

hereby fully authorize, strictly require, and expressly command our loving subjects to rise in arms and make war upon the Prince of Orange the usurper of our throne and all his adherents, and to seize for our use all such forts, towns, strongholds within our dominion of England, as may serve to further our interest, and to do from time to time such other acts of hostility against the Prince of Orange and his adherents as may conduce most to our service, We judging this the properest, justest, and most effectual means of procuring our restoration and their deliverance; and we do hereby indemnify them for what they shall act in pursuance of this our Royal command. Given at our Court of St. Germain's en Laye, the 27th of December, 1695." On the 27th of December, Barclay says: "I parted from St. Germain's, having none with me but major Holmes, and about the 27th old style [January 6] arrived in London." The narrative of Barclay, in some respects very important, in others very meagre, is to be satisfactorily pieced out by various evidence collected by the ministers of William. In Romney Marsh lived one Robert Hunt, who describes himself as yeoman. He had for some years "been employed by the party in all their correspondence with France." He deposed that Barclay and Holmes came over together some time in January, and about the same time sixteen or eighteen persons came over. At the beginning of February, "a tall young gentleman," who was particularly recommended by one Mr. Pigaut, at Calais, came over alone; and Hunt had heard since, and believed, this person was the duke of Berwick. After Barclay had received the hospitalities of the smuggler's cottage in Romney Marsh, came two men in company, Harris and Hare. Harris deposed that he had served king James in Ireland as an ensign of foot, and since in France. On the 4th of January (new style) king James sent for him, and Hare his comrade; said he should send them to England; he had ordered money for that journey, and they were to follow Barclay's orders. The king then went on to say they would find Barclay every Monday and Thursday evening, between six and seven o'clock, in Covent Garden Square, and might know him by a white handkerchief hanging out of his coat pocket. Looking over a list, James added that they were to go by the names of Jenkins and Guineys while in England. Harris and Hare met Barclay in London. They were ordered to keep close till there was an occasion for their service, and were put on a sort of establishment at five shillings a day.

We have now traced Barclay to his great scene of action, and may revert to his own official narrative. He became acquainted,

soon after his arrival, with Mr. Charnock, who complained to him that he and others had a design on foot which would have facilitated the return of king James, but that his majesty would never permit them to put it in execution. Sir William Parkyns, a few days after, explained what that design was. They wanted nothing but his majesty's leave. "It was to form a party to fall upon the prince of Orange." James, in his own Memoirs, states that in 1693 a proposal had been made to him "of seizing and bringing away the prince of Orange, and of making a rising in and about London"—but he "would not hear of it, looking upon the project as impracticable." It was again proposed, he says, and again rejected. In 1695 it was a third time proposed, by one Crosbie, alias Clench, who came from another set of men, who "made no doubt of seizing the prince of Orange and carrying him off, but desired a warrant signed by his majesty to empower them to do it." James, as he says, rejected this matter, and charged Crosbie not to meddle in it. This very "indiscreet and insolent man," as the Memoir goes on to say, went not only to his own club, but to several of another club, "as Mr. George Porter, Goodman, sir William Parkyns, and Charnock; engaged them to join with him; and, to gain the greater credit and reputation with them, assured them that an order would speedily be sent to him for the executing of it." When Charnock and Parkyns opened their design to Barclay "to fall upon the prince of Orange,"—something more intelligible than the delicate proposal of "seizing and bringing away the prince of Orange,"—Barclay says, "I did much approve of it, if it could be carried on with that secrecy and conduct as a thing of that consequence ought to be; upon which I immediately asked them if it was possible to find so many good men as would be requisite, and would undertake a brave action without asking of questions." They were certain of it. Upon this, the confidential agent of king James produced his commission for "acts of hostility against the prince of Orange." He had parted with his master at St. Germain's on the 27th of December, with eight hundred pounds put into his purse; he had no hesitation in interpreting the secrets of the royal mind; he was prompt

"On the winking of authority
To understand a law; to know the meaning
Of dangerous majesty;" *

and so, he says, "presuming, therefore, upon the commission I had from his majesty to make war upon the prince of Orange and all his adherents, I thought myself sufficiently authorized to engage

* "King John," Act iv., sc. 3.

with them to attack that prince when his guards were about him; upon which I showed them my commission, which they were much pleased with." Barclay, says James, "proposed to attack the prince of Orange with forty horse on the road as he went to or came from hunting at Richmond; whereas his commission imported no such thing."

