XLIII.

LAST DAYS OF CROMWELL.—MASSON.

[Cromwell was now virtually supreme. In December, 1653, he was made Lord Protector of the three kingdoms, and entered, with characteristic energy, upon the herculean task of establishing a permanent civil organism, and of securing recognition for his government abroad. Both his home and his foreign policy were exceedingly brilliant, challenging the admiration even of his enemies; but he was constantly harassed by factions, was often compelled to resort to force when he would have ruled constitutionally, and at last broke down under a burden which proved to be greater than even he could bear.]

THOUGH but in his sixtieth year, and with his prodigious powers of will, intellect, heart, and humor unimpaired visibly in the least atom, his frame had for some time been giving way under the pressure of his ceaseless burden. For a year or two his handwriting, though statelier and more deliberate than at first, had been singularly tremulous, and to those closest about him there had been other signs of physical breaking up. Not till late in July, however, or early in August, was there any serious cause for alarm; and then in consequence of the terrible effects upon his highness of his close attendance on the death-bed of his second daughter, the much-loved Lady Claypole. She had been lingeringly ill for some time of a most painful internal disease, aggravated by the death of her youngest boy, Oliver. Hampton Court had received her as a dying invalid, "tortured by frequent and long convulsion-fits;" and here, through a great part of July, the fond father had been hanging about her, broken-hearted and unfit for business.

Before her death his grief had passed into an indefinite illness, described as "of the gout and other distempers;" and though he was able to come to London on the 10th of August, he returned to Hampton Court greatly the worse. But, after four or five days of confinement, he was out again for an hour

Oliver Cromwell.

on the 17th; and thence till Friday, the 20th, he seemed so much better that Thurloe and others thought the danger past. From the public at large the fact of his illness had been hitherto concealed as much as possible; and hence it may have been, that on two or three of those days of convalescence, he showed himself, as usual, riding with his life-guards in Hampton Court Park. It was on one of them, most probably Friday, the 20th, that George Fox had that final meeting with him, which he describes in his journal. The good, but obtrusive, Quaker had been writing letters of condolence and mystical religious advice to Lady Claypole in her illness, and had recently sent one of mixed condolence and rebuke to Cromwell himself, and now, not knowing of Cromwell's own illness, he had come to have a talk with him about the sufferings of the Friends. "Before I came to him, as he rode at the head of his life-guard," says Fox, "I saw and felt a waft of death go forth against him; and, when I came to him, he looked like a dead man." Fox, nevertheless, had his conversation with the protector, who told him to come again. Next day, Saturday, August 21, when Fox went to Hampton Court Palace to keep his appointment, he could not be admitted. Harvey, the groom of the bed-chamber, told him that his highness was very ill, with his physicians about him, and must be kept quiet. That morning his distemper had developed itself distinctly into "an ague;" which ague proved, within the next few days, to be of the kind called by the physicians "a bastard tertian," that is, an ague with the cold and hot shivering fits recurring most violently every third day, but with the intervals also troublesome. The physicians, thinking the London air better for the malady than that of Hampton Court, his highness was removed to Whitehall on Tuesday, the 24th.

Saturday, the 28th, was a day of marked crisis. The ague had then changed into a "double tertian," with two fits in the twenty-four hours, both extremely weakening. So Sunday

