, on the other hand, entreating him to turn a deaf ear to these counsels. It was unlikely that, at the eleventh hour, they would prevail. But the Duke was not to determine the question.

Forebodings of evil seem to have hung alike over himself and over those who loved him. He had asked Laud to remind the King—who afterwards gave proof that no reminder was needed—of his wife and children. "Some adventure," he observed, "might kill me as well as another man." Yet he rejected the suggestion that, in consideration of his unpopularity, he should wear mail beneath his clothes. "There are no Roman spirits left," he said with a scoff. He was mistaken. As Henri of Navarre had met his death at the hands of a religious fanatic, Buckingham was to fall by the knife of a political zealot.

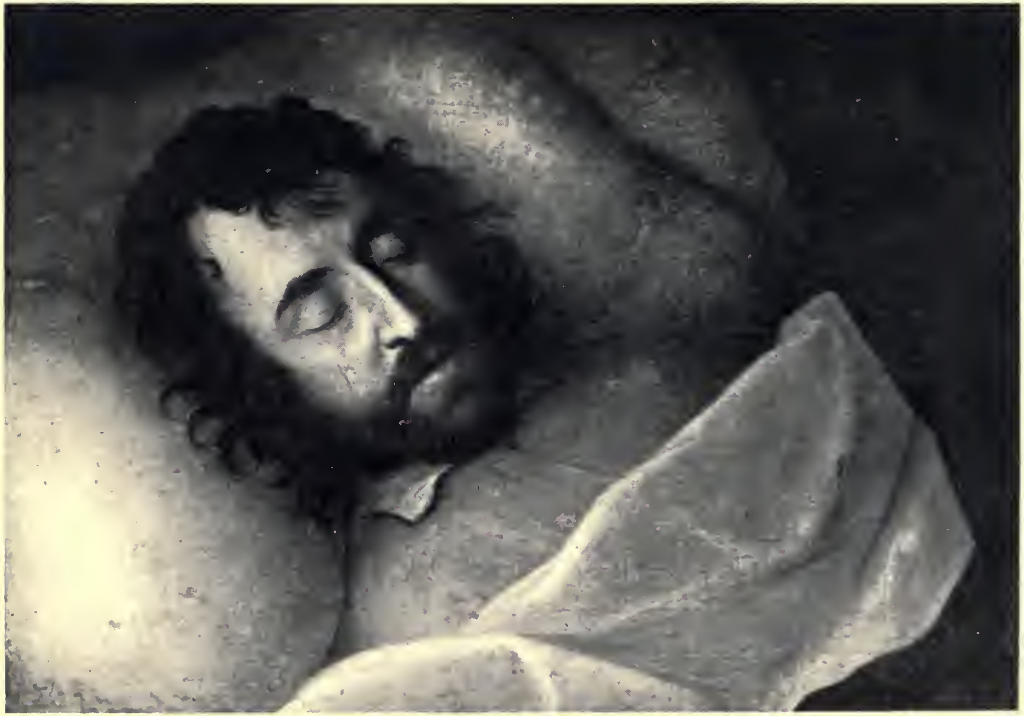
"That man is cowardly base, and deserveth not the name of a gentleman or soldier, that is not willing to sacrifice his life for the honour of God, his King, and his country . . . If God had not taken our hearts for our sins, he would not have gone so long unpunished." Thus ran a paper afterwards found upon John Felton. He made good his language by his deed, and stabbed the Duke to the heart.

The King was at prayers with his household when the news was whispered into his ear. As he knelt on, his head bent, his face covered, he gave no sign of grief or disturbance, maintaining his attitude, silent and motionless, till the devotions were concluded. With the same unmoved calm he rose and went to his private chamber. But having reached it, he flung himself on the bed in a passion of tears.

Those who had watched him as he received the fatal intelligence formed their own shallow conclusions from his demeanour. The very greatness of the blow may have nerved him to bear it with the dignity in which he was rarely wanting. But such was not the interpretation placed upon his composure by men incapable of comprehending his self-restraint. Construing it as indifference, the courtiers, so Clarendon tells us, allowed themselves to fall into the error of speaking with licence of the dead, setting themselves to the dissection of his infirmities, "in which they took very ill measures, for from that time almost till the time of his own death, the King admitted very few into any degree of trust who had ever discovered themselves to be enemies to the Duke."

The same event produces contrary effects. Charles, though in silence, mourned for his friend as David for Jonathan. The neglected wife of the Duke was broken-hearted. Some friends and associates, no doubt, were genuine in their regret; but the nation as a whole rejoiced as those who rejoice that their enemy is dead. "God bless thee, little David," cried a woman when Felton was led through London; and the sailors leaving for Rochelle shouted out their last request to the King, that he would deal mercifully with the man who had slain the leader of the expedition.

For the feelings of the Queen it is necessary to have recourse chiefly to conjecture. A French writer asserts—on what grounds he omits to state—that she did not affect a grief she could not feel. But Sir Dudley Carleton, by this time Viscount Dorchester and Secretary of State, writing to Lord Carlisle from Portsmouth at the end of August, says that the "apprehension that sweet Princess showed and still continueth of the fatal blow given here, and the comfort she giveth to those many distressed ladies"—the Duke's wife, mother, and sister—"upon this accident, as it is kindly taken by the King, so it must affect all the world."



From the picture by Van Dyck, by permission of the Marquis of Northampton.

GEORGE VILLIERS, FIRST DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM,
After his assassination by Felton.

[*To face p.* 102.

It was impossible that Henrietta should not have been aware that a danger, and perhaps the chief one, to her domestic happiness, was removed. Although she might have vindicated, in time, her claim to the first place in Charles' confidence, Buckingham would not have relinquished his supremacy without a struggle, and his mastery had been hitherto too entire not to warrant a doubt as to the issue of a trial of strength. The Duke gone, Henrietta had no rival. But whilst conscious of this, the suddenness and terrible completeness of the tragedy may have made her, generous and impulsive as she was, forget her past wrongs and present deliverance in compassion for his fate. And remembering the love she bore her husband in later years, already having its beginnings, it is difficult to believe that a blow striking him so heavily would leave her untouched. The very clamorous jubilation of the crowd would serve to range her on the side of the mourner who, making no secret of his grief, was yet bearing it "manly and princely."

She could afford to be magnanimous. With Buckingham's death a new era had opened for her. Thenceforth none would venture so much as an attempt to stand between man and wife. From this time till public calamities made shipwreck of the royal fortunes, Henrietta was a happy woman.

Contemporary documents afford occasional glimpses into the interior of the palace. Lord Carlisle was absent on a mission to Turin at the time of the Duke's murder, and the letters constantly despatched to him from court give a vivid picture of the state of things prevailing there during the last months of 1628. He could not wish, his wife wrote in October, more affection and happiness between the King and Queen than he would find on his return. And in the following month he is informed by another correspondent, Thomas Cary, that the King might be imagined to be once more a wooer, and the Queen gladder to receive his caresses than he to make them. On the previous day her birthday had been celebrated by Charles on horseback, where he took the ring offered and was resolved to grow every day more and more *galant.* The King, Cary writes some three weeks later, had so wholly made over all his affections to his wife, that there was no danger of any other favourite ; whilst she, for her part, had returned to such a fondness and liking of him and his person as it was of as much comfort to themselves as of joy to their good servants.

It was well that it was so, for Charles stood sorely in need of comfort. The fatal blow dealt in August had, according to Sir George, now Lord, Goring's account, also sent to Carlisle, astonished and benumbed all. Charles himself was observed to be more reserved than ever ; though rather, the writer surmises, in order to keep off the torrent of suitors than from any change in a nature the best and most constant he ever knew. Perplexities and troubles were rife. The only joy was in the happy intelligence which Goring, like others, is eager to report between their blessed sweet master and mistress, "which certainly easeth that swelling brave heart of his in these his days of highest trials." More true love Goring never saw. His Majesty being at Theobalds but for four days, the Queen can take no rest in the same nights, but sighs for his return, till when she delights herself with his shadow at her bedside.

Whilst all went well at home, public affairs were giving grave cause for anxiety. The removal of the favourite had not resulted in any approximation between King and people. In one sense the absence of the scapegoat upon whom the sins of the Government had been charged may have operated in a contrary direction. Charles had at once assumed the position formerly held by Buckingham, and had taken the direction of affairs into his own hands, showing an attention to business he had not hitherto displayed. It would be for the future difficult, when things went wrong, to acquit him of personal responsibility.

An additional cause of estrangement between the King and his subjects was also making itself more and more felt. To the majority of Englishmen his attitude with regard to religious matters was embittering the discontent produced by the attacks made upon constitutional liberty. The ancient church had not been thrown down in order to be replaced by a paler counterfeit, and Laud and the high church party, increasingly identified with the principles of absolute monarchy, were scarcely less objects of fear and hatred than Rome. Religion was becoming as much the watchword of the national party as liberty itself.

In the spring of 1629, after a scene of unprecedented violence, Parliament was once more dissolved. The nine members who had been most prominent in the defence of its privileges and in opposition to the Crown were thrown into prison, there to await their trial; and the memorable attempt at personal government, to be carried on by Charles for eleven years without the help of Parliament, was inaugurated. The King and the people took their stand over against one another, each confident of ultimate victory.

Soon after the dissolution a domestic event took place, of greater importance to Henrietta than any political convulsions. This was the premature birth of her first child. On All Saints' Day, 1627, some eighteen months earlier, the Queen, having duly attended her devotions, had received a visit, apparently by appointment, from a lady deeply skilled in the art of fortune-telling. Dealers in divination were in fashion. It has been seen that Henri of Navarre, shrewd and sagacious as he was, had not been free from the prevailing superstition, and the tendency to put faith in soothsayers would seem to have been inherited by his daughter. Lady Eleanor Davys, the prophetess called into council, was the daughter of one Lord Castlehaven and the sister of another, of infamous notoriety. The reputation she had acquired in her special line of business stood high, nor does she appear to have entertained any doubts with regard to her own possession of phenomenal gifts.

On the present occasion, according to her account of the incident, Henrietta first inquired whether she would ever have a son. Being answered to the effect that she would have one, and shortly, the Queen proceeded to question her visitor with regard to the fate of Buckingham and the English fleet under his command, not then returned from Rochelle. Answered that the Duke would return in safety and speedily, but with little honour, the Queen recurred to matters more interesting. "I showed that she should have a son, and that for a long time she should be happy."

"But for how long?" persisted the Queen.

The answer, "For sixteen years," may have satisfied her. At seventeen, sixteen years seems a lifetime. At all events, she was not afforded further opportunity of pressing her inquiries, for at this stage of the proceedings the King entered the room; and, probably with little liking for his wife's visitor, and less for Henrietta's object in admitting her, he changed the conversation by recalling to Lady Eleanor's remembrance a prediction she had hazarded concerning her first husband's death three days before it had occurred—"to which," says the seer, "his Majesty thought fit to add that it was the next to breaking his heart." After this expression of opinion, scarcely calculated to gratify his wife's guest, Charles seems to have put a summary end to the interview. To Henrietta's ladies Lady Eleanor imparted further information. The promised son would, she said, be born, christened, and buried all in one day.

This sinister prophecy seems to have been unwisely repeated to the Queen, and was not unlikely to contribute to its own fulfilment. At any rate, Henrietta's first child, born on May 13th, 1629, scarcely survived its birth. Different causes were assigned for the catastrophe. The Queen had been frightened by finding two large dogs fighting in her gallery, one of whom had snatched at her gown; whilst other incidents were also considered to account for the fact of her premature confinement at Greenwich. No qualified nurse was at hand, and the town midwife, sent for on the emergency, "swooned with fear" so soon as she was brought into the royal chamber, and was carried away in that condition. The Queen was in great danger; and the King, constantly at her side, watched in deep anxiety for the issues of life or death. If God pleased, he told the doctors, he might have other children, but let them do all they could to save his wife. Their efforts were successful. Henrietta lived, but her child died. "Some little life" being still in the infant at his birth, he was baptized by the King's chaplain, though not before an altercation had taken place between Charles and the Queen's confessor. There had been but scanty time to lose in disputing. That same night the small coffin was carried in state to Westminster Abbey, six sons of earls, supported by six sons of barons, acting as bearers, and was laid, Laud officiating, by the side of King James.

The disappointment was no doubt a severe one. In the words of Sir Theodore Mayerne, the Queen's physician, God had shown them a Prince of Wales, but the flower had been cut down the same instant that it saw the light. Sir Theodore was, however, able to assure his correspondent, Lord Dorchester, that the mother was doing well and was full of strength and courage.

If the Queen had to mourn the loss of her child, a constant source of trouble to her had come to an end shortly before her confinement. The war with France had been concluded. Charles had tacitly renounced the right he had assumed to dictate to the French King the measures to be adopted in dealing with his Huguenot subjects, whilst Louis had waived the question of the fulfilment of Charles' pledge that the English Catholics should remain unmolested. Further, when Henrietta declared herself satisfied with the arrangement of her household, it was manifestly impossible for her brother to continue his interference on her behalf. On April 14th a treaty was accordingly concluded, and less than a month later it was publicly proclaimed.

At peace with her own country, and secure in the affection of her husband, Henrietta, in spite of the little grave in Westminster Abbey, had become a happy woman. The prophetess's prediction was in course of fulfilment. The good years had begun. An account of things at court sent by Lord Cottington to Wentworth some three months after her child's birth proves that all was going well. "The Queen," he says, "went to the waters of Tunbridge, with an intention to have drunk them long, but she could not bear the King's absence; so she is come suddenly from thence, and by great journeys meets with the King this night at Oatlands, whither he also returns to pay her in the same money."

More conclusive still is a letter written in 1630 by Charles, when, before the birth of the child who was to become Charles II., he gives his mother-in-law a description of the relations existing between himself and his wife, offering a signal contrast to the complaints intended for Marie de Medicis' eyes in earlier days. After making due acknowledgments for the gift of a chair sent over from France for Henrietta's use, he adds that she is so careful of herself that the only authority he needs to exert is that of love, "the sole dispute now between us being which shall vanquish the other by affection, each deeming the victory is gained when the wishes of the other are discovered and followed." Nor is there any reason for believing that the condition of harmony thus established was ever seriously interrupted. If Charles had shown himself too anxious at the first to vindicate his authority as husband, he had exchanged the part for that of a lover, and such he remained to the end of his life.

There can be no doubt that Henrietta showed herself worthy of his love. The age was one of licence, and the path of the courtier remained, as Raleigh had described it in his dying speech, a way of wickedness and vice. Charles had refined his surroundings; it was not in his power to conform them to his own standard of morality. Pleasure, says Mr. Forster, was, in the court of Charles II., a vulgar satyr. In his father's it was a god Pan, and the muses piped amongst his nymphs. Yet something had been done. With a King, to quote an authority as unprejudiced in Charles' favour as Mrs. Hutchinson, temperate, chaste, and serious, the face of the court had changed, and those of the nobility and courtiers who did not abandon their former ways of life had yet the reverence to the King to retire into corners to practise them.

It has been asserted that Henrietta had no natural abhorrence for vice, and tolerated those about her person known to indulge in it. Admitting the charge to be to a certain extent true, it is no more than fair to take her origin, her early training and associations, into account. She had been brought up at a court where intrigues were of daily occurrence. The blood of Henri of Navarre ran in her veins, partly responsible, it may be, for the sins laid to the charge of Charles II. The age, also, was one when immorality was in a measure taken for granted.[1] But though the atmosphere around her may have affected Henrietta's moral standard, she herself had escaped the taint. Unpopular as she was, alike as Catholic and as Frenchwoman, and later on as Queen, and in spite of the abuse showered upon her, curiously few serious attempts were made to reduce to specific charges the vague generalities of condemnation. Both before and after her husband's death her name was coupled with that of Jermyn, but the foundations upon which the accusation rests are, in the King's lifetime, scarcely worth taking into account ; after his death, wholly inconclusive. With this exception, the breath of calumny was powerless against the blamelessness of her private life. Her confessor's conviction, transmitted to Rome by the agent of the Vatican, was that she had no temptation to moral transgression. She possessed, at all events, the safeguard of the love, tender and true and enduring, she bore her husband—a love even more passionately returned.

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[1] In the letters of Mary, Princess of Orange, to her brother Charles, some twenty years later, there is more than one playful allusion to his "wife," Lucy Walters, the mother of Monmouth.

In the summer of 1629, Chateauneuf, the French ambassador, was observing and registering his impressions of affairs at court. Sent to London for the purpose of securing, if possible, Charles' co-operation against Spain, he placed high amongst the circumstances favourable to his mission the influence exerted by Henrietta. Though ignorant of politics, and as yet taking little interest in such questions, she could be counted upon as the natural advocate of France ; and each proof of the King's devotion to her, however trivial in itself, represented an additional chance of effecting the desired alliance. And proofs were many.

"You do not see that in Turin ?" said Charles lightly to the ambassador, as he kissed his wife again and again. "Nor at Paris either," he added, in a lower tone and a little indiscreetly, in allusion to Louis and the unloved Queen.

Complaints were heard that speech could not be had with the King, so constantly was he in his wife's apartments. His only regret was that he could not take her with him to the council-chamber. "I wish," he once said, "that we could always be together, and that you could accompany me to the Council. But what would these people say if a woman were to busy herself with matters of government ?"

Chateauneuf was forced to confess that the nineteen-year-old Queen had little desire to find occupation in state affairs. It was, nevertheless, important to strengthen and maintain the French hold upon her sympathies ; and viewed in this connection, the fact that, since the ejectment of her retinue, an English Oratorian had filled the post of her confessor, caused some disquietude in France. The ambassador accordingly set himself to place the ecclesiastical arrangement of her household on a new footing. The coming of the Capuchins who, as a result of Bassompierre's mission, were to have been sent from France, had been delayed by reason of the war. It was now proposed that, together with a bishop, eight French monks of the order should take up their residence at court, thereby superseding in their functions the Queen's present confessor, Father Philip, and his colleague, a second Oratorian. Against the coming of the Capuchins the King had no objections to urge. As belonging to a less political order than the Oratorians, their presence at court might indeed be the more desirable of the two. With Henrietta's personal religion he had shown no disposition to interfere, and was reported to have chidden her for remaining so late in bed that mass could not be said before noon. The eight Capuchins he was, therefore, ready and willing to receive. But to a resident bishop he entertained strong objections. Retaining a lively recollection of the young ecclesiastic who had accompanied his bride to England, and of the part he had played in the domestic dissensions of their first year of marriage, he may be pardoned for entertaining a dread of a similar influence.

"Your mother is sending you a governor," he told Henrietta, adding an injunction not to permit the newcomer to establish himself on the same footing as that obtained in former days by the Bishop of Mendes; but to permit him to approach her at dinner or in church alone.

The proposed arrangement ultimately fell through. Unless he were to be replaced by a bishop, Henrietta refused to relinquish her English confessor; and Charles in the end declined to receive a bishop at all. Although the difficulty was afterwards surmounted, it seems to have been considered impracticable to combine the ministrations of Oratorians and Capuchins; and retaining the services of Father Philip, the Queen dispensed for a time with those of the monks. In the spring of the following year, however, the long-deferred arrangement was carried into effect, and the band of Capuchins were at last established in London. Their arrival was the signal for fresh demonstrations on the part of the English Catholics, and threatened to endanger the hardly won domestic peace of Whitehall. Auguring favourably for the future from the presence of the monks, crowds hastened to avail themselves of their ministrations, till it became necessary to issue orders that no English subject should be admitted to the Queen's chapel—a prohibition that Lord Dorset, now chamberlain and "highly approving this gracious message," could be trusted to enforce.

Difficulties of the kind were more easily met when both King and Queen were anxious to keep the peace; but prudence and tact were not amongst the gifts of Henrietta's spiritual advisers, and a ceremony at which, in the presence of two thousand spectators, she laid the corner-stone of the Capuchin church at Somerset House, increased to an alarming extent the dislike felt for the Catholic Queen. The strict watch kept by the public upon the royal household is evidenced by a letter written when Henrietta's second confinement was expected, in which it was mentioned, as the best news of the week, that nurse, rocker, and all attendants of the future nursery, were to belong to the Protestant religion.

Another letter—this time addressed by Lord Dorchester to de Vic, *chargé d'affaires* at Paris—gives an account of the period immediately preceding the looked-for event. The Queen, he said, was expecting her confinement at St. James', all being convenient there—the King having his recreations near, and the Queen her entertainments and devotions. The newly arrived Capuchins were lodged commodiously, beyond the austerity of their rule, so as the French ambassador himself professed he could not conceive how it was possible for things in all respects to be so well accommodated. The general satisfaction at court had been disturbed by one incident alone—namely, the arrival, against Charles' expressed pleasure, of a doctor from France, intended to fill the post of domestic physician to the Queen. Lord Dorchester added that, having the present condition of the latter in view, the King had contented himself with letting the French ambassador know that the doctor might return as he came, replying to the envoy's requests that the man of medicine might kiss her Majesty's hand and wait to carry the good news of the birth to France, with a civil refusal. This reply was to be understood by M. de Fontenoy as made to him in his private capacity. Should he advance the demand as ambassador, Charles would be forced to say what would displease him.

Such being the state of feeling at court and outside it, it was perhaps fortunate that the *sage femme*, Madame Peronne, who had, under the singular escort of little Geoffrey Hudson, the Queen's dwarf, been despatched from France to preside over the birth, should have fallen into the hands of pirates, by whom she was detained until the occasion for her services was at an end.

On May 29th, 1630, the Queen's eldest surviving son, afterwards Charles II., was born at St. James' Palace. That same morning the King went in state to return thanks at St. Paul's Cathedral for the birth of his heir, a star, said to have appeared at noonday whilst the procession was taking place, promising well in the sight of the people for the future of the new-born Prince. Charles had likewise taken immediate measures to ensure that no march should be stolen upon him by Henrietta's resident priest. "As soon as he was in the world," writes Father Cyprian de Gamache of the child, "the King his father sent to tell the Capuchins not to trouble themselves about the baptism of his son, as he would attend to it himself"— a polite fashion of intimating that the ministrations of the monks would not be acceptable in the present instance.

Whilst thus making his own attitude clear, Charles had come near to being betrayed, out of consideration for his wife, into a step by which the popular imagination would have been dangerously inflamed. It was only by the expostulations of his ministers that he was induced to cancel the appointment, announced on the day the child was born, of Lady Roxburgh, a Catholic, to the charge of the heir to the throne—a post ultimately conferred upon Lady Dorset.

That Charles should for a moment have contemplated running counter to British prejudice in such a matter is one proof amongst others of his lack of comprehension of the conditions by which he was surrounded. At this very time, so strong was the jealousy entertained with regard to the French Queen and her religion that the birth of the child had been looked upon by many of his subjects rather in the light of a misfortune than as matter of rejoicing. Henrietta's son was, it was considered, an ill substitute for the heirs to the throne ready provided in the children of the King's sister, the Queen of Bohemia; who, educated and nurtured in the exercise of the Protestant faith, would have been gladly welcomed as his successors by the bulk of the nation. Two of Henrietta's sons were, however, for good or for ill, to reign over the English people. On June 27th the baptism of their future King took place, the ceremony being performed by Laud, now Bishop of London, and the office of sponsors filled by the incongruous trio, King Louis XIII., Marie de Medicis, and the zealous Protestant Palgrave, all three alike viewing with suspicion or dislike the special tenets in which their godson was to be educated.

The baby was satisfactory in all respects save beauty. He was fat, healthy, and ill-favoured. He also had a gravity of demeanour according little with his characteristic gaiety in later life.

"He is so ugly that I am ashamed of him," Henrietta wrote to her friend, Madame de Saint-George, to whom, in spite of her reconciliation with her husband, she always continued to display cordial affection. "I wish you could see the *cavalier*, for he has no ordinary mien. He is so serious in all that he does that I cannot help deeming him far wiser than myself." "If my son only knew how to talk," she says in another letter, "I think he would send you his compliments. He is so fat and so big that he is taken for a year old, and he is only four months. . . . I will send you his portrait as soon as he is a little fairer; for at present he is so dark [*noir*] that I am ashamed of him."

These and others addressed to "ma mie Saint-George" are sunshiny letters, giving little indication of any apprehension of gathering clouds. It is difficult to believe that they can have been wholly absent. Yet it is pleasant to imagine that, for a time at least, the woman to whom life was presently to resolve itself into a sombre tragedy was troubled with no serious forebodings.

CHAPTER VI

1630—1633

Exile of Marie de Medicis—Henrietta's growing influence—Charles still independent of it—His foreign policy—The Queen's hostility to Spain—Charles' refusal to receive her mother—The Chevalier de Jars—Letters of Henrietta's and Lord Holland's opened—Quarrels at court—Jermyn's misconduct—Birth of the Princess Royal—Charles crowned in Edinburgh—Birth of James II.—Letter from Wentworth.

HENRIETTA'S domestic felicity, great as it was, cannot have been without alloy. Before her baby was many months old news was brought from France which, to a daughter so devotedly attached, must have occasioned no little grief, rendered the greater by her inability to render to Marie de Medicis the assistance she demanded.

In these early days the King, in spite of his attachment to his wife, was jealous of allowing it to be imagined that he was ruled by her influence, and it may be that her power over him at this date has been over-estimated. The very endeavours made by intriguing politicians to make use of her—endeavours of which the King cannot have been altogether ignorant—may have contributed to put him on his guard. It has been seen that Chateauneuf had striven to turn her power to account, and a letter written at a later date to the Vatican by Panzani, papal agent at her court, affords evidence that he was engaged in a similar attempt. "She thinks little of the future," he wrote, "trusting entirely in the King. She must endeavour more to gain the ministers of State, of whom if she wishes she may be the mistress."

The last sentence is significant of the pressure constantly brought to bear upon Henrietta with the object of inducing her to throw herself into political and party interests. It is easy to measure the importance, in the eyes of foreign statesmen, of increasing the influence of a Queen upon whom they believed themselves able to count for the furtherance of their designs. Ignorant for the most part, whether as foreigners or as Catholics, of the trend of political and public feeling in England, they could not foresee the fatal results, not only of the Queen's genuine power over her husband, but of the reflected distrust of him likely to be produced by the suspicion that he acted at the dictation of his wife.

There can be little doubt that it was at this time that the foundations were being laid for that influence destined to prove, in the eyes of most of those making a study of this period, alike strong and disastrous. Mr. Disraeli, it is true, has been at pains to demonstrate that Henrietta's power has been strangely and inexplicably overrated. He asserts that it is comparatively seldom that she appears in connection with matters of state importance, quoting a letter from the Earl of Northumberland to the Earl of Leicester in support of the view that solely or chiefly in reference to court arrangements did Charles defer to her wishes. "Celia [the Queen] will be able to serve you in matters of favour rather than in what must be disputed and sifted for reason and justice, because Arviragus [Charles] is too subtle. . . . Our master loves not to hear other people give what is only fit for him." Mr. Disraeli also contends that the public declaration made at a later date by Charles at York, that the Queen had advised him to call a Parliament, was a mere expedient adopted to promote her popularity. The assertion can be neither proved nor disproved. His main argument will strike many readers as singularly inconclusive. It is the Queen's unfitness to be the King's counsellor in matters of State. But not the wisest advisers are most secure of a hearing, and men are less often swayed through their reason than by means of their affections.

A formidable array of witnesses testify to the influence exercised by Henrietta. St. John, the popular leader, classed her with Buckingham and Laud as obtaining Charles' ear "to his utter undoing"; Clarendon is prejudiced against her, but when he speaks of her "absolute power" over her husband, if some blunders are thereby transferred from the master he loved to the Queen he disliked, the King is convicted of a degree of weakness scarcely less than criminal; Sir Philip Warwick's reference to her "too, too powerful influence" takes its existence for granted; and, in view of the facts of history and of the documentary evidence afforded by her own letters and the King's, it is difficult not to believe, in spite of arguments to the contrary, that the opinion of contemporaries, endorsed by most historians, is justified.

At the present time Henrietta's power was in its infancy; nor is proof wanting that Charles was capable of holding his own against it. In his foreign policy this was especially the case. A glance at it, however cursory, will show that it was not adopted in deference to his wife. So far as it could be called a policy at all, it displayed strength in family affection, but in nothing else. His central aim, to the exclusion of all wider and larger conceptions, was the restoration of the Palatinate to his sister's husband. To this end, negotiations were carried on, in turn or simultaneously, with every power from whom assistance might be expected. Envoys visited Madrid, Vienna, France, Turin, and the camp of the great Protestant champion, Gustavus. Should the restitution of the Palatinate be made a condition of the alliance, Charles would have been ready to throw the weight of his influence into the scales in favour of any power thus pledged. He failed to perceive that, in order to obtain a result of no great moment to any one but himself, he must be prepared to make adequate payment, either in hard cash or in military assistance. Charles never made it worth while—perhaps, under present circumstances, it would have been impossible for him to make it worth while—for any of the powers at war to accede to his condition. But if his hopes of achieving by diplomacy what he was not prepared to purchase at its just value were doomed to disappointment, the course he pursued was, none the less, proof sufficient that Henrietta had not the direction of his conduct. So far as she endeavoured to sway him, it would certainly have been in favour of her own country and against the interests of Spain. In December, 1628, a correspondent, informing the Earl of Carlisle that suspicions were entertained that he inclined towards an accommodation with that country, added reassuringly that the Queen refused to believe it; and when Lord Cottington, despatched in the following November, in spite of her opposition and that of the French ambassador, to conduct negotiations in Spain, in taking leave of her asked, "what service she would be pleased to command him to her sister," she replied uncompromisingly that "she would have nothing to do with Spain or any person there." Upon the arrival of a Spanish envoy, Don Carlos de Coloma, in December of the same year, she made so little attempt to disguise her feelings that she omitted to pay the guest the customary compliments.

Incident after incident betrays the strength of her French partisanship. It is related that one morning the King sent her in jest a grey hair discovered on his brown head. "Don Carlos," she told him sardonically, seizing the opportunity of pointing a moral—"Don Carlos will give you many more before the Emperor restores the Palatinate." She was right. Yet, against her judgment and against her wishes, Coloma remained in London, and ten months later Charles had concluded a treaty with Coloma's master and his own old enemy. Nor did Henrietta even then show any disposition to bow to the inevitable. When the formal declaration of the alliance was publicly celebrated, and bonfires were lighted by order in the streets, Charles proved unable to command corresponding tokens of rejoicing within the precincts of Whitehall, the Queen marking her displeasure by a refusal to array herself as for a festival at the banquet given in the ambassador's honour.

It is thus proved that, from first to last, Charles had shown himself, where Spain was in question, fully capable of carrying out a line of action directly opposed to his wife's wishes. In a matter touching her more personally he gave yet more signal evidence of independence of judgment and conduct. In November, 1630, a year before the final conclusion of the treaty with Spain, an attempt had been made in France to overthrow the domination of the all-powerful Richelieu. In this attempt, not only the two Queens, Louis' wife and mother, had been concerned, but the King's brother, Gaston, Duc d'Orléans. It had ended in failure; and the Queen-Mother, foremost in its promotion, was sent to expiate her hostility to her former favourite in confinement. In the following July, escaping from her place of captivity, she fled across the frontier, and took refuge in the Spanish Netherlands, from whence she brought what pressure she could to bear upon Charles, to induce him to join with Spain in interfering upon her behalf. Her endeavours were not successful. Disinclined in any case to complicate his relations with France by entering the lists in defence of his mother-in-law, her cause was further injured in Charles' eyes by the means employed to advance it in England. A disagreeable incident occurring in the summer of 1631 would have tended to open the eyes of a less suspicious man to the inconveniences likely to result, should he allow his kingdom to be made by this professional schemer a centre of foreign intrigue.

In the spring of the preceding year the ambassador, Chateauneuf, had been recalled, being replaced by the Marquis de Fontenoy-Mareuil, with whom Henrietta had fallen out, by reason of some dispute concerning her confessor. Her quarrel with the accredited envoy may have led her to look with the more favour upon a certain Chevalier de Jars, then in London and on friendly terms with the King and herself. In Charles' eyes de Jars was no more than a casual visitor, and an agreeable countryman of his wife's; he had no suspicion that the Chevalier privately filled a post of his own, and was acting as agent in London of the ex-ambassador, Chateauneuf.

The facts were these. Chateauneuf, on his return to France, had been won over—owing, it is said, to the wiles of the French Circe, Madame de Chevreuse—to attach himself to the party opposed to the Cardinal. In the eyes of this faction, Charles' Lord Treasurer, Weston, soon to become Earl of Portland, presented one of the principal obstacles, on economic and other grounds, to English interference in French affairs. To remove him from power, or to weaken his influence, was therefore, in the eyes of the adherents of Marie de Medicis, an object of the first importance. It was with this view that de Jars had been sent to London ; and affection for her mother, together with her dislike for the Lord Treasurer, may have combined to render Henrietta not averse to co-operation in the intrigue. The affair, unfortunately, came to the ears of Fontenoy-Mareuil, who, whatever may be thought of his manner of dealing with it, showed himself to be a man of determination and promptitude. Engaging the services of a housebreaker, he caused the Chevalier's lodgings to be entered ; the cabinet containing his compromising correspondence with Chateauneuf was carried off, and was placed forthwith in the hands of the ambassador.

The sentiments evoked at court by this summary mode of procedure may be imagined. The Queen, as was natural, ranged herself on the side of de Jars, representing not only her mother's partisans but the opponents of the obnoxious Fontenoy-Mareuil. The ambassador, on the other hand, boldly maintained his right to make use of whatever means he found necessary in order to unveil the machinations of his master's subjects. In the end he carried the day ; Charles took no steps to vindicate the majesty of the law against the ambassadorial house-breaker, and the whole matter was probably of importance chiefly by reason of its effect in strengthening the King's determination to exclude the lady who was a chief promoter of affairs of the kind from English soil. A news-letter of December, 1632, quotes with malicious satisfaction reports from Brussels that the French there, with the Queen-Mother and Monsieur, had "made account to have kept a brave Christmas in London, and for that purpose had trussed up their trinkets half top-mast high. But it seemeth they reckoned without their host that should have been, King Charles," and the visit remained unpaid.

That he was determined that, so far as he had power to prevent it, his wife should not be entangled in the network of political intrigue, was shown by a brief imprisonment inflicted upon Lord Chaworth, in consequence of his having become the bearer, without permission from Charles, of a message to the Queen. Henrietta is not likely to have proved altogether submissive. That no fresh domestic dissensions were the result of Charles' display of authority bears witness to the terms of good fellowship now established in the royal household; but she continued to owe Fontenoy-Mareuil a grudge, and an envoy despatched by her brother, in 1633, with the object, amongst others, of making peace between the resident ambassador and the Queen, failed to effect the desired reconciliation. The Marquis, Henrietta allowed, had done her no injury, but she did not like him. If it was a woman's argument, it was none the less unanswerable.

De Jars' name occurs a little later on, once more in connection with intercepted correspondence. Jerome Weston, son to the Lord Treasurer, returning from a mission abroad, chanced to encounter a messenger charged with a packet addressed in Holland's handwriting to a French minister of State; and Holland being known to be high in the Queen's favour and to belong to her household, the fact that he was corresponding, after an irregular fashion, with the French court, appears at once to have awakened young Weston's suspicions. Conceiving himself justified, in his character of envoy, in making himself acquainted with the contents of the packet, he forthwith opened it, and found it to contain a letter in cipher from Holland himself, as well as one from the Queen, which he did her the grace to leave unread. Henrietta's object is believed to have been simply to make intercession for de Jars and his principal, Chateauneuf, both consigned to prison by Richelieu, and the discovery in itself was of little importance. That communication of any kind had been attempted with the French court, save through the authorised channels, was, however, held by the King to be full justification for the action taken by Weston. It was an ambassador's duty, Charles declared, to intercept and at his discretion to open any packet, not having allowance from King or secretary, sent beyond seas. It is scarcely to be wondered at that this view of the incident was unshared by Holland, and that both he and the Queen should have "taken it ill." The sequel presents a graphic picture of the court and of the manners of the day.

The first step was taken by Holland. Henry Jermyn—his own friend and the Queen's favourite—was sent to tell Weston that, believing himself to be injured, he desired to meet him sword in hand. Hampered by a prohibition of the King's, forbidding him to fight, Weston returned a vague answer by young Henry Percy, Lady Carlisle's brother, to the effect that he knew of no injury done to the Earl, Percy adding that, should his principal be questioned as to what had occurred abroad, he would be unable to reply. Upon this Holland answered that he was left to take his own satisfaction. At this stage Weston's obedience to the

King appears to have become exhausted, for he sent word that, whithersoever he walked, he would wear his sword by his side. When Holland had rejoined that he would walk on the following morning in the Spring Garden, Percy returned with yet another equivocal message, to which his opponent replied by reiterating that he would be found in the gardens, near the Earl of Portland's house.

At his subsequent examination in the council-chamber, one of the charges brought against Holland was that he had appointed the King's own garden to be the scene of an unlawful combat. Had he ever, he was asked, known of the like insolency offered by another? Though Holland's defence that the Spring Garden had merely been chosen as a place where the two could meet with least notice, and that they would have gone elsewhere to fight, does not seem to have been found convincing, it was impossible to refute it; for Weston, at this point in the negotiations, had taken the course open to him from the first, and told Jermyn plainly that he had been forbidden to accept the challenge. In the end the matter was settled by the submission of all the parties concerned. It may have been owing to the fact that three out of the four involved in the dispute—not to mention Lord Goring and young Fielding, who had had a quarrel of their own arising out of it—were friends of the Queen, that Holland and Jermyn escaped, to everybody's surprise, with no severer chastisement than a short imprisonment.

