

## PREFACE.

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THE third and, it is hoped, penultimate volume of the correspondence of Sir Edward Nicholas covers a period of eighteen months, beginning with July, 1655. There is, however, the same inequality in the distribution of its contents which was remarked in vol. ii. ; for, whether the fact is due to unusual activity on the part of his correspondents, or, as is more probable, merely to the accident that the letters addressed to Nicholas in 1655 have been exceptionally fortunate in escaping destruction, the latter half of that year requires more than three times as much room as the whole of 1656. The list of writers is mainly the same as in the preceding volume. Joseph Jane, who was still at the Hague, is by far the most prolific. His judgment on affairs was evidently held by Nicholas in high esteem, and he contributes upwards of fifty letters, in which every phase of the political situation is freely discussed. Both the Earl of Norwich and Lord Hatton are less in evidence than they were, but their letters are as lively and characteristic as ever. Unlike Norwich, who was generally in desperate straits, having to mend his "ould breeches" and look about for "a crust of new bread" (p. 15), Hatton seems to have lived at Paris in tolerable comfort. Apart from the misdoings of the Queen and her faction at the Palais Royal, on which he dilates with his usual acrid humour, his most serious grievance was that his merits were not officially recognised by employment, the more so as he could boast of being one of the lucky few who could "serve at their own charge, aye, and contribute too" (p. 7). In September, 1656, he managed, after a first rebuff, to obtain a pass for England from the Council of State, and he promised the King on starting to

“advertise very religiously how he finds things” (p. 284). Unfortunately, however, just when his letters would have been of most interest they cease altogether. Sir Henry de Vic, Resident at Brussels, is a more regular correspondent, and Sir Marmaduke Langdale also writes frequently from the same neighbourhood, chiefly on his negotiations with the Levellers, Col. Edward Sexby and Richard Overton. At Paris, besides Lord Hatton, Nicholas still had as an “intelligencer” Percy Church,<sup>a</sup> whose interesting series of news letters, like those of Jane from the Hague, embody much information from English sources. When after a time they come to an end, they are succeeded by a new series from Sir Richard Browne, the Royalist Resident. From England direct there are only a few anonymous letters of news. Among other occasional correspondents abroad are the Marquis of Ormonde, Sir Alexander Hume, Capt. Peter Mews (the future bishop), Col. Robert Whitley, Henry Bennet,<sup>b</sup> George Lane, Sir William Bellenden, and Sir John Marlay. There is a curious letter also from Count Ulefeldt, the disgraced Danish minister, defending himself from charges of embezzlement in connection with aid given by the King of Denmark some years before to Montrose. Of letters written by Nicholas himself five only are included. As was the case with the much greater number in the two previous volumes, they have been preserved among the extracts made from his lost letter-books by Dr. Thomas Birch in 1750-51 (see vol. i., preface). To some extent, however, the deficiency on this side of the corre-

<sup>a</sup> He was a Catholic, and Groom of the Chamber to Queen Henrietta Maria, and after the Restoration is described as her Equerry. His history has recently been traced by Professor A. H. Church, F.R.S., in an interesting article in the *Genealogist*, 1897, entitled “Percy Church, a forgotten Royalist.” He belonged to an Essex family, of Maldon and elsewhere, and since writing the above-mentioned article Professor Church has found proof that he was the only son of Rocke Church, Surveyor to James I. He died on 27th July, 1675.

<sup>b</sup> Several of Bennet's letters, written from the French camp, where he was in attendance on the Duke of York, contain nothing but unimportant military details, and are consequently not printed.

spondence is supplied elsewhere, a number of letters from Nicholas to Jane, together with other letters addressed to Nicholas himself, having in some unexplained manner found their way into the Public Record Office. As their contents are fully given in the *Calendar of State Papers* for 1655-56 they are not printed here, the materials, already sufficiently bulky, being drawn exclusively from the Nicholas Collection in the British Museum.

