been seized in his preachings, and carried to London, managed to see the Protector, and exhorted him to keep in the fear of God; and Cromwell, having patiently listened to his lecture, parted with him, saying "Come again to my house. If thou and I were but an hour of the day together, we should be nearer one to the other. I wish no more harm to thee than I do my own soul." * George and some of his brethren had been dispersing "base books against the Lord Protector," as major-general Goffe informed Thurloe. Cromwell sent the Quaker unharmed away, having received from him a written promise that he would do nothing against his government.

* Fox's "Journal," quoted in Carlyle's "Cromwell," vol. ii. p. 121.



## CHAPTER IV.

Greatness of Cromwell in his Foreign Policy.—Naval armaments.—Blake's exploits.—Jamaica taken.—Cromwell's interference for the Vaudois.—He attempts to procure the re-admission of the Jews to settle in England.—Hostility of the Republicans to the Protector.—Cromwell requires a pledge from Republican leaders.—Meeting of the Protector's Second Parliament.—Cromwell's opening Speech.—Members excluded from the Parliament.—Case of James Nayler.—Sindercomb's plot.—The Parliament votes that Cromwell shall be offered the Crown.—Conferences on the subject of Kingship.—Cromwell declines to accept the title.—Blake's victory at Santa Cruz.—Cromwell inaugurated as Protector under a new Instrument of Government.—Second Session of Parliament.—The Upper House.—The old secluded Members admitted to sit.—Cromwell's Speech.—Violent dissensions.—The Parliament dissolved.—Projected rising of Royalists.—Allied War in the Netherlands.—Dunkirk.—Cromwell's family afflictions.—His illness and death.

"His greatness at home was but a shadow of the glory he had abroad." So writes Clarendon of him who, he says, "will be looked upon by posterity as a brave bad man." The mere courtiers of Charles II. used to talk of the Protector as "that wretch, Cromwell." * It is something for Clarendon to acknowledge that "he had some good qualities." He had the highest of all qualities in a prince—a sense of public duty. He was an Englishman, bent upon sustaining the honour of his country amongst the nations. In this great design his genius luxuriated. He was not beset with difficulties, as at home, when he sent forth his fleets to sweep the Barbary pirates from the Mediterranean, or employed his diplomatists to express in distinct terms, that the Protestants of the Piedmontese valleys should not be massacred by a duke of Savoy, although supported by a king of France. He went straight to his object, when he concluded the French alliance, and rejected that of Spain, because "there is not liberty of conscience to be had from the Spaniard, neither is there satisfaction for injuries nor for blood." † "Elizabeth, of famous memory, that lady, that great queen," as Cromwell terms her, was the load-star of his foreign policy; "nothing being more usual than his saying 'that his ships in the Mediterranean should visit Civita Vecchia, and that the

* Letter of Henrietta Maria; Green, p. 380. † Speech, 17th September, 1656.

sound of his cannon should be heard at Rome.'"* He raised his country out of the pitiful subjection to which the Stuarts had reduced it, to be again amongst the most respected of Christian powers. "It was hard to discover which feared him most, France, Spain, or the Low Countries, where his friendship was current at the value he put upon it." † The price which he demanded for his friendship was, that the liberties of Englishmen, their personal security, and their rights of conscience, should be respected throughout the world; that no sea should be closed against English commerce; that no combination of crowned heads should attempt to control the domestic government of these kingdoms. He made no pretensions to national supremacy inconsistent with the rights of other countries; but not a tittle would he abate of that respect which was due to his own country and his own government. He was raised to supreme power by a revolution upon which all monarchical rulers must have looked with dread and suspicion and secret hatred; but he made no efforts to imbue other kingdoms with a revolutionary spirit. His moderation commanded a far higher respect than if he had formed schemes of European conquest; or had attempted to conciliate discontented colonels and murmuring troopers, by leading them in person against Condé or Don John of Austria. Truly has it been said, "He was a soldier; he had risen by war. Had his ambition been of an impure or selfish kind, it would have been easy for him to plunge his country into continental hostilities on a large scale, and to dazzle the restless factions which he ruled, by the splendour of his victories."‡ He left to Blake the glory of making the flag of England triumphant on the seas, satisfied to counsel and encourage him. His practical spirit of doing everything for utility, and nothing for vain glory, was so infused into his officers, that when Turenne sent to Lockhart, Cromwell's general in the Netherlands, an explanation of the plan of the battle they were to fight with their allied forces, the Englishman, with a noble common sense that could lay aside the morbid vanity which too often mars the success of joint enterprises, exclaimed, "Very good: I shall obey M. de Turenne's orders, and he may explain his reasons after the battle, if he pleases." §

