

cost of war as the principal inducement to remain at peace. But the wise economy which was opposed to the martial tendencies of the people that he was called to govern, was not an economy for the public good. He wasted his revenues upon silly baubles for personal ornaments, and in lavish grants to unworthy favourites. He almost wholly neglected the business of the state; for he was hunting, bolstered up on an ambling palfrey; or he was writing pedantic treatises which nobody read; or he was going in progress, to be flattered and feasted; or he was moving by easy journeys from his palace of Richmond to his palace of Windsor, or in triumphal procession in his state-barge from Greenwich to Whitehall. There were some refinements in his court, for the plays that were acted before him were often those of Shakspeare; and at a later period Jonson wrote "Masques at Court," and Inigo Jones supplied the decorations. In a short time the palace became a scene of profligacy, in which even the mask of decency was not attempted to be put on. Yet this was the king who was to try his hand at making England an absolute monarchy by divine right. Lord Thomas Howard, who had been a powerful instrument in forwarding the accession of James, wrote to Harrington, "Your queen did talk of her subjects' love and good affection, and in good truth she aimed well. Our king talketh of his subjects' fear and subjection, and herein I think he doth well too,—as long as it holdeth good."

CHAPTER XIV.

The Gunpowder Plot.—Lord Mounteagle receives a letter.—Salisbury is made acquainted with the letter.—Its interpretation.—Search under the Parliament House.—Seizure of Fawkes.—The other Conspirators.—The preparations during eighteen previous months.—Their proceedings after the discovery.—They resist the sheriff.—Some killed, others taken prisoners.—Feelings of the Roman Catholics.—Ben Jonson.—Trial of Fawkes and others.—Garnet the Jesuit.—His conviction.—His doctrine of Equivocation.

IN the last week of October, 1605, the king was contemplating "his return from his hunting exercise at Royston, upon occasion of the drawing near of the parliament time, which had been twice prorogued already."* Whilst James was at his favourite sports, hunting according to a more discreet fashion than that of the old Norman kings, his "little beagle," for so he called Robert Cecil, now earl of Salisbury, was diligently carrying forward the business of the State. Salisbury was at his post at Whitehall on the night of the 26th of October, when his wonted meditations upon the difficulty of providing money for his extravagant master and his rapacious followers, were disturbed by the demand for an audience of a Catholic peer, lord Mounteagle. The position of this nobleman, who had been called to the House of Peers in the parliament of 1604, was a very equivocal one. He was the son of a Protestant peer, lord Morley; but, when very young, married a daughter of sir Thomas Tresham, who was a pervert to Rome under the guidance of missionary priests, and, during the reign of Elizabeth, a most uncompromising recusant. Lord Morley's son then became involved with several leading Roman Catholics in the conspiracy of Essex, and in their invitations to the king of Spain to invade England and to depose the queen. Upon the accession of James, when the king was either balancing the advantages of being Catholic or Protestant, or holding out to the Papists professions of toleration which he had no intention of accomplishing, Mounteagle was a satisfied recipient of court favours, whilst the severities against re-

* "A discourse of the Manner of the Discovery of the late intended Treason," &c. Published officially. Reprinted in "Harleian Miscellany."

cusants had been renewed, and the Roman Catholics in general were becoming hopeless of power, or even of indulgence. A strange incident had occurred on that night of the 26th of October, when Mouteagle broke in upon the quiet of the secretary of state. The catholic peer had a house at Hoxton, from which he had been absent a month, when he suddenly arrived that evening to supper. Very opportune was the return, as we learn from the official "Discourse:" "Being in his own lodging ready to go to supper, at seven of the clock at night, one of his footmen, whom he had sent of an errand over the street, was met by a man of a reasonable tall personage, who delivered him a letter, charging him to put it in my lord his master's hands; which my lord no sooner received, but that, having broken it up, and perceiving the same to be of an unknown and somewhat unlegible hand, and without either date or superscription, did call one of his men unto him, for helping him to read it." It appears from another account, that the letter was read aloud, of course in the presence of the lord's attendants. It was as follows:—

"My lord out of the love i beare to some of your frendz i have a caer of your preservacion therefor i would advyse youe as youe tender your lyf to devyse some excuse to shift of your attendance at this parlement for god and man hathe concurred to punishe the wickednes of this tyme and thinke not slightlye of this advertisment but retyere your selfe into your contry where youe maye expect the event in safti for thowghe there be no apparance of anni stir yet i saye they shall receyve a terrible blowe this parlement and yet they shall not seie who hurts them this councel is not to be contemned because it maye do youe good and can do youe no harme for the dangere is passed as soon as youe have burnt the letter and i hope god will give youe the grace to mak good use of it to whose holy proteccion i comend youe." The letter is addressed: To the right honourable the lord Mowteagle.