"It is the curse of kings to be attended
By slaves that take their humours for a warrant,
To break within the bloody house of life."*

In the Memoirs of James we find that "the day his majesty left St. Germain's, being the 28th of February, he met at St. Denis a servant of the duke of Berwick, with a letter from his master to the earl of Middleton, which gave an account of his being come back. . . . By some expressions in his letter, it was plain he had not succeeded in it [his negotiation] as expected." According to the deposition of Hunt, "the tall young gentleman" who arrived at Romney Marsh at the beginning of February returned from London within a week. The transport ships of Louis were to rendezvous at Calais on the 25th of February; and on that day Louis sent a message to James to let him know that "he thought it fit his majesty should go down forthwith to the sea-side, but not to let the men embark till he was sure the Jacobites were up in England." Why did James go down to the sea-side, when it was plain the duke of Berwick had not succeeded in raising the Jacobites in England? Barclay was in London with his commission. James saw the duke of Berwick, and heard from him in "what condition he had left things in England." And still "he continued his own journey to Calais." We hear little more in the words of James himself. The compiler of his life says, "He still hoped something might happen, on which he could raise a request to let the troops embark first, and for that reason continued his journey to Calais; where he was no sooner arrived, but, according to his usual good fortune, found himself at the end of his expectation, by meeting the news of several gentlemen being seized on account of an attempt upon the prince of Orange's person." It was, of course, necessary for the friends of James to deny his complicity in a scheme of assassination. He himself says that he, "finding nothing more was to be done, returned to St. Germain's, longing to see sir George Barclay, to know what he could say for himself, seeing his power for levying war was in general terms only."† Berwick was himself perfectly well aware how Barclay and his friends had interpreted this general power.

* "King John," Act iv. sc. 3.

† "Life of James," vol. ii. p. 553.

The incidents of the discovery of the plot for taking the life of William, furnish a signal instance, in addition to other evidences in English history, of the difficulty, if not impossibility, of many persons being associated in a conspiracy of so momentous a nature without detection. Barclay says in his narrative, that he had learnt that one Captain Fisher, who lived in King Street, Westminster, had made several proposals for raising men for the service of king James; that Barclay, disguised, saw him; and that Fisher proposed "to attack the prince of Orange between the two gates as he passed from Hyde Park to St. James's Park." Barclay says that he heard this, and other proposals, but never let Fisher know of any design he had on foot; but asked him "to give me notice when the prince of Orange went a hunting, pretending I had a mind to see him hunt." On the 11th of February, Fisher was in communication with the earl of Portland. He told him there was a design against the king's life. What details he gave are not very clear. In a subsequent deposition he said that he was introduced to sir George Barclay by one Johnson, alias Harrison, a monk, at a public house in Bow street, where the scheme of the attack at Hyde Park gate was proposed; and that on the 5th they discoursed about seizing the king at Kensington House in the night, by scaling the garden wall. On the 13th Fisher went again to Portland. The cautious friend of William was not forward in giving credit to such statements; or he thought it more prudent to say nothing till his information was more distinct. On the evening of the 14th Portland, on entering his lodgings at Whitehall, found an unknown person in the ante-chamber, who begged to speak with him in private. "My lord," he said, persuade the king to stay at home to-morrow; for if he go abroad to hunt he will be assassinated." Portland went to the king, and persuaded him, with great difficulty, to remain at home. Barclay, in his narrative, shows that he had not been idle since he opened his commission to Charnock and Parkyns: "I was at Kensington itself, and major Holmes with me; and everywhere else about London where that prince [William] used to go, both to know the ground, and what judgment I could make of it, in case any occasion should offer." The place fixed upon was Turnham Green. He describes this convenient spot, where the king was expected to pass, as "something narrow with hedges and ditches on each hand, so that a coach and six horses cannot easily turn, at least on a sudden; and at the very entrance of the green there were some little shrubs and bushes, which would put men under some sort of cover." The king would take this road to the water-side, where he usually took boat to cross to the Surrey side of the

