fearful odds. The dangerous position of the duke of Savoy enabled William to stipulate successfully that the Waldenses, who had been subjected to long and grievous persecution, should be allowed to exercise their religion in peace. A treaty containing a secret article for their toleration was signed on the 8th of February, 1691.

The arrangements of the Congress had sufficiently ripened in a month to allow William to announce in the London Gazette, that the various powers had agreed to furnish certain contingents, which would enable an army of two hundred and twenty thousand men to take the field. But whilst the king of England was infusing his spirit into his allies, some eager and confident, others tardy and lukewarm, most with some especial private interest to accomplish—whilst, as the caricaturist of that day paid a homage to his powers, William was teaching his bears to dance*—Louis suddenly appeared in person at the head of a great army to besiege Mons, the strongly fortified capital of Hainault, and one of the chief barriers of the Netherlands against France. The French troops, gradually converging to the frontier from every quarter of the territory of Louis, were opening trenches before this strong fortress, whilst the allied powers were deliberating and dining at the Hague. William, with his accustomed energy, at once broke up the Congress; got together an army of fifty thousand men; but arrived only in time to learn that the burning city had capitulated amidst the terrors of its population, after a bombardment which had destroyed one half of its dwelling places. Louis went back to Versailles to hear the well-rehearsed flattery, that wherever the great king appeared the genius of Victory was there ready with the laurel crown. William ran over to England, with his secrets of the future kept close in his own bosom. He arrived on the 13th of April. On the 1st of May, he was again on his way to Holland. In these seventeen days the king had important affairs to settle, which required the exercise of a clear intellect.

The period had arrived when it was necessary to fill up the sees, vacant by the refusal to take the oaths, of the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishops of Bath and Wells, Ely, Gloucester, Norwich, and Peterborough. Two other non-juring bishops, Worcester and Chichester, had died in the interval since the Revolution. A discovery had been made of a correspondence of Turner, the bishop of Ely, with the court of St. Germains. Burnet says, "the discovery of the bishop of Ely's correspondence and

* "Macaulay," vol. iv. p. 8.

engagements in the name of the rest, gave the king a great advantage in filling the vacant sees." Whether Turner was justified in stating to James that he was acting in concert with his brethren, when he advised that a French army should come into England, may reasonably be doubted. Sancroft and a few bishops denied the charge in a printed paper, in answer to an anonymous pamphlet. Endeavours had been made to conciliate the non-juring prelates. All that they would engage to do was to live quietly. Their deprivation was no longer opposed, even by the king's Tory advisers. So Tillotson became archbishop of Canterbury, and Sharp archbishop of York. Patrick, Stillingfleet, Moore, Cumberland, Fowler, and Kidder, filled the other vacancies. "In two years' time the king had named fifteen bishops; and they were generally looked upon as the learnedest, the wisest, and best men that were in the church." This was Burnet's opinion; but from this opinion there were many dissentients. Tillotson was especially marked out for the hatred of the Jacobites. The violent high-churchmen saw cause of offence in all these preferments, for the successors of the non-juring bishops "were men both of moderate principles and calm tempers."*

When the king closed the Session of Parliament on the 5th of January, he noticed "the restlessness of our enemies, both at home and abroad, in designing against the prosperity of this nation and the government established." It was impossible that such "restlessness," and such dislike of "the government established," should not exist in some quarters. William alluded to the apprehension of lord Preston, with two other agents of the Jacobites, on the night of the 31st of December. They were seized on board a smack in the river, with papers addressed to James, containing propositions for his coming over with a small force during the absence of William, when the nation would be undefended, and the people would be complaining of the burthen of taxation. Preston and his humbler associate, Ashton, were tried for high treason in January, and were convicted upon very clear evidence. The altered character of the mode in which prisoners charged with political offences were treated by the judges and by the counsel for the crown, was strikingly exhibited in this trial. In the "Life of James" there is a curious observation of the compiler, which shows in what light the laws of the realm were considered by the champions of arbitrary power. The law which makes a corre-

* Burnet, vol. iv. p. 132.