There have been many conjectures as to the writer of this extraordinary letter. One probable guess is that Francis Tresham, the brother-in-law of Mouteagle, gave him this warning to save his own life, though in such obscure terms as should not lead to discovery of the conspiracy in which Tresham and others of Mouteagle's friends were engaged. Greenway, the Jesuit, whose relation of the plot, although written to exculpate himself and others, contains many curious details, gives in his manuscript what seems "to have been the opinion of the conspirators themselves. They attributed it

to Tresham, and suspected a secret understanding between him and lord Mouteagle, or at least the gentleman who was employed to read the letter at table. They were convinced that Tresham had no sooner given his consent than he repented of it, and sought to break up the plot without betraying his associates.* The circumstances indicate that there was a got-up scene enacted in the house of lord Mouteagle at Hoxton. The unexpected return of the lord of the house; the page met in the street by a man of tall person; the reading aloud of the letter, which the page had received as one of great importance to be delivered to his master's own hand;—these are all suspicious incidents. Whether the visit of Mouteagle to Salisbury, "notwithstanding the lateness and darkness of the night in that season of the year,"† was a part of the same well arranged mystery, may be reasonably doubted. Mr. Jardine says, "Many considerations tend to confirm the truth of Father Greenway's suggestion, that the whole story of the letter was merely a device of the government to cover Tresham's treachery, or, for some other state reason, to conceal the true source from which their information had been derived."‡ According to Dr. Lingard's account of Greenway's relation, he makes no such suggestion as that "the letter was merely a device of the government." It could have been no object of the government that the conspirators should escape. Thomas Winter, one of those actively concerned in the plot, had been a confidential attendant upon Mouteagle; and Thomas Ward, the man who read the letter aloud at Mouteagle's supper, went the next morning to Winter and urged him to fly. We can understand how Mouteagle might have sought to cover his previous knowledge of the plot by having a letter openly delivered which would convey to him the intimation of some dangerous design; and we can also understand how the very unusual course of causing a letter to be read aloud would have been adopted, that his old friends should have a hint to look after their own safety. But it appears unlikely that Salisbury should have been concerned in a device so calculated to defeat the discovery of some impending danger. It would be unsafe to affirm that the letter sent to Mouteagle gave the first intimation to the govern-

* Dr. Lingard's "History," vol. ix. p. 69, 8vo ed. Dr. Lingard brought Greenway's MS. from Rome, and first made it known in his "History."

† "Discourse," &c.

‡ "Narrative of the Gunpowder Plot," 1857. This admirable narrative is an expanded and corrected re-publication of Mr. Jardine's Introduction to "Criminal Trials," vol. ii.

ment of some imminent peril. A man of the name of Thomas Coe appears to have made a communication to Salisbury which conveyed "the primary intelligence of these late dangerous treasons." He claims this merit in a letter to Salisbury of the 20th December, in which he says, "My good lord, my writing so obscurely, and entitling my narration by the name of a dream or vision, was occasioned by the reason aforesaid"—[a doubt whether his letters might be opened]. "Not that it was a dream or idle fantasy, but such an approved truth as was wrested from a notorious Papist, unto whom I did so far insinuate by private conference that he confessed unto me the whole circumference of this treason, as it is since fallen out."* The administrative ability of Salisbury is shown by the wariness with which he conducted his operations, from the moment that Mouteagle came to him from Hoxton on that dark October night. Whether his suspicion was first raised, or whether he had a previous knowledge, his course was unaltered. He made no fuss; he quietly communicated the letter to others of the Council; he suffered James to go on with his hunting exercise; and when the king came to London, the Secretary, having had the ominous letter six days in his possession, presented it to the king, no other person being present. The official "discourse" claims for the king the right interpretation of the riddle, "For the danger is passed as soon as you have burnt the letter." If the danger was past so soon as the letter was burnt, argued Salisbury, what was the use of the warning. But the king read the mysterious sentence, thus:—the danger is to be sudden and quick—the terrible hurts, of which the authors should be unseen, "should be as quickly performed and at an end, as that paper should be a blazing up in the fire." Thence, held the king, according to the "Discourse," it should be "by a blowing up of powder." It was "a divine illumination of the royal mind," said Coke on the trial of the conspirators. Salisbury, according to his own statement, had suggested the same interpretation to several of the Council, before the king knew anything of the matter. But Salisbury was too politic not to let the vanity of his master expatiate to his parliament upon his claim to the discovery. It was set forth in the "Discourse" how all inquiry had been postponed by the Council, "for the expectation and experience they had of his majesty's fortunate judgment, in clearing and solving obscure riddles and doubtful mysteries." The Secretary completely threw the conspirators off their guard, even

* Lodge, "Illustrations," vol. iii. p. 301.