Not long afterwards the Queen's favour again availed to shield Jermyn from the consequences of a worse misdeed. Shortly before he had taken part in the dispute between Holland and Weston, he had ruined a niece of the late Duke of Buckingham and a maid-of-honour to the Queen, declaring that he had been precluded from marriage by his lack of fortune. When the scandal became public, the King, on the demand of the Villiers family, offered Jermyn the alternative of fulfilling the promise of marriage which Charles declared himself satisfied had been given, or of perpetual banishment from court. But though no marriage took place—the victim herself admitting that she had loved Jermyn too well to make conditions, and that he had given her no pledge—it was not long before the culprit regained his old footing at Somerset House, the Queen finding herself apparently unable to dispense with his services.

The episode in which de Jars had been concerned had not been without a sequel. Amongst the papers seized by Richelieu upon the arrest of the Chevalier, letters had been found affording the Cardinal a convenient means of embittering the relations, already strained, between Henrietta and the Lord Treasurer. By placing in Portland's hands documents making it clear that there were those about the Queen actively engaged in intrigues against the minister, the Cardinal could rest satisfied that he had made it the interest of the Treasurer to use his endeavours to counterbalance Henrietta's influence, always liable to be employed on behalf of her mother, and consequently in opposition to Richelieu himself.

At the present moment the Queen was probably occupied with interests of a different nature to those implied by the attempt to intervene in public affairs. In November, 1631, her eldest daughter had been born; whilst not two years later another addition to the royal nursery was made, in the person of the future James II. It was some weeks before this last event that Charles' coronation took place in Edinburgh, Henrietta being, as before, firm in her refusal to share in the ceremony.

Religious feeling ran high in Scotland. Episcopacy, formally abolished in 1592, though restored by James after his accession to the English throne, had never regained its hold on the mass of the people; and any attempt to impose upon them rites and ceremonies savouring of the Church thrown down in the preceding century was certain to rouse indignation even more fierce than in England. But neither tact nor forbearance was to be expected from Charles or from his adviser in matters ecclesiastical, the Bishop of London, soon to become Primate. As if blindly determined to run counter to the most cherished prejudices of his subjects in every part of his kingdom, he threw down the gauntlet on this first occasion of his meeting with his Scottish subjects. Laud, by whom he was accompanied, not only delivered a sermon from Knox's pulpit in favour of conformity and ceremonial, but treated the Archbishop of Glasgow, who entertained conscientious scruples as to the use of vestments, with arrogant insolence. "Are you a churchman, and want the coat of your order?" he is reported to have said, thrusting him back, and replacing him with a more compliant prelate.

In the Scottish Parliament, notwithstanding the loyal enthusiasm greeting Charles' visit to the kingdom, there had not been lacking signs of the presence of the same spirit displayed at Westminster; and though Charles succeeded for the moment in overriding opposition, he must have felt that the display of independence boded ill for the future. All things considered, he was probably not sorry to leave the ancient city where his forefathers had borne sway, and to turn his face once more southwards. He was also impatient to reach home. The latter part of his journey was hurriedly performed; and, avoiding the delay belonging to a public entry into London, he crossed the river at Blackwall, took the

Queen by surprise, and presented himself, before she had expected him, at Greenwich. There is no doubt that he was joyfully received. The weather had been sad, wrote a correspondent to the Queen of Bohemia, his sister, since the King's absence, and the Queen a perfect mourning turtle.

Henrietta had not been without business to settle during his absence, Lord Goring in this case having become involved in the dispute.

When the King was already on his way to Scotland, the English agent of his sister, one Sir Francis Nethersole, had applied to him for leave to raise money by an appeal for voluntary contributions to assist the Queen of Bohemia, now a widow, in the recovery of her son's inheritance. Obtaining the permission he sought, he proceeded at once to negotiate the matter with more zeal than prudence; and growing alarmed at the discovery that, though intended to be kept secret, the business had become public property, he taxed Goring with betrayal of confidence. Goring, as a member of the Queen's household, referred the accusation to his mistress, and Henrietta ranged herself on the side of her servant. In the end the King, thinking better of the permission he had accorded for the levying of money, decided to cancel it, and furthermore ordered Nethersole to make due apology to Goring. Thus the affair was concluded, though not without sufficient tedious correspondence to warrant a wiser adviser than Nethersole, Sir Thomas Roe, in telling the Queen of Bohemia that he feared the fashion after which the business had been conducted might reflect upon her Majesty. Too much *pragmatique* and *brouillerie* might turn to her disservice. When weariness begins, affection ceases. One cannot but believe that Sir Thomas was right, and further that, where

Nethersole had the management of affairs, weariness was not far off.

When, after the King's return, Henrietta's confinement took place, the usual struggle was carried on over the cradle. The nurse was a Catholic, and, offered the oath of allegiance, refused to take it, "whereupon there grew a great noise both in the town and court, and the Queen afflicted herself with extreme passion upon knowledge of a resolution to change the woman. Yet, after much tampering with the nurse to convert her, she was let alone to quiet the Queen."

It must be confessed that the appointment of a nurse to the King's son who declined the oath of allegiance to the King was an anomalous one. In the end the child was committed to the care of Lady Dorset, who seems to have been entrusted with the general supervision of the royal nurseries, since it is to this lady that Wentworth, then Lord Deputy in Ireland, addressed a letter in the following year, containing his answer to a request that he would provide an Irish greyhound puppy for the little Prince of Wales. The zeal with which, in the midst of his anxious and arduous labours, the Lord Deputy applied himself to execute the commission, is an example of his eagerness to serve any member of the royal family.

"Madam," he writes on this occasion, "I did with all gladness receive from your ladyship the first commands it ever pleased our young master to honour me with, and before Christmas I will not fail to furnish his Highness with the finest greyhound this country affords." Till then he must crave the Prince's pardon. It were too bold and indiscreet to send a dog to England before he had had him under his own eye to see that he was safe and gentle amongst Wentworth's own children.

CHAPTER VII

1630—1634

The lull before the storm—The court—Henrietta—Charles—The Lord Treasurer, Weston—Laud—Wentworth—Hamilton—Holland—Lord and Lady Carlisle—Other courtiers—The Queen's Pastoral—Earl of Newcastle—His instructions to the Prince of Wales—Letters from the Queen and Prince—Henrietta and her sister.

THE years following the Dissolution of 1629 were the lull before the storm. The country, owing to a variety of causes, and especially to the peace concluded with France and Spain, was in a condition of material prosperity. For material prosperity the advisers in possession of the King's ear—more particularly the Lord Treasurer—were ready to barter most other goods, and their object had been attained. Parliaments were clearly unnecessary evils, and men laughed as they talked of the catchwords of the patriots and the liberty of the subject. If the acuter spirits amongst the ministerial party must have been aware that a time of reckoning was in store, discontent had been driven underground, and, in the absence of the usual channels of expression, could only find occasional and isolated utterance. To some men the thought of Eliot, dying in the Tower rather than make a surrender of principle, may have come at times to trouble them, like the spectre at the banquet; but by courtiers, at least, the unwelcome reminder of a force only to be conquered when life itself was extinct, will have been quickly thrust aside.

Meantime, the court, presided over by a Queen in the first freshness of her youth and of a beauty to which her many portraits bear witness, was pervaded by a spirit of gaiety and pleasure. "Frivolous and meddlesome" are adjectives applied to Henrietta by one historian. Eager and interested may be epithets less offensive and not less true; and a certain shyness which, judging by a description of her sent to Rome by the papal agent a little later, seems to have clung about her, will have added to her charm. "Her actions are full of an incredible innocence," the envoy reported, "such that she blushes like a young girl in the presence of strangers." He added that she suffered at times from melancholy, when she liked silence. These occasions, we cannot but believe, were in these days rare.

Instead of remaining aloof in the attitude she had at first adopted towards England and things English, she was setting herself in earnest, under the tuition of one Mr. Wingate, to acquire a mastery over the language; and though it was not until some years afterwards that her first letter in that tongue was indited, her progress in it is proved by the fact that she was already capable of taking her part in the performance of an English masque.

To Charles, no less than to Henrietta, these years must have been the happiest of his life. It is true that, looking at the face made familiar to all the world by Van Dyck, it is difficult to believe that, even before he was overtaken by his calamities, he was a wholly happy man. When Henrietta sent three sketches by the great painter to Bernini, that by their help he might model the King's bust, the sculptor said that never had he looked upon a face so marked by melancholy, adding that its owner must be doomed to misfortune. But for the present life cannot have failed to seem desirable enough.

Buckingham indeed was gone, nor was his place ever to be filled. As Charles had loved and trusted the friend of his youth he trusted and loved no other man. But, setting aside the wife he adored and the children who were growing up around him, interests, many and various, filled his days and supplied him with occupation and pleasure. His love for art of all kinds was real and genuine. "Monsieur le Prince de Galles," Rubens had written in 1625, "est le prince le plus amateur de la peinture qui soit au monde;" and he was doing his best to encourage, not only painting, but literature and architecture. He valued the society of artists. Rubens himself, Van Dyck, and Mytens were numbered amongst his familiar friends; and the ease and cordiality distinguishing his bearing towards the painters he attracted to his court contrasted curiously with the formality and "stiff roughness" of his manners when in a less congenial atmosphere.

His artistic sense showed itself in matters of business. He was critical and fastidious as to the style of his despatches, and Warwick records that he smilingly observed, with reference to a document that had been brought to him, that "a man might have as good ware out of a chandler's shop." Yet he recognised the fact that there were things more important than style; and comparing his two secretaries, he once said that the dull one—Carleton—pleased him best, for he ever brought him his own sense in his own words. The other, Falkland, on the contrary, most commonly brought him his instructions in so fine a dress that he did not always own them.

Whilst his days were filled with interests practical and artistic, Charles also possessed the power, so essential to happiness, of attaching those by whom he was surrounded. At a time when men were ranged against one another in opposite camps, the spirit of loyalty would have been in any case accentuated amongst the King's partisans; but the sequel shows that personal affection for the man mingled with passionate loyalty to the King. Nor is the attachment of his friends difficult to understand, in spite of failings and defects. "This King," says Carlyle, "is of fine delicate fibre . . . . there is a real selectness, if little nobleness of nature in him. His demeanour everywhere is that of a man who has at least no doubt that he is able to command." That he was justified in his confidence was to be abundantly proved in days when men went to death or to exile at his word. For the present, it was enough that he could rule in their hearts.

Coming from King and Queen to the other elements making up the court, it is worth while to pass briefly in review the principal figures there. To understand Henrietta, and to make due allowance for her faults and her mistakes, it is necessary to obtain a clear conception of the atmosphere and influences around her during these sunshiny years. Those influences were the influences of the palace, since with all that lay outside its precincts she was never brought into any practical contact; and the court was what it was made by the men and women belonging to it. It is, therefore, not irrelevant to break the narrative of events in order to take a survey of the actors in them.

Notwithstanding the harmonious relations established between the King and Queen, the court may be roughly divided into rival camps, usually distrustful of one another if not at actual war, the members of each looking respectively to Charles or to Henrietta for countenance and support. In the Council itself this was the case, the Queen's party actually outnumbering at the Board that of the King. In the matter of weight it was, of course, a different question, and it was impossible that Henrietta's friends should make way against the advisers favoured by Charles. Amongst these last the Lord Treasurer, Weston, afterwards Earl of Portland, was, until his death in 1635, indisputably the most important. Commonly to be found in opposition to the Queen, he was a man of little dignity and no nobility of character, self-interested, and not above the suspicion of dishonesty in the methods he took to amass a fortune. Possessing a full share of administrative ability, he had steadily adhered, partly by policy, partly by inertia, to the maintenance of that peace to which, now that Buckingham's restless spirit was removed, Charles himself inclined. England was, in Portland's eyes, "a land the people of whom it was his business to make rich, in order that they might be more easily made obedient."[1]

To the end thus epitomised his whole policy was directed, based on economical principles partly responsible for the frequent collisions between himself and the Queen. On some grounds Portland might have been expected to be viewed with more favour by Henrietta than others of her husband's counsellors. His family were recusant Catholics, his own attitude with regard to the old religion finding expression in a death-bed reconciliation with the Church. Yet he was constantly to be reckoned amongst the adversaries of the Queen. He had not that submission and reverence for her, says Clarendon, as might have been expected from his wisdom and breeding, and often crossed her with more rudeness than was natural to him. Whilst, when the inevitable result followed, in anger upon the part of Henrietta, not inclined to take such "crossings" meekly, and there reached his ears bitter expressions she had let fall, he was "exceedingly afflicted," and would make vain and abject endeavours to regain the ground he had lost, sometimes addressing his complaints to the King, sometimes expostulating with the Queen herself, and by his demeanour and bearing rendering his case worse than before. For his attempts to control expenditure there was no doubt ample reason. Buckingham, Carlisle, and their imitators had set a bad example of a lavish extravagance, calculated to rouse emulation and lead to similar display. It was difficult for the King to allow himself to be outshone by his courtiers, nor had Henrietta shown any inclination to practise economy. Profuse expenditure existed, side by side with something approaching to actual poverty. The story told of the necessity under which the Queen found herself, to have her room darkened on the occasion of a visit made by a Frenchwoman to herself and her baby, lest the foreigner should detect the deplorable condition of the bed-coverings, does not ring true. It might indeed be considered sufficiently disproved by the entry among the state papers of a payment of £2,000 to Lady Denbigh, as first lady of the bedchamber, for the purchase of linen in preparation for Henrietta's confinement; but, true or false, it is illustrative of the straits considered possible at Whitehall. "She is a bad housekeeper," Charles told somebody in his wife's presence. Such being the case, and money being scarce, it is comprehensible enough that, in spite of religious sympathies in common, Henrietta and the Lord Treasurer should have frequently disagreed.

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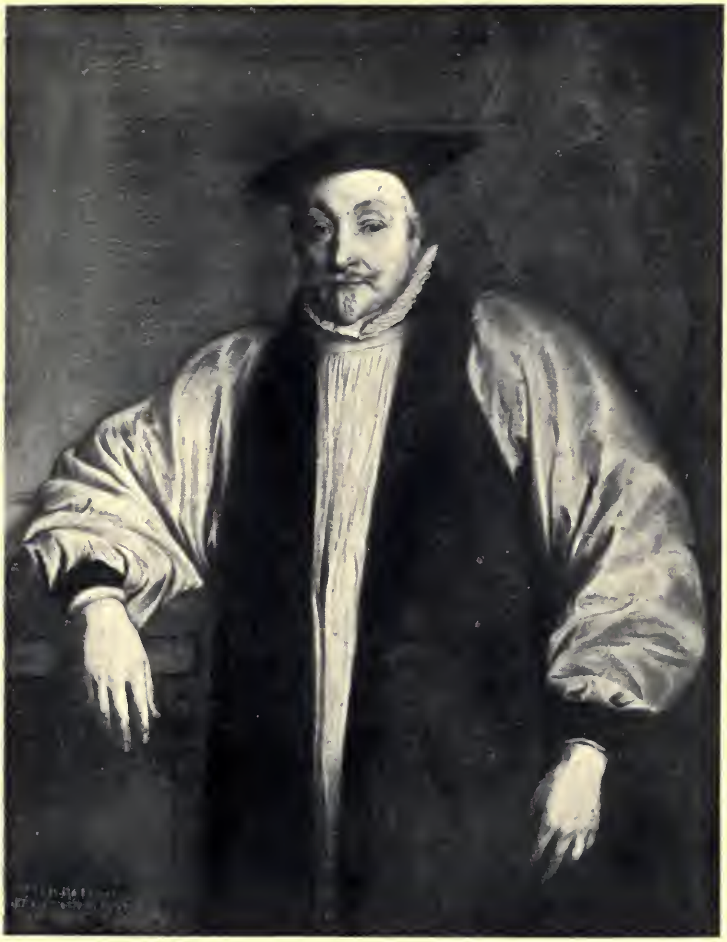
[1] Gardiner's *Personal Government of Charles I.*, vol. i. p. 5.

Nor was Laud, rapidly rising to pre-eminence in the King's counsels, likely to have been on terms of genuine cordiality with the Queen. Narrow, honest, dictatorial, and industrious, he had the singleness of purpose and aim which is one factor, though not the only one, in the achievement of an object. That object, in the Archbishop's case, was the settlement of the English ecclesiastical establishment on a firm basis as a branch of the Catholic Church. In furtherance of this end he attached the utmost importance to a rigid uniformity in worship and rites. Of inward diversities in dogma he took less account. Disliking controversy, he would have had men avoid, so far as was possible, meddling with matters too deep for human understanding. He was, in a sense, the apostle of the saving virtue of external observance, as opposed to the vehement and militant personal spirituality of Puritanism. As the upholder of absolutism alike in Church and State, the royal supremacy, accepted by him without difficulty, united the two. Personally he had little attraction, and none for women. "No leader of any great church party," says Gardiner, "before or since, was ever so entirely without female admirers." That it was so may be reckoned, from one point of view, to the credit of the Archbishop. From another it indicates certain disqualifications for the post of a spiritual guide. He made, says the same writer, no appeal to either imagination or devotional feeling. Hard-headed and eminently practical, he had nothing of the idealist save his blindness to actual issues.

With the hopes he indulged of ultimate reunion with Rome, it will doubtless have been his interest to keep on good terms with Henrietta. But it is equally certain that there must have constantly arisen difficulties in the way of an understanding between them. Approximation in



After a copy of Van Dyck's picture in the National Portrait Gallery.

Photo by Emery Walker.

WILLIAM LAUD, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

[*To face p.* 138.

doctrine is by no means invariably a corrective of personal bitterness, and the reversions to the ancient faith which were a common feature of the times can scarcely have failed to produce friction.

It may be true that reunion with Rome was the dream of the Archbishop's life; but he had no inclination to lead the way by a personal submission. When once, if not twice, he was offered a cardinal's hat, should he take that step, he was resolute in his rejection of the proposal. "Something dwells within me," he said, "which will not suffer me to accept that till Rome be other than it is;" and he seems to have acquiesced in the brutal punishment inflicted on one Bowyer, in consequence of his having spread reports that Laud was in the service of the Pope. Taking him all in all, his antagonism to the Queen was probably as great as that of Portland, though less undisguised.

For another and a greater man, the most interesting by far of those filling the stage, Henrietta had no liking. In Wentworth's character there would seem to have been much to commend him to her favour. It might be true that he lacked the smaller arts useful in propitiating goodwill, that he was no courtier, nor skilled in winning the favour of women—"there are few of them," he once wrote lightly, "know how gentle a *garçon* I am"—but what he lacked might well have been overbalanced in the Queen's eyes by his brilliant gifts and the intangible charm of his personality, combined with his services to the King and his views upon questions of prerogative and statesmanship. In his loyalty there was an absence of self-seeking—not incompatible with the ambition he doubtless cherished—an element of personal devotion, that it is strange should not have appealed to Charles' wife. In a letter of 1632 he makes a profession of the service he is prepared to render the King, to which his conduct never gave the lie. "Surely," he wrote, "I will never omit continually to serve him his own way, where I once understand it, and where that beam leaves me, serve him the most profitable way the dimmer lights of my own judgment shall by any means be able to lead me into. In this truth I will live and die."

In spite, moreover, of his disclaimer of popularity amongst women and of his "bent and ill-favoured brow," he had been loved by many. Not to speak of the wives to whom he was successively married, the Queen's ill-chosen friend, Lady Carlisle, was so devotedly attached to him that the transference of her services to the Parliamentarian party has been attributed to her indignation at the King's acquiescence in his fate. That Henrietta herself did not fail to recognise his serviceable qualities is clear from the narrative taken down by Madame de Motteville from her lips. He was a great man, she said, and of all the King's servants the most able and faithful. "Il était laid," adds Madame de Motteville, still quoting Henrietta's description, "mais assez agréable de sa personne ; et la Reine, me contant toutes ces choses, s'arrêta pour me dire qu'il avait les plus belles mains du monde." But though doing justice both to his character and to his hands, the fact remained that Henrietta did not like him. When fault was found with certain aspects of his Irish administration, Laud warned him that it was "somewhat loudly spoken of by some on the Queen's side" ; and though Charles recognised and acknowledged his extreme value, the fact that the earldom he solicited—more as a signal mark of the King's favour which his enemies would not be able to gainsay than by reason of the personal advancement it contained—was twice refused, may have been partly due to the influence exercised over Charles by his wife's prejudice. Holland, her chief friend at court, was heard to hint that the Lord Deputy was subject to touches of madness; although, charged by Wentworth with having given utterance to the calumny, the Earl denied that he had attributed to him more than "hypochondria humours."

Wentworth was well aware of the feelings with which he was regarded by the Queen. Of another courtier, temporarily out of favour, he wrote that Wat Montagu was "very ill used by her Majesty, so as if it continue but a while longer in this state it is feared he may grow out of countenance on the Queen's side *comme nous autres*." Arduously as she laboured when the catastrophe drew near to avert his fate, in happier times she had never been his friend. His visits to court were, for the rest, only occasional, his duties, first as President of the North and then as Lord Deputy of Ireland, detaining him mostly elsewhere.

Amongst the King's personal friends, as distinguished from his political advisers, Hamilton perhaps stood first. An unpopular man, he had fewer friends and more enemies, according to Clarendon, than any other, whether at court or elsewhere. The King's affection for him was, on the other hand, at least equal and thought to be superior to that he bestowed on any man. It was one of Charles' good points that he was not swayed by public opinion. When the Marquis had obtained leave to levy a body of volunteers to lead to Germany in support of Gustavus, a charge was brought against him to the effect that the object he avowed was no more than a blind, and that his real purpose was a treasonable design upon the Scottish crown. Charles listened to the accusation against his friend, told him on his return to court of the charges preferred against him, and in proof of his incredulity made him share his own bedchamber. Such loyalty in friendship contributed to rouse an answering loyalty amongst his servants.

Turning from ministers of State and those in the King's confidence to Henrietta's own precincts, the Earl of Holland would have been the most prominent figure there. Upon Charles himself, as the intimate friend of the dead Duke, he had a strong claim; whilst, as long as he remained true, Henrietta continued faithful to her first English friend. Writing of a later date, when Holland's loyalty had been put to the proof and had been found wanting, Clarendon casts a backward glance at these earlier days when the man who had afterwards served her so ill had been "believed to be a creature of the Queen's, and exceedingly obliged and protected by her immediate single grace and favour against the Earl of Portland, the Earl of Strafford, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, in those times when they had otherwise destroyed him." Holland was not lacking in ambition, and at the time immediately following upon the Duke's death he appears to have indulged the hope of succeeding to the place left vacant, and of exercising, through the Queen, a similar power. With this object in view, with all who were not "gracious" to Henrietta, or who showed themselves adverse to her possession of authority, Holland was at war. He had, however, neither Buckingham's gifts, his brilliance nor his fascination, and his dream of pre-eminence was never realised.

Lord Carlisle was high in favour with Henrietta. He, like Holland, had had the opportunity of stealing a march upon the rest of their fellow courtiers, and had made the most of it, obtaining for his wife a post in the Queen's household, whilst he himself had been made her Master of the Horse. In his case, as in Holland's, Henrietta remained constant in her friendship. Writing to him when abroad, Lord Goring told the Earl that "the blessed sweet Queen, my mistress, is hugely yours," and Lady Carlisle sent him word that Henrietta was constantly expressing her value of him to the King. He was much desired at home, Lord Goring told him again, not least by King and Queen; whilst he added, evidently with the desire of effacing past strife, that Lady Carlisle was his careful friend, beyond that of ordinary in a wife, and expressed a hope that he might not hear a syllable at his return of old quarrels.

It is unlikely that Goring's aspiration was fulfilled. Lady Carlisle, one fancies, was not well calculated to keep the peace—especially, perhaps, in the case of a husband. Yet her position was such that even a husband might find it worth his while to propitiate her. Restless in her ambition, alike political and social, it was easy to deride her, especially when her charm was on the wane, for her meddlesomeness in public affairs; but a woman who could count amongst those owning her attraction, first, the Earl of Strafford, and when he was in his grave the Puritan leader Pym, was a power no party could afford to despise. The Queen had quickly adopted her as a friend. A letter written in 1628, when Lord Carlisle was starting on a foreign mission, observes that in the opinion of the writer—one John Hope—he will not be half his journey before his wife is turned out of court, for the Duke's mother, sister, and wife hate her, not only for the Duke's intimacy with her, but also that she has the Queen's heart above them. "She has already brought her to paint," adds Mr. Hope—clearly no friend of Lady Carlisle's—" and in time will lead her into more debaucheries." That same year it is recorded that when her friend had the smallpox they had much ado to keep Henrietta from her; and Lady Carlisle herself, writing to her husband after her recovery, says that she did not think the heart of a queen could have been so sensible of the loss of a servant. Three years later, it is true, there had evidently been a quarrel, since a correspondent of Sir Henry Vane's informs him that Lord Holland's friendship with Lady Carlisle is perfected, adding that her friends hope his credit may restore her to the Queen's favour, whilst his apprehend that her pride may endanger him. "The court," observes the writer philosophically, "is like the earth, naturally cold, and reflects no more affection than the sunshine of their master's favour beats upon it." But, nevertheless, Lady Carlisle must have been Henrietta's chief friend amongst the women at her court. It is well known how the Queen's friendship was requited.

Rising rapidly in her liking during this period were "the young tampering favourites," as Warwick terms them, Henry Jermyn, of whom mention has already been made and who was to play so conspicuous a part in her after-life, and Henry Percy, brother to Lady Carlisle and the Earl of Northumberland. Percy's influence was strong with the Queen, since in 1635 when a Garter was to be given away, Henrietta by his request spoke to the King to give it to his brother, making it "her act solely, that the thanks might be only hers." Like his sister, Percy was amongst those who in days to come was not always held to have well repaid the favour shown him in these halcyon times. On the whole, however, he was a sharer in the Queen's fortunes to the end.

If a woman is to be judged by her friends Henrietta is not well calculated to stand the test. But it must be remembered that she was young and a foreigner, and almost necessarily influenced by the attraction exercised by external advantages, by grace and wit and adroitness in the art of achieving success at court. It is, nevertheless, not astonishing that her choice of men such as Holland, Jermyn, and Percy as her favourite companions and associates should have redounded to her discredit, and their influence may well have availed to prejudice her against those who might have proved wiser counsellors and friends.

In the meantime, though she was not without her enemies at court, it would have been a bold man who would have sought to harm her, her relations with the King being what they had now become. Every touch in the domestic story of those days tells of love and happiness. Smallpox was a terror at the time, especially to women ; but Henrietta seems to have been singularly fearless. If it had been difficult to bar her access to Lady Carlisle when attacked by the disease ; when it was contracted by the King it was found impossible. "The Queen, as I heard a Frenchman of the court assert," writes a contemporary, "will never be out of his company." And the invalid, having taken the complaint lightly, "is up in a warm room, with a fur coat on his back, and is merry." A month later all was well again, the Queen having escaped the natural consequences of her temerity, although young Francis Stanley, son of Lord Derby, has been less fortunate, dying of the same illness some six or eight weeks afterwards, "having got it by visiting a great person" discreetly left anonymous.

Upon the King's recovery followed the performance of the Queen's Pastoral, rousing serious disapproval in the minds of her Puritan subjects, and contributing, amongst other consequences, to cost Prynne his ears. It was to be acted at Whitehall, in a temporary building erected for the purpose, lest the pictures in the banqueting-hall should be injured by the lights; and "my Lord Chamberlain saith that no chambermaid shall enter, unless she sit cross-legged on the top of a bulk. No great lady shall be kept out, though she have but mean apparel, and no inferior lady or woman shall be let in, but such as have extreme brave apparel, and better faces." Birth, beauty, or fine clothes were to be the passports of admission.

There had been trouble about the Pastoral. To Inigo Jones, high in the King's favour, and who, had Charles been able to carry out his plans, was to have rendered Whitehall worthy to compete with any palace in Europe, the decorative arrangements of the masque were to have been entrusted, Ben Jonson furnishing the words. But the two artists had fallen out, and since neither would give way it was clear that one must withdraw. It was the poet's services that were dispensed with, and Ben Jonson's verses were not written. One man's misfortune is another's opportunity. Young Walter Montagu, my Lord Privy Seal's son, destined to end his days as a Catholic priest, and, as Henrietta's spiritual adviser, held responsible for certain acts on her part specially offensive to Protestant sentiment, was selected to replace the veteran verse-writer. Not yet having mastered the difficult art of brevity, he produced a libretto of which the performance took some eight hours; but though the Queen is said to have complained bitterly of the length of her part, the author had given satisfaction, since, meeting the Lord Privy Seal, the King "did highly congratulate and extol unto his lordship the rare parts of Mr. Walter Montagu, his son, in poetry and otherwise; so that he is a favourite with both their Majesties."

For months the Queen and her ladies are said to have thought of little besides the coming performance. On January 10th, 1633, it took place, and the very next day the invective of Mr. Prynne of Lincoln's Inn was published, including, amongst other objects of vituperation, stage-plays and such-like entertainments. The production was so plainly directed against the Queen that the author could scarcely have expected to escape prosecution, and it is not to be wondered at that proceedings were taken against him—Henrietta, it is said, interceding, though in vain, to obtain a mitigation of his punishment. It was that they might publicly dissociate themselves from this attack that other gentlemen of Lincoln's Inn entertained the court, the year after, at another magnificent ballet and masque, given in the banqueting-hall at their own expense; on which occasion the crowd was so great that the King and Queen found a difficulty in reaching their places. The masque was followed by a ball, when Henrietta expressed her approval of the partners she selected, pronouncing them as good dancers as ever she saw.

Not a week after, on the day following the performance of another play, Shirley's *Gamester*, two cases brought before the Star Chamber afforded curious proof of the variety of the offences dealt with by this tribunal, and their differing degrees of importance. The first of the charges was directed against Prynne, whose prosecution had already lasted over a year. The other, arising out of the entertainment of the previous night, was merely concerned with a brawl, drunken or other, between two of the guests, Lord Morley and Sir George Theobalds. Morley probably escaped with a reprimand. Ten days later Prynne was sentenced to pay a fine of £5,000, was expelled from Lincoln's Inn, degraded from his degree, and ordered to be set in the pillory and to lose his ears. He would probably have felt that the suffering to be undergone was not too high a price for the result achieved, if, as it has been averred, dramatic productions became less openly immoral by reason of the attention he had drawn to their character.

Masques continued much in fashion so long as the King and Queen had leisure for such entertainments. Ben Jonson, though discarded at Whitehall, was employed as librettist soon afterwards by the Earl of Newcastle, on the occasion of a royal visit to Bolsover in 1634, when the expenditure incurred by the Earl, together with that of an earlier visit to Welbeck, was estimated at no less a sum than £10,000. It is true that a letter addressed by Newcastle to Wentworth on the first occasion implies that other motives besides purely disinterested ones had contributed to the outlay, and that it was not without disappointment that he viewed the result. The King, he said, had seemed pleased, and had never used him better. On the other hand, he had hurt his estate, had been long put in hope, and would now labour no more, but would let nature work and expect the issue—"it is better to give over in time than to lose all." Even did he obtain his desire, it would be a more painful life, and, since he was so much plunged in debt, would help very well to undo him. After all, he knew no reason why the King should give him anything. If he had commands for him, he was ready to serve him; if not, to pray for him.

It is easy to be philosophical on paper; not so easy to carry philosophy into the conduct of life. Yet, having done much, it was perhaps not unwise to do more. It is said that in consequence of the impression made upon the King and Queen by the magnificent hospitalities he again offered them in the succeeding year, the post of governor to the little heir-apparent was conferred upon the Earl. He had many qualifications for the charge. A very fine gentleman, to summarise Clarendon's account, full of courage, accomplished in the arts of horsemanship, fencing, and dancing, and "amorous in poetry and music," nothing could have tempted him out of paths of pleasure but honour and ambition to serve the King. He loved monarchy, as the foundation and support of his own greatness; the Church, as it was constituted for the splendour and security of the Crown; and religion, as it cherished and maintained the order and obedience necessary to both. He had a reverence for the King and an extraordinary devotion to the person of the Prince, and he was loyal and faithful in days when the love of many waxed cold. Such was the man entrusted with the education of the child upon whom many hopes centred. A curious paper of instructions, drawn up by him for the use of his pupil, illustrates the lines upon which that education was conducted. Judging by Charles II.'s future career it seems that some, at least, of his tutor's maxims had been laid to heart.

"I would not have you too studious," wrote the Earl, "for too much contemplation spoils action, and virtue consists in that." Art is to be cultivated, so far as it is of use. Then follows advice surely not endorsed by Henrietta. "Beware of too much devotion for a king; for one may be a good man but a bad king, and how many will history represent to you that in seeking to gain the kingdom of heaven have lost their own. The old saying is that short prayers pierce heaven's gate." What religion Charles has is nevertheless to be genuine. He is God's deputy, and owes Him as much reverence and duty as his own subjects owe a sovereign. To all he is to be courteous and civil. "Pulling off your hat and making a leg pleases more than reward." He also is to speak well of every one. "To women you cannot be too civil." Thus the paper runs on, a curious example of worldly wisdom and shrewd common-sense.

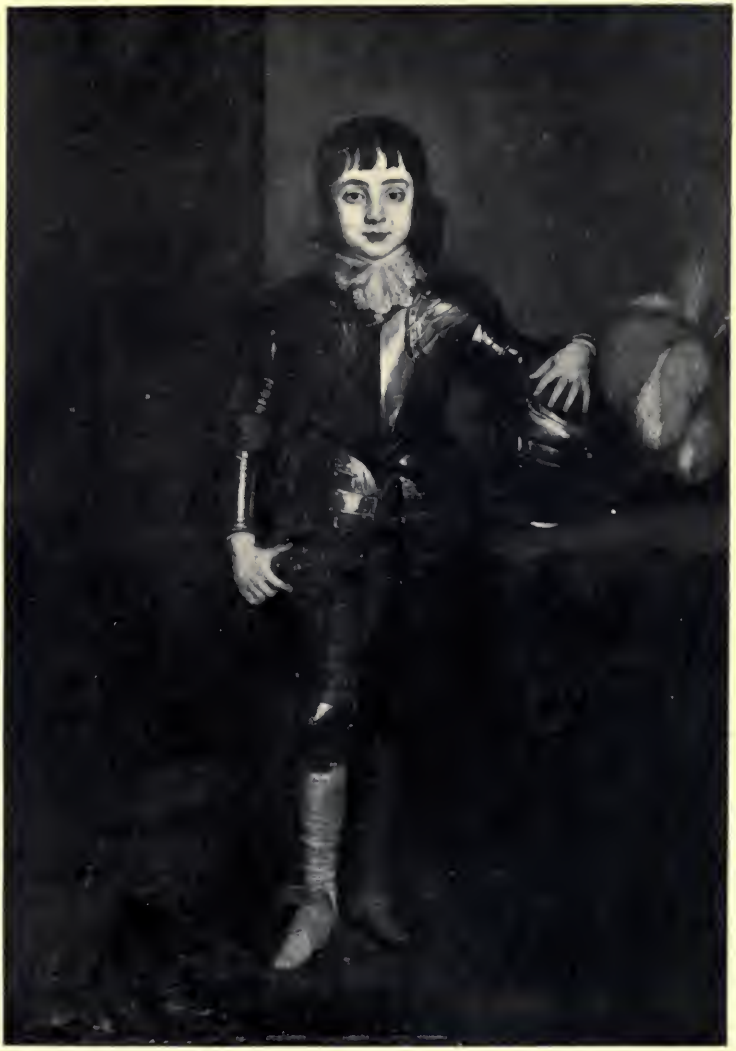
The Queen's first letter to her son has been preserved, and is one of the few examples of her use of the English language. Belonging to a somewhat later date, it may be given here.

"Charles," she writes, "j am sore that j must begin my first letter with chiding you because j heere that you will not take phisike. I hope it was onlei for this day, and that tomorrowe you will doe it for yf you will not j must come to you, and make you take it, for it is for your healthe. I have given order to my lord Newcastell to send mi word tonight whether you will or not, therfore j hope you will not give mi the paines to goe, and so j rest your affectionat mother, Henriette Marie R. To my deare Sone the Prince."

Charles' own note to his governor, probably in reply to further pressure on the subject of medicine, gives too much evidence of humour in the eight-year-old heir to the throne to be omitted.

"My Lord," wrote the Prince in a round hand, "I would not have you take too much phisicke, for it doth always make me worse and I think it will do the like with you. I ride every day and am ready to follow any other directions from you. Make haste back to him that loves you, Charles P."

Henrietta was an affectionate mother, and her



From the picture by Van Dyck at Windsor Castle. *Photo by Franz Hanfstaengl.*

CHARLES II. AS PRINCE OF WALES.

[*To face p.* 150.

nursery must have been full enough to give her ample occupation when the round of court entertainments afforded her leisure to attend to it. Besides her two elder sons and her daughter Mary, Elizabeth and little Anne were added to the list before the close of this period of tranquillity ; and her voice—of rare beauty, but never used in public—would be sometimes heard as she sang to her babies. Rumours of gathering and increasing discontent outside the circle of the court will have penetrated but faintly to her ears, and all have seemed to her to be going very well.