spondence with a foreign enemy treasonable is for the safety of the commonwealth, as every other portion of the law of treason contemplates that safety. The biographer of James writes thus: "My lord Preston and Mr. Ashton (there not appearing evidence enough against Mr. Elliott) were brought to their trials, condemned, and the latter executed, being the first that suffered by a court of justice for the royal cause; which was a new subject of grief to the king, for he knew not what would be the consequence when he found the laws, as well as the sword, turned against him." * The notion could never be driven out of the heads of those who had seen a king ejected for his contempt of the laws; that he alone was the source of all law; and that without him, the one legitimate head of the law, it was powerless to protect or to punish. The new head of the law, expressly chosen that the ancient laws, which gave the people security and freedom, should not perish, but should be strengthened by an infusion of principles having still higher regard for the general good,—this sovereign of the Revolution was always considered by James and his minions as an interloper having no legal rights. The solemn compact which had been entered into by the nation with William and Mary was to give them no real authority. William was but a Prince of Orange, who had traitorously and wickedly thrust out God's anointed; and the assassin's knife was therefore too good a fate for him. Happy was it for England that this prince was a man of justice and clemency. We shall have to mention plot after plot against his life and his government. But we shall have to record no sweeping proscriptions, no demands for new powers, no exercise of his own uncontrolled will. During the long continuance of plots and conspiracies, the laws of high treason were so modified as to assure the prisoner a much fairer trial than under the ancient system, by affording him every facility for his defence. We may have incidentally to notice the publication of the most virulent libels against the person and principles of William. But we shall also have to record that, at the very time when these attacks were most frequent and most inflammatory, the laws against printing and publishing were relaxed instead of being made more stringent—the censorship of the press was abandoned. We may probably attribute to this moderation of the king, the circumstance that, although his reign was one of continual danger to his person; that although he was surrounded by treacherous

* "Life of James II." vol. ii. p. 443.

servants and cold friends; that although a systematic attack upon the principles that raised him to power was constantly going forward,—his power strengthened as it grew, out of the very absence of any attempt to prop it by unconstitutional devices. There might have been something in the character of the English people which led them to respect the equanimity which had no morbid dread of the conspirator or the libeller; which was never diverted from its own course of duty by fear or by revenge. But certainly there must have been something very remarkable in the character of William—very different from the ordinary character of those who are termed usurpers—to direct him toward the noble policy of making himself secure by equal justice instead of irregular despotism, and of living down calumny instead of weakly attempting to forbid its utterance. We have been led to these remarks by the fact, that when William returned from the Continent in April, he had to occupy some portion of his short visit to England by learning the extent of the conspiracy of which Preston was the chief agent, and of determining as to the fate of some of those accused as conspirators. We cannot enter minutely into the details of the discoveries which had been made by his ministers in the king's absence. Preston had confessed, when his own fate appeared to depend upon his confession, that he was guilty himself, and that Clarendon, Turner the bishop of Ely, and William Penn, were implicated with him. When William returned to England, Preston was brought before him at the Council; and he then said, "that Mr. Penn had told him the duke of Ormond, the earls of Devonshire, Dorset, Macclesfield, lord Brandon," * and others, were well affected to the plot. He also implicated lord Dartmouth. The accusation against these eminent persons was probably without foundation. Whether or not, William stopped the hearsay testimony of Preston. The biographer of James shows the value of this wise discretion: "It is probable the prince of Orange thought it not prudent to attack so great a body of the nobility at once; that what he knew was sufficient either to be aware of them, or by forgiveness and a seeming clemency gain them to his interest. Which method succeeded so well, that whatever sentiments those lords which Mr. Penn had named might have had at that time, they proved in effect most bitter enemies to his Majesty's [king James's] cause ever afterwards." † And this is deliberately written by the habitual maligner of king William.

* "Life of James II." p. 433.

† *Ibid.*

Since the successes of Marlborough in the autumn of 1690, there had been no marked change in the positions of the two contending parties in Ireland. To follow up his successes was not a trust assigned to the victor at Cork and Kinsale. Marlborough was chosen by William to accompany him in his Continental campaign. He was entrusted to collect all the English troops, and to wait near Brussels till the king should arrive to take the command. William had much diplomatic work on his hands—to encourage the wavering, to assist the weak, and to bribe the hungry. Victor Amadeus was in despair at the devastation of his country by the French armies: Schomberg was sent by William to raise the duke out of his despondency. The petty princes of the Germanic empire, striving, for the most part, for some personal dignity or profit, had each to be propitiated and kept in good humour. In the interval between the king's arrival at the Hague and his taking the command of the army, Marlborough was sorely tempted to make good some of the professions which he had secretly conveyed to the sovereign whom he had betrayed in 1688. It is recorded that Marlborough had, in London, told colonel Sackville, an agent of the court of St. Germains, "that he was ready to redeem his apostacy with the hazard of his utter ruin;" and "proffered to bring over the English troops that were in Flanders if the king [James] required it." It is further stated that he wrote to the same effect to James himself, in January and May, 1691. "Nevertheless," says the compiler of James's life, "the king found no effects of these mighty promises; for his majesty insisting upon his offer of bringing over the English troops in Flanders, as the greatest service he could do him, he excused himself under pretence that there was some mistake in the message." Marlborough asked, however, for two lines under the hand of James, "to testify that he would extend his pardon to him." * James, it is stated, complied with this request. Whether the crafty Churchill really believed, as he assured James, that "in case the French were successful in Flanders, or any ill accident should happen to the prince of Orange, his restoration would be very easy," it is pretty clear that he, like many others, saw nothing higher in politics than their own safety and their own profit. William had no suspicion of the man employed by him in a most important command. The opportunity was probably wanting for a decisive act of treachery in this

* "Life of James II." vol. ii. p. 448.

campaign, in which nothing great on either side was accomplished or even attempted.