when they knew that the letter to Mouteagle was in the hands of the vigilant minister. They had conferred upon their danger; but the absence of every indication of alarm or suspicion on the part of the government made them despise the advice which Winter had received from his friend in Mouteagle's household. On Monday the 4th of November, the Lord Chamberlain, whose duty it was to make arrangements for the meeting of parliament, went to the House of Lords; and afterwards entered the vaults under the parliament-chamber. Lord Mouteagle was of the party. They observed a large store of coals and wood in a cellar; and standing carelessly there they saw "a very tall and desperate fellow." The Lord Chamberlain asked who the fuel belonged to; and the man answered that they belonged to his master, Mr. Percy, who had rented the cellar for a year and a half. There were no more questions. But there was a general examination, by the direction of a Westminster magistrate, of neighbouring houses and cellars, under a pretence of looking for some missing property belonging to the royal wardrobe. The "tall and desperate fellow," was not yet frightened from his purpose. A little before midnight on the eve of the 5th of November, the same magistrate, with a strong body of attendants, repaired to the cellar under the parliament house. A man just stepping out of the door was seized and searched. Slow matches and touchwood were found upon him; and a lantern, with a light within its dark covering, was in the cellar. The heaps of billets were quickly removed, and beneath them were thirty-six barrels of gunpowder. It is one o'clock in the morning. The prisoner is led to Whitehall. A Council is hastily assembled in the king's bed-chamber. The resolute man is beset with hurried interrogatories by king and peers. His name, he says, is John Johnson; he is a servant of Thomas Percy; if he had not been apprehended that night, he had blown up the parliament house, when the king, peers, bishops, and others had been assembled. "Why would you have killed me?" asks the king. "Because you are excommunicated by the pope," is the reply. "How so?" said James. "Every Maundy Thursday the pope doth excommunicate all heretics, who are not of the church of Rome," is the explanation. He is asked who were privy to the conspiracy, and answers, "he could not resolve to accuse any." The night was passed in the examination of the prisoner; but nothing could be obtained from him that could commit his accomplices. In the morning he was taken to the Tower.

That morning of the 5th of November was a time of deep anxiety in London. The news of a conspiracy so daring in its objects; so mysterious in its origin, so terrible in its remorseless fanaticism, filled all classes with alarm. It was scarcely possible to exaggerate the consequences of a plot which threatened to involve the whole machinery of government in one indiscriminate destruction. Two of the conspirators had left London on the 4th. Two others fled the instant they knew that the pretended servant of Percy was seized. Two more lingered till the morning. Five of these joined company on their road to Ashby St. Legers, in Northamptonshire, all riding with extraordinary speed, having relays of horses. It had been arranged that a general rendezvous should take place at Dunchurch, on the 5th of November, after the great act of vengeance should have been accomplished in London. Towards that place various bodies of Roman Catholics were moving on the appointed day; some being cognisant of a design against the government, but few having been intrusted with the secrets of the leaders. A party was collected on the 5th at the house of lady Catesby, at Ashby St. Legers. They were at supper when the five who had fled from London rushed in, covered with the mire of the wintry roads, exhausted, hopeless. They had little to think of now but self-defence. Taking with them all the arms they could collect, the rode off to Dunchurch. Here they found a large assembly, with sir Everard Digby at their head, carousing, and anxiously expecting some joyful intelligence of the triumphs of their party, which they had been led to anticipate by vague hints of a coming time when heresy should no longer sit in high places. The ill-concealed fears, the pale looks, the secret whisperings of the friends who had ridden so hard to join them, told another tale. The instinct with which those who with a half-confidence, are to be made the instruments of conspiracy fly from their leaders at the first approach of detection, was now in full operation. Those who came with numerous retainers to the great chase on Dunmore heath, which was to be a gathering for more important objects than the hunting of the deer, gradually slunk away. On that night the chief conspirators were left alone. Let us now see who were the principal actors in this perilous enterprise; and how they had been occupied for many months before the fatal fifth of November.

Robert Catesby, the only son of sir William Catesby, who in the time of Elizabeth passed from the Protestant faith to the Roman Catholic, and whose mother was a sister of Thomas Throck-

morton, also a most determined recusant, was imbued with a more than common hatred to the established religion. He was concerned in the insurrection of Essex, but was pardoned upon paying a fine of £3000; and he was prominent in other seditions during the two latter years of the queen's reign. Thomas Winter was of a Roman Catholic family, who were connected by marriage with the family of Catesby; and he also had been occupied with plots, and had been in Spain to negotiate for the invasion of England by a Spanish force, in 1601. John Wright was a pervert from Protestantism, and he had also been engaged in the treason of Essex. These men were old and intimate friends; and these "three first devised the plot, and were the chief directors of all the particularities of it," as their principal associate declared in one of his examinations. He who stated this, on the 19th of November, was the "tall and desperate fellow" who called himself John Johnson, and refused when brought to Whitehall on the 5th, to declare any who were privy to the design which he so boldly avowed. He had been compelled to disclose his real name by a hateful process; for on the 6th of November the king proposed a number of interrogatories to be put to the prisoner, concluding thus: "The gentler tortures are to be first used unto him, *et sic per gradus ad immitenditur*:" [and so proceed by steps to the extremest.] This recommendation produced its effect; as we may learn from the signature of Guido Fawkes to his examination before the torture, and his signature to an examination after the torture. He was the son of a notary of York, who was Registrar of the Consistory Court of the Cathedral; and he was brought up as a Protestant at the free school there. He became, however, a zealous Papist; and, having served in the Spanish army in Flanders, acquired some of the Spanish notions of the Christian treatment by which heresy was to be extirpated. Guido Fawkes and Thomas Winter came to London together in 1604; and a few days after there was a remarkable meeting between Catesby, Wright, Winter, Fawkes, and a new malcontent, Thomas Percy, a relation of the earl of Northumberland. From the time of this meeting, at which the first words which Percy uttered, were, "Shall we always, gentlemen, talk, and never do any thing?"—there was abundant work, and very hard work, for these five fanatics.