Thames. The 15th was the day planned for the attack with blunderbusses, musquitoons, and well sharpened swords. The reluctant resolve of William to forego his hunt disconcerted the arrangement. Parkyns had provided his five men well mounted; Porter and Charnock their five each; Barclay had given money to Holmes and Charnock to buy twenty horses and their furniture; the men he had ready under pay, with a list of their lodgings.* The king stayed at home; but on the following Saturday he would be made sure of.

Between the 15th of February and the 22nd, another of the conspirators was closeted with Portland. His name was de la Rue. There were now three persons who had given warning of the plot. Two had furnished a somewhat circumstantial account. On the evening of the 21st, the man who had exhorted Portland to warn the king to stay at home was brought before William himself. Cutts was present, in his office of captain of the guards. Portland was there also. The man was a Roman Catholic named Pendergrass. For a long time he refused to give the names of any of the conspirators. He was not threatened, but exhorted. He at last required an assurance that his evidence should not be used against any of the criminals, and William gave his word of honour that it should not be so employed except with his own consent. He then wrote down a list of names. He especially desired to screen his friend Porter; and Porter himself, though one of the foremost in the scheme, was subsequently admitted as evidence. Barclay was recommended to Porter by Charnock and Parkyns; but he hesitated about trusting him; "not," says he, "that I mistrusted his loyalty, but that I heard he was much given to drink, and open-minded." On Saturday morning, the 22nd, the conspirators assembled at Porter's lodgings; Pendergrass was amongst the number. They were in high glee. Their spies at the palace sent word that the king would certainly hunt that day,—that the coaches had gone from the Mews at Charing Cross to take him to Kew ferry; that the guards had gone to Richmond. They were taking a parting glass at the Blue Posts in Spring Gardens, before starting separately, so as not to attract attention, when Keyes, one of their number, formerly a trumpeter in the Blues, who had been in constant communication with some of his old comrades, came to say that the coaches and the guards were come back. They hurriedly dispersed. The next day twenty prisoners were arrested. Barclay escaped.

A special commission was issued for the trial of the prisoners. The first tried were Charnock, Keyes, and King, on the 11th of

* Barclay's "Narrative."

March. Charnock—who had been a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, when James took his arbitrary measures against that society, and then became its popish vice-president—was an indefatigable agent of the Jacobites. He defended himself with ability; for the Act which allowed prisoners counsel, and gave them other advantages under a charge of high treason, was not to come into operation till the 25th of March. It was unjust and impolitic in the government to press on the trials under this circumstance. The convictions of the accused would unquestionably have been as certain if the privileges of counsel, of a copy of the indictment, and of a list of witnesses, had been allowed them. Their crime was proved beyond a doubt by the evidence of Pendergrass, and of their more guiltily accomplices. Their executions followed quickly upon the verdict of the jury. Buret relates that lord Somers told him that Charnock sent an offer to the king to disclose all he knew of the consultations and designs of the Jacobites, if his life were spared, but that William "was afraid to have such a scene opened, and would not accept of this offer." According to Dalrymple, Charnock said "he would disclose the names of all those who had employed him in England, if his punishment was changed from death into perpetual imprisonment. The king generously answered, 'I desire not to know them.'" Charnock on the scaffold delivered a letter to the sheriff, in which he denied that James had authorised assassination by any commission. But in a letter to a friend he justified the assassination of such a usurper as Cromwell or as William. "He thought either of them might be treated as one would do a thief or a robber, whom it is lawful in one's own defence to attack, and kill too, if nothing else will do." He quotes the authority of Grotius, that a subject of a dispossessed prince might lawfully kill the usurper of the supreme power. We take this doctrine of Charnock from an abstract in the "Life of James;" but the right of a subject to kill an usurper is thus qualified—"that indeed he requires the legal proprietor's commission, which Mr. Charnock said they had in general terms."* The original paper in the Bodleian Library is abstracted by Lord Macaulay, who gives the following sentence from it in a note: "Nobody that believes his majesty to be the lawful king of England can doubt but that in virtue of his commission to levy war against the prince of Orange and his adherents, the setting upon his person is justifiable, as well by the laws of the land, duly interpreted and explained, as by the law of God." †