But, if 1691 were a year of inaction in Flanders, it was a year of great events in Ireland. In the spring, Tyrconnel had arrived from France to assume his position as the viceroy of James; and he was followed by a French general, Saint Ruth, as commander-in-chief of the Irish army. He took the command at Limerick, and made great exertions to bring the disorganized troops into a state of efficiency. On the English side, an experienced Dutch officer, Ginkell, was appointed to the command-in-chief. His first operation was to lay siege to Athlone. On the thirtieth of June, a day memorable with the English army, the grenadiers again put green boughs in their hats, and were led to the assault under the command of Mackay. The town was taken by a bold attack; and Saint Ruth, who was encamped near, marched away on the road to Galway. He took up a strong position at Aghrim, resolved to risk a general engagement. On the 12th of July, at five in the evening, the two armies joined battle. The Irish fought with the most desperate resolution. The English and Dutch attacked and fell back, again and again. The issue was at one time very doubtful. But at the very crisis of the engagement, the French general was killed by a cannon-ball, and his death was concealed. The other general, Sarsfield, was inactive with the reserve, waiting for orders. The Irish were overpowered, and were soon disorganized. The victory of the English was complete, and they did not use it with moderation. There were few prisoners; and four thousand Irish lay dead on the actual battle-field. It is supposed that seven thousand altogether fell in the horrible carnage which accompanied the total rout of Aghrim. Ginkell followed up his victory by obtaining the capitulation of Galway; its garrison, with the French general, D'Usson, being permitted to retire to Limerick. Here was the last stand made against the triumphant army of king William. That army was now well supplied with artillery and the munitions of war. The same ground was occupied as in the previous year; but it was not in the same wet condition. Ginkell, by a bold manœuvre, crossed the Shannon on a bridge of boats, and scattered the Irish horse that were encamped near the city. He then succeeded in carrying a detached fort, which commanded the bridge called Thomond's; and a fearful slaughter of the garrison accompanied this success. The bombardment was terribly effective. The garrison might hold out till the whole town was in ashes;

but even then, unless the besiegers were compelled to retire on the approach of the wet season, hunger would effect what cannon-balls and bombs had left incomplete. The fall of the city became inevitable. In 1690 a French fleet commanded the approaches from the sea. Now, an English fleet rode in the Shannon. Hostilities were suspended for some days during the progress of negotiations. On the 1st of October, two treaties were signed—one military, the other civil. The civil treaty was signed by the Lords Justices, who had repaired to the camp. The first article of this civil treaty was in the following words: "It is agreed that the Roman Catholics of this kingdom shall enjoy such privileges in the exercise of their religion, as are consistent with the laws of Ireland, or as they did enjoy in the reign of king Charles the Second. And their majesties, as soon as their affairs will permit them to summon a Parliament in this kingdom, will endeavour to procure the said Roman Catholics such further security in this particular, as may preserve them from any disturbance on account of their said religion." An entire amnesty was promised to all who should take the oath of allegiance. Limerick bears the name of "the City of the Violated Treaty." Years of unjust and vindictive penal laws, which are now happily swept away, have manifested that this reproach is not unfounded. The Parliament of Ireland became wholly Protestant, and laws were passed which not only denied the Roman Catholics "privilege, in the exercise of their religion," but deprived them of the most sacred civil rights—the rights of family. The war in Ireland was at an end—but not its woes. It was offered to the thousands of Irish troops at Limerick, to make their election for entering the army of king William, or to become the soldiers of king Louis in France. The greater number decided for France. It had been promised by the Irish general that those who embarked for another country should be allowed to take their wives and families with them. The promise could only be partly realised. "When the ablest men," says the writer of "Macariæ Excidium," "were once got on shipboard, the women and babes were left on the shore, exposed to hunger and cold, without any manner of provision, and without any shelter in that rigorous season but the canopy of heaven; and in such a miserable condition that it moved pity in some of their enemies." Ireland thus passed under the rule of the English colonizers. Happy would it have been, if years had not been suffered to elapse before it was felt that penal laws were the worst of all modes for

securing religious conformity; happy, if another series of years had not been wasted in attempts to maintain the Union of two nations without an equal participation of civil rights. The present generation has honestly laboured to repair the injustice of the past; and the time may thus arrrive when even the name of the third William shall be pronounced without party hatreds.