

them, in case he found by Montreuil, by whom I sent the letter, that they were really agreed with me. . . . Thou wilt as plainly see, by what secretary Nicholas sends thee, their base unworthy dealing, in retracting of almost all which was promised Montreuil from London, even to the being ashamed of my company, desiring me to pretend that my coming to them was only in my way to Scotland.* Nearer and nearer Fairfax was drawing his troops round Oxford. In a few days the blockade would be complete. Whither was the unhappy king to fly? He would get privately to Lynn; he would go by sea to Scotland, if Montrose were in a condition to receive him; he would make for Ireland, France, or Denmark. He would go anywhere "to eschew all kind of captivity."† If he who thus breathes out his sorrows to the only being in whom he has absolute confidence were a private man, who could refuse him pity? His very errors claim our pity. He has been trained to take the most dangerous view of his own position. "I am a king."—"They cannot do without me." He holds his sovereignty to be an inherent possession, and not a sacred trust. He sees only rebels; not a people that he has misgoverned. But there is a solemn pathos even in his egoism: "I conjure thee," he says to his wife in this his saddest hour; "I conjure thee by thy constant love to me, that if I should miscarry, whether by being taken by the rebels or otherwise, to continue the same active endeavour for prince Charles as thou hast done for me, and not whine for my misfortunes in a retired way, but, like thy father's daughter, vigorously assist prince Charles to regain his own."‡

There were two persons in attendance upon the king at Oxford upon whom he bestowed his most secret confidences. One was his chaplain, Dr. Michael Hudson; the other, a groom of his bedchamber, Ashburnham, commonly called by Charles, Jack Ashburnham. Each of these have left relations of the manner of the king's escape from Oxford. After noticing some ineffectual attempts to induce Ireton to accept and protect the king's person, upon the conditions proposed to the Parliament of going to London, Ashburnham thus continues: "And now his majesty conceiving himself to be discharged from all obligation, which by any way could be fastened upon him by his Parliament, or by any authority derived from them, settled his thoughts upon his journey to the Scots army; and in order thereunto did acquaint some of

* "Charles I. in 1646," p. 37.

† *Ibid.*, p. 38.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

his Privy Council, as he was pleased to tell me, with his intentions to leave Oxford, if they should approve of that course to be best for his affairs, and their preservation; but did not impart the truth of his design with the Scots, conceiving that most of them would have opposed with some unreasonable heat his conjunction with them, and therefore chose rather to put the design of London upon it.* In no situation of danger or difficulty could this unfortunate king give up his system of double-dealing and half-confidence. The groom of the bedchamber then very briefly relates how the journey from Oxford began and ended. Dr. Hudson, however, has amply filled up the details. He was arrested and brought before the House of Commons, and his examinations present a very circumstantial account of nine days of wandering and peril.† On Sunday, the 26th of April, Hudson was desired by Ashburnham to come to his chamber at eleven o'clock at night. About twelve o'clock the king came with the duke of Richmond. Ashburnham "cut off his lock, and some part of his beard," the lovelock, the well-known badge of the cavalier. Hudson was then sent to call the governor of Oxford, who arrived about two o'clock. To him the king confided his intention to leave the city; the governor went for the keys; and just as the clock struck three they passed over Magdalene-bridge. The king then commanded the governor that no gate of Oxford should be opened for five days. Onward rode the three—the king, Hudson, and Ashburnham—by Dorchester, Benson, Henley, Maidenhead, and Slough. They then turned out of the road towards Uxbridge, and rested not until they reached a tavern at Hillingdon, between ten and eleven o'clock. They encountered several parties of horse on the road; but Hudson had obtained an old pass that had been granted to another person, and he was liberal of his money when he came to any guard. He was the master, the king and Ashburnham were his servants. "One of Colonel Ireton's men," says Hudson, "rid in our company from Nettlebed to Slough; and seeing me give money always at the guards, asked him, the king, if his master was not one of the Lords of the Parliament? He answered, No; his master was one of the Lower House." During their short rest at Hillingdon, "the king was much perplexed what course to resolve upon, London or northward." He at length determined "to go northward, and through Norfolk, where he was least known," and there to stay whilst

* Ashburnham's "Narrative," vol. ii. p. 72.

† See Peck's "Desiderata Curiosa."