Yet there must have been times when the French Queen felt herself to be a foreigner in a strange land. Not one of her relations appear to have yet crossed the narrow seas to visit her ; whilst her correspondence with her sister, Christine, married in 1619 to the Duke of Savoy, and from whom Henrietta had finally parted as a child of ten, testifies to her clinging to ties of blood and to the warmth and tenacity of her affections. To the sister whom she would not have recognised had they met she writes with eager and overflowing sympathy, whether in the time of the Duchess's prosperity or during the sorrows by which she was overtaken. She is, as it were, at home in the nursery at Turin, and with the children she has never seen. "Je suis amoureuse de ma niepse," she says, thanking Christine for the portraits she has sent, "et pour vostre petit fils, je ne l'oserais louer, car il resemble trop au mien." Upon another occasion a lock of the little Italian niece's curling hair had been sent to the unknown aunt, in full confidence of her interest in its beauty. When, on the death of her husband, Christine was surrounded by intrigues and conspiracies, Henrietta's sympathy was no less great. She wished it were in her power to go in person to offer her services to her sister. The time was not far distant when Henrietta herself would be claiming the compassion she was so lavish in bestowing, and the tone of her letters at that period is evidence that she did not claim it in vain. But for the present no presage of the coming storm oppressed her.

CHAPTER VIII

1634—1637

Henrietta not concerned in Charles' foreign or home policy—Money difficulties—Puritan distrust—Panzani's mission—Panzani's relations with court and ministers—Hopeful reports sent to Rome—Conversions—Panzani and the Queen—Charles friendly—Con and Hamilton appointed agents to Urban and Henrietta—The Prince Palatine and Prince Rupert visit England—Royal visit to Oxford—Popular discontent—Departure of the Princes.

WITH many of the public events which, in England and elsewhere, were silently but not less surely preparing the way for the fall of the monarchy, Henrietta had, directly, little to do. Into the bewildering mazes of Charles' negotiations with foreign powers, still carried on with the hope of obtaining for his nephew the restoration of his lost inheritance, she probably cared to intervene only so far as she might be able to place obstacles in the way of a Spanish alliance. Neither as Calvinist nor as the son of an unknown sister-in-law would the young Prince Palatine appeal strongly to her sympathies; and in regard to Charles' renewed hopes of obtaining his object through Spain the Queen was not in his confidence, only those members of the council employed in the negotiations being acquainted with his scheme. With these matters, therefore, Henrietta continued to have no concern.

With the nature of the efforts made by Charles and his ministers to fill the Exchequer, whilst dispensing with the assistance and authority of Parliament, she would have concerned herself inasmuch as they appeared likely or not to prove efficacious in supplying the funds so sorely needed in the royal household. Of the urgency of its necessities there is ample proof. Debts to the amount of £2,456 and £1,026, incurred during Henrietta's first two years of marriage in connection with "the Queen's Christmas masques," were not paid till 1636. For these expenses Henrietta could not be held responsible. But other items in the royal accounts point to the fact that the charge of extravagance brought against her was not unfounded. Thus, a sum of £2,481—even when £200 had been deducted by the King from the bill—was paid for a bed, a cradle-bed, chairs, cradle, and stools, all purchased in preparation for the birth of her second daughter, Elizabeth. Humbler creditors were clamouring for payment, and one Francis Burt, purveyor of poultry to the royal children, sending in his bill for £1,900, fears he will be undone if it be not discharged. To the inconvenience attaching to the honour of being entrusted with the responsibility of making purchases on the King's behalf, letters of Sir Thomas Roe, preserved amongst the state papers, bear witness. Roe was a disappointed man. Neither his abilities nor his services had met with the recognition they deserved; and he had recently seen the post of Secretary, for which he might reasonably have hoped, conferred upon Windebank, a nominee of Laud's of no personal weight. For his more serious disappointments there was no remedy; but he had a minor grievance to be redressed, and upon this point he wrote pressingly to Lord Goring. A sum of £2,500, apparently due for jewels of which he had negotiated the purchase, was still unpaid, Roe being personably liable for the debt. A former letter addressed to Goring upon this subject had, he fears, been misunderstood, since the answer had contained, not a promise of hard cash or of the Queen's influence to obtain it, but of her prayers. Of "those six Our Father in Heaven" Roe has never heard. It is practical help he desires. He will not urge one reason why the Queen should succour him—should "show him in another glass to his Majesty"—since he will not alloy the purity of her goodness with any mixture of cause in himself. But he wants the money. Two days later he is writing again, this time to the Lord Treasurer himself, on the same subject, expressing a confidence one fears he does not feel, that the Queen is "too princely" to wear jewels and leave them unpaid for.

Whilst expenses of this nature had to be met, and difficulty was found in meeting them, interest of a certain kind must have been felt by Henrietta in her husband's financial affairs; but provided money came in she probably cared little how it was obtained. Nor had discontent, up to this time, with regard to the methods employed to raise it, become loud enough to penetrate to any great extent the thick walls of a palace. So long as Portland was alive, selfish, interested, and inert, he had opposed an obstacle to the employment of the more energetic and drastic methods adopted by Laud and the colleagues amongst whom, at his death, the Treasury was temporarily put into commission. It was not until the second levy of ship-money that dissatisfaction had become noisy. At that time a change had taken place. Justice Berkeley had put the claims of the King into black and white. In publicly enunciating the principle that there was one rule of law and another rule of government, he had practically set the royal prerogative above legal precedent, thereby abrogating at one stroke every man's rights, and placing his property at the mercy of the Crown. It was not strange that the pronouncement should have created a universal feeling of insecurity. "The liberty of the subject," wrote D'Ewes, "received the most deadly and fatal blow it had been sensible of in five hundred years." But a new opposing force was likewise called into existence. "The feeling that law was trodden under foot would quickly spread, and would give an imaginative force to a resistance which would be based on a higher motive than the dislike to pay a tax which had not been paid before."[1]

To what end the struggle now beginning in earnest was tending, few on either side had probably any suspicion. Loyalty, if it was ceasing to be a reality, retained an imaginative existence even amongst those most opposed to Charles' high-handed proceedings. Least of all would the foreign Queen, engrossed in the limited interests, the trifling intrigues, and the pleasures of a court, be in a position to form any adequate conception of the volume of hostility daily gathering force outside it.

With one considerable factor in public discontent Henrietta was intimately connected. Religious feeling was running higher and higher; and during the year 1634 and the two succeeding ones, events had taken place contributing distinctly to increase the suspicion with which the ecclesiastical arrangements at court were regarded. Henrietta had hitherto exerted herself only spasmodically, and when stirred to the effort by outside influences, to further the spread of her own religion. For the most part she had contented herself with obtaining from the King alleviations of the disabilities applying to its members. But she had, nevertheless, been viewed from the first with distrust by a large party in the nation.

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[1] Gardiner's *Personal Government*, vol. ii. p. 203.

To the Puritans she was a "daughter of Heth," and on one occasion had been openly and "irregularly" prayed for at St. Sepulchre's Church, the petition taking the form of beseeching that "her eyes might be opened, that she might see Jesus Christ whom she hath pierced with her infidelity, superstition, and idolatry." Andrew Humfrey, one of the seers so rife at the time, wrote to a correspondent, in a note preserved amongst the state papers, that although their noble Queen was angry with him, he "had watched day and night for seven years to keep her Highness out of hell"—by what means he omits to specify. Such isolated expressions of feeling probably represented in an exaggerated form the sentiments of the Puritan body at large.

Under these circumstances it was inevitable that a jealous watch should be kept upon proceedings at Whitehall, and that Henrietta's growing influence over the King should be regarded with disquiet. It was true that the condition of Catholics was still in many ways undesirable enough ; but notwithstanding the acts in force against them, it was undeniable that the severity with which these decrees were applied had been considerably relaxed. "They were grown," says Clarendon, summarising the situation, "only a part of the revenue, without any probable danger of being made a sacrifice of the law." They were fined, that is, but not executed. According to the same authority, they were not discreet in the employment of their new immunities. Grown elate and bold, they resorted to mass at the Queen's chapel with the same "barefacedness" as others to the Savoy ; whilst priests "were departed from their former modesty, and were as willing to be known as to be hearkened to."

Toleration is to be commended, and there are few at the present day who will be found to condemn it. But it should not be one-sided. In the seventeenth century liberty of conscience had not yet been recognised as a part of the liberal creed, and was no article of faith amongst those most ardently enlisted on the side of political freedom. To the majority of Englishmen, vehemently opposed to the authority from which they had recently broken loose, the indulgence shown to members of the unpopular Church would have been in any case unwelcome. That, almost simultaneously with the exercise of this toleration, culprits accused of errors in an opposite direction should have been savagely punished, placed in the pillory, and mutilated, was likely to kindle a fire of indignation not to be easily extinguished. Nor was the fact that, in 1634, a papal agent had been sent to London and received at court, calculated to allay it.

Though the ostensible object of Gregorio Panzani's mission was to compose the dissensions arising out of the relations of the regular and secular clergy resident in England, there can be little doubt that the desire to gain a footing in London and to establish a channel of communication between Rome and Whitehall was in the minds of those who sent him. Dodd, indeed, himself a Catholic, describes the whole affair as "an intrigue against the Established Church."

The envoy had been carefully selected. As an Oratorian he belonged to the same order as the Queen's confessor, Father Philip, and was so well disposed towards conciliation as to draw down upon himself an occasional rebuke from the Vatican. His mission was inaugurated by an interview with Henrietta, when "he acquainted her Majesty with the extraordinary respect" entertained for her by Pope Urban, on account of the ease enjoyed through her interest by the Catholics of England. Panzani likewise expressed the Pope's desire that her co-religionists should be exact in their civil allegiance, and requested that his arrival should be made known to the King, whose "tacit consent" to his coming had been already obtained.

Charles' reply to the announcement was that the agent was to act with caution and secrecy, and above all was not to intermeddle in affairs of State. So far, therefore, the King's attitude was strictly neutral. Panzani had several interviews with the Secretary, Windebank, who, according to the agent, had authority from his master to discuss the question of re-union. An honest man, though weak and of no great abilities, Windebank had leanings towards Rome leading him ultimately to make his submission and die a Catholic. He was anxious for compromise, not only on the crucial point of the oath of allegiance, always a stumbling-block, but on matters of doctrine. "If only Rome had a little charity!" he sighed. Laud, on the other hand, possibly understanding the attitude of the Holy See better than the layman, was reported to have told the King that, "if he wished to go to Rome, the Pope would not stir a step to meet him."

On the subject of the oath it was intimated to the papal agent by certain of the King's Council that it might be modified so as to suit Catholic consciences; and Panzani, not to be outdone in generosity, encouraged the hope that the Pope might compromise the matter, thereby winning for himself a sharp rebuke from head quarters. He aimed, he was told, at too much; and it could be wished he had shown more caution in dealing with the oath. He had also been meddling, perhaps unwisely, in the Queen's household. It was better to avoid tampering with it. His business was to see, hear, and observe.

What the agent did see, hear, and observe, must have been in many respects eminently satisfactory to those to whom his reports were sent. Allowing for his disposition to represent matters at the English court in a favourable light, there was much that was calculated to encourage any hopes of ultimate reconciliation entertained at Rome. Henrietta had taken her little son to mass, promising to do her best to bring him up in her own religion. Montagu, Bishop of Chichester, was keenly anxious for re-union, though contemplating terms that Panzani knew well enough would never be accepted at Rome. In the meantime, he and the agent were on the most friendly footing. He would be a papist one day, the envoy told him. "What harm would there be in that?" returned the Bishop. Lord Cottington, temporarily associated with Laud at the Treasury, and who ended his life in the Roman Church, took off his hat reverently whenever the Pope's name was mentioned. Walter Montagu, the Queen's playwright and favourite, was transferring his allegiance to Rome. In his case some secrecy seems to have been considered expedient, as Henrietta, writing to her sister, the Duchess of Savoy, mentions that it is probable that Montagu will soon be in her neighbourhood, "it being necessary, for a reason that will not be displeasing to you, that he shall absent himself for a short time"—the cause she fears to commit to paper. Perhaps a more important piece of intelligence than any of the rest had been the announcement that, not four months after Panzani's arrival, the dying Treasurer, Portland, Charles' principal adviser, courteously declining Laud's proffered ministrations on the grounds that, "God be thanked, he was at peace in his conscience," had died in the Catholic faith. "The Lord Treasurer," wrote Conway to Wentworth, "is gone to give an account of his stewardship. He hath left many mourners for him, but the most are that he did live, not that he did die. Sir Tobie Matthews" —also a convert—"doth assure us he is in heaven. . . ."

Coming to the important matter of the King himself, Panzani was soon able to report that he had been granted a personal audience and had been received with a very cheerful countenance. The interview was followed by others, though the conversations with Charles always took place in his wife's presence and were confined to general subjects. It was probably on one of these occasions that the Queen, speaking of Pope Urban, told Charles that he had filled the post of nuncio at Paris at the time of her own birth; and in offering his congratulations to her mother, had said he hoped the time would come when the infant Princess would be a great Queen. "That will come to pass," returned Marie de Medicis lightly, "when you are a great Pope." Both things, the King courteously replied, had manifestly come true. "I always," he added, "looked on our Queen-Mother as a great Princess; but for the future I must regard her as a prophetess."

Sometimes the conversation turned on more serious matters. "God forgive the first authors of this disunion," the King once said. For the agent he seems to have had a genuine liking. Panzani hoped, he told Charles, that the fact of his being a good servant to the Pope and Cardinal Barbarini would not serve to prejudice him with his Majesty. "The King quickly gave me his hand, saying, 'No, Gregorio, no. Always be assured of that.'"

Other scenes of a lighter nature are reported, such as a distribution of objects of devotion, sent for that purpose, amongst the Queen's ladies; when little Geoffrey, the dwarf, moves all present to laughter by his manner and gesture in making his claim to a share. "Madame," he bade Henrietta, "show the father that I also am a Catholic." Henrietta herself, receiving a picture of St. Catherine, is so much enchanted with the gift that, refusing to wait until the agent has had it properly framed, she takes at once possession of it, tin case, pack-thread and all, and orders it to be hung up above her bed. "The opinion of one who was not present is still expected," adds Panzani—not without, one fancies, some satisfaction in the display of independence.

More splendid gifts, especially adapted to the King's well-known tastes, were despatched from Rome in acknowledgment of the redress of certain grievances under which Catholics had continued to labour. Ostensibly presented to Henrietta, they consisted of paintings by the most celebrated of the old masters—Albani, Correggio, Veronese, Stella, da Vinci, Andrea del Sarto, Romano, and others. Their arrival having been announced, it was no wonder that Charles was impatient to inspect these treasures of art; and, Henrietta being confined to her room at the time after the birth of a child, the boxes were opened in her apartment in the presence of both King and Queen, each picture being viewed in turn "with singular pleasure"—although Henrietta, finding none of them of a devotional character, "seemed a little displeased."

Panzani appears to have accompanied the court occasionally to the country, some of his communications to Rome being dated from thence. During his visits there he was evidently not idle. The hostess by whom the court was entertained permitted mass to be said in the chapel, and had gone so far as to ask counsel of the envoy with regard to the practice of confession. Being answered that it was good, but must be made to a true priest, she responded by a sigh.

The mission of Panzani came to an end at the conclusion of 1636. Those who had sent him may well have been satisfied with the results he had achieved. The most important was the arrangement he had successfully negotiated for the establishment of a permanent agent of the Vatican at Henrietta's court, whilst the Queen was to be likewise represented at Rome. The choice of the men who were to fill posts of such importance had been much debated. Ultimately a Scottish priest named Con was selected by Urban to be resident in London; whilst William Hamilton, brother to Lord Abercorn, was sent by Henrietta to the Vatican.

The arrangement was certain to meet with sharp criticism in England. Whether or not the labours of Panzani would have conduced to the permanent advantage of the Catholic Church, had not their results been swept away by the convulsions so soon to follow, there can be small question that his achievements contributed to increase to an appreciable degree the irritation of the nation towards the Crown and court. It was true that Laud, as well as Juxon, Bishop of London and soon to occupy the post of Treasurer, had held themselves absolutely aloof from the papal envoy. "The Papists," the Archbishop is quoted by a correspondent of Wentworth's as saying, "were the most dangerous subjects of the kingdom"—adding that between them and the Puritans the good Protestants would be ground to powder. It is certain that the King himself never wavered for a moment in his allegiance to the Established Church. "I permit you your religion," he is said to have told the Queen; "the rest of my subjects, I will have them live in the religion I profess, and my father before me." The words were the sincere expression of his attitude throughout, no matter what amenities may have been exchanged between him and Rome. But the public, looking on, was not unlikely to put a different construction upon what they saw. Panzani's mission had certainly given a new impulse to proselytism, gathering, as will be seen, strength in the hands of his successor, Con ; and the more conspicuous conversions at court were earnests of many others in a humbler sphere. Thus the sub-curate of St. Margaret's, Westminster, is found addressing a complaint to the authorities, stigmatising the prevalent interference in spiritual matters as unsettling to poor people and their religion, and adding an argument for the exclusion of the "newly turned Roman Catholics" from the Queen's chapel, more calculated, as he may have shrewdly surmised, to appeal to the King than those based on theological reasons alone. Their presence at Somerset House was not only undesirable on other grounds, but was fraught with danger to the Queen, three persons who had watched with a dying man (probably sick of the plague) having attended mass there next day.

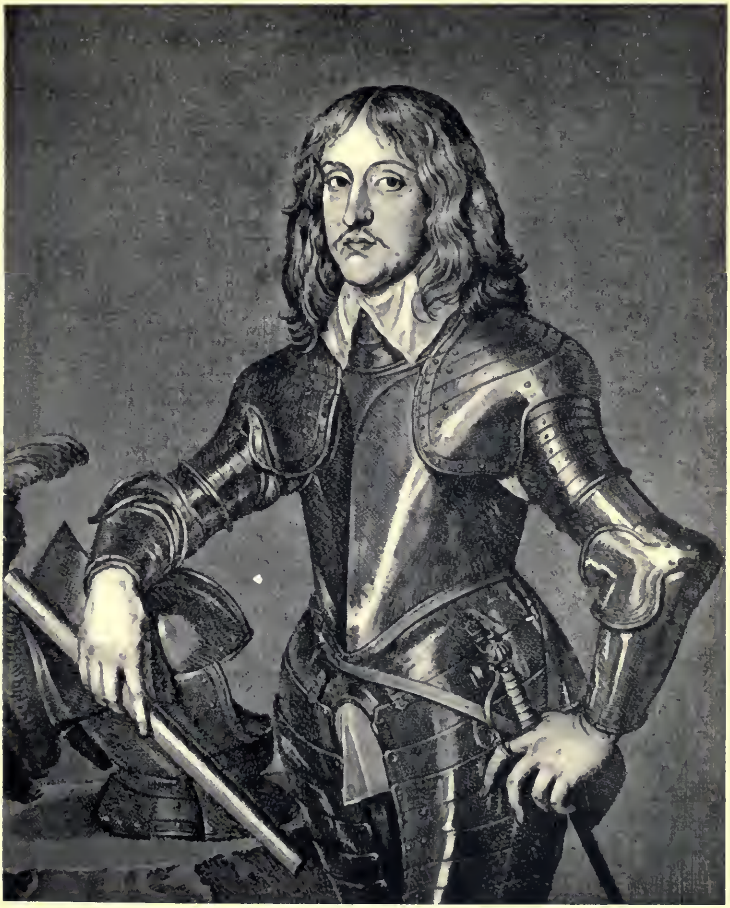
Whilst the progress of Catholicism, together with the approximation to Roman doctrine and ceremonial within the Established Church, were serving to rouse the jealousy of the growing Puritanism of the nation, two other foreign visitors, of a very different nature to the papal agent, had arrived at court, and had been given a hearty welcome by King and country alike. These were Charles' nephews, the young Prince Palatine and his brother Rupert. Devoted as Charles had shown himself to the furtherance of his sister's cause—he had lately been endeavouring through Panzani to induce Urban to interest himself in the question—she herself, after her long residence abroad, must have come near to being a stranger to him. Sir Thomas Roe, her principal English correspondent, urging her acceptance of the invitation sent her by Charles upon her widowhood, gave it as a reason that her presence was necessary to establish love and make acquaintance with her brother. Elizabeth had not acted upon his advice, but his argument may have decided her to send her two boys to London, counting upon a personal acquaintance to quicken the King's interest in their futures. At any rate, by December, 1635, the elder of the brothers was in England, Rupert following a few weeks later.

The reception accorded to the disinherited heir to the Palatinate was, as might be expected, cordial. Anxious to emphasise his position from the first, Charles sent the Earl Marshal as his own representative, and Lord Goring as the Queen's, to meet the boy at Gravesend and bring him to London, where he was received by the King "extraordinary kindly," and kissed by Henrietta. "He is a handsome young prince," adds the correspondent who sends Wentworth these details—"modest, very bashful ; he speaks English." He was much at the King's table, and "now and then plays the good fellow."

Charles was punctilious in matters of etiquette with regard to his nephew. The Spanish ambassador, anxious to ingratiate himself with the King, and reflecting that courtesy costs nothing, took care to give the guest his full title of Prince Elector Palatine ; thereby stealing a march upon the French envoys, who, being "more hidebound," declined to do so without permission from home, and were consequently refused by the King access to the lad. Both at court and elsewhere there was mighty feasting in his honour, Lady Hatton in particular having provided a huge entertainment, including fireworks, two masques, and a great supper—the whole forced to be deferred for six weeks on account of the inopportune arrival of the little Princess Elizabeth, the night before it was to have taken place. By February—his brother having meanwhile had an attack of measles—Rupert had been sent for, and both were being initiated into the manners and customs of English court life.

Judging by the impression made by them upon Roe, their mother's faithful friend, recorded in a letter to her, the lads were singularly unlike. The elder appeared to him to be of a sweet nature, possessing in especial the virtues of secrecy and sedulity. He could love and discern his servants. His own letters give the impression of a cautious lad, anxious to do his duty, not without an eye to self-interest and somewhat of a prig. All, he wrote to his mother, showed a great deal of desire to serve him, but he would believe nothing but what he saw. A prediction hazarded by him, with regard to some business on hand, to the effect that Henrietta "is so discreet that she will not meddle in it," argues a certain lack of the power of appraising character. He was also much troubled by a report, "spread all over the town, that my Lady Laveston hath given my sister a box on the ear, before twenty people, in the Prince of Orange's garden, and did not so much as ask her pardon for it." The foolish things happening at his mother's court ought not to be repeated, though he for his part cannot believe but that it was a jest.

Rupert was cast in quite another mould. The boy, once more to quote Roe, was of a rare condition, full of spirit and action. Certainly he would "réussir en grand homme," for whatsoever he wills, he wills vehemently.



From an engraving after Van Dyck's picture.

CHARLES LEWIS, PRINCE PALATINE.

[*To face p.* 166.

His Majesty takes great pleasure in his unrestfulness, for he is never idle, and in his sports serious, in his conversation retired, but sharp and witty when occasion provokes him. His mother furnishes a further sketch of the boy who was subsequently to play so important a part in English affairs. She hopes, she says, for his blood sake he will be welcome, though she believes he will not much trouble the ladies with courting them, nor be thought a very "beau garçon." She does not desire that he should linger too long in the atmosphere of a court. He is to learn soldiering under the Prince of Orange, so as to serve his uncle and his brother. And Roe believes—subsequent events justified the belief—that he will "prove a sword for all his friends if the edge be set right."

During their visit the young Prince Palatine kept a wary eye upon his more impulsive brother, and is presently found writing to his mother in some anxiety. Rupert had been making undesirable friends. "My brother Rupert is still in great friendship with Porter"—Endymion Porter, afterwards concerned in the Army Plot with Goring and Jermyn—"yet I cannot but commend his carriage towards me; though when I ask him what he means to do, I find him very shy to tell me his opinion. I bid him take heed he do not meddle in points of religion amongst them, for fear some priest or other, that is too hard for him, may form an ill opinion in him." Con, the papal envoy at the time, was a frequenter of the house, and Mrs. Porter herself a Catholic. But it is clear that Rupert was not amenable to brotherly authority. "Which way," adds Charles Lewis, "to get my brother away I do not know, except myself go over."

Rupert had taken kindly to English life. Neither the lads nor their mother had reason to complain of any lack of warmth in the welcome they continued to receive, not only at court, which was a foregone conclusion, but outside it. Partly in compliment to the King, but probably more in consequence of their own popularity as belonging to a branch of the royal house whose Protestantism was unquestioned, London was eager to do them honour. An entertainment on a magnificent scale was in preparation at the Middle Temple, a new feature in the rehearsals being the presence of a sham prince, set up there for weeks beforehand and provided with all the accessories to a sovereign, including ministers of State and a favourite. On the Wednesday before Lent the result was seen. On that day the "Prince of the Temple" invited the Prince Palatine to assist at a masque; and thither also went Henrietta, accompanied by three of her ladies, all disguised as citizens, and attended by Holland, Goring, Henry Percy, and Jermyn, also in masquerade; when Mistress Basset, the great lace woman of Cheapside, went foremost, leading the Queen by the hand. When all was over, the Prince of the Temple was deposed and a genuine knighthood replaced his fictitious honours.

With what sentiments Henrietta regarded the King's nephews does not appear. It is possible that she had not forgotten the regrets of the Puritan party that their heirship presumptive to the Crown should have been superseded by the birth of her own son. But she probably owed them no grudge on account of that for which they were in no wise responsible; and whilst their visit gave occasion for revels such as that in the city, she would not regret it. The novelty of their presence, their youth, and perhaps Rupert's "unrestfulness," may have afforded amusement to her as well as to the King.

During the summer of 1636 Wentworth had reappeared at court, having left his duties in Ireland for a time and come to London to justify his administration in Ireland before the King and Council. Private as well as public charges were preferred against him. Unpopular at court, and more especially on the Queen's side of it, he was reported to have declared that Holland should have lost his head in connection with his conduct with regard to the letters intercepted by Jerome Weston, and however carelessly the words might have been said, the culprit would not forget or forgive them. Nor was Wentworth the man to propitiate public opinion. Even his firm friend, the Archbishop, would have had him assume a more conciliatory attitude. "If you could find a way," he wrote, "to do all these great services and decline these storms, I think it would be excellent well thought on." Wentworth did not act upon the advice, and his unpopularity grew. Judging, however, by a letter addressed to him by Lord Dorset in the year preceding his present visit to London, Henrietta, if she did not like the Lord Deputy personally, had begun to recognise his great value to the King. "How fairly your lordship stands in the Queen's opinion," wrote Dorset, "judge by this relation I give you. Two days since, fame rumouring your death, with sorrow she protested that then the King had lost a brave and faithful servant, one whom she loved, valued, and esteemed." Possibly the tribute to one believed to be dead was not of so much worth as if paid to the living. But Wentworth was not inclined to underrate any token whatsoever of royal favour. "I do understand," he replied, "with much comfort of her Majesty's gracious mentioning of me upon the rumour of my death. I do consider it in silence and gratitude as indeed it doth highly merit that I should, and this life, which hitherto God is pleased to lend me, cannot be better laid down than where it shall please her Majesty to command it."

His presence at court during those summer days left its trace behind it, as appears from a letter addressed to him by Lord Conway when he had returned to his duties in Ireland. "My Lady of Carnarvon," said the writer, recapitulating to him the story of his own misdoings, "came with her husband to the Court, and it was determined that she should have been all the year in London, her lodging at the Cockpit. But my Lord Wentworth had been at court, and in the Queen's withdrawing-room was a constant looker on my Lady, as if that only were his business; for which cause, as it is thought, my Lord of Carnarvon went home and my Lord Chamberlain preached of truth and honour; one of the sermons, I and my Lady Killigrew—or my Lady Stafford, which you please—were at; it lasted from the beginning till the end of supper. . . . My Lady Carnarvon is sent down to her husband, and the night before she was with her father in her chamber till past twelve, he chiding and she weeping; and when she will return no man knows." And some think, adds Lord Wentworth's monitor, that his behaviour had been due rather to a desire to do despite to father and husband than to any great love for the lady herself—which surmise was not unlikely to be true.

In the month of August the foreign Princes were shown a different side of English life from that displayed by the entertainments of the Middle Temple. A royal visit was to be paid to Oxford and its Chancellor, Laud, and the boys accompanied the King and Queen to the university town.

The two days spent there were filled to the full. In the first place came the state entry, when the royal party were met by the Archbishop, accompanied by the doctors in their scarlet academical gowns, at a couple of miles' distance from the town, and were escorted by them to Oxford itself. Evening service at Christchurch followed, attended by the King, Henrietta having been first deposited at her lodgings. That night the entertainment consisted of a play, given in Christchurch Hall and described by a letter of the time as "fitter for scholars than a court"; whereas Lord Carnarvon declared it to be the worst he had ever seen, with the exception of one at Cambridge. The next day the morning was occupied by a meeting of Convocation, when the two Palatine Princes were introduced; and Laud, determining to outdo the courtesy already shown by Cambridge to the elder of the brothers, declaring it beneath his dignity to accept a degree, requested him instead to nominate those he wished to see made doctors and promised that the university would ratify his choice. Upon Prince Rupert a Mastership of Arts and a scarlet gown were conferred. After this, the Queen not being ready for the next item in the programme, Charles and his nephews were taken to the Bodleian, where more than an hour was passed, the King being loath to leave the place on Henrietta's arrival. Dinner—"a mighty feast"—followed at St. John's, and afterwards a play, not concluded till six o'clock, but interrupted in the middle for a short banquet. Supper at Christchurch was succeeded by a second play, Cartwright's *Royal Slave*, with which the Queen was so much pleased that she had it performed some months later at Hampton Court, borrowing the costumes for the purpose from Oxford; and at nine on the following morning the court left the university city to retire to Woodstock, and there, as one may well believe, to rest from the fatigues of the preceding days. One circumstance, and one alone, must have marred the success of the visit. In its official utterances the loyalty of the university left nothing to be desired. But it was observed that, as the King passed through the streets of the city, there was an entire absence of public acclamation. That silence, to observant ears, must have suggested ominous reflections.

Speech, as well as silence, was soon to give expression to popular sentiment with regard to the course the King was pursuing. As discontent grew and waxed stronger and bolder, the general desire for a Parliament, for the French alliance then in question, and if necessary for a war, was openly manifested. Protests against the illegal levying of ship-money were no longer confined to those from whom opposition might naturally have been expected. The old Earl of Danby, a loyal servant of the Crown, wrote to warn Charles of the peril inseparable from his present policy, entreating that he would return to constitutional methods of government and would call together a Parliament. The Earl of Warwick, a month later, used still plainer language, adding that, should the King join with France in a war on behalf of the Prince Palatine, Parliament would be found ready to furnish all necessary supplies.

Charles was determined not to call a Parliament together; but he was not unwilling to take more active measures than he had yet done with regard to the Palatinate. With this end in view he was energetic in pressing on the collection of ship-money. A fresh decision, calculated in every way to meet the King's wishes, was obtained from the judges with regard to the legality of the unpopular tax. To quote Laud's summary, sent to Wentworth, of the pronouncement of the Bench, the judges had "all declared under their hands, unanimously, that if the kingdom be in danger, the King may call for, and ought to have, supply for ship-money through the kingdom, and that the king is sole judge when the kingdom is in danger."

Fortified by this decision, the collection of the tax was pushed vigorously forward, and a treaty with France, binding Charles to lend naval co-operation in a war, seemed well-nigh concluded. The Archbishop thought all was well. Others, of far different opinions and hopes, were rejoicing too; for, more sagacious in this respect than the minister, they perceived that, a war once set on foot, it was impossible to assign it limits, and that, if the supplies necessary for carrying it on by land as well as by sea were to be obtained, resort must be had in the end to the representatives of the people. Wentworth perceived this too. His voice, unlike the Archbishop's, was given against a resort to arms. Had the Crown possessed a power to levy money for military operations on land corresponding to that already exerted to strengthen the fleet, it would have been a different matter. But, so far, no such system was in existence. The absolutism Wentworth himself had succeeded in establishing in Ireland was still, as Laud sorrowfully acknowledged, far from being possible in England; and taking into consideration the spirit at present abroad, the Viceroy wisely deprecated any course of action tending to render an appeal to the country inevitable.

Meantime the chances of a war which might have had this result were visibly decreasing. It had become plain that France had not, after all, meant business. Once more Charles was falling back upon his old futile policy of carrying on negotiations with any possible allies who might assist in the restoration of the Palatinate;

and, for the present, the most important duty entrusted to the fleet that had cost so much in money and popularity, seemed destined to be that of serving as escort to the Prince Palatine and his brother on their return to Holland.

"Both brothers," wrote a correspondent to Lord Wentworth, "went away unwilling, but Prince Rupert expressed it most; for being a-hunting that morning with the King, he wished that he might break his neck, that so he might leave his bones in England."

Whatever else might be the result of the visit, it was clear that Rupert, at least, had profited to the full by the opportunities it had afforded him of becoming versed in the arts of a courtier.

CHAPTER IX

1637—1638

The Pope's envoy, Con—Conversions at court—Laud's proclamation—Scottish affairs—Hampden's trial—Decision of the judges—Court gossip—Rivalry of Northumberland and Holland—Wentworth on Holland—Wentworth's own aims—Relations with Henrietta—The Scottish Covenant inaugurated—Arrival in England of Marie de Medicis—Her interview with de Bellièvre.

PANZANI'S departure had not had the effect of allaying the agitation consequent upon his mission. His successor, the Scottish priest, Con, was equally adroit in making use of his position at court, and perhaps more active in carrying on the work of propaganda. Walter Montagu had likewise returned to England, fired by the zeal of a convert, and religious parties were more sharply divided than before. Laud, keenly alive to the suspicions entertained as to his own proclivities, would have liked to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of the nation, and to clear himself from the imputation of Romanism, by dealing out equal justice to Catholic and Puritan. But there were obstacles in the way. Charles, who had no particular objections to urge against the placing of Puritans in the pillory, would have probably disapproved of a similar severity used against those with many of whom he was himself upon friendly terms; and the opposition of the Queen, roused to unusual energy by her present advisers, and taking besides a special interest in a fight in which the

Archbishop was her opponent, could be reckoned upon to counterbalance his influence. Nor does it appear to have occurred to the King that his intercourse with his wife's co-religionists might lay him open to misconstruction; or that, for example, the prominent place given to the Pope's envoy on so public an occasion as the leave-taking of the French ambassador, when, Laud being on the King's right hand, Con stood at the Queen's left, could give rise to unfavourable comment. Secure in his absolute loyalty to the English Church, he was, perhaps, less cautious than might have been the case with a man conscious of a divided allegiance.

The work of conversion was going rapidly forward and might well cause uneasiness to spectators in the Protestant camp. Now it is Lord Andover, who is married by a priest to a daughter of Lord Savage without consent of parents, an offence which the King could not forgive, even the Queen being reported to be heartily sorry for the young lord's mother. Again, two nieces of the late Duke of Buckingham, following the example of his widow, are numbered amongst those reconciled to Rome. In this case, the manner in which the conversion of one of the two, Lady Newport, had been effected produced additional disturbance. The story was a singular one. Returning home one night, after attending a performance in Drury Lane, she called at Somerset House, and was then and there received by one of the Queen's Capuchins into the Catholic Church. It is scarcely surprising that such a mode of procedure should have moved her husband to indignation; whilst Henrietta herself "hath since sent for the Rector, hath chid him, and admonished him from doing the like again, especially to women of quality."

The Queen, as well as Con, at this period her counsellor, may have been moved to unusual prudence by the perception that trouble was likely to ensue. Lord Newport was not disposed to let the matter rest, and called upon Laud to proceed against those to whom his wife's defection was due. The Archbishop would have liked nothing better than to comply with the demand, desiring in particular that young Montagu should be banished the court. Once more, however, Henrietta barred the way. She had by this time entered so fully into the spirit of the fight that Con himself advised moderation. She was hot against Laud. Language used by him in the council-chamber had not failed to find its way to her ears, and she complained to the King of his insolence. Charles found himself in a difficulty. His sympathies were on the side of the Archbishop, but he loved his wife. He took the course of recommending Laud to confer with Henrietta. "You will find my wife reasonable," he told him. Laud may be pardoned for doubting it.

Action of some kind was, nevertheless, clearly necessary, and the Archbishop, in one fashion or another, must be allowed to vindicate his Protestantism. A proclamation directed against the recent development of religious zeal was accordingly prepared; and Charles, in reply to Con's remonstrances upon the subject, answered with spirit and determination. He desired, he said, that his own position, as well as that of the Catholics, should be understood. "It is necessary," he added, "to remind them that they live in England, not in Rome." His conduct was marked with less decision than his words. The proclamation was issued; but, having been first submitted to Henrietta's censorship, the Government was committed to little more than a vague threat that those who made converts or gave rise to scandal should be punished according to their offences.

Even to this mild warning Henrietta's retort was prompt. On Christmas Day the new converts, assembled at Somerset House, made their communion in a body. The corporate act was a demonstration and an open defiance: "You have now seen," Henrietta told Con, "what has come of the proclamation." The Archbishop's measure was neutralised, and things went on as before. "Our great women fall away every day," wrote the Master of the Charterhouse sadly to Wentworth some months later; a further result of Con's labours being described by Lady Arundel in a conversation with the papal envoy. "Before you came," she told him, "I would not for a million have entertained a priest at my table, and now you see how common a thing it is."