The maintenance and increase of the naval arm of our strength was the especial care of the Protector. "I went," writes Evelyn

* "Clarendon," vol. vii. p. 297. † *Ibid.* ‡ Macaulay, "Essays," vol. i.
§ Guizot, "Cromwell," vol. ii. p. 383.



in his Diary of the 9th of April, 1655, "to see the great ship newly built by the usurper, Oliver, carrying ninety-six brass guns and 1000 tons burthen." Some months before, two armaments were being fitted out at Portsmouth. Their destination was unknown. Cromwell was one day surrounded in the streets by a large number of sailors' wives. "Where are our husbands to be sent?" they demanded. "The ambassadors of France and Spain would each give me a million to know that," answered the Protector. Whilst France and Spain were each under apprehensions when Blake's fleet of twenty-five ships had sailed, the admiral appeared before Leghorn, and demanded from the grand duke of Tuscany redress for the owners of three merchant vessels, which had been captured by prince Rupert in 1650, and sold in Tuscan ports and in the Papal States. The grand duke and the pope paid the indemnity. Blake then presented himself on the coast of Africa, to demand the relief of Christian captives from the Barbary States. His terms were complied with at Algiers and Tripoli. At Tunis, the Dey pointed to his fortresses, and told the English to do their worst. Blake battered the Tunisian works, and burnt the piratical fleet in the harbour. A hundred and sixty years after this example England had again "to break the oppressor's chain, and set the captives free." The war with Spain had not yet been proclaimed, but the second armament had sailed with secret orders. Blake was waiting to take his share in the warfare, after he had chastised the African pirates. He was off Malaga, where some of the sailors who had landed had shown disrespect to a procession of the host. A priest incited the Spanish populace to outrage, and the sailors were beaten and chased to their ships. They told their story to the admiral, who demanded that the priest should be brought to justice. The authorities replied that the civil power could not touch an ecclesiastic. "Send him on board the St. George within three hours or I will burn your city," was the admiral's demand of the governor of Malaga. The priest was sent. The story of both sides was heard on the justice-seat of the quarter-deck. The sailors were found to be in the wrong, and the priest was put ashore with all civility. "I would have punished the men had I been appealed to," said the admiral; "but I would have you and all the world to know that an Englishman is not to be judged and punished except by Englishmen." The other fleet under Venables and Penn had gone for the West Indies. On the 14th of April it was before Hispaniola. There was no attempt at