There were five other trials connected with this formidable conspiracy. Sir John Friend, a rich London trader, had not taken

* "Life of James," vol. ii. p. 566.

† "History," vol. iv. p. 675.

part in the Assassination Plot, although he knew of it; but he had made large preparations for assisting in a foreign invasion. Sir William Parkyns, as we have seen, was an active participator in the design to kill the king. Three other conspirators, Rookwood, Cranborne, and Lowick, were tried. They were all convicted, and all suffered the death of traitors.

The effect upon the temper of the nation of the discovery of this Jacobite Plot is forcibly expressed in the "Diary" of Evelyn: "Though many did formerly pity King James' condition, this design of assassination, and bringing over a French army, alienated many of his friends, and was likely to produce a more perfect establishment of king William."

The complete discomfiture of the plans of St. Germain is thus mentioned by the compiler of the Life of James: "This intended attempt being thus discovered, it raised such a ferment in the nation as put an end to the king's real design of landing, by making it impossible for his friends to assemble, they having enough to do to secure themselves from the strict and universal search which this discovery occasioned." No one who looks carefully at the evidence in this affair can doubt that "the king's real design of landing" came to an end when he knew that Sir George Barclay had not been able to carry out his commission "to make war upon the prince of Orange," by stopping that prince's coach as it was dragged through the miry and narrow lane at Turnham Green, and with his eight good men, armed with pistols and "strong pushing swords," putting to death the hated usurper who was unlawfully called king of England.

CHAPTER II.

William in the Netherlands.—His Financial Embarrassments.—Great Crisis of Commercial Difficulty.—Revival of Credit.—The New Currency established.—Attainder of Sir John Fenwick.—Negotiations for Peace.—The Peace of Ryswick.—Opening of St. Paul's Cathedral.—Parliament.—Reduction of the Army.—Dangers of an insufficient Force.—The East India Company.—Statute against Socinians.—Reformation of Manners.—Societies for Promoting Christian Knowledge and for the Propagation of the Gospel.—Licentiousness of the Stage.—Embassy to France.—French Embassy to England.—Czar of Muscovy in England.

AFTER these harassing events, had taken their course, William departed for the continent, to encounter dangers and difficulties far more oppressive than the risks of a battle—more insupportable to such a man than any dread of the assassin's knife. He left London in the very crisis of the monetary change, and was in Holland on the 7th of May. On the 22nd of May the king wrote to Shrewsbury from the Hague. He informed his Secretary of State that the French army had first taken the field; that the allied troops assemble as well as they can, but find it difficult to join, as the enemy had far advanced in great force. There was another reason, he said. The troops "in Flanders are so much in want of money, that they can scarcely move; and if the Treasury do not find prompt means to furnish supplies, I know not how I can possibly act."* On the 25th of May, Shrewsbury wrote to William in great alarm: "We discoursed this morning with several of the most eminent goldsmiths, and with some of the Bank, and had the smallest accounts from them of the state of credit in this town, and of the effect it would soon have upon all the traders in money; none of them being able to propose a remedy, except letting the Parliament sit in June, and enacting the clipped money to go again;—the very hope of which locks up all the gold and good money, and would be to undo all that has been done."† The Lords Justices, who had the charge of affairs in William's absence, were to a great extent helpless. They saw clearly what locked up all the gold and good money; but to retrace their steps would have been fatal. Their position was one of extreme difficulty. Public clamour was loud in its demand "that clipped money should be cur-

* "Shrewsbury Correspondence," p. 114. † *Ibid.*, p. 116.