The confession of Thomas Winter, on the 23rd of November, is a very elaborate paper, minutely detailing the rise and progress of the conspiracy. It is perfectly consistent in its details with the

facts derived from other sources; and altogether presents so vivid a picture of the energy and perseverance of these misguided men, that we shall use occasionally its exact words in detailing their proceedings after they were solemnly banded together in their dangerous enterprise. They gave each other an oath of secrecy, "in a chamber where no other body was;" and, going "into the next room, heard mass, and received the blessed sacrament upon the same." The object for which the oath was taken was then disclosed by Catesby to Percy, and by Winter and Wright to Fawkes. In the State Paper Office there is an agreement between Thomas Percy and Henry Ferrers, for the hire of a house next the parliament-house. It is dated, May 24th, 1604;—and is endorsed by Salisbury. "The bargain between Ferrers and Percy for the bloody cellar, found in Winter's lodging."* Eighteen months were these five men carrying their terrible secret close in their bosoms; imparting it to very few others; never doubting their own unaided power to produce a revolution by one stunning blow; and, from the very nature of the means they employed, exposed to detection at every step. "The bloody cellar," was not under the parliament chamber. They saw no chance of preparing a mine beneath that chamber, but by breaking through the massive foundation wall of the House of Lords. Fawkes received the keys of the house next the parliament-house; and they were ready for their work previous to the expected meeting of parliament. But the parliament was again prorogued to February, 1605; so they departed to the country for awhile. They then took another house at Lambeth, "where," says Winter, "we might make provision of powder and wood for the mine, which being there made ready, should in a night be conveyed by boat to the house by the parliament, because we were loth to foil that with often going in and out." The charge of this Lambeth house was given to Robert Keyes; who, although sworn as a member of the confederacy, appears to have been received "as a trusty honest man," who was ready to earn money for his services. At the beginning of Michaelmas term, 1604, Fawkes and Winter conferred with Catesby in the country, and they agreed "that now was the time to begin and set things in order for the mine." Percy's house was wanted for a meeting of the Commissioners for the Scotch Union. It was an official house; and Percy, its temporary tenant, was obliged to defer his unsuspected proceedings. Percy held the office of a Gentleman-Pensioner, which may account for the absence of all suspicion as to his

* Mrs. Green's "Calendar of State Papers," p. 113.

objects. The conferences of the commissioners were ended a fortnight before Christmas; and then other labours were commenced in right earnest within those walls. Percy and Wright now joined Catesby, Winter, and Fawkes; "and we," says Winter, "against their coming, had provided a good part of the powder; so as we all five entered with tools fit to begin our work, having provided ourselves with baked meats, the less to need sending abroad. We entered late in the night." They had to get through a stone wall three yards in thickness. Their labour was far beyond what they had expected; and they sent to Lambeth for Keyes, and obtained the adhesion to their plot of Christopher Wright, the brother of John. Fawkes, with the boldness which characterised him, vindicated himself and his associates from the belief that they were men of low birth and mean employments, to whom such toil was habitual; but that they were "gentlemen of name and blood." In his examination of the 8th of November, he says, "not any was employed in or about this action, no, not so much as in digging or mining, that was not a gentleman. And while the others wrought, I stood a sentinel to descry any man that came near; and when any man came near to the place, upon warning given by me, they ceased until they had again notice from me to proceed. All we seven lay in the house, and had shot and powder; being resolved to die in that place before we should yield or be taken." Father Greenway expresses his surprise that men delicately nurtured should, in a short space of time, have accomplished far more rough work than men who had been bred to laborious occupation would have accomplished. They were enthusiasts. They had little sense of fatigue, in the confidence that they were engaged in a holy work to which they were called by the immediate voice of heaven. Whether they were driven on their desperate course by those who claimed to be interpreters of the divine voice must remain to some extent a matter of doubt. They were all followers of the Jesuits. There were none of the conspirators who belonged to the more loyal body of Catholics who were guided by the secular priesthood. The Jesuit missionaries were, at this period, hiding in the secret chambers of old manor-houses to avoid expulsion from the kingdom. But if these seven gentlemen who worked in the mine had been bound together in their atrocious purpose by those who ruled over their consciences, they were at least faithful to their secret advisers. As they worked, they beguiled the time by discoursing about what should be their first proceeding when they had accom-