passed, with prayers in all the churches; and then came that extraordinary Monday, August 30, which lovers of coincidence have taken care to remember as the day of most tremendous hurricane that ever blew over London and England. From morning to night the wind raged and howled, emptying the streets, unroofing houses, tearing up trees in the parks, foundering ships at sea, and taking even Flanders and the coasts of France within its angry whirl. The storm was felt, within England, as far as Lincolnshire, where, in the vicinity of an old manor-house, a boy of fifteen years of age, named Isaac Newton, was turning it to account, as he afterward remembered, by jumping first with the wind, and then against it, and computing its force by the difference of the distances. Through all this storm, as it shuddered round Whitehall, shaking the doors and windows, the sovereign patient had lain on, passing from fit to fit, but talking in the intervals with the lady protectress, or with his physicians, while Owen, Thomas Goodwin, Sterry, or some other of the preachers that were in attendance, went and came between the chamber and an adjoining room. A certain belief that he would recover, which he had several times before expressed to the lady protectress and others, had not yet left him, and had communicated itself to the preachers as an assurance that their prayers were heard. Writing to Henry Cromwell at nine o'clock that night, Thurloe could say: "The doctors are yet hopeful that he may struggle through it, though their hopes are mingled with much fear." Even the next day, Tuesday, August 31, Cromwell was still himself, still consciously the lord protector. Through the storm of the preceding day, Ludlow had made a journey to London from Essex, on family business, beaten back in the morning by a wind against which two horses could not make way, but contriving late at night to push on as far as Epping. "By this means," he says, "I arrived not at Westminster till Tuesday about noon, when, passing by Whitehall, notice was immediately given to Cromwell that I was come to town. Whereupon he sent for Lieutenant-General Fleetwood, and ordered him to inquire concerning the reason of my coming at such haste and at such a time." At the end of the day, Fleetwood, writing to Henry Cromwell, reported: "The Lord is pleased to give some little reviving this evening; after few slumbering-sleeps, his pulse is better." As near as can be guessed, it was that same night that Cromwell himself uttered the well-known short prayer, the words of which, or as nearly as possible the very words, were preserved by the pious care of his chamber-attendant, Harvey. It is to the same authority that we owe the most authentic record of the religious demeanor of the protector from the beginning of his illness. Very beautifully and simply Harvey tells us of his "holy expressions," his fervid references to Scripture texts, and his repetitions of some texts in particular, such repetitions "usually being very weighty, and with great vehemency of spirit." One of them was: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Three times he repeated this; but the texts of promise and of Christian triumph had all along been more frequently on his lips. All in all, his single short prayer, which Harvey places "two or three days before his end," may be read as the summary of all we need to know of the dying Puritan in these eternal respects. "Lord," he muttered, "though I am a miserable and wretched creature, I am in covenant with Thee through grace, and I may, I will, come to Thee. For Thy people, Thou hast made me, though very unworthy, a mean instrument to do them some good, and Thee service; and many of them have set too high a value upon me, though others wish and would be glad of my death. But, Lord, however Thou dost dispose of me, continue and go on to do good for them. Give them consi tency of judgment, one heart, and mutual love; and go on to deliver them, and with the work of reformation; and make the name of Christ glorious in the world. Teach those who look too

much upon Thy instruments to depend more upon Thyself; pardon such as desire to trample upon the dust of a poor worm, for they are Thy people too; and pardon the folly of this short prayer, even for Jesus Christ's sake; and give us a good night, if it be Thy pleasure."

Wednesday, September 1, passed unmarked, unless it may be for the delivery to the lady protectress, in her watch over Cromwell, of a letter dated that day, and addressed to her and her children, from the Quaker, Edward Burrough. It was long and wordy, but substantially an assurance that the Lord had sent this affliction upon the protector's house, on account of the unjust sufferings of the Quakers. "Will not their sufferings lie upon you? For many hundreds have suffered cruel and great things, and some the loss of life (though not by, yet in the name of, the protector); and about a hundred at this present day lie in holes, and dungeons, and prisons, up and down the nation." The letter, we may suppose, was not read to Cromwell, and the Wednesday went by. On Thursday, September 2, there was an unusually full council meeting, close to his chamber, at which order was given for the removal of Lords Lauderdale and Sinclair from Windsor Castle to Warwick Castle, to make more room at Windsor for the duke of Buckingham. That night Harvey sat up with his highness, and again noted some of his sayings. One was, "Truly, God is good; indeed He is; He will not—" He did not complete the sentence. "His speech failed him," says Harvey; "but, as I apprehended, it was, 'He will not "leave me.' This saying, that God was good, he frequently "used all along, and would speak it with much cheerfulness "and fervor of spirit in the midst of his pain. Again, he said, "'I would be willing to live to be further serviceable to God "and His people; but my work is done.' He was very rest-"less most part of the night, speaking often to himself. And, "there being something to drink offered him, he was desired "to take the same, and endeavor to sleep; unto which he an-