Whilst Henrietta was thus contributing her share to the work of arousing against the monarchy the religious sentiment of the English nation, Charles was producing a like spirit of animosity in the north. In the year 1637 his ill-advised attempt to force the English liturgy upon the Scottish people took place. Whatever may have been the evil effect of Henrietta's influence and counsels upon her husband's fortunes, for the proximate causes of the disturbances in Scotland, where the discontent smouldering throughout the kingdom first burst into flame, she was in no wise responsible. It is more than possible that, had it been a question of compelling a nation to accept Catholic faith and Catholic ceremonial, she would have considered no price unduly high; but the exchange of one form of Protestantism for another would have appeared to her of too little importance to justify imperilling the peace of the kingdom in order to secure so inadequate a return. For obtaining a clear conception of her true point of view at this juncture there are exceptional means at hand. In the narrative declared by Madame de Motteville to have been taken down from her lips, and which there is no reason to doubt was substantially her own,[1] she recapitulated the events leading up to the final catastrophe. The *abrégé* thus supplied may not be of much importance historically, but it furnishes curious and interesting evidence, not to be found elsewhere, of Henrietta's own attitude, and for this reason alone it would be worth while, in her biography, to dwell upon it in some detail.

In accounting to her friend for the origin of the Scottish troubles, she attributed to the Archbishop, "at heart a good Catholic," the desire with which the King was inspired to re-establish the liturgy in the northern portion of his dominions—relating further how, at the time when the book prepared was to be despatched to Scotland, Charles had one evening brought a copy of it to her apartment, and had begged her to read it, telling her that he would like her to see how similar were their beliefs. That he should have entered upon the attempt to force upon the fierce and sturdy Protestantism of the north a volume calculated to impress this fact upon his Catholic wife, is another proof of his utter incapability of measuring and estimating the forces arrayed against him. The light in which the Queen regarded the unfortunate compilation, considered by her to be the *raison d'être* of the initial revolt, is contained in her observation that, having reached Scotland, "this fatal book" gave rise at once to much disturbance. Her conception of the passionate religious convictions which lent its power to the Puritan opposition as well in Scotland as in England, is to be inferred from the account given by Madame de Motteville of the combination formed in the following year between the political malcontents of both countries and a third faction described as "a sect called Ana-Baptists, otherwise indifferentists, who permit every religion and know not which is their own," every man being heretic in England *à sa mode.*

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[1] J'ai su par elle-même le commencement et la suite de ses disgrâces; et comme elle m'a fait l'honneur de me les conter exactement dans un lieu solitaire où la paix et le repos regnoient sans aucun trouble, j'en ai écrit les plus remarquables événements, que j'ai cru devoir mettre ici. . . . Elle s'est occupée quelques jours à se donner la peine de me faire le récit de ses malheurs avec assez d'ordre et de netteté pour les pouvoir retenir, et j'ai écrit tous les soirs fort exactement ce qu'elle m'a conté, sans rien changer au fond de cette histoire.—*Mémoires de Madame de Motteville.*

Charles' attempt at religious coercion was met by the determined resistance of all classes alike, the nobility and gentry, with comparatively few exceptions, joining hands with the common people in defence of their ecclesiastical rights. The Council itself was half-hearted, or more than half-hearted, in its desire to uphold the royal authority. Petitions poured in from every quarter. Commissioners were appointed to represent the nation in Edinburgh, and Charles' commands that all strangers should leave the capital were practically disregarded. His further directions that the Council of State should remove to another place raised so great a storm of protest that Council, Provost, and Bishop were compelled to invoke the protection of the King's opponents. By November a permanent body of commissioners had been chosen to replace those selected in haste and to await the King's reply to the General Supplication concerning the affairs of the Church, all that had so far been elicited from him being his abhorrence of Popery and desire to advance religion as professed in Scotland. Thus 1637 drew towards its close in the northern kingdom.

At court the autumn had passed uneventfully away. The Percy interest was as strong as ever on the Queen's side, and letters from the younger brother, Henry Percy, to Lord Leicester, ambassador in Paris and married to a sister of his own, kept the absentee informed of matters at Whitehall. In these communications the Queen is Celia, Charles Arviragus, and Leicester himself Apollo; and it is evident that in August an attempt was being made to obtain, through Henrietta, some coveted post, since Percy is found deploring the fact that, Celia's intentions having become known, it was likely to give a great distaste to Arviragus to hear how they ordered those things without his knowledge. A month later it is reported that "Celia hath done *tour d'amis*;" and that though Percy himself had been forced to become the bearer of a letter to her, probably from one of his sisters, couched in language less mild than he would have desired, he had caused the Queen to consider it as proceeding from a kind wife, and Arviragus had known nothing of it.

Whilst such intrigues were the matters of principal interest at court, in the country at large resistance to illegal taxation was gathering to a head. Ship-money might be needed. It might, further, in view of the country's necessities, be necessary to enforce its payment. But it was for Parliament to decide the question. The matter at issue between King and country was neither the nature of the tax nor the uses to which it was applied, but the right of the Crown to raise it in the absence of the authorisation of the representatives of the people. It was a case, not of money, but of principle. Throughout the summer the opposition had been carried on. The refusal of Hampden to pay the tax had been selected as a test case. Through November and December his trial was protracted; but not till some months later was the decision of the judges made known, when seven out of twelve declared in favour of the King's claim. Though by a narrow majority, Charles had won. But it is said that the speeches of the counsel for the defence, with the arguments of the judges on the popular side, freely circulated amongst the people, more than counteracted the effect of the technical victory obtained by the Crown.

In the condition of things thus epitomised the year 1638 opened. The struggle, for constitutional rights in England, in Scotland for religious privileges, was agitating both nations. Discontent, especially in the north, was rapidly assuming the character of disaffection. King and nation were more and more openly opposed. Yet, even at this stage, few persons were probably clear-sighted enough to discern the signs of the times, or to foresee the magnitude of the approaching conflict, and Henrietta, in particular, would not entertain serious apprehensions as to its issue.

Life at court still went on as if no thunderstorm was gathering without. A letter addressed to Wentworth in February by one of his London newsagents is as full of gossip as if no weightier matters claimed consideration than the King's *Twelfth Night* masque or the authorship of an anonymous paper. The masque had been less well attended than usual, owing perhaps to the unusual cold, or to the performance having been fixed for a Sunday, or possibly to other causes. A reflection of the religious strife then being carried on at court is found in the report of a suggestion made in Council to the effect that all eldest sons should be removed from the wardship of Catholic parents and bred up Protestants. Such an arrangement would do much good, carried into effect, but nothing had as yet come of it. Prince Charles, now nearly eight, is to be taken out of the hands of the women and given a little household of his own. The Duchesse de Chevreuse has fled to Madrid, where she has been magnificently entertained. Spain, however, is reported to have become weary of the beautiful *intriguante*, and a ship has been sent to bring her to England, where she is to be assigned lodgings in the garden at Whitehall. And, lastly in the budget of gossip, Wentworth is informed that Sir Toby Matthews, court flatterer in chief, has written, after the fashion of the day, "characters" both of Lady Carlisle and of the Queen; whilst another such description of a lady, author unknown, exceeded in wit anything written by Sir Toby, and some credited Lady Carlisle herself with the production—"King, Queen, all have seen it."

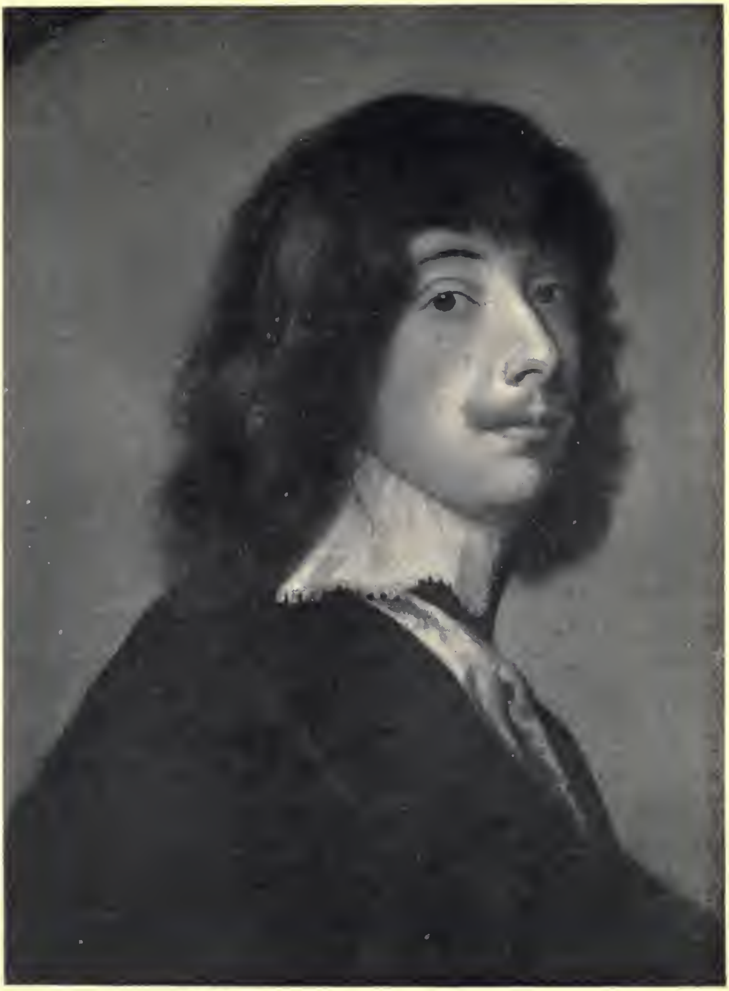
So the letter runs on, giving its picture of the petty interests, the daily trivialities, of court life. And that very month the High Treasurer of Scotland, Traquair, had come to London in response to a summons from the King, and was telling Charles that if he wished his Prayer-Book to be read in Scotland he must be prepared to support it by an army of 40,000 men!

In March an event took place imperilling the friendly relations of some of the principal frequenters of the court, whilst it also affords an indication that Holland's influence over Henrietta was suffering diminution. The appointment of Northumberland to be Lord High Admiral had taken most people by surprise, and had caused disappointment to not a few aspirants to the post. The Earl had already filled the office of Master of the Horse to the Queen, and, as brother to Lady Carlisle and to Henry Percy, had not been lacking in interest to forward his claims. He was also, according to Sir Philip Warwick, "a graceful young man, of great sobriety, regularity, and in all kinds promising and hopeful." Notwithstanding his qualifications, few except the Queen had been prepared for his advancement ; and Lord Conway, writing to Wentworth, gives an account of the fashion in which one, at least, of his competitors had met his disappointment.

" My Lord of Holland," he wrote, " called a Council —my Lady of Devonshire, my Lady Rich, my Lady Essex, Cheek and Lucas his secretary, to whom he uttered his griefs "—complaining in especial of the secrecy with which the affair had been conducted. " The consult was whether he should bear it patiently, or publish his resentment. The former had been, in my foolish opinion, wisest, and my Lady of Carlisle saith she wonders he did not." Holland, however, had retired to Kensington, on the transparent excuse of health. Moreover, " his tongue, unfaithful to himself—and therefore his friends have the less reason to complain of it—hath so expressed his grief that the Queen makes herself very good sport at it."

With few staunch friends, Holland had many enemies ready to rejoice in his mishaps, and he and Wentworth in especial were foes. " I am told," wrote the Lord Deputy a few months later to the Earl of Newcastle, " my Lord of Holland is very much awakened in the matter "—Wentworth's own concerns—" and verily I forgive him the very worst he can do me in this, or, if it please him, in anything else. . . . Methinks his lordship should desire to clear his hands of it, that at more leisure and freer of thought he might one day write a character, and another day visit Madam Chevreux. He sure were lapped in his mother's smock, which sure enough was of the finest Holland indeed, that hath thus monopolised to himself as his own peculiar the affections and devotions of that whole sex."

The bitter contempt of the man fighting, in spite of



After a copy of Van Dyck's picture in the National Portrait Gallery.

Photo by Emery Walker.

ALGERNON PERCY, EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

[*To face p.* 184.

ill-health, calumny and misrepresentation, the King's battle in Ireland, for the courtier engaged in petty intrigues, social and political, is not difficult to understand. The interests by which Wentworth's own life was filled were of a far different type. Nor, granted the fundamental principle of the absolute rights of kings, were his ambitions otherwise than noble. His loyalty was unlimited, his zeal unwearied. He desired to serve first the Crown, then the people; to assure to the King what he believed to be his own, and to afford protection to the poor and helpless from the tyranny and the exactions of middle men, of the rich and the noble. But to compass his purpose he used any means he might find ready to his hand. He made promises in the King's name, and broke them; worse, he deliberately contemplated their breach. It would be difficult to summarise the policy he pursued better than has been done by Mr. Gardiner: "The type of his mind was that of the revolutionary idealist, who sweeps aside all institutions which lie in his path, who defies the sluggishness of men and the very forces of human nature in order that he may realise those conceptions which he believes to be for the benefit of all."

Such a man could have no sympathy with the idlers and triflers of a court. With Henrietta he would have had little in common at a time when trouble and care and calamity had not as yet taken effect upon her. But she was ever in his eyes his master's wife, with the glamour of royalty about her; and when he was compelled to cross her wishes it was done with regretful and reverent courtesy. In a correspondence belonging to this year Henrietta gave proof that she knew how to take a refusal.

"Monsieur Wentworth," she wrote, "I have found you so prompt to oblige me [on former occasions] that I write to you myself to render you thanks, and also to make you a request in according which you may oblige me more than in anything else ; which is that you would suffer that a devotion that the people of this country have always had to a Place à Saint Patrick, should not be abolished. They will make so modest a use of it that you will have no reason to repent, and you will do me a great pleasure. . . . Your very good friend, H. M. R."

The thing could not be done ; but one is assured that Wentworth felt it hard to refuse a request thus proffered. "The gracious lines I received from your Majesty's own hand," he writes, "concerning St. Patrick's Purgatory, I shall convey over to my posterity as one of the greatest honours of my past life. For the thing itself, it was by act of State decry'd under the Government of the late Lord's Justice before my coming into the Kingdom ; and since I read your Majesty's I can with truth say I am glad none of my Counsel was in the matter." Having been abolished, and the spot in question being in the midst of the Scotch plantation, it would be difficult to effect a restoration of the devotion at present. His advice is to let the matter rest awhile, until opportunity should offer of carrying out the Queen's pleasure with regard to it. He is always anxious to serve her.

It is probable that Henrietta believed him. At any rate, Wentworth is presently found thanking her, through her secretary, Sir John Wintour, for having been pleased so graciously to interpret his counsel—adding that he will be mindful, not only of a recommendation she has lately sent him, but of all else, whensoever he may have means of serving her. "Yet," he adds, "I know some there are could be content her Majesty should think otherwise of me, how injurious soever to me, or untrue in itself."

Wentworth must have been anxiously occupied with matters more urgent in his eyes than the restoration of a devotion. Whatever might be the case with others, the Lord Deputy, looking across the Channel and away from his own hard-won success, was not inclined to underrate the dimensions to which discontent in Scotland had risen. The events so inadequately characterised by Charles to his Council as the work by "some wild heads," to whom, provided they went no further, he was disposed to show mercy, were regarded by Wentworth in another light. The Scottish "Protestation," in particular, he described in a letter to Northumberland as "the sauciest and most unmannerly piece my eyes ever went over, which will to posterity remain the first-fruits of their rebellion." The words were to be proved true in a wider sense than the Lord Deputy himself would have understood them at the time. For rebellion was, in fact, begun.

Important developments had taken place in affairs north of the Tweed. On February 27th an amended form of the Covenant of 1581—entered into at the instance of James as a defence against Catholicism—was under the consideration of an assemblage of ministers gathered together in Edinburgh. Altered to suit the exigencies of the present crisis, it received on the following day the signature of the nobles and gentlemen who chanced to be at the moment in the capital, the Earl of Sutherland heading the list. The subscription of the clergy followed, and on the 29th the people in general were invited to pledge themselves in like manner to the defence of the Protestant religion. The Covenant, to bear such notable fruit in time to come, had had its beginning. Two months later it had been circulated throughout Scotland, and the nation had risen, almost as one man, in protest against the invasion of its religious rights.

It was clear that, until he was in a position to enforce obedience, Charles was helpless against the flood of popular resistance ; and he yielded so far as to pledge himself not to press the Canons or the Prayer-Book. But he refused to recognise the Covenant. Should that bond be abandoned, he was ready for compromise, and Hamilton was sent to conduct negotiations in Scotland. As a result of his mission he wrote to the King that he must be prepared for the invasion of Scotland, adding—for Hamilton was Scotch—that though victory would be his, he must remember that it would be gained over his own poor people. He would therefore have had Charles concede more than he was ready to do. When the King's answer came it was to the effect that preparations were being pushed forward. The shadow of coming war was already lying over the land. It lay, so they tell us, also on Charles' countenance. Whether or not he had at last obtained a glimmering perception of the extent and nature of the struggle upon which he had entered, it is said that a change was apparent both in his aspect and in his way of life. His ordinary amusements were discarded, and his face had taken a new look, as of a man acquainted with care.

Before the end of the year an event took place calculated to increase, to an appreciable extent, the King's difficulties, already sufficiently formidable. This was the arrival in England of his mother-in-law, Marie de Medicis, on a visit of indefinite duration. For the dangers resulting from the presence of the Queen-

Mother in England neither Charles nor Henrietta was responsible.

Anxious as the latter had been to offer her an asylum, Charles had been resolute in declining to receive her, confining himself to the endeavour to induce Louis to re-admit his mother to his own dominions. His efforts had not met with success. Leicester, through whom the attempt had been made, was informed that it was "une affaire domestique," and was given no hopes of present relenting upon Louis' part; whilst a rumour which had reached the Louvre that Marie was to be allowed to take up her residence in England called forth a warning that such a step would be regarded at Paris as an indication that Charles did not desire friendship with France. Charles had, in truth, no more inclination than his brother-in-law to afford hospitality to an intriguer of world-wide reputation; yet before the end of 1638 circumstances had proved too strong for him. Conceiving that her petitions for permission to return to France would be more favourably received if preferred from other than Spanish territory, Marie had first betaken herself to the Hague; and when her magnificent reception there had been followed by an intimation that a prolonged visit would not be welcome, the wanderer had determined to leave Charles no choice in the matter of receiving her. On September 3rd an envoy appeared to acquaint him with the fact that the Queen was already on her way to England. Such being the case, it came near to being impossible for him to refuse a shelter to his wife's mother, whose coming was, as Windebank expressed it, "so flat and sudden a surprisal as, without our ports should be shut against her, it is not to be avoided."

It must have been with a sinking heart that

Charles submitted to necessity. Travelling in state to Chelmsford, he met the unwelcome guest on her way from Harwich, at which port she had landed, and escorted her in person to London, where she was received with as much pomp and ceremony as if she had been a reigning sovereign. Fifty apartments had been prepared, under Henrietta's personal superintendence, at St. James' Palace for her use and that of the two hundred needy foreigners who swelled her train. In the quadrangle of the palace the Queen, expecting shortly the birth of another child, awaited the mother from whom she had been parted thirteen years. Hurrying to the carriage containing her husband and his guest, Henrietta sought with her own hands to open the door; then, kneeling down, with her own four children at her side, she received her mother's blessing. Warm-hearted, generous, and affectionate, she was unfeignedly glad to welcome the Queen-Mother for the first time to her home.

Announcing to the Duchess of Savoy their mother's coming, she says, "I believe that none as much as yourself will enter into the joy caused to me by the arrival of the Queen, my mother . . . She gives me a second life, being so happy in seeing her and in being able to serve her." At the first, she added, she had found the guest a little altered—it was no wonder, after an interval of thirteen years. But the change had been only due to the fatigue of the journey, and the Queen-Mother had never been in better health than since she reached London.

Henrietta was probably the single person, with the exception of the band of French refugees already finding a shelter in England, who did not view the arrival of Marie de Medicis with dismay. "You see what a number of French daily run hither," wrote a correspondent to Sir John Pennington, recording the arrival of the Duc de la Valette not long before that of the royal guest, "so that if the court be not Frenchified now, 'twill never be." And he adds that the Queen-Mother is to be brought to St. James', "where she will stay till we are aweary of her." Laud was not more sanguine in his prognostications. "I pray God," he wrote, "her coming do not spend the King more than . . . would content the Swedes." His apprehensions were justified by the sequel, and Henrietta herself in later days complained of the shameless rapacity of her mother's suite.

Charles, if he performed his duty reluctantly, did it with liberality. A hundred pounds a day was the allowance granted to his mother-in-law; and she was permitted to make of St. James' a centre for all the restless schemers banished from France. The Duchesse de Chevreuse, chief amongst them, cost him another two hundred guineas a week. In the state of the royal finances the foreign visitors must have been a serious tax upon the King's resources. But graver still was the dislike with which the establishment of a foreign court, with its contingent of French ecclesiastics, was regarded by the nation at large, at a time when the King had no popularity to squander.

A result even more dangerous was the resentment on Richelieu's part to which it would give rise. It was not possible that the Cardinal, whose position had lately been strengthened by the tardy birth of a Dauphin, would view without suspicion the establishment of his enemy in England; and when Leicester formally acquainted Louis with his mother's arrival on British soil, the King observed that she had strange counsellors with her, "des brouillons et des meschants esprits," who, he warned Charles, would make trouble in England, since nowhere could they live in peace or repose. The Cardinal was not a man to pardon Charles for affording to such characters harbourage and opportunity to mature their plots across the narrow seas. He had lost no time in making his own attitude plain. De Bellièvre, French ambassador in London, received orders to show the exile no such courtesies as would naturally have been due to his sovereign's mother; and to minimise as much as possible any casual and unavoidable intercourse. So adroit was the envoy in carrying out his instructions, that not for some time had the Queen-Mother an opportunity of addressing her son's representative; and when, no doubt at Henrietta's instance, Holland at length succeeded in detaining the ambassador in the gallery at Whitehall until the Queen-Mother came that way, no good resulted from the interview. The envoy was firm in his refusal to accept any messages for transmission to France, assuring his own position by repeating his denial of her request in the presence of the King and Queen. Henrietta would remember, he added, that she had frequently commanded him to write in her name on behalf of her mother, but that he had always entreated her not to insist upon obedience, but to respect his instructions.

It was plain that there was, for the present, no chance of Marie's readmission to her son's dominions; she had made good her footing on English soil, and would not be easily dislodged. For the next three years she remained in London, a constant source of exasperation to the people, by whom she was disliked for her own sake as well as for her daughter's. "Wheresoever she has been there could be no peace nor tranquillity, yet ship-money must be had to keep her and all her chaggraggs," complained a political squib of the year 1639; whilst besides the material burdens incidental to her presence, it appears that a superstitious dread was felt of the ill luck dogging her footsteps, "so that she was held as some meteor of ill signification."

But it is difficult for a host to dismiss a guest; it is hard for a son-in-law to cast his wife's mother homeless upon the world; and no alternative remained but to accept the situation with what equanimity was possible.

CHAPTER X

1639—1640

Wentworth's letter—Preparations for war—Need of money—Choice of officers—Wentworth and the Queen—Charles in the north—A treaty signed with the Scotch—Marie de Medicis and her son—Wentworth's growing influence—Becomes Earl of Strafford—Secretaryship conferred on Vane—Henrietta in opposition to Strafford—Rossetti papal agent in England—Departure of Duchesse de Chevreuse—The Short Parliament—Growing disaffection—Henrietta appeals to Rome—Failure of northern campaign.

THE latter part of the year 1638 had been marked by tempests symbolising well the storms imminent upon the political horizon. In Yorkshire the son of the Vice-President of the North had been killed by the fall of chimneys, and Wentworth wrote to Laud from Dublin, that nowhere were there so many rotten chimneys or ones so dangerously high as at the castle; and that the women and children there, already frighted by the late high winds, were so terrified, since news had come of young Osborne's death, that when next Boreas swelled his cheeks he did not think it would be possible to keep them in their beds. "God bless the young whelps," he adds, "and for the old dog there is less matter."

News from abroad was bad. The young Prince Palatine had been defeated in an abortive attempt to vindicate his rights, and Rupert was a prisoner, reported at first to be dead of his wounds, "having fought very bravely and (as the *Gazette* says) like a lion," writes Nicholas to Pennington. The rumour must soon have been contradicted ; but Charles, in the midst of his own trials, will not have been insensible to the misfortunes of his nephews.

Wentworth was, as usual, ill and suffering. A realisation of his constant ill-health is necessary in order to appreciate to the full the indomitable courage and intellectual vigour of the man who thus subordinated flesh to spirit. In the midst of his more important labours he was finding time to devise means of gratification for Henrietta. Writing to Charles in December—having caused himself to be taken out of bed and set up in a chair for the purpose—he reminded his master of a certain day at Windsor when the King had directed him to carry himself with all duty and respect to her Majesty, "as I ever have done, and as good reason there is I both should and ought to do." Hitherto he had "never had the happiness to light upon any fit occasion to express it, in this silent corner of the world." One had now offered itself. For building purposes of Henrietta's, materials were to be fetched from Ireland ; and the Lord Deputy wrote to tell the King that he had made discovery of a royal unclaimed right, which, being vindicated, would bring in some four or five thousand pounds. He suggested that this sum should, with Charles' approval, be made over to the Queen, and should defray the cost of the Irish building materials, the grace of the gift, of course, remaining with the King. It was a dexterous device for affording pleasure alike to King and Queen, and doubtless it found appreciation with both. There must have been need at court of any distractions, however slight, that would afford a respite from the anxiety caused by the political outlook.

Hamilton's mission of pacification to the north had ended in total failure. Charles had been prepared to make large concessions ; but the fighting spirit, once roused, is not easily quelled, and the Covenanters had ceased to be in the mood to accept any moderate terms of compromise. It was becoming plain that, if Scotland was to be reduced to submission, resort must be had to arms. Preparations for war were accordingly carried on with as much speed and vigour as was consistent with the exhausted condition of the Royal Exchequer. The lack of ready money was a serious obstacle, nor were means of raising funds easily to be devised. It might be well for Wentworth, in advocating drastic measures of repression, to assert that the King's servants would be ready, in defence of his rights, to impoverish themselves and their children. In speaking for himself he was sincere. But there were few like him, and men of the nature of the trimmer Holland, soon to show his worthlessness as a support in times of trouble, or like Hamilton, already anticipating his own ruin should the struggle with his countrymen be carried to extremities, or like the Percy family, high in the Queen's favour as they were—were not inclined to strip themselves of their wealth on the King's behalf ; whilst the nation at large would be still less disposed to provide funds to enable a sovereign with whom they themselves were engaged in a struggle to reduce the sister kingdom to submission.

Henrietta exerted herself, in the spring of 1639, to obtain money by means of an appeal to the Catholics of England and Wales, and a certain amount was thus raised ; but the sum was scarcely sufficient to counterbalance the probable detriment to the King's popularity caused by the public advertisement of the fact that the adherents of the discarded religion were ranged on his side ; whilst the old Catholic families themselves were inclined to resent the interference of the new convert, Walter Montagu, and the Roman envoy, Con, in the matter. A similar appeal made by the Queen to the ladies of England met with little or no response. Notwithstanding these difficulties, preparations were pushed actively forward, and by the spring the King's forces were estimated at some 20,000 men. It was true that they were for the most part raw recruits, a request for assistance in the form of a leavening of seasoned soldiers from Flanders having been met with a refusal by the Spanish Government—the Cardinal Infant, approached later on on the same subject, likewise professing his inability to spare any troops. Meantime, it would appear from a "presumed letter" from one fashionable lady to another, written in January and preserved amongst the state papers, that in social circles the coming war was chiefly regarded as serious by reason of the fear lest all the young gallants should go for soldiers, and the ladies lack escorts to their places of entertainment. The same writer is anxious to learn whether sleeves are still worn to the wrists, the mode introduced by the Duchesse de Chevreuse, who must have competed as a guide in such matters with Lady Carlisle, declared by Sir Toby Matthews to take the less interest in discussing fashions since she knew it was in her power to set them.

Notwithstanding the anxious condition of public affairs, court amusements went forward as usual, and in December Northumberland was writing to Leicester in Paris that the King and Queen had begun to practise their masque. "A company of worse faces did I never see assembled," added the Lord High Admiral discontentedly, "than the Queen hath got together upon this occasion ; not one new woman amongst them." Yet he assured his brother-in-law that their Majesties were not less busy than Leicester had formerly seen them in such matters. "The King," he wrote in January, "is daily so employed about the masque as till that be over we shall think of little else."

Before the month was ended the Queen had more serious subjects of preoccupation. A little daughter had been born, only to die; and "this child," says a contemporary letter, recording the event, "is said to have gone nearer to the Queen than ever any yet did."

Whilst Henrietta mourned her baby, the King was engrossed by other cares. The Queen's assertion that Richelieu was expending large sums in London, in order to foment sedition, is probably, if not a reflection, no more than an exaggeration of Charles' own suspicions; and the belief that the power of France was secretly employed against him must have been a heavy addition to his genuine causes for anxiety. It had been decided that he was to go north in order to be nearer to the centre of action. Arrangements had to be made for carrying on the Government during his absence, and the newly recruited levies to be provided with officers. In the choice of the men to be placed in military command, Charles displayed a lack of discrimination not uncharacteristic of him in such matters. Military experience, perhaps, after the long peace, was scarcely to be looked for; but the characters of those selected for the highest posts in the army were not such as to augur well for the success of a campaign.

The Earl of Arundel was made General of the army; Essex, by no means to his own contentment, exchanged his post of General of the Horse for that of Lieutenant-General under Arundel, the office he vacated being bestowed—by means, it was believed, of the Queen's influence, supplemented by that of Hamilton—on Lord Holland, more fitted to fill his former position of groom of the stole and gentleman of the bedchamber. Of these men, Arundel, says Clarendon, was thought to owe his appointment chiefly to his negative qualities. He did *not* love the Scots; he did *not* love the Puritans: but then, too, he did *not* much love anybody else. He had also attaching to him the suspicion of Catholic proclivities. If Holland, for his part, had as yet given no indication of bad faith, and was deeply indebted to the Queen, "who vouchsafed to own a particular trust in him," neither his life in palaces and courts, nor anything in his character, would have pointed him out for high military command. There remained Hamilton, who was to take a fleet, with troops on board, to the Forth; and Essex, the most popular man, according to Clarendon, in kingdom and army, but whose zeal in the royal cause, judging by subsequent events, can have been but half-hearted.

If the Queen had a voice in the selection of those entrusted with chief command, she doubtless exercised a like influence, and a disastrous one, upon the choice of men to fill its subordinate posts. Her friends were not at this time such as to furnish the material out of which capable officers are fashioned. Wilmot, afterwards Earl of Rochester, and Goring the younger, to whom much of her confidence was subsequently given, are described by Warwick as "merry lads," and the description would probably apply to many others whom Henrietta, herself still under thirty, would desire to befriend. That Wentworth, with all his over-weening reverence for her position, should have been firm in the refusal to defer to her wishes in these respects, is proof of his own fitness for authority. A letter of April, 1639, though marked by the courtesy he never failed to show her, is expressed after a fashion contrasting sharply with the subservience of the courtiers by whom she was surrounded.

The question at issue was the appointment of the Earl of Desmond to the command of a troop of Irish Horse. When the King had written to the Lord Deputy to desire that the post should be bestowed upon the young man it had been already promised elsewhere; and understanding that Charles' directions had been sent at the Queen's instance, Wentworth addressed his explanation to her secretary, Wintour, begging him to let his mistress know that he "would receive it as a gracious and singular favour if she would move no more in the matter." The interference was a bad precedent and productive of disorder. "Be you judge," he adds, "whether I ought to be sensible of having young, inexperienced noblemen to be put under me in command," when the need of men of a different stamp was so great. He trusted that Henrietta would approve his action, and that he would be sustained and not thus disabled by her. "If I may by you understand her Majesty's good pleasure," he goes on, "it will be a mighty quietness unto me; for if once these places of command in the army become suits at court, looked upon as preferments and portions for younger children, the honour of this government and consequently the prosperity of these affairs are lost."

The remonstrance was plain and manly; and the answer returned by Henrietta furnishes evidence that she bore Wentworth no grudge for his refusal to accede to her wishes. She was by this time beginning to appreciate the value of his perfect loyalty and zealous service, and she was prompt to relieve any anxiety he might have felt as to the consequences of his refusal.

"Monsieur," she wrote, "believe that I shall be glad on every occasion to show by my actions my desire to oblige you; it not being my nature to be ungrateful towards those who serve me, as I have always recognised that you have done in regard to my requests." In the Desmond affair she takes the opportunity of showing that, in spite of her engagements, entered into in ignorance, she acts as Wentworth desires, leaving him to do what he can for the young Earl; since she knows him to be a person of too much honour to wish that, for love of him, she should break the pledges she had already given.

Matters were gathering to a crisis. By the last day of March Charles was at York. The morning of his departure from London he had brought Henrietta to the Lord Admiral, Northumberland, who was to remain behind, "had said she was his jewel, and had committed her to his protection." It was the first long separation of husband and wife, the earnest of many in the future. Whether or not Henrietta had sufficiently grasped the position of affairs as to regard the Scotch difficulty as more than a passing cloud, she must, left behind with her band of little children, have passed many anxious hours. A fast was, by her orders, to be observed amongst the Catholics who frequented her chapel on every Saturday during the King's absence; whilst prayers were said in the Protestant churches for his good success.

Even amongst the court officials a reflection was not wanting of the widespread disaffection abroad in the country. Lord Ker, son of Lord Roxburgh, having been the bearer of letters from Henrietta to the camp, and proceeding from thence to make a further expedition into Scotland, had come back so deeply imbued with the spirit of the Covenanters that his father, though assured by the King that he acquitted him of personal guilt, was consigned to prison as an example to others. Writing to Wentworth in May, Garrard, the Master of the Charterhouse, reports the occurrence, adding that Lady Roxburgh, "governess here of some of the King's children, laments, keeps her bed, cannot be comforted to hear how her only son hath played the fool in turning Covenanter; and to know her Lord, now in his old age, to be in the King's displeasure, and cast into prison." Charles' own Scotch grooms appear to have betrayed his secrets to the insurgent leaders, and it must have been difficult to feel any certainty as to the trustworthiness of individual dependants.

From York Charles had, against the advice of some of his counsellors, proceeded further north. It was at Berwick that he was driven to recognise the impossibility of forcing submission at the point of the sword, or of successfully carrying the war into Scotland and opposing an army of raw recruits, for whom he had no prospect of obtaining means of maintenance, to the organised forces led by the veteran Leslie, and supported by a whole people described by Verney as "strangely united." Even now it is probable that the King had arrived at no adequate comprehension of the fact to which he had obstinately blinded himself, that it was with a nation, not with a faction, that he had to deal. For the present he had no choice but to bow to necessity. On June 18th the Treaty of Berwick was signed, virtually conceding to the insurgents the whole of their demands. The war, for the time, was at an end.

Whatever may have been the view taken by sagacious and serious politicians of the result of the first actual trial of strength between Charles and his people, Henrietta must have rejoiced that personal risk to the King was for the present at an end. In her anxiety for his safety, and at the suggestion of the Duchesse de Chevreuse, always ready for adventure, she had proposed to join her husband in the camp, in the hope that she might exert her influence to enforce prudence upon him. But though the alternative of welcoming him back to London must have been joyfully hailed by her—Con, the papal agent, reported the brightness of her face—it appears clear from Madame de Motteville's narrative that, as a matter of policy, she regretted the peace. "La Reine d'Angleterre n'était point d'avis de cette paix." Neither, it is added, was the Archbishop of Canterbury, nor the Lord Deputy of Ireland.

The King had been detained at Berwick for some weeks after the treaty had been signed. But by August 3rd he was in London, having travelled by post with extraordinary speed and ridden two hundred and sixty miles in four days. Once before, on his return from his Scotch coronation, he had hurried home so rapidly as to take his wife by surprise. But on this second occasion the gladness of the meeting must have been marred by the circumstances attending it. In the short time that had elapsed since the treaty had been signed the horizon had become once again overcast; and the irritation existing in the King's mind towards the Scottish leaders found expression on the very day after his arrival in London. A paper had been circulated in England purporting to contain an account of certain conversations between themselves and the King when they had visited him at Berwick. In this document Charles conceived that he had been grossly misrepresented, and he took the extreme step of showing his displeasure by directing that it should be burnt by the hands of the common hangman.

That Marie de Medicis and her train were increasing his financial and political difficulties by their continued presence at St. James' must have yet further contributed to alloy Charles' satisfaction in returning home. Jermyn, the Queen's favourite, had been sent to Paris, to carry on the negotiations with regard to her mother's return which the French ambassador had declined to conduct. But Richelieu had proved inexorable; and in reply to a letter addressed to her brother by Henrietta, Louis had answered that, though he had never been wanting in good feeling towards the Queen-Mother, her intriguing propensities were such that he could arrive at no determination concerning her until a solid peace should be established between himself and other European powers. It was an explicit refusal. Henrietta, nevertheless, refusing to be discouraged, persevered in her attempts to move her brother from his determination. Availing herself of the pretext of some delicacy of health left by her late confinement, she craved permission to pay a visit to the French court, in order to try the effect of her native air. Richelieu had no intention of permitting her the opportunity of mediating in person, and Louis delayed his reply till he was in a position to say that, as he was on the point of leaving Paris, it was impossible for him to have the happiness of offering her a welcome there. On Charles' return from the north he will, therefore, have found the self-invited guest as firmly established as ever in London, and the chances of her departure thence in no wise increased.