Besides correspondence, the volume also contains matter preserved among the Secretary's papers relating to the case of Henry Manning the spy, of whose treason and detection curious particulars are given in Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, xiv. 138-146. This "proper young gentleman," as Clarendon describes him, was a Catholic, and son of a Royalist colonel killed at Alresford, where he himself also was wounded.<sup>a</sup> He came to Cologne soon after the King—by his own account (p. 149) about the end of January, 1655—and his good looks, genial manners, and full purse, added to his father's loyal services, gained him ready admittance to the court circle. Having ingratiated himself particularly with the Earl of Rochester, he imparted to him as a secret that he was charged by the Earl of Pembroke to assure the King of his affection, and of his having a sum of £3,000 ready for him at Wilton on production of a private token.<sup>b</sup> By Rochester's means he repeated this to Charles himself and afterwards to Clarendon, or Sir Edward Hyde as he then was. The latter knew Pembroke's sentiments and resources well enough to warn the King that the story was a mere fiction concocted by Manning in order to secure a better welcome; but neither he nor anyone else had the least suspicion of the man's true character, and it was a rude shock

<sup>a</sup> He was evidently connected with Wiltshire, and was probably the Henry Manning of Salisbury who compounded for the modest fine of £3 6s. 8d. on 12th December, 1650 (*Cul. of Comm. for Compounding*, pt. iv. p. 2649). He is said to have served as a Royalist captain (*Thurloe St. Pap.* iv. p. 249).

<sup>b</sup> This is Clarendon's account. Manning gave rather a different version himself after his arrest (p. 150).

therefore when it was discovered late in the year that he was a paid spy of Thurloe and the principal channel by which the English Government was kept informed of the plans and movements of those concerned in the plot of the preceding spring. From another agent's letter to Thurloe (*State Papers*, iv. p. 249) we learn that he was seized, with his papers, on the night of 5th December. Nicholas was deputed, with Ormonde and Colepeper, to examine him, and full minutes of both questions and answers are here printed (pp. 149-187). The letters found upon him and his own admissions left no doubt of his guilt, but the strongest proofs of it were unknown to his examiners. They are to be found in his letters which had already reached their destination, and are printed in the *Thurloe State Papers* and the Record Office *Calendars*.<sup>a</sup> His own account was that he was loyal at heart and merely forwarded to England trivial and fictitious intelligence which hurt nobody, his sole object being to obtain money.<sup>b</sup> The lie is given to these impudent protestations by his own hand. His earliest letter, of 13th March, 1655,<sup>c</sup> sent important information as to Royalists going to England, and from this date until his arrest he did his work as spy with evident zest.

The most interesting of his letters here (p. 177) relates to a design for surprising Plymouth, discussed, as he alleges, by Charles and his Council on 11th November. It is, no doubt, the letter to which Clarendon especially refers (sect. 143); but if the copy here is complete his recollection of the contents was not quite accurate. This seems to have been a case in which Manning really did delude (or, as the letter was stopped, intend to delude) his employers with

<sup>a</sup> The *Calendar* for 1655 contains a series of eleven deciphered letters from him to Thurloe, written between May and July.

<sup>b</sup> His pay is said to have been £120 a month (*Thurloe St. Pap.* iv. p. 292), but this is very doubtful.

<sup>c</sup> In the *Thurloe St. Pap.* iii. p. 190, signed Henry Jackson. He speaks of having written before to the Protector and "my Lord President," but without receiving any answers.

fictitious news. He confessed (p. 181) that the whole story was his own invention, and Clarendon confirms him, declaring there was not a syllable of truth in it, no such proposal having been debated or even heard of. Nothing is said as to his fate either by Clarendon or in the Nicholas Papers. - Four letters, however, from him to Nicholas, containing abject appeals for mercy, will be found on pp. 196-203, and there are more of the same sort not printed. The Royalists feared that the Protector would seize one of their party as a hostage for his life, and this was suggested to Thurloe by a correspondent on 17th December (iv. p. 290). No time, however, was allowed for any attempt to save him, even if the Government had wished to concern itself about a now useless tool. In his last letter, of 14th December (p. 202), he speaks of rumours of a "suddein end intended" him on the following day, and the cessation of his appeals makes it probable that his worst fears were speedily realised. It is only, however, incidentally in a letter of intelligence to Thurloe from the Hague on 1st May, 1656 (iv. p. 718), that we learn that he was "pistolled" in a wood near Cologne by Sir James Hamilton and Major Armorer. The most singular feature in the case is that he was arrested, confined for more than a week, and finally, after a more or less formal trial, put to death in an independent state, apparently without any interference or protest from the authorities of Cologne.