"swered, 'It is not my design to drink or to sleep, but my "design is to make what haste I can to be gone.' Afterward, "toward morning, using divers holy expressions, implying "much inward consolation and peace, among the rest, he spake "some exceeding self-debasing words, annihilating and judg-"ing himself." This is the last. The next day, Friday, was his twice victorious 3d of September, the anniversary of Dunbar and Worcester. That morning he was speechless; and, though the prayers in Whitehall, and in all London and the suburbs, did not cease for him, people in the houses and passers in the streets knew that hope was over, and Oliver at the point of death.

LXIV.

THE RESTORATION.—GUIZOT.

[Two troublous years came after Cromwell's death. Though his son Richard quietly succeeded to the office of protector, it soon became apparent that the protectorate must fall. Only another Oliver could have upheld it, and there was none at hand. The sentiment in favor of calling back the banished Stuarts was too strong to be resisted. For a few months Richard's tottering authority was upheld by the influence of his father's name. Then came a brief succession of factions, and then the inevitable—the Restoration. The tardy action of General Monk was scarcely more than incidental.]

At day-break the army, more than thirty thousand strong, was drawn out in battle-array on Blackheath, where it silently awaited the coming of the king. It was sad and disquieted but resigned to its fate; it had seen all the governments that it loved—the commonwealth, Cromwell, and its own dominion—fall one after another; among its leaders, the majority, and those the greatest of them all, had gone over to the royal cause; others, still popular among the rank and file, were proscribed and compelled to fly, for having formerly maintained a deadly conflict against the king. The

republican spirit, military pride, and religious zeal were still powerful in the army; but it no longer had confidence either in those who commanded it or in itself; and bowing its head beneath the secret consciousness of its errors, it accepted the restoration of the monarchy as a necessity, regarded submission to the civil power as a duty, and devoted itself to the maintenance of public order and the preservation of private interests. The king arrived, accompanied by his brothers, and attended by his staff, with Monk at its head, and by a brilliant cavalcade of volunteers elegantly dressed, and adorned with plumes and scarfs. As they pranced about in every direction, an officer, bending toward Monk, whispered in his ear, "You had none of these at Coldstream; but grasshoppers and butterflies never come abroad in frosty weather." Many men in the ranks shared in this feeling of ill-humor. But Charles was young, vivacious, and affable; he presented himself gracefully to the army; and, singularly enough, it was the anniversary of his birthday; he was just thirty years of age. He was well received. Colonel Knight, on behalf of all the regiments, presented to him an address full of the utmost protestations of loyalty, which the soldiers confirmed rather by their submissive countenance than by their acclamations. The king left Blackheath, delighted at having got through this ordeal satisfactorily. On arriving at St. George's Fields, he met the lord mayor, aldermen, and common council of the city of London, who were awaiting him in a richly decorated tent, to offer him their address and a collation. He halted there for a few moments, and was more cordially received and felt more at his ease among the throng of citizens than among the ranks of the army. His road from St. George's Fields to Whitehall was one continued ovation. He was preceded and followed by numerous squadrons of mounted guards and volunteers, magnificently dressed and caparisoned; the train-bands of the city and of Westminster, and the various corporations with

their banners, formed a double line through which he passed; the sheriffs, the aldermen, and all the municipal officers of the city, with a host of servants in splendid liveries, crowded around him; the lord mayor, with Monk on his right hand and the duke of Buckingham on his left, bore the sword before him; five regiments of cavalry formed his escort; the streets were strewn with boughs and flowers, the houses hung with flags, the windows, balconies, and roofs crowded with innumerable spectators, men and women, nobles and citizens, all in their gayest attire; the cannon of the Tower, the bells of the churches, the bands of the regiments, and the shouts of the crowd, filled the air with a deafening and joyous sound. "I stood in the strand and beheld it, and blessed God," says an eye-witness. "All this was done without one drop of bloodshed, and by that very army that rebelled against him; but it was the Lord's doing, for such a restoration was never mentioned in any history, ancient or modern, since the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; nor was so joyful a day and so bright ever seen in this nation, this happening when to expect or effect it was past all human policy."