once to take St. Domingo; but a portion of the badly assorted army landed about ten leagues to the westward of the town, and marched "through woods of incredible thickness, receiving little or no opposition except the excessive heat of the sun, and intolerable drought that oppressed them, having not had, in many miles' march, one drop of water." *. The other portion of the armament had landed nearer the city; and when a junction was effected, the whole force fell into ambuscades, and were eventually driven back to their ships. The commanders, who had lost everything by their disputes and feeble arrangements, sailed away, and possessed themselves of Jamaica. The value of this conquest was then little estimated; and the fertility of the island was thought small compensation for the loss of the supposed treasures of Hispaniola. Cromwell was somewhat cast down by this his first failure; and he sent Penn and Venables to the Tower when they came home with the tale of their disasters. But he soon saw that Jamaica gave England a solid footing in the West Indies, and was a most important acquisition, although "it produces not any mines of gold and silver, as doth Hispaniola"—a defect which the journalist much laments. The two unfortunate commanders were soon released. The Protector is unremitting in his watchfulness over the West Indian possessions, as his letters show, and if possible he will strike at the root of such miscarriages as that of Hispaniola. He writes to major-general Fortescue at Jamaica, "As we have cause to be humbled for the reproof God gave us at St. Domingo, upon the account of our own sin as well as others', so, truly, upon the reports brought hither to us of the extreme avarice, pride and confidence, disorders and debauchedness, profaneness and wickedness, commonly practised amongst the Army, we can not only bewail the same, but desire that all with you may do so; and that a very special regard may be had so to govern, for time to come, as that all manner of vice may be thoroughly discountenanced, and severely punished; and that such a frame of government may be exercised that virtue and godliness may receive due encouragement."

The power and influence of the Commonwealth was at this period signally called forth by an occurrence that was no especial injury or affront to the nation, but which more deeply moved the heart of Puritan England than any event since the Irish massacre. For many centuries there had dwelt in three small valleys of Piedmont a race known as the Vaudois, or Valdenses—the people of the valleys—who from the earliest times had kept separate from the Church of Rome. Before the principles of the Reformation had been disseminated by Luther or Calvin, the Pope, Innocent VIII., had issued a bull for the extirpation of the pernicious sect of the Waldenses. When they declared that their ancient faith was similar to that of the Reformers, persecutions became more frequent against them. They were proscribed, first by France and then by Savoy; and then sometimes tolerated, and sometimes molested. In 1655 the government of the young duke Charles Emmanuel II., having been irritated by tumults between some Vaudois of one of the valleys and a convent of Capuchins, alleged that those who had been tolerated in their religion within certain districts, prescribed by edicts, had settled upon lands beyond their proper boundaries. All the Vaudois families inhabiting eight communes in the lower part of the valley of the Pelice, were commanded to abandon their fields and houses; to sell their property within twenty days; or to become Roman Catholics. This command was resisted; and the duke of Savoy sent the marquis of Pianezza to enforce the manifesto. The Vaudois deserted their villages and sought refuge in the mountains. There were severe contests between the troops and the suffering people; in which fearful cruelties were committed by the Piedmontese soldiers, and by mercenary Irish and French in the service of the duke of Savoy. An officer who was in the command of a French regiment in Piedmont that had been placed under the orders of the marquis of Pianezza, threw up his commission, "in order," he says, "that I might not assist in such wicked actions." A declaration of this brave man, captain du Petit-Bourg, is in the University Library at Cambridge, wherein he says, "I was the witness of numerous acts of great violence and extreme cruelty, practised by the soldiers towards all ages, sexes, and conditions, whom I saw massacred, hanged, burned, and violated, and I also witnessed several terrible conflagrations." He adds that the marquis of Pianezza ordered all the prisoners to be killed, "because his highness would not have any of their religion in all his dominions." The instant that Cromwell heard of the preliminary harsh measures of the duke of Savoy towards the Vaudois, he wrote to the English resident in Switzerland to advise the persecuted people to appeal to England. The news of the massacre arrived before any request was made for succour. The Protector immediately sent an envoy extraor-

* "Journal of the English Army," Harl. Miscellany, vol. vi. p. 372.

dinary to Louis XIV. and to the duke of Savoy, with letters of remonstrance. Upon all the Protestant princes he called for assistance in demanding justice for the Vaudois. A collection throughout England was made for these poor people, and Cromwell himself gave two thousand pounds. His language was as moderate as it was firm. But his meaning could not be mistaken. France was most anxious to conclude a treaty of peace and commerce with England; but Cromwell declared that he would not sign it till the French Court had procured from the Piedmontese government the Restoration of the Vaudois to their ancient liberties. The French minister at Turin now insisted on an immediate pacification, which should restore the Vaudois to their civil and religious liberties, as of old. The business was hastily concluded by the French agents, and some harsh conditions were connected with this settlement, which again caused the interference of the Protector in 1658. The earnest thought of Cromwell went through Europe clothed in the eloquent Latin of Milton; and even those who hated the Commonwealth acknowledged that England never stood higher than when she demanded justice for a few poor cultivators of the Alps—those who had kept the truth

"When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones."