As the autumn drew on the aspect of affairs in the north did not improve; and it must quickly have become clear that the treaty had been not a peace but an armistice, and that, if Charles was not to relinquish supremacy in the State as well as in the Church in his

Scottish dominions, recourse must again be had to force. Nor was Scotland alone to be considered in the matter. To own himself defeated there would have come near to proving fatal to the King's chances of a successful vindication of his rights in England. The condition of affairs had, besides, already told upon British prestige abroad. It was impossible that Charles should have weight in foreign affairs whilst his powerlessness to control his own subjects was patent. The negotiations he continued to carry on with the old object of befriending his nephew were more unsuccessful than before; and the Dutch presumed so far as to pursue a Spanish fleet under British protection to the English coast, and to fight it in the Downs.

In the month of September a new force made itself felt in the council-chamber. Wentworth had arrived in London. His presence was immediately due to intrigues carried on against him at court and in the Council; but his coming had a far more important result than the vindication of his Irish administration. "From that time he became what he had never been before, the trusted counsellor of Charles, so far at least as it was possible for Charles to trust any one."[1] The sneer of Sir Philip Warwick points to the position he was henceforth to occupy, when he says that, later on, "as if the oracle at Delphi had been to be consulted, the great Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was to be sent for." His undaunted spirit and iron determination established his right to be regarded as the most capable of the counsellors to whom Charles could turn in time of danger. Scarcely less blind than his master as to the strength and dimensions of the opposition, constitutional and religious, he had a clear perception of the objects to be pursued and unwavering resolution in advocating the means he imagined calculated to obtain them. It was at his suggestion that Charles at length brought himself to return, at least in appearance, to constitutional methods of government, and to summon a Parliament for the following spring.

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[1] Gardiner's *Fall of the Monarchy*, vol. i. p. 278.

Wentworth's counsel was due to no lingering concern or respect for the rights of the people or the ancient charters of liberty. But his experience in Ireland, and his signal success in rendering the Parliament he had there called together subservient in all things to his will, may well have caused him to be sanguine as to the result of a similar experiment in England. He had told the Privy Council in Dublin that the means of having the happiest Parliament ever held was "most easy; no more than to put an absolute trust in the King, without offering any condition or restraint at all upon his will." This was his ideal. In Ireland it had been realised. He had to learn that the circumstances and conditions of the two kingdoms were not identical.

In December Charles gave his consent. Parliament was to be summoned to meet in the following April, affording time for the previous assembling of the Irish Houses, to lead the way in submissiveness. More was accomplished. The Council determined to make a personal loan to the Royal Exchequer amounting to £300,000. Wentworth at once contributed £20,000; other lords of the Council followed, and two-thirds of the whole sum had been contributed before Christmas.

Meantime, if the news of the coming Parliament had caused widespread satisfaction, it had come too late to allay suspicion. The nation stood on its guard against the King. Misgivings were felt as to the purpose the army now to be raised was to serve. Was it intended to intimidate the representatives of the people? It remained to be seen, and judgments were suspended.

By January the earldom long withheld was bestowed upon Wentworth, and he became the Earl of Strafford, with the additional title of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. In many of the appointments made to different posts his hand was apparent. The army was to be commanded by Northumberland, his friend; Conway, also in his confidence and who had been visiting him in Dublin, was to command the Horse; Strafford himself was named Lieutenant-General under Northumberland. But in the appointment to the important post of Secretary of State, the old enmity between the "Queen's side" and the King's new counsellor had shown itself afresh, and Strafford had been worsted. Sir Harry Vane, "by the dark contrivance of the Marquis of Hamilton, and by the open and visible power of the Queen,"[1] was made secretary. And, what was perhaps more unfortunate than an unfortunate appointment, the affair had been marked by a "declared and unseasonable displeasure" in Henrietta towards the Earl of Strafford, who had succeeded in retarding the arrangement and in making it necessary for her to exert all her influence over the King before it was carried into effect. The Queen's solicitations, Northumberland told Leicester, had much furthered that business; though he added that upon this occasion—in contra-distinction apparently to others of the kind—"certainly no money hath been employed either to Henry Jermyn or to anybody else." However his appointment had been procured, that the Secretary of State should be the personal enemy of the man who was to stand at the helm, would increase to an incalculable degree the difficulty of steering the ship. But it was done, and "with this untempered mortar," to quote Warwick again, "the poor King was to build in a most stormy season." It was not long before Henrietta had cause to regret her interference.

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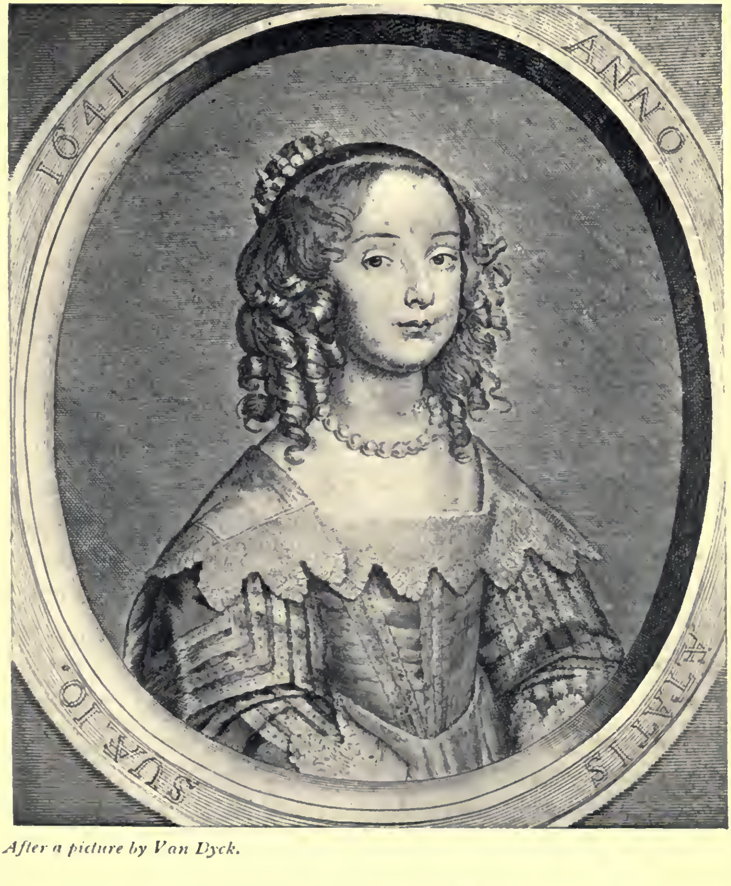
[1] Clarendon.

In the meantime, her trial of strength with the Lord Lieutenant did not prevent her from appealing to him when she had occasion to entertain fears as to the course likely to be pursued by Parliament with regard to Catholics. Con had been succeeded as papal agent by Rossetti; and whilst the new-comer was astonished at the amount of indulgence displayed towards his co-religionists, as well as at the language—that of a "zealous Catholic"—used by the vacillating Windebank, he regarded his own dismissal as a not improbable result of Parliamentary action. Henrietta, having taken the King into council, was assured by him that, in case of necessity, he would assert that her right to correspond with Rome was secured by her marriage treaty. It was not true, she told Rossetti easily, but the King would use this pretext to silence any one meddling in the matter. Henrietta was likewise busying herself about the position of Catholic peers, hitherto excluded from the House of Lords by the necessity of taking the oath of allegiance. The attempt was to be made of proving that formality unnecessary, by which means the Catholic representation in Parliament would be materially increased. The wild scheme of a double Spanish marriage had also been started by the Duchesse de Chevreuse, Charles viewing with favour the project of uniting his two eldest children with the Infant and Infanta. The project was not one to be seriously entertained at Madrid, and its chief result was to disincline Charles to lend a favourable ear to the proposal that his daughter Mary should become the wife of the Prince of Orange's son.


ANNO 1641 ÆTATIS SUÆ 10

After a picture by Van Dyck.

MARY, PRINCESS OF ORANGE.

[*To face p.* 208.

In April the court was again engrossed in its amusements; and Henry Percy, writing to tell his brother-in-law that he had delivered a letter of his to the Queen, warns him that he will have to wait for an answer, "for this day my Lord Chamberlain gives the King and Queen a play, so that you may judge the ladies will be *empesché*."

In this same month the visit of Madame de Chevreuse was to end, and she was to remove herself and her intrigues elsewhere. Her favour at court had been so great that at one time trouble had threatened to come of it, and Louis had complained that she was granted privileges in the matter of the *tabouret* refused to the wife of his ambassador. If the answer returned by Leicester—namely, that this grace had not been enjoyed by reason of the Duchess's quality, but as a personal favour—was calculated to settle the matter of etiquette, the fact that his exiled subject was held in so much consideration at Whitehall was not likely to be pleasing to her offended sovereign; whilst the scheme she had pressed of a cross marriage with Spain left no doubt as to the direction in which her influence would be employed. But England had by this time become weary of her, and few regrets were felt when a domestic catastrophe came to hasten her departure. "The Duke of Chevereux," wrote Northumberland to Lord Conway, "is coming hither to fetch his wife; but she, to avoid him, is going away to Flanders." It had become the writer's duty, and one he performed with alacrity, to supply a ship to attend her, and on the following Sunday she was to set forth. "Happy shall we be," concluded the Earl, "if a greater loss do never befall this kingdom." Conway, in reply, hoped that Northumberland would get the Duchess lodgings.

Whether or not Henrietta had tired of her friend no evidence remains to show. But she was probably ceasing to have heart for the amusements of which the Duchess was so indefatigable a purveyor.

In March, Strafford, again in spite of illness, had crossed to Dublin. Parliament had already met when he arrived there, and the short session resulted in a complete triumph for the absolutism he had established. Without a single dissentient voice, and with enthusiasm, the subsidies he demanded were voted; and he returned to England, to find a Parliament inspired by a very different spirit sitting at Westminster.

The three weeks during which the Short Parliament continued in session, whatever were the results to King and country, must have served to convict Henrietta of her own errors of judgment. Before they were over she had told Strafford that she considered him the most capable and faithful servant the King possessed; whilst her opinion of the man she had placed in power, in the teeth of his opposition, is to be inferred from her own narrative. Though Vane's name is never mentioned, he is clearly indicated in the Secretary of State in whom the King had had confidence, and who had been given him by the Queen herself, believing him to be faithful. Out of hatred to Strafford this person had been guilty of signal treason; since having allied himself with Charles' enemies, he had misrepresented to the House of Commons the King's intentions; had led them to understand, in exact opposition to the orders he had received, that his master would content himself with nothing less than the entire sum he had originally demanded; and on the refusal of Parliament to grant this, had given them orders to dissolve—a measure intended by the King to serve only as a last resource. This harsh proceeding, for which Charles was not responsible, had been the means of losing him many members hitherto well affected to his cause. Such was, in substance, the account of the matter furnished by the Queen. In spite of technical inaccuracies it has been mainly adopted by later historians, save that it is considered by some incredible that Vane should have acted without authority from the King, and his conduct is hypothetically held to be the result of a change of purpose on Charles' part.

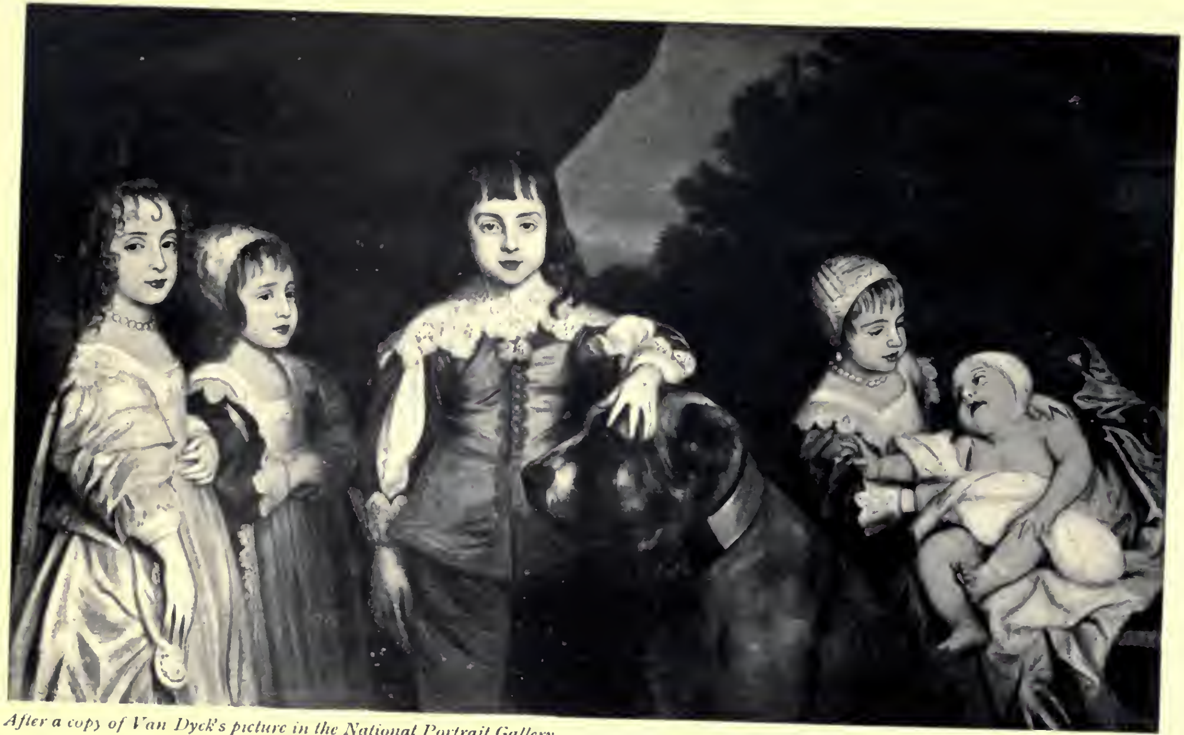
The days following the dissolution must have been ones of stress and excitement. In the opinion of Strafford and his friends, Parliament had been tried and found wanting. It was now for the King to exert his own authority, and to take measures to reduce Scotland to submission. It was at the select committee of eight, accustomed to deal with Scottish affairs and now hastily summoned, that the Lord Lieutenant made the suggestion that troops should be brought from Ireland for service against the rebels—a suggestion afterwards constituting a formidable item in his impeachment. Money was demanded from the city, and was refused. Loans were requested from foreign powers. In the meantime, riots in London and elsewhere testified to the sentiments of the populace. Laud's house was made ready for defence, the trained bands called out. One placard announced that the King's palace was to let; another threatened an attack upon St. James'.

Of Henrietta's bearing during this time of trouble little is known. It was probably fearless enough; but a story abroad in the town and reported by one William Mayle, in a letter to the Archbishop, is significant of the terror which had penetrated to the royal household. Prince Charles, now about ten, had been weeping bitterly for five days, no one able to pacify him. Also, he was troubled with dreams at night, so that at last the King came to him and asked him what was the matter; when the Prince said, "Your Majesty should have asked that sooner." Then the King required the Prince to tell him; who answered, "My grandfather left you four kingdoms, and I am afraid your Majesty will leave me never a one." Whereupon the King asked the Prince, "Who have been your tutors in this?"

Perhaps there had come to the ears of the little heir the story of the inscription scratched with a diamond upon a window-pane at Whitehall. "God save the King"—so it ran—"confound the Queen and her children, and give us the Palsgrave to reign in this kingdom." No doubt it expressed the spirit that was abroad. Charles could shatter the glass with his own hand, but he could not quell the animosity to Henrietta of which it was the visible sign.

The Queen's actions at this time, so far as they can be traced, give small evidence of wisdom, or of a comprehension of the condition of public feeling. It was known or believed that Marie de Medicis, herself always a meddler in politics, had desired her daughter to bring her influence to bear upon the King; and to it the dissolution was in a measure ascribed. Yet, at this juncture and with the prejudice against herself and against Rome daily increasing, either the Queen, or Charles at her instance, applied to the Pope for assistance in men and money. It was an act certain to become known, and marked by little less than madness. The answer to the appeal, when it came, was what might have been expected, and contained an explicit refusal to afford any assistance to the King, except on the impossible condition of his submission to the Church.

Into the events of that mournful summer there is no space to enter at length. Strafford, struck down by



After a copy of Van Dyck's picture in the National Portrait Gallery. *Photo by Emery Walker.*

FIVE CHILDREN OF CHARLES I.

Mary. James, Duke of York. Charles, Prince of Wales. Elizabeth. Anne.

[*To face p.* 212.

sickness at one time believed to be mortal, had rallied his strength, and, as Commander-in-Chief of the army, was infusing into the preparations for war all possible vigour. In Scotland the rebels were everywhere triumphant, and were openly announcing an invasion of England. In the south the temper of the King's levies was shown by the murder of one Catholic officer, and threats against others. The Parliamentary leaders, confident in their expectation of being shortly summoned to Westminster, were keeping up the constitutional agitation throughout the country. Vacillation, as usual, paralysed the King's policy. Only Strafford, making straight for the goal at which he aimed, never wavered.

By the middle of August, Charles, in spite of remonstrances, had gone north, to place himself in person at the head of his army. It was thus, he said, he could best secure the safety of his wife and children. What came of the anticipated campaign is well known. The disgraceful and bloodless rout of the raw English levies at Newburn was followed by the evacuation of Newcastle without a blow struck in its defence, and dissension was rife amongst the Royalists themselves. A challenge had passed between Newcastle and Holland; and in a letter to Ralph Verney, a Dr. Denton told him that "one Cunningham hath related to the Queen that all the men run away from Kelsay, of which number your father was, a relation so generally distasteful to all that were there that he will be in no quiet until he hath fought with them all."

The gloom hanging over present and future can scarcely have been dispelled for more than a moment by the rejoicings at Berwick which celebrated the birth of Prince Henry, the King's third son. It must have been impossible to remain blind to the fact that disaffection, even in the south, was spreading to a class whose loyalty could once have been reckoned on. To Essex in particular, only the year before General-in-Chief of the King's army, so much suspicion had begun to attach that the question of how to regain him was an anxious one in the Council. In common with Holland and Arundel, he had been passed over in the appointments made to commands in the present year, and it was decided, by means of the Queen, to induce Charles to make personal overtures to the Earl, and, by offering him employment "in the most obliging way," to withdraw him if possible from association with other malcontents in London.

Henry Percy, selected to act as an intermediary between the lords of the Council and Henrietta, performed his service with zeal. "I thought time very important," he wrote to Windebank, "therefore I waited upon her Majesty this night, and represented those reasons to her that might conduce most to make her a party in this design ; which she apprehended so rightly that she instantly wrote as one much concerned, and gave them many thanks for preparing this, which she believes will prove much for his Majesty's service." The incident is worth noticing, not because of any effect produced upon Essex through Henrietta's means, but as significant of the importance by this time attached to the power exercised by her over the King. There can have been little question, at the moment, of the appointment of fresh officers to fill posts in the army. Denuded of means of carrying on the struggle, Charles was driven by September to announce to the Council of Peers convened at York his intention of summoning a Parliament for November.

In making this announcement, Charles—in order, to quote Clarendon, "that the Queen might receive the honour of it"—declared that he was acting upon advice contained in a letter he had received from her. The statement may have had foundation in fact; but another motive for the assertion is supplied by the certainty that the King "exceedingly desired to endear her to the people," and her own narrative seems to contain an explicit denial of the conduct attributed to her. Amongst the peers assembled at York, she said, were certain malcontents, who advised the summoning of a Parliament. Not recognising the malice contained in the suggestion, the King determined to act upon it, a resolution resulting in his ruin. For the rest, if Charles was guilty of straining truth in the matter, excuse, if not justification, might be found for him in the condition of public sentiment at the time with regard to his wife.

At all events, Parliament was to meet; and, helpless to oppose an effective resistance to the invading army, an agreement was entered into, meantime, by which the Scots were to be left for the present in possession of the two northern counties, and to be subsidised, pending the assembling of the Houses, by English money. The triumph of the rebels was complete.

CHAPTER XI

1641

The Long Parliament—Henrietta's position—Strafford impeached—Death of Princess Anne—Suspicions of Parliament—Henrietta's endeavours to save Strafford—The Army Plot—Goring's treachery—Marriage of the Princess Royal—Strafford's execution—Attitude of the Houses—The Queen and Rossetti—Parliament interferes to prevent her leaving the country—Charles goes to Scotland—Marie de Medicis' departure.

EXCEPT in so far as they directly affected, or were affected by, the Queen, it is not possible to dwell here upon the proceedings of the Long Parliament. But Henrietta had become too important a factor in the game in course of being played out between King and country to allow of this period being passed over briefly. If it is difficult to assign to her her actual share of responsibility for the events rapidly succeeding one another, there can be no question that it was not a small one.

The time was one of terror and anxiety. "I swear to you," she wrote to her sister Christine of Savoy, "that I am almost mad with the sudden change in my fortunes; for from the highest degree of happiness I am fallen into unimaginable misfortunes of all kinds, not concerning myself alone, but others." The words were written in August, 1641, when Parliament had been already sitting nine months; but they supply a key to the state of the Queen's mind during an earlier period of the session, and may be accepted as an excuse for much unwisdom.

The condition she describes was not one to produce in a vehement and undisciplined temperament the judicial frame of mind calculated to adapt itself with prudence to changed circumstances, and, recognising the inevitable, to accept it.

Parliament had met on November 3rd. Its members had assembled with the determination to do away with the quasi-absolutism which had been established, to render a similar system impossible for the future, and to vindicate the Protestantism of the kingdom. But the system they abhorred was clothed in concrete form. In Laud and Strafford they saw the embodiment of all those tendencies in Church and State most obnoxious to public sentiment. It was not difficult to prophesy that these two, first of all, would be called to account. Neither were men to flinch from facing the consequences of their principles. Yet both must have been aware of their peril. When Strafford, in particular, left his home in the north to place himself, at the desire of King and Queen alike, at Charles' side, he did it with open eyes, knowing himself, he said, to be beset with more dangers than any man went with out of Yorkshire. His forebodings were quickly justified. On the very first day that the House of Commons met for business, his old comrade, Pym, attacked the "apostate" by name; and from that moment his formal impeachment was no more than a question of time. By November 11th he was in custody.

Various causes may have contributed to hasten the movements of the popular leaders. The King had been suspected of a design to overawe Parliament by force of arms; the fear of a Catholic plot was entertained. Nor can it be denied that for some of the reasons making delay appear dangerous Henrietta was responsible. Her apartments at Whitehall have been said to have formed a centre of intrigue,—intrigue for the most part, it is true, idle and hopeless, the Queen being, according to Burnet, bad at contrivance and much worse in execution; but tending, none the less, to create an atmosphere of uneasiness and distrust, and to increase to a perilous degree not only her own unpopularity, but that of those who were regarded in the light of her partisans. The Archbishop, as well as Strafford, who had sins enough of their own to answer for, were further associated in the public mind with schemes, fictitious or real, for betraying the Protestant interests of England to the Pope.

Before the year closed a domestic sorrow formed an interlude, so far as the royal household was concerned, in the political drama going forward at Westminster. The little Princess Anne, not four years old, died on December 8th. Being "a very pregnant lady, above her age," Fuller relates, on the authority of one of her rockers, that "being minded by those about her to call upon God, even when the pangs of death were upon her, 'I am not able,' saith she, 'to say my long prayer' (meaning the Lord's Prayer), 'but I will say my short one, Lighten mine eyes, O Lord, lest I sleep the sleep of death.' This done, the little lamb gave up the ghost."

There can have been scanty leisure, even for her mother, for the indulgence of grief. Against the Catholics, in especial, public feeling was rising higher and higher, and any charge preferred against them, true or false, was likely to find credence. Incidents belonging to the past were raked up and examined, with the object of discovering in them a seditious significance. To the desire expressed by the Queen, in the year 1639, that a fast should be observed for her "pious intentions"

—such intentions having reference merely to the safe return of the King from the north—a sinister interpretation was lent; the vague report of a woman relating to a mythical scheme of murder received grave consideration in the House of Commons; and Henrietta's appeal to the English Catholics for contributions towards the expenses of the war was made the subject of minute inquiry, the suspicions entertained not being allayed when it appeared that the Pope's envoy, Con, had taken a prominent part in the business. In what capacity, it was questioned, had Con visited England at all? and how had it happened that he, coming immediately from the Pope, had thus concerned himself in the affair, and had so willingly undertaken the engaging of two kingdoms in a bloody war?

The Queen did what she could to propitiate public opinion. A message was brought from her to the House stating that she had been ready to do her best to remove all misunderstandings between the King and his people; whilst she expressly took credit, with truth or not, for having advised her husband to summon a Parliament, stating that she had written for this purpose to the King, and sent a gentleman to persuade him thereto. She also professed her willingness, in deference to public opinion on the subject, to consent to the removal of the papal envoy "in convenient time"; pledged herself to be careful not to exceed, in regard to the practice of her religion, what was necessary; and concluded by explaining that, in raising money from the Catholics, she had simply been moved by her dear and tender affection for the King, and that, if her conduct had been illegal, it was due to her ignorance of the law.

At the instance of Lord Digby, the Earl of Bristol's son, thanks were returned to the Queen for her message;

but it was manifest that it had made little impression upon the House. It was probably known or guessed that during the preceding month she had been engaged in the endeavour to gain over those of the popular leaders who were likely to be accessible to her influence, and the change of tone on the part of Digby himself may have been attributed to its true cause. From a violent opponent of the court he had been converted by Henrietta's instrumentality into one of its most ardent supporters, and was now numbered amongst the minority engaged in the vain endeavour to avert Strafford's approaching doom. Nor were Henrietta's dealings with British subjects the only part of her conduct calculated to rouse popular feeling against her. With almost incredible rashness she had again, at this critical juncture, courted the indignation of the country by a second appeal, destined to prove as fruitless as those preceding and following it, to Rome for pecuniary aid.

In spite of all that could be done, the outlook was black enough. Windebank, fearing to face his enemies, had fled to France, carrying with him letters of recommendation from the Queen. The Lord Keeper, Finch, soon followed him to a place of safety. Before the close of the year, Laud, like Strafford, had been impeached of high treason, and was presently to find a lodging in the Tower. All that spring the fate of the great Earl hung in the balances. His trial had been deferred till March, and during the interval Henrietta strove her best to make use of the influence of a woman and a Queen upon his behalf. No day passed, she afterwards told Madame de Motteville in describing this period, that she did not meet the most malignant of his foes in the apartment of one of her ladies, which, near her own, was approached by a private staircase. "Thither she herself, a light in her hand and taking no one into her confidence, repaired evening after evening, for the purpose of meeting them and of making, though in vain, every offer in her power."[1] It must soon, however, have been clear that, unless the King had strength enough to save him, the fate of his minister was sealed.

The trial was opened on March 22nd. From a tribune prepared for them the King and Queen looked down upon the scene. Charles, with his own hands, had torn down the lattice obstructing their view, and day after day they were present at the proceedings, never, as Henrietta afterwards said, leaving the hall, "que le cœur saisi de douleur, et leurs yeux pleins de larmes." There is no reason to doubt the Queen's sincerity, or to underrate her strenuous desire to avert the doom of the man she now regarded as her husband's most faithful servant. But her zeal was not according to knowledge, and it may easily be that her partisanship proved more fatal to the Earl than her enmity. It was a moment when the dislike she had once felt for him might have turned to his advantage in the eyes of his enemies; but she made no secret of the opposite nature of her present sentiments. "The Queen," wrote Strafford himself towards the end, "is infinitely gracious towards me, above all that you can imagine, and doth declare it in a very public and strange manner, so as nothing can hurt me, by God's help, but the iniquity and necessity of these times."

If it was difficult for Henrietta to realise that the favour men had formerly eagerly sought was likely to turn to the ruin of the man to whom she displayed it, the schemes to which she was ready to lend her ear were not less calculated to damn him. Her enemies can scarcely have been ignorant of her attempts to obtain foreign assistance for the King, futile though such attempts had proved. It was, however, plain that, for the present, the means of opposing resistance to Parliament must be sought within, rather than without, the kingdom ; and to the army, already in a promising state of discontent at its treatment by the popular leaders, the eyes of the King's partisans were turning.

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[1] The Queen's account has not always carried conviction; nor is it improbable that, in giving it, memory found an auxiliary in imagination. But she doubtless did her utmost to save the Earl.

From this body they indulged the hope of securing a force strong enough to counterbalance the power wielded by the House of Commons. The outcome of this hope, known by the name of the Army Plot, consisted of two separate schemes, each taking shape independently of the other. On the one hand, four members of Parliament, Henry Percy, Wilmot, Pollard, and Ashburnham, holding commissions in the army, had developed a plan for utilising the dissatisfaction prevailing amongst the troops, and inducing them to hold themselves ready, in case of need, to lend their support to the King in his resistance to any extreme measures at Westminster. Whether or not the project would have had any chance of ultimate success, such chance was materially lessened by the fact that, almost simultaneously, a second plot had been hatched, Sir John Suckling, Henry Jermyn, and George Goring being its chief movers. According to this scheme, far more violent and rash than the first, Goring was to be placed in practical command of the northern army ; the troops were to be marched upon London ; the Tower was to be seized, Strafford liberated, and the King freed from the domination of Parliament.

To this last project Charles was from the first opposed. To the other it seems that he lent a dubious though not unwilling ear. But it was certain that, unless the promoters of each could be brought to agree upon concerted action, neither could succeed. The account of the matter contained in the Queen's narrative, though confused and inaccurate, supplies graphic touches not to be found elsewhere. Whilst the rasher conspirators had made her their confidant, Percy and his friends had communicated their designs to the King. Upon consultation between herself and Charles it was decided that an attempt must be made to induce the rival leaders, represented by Henrietta to be Goring and Wilmot, to co-operate in a common scheme. At Charles' suggestion it was arranged that Jermyn, as the friend of both, should act as intermediary. Reconsidering the question, however, it appeared to Henrietta that the risk he would thereby run was too great; that discovery would result in the necessity of his own flight, as well as that of his friends ; and that she and the King would be thereby left with none upon whom it was possible to rely. To Jermyn she explained her change of view, forbidding him to intervene in the affair, and undertaking to justify him to the King.

It was at this moment that Charles, entering the cabinet in which the interview had taken place, overheard her last words. Repeating them with a laugh, he added :

"Nevertheless, he will do it."

"He will not do it," returned the Queen, also in jest ; "and when I shall have told you what it is, I am sure you will be of my opinion."

"Speak then, Madame," replied Charles, "that I may know what it is that I command and you forbid."

Though it was ultimately decided that the risk must be run, no good result followed upon Jermyn's endeavours to induce the two parties to co-operate; and Goring, perceiving that neither his ambition nor his interest would be served by participation in the scheme, took the step of betraying it to the Parliamentary leaders. He was thereupon directed to retire to Portsmouth, of which place he was Governor, no immediate action being taken in regard to his disclosures. By the first week in May the Queen's forebodings had been realised, and Jermyn, Percy, and the rest of those concerned in the plot had fled the country. "Colonel Goring," wrote a correspondent to Sir John Pennington when the treachery became known, "is an unhappy man, having in the discovery of these plots lost himself and all his friends, a King and Queen too."[1]

To Strafford the scheme was calculated to be more fatal than to any of those directly concerned in it. Unconnected with the plot as he was, it can scarcely have failed to have taken effect upon the great trial going forward at the time.

A chief article in the indictment had dealt with his alleged intention to bring over Irish troops to England; and the design, now come to light, of employing the northern army to support the King in opposition to Parliament, must have lent no little additional weight and significance to the charge. So far, it is true, the discovery had not been made public; but the chief wire-pullers in both Houses were well aware of the actual state of things. The Earl of Northumberland—a man singled out by Charles for special favour; whom, to use his own words, he had "courted as his mistress and conversed with as his friend"—had made, as his sister was presently to do, return for his master's trust by the production of an incriminating letter from his brother, Henry Percy, either in hiding or beyond seas. Nor can there be a doubt that each fresh proof of the plans which had been formed must have rendered those in possession of them more and more keenly alive to the necessity of putting a final end to the chances of the prisoner's regaining a hold upon the military resources of the kingdom. Had it been possible to place confidence in Charles' promise that the Earl should never again be employed in the public service, he might have escaped with life; but such a pledge, the manifest result of coercion, could scarcely be expected to carry weight; and the Parliamentary leaders were bent upon making all sure. "Stone-dead hath no fellow," was Essex's grim reply, when Hyde would have pressed upon him more merciful alternatives.

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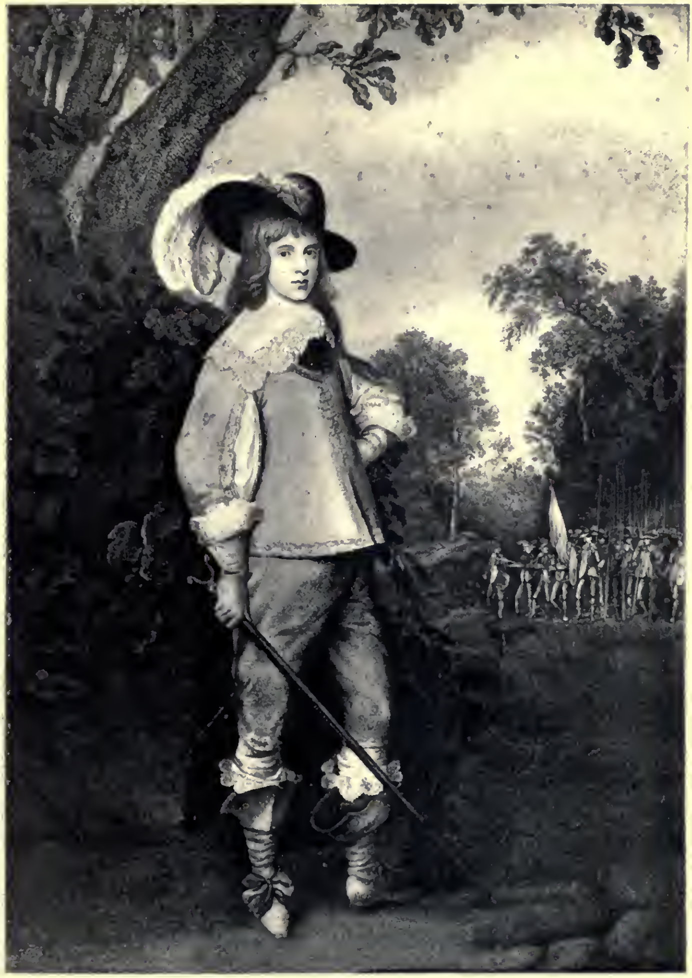
[1] As an example of the confusion of dates in the Queen's narrative, it may be mentioned that she makes Charles sign Strafford's death-warrant only three days after Goring's treason. In point of fact, Goring's disclosures were made on April 1st, while Charles' signature was not affixed till May 9th.

Communication was meanwhile kept up between court and army; and, still ignorant of Goring's betrayal, Portsmouth was regarded by the first as a place of refuge in case of necessity. As the excitement within and without the palace grew and intensified, plan succeeded plan in the royal household, many of them originating in Henrietta's busy and restless brain. The possibility of bringing military aid into England by way of Portsmouth was under consideration. The Irish troops formed another asset in the calculations of the court. An alliance had been formed with Holland which it seemed possible might result in practical aid. On Sunday, May 2nd, the nine-year-old Princess Mary was married to her boy-bridegroom, William of Orange. His union with an English princess had been for some time under consideration, but when the King's affairs had been in a more prosperous condition it had been proposed in England to substitute for Charles' elder daughter her little sister Elizabeth. "The States seek to get my eldest niece," wrote the Queen of Bohemia to Roe, "but that, I hope, will not be granted: it is too low for her." Her son, who considered himself a more fitting match for Mary, also interfered in the matter, objecting to the anticipated condition that Elizabeth should be brought up in Holland. "Methinks," he had written the previous November, "it is great sauciness in them to demand the breeding of so great a King's daughter."

All was now changed, and the Dutch alliance, on the terms demanded, with Mary as bride, was not to be despised. The young Prince of Orange had come over to England, bringing with him, it was rumoured, a large sum of money; and in the midst of the anxiety and trouble surrounding the royal household and overshadowing present and future, the ceremony deciding the fate of the King's little daughter took place. It must, under the circumstances, have been but a melancholy affair—an element of family dissension being added by the refusal of the bride's cousin, the Prince Palatine, to assist at the banquet celebrating an event in which he would himself have liked to play the principal part. Henrietta, writing to her sister on the subject, hoped her child would be happy. The husband chosen for her was not a king; but she was, she added, learning well that it is not kingdoms that give contentment, and that kings are not less unhappy—sometimes even more so—than others.

On the very day when the wedding took place an ill-advised attempt had been made by Charles to introduce a body of soldiers, ostensibly intended for



From a painting by Gerard Honthorst at Windsor Castle.

WILLIAM OF NASSAU, PRINCE OF ORANGE.