At the time when the volume opens the exiled Royalists were still smarting from the disastrous failure of the ill-advised rising in the spring of 1655. Charles was again at Cologne, where, except for a short interval in September, he remained till the spring of the following year. The interval was spent in a visit to Frankfort Fair,\* as Nicholas thought, for pleasure only, but Ormonde makes out that it was in order to raise money (p. 61). As Secretary of State, Nicholas was in attendance upon the King, together with Hyde,

\* He had an interview near Frankfort with Queen Christina of Sweden (p. 87). De Vic has something to say of this eccentric lady on p. 57.

Ormonde, and others, and it is to Cologne therefore that the letters here are addressed until May, 1656, when he followed his master to Bruges. Of the active leaders in the abortive outbreak, Rochester, O'Neill, Wagstaffe, and others had made good their escape abroad. Penruddock and Grove, however, had paid the penalty of their exploit at Salisbury on the scaffold, and Cromwell's hand lay heavy on all who were suspected of complicity. For the time the party in England was thus completely crushed. Wild rumours were even afloat of their impending massacre or wholesale deportation to the Indies, and we are actually told by Norwich that it was by the casting vote of Lawrence alone in the Council that a massacre was averted (p. 218). Under these conditions the only hope of relief seemed to lie in another direction. "All that come from England," writes Jane on 24th August (p. 35), "now say that there must be forreyne force," and no small part of the correspondence is taken up with speculations on the chances of a war between England and Spain, when the latter, it was thought, would be forced to actively support the Royalist cause. The tardy issue of Penn's expedition to the West Indies was therefore awaited with anxiety. To the last the secret of its destination had been well kept, and so late as 23rd July we find Nicholas surmising (p. 21) that it might prove a joint design of Cromwell and Spain against Brazil. The earliest news, reported to Nicholas by Sir A. Hume on 12th July (p. 16), was that Penn had taken San Domingo in the Spanish island of Hispaniola, and it was not until 9th August (p. 28) that Jane was able to announce the truth. A fuller account of his repulse from San Domingo and his subsequent seizure of Jamaica (the importance of which was not at first appreciated) followed three days later from Sir H. de Vic (p. 29), being derived from Cardenas, Spanish Ambassador in England. Although De Vic seems to have felt a patriotic twinge at Queen Christina of Sweden's sneer that 100 Spanish had beaten 4,000 English, the news was as favourable for the Royalists as they could reasonably have hoped, for while the desired provocation was given to Spain, a serious blow, as they imagined, was

dealt at Cromwell's prestige. Jane puts the case strongly as usual (p. 58). "This strikes him," he writes, "in point of reputation with the vulgar in England, who beleev'd him invincible. . . . Next this plucks him low in mony and he wilbe putt to it hard, for, if his fortune fayle, the peoples boldnes will increase and the orders of his Councill will hardly gett mony, and a parliament will have conditions that must make him nothinge." But in spite of insults and injuries in the Indies and from Blake's fleet nearer home, followed up in October by Cromwell's Declaration of Grievances against them, the Spaniards were in no hurry to move. Besides their other difficulties, of which Langdale gives a gloomy account on p. 201, they had enough on their hands in the war with France. Although ready to make reprisals by seizing English traders and goods, they were therefore plainly reluctant to the last to destroy all hopes of peace by an open alliance with Charles. Matters were complicated too by their somewhat ambiguous dealings with Col. Sexby, "the Spaniards favourit," as Norwich calls him, "and by whom he cheefly workes" (p. 2). Unless Norwich was deceived, Sexby was plotting with Spain against Cromwell's life, but he was admittedly not working on the King's account (p. 44), and Nicholas recognised, what Cardenas avowed, that Spain actually preferred a republic in England to a monarchy as more likely to result in continual dissensions and consequent weakness (p. 249). The Royalists naturally viewed matters in a different light; for, as Langdale puts it (p. 76), "the killinge Cromwell will little availe, if in his steade they sett upp a Commonwealth." Their own negotiations with the Levellers promised little tangible benefit. Overton, indeed, wrote effusively of the King's open letter to the Levellers, sent to him through Langdale (p. 73), but neither party really trusted the other. After a tedious and unsatisfactory interview on Sexby's return from Spain, Langdale's conclusion was that "they are not wourth the taking notice of" (p. 128), while to Nicholas Sexby appeared no better than a spy (p. 145). Even Norwich could only say that, though he might be