The efforts of the Protector to procure safety and liberty of conscience for a race of Christians dwelling in three small valleys of the Alps, were more successful than his endeavours to give a legal home in England to a persecuted race, scattered through every land. The Jews were banished, and their immoveable goods were confiscated, in 1290. In 1655 Cromwell assembled his Council, and "divers eminent ministers," to consider the petition of Rabbi Manasseh-Ben-Israel of Amsterdam, that the Jews might have liberty to settle again in England. Three hundred and sixty-five years of obstinate prejudice might probably have sufficed to exhaust the bigotry of a Christian community. Cromwell thought the term quite long enough; and so the matter of allowing the Jews to reside again amongst us, and trade, and have public synagogues, and a cemetery out of the town to bury their dead, was discussed in four conferences; and the Protector advocated the measure; and one present says, "I never heard a man speak so well." But there were then, as there always will be, grave divines and learned lawyers who patch a rag of ancient intolerance into



their modern garments, to show the colour and substance of the old material that all men once proudly wore. Of this species was William Prynne, who headed the cry of Christianity in danger, by publishing a manifesto against the Jews, in which "their ill-deportment, misdemeanours, condition, sufferings, oppressions, slaughters, plunders by popular insurrections, royal exactions, and final banishment," were brought forward in connection with Laws and Scriptures, "to plead and conclude against their re-admission into England." The old clamour against the Jewerie was revived, especially in the city, where the merchants were jealous of the wealth of the Hebrews; and the Protector, seeing it was in vain to expect any agreement on this question, sought for no legal sanction to their settling here, but raised no objection to a Portuguese synagogue being opened in 1656.

The government of the Protectorate had ample public business to engage its attention, during the twenty months in which a Single Person, without a Parliament, was the supreme director of the affairs of three kingdoms. The alliance with France, and the war with Spain, gave occasion to new movements of royalists, and new combinations of republicans. Charles the Second was living in dissolute poverty at Cologne, caring little for state concerns, and laying no burden upon his conscience when he had to make some contrary pledge to Protestant or Papist, openly to the one, or in secret to the other. He was a little roused from his exclusive attention to his mistresses when the war with Spain induced him to believe that he might obtain some assistance from that power against their common enemy. Colonel Sexby, a furious republican, prepared with schemes of conspiracy and assassination, joined the councils of Charles and the Spanish ministers. In April, 1656, a treaty of alliance was concluded between Philip IV. and the exiled king of England, by which the Spanish monarch promised Charles a pension and an army, and Charles engaged that with the aid of the Irish serving in France he would make a landing in England. The government of the Protector was more effectually endangered by the attitude of the great republican leaders at home, than by preparations for war and assassination. Sir Harry Vane had come forth with a pamphlet, which Thurloe described in a letter to Henry Cromwell, as "a new form of government, plainly laying aside thereby that which now is. At the first coming out of it, it was applauded; but now, upon second thoughts, it is rejected as being impracticable, and aiming in truth at the setting up