plished the sweeping destruction of all the estates of the realm. They were to carry off prince Charles, and his sister Elizabeth, prince Henry having perished with the king. They were then to proclaim the heir apparent, and appoint a Protector of the kingdom, during the minority of the sovereign. They were to ask help of foreign princes, when "the business was acted." What next they were to do with a state so "out of joint," was not manifest. They were sometimes beset with superstitious fears. They heard a sound from the middle of the wall, as of a tinkling bell. It was an unearthly sound, and was heard no more when holy water had been sprinkled again and again. They did not resume their labours till February, 1605, having learnt that parliament was to be again prorogued. But now their plan of operations was changed. They had "wrought also another fortnight in the mine against the stone wall, which was very hard to beat through," when they heard a rushing noise above their heads. Fawkes, always foremost in any danger, went to ascertain the cause, in his usual disguise of a porter's frock. He found that above the spot where they had been mining was a cellar in the occupation of a coal-dealer, and that he was moving his coals, being about to give up possession. That cellar was immediately under the parliament chamber. They seized upon the opportunity. The cellar was hired, and was quickly filled with barrels of gunpowder, covered over with fagots and billets. In May all their stores were carried in, and, locking the cellar, they departed from London. Fawkes went to Flanders to see if any foreign plotting looked promising. Catesby employed the summer in raising a troop of horse, for service in Flanders, as a part of an English regiment levied by the Spanish ambassador. This troop was officered by Catesby's immediate friends. The conspiracy widened by the introduction to its secrets of sir Everard Digby, Ambrose Rookwood, and Francis Tresham. Digby was only twenty-four years of age, and was evidently a weak tool of the Jesuits, whom he secreted in his house. "He cordially joined in the project from religious zeal, as soon as he satisfied himself that the action had been approved by his spiritual advisers."* Rookwood was also a young man, who had been repeatedly prosecuted for harbouring priests in his house. He had scruples about joining in so extensive a scheme of slaughter, saying, "it was a matter of conscience to take away so much blood;" but Catesby silenced him by saying "it had been resolved on good authority that in con-

* Mr. Jardine refers to Digby's letters, published in 1678, as evidence of this.

science it might be done. Tresham and Catesby were consins. Tresham had taken a prominent part in the Essex conspiracy; and he very narrowly escaped arraignment and execution; for it was he who kept guard over the Lord Keeper in Essex House, and told him that having stayed two years for a motion in Chancery, he hoped his lordship would now be at leisure to hear him. We have seen how Tresham was suspected to have been the author of the letter to lord Mounteagle; and it appears that Catesby had great misgivings of the success of his scheme from the time that Tresham became possessed of its perilous secret.

We now resume our narrative from the point at which we left the bewildered conspirators at Dunchurch, after the seizure of Fawkes. The timid adherents to some vague plan of revolt having departed, and left the bolder spirits to their own resolves, these daring confederates determined at once to march with their armed retainers, in the hope to excite a general insurrection of Roman Catholics in the midland counties, and in Wales. They set out from Dunchurch at ten o'clock on that same night of the 5th, having despatched a letter to the Jesuit Garnet, who was in the neighbourhood with sir Everard Digby's family. They marched through Warwick, where they helped themselves to horses, on to Alcester; and having seized some armour at lord Windsor's, on Wednesday night they had reached Holbeach, the house of Stephen Littleton, one of their friends. Their numbers were gradually diminished by desertion. Not one man joined them. The Roman Catholic party saw that the odious enterprise would long retard any hope of toleration from the government. The conspirators were pursued by the sheriff of Worcestershire with his *posse comitatus*. Digby fled from them at Holbeach, and was seized at Dudley; for the hue and cry had gone through the country. Those who remained at Holbeach prepared to defend the house against assault. An accidental circumstance filled them with terrible forebodings—a circumstance which Coke cleverly alluded to, upon the trial of Fawkes and others, as an exemplification of the principle that there is no law more just than that the wicked should perish by their own acts:—"Observe," he said, "a miraculous accident which befel in Stephen Littleton's house called Holbeach, in Staffordshire, after these traitors had been two days in open rebellion, immediately before their apprehension; for some of them standing by the fire-side, and having set two pounds and a half of powder to dry in a platter before the fire, and underset the said platter with a great linen bag

full of other powder, containing some fifteen or sixteen pounds, it so fell out, that one coming to put more wood into the fire, and casting it on, there flew a coal into the platter, by reason whereof the powder taking fire and blowing up, scorched those who were nearest, as Catesby, Grant, and Rookwood, and blew up the roof of the house; and the linen bag, which was set under the platter, being therewith suddenly carried out through the breach, fell down in the court-yard whole and unfired, which if it had taken fire in the room, would have slain them all there, so that they never should have come to this trial; and *Lex justior nulla est, quam necis artifices arte perire sua.** This explosion of gunpowder was regarded even by the boldest of these men as a token that God was against them. But the next day when the sheriff arrived and summoned them to surrender, the few who remained determined upon resistance. Thomas Winter was not present when the gunpowder exploded. Stephen Littleton then fled, having asked Winter to fly with him; but Winter, who supposed that Catesby was killed by the accident, said he would see the body of his friend, and bury him before he left. Winter tells the remainder of the story with expressive brevity: "When I came I found Mr. Catesby reasonable well, Mr. Percy, both the Wrights, Mr. Rookwood, and Mr. Grant. I asked them 'what they resolved to do.' They answered, 'we mean here to die.' I said again, 'I would take such part as they did.' About eleven of the clock came the company to beset the house, and, as I walked into the court, I was shot into the shoulder, which lost me the use of my arm; the next shot was the elder Wright struck dead; after him the younger Mr. Wright; and fourthly, Ambrose Rookwood. Then said Mr. Catesby to me (standing before the door they were to enter), 'stand by me, Tom, and we will die together.' 'Sir,' quoth I, 'I have lost the use of my right arm, and I fear that will cause me to be taken.' So, as we stood close together, Mr. Catesby, Mr. Percy, and myself, they two were shot, as far as I could guess, with one bullet, and then the company entered upon me, hurt me in the belly with a pike, and gave me other wounds, until one came behind, and caught hold of my both arms."