a knave, he was certainly no fool (p. 15). Nor was the outlook brighter with regard to the Catholics and Presbyterians. As was seen in the earlier correspondence, the latter were especially odious to Nicholas and his friends, and a fresh attempt to conciliate them in July, 1655, met with marked disfavour. Mews, for instance, could not "but pitty the poore King, who must bee so perplexed with the factious and unreasonable humors of som people" (p. 20). Jane, though he grudgingly admitted the necessity of receiving their overtures (p. 22), was more outspoken, avowing his belief that "the designes of that generation are as fraudulent and trayterous as ever" (p. 13). The immediate result of the King's supposed inclination towards them was to excite the jealousy of other parties, especially the Catholics. The latter were already aggrieved by the Treaty of Breda, and Langdale made himself the mouthpiece of their fresh discontent (p. 53). Nicholas's reply is one of the letters preserved by Birch (p. 64). While declaring the King's earnest desire "to take in all parties that will serve him," he significantly adds that it was impossible to satisfy "the different humours of all parties, who hold it their interest to destroy one another."

Practically therefore during the last six months of 1655 the Royalists effected nothing, and the King's fortunes, especially after Cromwell's Treaty with France, were perhaps at their lowest. Meanwhile, both at home and abroad, the Protector for his part had not been idle. As described by Royalist pens, he is of course "rogue," "villain," "monster," "hellish rebel," and so on, but it was a case of *oderint, dum metuant*. "Whilst wee on this side the water," writes Hatton (p. 5), "trifle out with giving way to *all* humors and factions, Cromwell resolves to leave none in England that are not of *his* humour and faction." This was exaggerated of course, but it contains an element of truth. After the plot of 1655, greater severity in repression was undoubtedly employed, and by Royalist admission it so far succeeded that its effect was to "rather terrifie then exasperate, and men grow



rather fearfull then vindictive by it" (p. 22). Besides the arrest of suspected persons, by an order of 6th July all adherents of Charles or his father were banished from the capital (p. 25). London, we are told, was thus "abandoned allmost by all the gentry," and it was not until November, when the order expired, that they again began to "creepe into the towne" (p. 120). The appointment of major-generals of counties or "cantonizing of the kingdom," as it was called, was a measure of wider scope. This took effect at the end of October, and appeared to some a policy of doubtful wisdom on the Protector's part, as putting too much power in the hands of possible rivals (p. 133). Later we hear of the great rigour with which these "new Bashaws"<sup>a</sup> performed their functions, Col. William Butler in Northamptonshire being particularly stigmatized (p. 261). In the instance given Cromwell upon complaint refused to interfere, but other applicants for redress seem to have found him more amenable (pp. 253, 254). Three more drastic ordinances completed the discomfiture of the prostrate party. One of them made all masters answerable for everything done or said by their servants, and was felt to be so unreasonable that it provoked remonstrance. Cromwell's characteristic reply is given in a London news-letter (p. 193). It was not conciliatory, to say the least, inveighing strongly against the "forlorne poore cavaliers, who get into good houses to bee gentlemen ushers to ladyes, stewards of great persons, companions to the gentry, hangers on, hungry fellows, etc." The Declaration of 24th November to "secure the peace of the commonwealth" (p. 193) struck at a different and more reputable class. Besides disarming all who had been "sequestred" or had fought for the King, it forbade them, after 1st January, 165 $\frac{5}{8}$ , to harbour "any sequestred chaplains or school masters for education of their children," while the ejected clergy were disabled from using the Book of Common Prayer or preaching "either publike or private." But what seems to have

<sup>a</sup> This is Jane's term (p. 141), but it is also used by Clarendon in his *History*.