of the Long Parliament again." Cromwell, in July, had issued writs for a new Parliament. A second pamphlet, more exciting than the first, was also published, and extensively circulated. The influence of such appeals to the people, setting forth "infringed rights"—"invaded properties"—"imprisoned friends"—would be full of danger in the result of the elections; and Cromwell was placed in an attitude of more determined hostility against the republican party. The elections were fiercely contested, amidst many popular tumults. The government had secured a majority, but many of its declared opponents were elected. Cromwell and his Council tried to persuade Vane, Harrison, and other opponents, to pledge themselves not to commit any act to the prejudice of the government. They refused; and were imprisoned. The nature of the pledge required may be judged from a remarkable conference between Cromwell and Ludlow, recorded by the sturdy republican, who had been dismissed from his employment in Ireland. When Ludlow drew near to the Council Table, Cromwell charged him with dispersing treasonable books in Ireland. He denied that they were treasonable. Cromwell said that he was not ignorant of many plots to disturb the present power, and that he thought it his duty to secure such as he suspected. Ludlow replied that whether his actions were good or bad he was ready to submit to a legal trial. Cromwell then required him to give assurance not to act against the government. "I desired," says Ludlow, "to be excused in that particular, reminding him of the reasons I had formerly given him for my refusal." The reasons were thus given at the previous interview referred to: "If Providence open a way, and give an opportunity of appearing in behalf of the people, I cannot consent to tie my own hands beforehand, and oblige myself not to lay hold on it. * * * My dissatisfactions were not grounded upon any animosity against his person; and that if my own father were alive, and in his place, they would, I doubted not, be altogether as great." * At this second conference Ludlow maintains the same resolute mind, and Cromwell exhibits the same desire to conciliate him: "Pray then, said he, what is it that you would have? May not every man be as good as he will? What can you desire more than you have? It were easy, said I, to tell what we would have. What is that, I pray, said he? That which we fought for, said I, that the nation might be governed by its own consent. I am, said he, as much for a government by consent as any man; but where shall we find

* "Memoirs," vol. ii. p. 554-5.



that consent? Amongst the Prelatical, Presbyterian, Independent, Anabaptist, or Levelling Parties? I answered, amongst those of all sorts who had acted with fidelity and affection to the public. Then he fell into the commendation of his own government, boasting of the protection and quiet which the People enjoyed under it, saying, that he was resolved to keep the nation from being imbrued in blood. I said, that I was of opinion too much blood had been already shed, unless there were a better account of it. You do well, said he, to charge us with the guilt of blood; but we think there is a good return for what hath been shed; and we understand what clandestine correspondences are carrying on at this time between the Spaniards and those of your party, who make use of your name, and affirm that you will own them and assist them. I know not, said I, what you mean by my party, and can truly say, that if any men have entered into an engagement with Spain, they have had no advice from me so to do, and that if they will use my name I cannot help it. Then in a softer way he told me, that he desired not to put any more hardships on me than on himself; that he had been always ready to do me all the good offices that lay in his power, and that he aimed at nothing by this proceeding but the public quiet and security. Truly Sir, said I, I know not why you should be an enemy to me who have been faithful to you in all your difficulties. I understand not, said he, what you mean by my difficulties. I am sure they were not so properly mine as those of the public; for in respect to my outward condition I have not much improved it, as these gentlemen, pointing to his Council, well know. To which they seemed to assent, by rising from their chairs; and therefore I thought not fit to insist farther on that point, contenting myself to say, that it was from that duty which I owed to the public, whereof he expressed such a peculiar regard, that I durst not give the security he desired, because I considered it to be against the liberty of the People, and contrary to the known law of England." * After this bold manifestation Ludlow went quietly away; to maintain that Cromwell was a usurper, and that the only legitimate authority was the Long Parliament. "In general there is as much difference between a usurper and an hereditary king, as there is between a wild boar and a tame one; but Cromwell had nothing in him ferocious." †

* "Memoirs," vol. ii. p. 570.

† Landor, "Imaginary Conversations."—Works, vol. i. p. 554.

