

statements, and a declamatory speech from Pym gave a sketch of all the charges against Strafford, and endeavored to destroy all the merit of those parts of his administration which the accused could appeal to. The regular business of the court followed; twenty-eight charges of treason and maladministration were formally preferred against Strafford; every high proceeding and act of power, every harshness, and every case of grievance of the subject, noble and aristocratical, that they thought could tell upon the court; all the knots and rough spots and corners that an administration of unparalleled activity had, in the full swing and impetus of its course, contracted, were brought up, singly and isolatedly enlarged upon, and exhibited in the very worst color. Strafford was asserted to have done every thing with a view to the most selfish ends, to establish his own tyranny, oppression, and extortion; and the very idea of a respectable *intention* in what he did, of any view to public good, mistaken, irregular, as they might think it, but still real, was not alluded to.

Strafford was fully equal to the emergency, and played off his host of papers with all the self-possession and dexterity possible. No knowledge of what a thread his life hung by ever unsteadied for a moment his thorough coolness and presence of mind; no unfair play, time after time, throughout the trial, put him the least out of temper; he let nothing pass without a struggle, he fought for a point of law or court practice stoutly, determinately; when decided against him, the fine, well-tempered spirit was passive again, took, with a *nil admirari*, what it could not help, and worked upon the bad ground as if it were its own choice. A charge was made with every skillful exaggeration and embellishment; he simply asked time to get up his reply—it was refused; without “sign of repining”—it is the unconsciously beautiful expression of Baillie—he turned round and conferred with his counsel. For a few minutes a little nucleus of heads, amid the general turmoil, were seen in earnest consultation, eyes bent downward,

and hands shuffling and picking out papers: the defense arranged with that concentrated attention which shortness of time and necessity inspire, Strafford was ready again, and faced the court. Great was the contrast of the rest of the scene; these pauses were the immediate signal for a regular noise and hubbub, and it was with laughing, chattering, walking about, eating and drinking, close to him and echoed from all sides, that the tall, black figure of Strafford was seen, “serious with his secretaries,” and life and death were at work in his small isolated knot. The general behavior in court throughout was gross and vulgar in the extreme, and scandalized Baillie. There was a continual noise, movement, and confusion of people leaving and returning, doors slamming, and enormous eating and drinking; bread and meat and confections were dispatched greedily; the bottle went round from mouth to mouth, and the assembled company manifested by the freest signs their enjoyment of the occasion.

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 XXXIX.

## ATTEMPT TO ARREST THE FIVE MEMBERS.—GARDINER.

[Strafford was condemned and executed in May of 1641. In the summer of that year Charles visited his northern capital. His plan was to make peace with the Scots, which he did by yielding all the points in dispute, and then to turn upon and crush the English opposition. Returning to London toward the close of the year, he brought a charge of high treason against five of the leaders of the House of Commons. There were constitutional methods by which these men might have been arrested, and, if guilty, punished. But Charles disdained constitutional ways and chose to resort to force. He grossly violated the privileges of the Parliament by going to the House of Commons at the head of a body of armed men and attempting to arrest his enemies in their places in the House.]

If the blow had not already fallen, it was because Charles had been involved in his usual vacillation. According to a