[*To face p* 226.

service in Holland, into the Tower. The plan was frustrated by the refusal of the Lieutenant to admit them; and the report he made of the matter did not tend to reassure the House of Commons as to the King's intentions. Rumours of French interference—unlikely enough to be true—were likewise afloat, and London was in an uproar. In view of the hostile demonstrations, fresh plans of evasion were evolved at Whitehall. The removal of the Queen—the principal object of public mistrust—to Hampton Court was mooted, and Hampton Court would have been merely a stage on the road to Portsmouth.

On May 5th Pym played the important card he had hitherto held in reserve, by making known the plot revealed by Goring. It was openly stated that persons about the Queen were implicated in it. It was known that she herself was concerned in the scheme. Under the circumstances, the House determined to move her "to stay her journey, for the security of her person, her Majesty not knowing what danger she might be exposed to in those parts"; whilst the King was requested to forbid his servants to leave London, without his own permission, endorsed by Parliament. By May 6th it had become known that precautions had been taken too late. Jermyn, Percy, and Suckling had already made good their escape. If the Queen's account of the matter is to be credited, though again marked by complete confusion in point of time, Jermyn, having fled to Portsmouth, proceeded to warn Goring, most unnecessarily, of the discovery of the plot in which both had been implicated: when the traitor, "le regardant avec douleur," made confession of his share in the transaction; and likewise repaired his fault, so far, at least, as Jermyn was concerned, by disobeying the orders sent him by Parliament to arrest the fugitive, and assisting him to make his escape to France.

If the three chief conspirators had succeeded in eluding pursuit, the Queen was still at Whitehall. To the request preferred by Parliament that she would remain there, she replied with her accustomed spirit. She was her father's daughter, Henrietta said. He had not known how to fly, nor was she about to learn that lesson. The Commons, at any rate, had no intention of allowing her the opportunity of putting it into practice.

In the meantime, every fresh incident, as it became public property, was an additional prejudice to Strafford's chances, such as they were, of life. It was soon apparent that Charles alone, the master he had served, stood between the prisoner and the fate awaiting him. So late as April 23rd, the King, in his memorable letter, had assured the Earl that, "upon the word of a king, he should not suffer in life, honour, or fortune." Charles, as well as Strafford, was soon to learn the bitter lesson how weak a guarantee the word of a king may prove. On May 4th the doomed man had written to release his master from the pledge he had voluntarily given. By his own consent to die he had "set his Majesty's conscience at liberty." Four days later the Bill of Attainder had passed, and was awaiting Charles' signature. On that day London was shaken by a fresh wave of excitement. The report of the presence of a French fleet in the Channel had roused the city to frenzy. The Tower was spoken of as a fit lodging for King and Queen; and Henrietta, in spite of her disclaimer of any intention of flight, was on the point of starting for Portsmouth, until dissuaded from so rash a step by the representations of her brother's ambassador. No calumny was too foul to use in blackening her name, and it was said that love for Jermyn was the motive of a desire to follow him abroad. Before the day was over it had become known that Goring was in the service of the popular leaders, and that Portsmouth had ceased to be a possible place of retreat.

It was no wonder that the court was struck with terror. The Houses had been attended by an armed mob when they had come to demand Charles' signature to the Bill of Attainder. The Catholics about the Queen made their confessions, as if expecting instant death. And still the King hesitated. How that hesitation ended all men know. There has been but one opinion upon the act by which he abandoned his devoted servant to the will of his enemies. Yet, in condemning him, the circumstances should be taken into account. He may well have argued that it was no question of saving the victim, but only of perishing with him. With or without his formal consent, Strafford was to die. An attack on the palace seemed imminent, surrounded as it was by a raging mob. And it was above all on Henrietta, a woman and weak and the object of his passionate affection, that the vengeance of that furious rabble would first be wreaked. "If my own person were only in danger," he said with tears, when at length he yielded to the pressure brought to bear upon him, "I would gladly venture it to save Lord Strafford's life; but seeing my wife, children, and all my kingdom are concerned in it, I am forced to give way." There is no reason to question his motives. If, nevertheless, he sinned, as doubtless he did sin, he atoned for it. For the rest, to quote an historian who will not be suspected of undue partiality, "let him who has seen wife and child, and all he holds dear, exposed to imminent peril, and has refused to save them by an act of baseness, cast the first stone at Charles."[1]

The final scene in the tragedy took place on May 12th. Gallantly as he had lived, Strafford died, leaving to his master an inextinguishable regret and a bitter remorse. "The King suffered much grief," said Henrietta; "the Queen shed many tears. Both alike felt that this death would one day cost the one his life, the other her tranquillity."

The position must have been one of humiliation as well as of grief. The sacrifice had been offered; it remained to be seen whether it would avail to stay the course of events. Looking around them, the glance of King and Queen can have lighted upon few whom it was possible to trust. Strafford, with his whole-hearted allegiance and his loyal service, was dead. Laud, faithful too, if narrow and shortsighted, was in the Tower. Jermyn and Percy were fled beyond seas, to join Windebank and the Lord Keeper, Finch. Holland, the Queen's first English friend, was wavering, until such time as he should determine with which party self-interest would cause him to throw in his lot. Northumberland was already half-hearted in his adhesion to the royal cause. His sister, Lady Carlisle, Henrietta's chosen associate, was scarcely to wait till Strafford was in his grave to transfer her devotion to Pym, the man to whom his destruction was chiefly due. Hard indeed must it have been for King or Queen to know upon whom their confidence might be bestowed.

From their place of safety beyond seas the English

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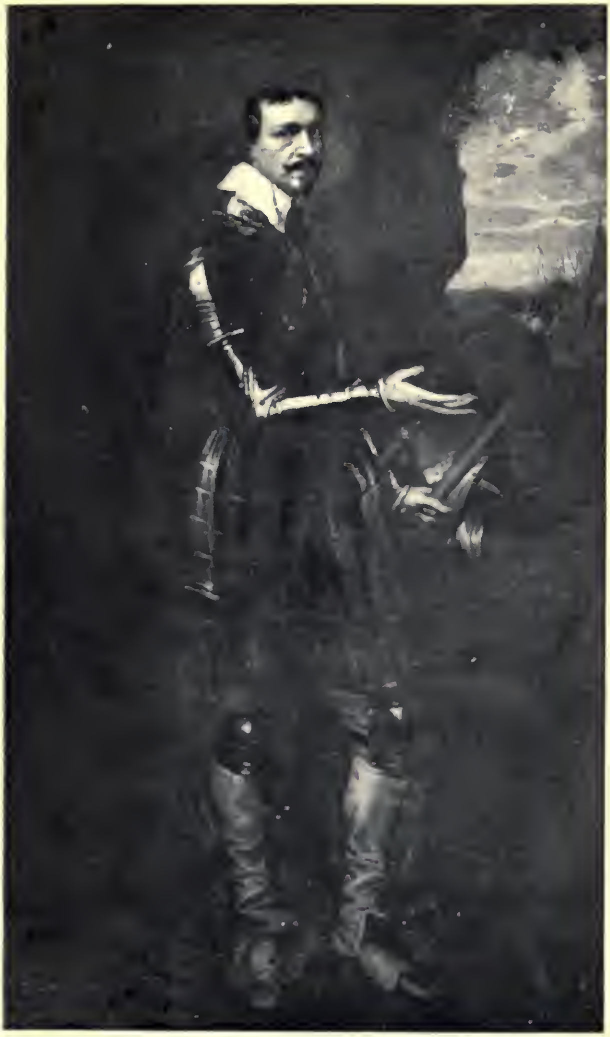
[1] Gardiner's *Fall of the Monarchy*, vol. 2, p. 175. Bishop Burnet, on the authority of Holles, brother-in-law to Strafford, accuses Henrietta of so meddling in the affair as to ruin a scheme by which Strafford might have been saved. But the story seems confused and doubtful, and the Bishop was biassed against the Queen.



From the picture by Van Dyck, by permission of the Earl of Home.

THOMAS WENTWORTH, FIRST EARL OF STRAFFORD.

[*To face p.* 230.

knot of refugees kept anxious watch upon the course of events. But the sympathy of those at a distance is apt to be of a different quality to that of men who are sharers in the stress of the battle ; and the fact is curiously illustrated in a letter sent from Paris during the summer. The writer, one Robert Reade, addressing his cousin, Thomas Windebank, son of the late secretary, after retailing business and Parisian gossip, complains that no news of the latter sort is included in his cousin's communications. "These pretty passages of the court," he says, "serve for diversion and sweeten the sour apprehension of misery. You deal very hardly with us that you mingle them not among your serious relations." The reproach implies a strangely inadequate conception of the situation in London. There was little attention to spare there for such "pretty passages." Upon the same day that the Bill of Attainder had been passed, Parliament had secured leisure to complete its work by a second measure providing against dissolution, save by its own consent. The perilous remedy so often before employed by the King was to be put out of his power. By Charles' assent to the bill sovereignty was practically vested in Parliament. A royal autocracy had become a parliamentary one. Day by day the House of Commons was extending its jurisdiction and its authority. A paper belonging to the month of June, and supplying the heads of subjects under discussion at a conference between the Lords and Commons, is evidence of the tone adopted at this comparatively early stage by the representatives of the people towards the man who was nominally their sovereign. All suspected persons, according to this document, should be removed from their Majesties—the term doubtless including all such persons as the King and Queen might count amongst their friends. No English Papist should be admitted to their service. Certain "fit noblemen" should be appointed to attend upon the Queen—in a character, one imagines, compounded of the jailor and the spy—as well as upon the Prince and the other royal children; whilst during Charles' expected absence it was further proposed to appoint a guard to secure Henrietta's person against Papists—in other words, to prevent her friends from obtaining access to her. That such proposals were under discussion indicates sufficiently the authority arrogated to itself by Parliament at this time.

Taking into account the attitude of resistance to his prerogative assumed by the northern portion of the kingdom, it appears strange that Charles' eyes should have been turning to Scotland as a place from whence possible succour might be looked for. Yet so it was. Disagreements between the Scottish leaders, as well as the defection of Montrose from the popular party, appeared to make help from that quarter possible; and it was not a juncture when any chance, however small, of obtaining support could be disregarded. Whilst the King was meditating a personal appeal to the sympathies of the north, Henrietta was clinging to her vainer hope of enlisting the influence of the Vatican on Charles' behalf. Reverting to her fatal habit of soliciting aid from the court regarded with the most abhorrence by the English people, she had rashly added in the King's name conditional promises of freedom of worship and other privileges, to be granted to his Catholic subjects so soon as he should be in a position to accord them. In the face of the opposition of Parliament to the presence in London of an accredited papal agent, it had become necessary, before the end of June, to dismiss Rossetti; but Charles himself, using language in a parting interview, reported the envoy, "more like that of a Catholic than a heretic," endorsed the Queen's pledges. When the King had withdrawn, the question of his conversion was discussed between Henrietta and the Italian, the Queen finding grounds for hope in the attention she described him as lending to certain stories of miracles she had recounted. She admitted, however, that he was timid and irresolute, and that the change she desired would take time.

By the middle of July Henrietta had formed fresh plans for her own movements, and on the 13th a discussion took place in the House of Commons touching a report that she intended to repair to Spa during the King's absence in Scotland. The ostensible motive for the journey was her health, which she declared to be much impaired "by discontents of mind, and false rumours and libels spread concerning her." A debate ensued, resulting in a conference between the two Houses, when it was resolved that the King should be requested to dissuade her from carrying out her project. With this object a committee of Lords and Commons waited upon Charles at Whitehall, and enumerated the causes making it desirable that the proposed journey should be abandoned. There was reason, it was said, to suspect that the Papists had designs upon the Queen's person. The refugee English now in foreign parts would have access to her Majesty and infuse evil counsels, to trouble the peace of the kingdom. Treasure was said to have been packed ready to be conveyed out of the country; and, moreover, the state demanded by her dignity on an occasion of the kind would be a serious expense. Henrietta's physician, Dr. Mayerne, had been consulted by Parliament as to her condition of health, and the deputation proceeded to deal with his report. After stating that his patient was sick in body and mind, that she herself thought she could not recover, and had a great opinion of Spa water, he added, "To cure her body she must have her mind quieted and out of reach of employments that may disturb her. Her faith hath great power over her." In view of this medical opinion the deputation pledged themselves that, understanding the cause of her sickness to be discontent of mind, if anything within the power of Parliament might give her contentment, so tender of her health were they, both for the King's sake and her own, that they would be ready to further her satisfaction in all things, so far as might stand with the public good.

Henrietta might be pardoned if protestations of devotion to her person on the part of Parliament did not carry conviction to her mind, and her message in return was touched with sarcasm. "I hope," she added, after thanking them for their care for her health and affection to her person, "I shall see the effect of it."

To a proud and high-spirited woman, unused to discipline or control, the situation must have come near to being intolerable. "I am ready," she once told the Venetian ambassador, "to obey the King, but not to obey four hundred of his subjects." For the present, obedience was no matter of choice. She was not to be permitted to leave the kingdom, and the journey to Spa was perforce abandoned.

The report of the royal physician of Henrietta's state of mind and spirits at this time is supplemented by the letter to her sister already quoted. In it she further proceeds to describe the situation. The King is deprived of his power. Catholics are persecuted, priests hanged. Those remaining faithful to her are driven away. She herself is, as it were, a captive, not even permitted to accompany the King to Scotland. Added to all, there is no one in the world to whom she can speak of her griefs, or so much as show that she is sensible of them. Christine has also, it is true, had troubles, but she at least has been able to struggle against them. In England it is necessary to watch the course of events helplessly—"les bras croysés."

Parliament had succeeded in keeping the Queen in London. For once the King was the less pliable of the two. He had shown that he did not intend to be deterred from visiting Scotland, and the date of his departure was fixed for the second week in August. If Parliament had opposed obstacles in the way of his being accompanied by his wife, he himself had declined the companionship of another member of his family. His eldest nephew wrote to his mother that the King had refused to take him. "What reason he hath for it, God knows," added the young man. It is possible that Charles had divined the tendency to make terms with the enemy afterwards apparent in Charles Lewis's line of conduct. He may also have had too many cares of his own to desire the presence of the Prince, always, as may be inferred from his letters, inclined to survey the situation from the single point of view of his own interests. "I fear this violence," he told his mother in May—the month of Strafford's death—"will bring some trouble, and by consequence will keep back my business." And again, "The King saith he will seek to get money for my brother Maurice . . . . I want it very much myself, and it is hard to come by in these times."

He was shortly to show himself an adept in the art of obtaining it, if not from the King, from the King's enemies. For the present he was to be left in the south. Up to two days before Charles' departure it would seem to have been uncertain whether or not the King would be permitted to leave the capital, and Henrietta was writing to her sister that he was to start "après demain," if Parliament did not use force, as had been threatened, to prevent it. Unless the popular leaders were prepared to resort to actual violence, he was not to be turned from his purpose. He would make any repent, he said, who laid hands on his horse's reins to stop him—ironically telling the crowd collected to beg him to remain in London that they might console themselves for his absence; his Scottish subjects had as much need of him as they. Before the middle of August he had started on his journey.

He had been gone many days when Henrietta had to undergo another parting, and in this case a final one. Her mother's more prolonged stay in the country had become impossible. During Strafford's trial menacing mobs had gathered before St. James' Palace, and though Parliament had not refused its protection to the royal guest, it had added the suggestion that she should be requested to betake herself elsewhere. Had Henrietta been permitted to carry out her intention of visiting Spa, the two were to have travelled together. As it was, it was arranged that the Queen-Mother's departure should follow upon the King's, her daughter accompanying her as far as the coast.

The old Queen was probably ready to go. England had proved far from the harbour of shelter and tranquillity she had anticipated when she had forced her way thither; and not a month before her departure Parliament had given an example of the treatment Catholics were to expect when its authority should become paramount, by hanging an aged priest, who met his death in the spirit of a martyr, the Portuguese ambassador assisting at the last scene, and bringing with him a painter, so that a portrait of the victim might remain to show the world that heroes still existed. Marie de Medicis and her unpopular suite may well have been glad to leave the country.

CHAPTER XII

1641—1642

The Queen at Oatlands—Henrietta and Parliament—Rumoured plot—The Irish rising—Charles' return—His reception in London—Riots in London—The Remonstrance—Henrietta's unpacific attitude—Rumoured impeachment of the Queen—The five members—King and Queen leave London—Professions of the Prince of Orange—Digby's intercepted letter—The Queen takes the Princess to Holland.

THE King's absence in Scotland lasted three months, a period spent by Henrietta at Oatlands, the dower-house of English queens, destroyed during the civil war. Thither she resorted, when her mother had left England, taking with her her children. Thither, too—or rather, to a house of his own three miles distant—came Sir Edward Nicholas, clerk of the Council and a faithful servant of the King's, charged with the duty of acting as his secretary, and of keeping up constant communication with the Queen. Every day, or every second day, he repaired to Oatlands itself, to receive her orders, to transmit letters from the King, and to take charge of those from herself for which Charles was looking so eagerly during his absence in Scotland.

It was apparently the King's habit to send back the secretary's despatches, answered by marginal notes. In these annotations Henrietta plays an important part. "Advertise my Wife upon every despatch, that she may (if she will) write, and make one when and as often as she will command you," ran the King's initial instructions. Henrietta was to be consulted on every point, from the pledging in Holland of Charles' great collar of rubies to important matters of State. There was no fear of conflicting orders. On one occasion, Nicholas, a little uneasy at the Queen's detention of a letter enclosed by the King for the Lord Keeper, expresses a hope that he has done his duty in obeying her. " Ye are very right," is the King's reassuring note. Occasionally Sir Edward is the medium of gentle reproaches for Henrietta's slackness in writing. " This despatch I received this morning, but tell my wife I have found fault with you because none of hers was within it." Or, again, Charles expresses his wonder at her silence, " for all this last month every third day at furthest I have written to her." Presently Nicholas reports that he has told the Queen that he has been blamed because in several despatches none from her hand were enclosed, and that she now sent, in recompense, two together. " Tell her," is the King's comment, " that this double amends is abundant satisfaction."

At first the good news of Charles' favourable reception in Edinburgh must have raised Henrietta's spirits, appearing as it did to promise success in the object which had been the motive of his journey—namely, that of enlisting Scottish sympathies on his behalf. As the weeks went by the prospect darkened in the north ; whilst in England public feeling was excited to a high degree by the discovery of a second abortive army plot, concerning which information had reached the ears of Parliament. Holland, in command of the northern troops, and irritated by a refusal on the part of the King to place a barony at his disposal for sale, had returned to London with vague hints of fresh attempts to tamper with the army, and had assumed the attitude of an avowed partisan of the Parliamentary party, repeating all in his power likely to be disadvantageous to the King. "That busy stateswoman," too—to quote the description given by Warwick of Lady Carlisle—whilst transferring her allegiance to the Puritan leader, Pym, and "become such a she-saint, that she frequented their sermons and took notes," had adroitly contrived to maintain her credit at court, and being in constant communication with the Queen, was not likely to prove reticent as to the hopes entertained by Henrietta with regard to Charles' visit to Scotland.

The atmosphere of suspicion prevailing in the House found expression in an attempt to interfere with the arrangements of the royal household. The Prince of Wales, it was complained, who should more properly have remained under the charge of his present governor, the Marquis of Hertford, at Richmond, was too often with his mother, from whom he would get no good in body or soul, and Lord Holland was commissioned to acquaint the Queen with the views of the House on the subject—receiving, to quote Nicholas' report, "a very wise and discreet answer" from Henrietta. In the Queen's own version of the incident, given to Madame de Motteville, she included all her children in the designs of Parliament, stating that she had received an intimation that they would be better bestowed in its own hands during the absence of the King, since they were learning nothing, and it was also feared that she would make Papists of them. To this message she had replied that the Houses were mistaken, that the Princes had masters and governors, and that, well knowing that such was not the King's will, she should not turn them into Papists.

In Henrietta's narrative an occurrence belonging to this period is described, which, though probably exaggerated in importance, can scarcely have failed to be founded upon fact. Reports had reached her ears that it was intended to carry her off, these rumours being corroborated by warnings conveyed to her by a gentleman in the neighbourhood. According to her informant, he had received orders from Parliament to call together a number of the militia (*paysans armés*), and, thus accompanied, to meet at midnight in Oatlands Park a body of cavalry and officers, from whom he would receive further directions. The person to whom these orders had been given chancing to be Royalist in his sympathies, applied to the Queen herself for instructions; whereupon Henrietta, having sent post-haste to London for those of her servants and friends upon whom she could rely—Lord Digby, in particular, collecting a body of a hundred gentlemen to act as her personal guard—awaited the event. Nothing appears to have come of the affair. The Queen received, on the contrary, apologies for the directions issued to the militia, each member of Parliament disclaiming complicity in the matter. In the existing condition of public feeling, designs upon the person of the Queen may have been formed without the connivance of the responsible leaders of the popular party, and the precautionary measures taken may have availed to render them futile. Her assertion that she had directed Goring, who had by this time returned to his allegiance, to hold himself in readiness to receive her at Portsmouth should she be compelled to take refuge there, is corroborated by a letter read in the House of Commons, to the effect that communications were constantly passing between Oatlands and that seaport. It is clear that though its governor, called to account, stoutly denied the charges against him, he was, as before, playing a double game. It was difficult for the Queen to know in whom to confide. "I am so ill provided with persons that I dare trust," she wrote to Nicholas with regard to a letter to be sent to the King, "that at this instant I have no living creature that I dare send"—a lonely position for the woman who, but two or three years ago, had been surrounded by courtiers vying with each other to do her pleasure.

Party spirit was rising higher and higher, in Parliament and outside it. Religious extravagance had taken strange and rapid developments, the line marking the separation of the upholders of Church government from the Puritan sects becoming more sharply defined every day. The House of Commons, after a short recess, was once more busy, and the Grand Remonstrance was in preparation. On November 1st news reached London well calculated to inflame popular feeling to a yet further extent. This was the intelligence that the Irish peasantry were in arms, on behalf of neither King nor Parliament, but with the object of vindicating their right to their own country, and of driving out the English settlers who had robbed them of their inheritance.

Into the ghastly details of their vengeance it is not necessary to enter. Grossly as they were exaggerated, the actual facts were amply sufficient to create a condition of panic and to excite public sentiment still more against the Catholic Queen, and to prove fatal to any remnants of toleration accorded to her English co-religionists. Already, in September, Nicholas had pressed upon his master the wisdom of taking the initiative in the dismissal of the Queen's Capuchins, before Parliament should proceed in the matter; but though Charles would have been willing enough to act upon his secretary's advice, there were difficulties in the way. "I know not what to say," he replied to the suggestion, "if it be not to advertise my wife of the Parliament's intentions concerning her Capuchins, and so first to hear what she will say." Nothing had been done, and it can scarcely be doubted that the monks were now in imminent danger. Other priests had been apprehended, to be proceeded against according to the law ; and before much longer those belonging to the Queen's household, their chapel closed, were prisoners in their own house.

Yet the very extremes to which party spirit had carried the promoters of reform gave rise to hope. Men who would have been ready to throw in their lot with the adherents of moderate measures found themselves in a way to be driven back, as they saw all ancient landmarks in danger of obliteration ; and the reception given to Charles by the city of London on his return from Scotland indicated a reaction in his favour.

On November 20th the Queen, in her broken English, wrote to acquaint Nicholas with the King's movements. The letter, as a curious proof of how imperfect was her mastery of the language, may be given *verbatim* : "Maistre Nicholas, I did desire you not to acquaint mi lord of essex of what the King commanded you touching is commin : now you may do it, and tell him that the King will be at Tibols [Theobalds] vendnesday and shall lye there and upond thursday he shall dine at my lord Maiors and lye at Whitthall onlye for one nitgh and upon friday will go to hampton-court where he maenes to stay this vinter : the King commanded me to tell this to my lord of essex but you may doe it, for there Lords ships are to great prinses now to receaved anye directions from mee."

On November 25th the King and Queen, with the Prince, made their entry into London. The loyal welcome accorded them may well have sent a thrill of hope to their hearts. The Lord Mayor was a Royalist; many of the leading citizens disliked the frequent mob disturbances; and Charles was ready to bid high for the support of London's stronghold. Yet, with an honesty commanding respect, he distinctly excluded matters of religion from his concessions. He had already desired Nicholas to acquaint his friends amongst the Lords that what he had permitted in Scotland was no earnest of a like attitude in the south—that he was constant to the discipline and doctrine of the Church of England, and resolved by the grace of God to die in the maintenance of it. This declaration he publicly repeated, adding that to it he would prove true "to the hazard of his life, if need be, and of all he held dear." For the moment this uncompromising utterance produced no diminution of enthusiasm; and after a banquet and procession the royal party returned to Whitehall, accompanied by loyal shouts for King Charles and Queen Mary.

It was not strange that such a reception should have been taken as a presage of better fortune; but the hopes it had raised were quickly overcast. Whatever might be the attitude of the wealthier and more substantial citizens, of mayor and aldermen, the sympathies of the irresponsible majority were vehemently enlisted on the side of the popular leaders. Riots around Westminster and Whitehall, to which, after a visit to Hampton Court, the King and Queen had returned, were of frequent occurrence, nor was the House of Commons to be turned from its course by the Guildhall demonstration. The Remonstrance prepared and presented to the King, containing an indictment against the whole course of his government, with a recapitulation of popular grievances, was circulated throughout the country, in spite of Charles' expressed desire that its publication should be deferred until his answer had been made. That he was ready to maintain the acts already law, to grant besides as much liberty as could justly be required, and to maintain true religion as established, he declared. But the Commons might reasonably suspect that the King's interpretation of these pledges was likely to differ from their own, and they mistrusted the counsellor nearest him at home.

The situation was further complicated by Irish affairs. It was whispered that the Queen was not free from complicity in the scenes taking place across the Channel; and though in this instance she was guiltless, her attitude in general was not such as to rebut suspicion. Whitehall was furnished with spies, and it must have been well known that her influence was ever exerted in favour of resistance, where resistance was possible, to the popular demands. Again and again the fact is deplored by her sister-in-law, the Queen of Bohemia, echoing the opinions of her eldest son. "The Queen doth all," she wrote a little later to Sir Thomas Roe. "My son advised [the King] to a reconcilement with the Parliament; but the Queen would not hear of it, under pretence that the Parliament would ask dishonourable conditions."

The sequel shows that Charles' own views and his nephew's on the question of honour may have differed; but it was naturally upon her sister-in-law that Elizabeth would throw the blame for the rejection of the young man's counsels of prudence. It was also true that the concessions wrested from Charles had touched Henrietta too closely in the matter of religion to render her easily accessible to the conviction that it only remained to stem, by what constitutional resistance was possible, the course of revolution. "The truth is," wrote Sir Thomas Smith to Pennington in discreet generalities, "there is such fashions at court that, if some might be hearkened to, the King should lose all the best friends and servants he hath." Personal rancour mingled with Henrietta's opposition to those she suspected of popular sympathies. If Holland, she declared with the bitterness of estranged affection, retained his places at court, she would never live there.

Yet for the present the King kept his head, and acted with caution and prudence. Vane had been dismissed from the secretaryship, to be replaced soon after by Viscount Falkland, a moderate Royalist. Culpepper was made Chancellor. Both appointments were of men not liable to be suspected of extreme opinions, and if, as her sister-in-law asserted, Henrietta was responsible for Vane's dismissal—as she had unfortunately been for his appointment—it could scarcely have been expected that the services of a man so half-hearted in the royal cause should have been retained. But the very fact that the Queen's hand had been traceable in the step was sufficient to discredit its wisdom. "The Queen doth govern all the King's affairs," grumbled his sister again to her confidant, Roe; "then you can guess the rest, and this is the cause of Vane losing his secretary's place."

All through December matters were going from bad to worse. The Irish news was increasingly threatening. The Catholic Lords and the Irish Parliament had opened communications with the revolted peasantry; and the Catholic Lords, as was known or suspected, had been also in communication with the King. Lord Dillon, come to London with an offer from the Dublin malcontents to maintain the royal authority on condition of the concession of religious liberty and parliamentary independence, was arrested and examined before a committee of the House of Commons ; when part, at least, of the scheme he was to propose transpired.

Between the King and Parliament, and within Parliament itself, the struggle became more violent. That the impeachment of the popular leaders had been the subject of discussion at Whitehall was known ; and it must have been clear to Pym, Hampden, and the rest that they were fighting, not for the liberties of the country alone, but for their own lives. The mob was daily growing more uncontrolled around Westminster and Whitehall, and frays had taken place between Roundheads and Cavaliers—terms now coming into use—in which blood had been shed. The religious question, and in especial the exclusion of the bishops from Parliament, was vehemently debated ; and by the end of December the protest of eleven of the bench, to the effect that, being unable safely to attend in their places in the House of Lords, the proceedings there were rendered invalid, had resulted in the impeachment and imprisonment of the signatories.

But the event finally determining the King upon the adoption of extreme measures did not occur until the beginning of the new year. This was the spread of a report, true or false, better calculated than any other to rouse him both to fear and to indignation. It was said that it was the intention of Parliament to impeach the Queen herself, on the double charge of having conspired against the public liberties and of having held intelligence with the Irish rebels.

The intention thus imputed to them was afterwards explicitly denied by the House of Commons, a message being sent to desire the Queen to vindicate them from the aspersion and to make known the authors of the report. Henrietta, in reply, whilst admitting that such a rumour had reached her ears, added that, having no certain author, she had given little credit thereunto; and she accepted as conclusive the assurance of the House that it was unfounded. She could do no less; but it is unlikely that her disclaimer was true. According to Clarendon, a distinct endeavour had been made by certain of the popular party, by playing on her nervous fears—her "extreme apprehension" of danger—to drive her to some act which might turn to their own advantage. It has been shown that, as the same authority observes, there were those amongst the party opposed to the court—such as Holland and Lady Carlisle—"who exactly knew her nature, passions, and infirmities," and knew, too, how to make use of their acquaintance with them.

Nor was there anything antecedently impossible in the impeachment of the unpopular Queen, following upon that of Charles' most faithful servant; whilst it has been suggested that Henrietta must have been only too well aware of the multitude of charges which, should the whole truth transpire, might be preferred against her—charges of secret practices carried on with the Vatican, of endeavours to stir the King to violent measures, of intrigues with the army and with foreign powers. It was no wonder if, weakened by the strain and stress of the past months, her courage gave way, and she shrank from what the future might hold. Charles, for his part, was no coward, but danger to the Queen was his vulnerable point. The mere possibility of her conduct being called in question was sufficient to influence his line of action to a dangerous extent; nor was it strange that, under the circumstances, he should lose the coolness essential at the present juncture. Henrietta would have given him her version of what had taken place at Oatlands during his absence in Scotland. To the evidence thus afforded of designs against her more was added. According to a petition of Parliament dealing with the subject, a gathering at Kensington was reported to have taken place, when Lord Newport had answered, in reference to an alleged plot of the King's own, "If there be such a plot, yet here are his wife and children." Questioned by Charles, Newport had denied that he had ever heard of a design for seizing the Queen and her children; but if the account of his interview with the King furnished by him to Parliament was true, Charles had not believed him. "He was sorry," his master had said, "for his ill memory." On the other hand, the King, whilst admitting, in reply to representations from the House, that he had interrogated Newport, declared that he had been "far from that way of expressing a belief of the thing, which Newport had the boldness and confidence to affirm," and that he neither had nor did give credit to the rumour. Whether or not his disavowal of belief in the specific report in question was sincere, the very existence of such tales was not calculated to be reassuring; and with the rumour of Henrietta's intended impeachment, the words Newport had been quoted as using would have recurred to his memory, edged with fresh significance. Here were his wife and children, practically hostages in the hands of Parliament. Were they—was Henrietta, at least—safe so long as the men who had compassed Strafford's death continued to hold the reins of power?

Digby, too, was at hand—rash, imprudent, zealous, devoted to the Queen's person and to the royal cause, and with no popularity of his own to hazard. It is this counsellor who has been generally credited with the suggestion, disastrously acted upon, that Charles should take the initiative by dealing a counter-stroke in the impeachment of the five members chiefly responsible for recent events. On January 3rd, Pym, Hampden, Holles, Haslerigg, and Strode—with Lord Kimbolton in the upper House—were charged by the King's orders with high treason. On the following day he took the more fatal step of invading the privileges of Parliament by going in person to the House of Commons to arrest them.

Upon Henrietta's share in this episode her own narrative, in spite of its usual inaccuracies, throws most light. She did not attempt to screen herself from the blame attaching to her imprudence. To that imprudence there seems no reason to doubt that it was owing in part that the King's blow missed its aim. The details of the scenes taking place in the interior of Whitehall may be inexact, but a comparison of the different accounts probably supplies a picture sufficiently near the truth. It is said that in the morning Charles had hesitated as to the wisdom of the course decided upon the previous night in consultation with Digby and the Queen; but that Henrietta was firm in holding him to his purpose.

"Go, you coward," she is reported to have exclaimed, "and pull these rogues out by the ears, or never see my face more."

The taunt, spoken in jest, yet with an undercurrent of earnest, had its effect. Of what followed Henrietta herself gives a description. Kissing her, the King took his leave. He was now, he said, about to become master. In an hour's time he hoped to return to her possessed of more power than at present.

Remaining behind, the Queen impatiently awaited the event, repeatedly consulting her watch to ascertain whether the hour mentioned was at an end. When it drew to a close she was not alone. Lady Carlisle was with her, and Henrietta's misplaced trust in her friend found rash expression. Judging that the moment had come when the King's intention was either carried out or frustrated, and that the necessity for caution was therefore over, she turned to Lady Carlisle. "Rejoice," she bade her, "for by this time the King, I hope, is master in his own State. Such and such persons are under arrest."

Lady Carlisle's reply is not recorded. Quietly withdrawing from the apartment, she made use without delay of the information by sending a warning of their danger to the menaced men. Her message probably did no more than confirm other similar intimations. Secrets were not well kept at Whitehall. Essex, as chamberlain of the royal household, is said to have taken his own measures to make the King's intentions known; whilst Ferté Imbault, the French ambassador, also claimed a share in the transaction. "J'avois prévenu mes amis," he wrote, "et ils s'étoient mis en sureté." To which of the three channels of information the miscarriage of the scheme was chiefly due must be left undetermined. It seems certain that, delayed by business, Charles had not left Whitehall when his wife's indiscretion placed the secret in the hands of her friend. The sequel is too well known to need repetition. The scene in the House, the King's vain search for his intended victims, and his angry withdrawal, pursued by cries of "Privilege, privilege," has been often described. As he returned, defeated, to Whitehall, he must have recognised the fact that he had played a game full of danger, and that he had lost.

Of Henrietta, the poor, passionate, unwise Queen, no more is heard during that agitated day. Confessing her fault to the King, it is likely enough that he had no heart to blame her. " Elle en a fait pénitence par son repentir," she says by Madame de Motteville's lips, " et point du tout par aucun reproche que ce prince lui en a fait."

During the ensuing days all was confusion. The threatened members had taken shelter in the city. Thither Charles proceeded, to be met again by cries of "Privilege," and hostile demonstrations, in the place of the loyal welcome with which, scarcely more than a month earlier, he had been greeted. Lord Digby, who was never deficient in personal courage, proposed to lead a band of cavaliers to that stronghold to seize the traitors harboured there, dead or alive ; and though Charles did not entertain the idea, vague reports of such counsels at court, getting abroad, increased the public excitement. In the tumultuous condition of London it may have seemed to the King that Henrietta's life was in danger ; he believed at the least she was to be taken from him. "The Queen's rebellion " was the name given by many to the Irish insurrection, and the fresh Remonstrance drawn up shortly afterwards by the committee of the House of Commons sitting in the city, was in great part directed against herself, her religion, and her interference in affairs of State, the suggestion being added that an oath should be exacted from the King's wife pledging her to give him no advice in such matters, nor ever again to mediate in the appointment of his officers and servants. When this temper of mind prevailed, it was not strange that Charles should have conceived it possible that hatred would find more forcible expression than words could give it ; and his orders to the admiral, Pennington, directing him to keep a ship at Portsmouth ready for use, indicate that he was contemplating the necessity of the Queen's escape from the kingdom. In any case, he determined to leave London. It was useless to represent to him that by so doing he was abandoning the field to his enemies. Henrietta's safety was of greater moment to him than a victory—had one been possible—over the House of Commons. On January 10th, therefore, he left Whitehall—to return there no more a free man—taking the Queen, "of whose person," says Warwick, "he was always more chary than of his business," with her children to Hampton Court.

It must have been a melancholy departure, ominously like a flight. Holland and Essex, both filling offices at court, refused to accompany their master ; and the palace, when it was reached, was so little prepared for the arrival of the royal party, that the King and Queen and three of their children occupied a single bedroom. Two days later they had made a further move to Windsor.

The struggle was entering upon a new phase. The riots in London, the concourses of armed apprentices and citizens, the opposing bands of Royalists gathered about Whitehall, had prepared men's minds for the possibility of an appeal to force. Charles' eyes were turning towards the north ; and he had scarcely left London before he secretly appointed Newcastle to be governor of Hull, where large stores of munitions of war had been accumulated. But it was one of the misfortunes of the King that spies were all around him. No sooner was a scheme laid in his secret chamber than it was betrayed to the Puritan leaders ; and on this occasion

Newcastle was at once required to attend in his place in Parliament, whilst a nominee of the Commons themselves, Sir John Hotham, was directed to take charge of Hull—his son, more hot than himself in the Parliamentary cause, being despatched from London to guard the guardian.