The Parliament assembled on the 17th of September--a crowded meeting in the Painted Chamber on a hot day—so hot, that the Protector seems to imply that he will not detain them by a long speech, seeing "that condition and heat that you are now in." But he does speak at great length, with abundant words, although he says "Truly our business is to speak things" . . . "things that concern the glory of God, and his peculiar interest in the world." A large subject,—but one which Oliver mainly associates with "the being and subsistence of these nations with all their dependencies." Of their present dangers he chiefly speaks;—of "your great enemy, the Spaniard;" of the circumstances which "justify the war which has been entered upon with the Spaniard;" of the danger of "any peace with any State that is Popish, and subject to the determination of Rome and the Pope himself," for then "you are bound and they are loose." France was not "under such a tie to the pope." Spain, he says, "hath espoused that interest which you all along hitherto have been conflicting with—Charles Stuart's interest." He adds, "as there is a complication of these interests abroad, so there is a complication of them here. Can we think that Papists and Cavaliers shake not hands in England. . . . Your danger is so great, if you will be sensible of it, by reason of persons who pretend other things." He points to past dangers—to assassination plots, and insurrections in the preceding year. The present great danger was from "a generation of men in this nation who cry up nothing but righteousness, and justice, and liberty; and these are divided into several sects and sorts of men. They are known to shake hands with,—I should be loath to say with Cavaliers—but with all the scum and dirt of this nation." To meet such dangers "we did find but a little poor invention, which I hear has been much regretted—the erecting of your Major-Generals. . . . Truly I think if ever anything were justifiable as to necessity, this was." He then proceeds to Remedies:—First to consider all that ought to be done in order to Security; next doing all things that ought to be done in order to Reformation. For outward security join heartily in the prosecution of the war. "If you can come to prosecute it, prosecute it vigorously, or not at all." As to the distempers of people that pretend religion, "our practice since the last Parliament hath been, to let all this nation see that whatever pretensions to religion would continue quiet, peaceable, they should enjoy conscience and liberty to themselves, and not to make religion a pretence for arms and



blood." He points to the means which have been adopted "for the ejecting of scandalous ministers, and for the bringing in of them that have passed an approbation." He calls for Reformation of Manners. "In my conscience, it was a shame to be a Christian, within these fifteen, sixteen, or seventeen years in this nation—whether in Cæsar's house, or elsewhere. It was a shame, it was a reproach to a man, and the badge of Puritan was put upon it. We would keep up Nobility and Gentry; and the way to keep them up is, not to suffer them to be patronisers or countenancers of debauchery and disorders." These are wise words; and there were other words altogether as wise, which statesmen heeded not for more than a century and a half; holding, with learned Blackstone, the necessity of entirely disregarding as unworthy of notice "the crude and abortive schemes for amending the laws in the times of confusion which followed" the times of Charles I.* Let us conclude our brief notice of this remarkable speech of 1656, with a passage which contains, according to a high authority, "stronger indications of a legislative mind than are to be found in the whole range of orations delivered on such occasions, before or since." † "There are some things which respect the estates of men; and there is one general grievance in the Nation. It is the Law. Not that the laws are a grievance, but there are laws that are; and the great grievance lies in the execution and administration. I think I may say it, I have as eminent judges in this land, as have been had, as the Nation has had, for these many years. Truly I could be particular, as to the executive part of it, as to the administration of the Law; but that would trouble you. The truth of it is, there are wicked and abominable laws, which it will be in your power to alter. To hang a man for six-and-eightpence, and I know not what; to hang for a trifle, and acquit murder,—is in the ministration of the Law, through the ill-framing of it. I have known in my experience abominable murders acquitted. And to see men lose their lives for petty matters; this is a thing God will reckon for. And I wish it may not lie upon this nation a day longer than you have an opportunity to give a remedy; and I hope I shall cheerfully join with you in it. This hath been a great grief to many honest hearts and conscientious people; and I hope it is in all your hearts to rectify it."