Hudson ascertained from Montreuil if he had effected any arrangement with the Scots. They slept that Monday night at St. Alban's. Such is Hudson's account in his examination before the parliamentary committee. But, in a previous examination before the deputy-mayor of Newcastle, he stated that he was commanded by the king not to reveal the place where they lodged on Monday night; he declined to answer whether the king was in London or no; and said, "that when they turned their face about for the north, his majesty lodged at Wheathamstead, near unto St. Alban's; but the time when, he is commanded by his majesty to conceal." This would indicate far greater indecision about the movements of the king than Hudson's other narrative. It is clear that no energetic course of action presented itself to him after he had ridden over Magdalene-bridge on that spring morning. Clarendon says that the king "had wasted time in several places, whereof some were gentlemen's houses (where he was not unknown, though untaken notice of), purposely to be informed of the condition of the marquis of Montrose, and to find some secure passage that he might get to him." * On the Tuesday, according to Hudson's circumstantial narrative, he separated from the king and Ashburnham, as they rode upon their way towards Baldock; he to go in search of Montreuil, they to stay at the White Swan at Downham till he returned to them. Here they remained till the Friday, when Hudson returned with a statement that the Scots would condescend to all the demands which the king had made for the security of his person and the satisfaction of his conscience; that they would declare for him if the English Parliament should refuse to restore him to his rights and prerogatives; but that they would give nothing under their hands. "I came to the king on Friday night," says Hudson, "and related all; and he resolved next morning to go to them." There is a relation from Miles Corbet and Valentine Walton, addressed to the Speaker of the House of Commons, which takes up the adventures of Charles at this point. Hudson and a friend, Ralph Skipwith, on the Saturday morning, "did ride to Southrie Ferry, a private way towards Ely; and went, by the way, to Crimplesham, and there were the other two; one in a parson's habit, which, by all descriptions, was the king. Hudson procured the said Skipwith to get a gray coat for the doctor, as he called the king, which he did. And there the king put off his black coat and long cassock, and put on Mr. Skipwith his gray coat. The king bought a new hat at Down-

* "History," vol. v. p. 294.

ham, and on Saturday went into the isle of Ely. Wherever they came they were private, and always writing. Hudson tore some papers when they went out of the house. Hudson did enquire for a ship to go to the north, or Newcastle, but could get none." There was nothing left for Charles but to go to the Scots' army at all risks. On the Tuesday night, the 4th of May, they met Montreuil at Southwell. Commissioners from the Scottish army also met the king there. Their troops were spread about the district, surrounding the castle of Newark, which was held for the king. Ashburnham says that when Charles arrived at the Scots' army before Newark, "many lords came instantly to wait on his majesty with professions of joy, to find that he had so far honoured their army, as to think it worthy his presence after so long an opposition." On the 6th of May, lord Leven, the Scots' general, and the Committee of Estates at Southwell, wrote to the Committee of both kingdoms, in the following terms: "The earnest desire which we have to keep a right understanding between the two kingdoms, moves us to acquaint you with that strange Providence wherewith we are now surprised, together with our carriage and desires thereupon. The king came into our army yesterday in so private a way, that after we had carefully made search for him, upon the surmises of some persons who pretended to know his face, yet we could not find him out in sundry houses. And we believe your lordships will think it was matter of much astonishment to us, seeing we did not expect he would come into any place under our power. We conceived it not fit to inquire into the causes which persuaded him to come hither; but to endeavour that his being here might be improved to the best advantage, for promoting the work of uniformity, for settling of religion and righteousness, and attaining of peace according to the League and Covenant and Treaty, by the advice of the Parliaments of both kingdoms, or their commissioners authorised for that effect." Not a night passed before the king was made to understand his position. A guard, called a guard of honour, was placed at his door. He claimed to give out the watchword for the night. Pardon me, sire," said Leven, "I am the oldest soldier here. Your majesty will permit me to undertake that duty." The king consented to sign an order that his governor of Newark should give up the place to the Scots, for the Committee of both kingdoms. They rendered it to Poyntz, the English parliamentary commander; and very shortly after, the Scottish army, with the king, was on its march to Newcastle.

From the 6th of May, 1646, till the 30th of January, 1647, the king remained in the hands of the Scots. It was a time of unwearyed political intrigue and agitation, more complicated than ever with the great question of religion. The Presbyterian party had a considerable majority in Parliament. They had carried ordinance upon ordinance for the exclusive establishment of their Church. In this great point they were completely in accord with the Scots, who held the king at their disposal. But a compact and firm minority is often more really powerful than a disjointed majority. The men of the greatest intellect and energy had the strongest hold upon public opinion. The liberty of conscience which they proclaimed had produced its effect upon many who chose to think for themselves, without being fanatics; and upon more who had reached the extremes of fanaticism. The eloquent reasoning of Milton had not been published in vain. The impassioned harangues of Vane had not fallen upon barren ground. The Presbyterian rule in spiritual affairs was slowly and imperfectly established. The great hold of that church was in London. It was also established in Lancashire. In other provinces the beneficed clergy were chiefly Presbyterian; but many pulpits were filled with sectaries of various denominations, agreeing in few things beyond the common claim of the right of men to toleration; Papists only were excepted from the operation of this principle. Whatever was their particular creed, the Independents maintained the claim of every separate congregation to be a church; held that the exercise of the ministry was warranted by a call of the congregation; and denied that any spiritual powers were conferred in ordination by those who asserted their apostolical succession. But the Independents were far more powerful than the talkers in Parliament, from a superiority that had grown naturally out of the struggles of four years. The army was composed of earnest men, who had fought for a cause in which all their religious enthusiasm had been called forth. They were as formidable in their opinions as citizens, as in their unequalled bravery and discipline as soldiers. The Independent leaders had the entire control of this army. Whilst the Scottish commissioners were urging the king to adopt the Presbyterian rule of church government, and the parliamentary majority was tending to the same conclusion; the army, at the slightest signal from their chiefs, would have been ready to oppose its power to any such settlement. It had only to abide its time. For eight months there was interminable discussion and negotiation between