Lonelier and lonelier the King and Queen were left. Digby, charged with treason, was forced to fly the country. It was increasingly difficult, in the face of the evidence of constant treachery, to know whom to trust. A certain William Murray, high in their confidence, has been credited with part of the information conveyed to the enemy. Even Endymion Porter, groom of the bedchamber—the same at whose house the prudent Prince Palatine had regretted his brother's intimacy—took a certain degree of credit to himself for remaining true. "My duty and loyalty," he says, writing to his wife from Windsor, "have taught me to follow my King and master, and by the grace of God nothing shall divert me from it." Another passage in his letter adds a graphic touch to the picture of the reduced court. "I pray you, have a care of yourself and make much of your children. I wish sweet Tom with me, for the King and Queen are forced to lie with their children now, and I envy their happiness."

That happiness, if it existed at all, must have been chequered. War was approaching nearer every day. The two opposing parties were jealously watching one another, each striving to possess themselves of weapons to be used in the coming fight. The Tower was in the hands of a faithful servant of the King's, but it was manifestly doubtful how long his position there could be maintained. The Commons were inviting the local authorities to call out the trained bands, and directing magistrates to attend to the supplying and guarding of magazines within their districts.

On the other hand, bodies of cavaliers were collecting in and near Windsor. The charge which had caused Digby's flight had had to do with a meeting of officers at Kingston. The King, it was probably known, was sanguine as to assistance from Holland. The Prince of Orange, anxious to obtain the custody of his little daughter-in-law, had been profuse in professions. Writing on January 10th, he expressed his gratitude for the promise that the Princess should be sent over in the spring. "I cannot give your Majesty too great thanks for this honour," he said—adding that there was no one in the world over whom the King had a more absolute power, and that he desired nothing so passionately as to be able by his obedience to testify that he was the King's. They were brave words, and Charles might be forgiven if, destitute of other foreign allies, he counted upon words being supplemented by deeds. In the meantime, he had invited mediation on the part of the Dutch envoy, Heenvliet, between himself and his Parliament. As peacemaker, the ambassador can have seen little chance of success. Henrietta especially, in an interview with him on January 18th, used wild language. Never, she said, had she given the King evil counsels, as was alleged against her. She hated the Irish rebellion, at which she was accused of conniving. The King was worse off than a Doge of Venice. If not speedily satisfied he would betake himself to Portsmouth, and leaving her there in safety, would go, with the Prince, to the north. Byron, governor of the Tower, had instructions to blow it up rather than surrender it.

By February 5th both King and Queen knew that they had counted in vain on help from the Prince of Orange.

From that quarter no assistance was to be looked for. Instead of material aid the Prince sent his advice that war should be avoided. That same day Henrietta announced to the envoy her own intentions. She would take her daughter in person to Holland. Should peace be made between King and Parliament she would return. Otherwise he would go to the north, where the people were still loyal, and she would be best out of England. The plan was no new one, but the same which had been frustrated by Parliament in the summer. That body showed no disposition to interfere. They may even have welcomed the chance of the removal from the King's side of the woman whom they regarded as his evil genius ; and the Queen of Bohemia, writing to Roe on January 24th, and ante-dating her sister-in-law's movements, told him that Henrietta was at Dover. Rupert, his mother added, had gone to England.

Where blows were to be exchanged it was not likely that Elizabeth's second son would be absent, and he was causing his mother no little anxiety at the present juncture. Of the prudence and caution of the Prince Palatine she was secure, but a month earlier her difficulties with regard to the hot-headed Rupert had been confided to the same trusty counsellor. At the Hague, where she herself was, he would be idle, and in England no better off ; "for"—here her distrust of her brother's wife again finds vent—"I know that the Queen will use all means possible to gain him, to the prejudice of the Prince Elector and his religion." Later on the elder brother, expressing once more to Roe his own determination not to return to England with the Queen, "except she go, as you say, as an angel of peace"—an unlikely contingency—added that it was impossible for his mother or himself to bridle Rupert's "youth and fieryness."

With his uncle fighting for a kingdom across the narrow seas, it would have taken more than the admonitions of mother and brother to induce Rupert to remain a looker-on in Holland. For the present, however, he must have convinced himself that the appeal to arms was not imminent, for having met Henrietta at Dover, he returned in her company to the Hague.

February 12th had been settled upon as the day when, escorted by Charles, the Queen was to set out for the sea-coast, travelling by way of Hampton Court, Greenwich, Rochester, and Canterbury ; the journey having been arranged "in such post-haste," wrote Sir Thomas Smith to Admiral Pennington, "that I never heard of the like for persons of such dignity." Those breathing the atmosphere of a court are slow to recognise the fact that the time for ceremonial and etiquette is at an end. Notwithstanding the haste of which Sir Thomas complained, an event had occurred, before the Queen had crossed the Channel, well calculated to increase the distrust felt for her. Letters from Lord Digby had been intercepted, and amongst those thus fallen into the enemy's hands was one addressed to Henrietta. Matters had not yet reached such a point that to open a communication addressed to the King's wife should be taken as a matter of course ; but after a certain amount of hesitation it was determined that the gravity of the situation was sufficient to justify Parliament in acquainting itself with the contents, and the letter was accordingly opened and read before being forwarded to the King, accompanied by a message couched in terms of conventional respect. Whilst far from reflecting upon Henrietta in respect of a letter addressed to her, or expecting any satisfaction from her on the matter, the House "earnestly besought his Majesty to persuade the Queen that she would not vouchsafe any countenance or correspondence with Lord Digby or any other fugitive traitors."

It must be admitted that Digby's communication had not been marked by caution. He wrote, he told Henrietta, to let her know "where the humblest and most faithful servant you have in the world is here at Middleborough, where I shall remain in the privatest way I can till I receive instructions how to serve the King and your Majesty in these parts. If the King betake himself to a safe place where he may avow and protect his servants, from rage (I mean) and violence (for from justice I will never implore it), I shall then live in impatience and in misery till I wait upon you." But if peace is to be made with Parliament, Digby will be better absent. If he cannot serve by his actions, it will comfort him to do so by his sufferings.

It was not a tender of service, however much prompted by zeal and loyalty, to profit the Queen when submitted to unfriendly inspection. The unfavourable opinion entertained of her was however scarcely capable of accentuation. That she was to be for the present removed from the King's side was no doubt matter of public rejoicing. The latest effects of her influence were apparent both in Charles' consent to the exclusion of the bishops from Parliament, and the determination he evinced to retain control of the militia.

After some delay caused by contrary winds, the parting took place. For the first time since their marriage the sea was to be put between husband and wife. Riding along the cliffs, Charles kept the vessel with his wife and child on board as long as possible in view. Then, alone, he returned to carry on his struggle against an evil destiny.

CHAPTER XIII

1642—1644

Henrietta at the Hague—Her labours—And letters—The royal standard set up—The Palatine Princes—The Queen in danger at sea—Letter from Charles—The Queen lands in England—Fired upon—Fairfax's offer of escort—Life with the troops—At York—The effects of her influence on Charles—Her impeachment in Parliament—Marches south—Joins the King.

HENRIETTA remained in Holland close upon a year. Her reception was considered by her sister-in-law as, on the whole, satisfactory, taking into account the shortness of the warning she had given of her intended visit. On the other hand, in a letter of March written from the Hague by one William Newton to his brother, the Queen's entertainment was described as more royal than hearty. The authorities, Newton said, had set her a day that they would be rid of her, if so it stood with her occasions. Those declared by Parliament to be delinquents were forbidden to resort to the Hague during her visit, on pain of being sent to England; and when two of them ventured upon disobedience, they came in disguise.

The ostensible purpose of the Queen in coming to Holland had been quickly accomplished ; and by the middle of March the British ambassador, Boswell, was able to report that a week earlier the Princess Royal had been delivered over by her mother to the Prince of Orange, who, with his son, had conducted her to her own quarters at court. It was admitted by Boswell, though out of temper at having been passed over in the marriage arrangements, that the little bride was "in good health, and certainly as safe and well as might be." Notwithstanding the present condition of English affairs, the honour of the alliance was considered great; and one of the burgesses told Lord Goring in the Prince's presence-chamber that it was feared the marriage with the King's eldest daughter "had set the Prince on such a high strain that shortly he doubted either their ruin or his own."

The Princess's separation from her mother and installation at the Prince of Orange's court had probably been no more than a temporary formality, since Henrietta stated that she retained the care of her daughter "as a child" so long as she herself remained in Holland. But it was a time when the Queen can have had little leisure to spare for domestic concerns. If the declared reason of her presence at the Hague had been to place Mary in the hands of her boy-husband, other motives for the journey had not been wanting. The money and arms urgently necessary to the King at the present juncture had to be obtained; and it was upon crown jewels and other valuables brought by Henrietta to the Hague that it was hoped to raise the required funds. "Pour de l'argent, je travaille," she told Charles in one of her early letters; and the words describe her chief occupation during the whole of her stay in Holland.

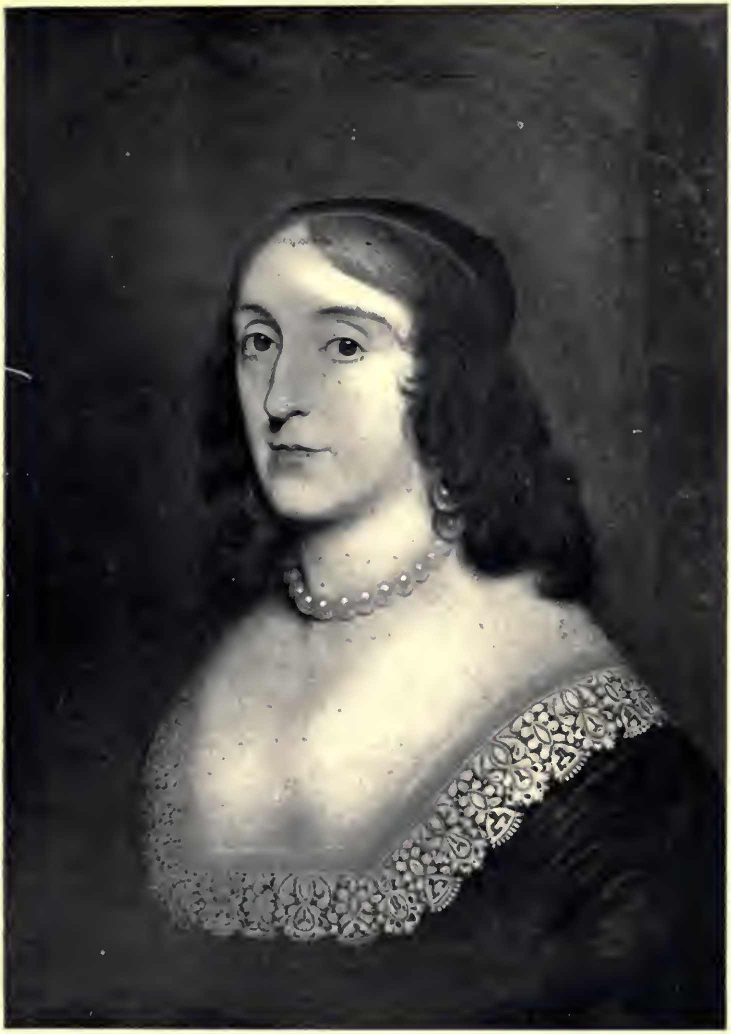
No less anxious than busy, the Queen's manifold cares found reflection in letter after letter to Charles—letters filled with business details, plans made only to be abandoned, fears, hopes, misgivings, leaving scarcely room at times for the expressions of love for which she perhaps guessed that the King was hungering. "Je suis si estourdie d'escrire que je ne diray rien de tendre," she once says, "car je le suis plus que je ne saurois escrire." Yet, in the midst of anxieties, apprehensions, and toil, there are not wanting occasional touches of humour—as when she describes the interview with the Dutch ambassador, who, mistaking little Jeffrey Hudson for her son, had kissed the dwarf's hands.

With her sister-in-law, in spite of the absence of any real sympathy between them, she was outwardly on amicable terms. During the earlier part of her visit Boswell was able to report that the two were much together, "and very kind they are one to another." "Our Queens," he wrote again to Roe, "agree here most kindly." The confidence between them was more apparent than real. Writing on one occasion to Roe, Elizabeth informed him that William Murray had come over to the Queen. "What he brings," she added, "is kept very secret. He is very reserved to me, which he need not be, for I am not curious to ask what I see is not willingly to be told." The King, she said, did nothing save by his wife's approbation. It was a condition of affairs naturally exasperating to the King's sister, especially as the advice Henrietta was likely to give in no way commended itself to Elizabeth's judgment. "I find," she wrote, reiterating the usual complaint, "by all the Queen's and her people's discourse that they do not desire an agreement between his Majesty and his Parliament, but that all be done by force, and rail abominably at the Parliament. I hear all and say nothing."

It was easier for a woman who had only regarded the situation from the opposite side of the Channel to take a philosophical view of it than for those fresh from the scene of action; and one fancies that Elizabeth's expressive silence may have conveyed her opinion as eloquently as speech. Meantime, much at the Hague must have been strange and new to Henrietta. The burgomasters had small reverence for royalty, and would seat themselves and enter into conversation with her as with an equal; or, coming into her presence without uncovering, would look at her and turn away with no salutation. These, however, were minor annoyances, if annoyances at all, for which the Queen, oppressed by her overwhelming anxieties, would have little attention to spare.

During her stay in Holland she kept up a constant and full correspondence with the King, some fifty letters belonging to this period having been preserved. Most of them were partly or wholly in cipher, and the King is warned to distrust any communication which might reach him in ordinary characters, since it would have been written for the purpose of misleading hostile readers into whose hands it might fall. Sometimes, with this intention, a pseudonym is selected for a loyal servant calculated to throw suspicion upon a popular leader, and Pym himself is bracketed with Culpepper as active in the Royalist cause.

It is pre-eminently in these letters, as well as in those of a later date, also addressed to her husband, that the true Henrietta, with all her faults and her virtues, impatient and dictatorial, loving and faithful, is found revealed. Here is to be seen the stronger will of the Queen constantly engaged in struggling, not without misgivings as to ultimate success, to impart strength and stability to the vacillating policy of the King. The correspondence throws light not only upon the period to which it belongs, but upon the past. The tone pervading it could only be used by one accustomed, if not to command, at least to counsel with authority. In these



After the picture by Miereveldt in the National Portrait Gallery.

Photo by Emery Walker.

ELIZABETH, QUEEN OF BOHEMIA.

[*To face p.* 262.

letters, often written in haste, in weariness and lassitude and strain, there was no leisure to play a part or to cast about for phrases. Each reflects the mood by which it was dictated. At one moment the absent Queen is found rebuking almost with scorn, complaining, going so far as to use threats should her injunctions not be obeyed; the next she is full of tender and passionate affection, apologies, protestations; and always, whether in anger or love, she is seen working, contriving, labouring, ready to sacrifice all—ease, comfort, safety—if by so doing the royal cause might be forwarded. Throughout weariness, disappointment, and fear, the courage belonging by right to the daughter of Henri of Navarre rarely fails. It may be true that she estimated aright neither the situation nor the times. She was wrong-headed, violent, self-willed. It may be the fact that her counsels contributed in no small degree to Charles' ruin; but in the vehemence of her protests against a pacification to be bought, as she understood it, by abandonment not only of rights but of justice, she spoke as the daughter of a royal race, to whom honour was dearer than life. It would be well if those who accuse her alike of urging Charles to a hopeless resistance and of responsibility for the surrender of Strafford, were to read the indignant remonstrances breaking from her at the mere rumour of an accommodation with Parliament from which Charles' too zealous supporters should be excluded:

"You must think well of what you will grant," she wrote to the King, "for you are lost for ever if you abandon your servants, and if you do not avow them in all they have done in your service. . . . If you abandon your servants, it will be worse than your crown: for, so long as you have friends, there is still hope of recovering that; but forsaking them, you will find no others, as I feel sure, nor yet any crown." And again: "If you take not care for those who suffer for you, you are lost. . . . You see that it will be necessary that you should pardon all who have actually opposed you, and those who have been on your side would be forgotten—a thing so base that I well know it could never come from you."

It will scarcely be denied that, in her energetic protest against what might wear the appearance of delivering up his followers to the enemy, Henrietta was within her rights. On other occasions the means she employed to force the King to adhere to the policy she was pressing upon him were less justifiable.

"There is a report here," she wrote soon after her arrival at the Hague, "that you are returning to London or its neighbourhood. I believe nothing of it, and hope that you are more constant to your determinations. You have already learnt to your cost that lack of perseverance in your plans has been your ruin. Assuredly you will change them no more. If it should prove otherwise, farewell for ever, and I must think upon my resolution to place myself in a convent; for never could I trust myself to the persons who would be your counsellors, nor to you, who would have failed in your promises to me."

Before the letter containing this menace—one she continued to repeat on important occasions—was despatched, news had arrived showing that her fears had been groundless, and that, so far from returning to London, the King was on his way north, and had arrived at Newmarket. A little later she is again in terror lest he should yield to the pressure put upon him, and relinquish, at least temporarily, the control of the militia.

"Perhaps," she writes with a touch of contempt, "this has already been done, and you are again beginning your old game of yielding all. Nevertheless, I will hope, for my consolation, until I learn it for certain, that it is not so; for I confess that if you do it you ruin me in ruining yourself." Worse still, she will have been rendered ridiculous, should it turn out that he has broken all the resolutions they had arrived at together, except, indeed, in going north—to do nothing when he arrived there. In the argument she proceeds to advance there is no little reason. Had his concessions in the matter of the militia been made whilst she herself remained in England, Parliament would have been satisfied. But she now fears he has acted as before in the case of the bishops—has, that is, refused the demands made upon him at first, and given way afterwards. Whereas, had he adhered to his attitude of resistance, it would have been believed that his former concessions had been merely the result of his fears for the Queen and of his affection for her, and not of any lack of determination. After which she reiterates her former threat, "I see that I shall be constrained by my misfortunes to withdraw into a place in which to pray God for you."

Henrietta's fears had again been unfounded. It was doubtless true that her absence had left the hands of the man who loved her more free than when he had been constantly haunted by the apprehension of her danger. The answer returned by him to the deputation demanding that the control of the militia should be transferred for a time to Parliament was marked by unusual determination and by something like passion. "By God," he replied, "not for an hour. You have asked that of me in this was never asked of a king, and with which I will not trust my wife and children." The reply must have gladdened Henrietta's heart. In a postscript to the letter last quoted, when news had reached Holland of the occurrences at Hull and of the refusal of the Parliamentary governor to admit the King, it is evident that the certainty of approaching conflict had only strengthened in Henri-Quatre's daughter her father's fighting spirit. She wished herself in James' place—the little Duke of York had been sent to Hull the day before his father reached it—that she might have dealt in person with Hotham, the governor. "Courage!" she added. "For my part I have never had so much. It is a good omen."

It was in another mood that she wrote, two or three weeks later, to the friend of her childhood, Madame de Saint-George.

"Pray God for me," she says, after recounting her misfortunes, "for believe that there is not in the world a more miserable creature than I, separated from the King my Lord, from my children, absent from my country, with no hope of returning thither without danger, and forsaken by all the world."

Through this long summer and autumn Henrietta was never idle. Negotiations with moneylenders, and with possible purchasers of the crown jewels and of her own, filled her days; and her letters to Charles are largely concerned with the consignments to England of the money, arms, and ammunition thus obtained. Yet she found space for bursts of passionate affection; and some of her graceful, hurried letters remind one of those addressed by her father, not seldom in the stress of imminent battle, to the women he loved. "My only joy," she tells the King, "is to assure you that I am with you in thought and affection, and am more yours than you yourself." When a hope of a meeting, to prove for the moment illusory, had been held out, she writes in a veritable transport of anticipation: "I cannot refrain from telling you the joy I shall have in going, hoping to see you in a month. . . . I fear to become mad with it, for I do nothing in the world but think of this, the only pleasure which remains to me in this world, for without you I would desire to remain in it not for an hour. . . . Adieu, my dear heart."

Occasionally her letters are couched in a lighter strain: "I must confess the truth concerning my weakness. It is that though I entertain no doubt of your affection for me, I am nevertheless not sorry to see in your letters the flattery you have placed there regarding the little services that I render you where I am. That they are acceptable to you gives me such great contentment that I cannot express it; and if anything could increase my affection and my zeal for your service it would be this, for you know that I love flattery. But it is not possible."

There is no space to multiply quotations. The few that have been given will serve as examples of the letters received by Charles—letters of admonition and advice, of blame, of love, and of devotion—during the year of separation. They form a singular commentary upon sneers such as that contained in a letter from Lady Sussex to Sir R. Verney. "The Queen," she wrote, "is pleased if she have so many favourites with her. I doubt we shall all fare the worse for it."

It was true that Henrietta had served, in spite of Dutch prohibitions, as a rallying-point for many of the "pauvres traistres," as she terms the fugitive Royalists. Her original train had consisted only of Lord Arundel, Lord Goring—whose son was still holding Portsmouth for the King—the Duchess of Richmond, Lady Denbigh, and Lady

Roxburgh, with some few others. But to these had been added Lord Digby, Jermyn, Henry Percy, Finch, and it would seem Windebank, all busily engaged in the same endeavour to obtain money and arms and to convey them in safety to England.

This last was no easy matter. The Prince of Orange was favourable to the royal cause, and had exerted himself to induce the States to interpose in the quarrel. But the latter, says Clarendon, "were so far from being inclined to the King that they did him all the mischief they could." Spies were as plentiful at the Hague as before at Whitehall, and the Queen's movements were carefully watched; whilst a fleet, placed under the command of the Earl of Warwick, was ready at hand to do its best to prevent letters or assistance from reaching the royal quarters. At the same time, the fact that Henrietta was permitted to remain at the Hague, to raise large sums of money with the manifest view of placing them at the King's disposal, and to despatch supplies of arms and ammunition to England, tends to throw some doubt upon the sincerity of the "affections to the Parliament" with which Clarendon credits the Dutch authorities; nor does it appear that the agent, Walter Strickland, sent to the Hague with the object of stirring them to more active opposition to Henrietta's schemes, met with any great success. In spite of all precautions, communication, though sometimes intermitted, was frequent between King and Queen, the channel being now some trusty cavalier, now one of the "favourites" credited by Lady Sussex with contributing to Henrietta's pleasures abroad.

On August 23rd the royal standard was set up at Nottingham, and civil war was formally proclaimed. The ceremony took place at six o'clock on a stormy and tempestuous evening. Melancholy men, says Clarendon, observed many ill presages. The royal force was small, a general sadness covered the town, whilst the standard was blown down the same night, nor could it be set up again until the storm had subsided.

One source of comfort the King must have had in the arrival of his nephew, Rupert. The Prince Palatine had been with his uncle during the earlier part of the year, but had prudently returned to the Hague, where Parliament presently sent to thank him for having quitted England. "A cette heure," writes the Queen, "il ne luy a pas respondu." The language suggests a suspicion on her part that a polite answer might yet be made; and in communicating to the King a suggestion of the Prince's that he should visit Denmark on his uncle's behalf, Henrietta adds her own doubts whether Charles would wish to avail himself of the offer, and whether those about his nephew would be likely to prove trustworthy, "car vous savés quelle est la personne qu'il est par luy-mesme."

Rupert was of quite another temper; and almost at the moment that his brother was leaving England, was on his way to join the King. Already appointed General of the royal Horse, he would have been at his post still earlier had he not been detained by contrary winds, the store-ship with its cargo of supplies accompanying him having been driven ashore. The Stadtholder subsequently furnished a frigate, with a galliot for stores; and, with his brother Maurice and Lord Digby, he had now succeeded in making his way to Charles. In announcing the departure of his nephew from Holland, Henrietta gives the King a word of warning:

"It is not necessary that I should commend him to you; for he goes with a great desire to serve you.

Only, a counsellor must be placed at his side ; for, believe me, he is still very young and wild [*estourdy*]. I have had experience of it ; wherefore I have thought it well to advertise you thereof."

Two or three mentions of the Prince occurring about this time in letters of the Roundhead Nehemiah Wharton, show him inaugurating his campaign. As early as September 13th, it seems that he had earned the epithet of "Prince Rupert, that diabolical Cavalier" ; whilst a graphic picture is given of his entry into Worcester at the head of his troops, "most of the citizens crying, 'Welcome, welcome,' but principally the Mayor, who desired to entertain him. But he answered, 'God damn him, he would not stay, but would go wash his hands in the blood of Roundheads.'" The King had one hot-headed partisan of his own blood at his side.

As autumn advanced, the Royalist prospects, at first menacing enough, improved ; yet there were those fighting on the King's side whose gloom remained uncheered. To Lord Spencer, for instance—afterwards Earl of Sunderland—it was, in his own words, a lightening before death. Forced into the struggle by circumstances, his discontent with the conditions of the conflict supplied, "were it not for grinning honour," a daily handsome occasion to retire. Yet, being determined not to fight upon the opposite side—which he would rather be hanged than do—it would be said he was afraid. Such was the explanation of his conduct he sent to his wife in the September of this year. The King, he added, was averse to peace and was believed to be resolved against making it till the Queen's return. Honest men sought accommodation. Charles had also desired it, but was prevented from making offers by expectation of the Queen and fear of the Papists. Spencer's attitude probably represented the dull hopelessness of many others engaged in the quarrel from chivalry rather than from conviction.

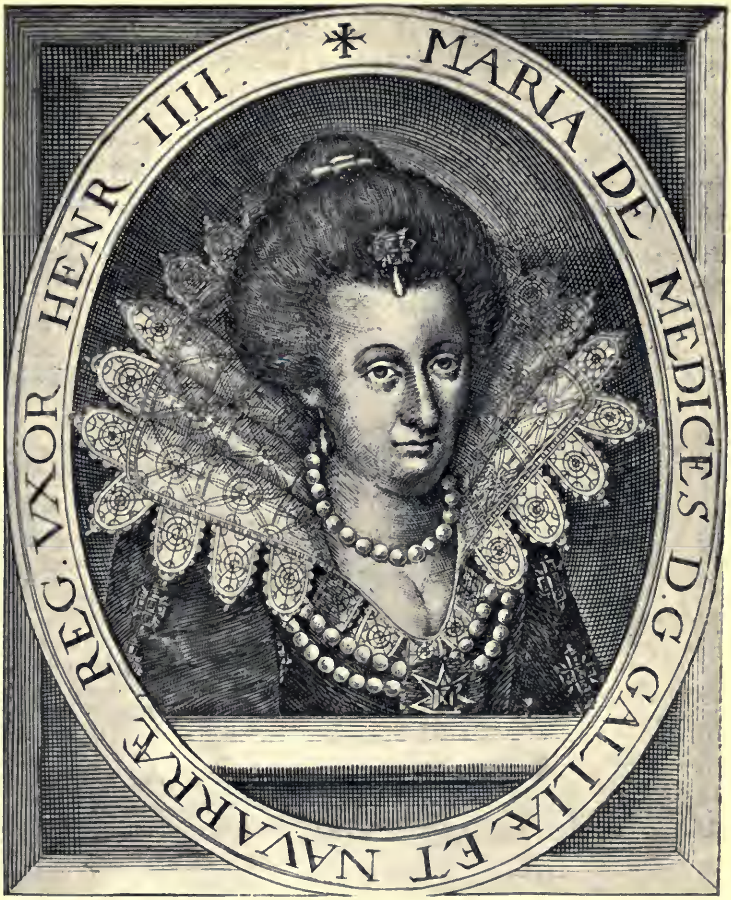
Meantime, with the amendment in the Royalist fortunes, Henrietta's eyes turned more and more longingly towards England. The question of a visit to France had been raised ; but whilst ready to go there should it be deemed desirable, her own wish was to rejoin her husband unless a pacification were to take place. Should that occur, she said, writing when no Royalist successes had warranted the hope of a peace upon favourable terms, it would be her wish to resort for the present to France, not feeling strength to look on at the disastrous results she anticipated from a like step. If, on the other hand, the war was to be prosecuted, she begged to be permitted to return to her place at the King's side : "I desire to share your fortunes and participate in your troubles as I have done in your joys, provided they are incurred with honour and in your own defence. For to perish from a consumption of royalty is a death that I could not endure, having found the malady by experience too insupportable."

To Paris she would have come as a stranger, her treasure and her heart being elsewhere. The days were long since past when she had yearned to return to her old home, and the last link binding her to it in any true sense had been lately severed by the death of her mother at Cologne. It had been Henrietta's intention to visit her in this her latest place of refuge, but opinion at the Hague had been so adverse to the journey that she had relinquished it, rather than by persistence endanger her husband's interests. The language in which she communicated her loss to Charles is a melancholy proof of the extent to which the relative importance of the greatest events of life is changed, when body, mind, and spirit are absorbed in one engrossing preoccupation. "Excuse it if my letter is ill-written," she says, concluding one dealing with other subjects; "I am grieved at the loss of the Queen my mother, who died a week ago. I only had the news of it this morning." Charles, as well as the children and his suite, must wear mourning.

Care for her children themselves was merged in practical work; and at the end of a communication concerned with barrels of gunpowder, pistols, carabines, and other munitions of war, a postscript is to be found curiously significant of the small space to be accorded to domestic anxieties: "I wish," she adds, "that you would send to fetch the children who are in London; for if matters should come to extremities, it would not be well for them to be there."

Meantime, some of the objects she had had in view in coming to Holland had been accomplished. Large sums of money—amounting, according to the doubtful statement of an early biography, to two million sterling—had been raised; arms and ammunition had been bought, some of these stores having been already despatched to England, whilst the rest were to be taken there by the Queen herself; and cordial relations with the Prince of Orange had been maintained: "I know by letters from the Prince of Orange," she wrote, "who is all we could wish, that he had written these same words, 'The impossible must be done for the King and Queen. The possible is too little.' I assure you that I believe he will do all that could be desired."

But notwithstanding her success it is plain that by November a longer absence was becoming unendurable. "Farewell, my dear heart," ends one of her letters, "I


✠ MARIA DE MEDICES D.G. GALLIÆ ET NAVARRÆ REG. VXOR HENR IIII

From a contemporary engraving.

MARIE DE MEDICIS.

[*To face p.* 272.

await life or death in the first news that I shall have from you; for if it happened that I could not go, it would be my death, since I can no longer live without seeing you." "This country," she writes a few weeks later, "puts the patience of those who, like me, have but little, too greatly to the proof." Rumours of disaster were abroad. The King was reported to be dead, the Prince of Wales a prisoner. There were men at the Hague said to have seen and touched the corpses of Rupert and his brother Maurice. No day passed without bringing tales of lost battles. "Such are the pastimes and the news of this country!" And, in conclusion, Henrietta herself has a bad cold, and nothing but English air, or at least the air breathed by Charles, will cure it.

By January she was actually ready for embarkation, and a note of joyous expectation makes itself felt. It was not necessary, she tells the King, to hasten her. Contrary winds alone had deferred her departure—winds over which, as she once wrote, she had as little power as Charles over his Parliament. She now hopes to be with him so shortly that she waits to answer his letter in person. "I only beg you," she adds gaily, to tell *the King* that all his commands shall be obeyed" —a profession of unusual docility on his wife's part.

The meeting did not take place so soon as she expected. Starting under the escort of the Dutch admiral, Van Tromp, the winds, her rebels, set themselves vigorously to frustrate her intention of reaching England; and after beating about in imminent peril for no less than nine days, she and the little fleet accompanying her were forced to return to Holland, two out of the eleven vessels laden with military stores being lost. Of her experiences during the time she was tempest-tossed, Henrietta's narrative gives a vivid account.

Tied in her berth, her ladies in the same condition around her, she endured the terror of an ever-present death, the Catholics on board making their confessions to the priests who had accompanied the expedition, and fear of death surmounting shame, reciting aloud the catalogue of their faults and failings for the benefit of all within hearing. Henrietta recovered her spirits after the first, and, becoming accustomed to danger, set herself to administer consolation to her train. "Comfort yourselves, *mes chéres*," she said. "Queens of England are never drowned." The boast was justified. The Dutch coast was reached and a landing safely effected.

The letter announcing the disaster to Charles is characteristic of her spirit and courage. She was hoping, she told him, to start afresh so soon as the winds would permit, "although a tempest of nine days is a very terrible thing. Nevertheless, when your service is concerned, I fear nothing. . . . God be praised that He has spared me still to serve you, but I confess that I did not think to see you again. My sole regret in dying was that in this accident your enemies might find encouragement and your friends the reverse. This consideration, I own, tormented me ; for, save as it concerns you, life is not a thing of which I fear the loss."

The King's reply is the earliest extant of that series of letters to his wife which perhaps show Charles in his most winning light.

"Dear Heart, I never till now knew the good of ignorance, for I did not know the danger that thou wert in by the storm, before I had certain assurance of thy happy escape ; we having had a pleasing false report of thy safe landing at Newcastle, which thine of the 19th Jan. so confirmed us in, that we at least were not undeceived of that hope, till we knew certainly how great a danger thou hast past, of which I shall not be out of apprehension until I may have the happiness of thy company; for indeed I think it not the least of my misfortunes, that for my sake thou hast run so much hazard; in which thou hast expressed so much love to me that I confess it is impossible to repay by anything I can do, much less by words; but my heart being full of affection for thee, admiration of thee, and impatient passion of gratitude to thee, I could not but say something, leaving the rest to be read by thee out of thine own noble heart."

Before embarking for the second time from Scheveling, Henrietta sent an indignant protest—less carefully worded than might have been the case had she been contemplating a more prolonged stay in Holland—to the States concerning their action in stopping a ship on its way to England. She had omitted, she wrote, to take notice of many indignities by which she had been provoked during her residence in their country, but now found herself so highly offended that she could not, with honour to the King, be silent. All things considered, and taking into account the difficulty of steering a middle course between Charles and the Parliament, it must have been with not a little relief that the authorities at the Hague bade farewell to their royal guest.

Meanwhile the King was eagerly awaiting the assurance that his wife had reached England in safety. On the same day that his letter to Henrietta had been sent, he wrote to the Earl of Newcastle, who was to meet the Queen, that "never woman with child more longed for anything than we for news from you." When intelligence reached him of Henrietta's arrival on English soil, the letter conveying it had to recount fresh dangers escaped. After waiting off Bridlington Quay for two days, until the cavalry charged with the duty of forming an escort both for her and the supplies she brought should have arrived, she had landed on February 22nd. On the following morning, wakened by cannon-shots, she found that four Parliamentary vessels had come up and were directing their fire, not only upon the ships, still laden with munitions of war, but upon the village itself. Whether purposely, as the Queen believed, or not, the house in which she was lodged appeared to be a special point of attack, and before she had had time to rise, the balls were whistling around her, "of which you may readily believe that I loved not the music." Hastily summoned by Jermyn, she threw on what clothes she could, and going on foot to some distance from the village, sought, with her ladies, the shelter of a ditch. For two hours she and her companions lay, balls passing over their heads or striking the ground and covering them with earth. At length, the mist which had afforded him an excuse for delay clearing off, Van Tromp, who had a second time served as escort to the Queen, threatened, "un peu tard," to open fire upon the English vessels, and they desisted from their cannonade and retired.

Henrietta, for the first time under fire, had already developed her father's appreciation of the excitement of war; and her account of the adventure is given in a tone of gay confidence, if not of bravado. One incident included in her subsequent narrative is omitted in her letter to the King—namely, her return to the lodging she had hastily quitted, upon the discovery that an ugly but much-loved dog had been left behind. Not until Mitte had been found and removed would she consent to seek a place of safety.

The episode threw, as it was well calculated to do, considerable odium upon the Parliamentary party, described in Naworth's almanack as the "bloudy rebels who endeavoured to murthr her." If such was the deliberate intention of the firing vessels it must have been quite unauthorised. At this very time Lord Fairfax, commanding the hostile army in the north, was writing in a tone of marked conciliation, not only to congratulate the Queen upon her safe and happy arrival in England, but to offer himself and his forces as her guard. The letter is too curious an example of the tone still used towards the King and Queen by those in arms against them not to be quoted here. After expressing the joy felt by all men at her Majesty's return, together with the hopes entertained that through her influence and mediation peace might be restored to the distracted country, the Puritan general went on to make his strange proffer of service :

" Madame," he says, " the Parliament . . . hath commanded me to serve the King and (in him) your Majesty in securing the peace of these northern parts. My highest ambition and humblest suit is that your Majesty . . . would be pleased to admit me and the forces with me to guard your Majesty ; wherein I and this army shall all of us more willingly sacrifice our lives than suffer any danger to invade the trust reposed in, Madame, your Majesty's most humble servant, Fairfax."

He can hardly, one would think, have anticipated that his petition would be granted, nor can Henrietta be blamed for declining his offered protection.

The following months must have seemed to the errant Queen, looking back upon them in after years, like the adventures encountered in a troubled dream. Not till the middle of July did the meeting with the King, so ardently desired by both, take place. In the meantime, remaining with the northern army, she ran her own risks and achieved her own successes.