The legislative mind of Cromwell could rarely find adequate encouragement in his legislators. We have seen how earnestly he

* Book iv. Chap. 33. † Macaulay, "Essays," vol. i.

was always calling, even from the battle-field, for reform of the laws. Surely Mr. Hallam must have been strangely prejudiced against the man and his principles, when, in his "Parallel between Cromwell and Napoleon," he says, "In civil government there can be no adequate parallel between one who had sucked only the dregs of a besotted fanaticism, and one to whom the stores of reason and philosophy were open. But it must here be added that Cromwell, far unlike his antitype, never showed any signs of a legislative mind, or any desire to fix his renown on that noblest basis, the amelioration of social institutions." Such a passage is unworthy of the usual calm and impartial tone of the "Constitutional History." It might have been better suited to the historian who designates Cromwell as "a barbarian." It would have been better suited to that historian, David Hume, to speak of "the dregs of a besotted fanaticism," as opposed to "the stores of reason and philosophy," who had little sympathy with, if not positive hatred to, the man or the race of men, who sought to live in the "great Task-master's eye." Cromwell, the barbarian, did not aspire to go down to posterity with a Code in his hand. He had not to build up new laws out of chaos, but to clear away the rubbish which encumbered the old laws. "If he erected little that was new, it was because there had been no general devastation to clear a space for him." *

The strong declamation of the Protector against men who cry up nothing but righteousness and justice and liberty—the men of several sects—the levelling party—the Commonwealth's men—seemed to point at some extraordinary course with this Parliament. About three hundred members had received a certificate in the following form: "These are to certify that —— is returned by indenture one of the Knights [or Burgesses] to serve in this present Parliament for the county [city or borough] of ——, and approved by his Highness's Council," which certificate was signed by the "Clerk of the Commonwealth in Chancery." This was a manifest violation of the ancient parliamentary privileges,—a violation upon the broadest scale. A hundred and two members, who had received no certificate, were prevented entering the House. Sixty-five sent a letter of remonstrance to the Speaker. The Clerk of the Commonwealth produced his instructions from the Council; and the House having then demanded of the Council why certain duly elected had not been admitted to sit, Nathaniel Fiennes, one

* Macaulay's "Essays," vol. i.



of the Commissioners of the Great Seal, attended, and showed that according to the Instrument of Government "no persons could be elected to serve in Parliament but such as were of known integrity, fearing God, and of good conversation;" and that, by the same Instrument, the Council was authorised and directed "to examine whether the persons elected were agreeable to the above-mentioned qualifications." The formal letter of the Constitution had been adhered to; its application was a bold exercise of arbitrary power. The excluded members protested against this total infraction of the conditions of a free Parliament; and denounced all the members who should continue to sit as "betrayers of the liberties of England, and adherents to the capital enemies of the Commonwealth." The public indignation was great and general; but a national success came opportunely to qualify it. A squadron of Blake's fleet off Cadiz had captured two Spanish galleons returning home with the treasures of the Indies; and the people crowded the roads and streets from Portsmouth to the Tower to look upon a procession of thirty-eight waggons laden with ingots and piastres. The treasury was replenished. The Parliament became tranquilised. The power of the Protector seemed established on a firm basis. He felt that he could relax in some measures of repression; and the Major-Generals were abolished. There was a mutilated Parliament; but the government of a Single Person was again coming within the bounds of constitutional liberty. The powers of the Parliament and the Protector now worked harmoniously together. Acts were passed for the security of his person: and for disannulling the title to the Crown of Charles Stuart and his descendants. The war with Spain was declared to be just and necessary; and four hundred thousand pounds were voted for the expenses of the war. The ordinances which the Protector had issued were for the most part confirmed. His appointments to judicial offices were approved. The revolution was thought by many to have passed its period of disturbance and experiment. It was even popularly considered to be probable and desirable that the Protector should assume a higher title, and with the powers of a king should receive the name. Poetical flattery talked of the Spanish gold being made into a crown and a royal sceptre. Amidst all sorts of speculations upon such an event, an incident which appeared to have little connection with a matter of such importance brought into view the necessary antagonism between the executive authority of the Protector, and the ill-defined and ill-understood executive