Previous to the trial of the principal conspirators who remained alive, there had been twenty-three days occupied in various examinations; during which the general progress of the conspiracy had been slowly extracted from the confessions of the prisoners.

* "Criminal Trials," vol. ii. p. 135.

Tresham, who is supposed to have been instrumental in discovering the plot to the government, was not arrested till the 12th of November, although Fawkes had distinctly mentioned him as one concerned. He died in the Tower before the trial. In postponing the trial, it was the great object of the government to obtain evidence that would inculpate the Jesuit missionaries. All the conspirators, with the exception of Thomas Bates, a servant of Catesby, persisted in denying the privity of the Jesuits to the enterprise. The alarm which was felt at the revelation of a treason which contemplated such awful consequences was universal; and thus we may understand how Ben Jonson, a person who, although a writer of masques for the court, was of a sturdy and independent character, appears to have lent himself to the government, in what we may regard as the odious function of a spy. There is a letter in the State Paper Office, bearing date the 8th of November, addressed by the poet to Salisbury, in which he says, "There hath been no want in me, either of labour or sincerity, in the discharge of this business, to the satisfaction of your lordship, or the State." Upon the first mention of it the day before, he had consulted the chaplain of the Venetian ambassador, who, he says, "not only apprehended it well, but was of mind with me, that no man of conscience, or any indifferent lover of his country, would deny to do it." The chaplain had recommended a fitting person to assist in the "business," but he could not be found. Jonson had made attempts in other places, but could speak with no one in person, "all being either removed or so concealed upon the present mischief." In the "second means" which he had employed, he had "received answers of doubt and difficulties, that they will make it a question to the Archpriest, with other such like suspensions." The dramatist was himself at this time a Roman Catholic.* Not believing him to have been altogether in the position of a vile informer and betrayer, we are inclined to think he was doing what other Roman Catholics were doing—assisting in the discovery of a conspiracy which the greater number of their persuasion repudiated. There was a broad line of separation between the disciples of the Jesuits and the majority of Catholics, who lived under the more quiet guidance of the ordinary priests. Jonson was clearly endeavouring to get at some secrets which would remove from the great body of the Catholics the odium

* In his Conversations with Drummond, he says that when he was imprisoned for killing his adversary in a duel, (which was in 1598) "then took he his religion by trust of a friend who visited him in prison. Thereafter he was 12 years a papist. Drummond's Notes, published by Shakspeare Society, p. 19.

which attached to the supposed movers of this conspiracy. "For myself," he says, "if I had been a priest, I would have put on wings to such an occasion, and have thought it no adventure, where I might have done (besides his majesty and my country) all Christianity so good service." The plot was offensive to him, as it was to many others of the Romish Church, upon religious and political grounds. It was opposed to every feeling of justice and humanity. When Jonson says, "I think they are all so enweaved in it, as it will make five hundred gentlemen less of the religion within this week, if they carry their understanding about them," we hold him to mean that those Catholics who exercised their understanding would turn from a religion whose priest-led fanatics were ready to commit such an abominable crime.* We take the poet's case to be an illustration of a very general tone of feeling amongst the moderate Papists; who, whatever might be their grievances, did not see their way to redress in casting aside all love of country, and all regard for religion, by being neutral and indifferent at a time when such a fearful mystery was suddenly brought to light.

The trial of Robert and Thomas Winter, Guido Fawkes, John Grant, Ambrose Rookwood, Robert Keyes, and Thomas Bates, took place in Westminster Hall, on the 27th of January, 1606, before a Special Commission. They all pleaded, "not guilty," although each of them had been brought to acknowledge the chief facts set forth in the indictment. Fawkes was asked by the Lord Chief Justice how he could deny the indictment, having been actually taken in the cellar with the powder. The report of the trial makes him say, that he had done so, because there were certain conferences mentioned in the indictment which he knew not of. Eudæmon Jones, who published an Apology for Garnet, the Jesuit, declares that what Fawkes said went much further: that he stated that "none of them meant to deny that which they had not only voluntarily confessed before, but which was quite notorious throughout the realm. But this indictment," he added, "contains many other matters, which we neither can nor ought to countenance by our assent or silence. It is true that all of us were actors in this plot, but it is false that the holy fathers had any part in it. We never conferred with them about the matter."† In the indictment, Henry

* The letter from Jonson is noticed in Mrs. Green's "Calendar of State Papers:" and in a review of that book, in the "Athenæum" of August 15th, 1857, the document is given in full.