By a singular chance it was at the house of the elder brother of Walter Strickland, who, as Parliamentary agent, had done his best to thwart her in Holland, that Henrietta was lodged on her first arrival in England. Sir William Strickland does not appear to have been at home when the Queen and her suite claimed his hospitality ; but in any case it would not have been easy to refuse it. Her visit had a sequel which must have made the stay of the royal guest memorable to the descendants of her host. The family plate having been produced in her honour, the Queen, in departing, took possession of it as a forced loan, leaving a portrait of herself in pledge, with apologies for what she feared might be regarded as an ungracious return for courtesies received. Another story related of this time exhibits her in a more attractive light. It is said that one of the Parliamentary officers concerned in the Bridlington bombardment, seized by the cavaliers, was tried by court-martial, convicted of having directed his fire upon the Queen's lodging, and condemned to death. Meeting him on his way to the gallows, Henrietta inquired his offence, and, learning it, refused, with easy good-nature, to allow the execution to take place. " I have forgiven him all that," she said, " and, as he did not kill me, he shall not be sent to death on my account."

On the arrival of Montrose, despatched by the Earl of Newcastle with a body of two thousand cavaliers to act as her escort, the Queen quitted Boynton Hall, and, carrying with her the Strickland family plate, proceeded to York, gathering fresh reinforcements as she went. Riding with the troops, and indulging in no *délicatesses de femme*, she lived with the soldiers, discarding the forms and ceremonies of royalty and taking her meals with them under the open sky. "Treating them as brothers, they all loved her," and the novelty of the situation must have lent it charm. Garrisons had been left behind at Moulton and at Stamford Bridge, and before the end of March Henrietta was able to report to the King the favourable response of Sir Hugh Cholmley, Governor of Scarborough, to her invitation to visit her, and his subsequent determination to hold the town for the King. For more than three months she remained at York, awaiting the time when it would be deemed advisable to send her, with troops to serve both as her escort and as reinforcements to the King's army, to join him at Oxford. In the meantime she was conveniently placed for communication with the north, and, in a letter to Ormond, Sir Robert Poyntz states that she had received visits from some of the Scotch nobles, including Montrose, who "were persuaded the safest way was by the Queen, whose course by many is judged very constant and fixed, whereas other courses are too moveable." Hamilton, however, had also repaired to York, and by his interest with her most trusted servants had "defeated the others and made her give little countenance to Montrose," himself hazarding the rash promise that he would keep the Scots at home.

During this period of waiting occasions were not wanting when, as before, the Queen regarded Charles and his proceedings with displeasure and did not fail to give forcible expression to her sentiments. Haunted by the old fear that peace would be concluded upon disadvantageous terms, she is found, after her former fashion, telling him that, in such a case, it will not be expedient that she should remain in England, and that she will take refuge in France. After which she turns to more personal grievances, of what precise nature it does not appear: "Have more care of me than you have hitherto shown," she adds with wholly unmerited reproach, "or at the least appear to do so, to the end that the lack of it may not be noticed." To Newcastle, in the same fit of ill temper, she wrote that it was not he alone who had been scolded; she had likewise had her share, which did not greatly surprise her, reason being on her side.

According to Clarendon, the Queen was largely responsible for the collapse of some secret negotiations carried on during this year at Oxford, when it was proposed that the King should re-admit the Earl of Northumberland to his favour and bestow upon him his former post of Lord High Admiral. Hyde himself, now coming into prominence as Chancellor, with others of Charles' Council, were anxious that this should be done; but the King was firm in his refusal—a refusal attributed by the Chancellor to a pledge given to the Queen at her departure to Holland, by which Charles had bound himself to admit none who had done him disservice to favour or trust without her consent, and, further, to make no peace save by her mediation. Upon this engagement Clarendon charges, not only Charles' refusal to condone Northumberland's offences, but the miscarriage of the peace negotiations. The King's affection, says the Chancellor, for his wife being of a very extraordinary alloy, compounded of conscience, love, generosity, and gratitude, and all those noble affections which raise the passion to the greatest height, he saw with her eyes and determined by her judgment—desiring, moreover, that all men should know that he was swayed by her.

Few people will differ with the writer when he expresses his belief that the condition of things thus described was good for neither King nor Queen. Yet Charles was demonstrating at this very time that he was capable of adopting a line certain to meet with Henrietta's disapproval. If her influence was, as Clarendon believed, wrecking the chances of a better understanding between the King and his subjects, she was, for her part, not without causes of complaint more reasonable than any imaginary neglect shown her by Charles. Amongst the sops he had thrown to his opponents was the offer of a bill directed against Catholics, and including in its provisions the compulsory education of their children in the Protestant religion. When it is remembered that the body at which this measure was aimed had been foremost in espousing the Royalist cause, it will be admitted that the services they had rendered were ill requited. Nor can it have answered its purpose in propitiating public opinion, since any result it might otherwise have produced must have been neutralised by a letter intercepted about this time, containing a message from the King to the effect that aid was shortly to be expected from Ireland. In the face of the knowledge that Charles was ready to employ Irish Catholics to advance his cause, the abandonment of their co-religionists in England will not have contributed to rehabilitate him in the eyes of his rebel subjects.

What Henrietta thought of the proposed concession is not known. By April she was repenting of her ill humour. Care for the King, and affection, she protested, had alone made her angry, and she grieved for his grief. If, as he believed, she had been in fault, she would make confession and hope for absolution. "I own," she wrote somewhat later, "that I was carried away in the end by passion; but you know that I am open to reason."

That the Chancellor was not alone in attaching a very high degree of importance to the Queen's influence is proved by a message received by her about this time from certain of the Parliamentary party, intended to elicit her views as to a pacification, and assuring her that the reasons to be given her for gaining the King's consent to the conditions which had been submitted to him would be such as she could not fail to find convincing. Her reply appears to have been a meaningless profession of her desire for peace, and, as might have been expected, nothing came of the attempt at conciliation. Before the end of May, so far were the Parliamentary leaders from entertaining any hopes of the Queen's assistance, that the gulf separating the opposed parties was widened by an attack on her own person. On a motion brought forward in the Commons for declaring all Papists in arms traitors, a member called Darley rose. "For my part," he said, "I desire to speak plain English. I think that the principal Papist now in arms against us is the Queen." Her impeachment was carried after scanty opposition, and was laid by Pym before the Lords. The step was little more than an act of bravado, for Henrietta was in no danger at the time of falling into the hands of her enemies.

She was doing her best to further the royal cause in the north, and was actually exerting herself to impress the necessity of patience upon Newcastle, who was not without grievances of his own. She gave him no counsels, she said, upon which she herself had not acted. It would seem that she had in truth been making an effort to control her own irritation: "When I shall see you and shall make all this known to you," she wrote, very characteristically, to Charles, "you will say that I am a good girl and very patient. But I swear to you that it kills me to be patient."

Her own plans and movements were dependent, not only upon directions to be received from the King, but upon the state of affairs in the north, and the possibility of sparing a sufficient body of troops to conduct her in safety to Oxford. Her wishes on the subject were divided, and she confessed she was torn between the longing to find herself on the way to Charles and the desire to achieve some signal victory before starting on her way south. By June she was, nevertheless, on the road to Oxford, though detained for a fortnight at Newark before proceeding further. The construction liable to be put upon any action of the foreign Queen, however innocent, is illustrated by a contemporary pamphlet dealing with her visit to this town. Naturally gay and light-hearted, when not actually oppressed by present calamity, she would have been ready to make friends easily with congenial spirits. Such a companion she found, at this stage of her journey south, in the Duke of Devonshire's brother, Lord Charles Cavendish, shortly afterwards slain in the service of the King. Of any further connection there is no faintest proof. Yet the delay at Newark was sufficient to give rise to the calumny that it had been made in order that she might "enjoy the company of Lord Charles Cavendish, of whom her enemies reported that she was fonder than it was right for a virtuous woman to have shown herself." And this although the same authority goes on to relate that, being pressed by the ladies of Newark to make a longer stay, she replied "that she was under the command of the King, and was going to march elsewhere by his orders; and that though she lamented not being able to comply with their request she rejoiced in being able to set them an example of obedience to their husbands." At Burton-on-Trent, the writer adds, "she parted with her favourite, Cavendish, very heavily, and proceeded to meet the King, while he returned to his command near Newark." For favourite read friend, and few would blame the Queen either for her liking or for the presage of evil by which her spirits may have been clouded at parting. Yet it is well to recall the old groundless slander, and to bear it in mind in reference to others less easily discredited.

The true reason for the delay at Newark is given in a letter written by Henrietta from that place to Charles, in answer to one brought by Lord Savile. The messenger had found her awaiting the capitulation of Hull and Lincoln before starting southwards—a cause, as she observes, for which the King will pardon her a couple of days' delay. The Hothams, father and son, had returned to their allegiance, and the two cities were to be delivered up to the royal army. She was now almost ready to start on her journey, the troops near Newark remaining under the command of Charles Cavendish, whom she was leaving behind at the desire of the gentlemen of those parts, and much against his own will. Harry Jermyn, as colonel of the Queen's guards, commanded the forces marching with her, Sir Alexander Lesley the infantry under Jermyn, Gerard the cavalry, and Robin Legge the artillery, "enfin Sa Majesté généralissime est extresmement diligente," adds the Queen, enjoying to the full her new character of Commander-in-Chief.

Her hopes as to the surrender of Hull and Lincoln were not to be fulfilled. On the whole, however, she had reason to be satisfied. Except the first-named city, Yorkshire was almost entirely won for the King by the time that she quitted it to take her way to join him. From Walsall she reported the capture of Burton-on-Trent, and the encouragement thereby afforded to the Royalist troops; and by July 11th she had met Prince Rupert at Stratford-on-Avon, lodging, according to popular tradition, in Shakespeare's own house. Two days later the long-expected meeting with her husband had taken place. Apprised of her approach, the King, with his little sons, Charles and James, and accompanied by some troops of horse, rode forth from Oxford. Near the battlefield of Edgehill the two met, and the long separation was over. When next they parted it was to be for ever.

CHAPTER XIV

1643—1644

Meeting of King and Queen—Jermyn—At Oxford—Dissensions in the Royalist party—Overtures from the Earls of Holland and Bedford—Holland's double treason—Henrietta's letters to Newcastle—Death of Falkland—French professions—D'Harcourt's embassy—Solemn League and Covenant—Henrietta parts from the King—At Exeter—Birth of Henriette-Anne—Henrietta's letters to Charles—Her flight—Arrives in France.

THAT 13th of July must have been a red-letter day to both King and Queen. "Their meeting, after so long absence and on so sad an occasion," says an old chronicler, "was very joyful to each other." Yet an historian of the type of Warburton clouds it with a shadow of dissension. As at the time, so in later days, there have been those eager to misrepresent every action, however blameless, of this Queen of misfortune; and he asserts that, applying at once for promotion for her favourite, she refused Charles a private interview until he had pledged himself to make Harry Jermyn a peer. Gardiner gives a truer colour to the incident when he interprets the condition made by Henrietta as a jest, quite in character with her gay spirits and the over-flowing happiness of the moment. Reckless as ever of the world's opinion, she had conferred the command of the troops escorting her to Charles upon the man whose name had been linked by hostile critics with her own. In a letter later on to Digby she takes credit to herself for being a loyal friend ; Jermyn, whatever his faults, had done good service to her cause and to the King's, nor would it have occurred to her to refuse him his reward in order that calumny and misrepresentation might be averted. That Charles was of her opinion is proved by the fact that he at once acceded to her request and conferred a peerage upon her servant.

On the following day Oxford was re-entered in the midst of wild rejoicing, due both to the Queen's arrival and the reinforcements she brought with her and to the good news of Newcastle's successes, reaching the town almost at the same time. Bells were set ringing, the air was filled with acclamations as King and Queen rode together through the streets, and Henrietta's coming was rather, says the chronicle, "a triumph than a war." It must have been one of the last of her sunny hours.

For nine months—till April, 1644—the Queen remained at the King's headquarters, only parted from him when the necessities of the struggle called him elsewhere. It is impossible to follow in any detail the course of the civil war, or to trace the gradual decline of the sanguine hopes entertained at Oxford at the time of the reunion. It was not till nearly a year afterwards that the monarchy received its death-blow at Marston Moor. During the interval the fight was carried on with varying success, victory remaining now with the one, now with the other side, pitted ever more fiercely against one another as each had more to avenge. It is possible—perhaps probable—that, had Henrietta's influence been other than it was, English history might have lacked one of its most tragic chapters. It is, at any rate, with her share in preparing for the catastrophe that we are concerned.

Discord was rife amongst the King's partisans, as was to be expected when the varying views and desires of those remaining true to the Royalist cause is taken into account. A letter written by Lord Savile to Lady Temple in the spring of this year gives a fair impression of the attitude of the more moderate party, who had thrown in their lot with the Royalists. "You desire," he says, "to know what my aims and intentions are. . . . I would not have the King trample on the Parliament, nor the Parliament lessen him so much as to make a way for the people to rule us all. I hate Papists so much that I would not have the King necessitated to use them for his defence, nor owe them any obligation. I love religion so well that I would not have it put to the hazard of a battle. I love liberty so much that I would not trust it in the hands of a conqueror." On the other hand, there was the party represented by the Queen, by Jermyn, and by Digby—to be made Secretary of State in the place of Falkland, when that pure-hearted idealist had sought and found on the field of battle a way of escape from the intolerable spectacle presented by an England hopelessly involved in civil war. In the eyes of these rash and hot-headed men and of their mistress, the sole peace to be aimed at would have included the unconditional surrender of those who had given up all that makes life desirable for the sake either of constitutional liberty or—in the case of the more fanatical section—for what they looked upon as the vindication of true religion. It can easily be imagined how, under such circumstances, councils were divided, and the King torn between the policy of conciliation advocated by wiser heads and the more violent courses pressed upon him by the Queen and her advisers.

In the camp it was little better. It is fair to point out that the fatal mistake made by the King, in exempting Rupert, as his nephew, from the necessity of receiving orders save from himself, was in direct opposition to the warning sent by Henrietta from Holland. Her recommendation that some level-headed commander should be placed over the prince, "jeune et estourdy," had been disregarded, with the result of a perilous absence of unity in the conduct of the war. The two younger Palatine brothers were gallant soldiers, but neither generals nor politicians, and had, moreover, imparted to their troops the unhappy tradition of plunder acquired in foreign warfare.

In August, when the surrender of Bristol, with other successes, seemed to promise favourably for the royal arms, a notable defection took place from the supporters of the Parliament, the three Earls of Northumberland, Bedford, and Holland taking the step of withdrawing from Westminster. The two last repaired to Oxford to make their submission to the King, whilst Northumberland retired to his Sussex home to watch the event and to shape his course accordingly. The arrival of the deserters caused some embarrassment to the King. Bedford had been general of the Parliamentary Horse. Holland, under far greater obligations to the court, had thrown in his lot, scarcely less openly, with the King's enemies. The manner of the reception to be accorded to them was hotly debated, the majority of the King's advisers being vehemently opposed to any such show of favour as should appear to condone their past offences. Wiser counsellors, on the other hand, were of opinion that the repentant rebels should be treated in a manner as to encourage others to follow in their steps; and in this view they had on this occasion the support of Jermyn, who had gone so far as to hold out hopes, though it would seem without authority, that Holland might be restored to his former office as groom of the stole. The Queen herself had been in communication with the Earl since her return to England; but maintained for the present, in the absence of the King with the army, a neutral attitude, and abstained from any display of favour.

The Earls, on their arrival at Wallingford, had been detained there until the governor should learn the King's pleasure; and the matter was considered of sufficient importance to bring Charles to Oxford for a night, in order that he might settle in person the question of their treatment. Other causes may likewise have contributed to render his presence desirable. In deciding the conduct of the war, Henrietta conceived that Rupert's counsels had been accorded greater weight than her own; and, entertaining a suspicion that a conspiracy was on foot with the object of lessening her influence with Charles, she had written to him in such a strain that, having, says Clarendon, "her Majesty in such perfect adoration," he had started forthwith for Oxford that he might set her mind at rest. He cannot have found the task difficult; and during his short visit his principal concern was with the more urgent question of the policy to be pursued towards Holland and Bedford. His decision was, in the end, a characteristic one. The prodigals were to be received at court, but every man was to be left at liberty to use his own judgment in determining his conduct towards them—a liberty likely to be fruitful in increasing the difficulties of a difficult situation.

When, under these circumstances, Holland presented himself at Oxford, he was greatly disappointed at the coolness of his welcome. Although surprised at the delay that had occurred, he appears to have reckoned with singular confidence upon an immediate restoration —without so much as the preliminary formality of an apology—to his former favour at court. Henrietta, on the contrary, displayed none of the cordiality he had anticipated ; and the courtesy of Charles' reception, when the two Earls followed him to the camp, was totally lacking in that friendliness which might have attached them permanently to his cause.

Nor were matters placed on a more satisfactory footing after the return of the King to Oxford. Holland, having given an earnest of loyalty by fighting his recent associates, considered that he had thereby earned a right to complete rehabilitation, and appears to have conceived the idea of forcing the King's hand by assuming the attitude of an old and trusted servant. Constantly visiting the Queen at Merton, where she had her lodging, at an hour when the King was to be found there, he was wont, with the curious court looking on, to whisper into Charles' ear or to Henrietta what the King characterised, with irritation, as mere trivialities ; or, drawing his master apart as if to communicate to him some secret of importance, would prove to have nothing to tell which might not have been spoken in the hearing of all present. To the Queen his conversation was of no greater interest, save that to her he was accustomed to enlarge upon the wisdom and power of Parliament—a topic the King may well have considered ill chosen.

Conscious of the necessity of steering a middle course, and avoiding alike the danger of arousing the jealousy of his loyal servants or of alienating the penitents by overmuch severity, Charles was in a position of no little embarrassment. For once he appears to have acted with decision. Henrietta, it was true, had been won over to a desire that her former friend should be admitted to his old footing at court. "Whether from her inclination, or promise, or dislike of most other people who were not so good courtiers (as sure none was equal to him in that function and mystery), [the Queen]," says Clarendon, "did in truth heartily desire that he might receive satisfaction in all things." But, in spite of her wishes, the King was resolute. Unless Holland should offer a sufficient apology for the course he had pursued, Charles was not disposed to treat him with more than civility. Writing to his wife, probably in reference to this affair, Sunderland observed that he had never seen the King use any one with more neglect than "100," and that he was said to be not much better used by the Queen. His own opinion of the trimmer is not recorded.

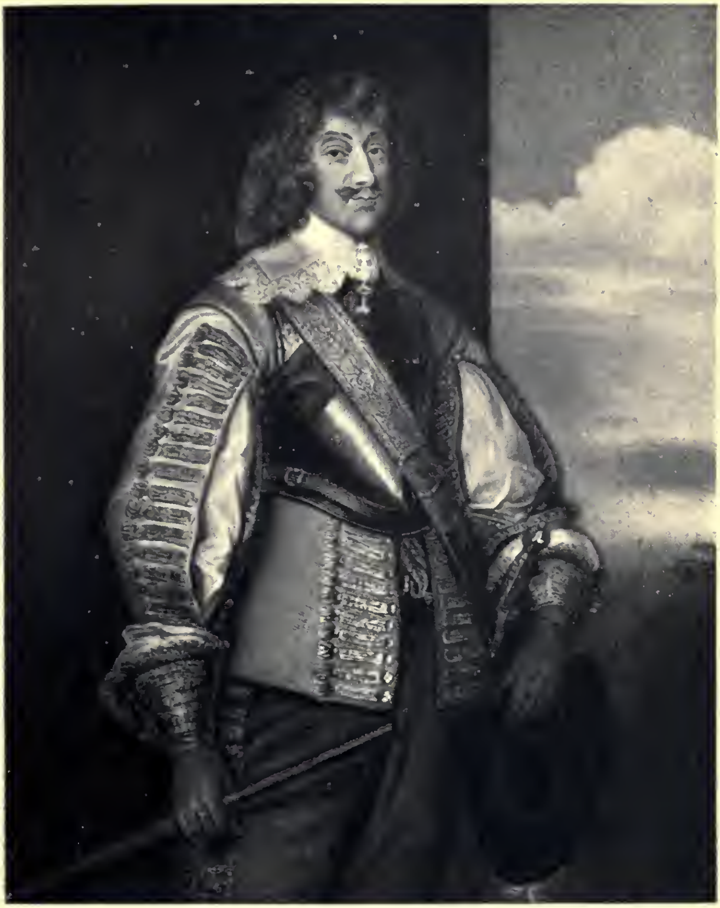
Sunderland himself was still kept by "grinning honour" at his post, playing out the melancholy part undertaken with so little enthusiasm. Quartered a month earlier in a "little private cottage" before the beleaguered town of Gloucester, a letter to his wife gives a description of an interlude in the fight, of a supper when Falkland and Chillingworth had been his guests, spending their leisure, after the fashion of the day, in polemical discussion, and Falkland had defeated the divine in a dispute concerning Socinianism. Now, from Oxford, four days before his death, he was sending his blessing to the little daughter he was never to see again—"and tell her I would have writ to her but that, upon mature deliberation, I found it to be uncivil to return an answer to a lady in another character than her own, which I am not yet learned enough to do." Though without a command in the army, he fought not a week later, at Newbury as a volunteer, and, with Falkland and Carnarvon, was amongst the slain. The victory, if such it were—success was claimed by either side—was dearly purchased.

To return to Holland, the evident poverty of the court, when he had had time to take stock of it, and the inability he must have recognised on the part of the King to make it pecuniarily worth his while to be faithful, may, as Clarendon surmises, have contributed to determine his future course. When Charles took the definite step of bestowing his former post upon the Marquis of Hertford, the disappointment gave its *coup-de-grâce* to the Earl's new-born loyalty; and, creeping away by night to the enemy's quarters, he once more tendered his services to Parliament, rushing into print shortly afterwards in order to demonstrate that his visit to Oxford had been made in the interests of peace, but that, finding opinion there too adverse to a settlement, he had abandoned his endeavour and quitted the court. The most serious result of his double treason was that Northumberland thought better of his intention of changing sides, and that others were deterred from attempting a reconciliation with the King.

Meantime, judging from the tone of her letters to Newcastle, Henrietta contrived to face the situation gaily.

"My cousin," she wrote from Oxford towards the end of August and before men's spirits had been clouded by the mournful battlefield of Newbury, "for a person who is awaiting a siege, it is not ill—*allez*—to be able to write. But it is necessary that I should flatter you at the present moment, so that, should the King not come to succour us, you may do so. Nevertheless, I hope we shall not cause you to leave Beverley, whe it is said here that you are. I must send you news of yourself, for you send none. It is so long since we have heard Yorkshire spoken of that were it not that we repeat what we know nothing at all could be said about it. I must scold you a little for not sending oftener, and at the same time assure you that I have not ceased to be your faithful and constant friend."

It is probable that at this time Henrietta felt that in the hope of practical intervention from France lay a better chance of such a pacification as she desired than in the negotiations constantly carried on between Charles and the Parliament or the unaided strength of the Royalist arms. The death of Louis XIII. had raised anticipations of French succour, and Henrietta had been reckoning on the good results to be obtained through the influence of his widow. The goodwill of Anne of Austria had been made clear, and her professions of amity would have been counted by Henrietta for more than they were worth. She had yet to learn that, if Richelieu was dead, his spirit, in a measure, survived in Mazarin; and that, whether the rumour was true or not by which the relations between Queen and Cardinal were reported to be of a closer character than those of Regent and minister, it was to be he who would determine the future policy of France. For the present, the intimation said by Clarendon to have reached Henrietta from France, to the effect that the King himself should direct what way he would be served, may well have seemed to promise effectual assistance. The recall of Senneterre, an avowed partisan of the Parliamentary party, would likewise have appeared an earnest of a change of policy. By Henrietta's own desire he was replaced as ambassador by the Comte d'Harcourt;



After the picture by Van Dyck.

HENRY RICH, EARL OF HOLLAND.

[*To face p.* 294.

but the hopes to which the mission of the new envoy gave rise were destined to end, like much else, in disappointment. Its very beginning was inauspicious. When Walter Montagu, the Catholic refugee, had been permitted, though in disguise, to accompany d'Harcourt across the Channel, Parliament was on the alert, and before he had been twenty-four hours on English soil he had been arrested, and placed, in spite of the ambassador's remonstrances, in the Tower. The embassy may have been intended as a mere empty display of goodwill; it certainly accomplished nothing; whilst, on the other hand, the evidence afforded by intercepted letters that the King was engaged in negotiations with foreign powers, and was seeking assistance from abroad, was calculated to embitter public feeling, already excited by the detection of a variety of intrigues carried on by the court with the city of London, and with officers in the Parliamentary army.

It was, however, his dealings with Ireland which perhaps proved most fatal to Charles' chances of success. The discovery that troops from that country were to be brought to England and to Scotland, and that it was reckoned upon by the King as a force to be employed against his British subjects, was not only a dangerous weapon placed in the hands of the irreconcilable amongst his adversaries, but was well calculated to alienate those who might otherwise have listened to counsels of peace. The assistance once hoped for from Scotland became, in particular, a thing impossible. In August the Solemn League and Covenant was entered into by the House of Commons at Westminster and by the Assembly in Edinburgh, and Scotland had practically declared itself for the Parliament. In January the Scotch forces had crossed the Tweed, to lend their assistance to Charles' northern opponents ; and Newcastle, writing to claim reinforcements on the ground that, could the Scots be beaten, the game was won, indicates the supreme importance he attached to their co-operation with the enemy.

During the spring of 1644 domestic anxieties had been added to the public cares pressing heavily upon the King. Henrietta was expecting the birth of another child in June, and was suffering besides from acute rheumatism—partly, perhaps, the result of the exposure she had undergone whilst with the northern army, partly due to the Oxford climate. She was, altogether, in a condition of restless discontent, anxious to try the waters of Bath as a cure for her malady, and a prey to nervous fears. Yet, writing to Newcastle in March, she preserved, notwithstanding her personal sufferings and the anxious outlook of affairs, her tone of bright, *débonnaire* friendliness.

"*Mon cousin*," she writes, "I have received your letter by Parsons with the history of all that has taken place at Newcastle, and am very glad that you have not yet eaten rats. Provided that the Scots eat no Yorkshire oat-cakes, all will go well. I hope you will take order accordingly." News follows of the course of the war ; of the doings of the Oxford Parliament he will already have been told, and a scoffing injunction is added "to take heed of our brethren of Scotland, for those alone can do us hurt." Since, however, it is Newcastle who is to deal with them, she has no fears.

Not much more than a fortnight after the Queen's letter was written it was decided that Oxford, in its present position and with a large body of Parliamentary troops quartered at Marlborough, was no fit resting place for her. Breaking off in the midst of a panegyric addressed to "the Queen at Oxford," the poet Davenant exclaims:

> But what, sweet excellence, what dost thou here?

The same question, though in a different spirit, was probably asked by others. The presence of the Queen must have been an anxiety and an embarrassment to the King's adherents. Henrietta herself was eager to relieve them of it. Besides reasons of health, it has been suggested that a desire to escape from the venomous tongues of her enemies may have been one of the motives deciding her to seek a refuge elsewhere; and the fact that four lines alone are accorded in her own narrative to the period passed at Oxford is not without significance. Whatever else it had been, it had been a time of failure.

When a place of resort was to be selected, some difficulty was experienced in arriving at a decision. Bristol would offer facilities for crossing to France, should such a step become necessary. From Chester it would be easy to pass over into Ireland. The distraction of the King's mind is indicated by the contradictory orders he issued. On April 3rd, regardless of the ruinous consequences to the Royalist cause, Rupert was directed to break off his preparations for a northern campaign in order to serve as the Queen's escort to Chester—a hazardous task. The summons was cancelled on the following day, and Bath was finally decided upon as Henrietta's destination. Charles was himself once more to take the field, and had she remained at Oxford it was probable that it would be alone. She was impatient to be gone. On April 16th one of the Porters wrote that, "much against her will and content," the journey had been deferred; but on the following day she did in fact leave Oxford, the King accompanying her as far on her way as Abingdon. There he took leave for ever of the wife he loved so well.

A letter has been preserved, in an Italian translation, purporting to have been written by Henrietta to her eldest son after his father's execution. This document is markedly unlike others of undoubted authenticity, and even making allowance for embellishments added by the translator, it is difficult to accept the hypothesis offered by a critic to the effect that, whilst the matter was furnished by the Queen, the language was that of a secretary. In this composition Henrietta is made to blame herself for having quitted the King, and thus missed the opportunity of accompanying him to prison and to death. "But you know," she adds, "what resistance I made to leaving him, and in my last adieus, embracing his royal knees and supplicating your father and my lord not to permit this cruel separation, he raised me to his bosom, and said, 'Madame, extreme remedies are requisite for extreme evils, and of two evils we must choose the least. Were you to remain with me. . . . who would liberate me from the hands and the snares of these ungrateful wretches, and who can procure me aid better than you? For mercy's sake, distress me no more by replying.' And I found myself ten leagues distant from him before I became conscious that I had left him, so much did grief overcome my natural senses."

Whether this account of the parting scene is due to the unaided imagination of a well-meaning scribe, or whether Henrietta had supplied some of the details, the inference to be drawn from it that her retreat to France was already a thing settled upon and determined is a manifest misrepresentation. At the moment it was a question merely of selecting a place of resort in England offering more security than Oxford. That the responsibility for the parting lay with the King would appear to be inconsistent with what is known of his wishes. It was, on the contrary, said that he had "heartily wished that she could be diverted from her purpose." That, taking into consideration her nervous terrors and her condition of mind and body, he had yielded to her wishes, and consented to the separation, was proof of his loyal and unselfish love. Henceforth he was to meet his troubles alone.

Another event had occurred during the spring which, though dwarfed by the parting from the Queen, must have struck a man, in whom ties of blood were so strong, hard. This was the arrival of his eldest nephew, the Prince Palatine, in London, where he was entertained by the Parliamentary authorities at Whitehall, and assured of the continuance of the pension he must have known that the King would be no longer in a position to pay. He had gone over to the enemy. It was characteristic of Charles' natural dignity that he merely observed that "he was sorry on his nephew's account that he thought fit to declare such a compliance."

Henrietta was not long in discovering that Bath was in no condition to invite a prolonged visit. War and disease had preceded her to the town, and she only remained there long enough to rest before continuing her journey, by way of Bristol, to Exeter. At this last town she resolved to await her confinement, and thither, to attend her, the King sent his physician.

"Mayerne, for the love of me, go to my wife, C. R.," was the language in which Charles' brief appeal was couched. Henrietta had also written to beg that Sir Theodore would come. Her malady, she said, would bring him sooner than mere words. Remembering his constant care, she knew that if it were possible to obey her summons he would do so. Her confidence was not misplaced. It is said that the physician cherished no particular affection for his patient. That he was not a courtier is shown by an anecdote which, related by the Queen to Madame de Motteville, illustrates his dry and sardonic humour. Overcome by her misfortunes, she told him one day that she felt her reason failing, and feared to go mad. "There is no occasion to fear it, Madame," replied the uncourtly doctor; "you are mad already." But his place was at present at her side, and he obeyed the command of his fallen master and went to tend his wife. Assistance had likewise been sent from France. Anne of Austria, if unable to furnish more valuable aid, had despatched the royal nurse, Madame Peronne, with 20,000 pistoles as a present to her sister-in-law. The nurse will have been welcome. For the rest, Henrietta—always lavishly generous—keeping only the little sum she had brought to meet her actual necessities, despatched the whole of the gift to Charles.

It was scarcely strange that trouble, separation, and sickness should have broken down the Queen's gay and courageous spirits. Parted from husband and children, the future dark and uncertain before her, with danger menacing herself and all she loved, despondency got the better of her. Writing to Charles in a mood when, if death seemed near, life was scarcely desirable enough to cause it to be feared, she gave expression to her dejection. Her extreme weakness, she told him, caused her to believe it was time to think of another world than this. God's will be done, who had already so befriended her and hers that certainly, however it might please Him to dispose of her now, it would be for her good and for the King's. There were many things to say, but she dared not trust them to the chances of the road; only she prayed him, should she die, to believe what Jermyn and Father Philip would tell him from her. It had been a consolation to say this much. Let him not be unhappy. There was reason both for hope and fear, and to prepare for the worst is to be unastonished if it comes, and to make good fortune the more welcome. "Adieu, mon cher cœur."

Henrietta's forebodings were not realised. On June 16th—a fortnight before the disastrous battle of Marston Moor—her youngest child, the Princess Henriette, was born. Shortly before this event Essex had approached her place of refuge, and was now menacing Exeter with a siege. It was manifestly desirable that, so soon as it should be possible, the Queen should leave the town. The bodily sufferings which had had their beginning at Oxford had taken an aggravated form, and she sent to demand a safe conduct from the Parliamentary general, that, weak as she was, she might return to Bath, there to carry out her original intention of trying the effect of the waters upon her malady.

Essex's answer was to make proffer of his own escort, not to Bath, but to London, where physicians were to be found, and her presence was moreover required that she might answer for the part she had taken in the war.

Henrietta, under these circumstances, decided to make her way to the sea-coast, and to take ship for France. Reasons not wholly selfish contributed to her decision. Should she remain at Exeter, she told Charles, writing from her bed twelve days after her child's birth, she knew well that he would hazard everything rather than not come to her aid; and sooner than that he should thus imperil his affairs, she preferred to endanger what, save for the value he placed upon it, was of small account—namely, her life. It is easy to see, reading her letter, that suffering, bodily and mental, had for the time robbed her of self-control. Otherwise it would be hard to forgive her for wringing the King's heart at a time when his anxieties and cares must have come near to being unbearable, by the description of all she had undergone and was undergoing, until, "were it not that death must not be wished for, it would be but too greatly desired by the most unhappy creature in the world."

Of the child afterwards to become so dear to her there is little mention. The French envoy, M. de Sabran, had repaired to Exeter, to visit mother and child, and had sent home word that the English Queen, though in a condition of extreme suffering, had given birth to a beautiful little princess. No time had been lost in confiding the new-born baby to the care of Lady Dalkeith, a Villiers by birth and niece to the late Duke of Buckingham. In this lady's charge the child was left when, less than a fortnight after her confinement, Henrietta started on the last of her adventurous journeys to make her way to the coast.

Not more than four days after the letter was written in which she announced her intention to the King, the battle of Marston Moor had decided the issue of the struggle in the north. On July 7th it was decided that Essex's position in the west was so little secure that Charles would do well to follow him thither. It is said that the King's determination was taken rather because Henrietta was at Exeter than because the plan promised success. Affection must at least have seconded reasons of military force. But if one of his objects had been reunion with his wife, his anticipations were doomed to disappointment. Even before his resolve was taken, Henrietta had quitted Exeter, and on July 9th she was writing from Truro to bid him farewell.

Her hazardous journey had been successfully accomplished. It was said, perhaps without foundation, that Essex had put a price upon her head. Henrietta believed it, and her precautions were taken accordingly. Accompanied by her physician, Sir John Wintour, her confessor, and one lady-in-waiting, she stole out of Exeter, narrowly escaping capture three miles from the town; when, hidden in a hut, she heard the Parliamentary troops march by, talking as they went of the expected capture of the Queen, and their anticipations of carrying her head to London. Before Plymouth, her original destination, was reached, she was joined by the rest of her household, including Jermyn and Hudson the dwarf, and proceeded to Falmouth; from whence, after some days spent in Pendennis Castle, she set sail for France.

She was not to be allowed to escape without a last effort on the part of her enemies to prevent it. She had had, it was afterwards boasted, "no other courtesy from England but cannon-balls to convey her to France"; and the vessel with her on board was struck by a shell from the Parliamentary fleet in pursuit. Believing that capture was imminent, the Queen, her spirits rising in the face of danger, gave directions to the pilot to make what speed he could, ordering that rather than allow the ship to fall into the hands of the enemy it should be blown up. Amidst the shrieks of her women she remained silent and calm, conscious only of the desire to escape the shame of becoming a prisoner in the hands of the King's enemies. The sole consideration which could have made her repent of the directions she had given, so she afterwards affirmed, was the reflection that in courting death she was guilty of an unchristian action. Thus she continued wavering between the choice of glory terrestrial and glory celestial, until the question was happily decided by the demonstration that the extreme measures she had contemplated would not be required to extricate her from the difficulties of the situation.

This was the account of the adventure she gave to Madame de Motteville. If one discerns in it a touch of self-glorification, the narrative is likely to have been substantially true. Cowardice was not amongst Henrietta's failings, and upon the emergency she described her father's spirit may have flashed out.

The account of the voyage furnished by the Capuchin, Père Cyprian de Gamache, supplies an element of comedy to what was a serious matter. To the perils due to the Parliamentary cannon and to the step proposed by Henrietta, was added the effect upon the Queen's attendants of "the unwholesome air of the sea." To such a condition of weakness was her retinue reduced that not one of them was capable of rendering assistance to the other prostrate victims of the prevailing malady, save one monk, who, being a Knight of Malta, had been so inured to the water that he was exempted from any ill effects, and charitably gave himself up to the assistance of all the sick on board.

Under these circumstances there must have been more than one reason for relief when the coast of France was sighted. It was not a time when a convenient spot for landing could be selected with overmuch deliberation; and Henrietta, placing herself in a boat, gained the shore, and, making her way, not without difficulty, across the rocks, succeeded in reaching a village hard by. Here she was lodged by peasants in a thatched cottage until certain gentlemen of the neighbourhood, hearing of her arrival, "more like a miserable heroine of romance than a true queen," brought carriages to convey her elsewhere.

Thus Henrietta Maria returned to the land of her birth, quitted by her nineteen years earlier as a bride of fifteen. Not for sixteen years did she revisit England.

END OF VOL. I

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