Charles himself expressed his delight and surprise with some little irony. "I doubt not," he said, "it has been my own fault I was absent so long, for I see no one who does not protest he has ever wished for my return."

He arrived at Whitehall somewhat later than he had announced, for it was nearly seven o'clock when he reached the palace. The two Houses were awaiting him. He received them each in turn, the Lords in the great hall of the palace, and the Commons in that same banqueting hall through which, eleven years before, the king, his father, had walked on his way to the scaffold. The two speakers, the earl of Manchester and Sir Harbottle Grimstone, addressed the king in speeches at once pompous and sincere, expressing, in terms of somewhat labored eloquence, enthusiasm for

monarchy and attachment to the religion and liberties of the country. Lord Manchester more particularly explained his views with firm frankness. "Great king," he said, "permit me to speak the confidence as well as the desires of the peers of England. Be you the powerful defender of the true Protestant faith, the just asserter and maintainer of the laws and liberties of your subjects; so shall judgment run down like a river, and justice like a mighty stream." Charles was, doubtless, struck by this expression; for, in replying to Manchester, he repeated it almost literally. "I am so disordered by my journey," he said, "and with the noise still sounding in my ears, which I confess was pleasing to me because it expressed the affections of my people, that I am unfit at the present to make such a reply as I desire. Yet thus much I shall say unto you, that I take no greater satisfaction to myself in this my change than that I find my heart really set to endeavor by all means the restoring of this nation to freedom and happiness, and I hope by the advice of my Parliament to effect it. Of this also you may be confident, that next to the honor of God, from whom principally I shall ever own this restoration to my crown, I shall study the welfare of my people, and shall not only be a true defender of the faith, but a just asserter of the laws and liberties of my subjects." The king's answer to the House of Commons was very similar, but somewhat shorter; and he excused himself from further discourse with them on the ground of extreme fatigue. The two Houses took their leave. The king was, in fact, so utterly wearied that he was unable to proceed, as he had intended, to Westminster Abbey, on that day, in order to take part in a solemn thanksgiving service; and he ended the day which had witnessed the re-establishment of monarchy in England, by offering up his prayers to God in the reception-room at Whitehall.

At the same moment, throughout the kingdom, thousands of hearts, full of joy, were also raising themselves in thanks

to the Almighty and praying him to bless the king whom he had restored to his people. The restoration of Charles the Second was not the consequence, but the cause, of a passionate outburst of the monarchical spirit. Decimated by the civil war, ruined by confiscations, baffled in all its attempts at insurrection and conspiracy, conquered in turn by all its enemies, by the Presbyterians, the Republicans, the Cromwellians, and the soldiers, the Royalist party had given up the conflict, but had not renounced its opinions or its hopes. At once inactive and persevering, it had endured the rule of all successive tyrannies, whether strong or weak, glorious or disgraceful, watching them pass with anger or contempt, and waiting until God and necessity should put the king once more in the place of this chaos. While thus waiting, the Royalists found themselves joined by most of their former adversaries in succession; from conviction, from passion, from resignation, or from personal interest, the Presbyterians, the political reformers, who would not be and did not think themselves revolutionists, a great many Cromwellians, both civilians and soldiers, and even some Republicans, took advantage of one conjuncture or another to range themselves beneath the banner of monarchy. And what was still more important, that portion of the population which had held aloof from all parties, those innumerable and unknown spectators who merely look on at political struggles, and derive from them only their emotions and their fate, this vast mass of the people could now see safety and find hope only in the re-establishment of the monarchy. On the 29th of May, 1660, the Royalist party, which had not conquered, which had not even fought, was nevertheless national and all-powerful. It was England.