† See Jardine's "Criminal Trials," vol. ii. p. 120. Mr. Jardine was the first to publish any satisfactory report of this trial, and of that of Garnet, by giving the original evi-

Garnet, clerk, of the profession of Jesuits, otherwise called Henry Walley; Oswald Tesmond, otherwise called Oswald Greenway and Oswald Fermour, of the aforesaid profession; and John Gerrard, otherwise called John Brooke, also of the same profession, are included as principals with other conspirators. A proclamation was issued for their apprehension on the 15th of January. Tesmond, more commonly mentioned as Greenway, and Gerrard, escaped beyond sea. It is unnecessary for us to dwell upon the trial of Fawkes and the others. They were necessarily condemned, and sentenced to the penalties of treason. Sir Everard Digby was tried and found guilty at Northampton. They were all executed on the Thursday and Friday following the 27th of January. There appears very sufficient evidence that some of the prisoners believed to the last that their project was not a sinful one. Sir Everard Digby wrote to his wife, "If I had thought there had been the least sin in it, I would not have been of it for all the world, and no other cause drew me to hazard my fortune and life, but zeal for God's religion." Such was the fanaticism of Digby, a man of no great force of character, but amiable, and just in his domestic relations. When we look at the unswerving fidelity of these men to each other; their undoubted confidence of success; their utter blindness to the awful consequences of their scheme,—we can scarcely doubt that they were all working together under a strong delusion, gradually taking a firm hold upon their minds through some external influence of the most powerful nature. Grant is reported to have said on the day of his execution, "I rely entirely upon my merits in bearing a part of that noble action, as an abundant satisfaction and expiation for all sins committed by me during the rest of my life." But Digby, who at first thought there was not the least sin in that action, adds in his letter to his wife, "But when I heard that Catholics and priests thought it should be a great sin that should be the cause of my end, it called my conscience in doubt of my very best actions and intentions." The great body of Roman Catholics, we may well believe, were free from such a horrible delusion. The trial of Henry Garnet, the superior of the Jesuits in England, which we shall now have briefly to notice, does not quite settle the question of the complicity of "the holy fathers;" but it leaves very little doubt of the principles upon which they acted.

dence as far as it could be ascertained. We regret that in his excellent "Narrative of the Gunpowder Plot," these reports are not given.

Henry Garnet, an Englishman, educated at Winchester, became a member of the Society of Jesus, in 1575. In 1586 he was appointed to the mission of the Society in England; and in 1588 he became Superior of the Jesuits here. An accomplished scholar, of mild demeanour and gentle nature, he exercised great influence amongst the most devoted adherents to the ancient faith. In September, 1605, a remarkable pilgrimage, under the conduct of Garnet, was undertaken by a party of Roman Catholics to St. Winifred's Well, in Flintshire. Anne Vaux, the daughter of lord Vaux, was amongst the most devoted followers of the fascinating Jesuit; and she, with the wife of sir Everard Digby, the wife of Ambrose Rookwood, and other ladies, walked barefoot on a part of the road to the holy fountain. Rookwood himself was amongst the pilgrims; and in their long progress from Digby's house in Buckinghamshire, they rested at the houses of John Grant and Robert Winter. The time of the pilgrimage, the persons associated in it, and its suggestion by Garnet, render it difficult to believe that the smooth Jesuit would not have found many an opportunity during this fortnight's adventure, to suggest the holiest precepts of the duty of hazarding life and fortune "for God's cause." On the 29th of October, Garnet moved with lady Digby and her family, to sir Everard's house at Coughton, near the place of general rendezvous appointed for the 5th of November. Here he received the letter from Digby and Catesby announcing the failure of the great business. In December he was conducted by Oldcorne, otherwise Hall, a Jesuit, to Hendlip House, near Worcester. Here he remained concealed before and after the proclamation against him. On the 20th of January, 1606, sir Henry Bromley, a magistrate, arrived at Hendlip House, with a commission to search the mansion. That house was full of secret apartments, which had been constructed by Thomas Abington, a devoted recusant. There were staircases concealed in the walls; hiding places in chimneys; trapdoors; double wainscots. On the fourth day after the arrival of the magistrate, two men were forced from their concealment by hunger and cold. They were the servants of the two priests. On the eighth day an opening had been found to the cell where Garnet and Oldcorne were hidden. They had been fed through a reed with broths and warm drinks; the reed being inserted in an aperture in a chimney of a gentlewoman's chamber, that backed another chimney of their secret room. Garnet after being taken was kindly used. He was examined before the Privy Council on the 13th of February