caused most dismay was the ten per cent. tax imposed on the Royalists for the expenses of the new militia. Jane hoped this would prove the proverbial last straw, and that despair would drive the victims to open rebellion. Nothing of the kind, however, occurred. "Some cavaliers doe yield," reports a news-writer, "others not, though they bee forced to let them take what they please" (p. 192), and the case of Sir John Monson, who vainly pleaded the Act of Oblivion, showed the futility of resistance (p. 215). No doubt, as Jane suggests (p. 239), the collection was made easier by the exemption of all whose income was under £100 a year; in any case, at the beginning of 1656 the tax was said to be paid "without any opposition." To Jane, out of harm's way at the Hague, it seemed "an ill signe that soe few dare suffer or profess themselves injured in such an outrageous extortion as this is" (p. 252).

The Protector, however, had other anxieties than those occasioned by fear of the Royalists. Mention has already been made of the disaster to his arms in Hispaniola. Although his enemies made the most of this, and in De Vic's eyes, for example, it was "the most shameful in all respects that can bee imagined" (p. 70), their anticipations that it would materially affect his position were hardly realised. The subject is one upon which Nicholas's correspondents, and Jane especially, have much to say, Cromwell's angry outburst against Penn on his return and the latter's spirited reply (p. 69), the committal of both Penn and Venables to the Tower, and the reasons for not bringing them to actual trial, furnishing ample matter for news and comment. As was natural, they attributed the treatment of the two commanders to Cromwell's desire to shift obloquy from himself; but, when the worst had been said, his most pertinacious critic was bound to confess that, "though he seeme streightned, yet he goes on without rubbs" (p. 147). At the same time, the financial difficulties of the Government were continually increasing. "Theire occasions and wants of money are great," quotes Col. Whitley in October, "and, unlesse some by-

way can speedily be found out, it is thought it will produce a Parliament" (p. 79). With Cromwell's experience of Parliaments, this remedy was not likely to be attractive, and, notwithstanding the "Presbyterian dream" of the enforcement of the Triennial Act, nearly a year, in fact, elapsed before it was tried (p. 291). Meanwhile, besides the Royalist tax, another "by-way" was found in the compensation paid by the Dutch to English merchants in the East Indies. This money, we are told, or a part of it, was retained by the Protector as a more or less compulsory loan, and in this and other ways his debts at the end of 1655 are said to have amounted to £1,700,000 (p. 223). Mention is also made of a proposal to re-establish the Court of Wards, with its lucrative train of fees and exactions, "though it will cause as much hatred to him as a tax" (p. 132); and it is hinted (p. 295) that the re-admission of the Jews to England was made the subject of bargaining, Cromwell saying that in itself it was "an ungodly thing."

Like the prohibition of news-books, the Court of Wards project served Jane as the text for a diatribe on the readiness of the rebels to adopt methods of government which they had formerly denounced. He is equally bitter also on the Protector's alleged intention to arrogate to himself the right of making laws preliminary to his taking the title of king or, as some expected (p. 79), of emperor. "He that hath the legislative power," he remarks with truth (p. 13), "may assume what title he will," adding "its noe wonder that any of the race of rebels scorne lawes that they pretended to fight for but never valued." According to Cardenas (p. 56) the petitions for a higher title were referred by the Protector to the Council of State, but were supported by three members only, "the rest flatly opposite, which much enraged him." If he pretended, says Col. Price, to be content with his actual title, it was solely from fear of the army (p. 45). Jane's information was to the same effect (p. 37), with the addition that even in this quarter it was rather the name than the substance which was distasteful, "unlesse some of the chieffes

like not an inheritance in title and power, which may be exclusive to their hopes." As to opposition in other directions, he writes that Cromwell cared nothing for "the peevisshnes of the Presbyterian or Independent, which he sees signifies nothing and change with the moone." Col. Whitley's news-writer, however, thought otherwise, representing him as "fearefull of the Presbiterean party" (p. 79). As to the Anabaptists, he says later that they gave him "a perpetuall alarme with their bolde prints and language" (p. 254). Harassed as the Protector was, and beset with dangers, it is not surprising that we hear of his being sick both in mind and body, and it is evident from the frequent references to his ill-health that his strength was failing. In September, 1655, a report was current that he was actually dead, though "others saide that hee was faln into one of his madd fitts, like to that att Edinburg" (p. 61). The report originated from the death of his nonagenarian uncle, Sir Oliver Cromwell, of Hinchinbroke (p. 64), but the fact that he was suffering at the time from a "stone-cholick" (p. 62) gained it easier credence. Col. Whitley, on 1st February, 1656, writes that he was again very ill. This time it was from "a great swelling on his brest below his clavis," from the effect of "wearinge of armes or something else," which, however, "his chirurgeon (a great curer of the French pox) doubts not but to cure" (p. 263). "Yet this," the writer continues, "I am assured from very good hands that he is soe often and greatly indisposed that it is thought he will not live long."