Westminster and Newcastle. The Scots, who thought they possessed a preponderating influence in retaining the person of the king, were growing more and more unpopular in the sentiments of the English people. Petitions were sent to Parliament against their exactions. They came to be regarded as enemies rather than as allies. A vote was at length carried in the Commons, in June, that their presence was no longer required; and they were requested to return home, on receiving a payment of a hundred thousand pounds, on account of what might be due to them. They made no sign of removing. Their great object was to induce Charles to consent to the abolition of Episcopacy, and to the establishment of Presbyterianism in both kingdoms. They assailed him with reiterated solicitations, and even with menaces. On the 10th of June, he wrote to the queen: "I never knew what it was to be so barbarously treated before; and these five or six days last have much surpassed, in rude pressures against my conscience, all the rest since I came to the Scotch army."* They required the king to sign the Covenant himself, and command all his subjects to sign it. They sent for the learned and eloquent Henderson to convert the king. Charles maintained a theological controversy with the great preacher with equal temper and ability. But whilst he was asserting his devotion to the Anglican Church, and rejecting the Presbyterian form as zealously as the Scots pressed it upon him, he was writing to Glamorgan that he would place himself, if he could do so by any means, in the hands of the pope's nuncio and his secret adviser in Ireland. His hatred of the Covenant was not altogether a religious conviction. He writes to the queen on the 26th of August: "Less will not serve them than the establishing of the Covenant in all my kingdoms, which, if it be, will ruin this monarchy."† Charles clung with a tenacity approaching to fanaticism to the Episcopal principle; but the maxim of his father, "no bishop, no king," was probably at the root of his inflexible resolution. The English Parliament, still governed by the Presbyterian party, sent him proposals in July. He was to adopt the Covenant; he was to abolish the Episcopal Church; he was to give up the command of the military arm for twenty years; he was to exclude seventy of his adherents from a general amnesty. The queen urged him to accept even these proposals. Without an absolute rejection of these hard terms, he prepared again to come to London. The Scottish commissioners told the king that unless

* "Charles I. in 1646," p. 45.

† *Ibid.*, p. 58.

he accepted the conditions, though higher in some particulars than they could have wished, he must not be expected to be received in Scotland.* The money question between the Scots and the Parliament then occupied many weeks of controversy. Four hundred thousand pounds were at last voted; and a loan was raised for the immediate payment of half the amount. The terms were accepted. Another difficult question then presented itself. Which nation was to retain the king? It was at last voted "that to the Parliament alone belongs the right of disposing of the king's person." In November the Scottish Parliament had met, and evinced a disposition to advocate the re-establishment of Charles in both kingdoms, with honour and safety. But the General Assembly interfered. The obstinacy of the king upon the question of Episcopacy was quite sufficient to excite the most violent popular feeling, and the Scottish Parliament then took another tone. The treaty was completed for the retirement of the Scottish army. On the 16th of December there was a singular procession from London to the north. Thirty-six carts, laden with two hundred cases of silver, were guarded on the road to Newcastle by an escort of infantry, under the command of Skippon. The money and the men arrived at York on the 1st of January, 1647. In three weeks the payment was made. "I am sold and bought," said the king. Nine commissioners arrived from London. On the 30th of January the Scots marched from Newcastle, and Charles remained with the English commissioners. He was treated by them with marked respect. On the 9th of February he left Newcastle, escorted by a regiment of horse, and reached Holmby House, in Northamptonshire, his appointed residence, on the 16th.

The first Civil War was at an end. Oxford had been surrendered to Fairfax on the 22d of June, under the terms of a treaty which allowed the garrison to "march out of the city of Oxon with their horses and complete arms that properly belong unto them, proportionable to their present or past commands; flying colours, trumpets sounding, drums beating, matches lighted at both ends, bullet in their mouths, and every soldier to have twelve charges of powder, match and bullet proportionable." Those who desired to go to their houses or friends were to lay down their arms within fifteen miles of Oxford, and then to have passes, with the right of free quarter; and a careful provision was made for those who wished to go beyond sea to serve any foreign power. The Royal-

* Ludlow," p. 184.

ists and the parliamentary troops had met as honourable enemies; and in this surrender of the loyal city they each went their way as men whom happier times might make willing friends. When Fairfax entered Oxford he secured the Bodleian Library from spoliation, as Aubrey records: "When Oxford was surrendered (24th of June, 1646), the first thing general Fairfax did was to set a good guard of soldiers to preserve the Bodleian Library. 'Tis said there was more hurt done by the Cavaliers (during their garrison) by way of embezzling and cutting off chains of books, than there was since. He was a lover of learning, and had he not taken this special care, that noble library had been utterly destroyed, for there were ignorant senators enough who would have been contented to have had it so. This I do assure you from an ocular witness." All the royalist garrisons had yielded before the end of 1646. Great changes had taken place since Charles fought his first battle of Edgehill. Essex, who there brought his undisciplined troops into conflict with the Cavaliers, died on the 16th of September. Other men and other influences were now to be paramount.

VOL. III.—34