and the examination was often repeated. But no blandishments and no threats could induce him to confess his participation in the plot. He was not subjected to torture, although his unfortunate companion, Oldcorne, and the two servants, appear to have been cruelly treated. One of these, Owen, died by his own hand in the dread of a second infliction of the accursed instruments which lawyers and statesmen were not ashamed to employ in their blind zeal for the discovery of treason. Evidence of some kind against Garnet was at last obtained, by a pretended kindness of his keeper, who told him that by opening a concealed door in his cell he might confer with his fellow-prisoner, Oldcorne. Two persons were so placed that they could hear the greater part of whatever words were exchanged. There were several of these conferences between the two Jesuits; and their conversations were taken down, and submitted to the Council. The facts which they revealed certainly indicated that Garnet had a knowledge of the general scope of the plot; and that in these conferences he made no attempt to deny the truth of the accusation that he had such knowledge. When pressed upon these points he boldly asserted that he had never had any speech or conference with his fellow-prisoner. Oldcorne had admitted the fact; and Garnet at length acknowledged it, justifying his previous untruth upon the principle that no man was bound to criminate himself until the charge against him was otherwise proved. He at length acknowledged that the design of blowing up the house of Parliament on the first day of the Session had been revealed to him by Greenway, who had received it in confession from Catesby and Wright. He maintained, however, that he had endeavoured to turn Catesby from his purpose. The trial of Garnet took place on the 28th of March. He defended himself with ability and courage; in which, though acknowledging "that he had done more than he could excuse by law in having concealed his privity to the design," he maintained "that he had acted upon a conscientious persuasion that he was bound to disclose nothing that he heard in sacramental confession." He was found guilty, and received the usual sentence for treason. After his condemnation his examinations were renewed. He was condemned on the 28th of March, and was not executed till the 3rd of May. Oldcorne had been tried at Worcester, and was executed on the 7th of April. Dr. Lingard is of opinion that Garnet's defence had made a favourable impression on the mind of the king; and that his avowals on the subject of Equivocation, after his trial.

led to his execution. His general principles had been thus expressed in a paper written before his trial: "Concerning equivocation, this is my opinion; in moral affairs, and in the common intercourse of life, when the truth is asked amongst friends, it is not lawful to use equivocation, for that would cause great mischief in society—wherefore in such cases there is no place for equivocation. But in cases where it becomes necessary to an individual for his defence, or for avoiding any injustice or loss, or for obtaining any important advantage, without danger or mischief to any other person, there equivocation is lawful." In an examination after the trial he goes further, and holds that an oath might be lawfully used to confirm a simple equivocation: "This, I acknowledge to be, according to my opinion, and the opinion of the schoolmen: and our reason is, for that in cases of lawful equivocation, the speech by equivocation being saved from a lie, the same speech may be without perjury confirmed by oath, or by any other usual way, though it were by receiving the sacrament, if just necessity so require." Dr. Lingard, with a candour very different from some apologies for Garnet and his doctrines which were put forth in past times, says, "The man who maintained such opinions could not reasonably complain, if the king refused credit to his asseverations of innocence, and permitted the law to take its course." Garnet's opinions were not shared by the majority of the Roman Catholics even in his own day; any more than the same body in general approved of the murderous project in which Catesby and his associates were involved. During the struggles between the two Churches in the seventeenth century, the Gunpowder Treason was the standing argument for denying liberty of conscience to our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects. Its traditions lingered through the eighteenth century, to support the same oppression in a mitigated form. They now scarcely survive even in popular prejudice; for, combined with the spread of knowledge has grown up a spirit of charity and justice, in the prevalence of which the State having ceased to persecute or to exclude for religious opinions, has nothing to fear from the fanatic or the casuist.

CHAPTER XV.

Parliament of 1606.—Statutes against Papists.—Game Laws.—Manners of the Court.—Lavishness of James upon his favourites.—Feudal aid.—Impositions upon merchandise.—First Settlement in Virginia.—Progress of the Colony.—Settlement of the Pilgrim Fathers in Massachusetts.—Charter of the East India Company.—First Factory at Surat.—The Mogul Rulers of Hindostan.—Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe.—Dissolution of the Parliament.—Murder of Henry IV. of France.—Authorised translation of the Bible.—Ireland.—Plantation of Ulster.—Creation of Baronets.—The New River.—Increase of London.

THE parliament which was to have met on the 5th of November, 1605, was necessarily prorogued to a later period. It assembled on the 21st of January, 1606. It was scarcely to be expected that the discovery of a conspiracy so atrocious as that of the Gunpowder project should have induced a parliament, becoming more and more puritan, to deal with the papists in a spirit of toleration. To the previous severities of the penal code were added various penalties which touched convicted recusants in their domestic and private relations. All Roman Catholics who had been convicted of recusancy, and all who had not received the sacrament twice in twelve months in a Protestant church, were also required to take an oath of allegiance. In this oath the pretended power of the pope to absolve subjects from their obedience was to be expressly renounced; and the Roman Catholic was further to swear that he, from his heart, abhorred, detested, and abjured, as impious and heretical, "the damnable doctrine and position that princes excommunicated or deprived by the pope may be deposed or murdered by their subjects." Looking at the history of the country from the time of the Reformation, it can scarcely be maintained that such an oath was unreasonable. The secular priests in England recommended their brethren so to declare their allegiance. The papal court issued a breve to forbid such a renunciation of the deposing power. Cardinal Bellarmine wrote a book to prove the unlawfulness of the oath. King James, never more happy than when engaged in a theological controversy, published *An Apologie for the Oath of Allegiance*; "by which," says Mr. Hallam, "he