Apart from his hostile measures against Spain already alluded to, Cromwell's activity and influence in foreign affairs are manifest throughout the volume. By the middle of 1655 he had "in a great measure worne out the odium with strangers" (p. 11), so much so that at Paris there were many "base enough to wish the French King married to Cromwell's daughter" (p. 3). As matters stood between the two kingdoms, a rupture with Spain almost necessarily involved an agreement with France. His first step in this direction was to revoke all letters of marque against

the French on 12th July (p. 23), and it was followed by the formal treaty signed on 3rd November, new style. What most excited Royalist disgust in the treaty was the supplementary article by which Charles, his two brothers, and seventeen of his principal supporters were excluded from French territory. This struck a blow at the hopes of those who, as Jane scornfully remarks, "still cast an eye to France as the deliverer" (p. 132); and the ingratitude shown in particular to the Duke of York, who was serving France as Lieut.-General of the army under Turenne, seems to have been resented as an "unwourthy act" by the French themselves (p. 130). At the same time it relieved him from a dilemma, for, as Jane points out, he could hardly continue fighting for France against Spain, "if the Spaniard breake with Cromwell and take in the Kinge" (p. 240). In the Duke's case, however, the treaty seems to have been interpreted with some laxity. According to Hatton, he was still at Paris in July, 1656, though "he hath nothing here but disrespects" (p. 281). De Vic's view, expressed on 3rd January, 1656 (p. 231), was that the object of France was merely to secure an advantage, by having Cromwell's weight on her side, in treating for a general peace, "and that once attained, that treaty will cease."

If the French agreement was a menace to Spain, Cromwell's negotiations with Sweden, resulting in the treaty of July, 1656, were a continual source of apprehension to the Dutch. At the beginning of the volume the latter are represented as unwilling to hear a word against him, though they did "thinke he will get the trade as much as possible" (p. 23). This feeling of security in his good intentions, however, did not last long. On 12th October we find Jane writing, "Though Cromwell be in great esteeme here, yet I beleeve they love him not." The immediate cause of the change was his rigorous exercise of the right of search at sea, "soe as they bear his yoke with great reluctaney" (p. 77). The continued success of the Swedes in Poland and latterly against Brandenburg on the Baltic, coupled with suspicions of a secret understanding

between the Protector and Charles Gustavus, increased their alarm. "Certainly they will breake," writes Jane on 26th October (p. 96), "rather then lose the freedome of the Baltique Sea"; and again a week later, "I finde the Dutch are very sensible of Cromwells designe upon their trade and that, seeinge by the peace he cannot directly fall on them in the voyages to the west, he will doe it by another hand in the east" (p. 104). The Dutch view is given by Renswoude, one of themselves, on the same day, "Wee doe apprehend very much the proceedings of the King of Sweden in Poland, and the more because wee beleeve hee is countenanced by Cromwell and perhaps by France, the first to winne our trade in the east and by consequence in the west, and the other for the affaires in Germany against the House of Austria" (p. 107). But although their chief anxiety was on account of their Baltic trade, "for its impossible to kepe the people quiett if that be curbed, for there is their bread" (p. 117), they had another cause for uneasiness. "The stinging business," says Norwich, "is the league betweene France, Sweade, and Cromwell, which alarms the Hollanders to the quick" (p. 221). Hitherto they had thriven on the rivalry of France and Spain in the Netherlands, and the prospect of seeing the latter crushed and ousted by a coalition was not to their liking. They were therefore as anxious to avert a war between England and Spain as the Royalists were to provoke it. "I beginne to feare a peace," writes Langdale from Brussels on 27th December (p. 220); "the Holland Ambassador labours it, and in case it cannot be had, that state is resolved to engage with the Spaniard rather then Flanders shall be taken from the Spaniard either by French or English."