power of the Parliament. Amongst the new sect of Quakers was James Nayler, who, in his frantic enthusiasm, had proclaimed that the Redeemer was incarnate in his person; and he had moreover given a great public scandal in going about in a state of nudity.* The quaker was arrested at Bristol; and brought up to the bar of the House of Commons. There were ten days of wearisome debate, in which it was maintained that the House possessed the right of life and death. The madman narrowly escaped hanging; for eighty-two voted for his execution. He was finally condemned to be put in the pillory, to have his tongue bored through with a hot iron, and to be whipped through the streets. Cromwell saw, as the more fanatical members had not seen, that the whole course of legal government was threatened by this procedure of the House —that this assumption of judicial power was incompatible with the due course of justice. He addressed this letter to the Speaker: "Right trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well. Having taken notice of a judgment lately given by yourselves against one James Nayler: although we detest and abhor the giving or occasioning the least countenance to persons of such opinions and practices, or who are under the guilt of the crimes commonly imputed to the said person; yet we, being intrusted in the present government, on behalf of the people of these nations; and not knowing how far such proceeding, entered into wholly without us, may extend in the consequence of it,—Do desire that the House will let us know the grounds and reasons whereupon they have proceeded." Part of Nayler's sentence had been inflicted when this letter was received. The House immediately rejected a proposition for deferring the completion of the punishment. The people became more and more convinced that in a due balance of the executive and legislative functions they must look for safety. The obstinacy of the Parliament was Cromwell's triumph with the sober part of the nation. But his very pertinent desire to know "the grounds and reasons" for a "proceeding entered into wholly without Us," led

* There is a curious passage in the very interesting autobiography of Thomas Ellwood which somewhat explains this. Ellwood's father violently opposed, even by blows and horsewhippings, his son's determination to be a Quaker. The old squire said, "they held many dangerous principles; that they were an immodest shameless people; and that one of them stripped himself stark naked, and went in that unseemly manner about the streets, at fairs, and on market-day at great towns." The young man replied to his father by citing "the example of Isaiah, who went naked among the people for a long time." Isaiah was a prophet, said the father. "How know we but this Quaker may be a prophet, too?" rejoined the son.



to inquiries about the due apportionment of power, which had very remarkable results. Meanwhile a new assassination plot excited a general interest in the life of the Protector; and, like all such abortive schemes, made the authority stronger which it was intended to overthrow.

Charles the Second was residing at Bruges at the beginning of 1657. He had obtained money from Spain, with which he was making some show of preparation for an expedition to England. But Cromwell—there is the difficulty. Colonel Sexby has been in England, and is again with the king. He has left a trusty agent behind him, and a certain service is to be well rewarded. Miles Sindercomb was one of the Levellers of the army, who was sentenced to be shot at Burford in 1650. But he escaped then; was received as quartermaster into Monk's army in Scotland; got involved in new plots; and was cashiered. Sexby has left this man a large sum for the conduct of his operations. He hired a house at Hammersmith, and provided deadly combustibles of a sort to blow the Protector and his carriage into atoms as he took his Saturday ride to Hampton Court. Sindercomb arranged, moreover, to fire Whitehall, and have a safe blow at the Protector in the confusion. On the night of the 8th of January, the sentinel at the Palace finds a basket of wildfire, and a slow match gradually burning onwards to explode it. A life-guardsman comes before the Council, and proclaims that Miles Sindercomb is the man who has made these midnight arrangements. Sindercomb is taken; is tried; and convicted by a jury in the King's Bench: the day of execution is fixed; but he is found dead in his bed. His sister has conveyed poison to him. The author of "Killing no Murder"—whether Colonel Titus or Colonel Sexby—says that Sindercomb was smothered and not poisoned. With the wonted rant of political fanatics, he exclaims, "The brave Sindercomb hath shown as great a mind as any old Rome could boast of; and, had he lived there, his name had been registered with Brutus and Cato, and he had had his statues as well as they." This assassination plot was extinguished as quickly as the lighted match at Whitehall. The Parliament went in a body to congratulate the Protector on his escape; and his Highness made an appropriate reply. A Thanksgiving day followed; and two sermons at "Margaret's Church;" and a princely entertainment to the House by the Protector, and after dinner, "rare music, both of voices and instruments, till the evening."