This was the situation at the end of 1655, and the same attitude of suspense and mistrust, without any overt act of hostility, was maintained during the remaining twelve months dealt with in this volume. The letters of 1656 are, however, comparatively few, and they include very little on the subject, neither Cromwell's own treaty with the Swedes nor his efforts to reconcile conflicting interests and unite Swedes and Dutch alike in a Protestant

League being mentioned. At the same time, the influence he exercised abroad was patent to all. One instance of it is worth notice for its undesigned consequences. According to Jane, who had good opportunities of knowing at the Hague, it was by Cromwell's means that the projected marriage of the Princess Sophia, daughter of the Queen of Bohemia, to the Count Palatine of Zweibrücken, the King of Sweden's brother, was broken off (p. 258). Possibly, as is hinted, Cromwell may have hoped to secure the Swedish match for his own daughter, but it is incredible that he can have had any thoughts whatever of another suggested son-in-law, Mazarin's nephew, Mancini (p. 224). Among the earlier letters of 1656 there are three which show some of the dangers he had to guard against. One letter is from Sir John Marlay, who defended Newcastle against the Scots in 1644. Judging from his equivocal action in offering his services to Thurloe in 1658 (p. 258, note), his good faith is not above suspicion, nor does he say upon what grounds he now believed that Lambert and Monck, Fairfax and "Howard of the North" were ready to restore the King if properly approached. But, unless he was romancing, the last-named at least, Col. Charles Howard, Deputy for Lambert as Major-General of the northern counties, must have made advances in that direction. Although Monck is styled by Capt. Mews (p. 92) a "perfect rebell" and creature of Cromwell, the Royalists had clearly begun to entertain hopes of him, as well as of Fairfax, but it was probably for no other reason than the belief that he must be jealous of Cromwell's ascendancy. "I beleeve," writes Jane (p. 125), "that Monke and the rest of his commanders know themselves unable to make a party against Cromwell for themselves and dare not venture on the Kinges interest and therefore may be played like pawnes at chesse as he pleaseth." The name that excites most surprise is that of Lambert, yet Manning the spy had written not long before that the Royalists "do not stick to say that Lambert is no ennemy to them" (p. 178), and reports were current in January, 1656, that he and the Protector had fallen out (p. 246). Another danger

that menaced the latter was more pressing and serious. The two cipher-letters of Nicholas to Thomas Ross, a Royalist agent, of whom we shall hear more in the next volume, leave no doubt of a plot for his assassination which only wanted the King's consent to be put into execution; but, although Nicholas gave his own approval to "so glorious an act" unreservedly, he refused point-blank to lay the proposal before the King. His motive for this can only be conjectured; probably it was less from the belief that Charles would reject it than because he preferred to leave him free, whatever the result of the plot, to disown all knowledge of it. If he had suspected a trap, he would have been more chary in what he said on his own account.

By this time active negotiations were going on for the King's removal from Cologne to the Spanish Netherlands. Ormonde had paid a secret visit for the purpose to Brussels in January, 1656, and he was there again two months later with Charles himself (p. 271). In his letters to Nicholas, which we owe to their temporary separation, he makes excuses for the slowness of the Spaniards, which he thought not unreasonable (p. 271). Jane, on the contrary, attributed it to their lingering hopes of an accommodation with Cromwell. "If the villayne," he writes, "could be bowed to a peace, [they] would still take it; and the protraction of this treaty makes it evident they have expectations of it still" (p. 273). When the treaty to which the Royalists had so eagerly looked forward was at length concluded on 12th April, it is hard to say what they gained by it, except a new place of residence for the King and an allowance for his support. To Charles, indeed, the pension was all-important. His necessities were so great that on removing from Cologne he was compelled to leave his household "in pawne there till hee shall bee able to redeeme it" (p. 272), and when in Ormonde's letter of 14th April he is said to be on the point of going to Bruges, which had been fixed upon for his residence, it is with the proviso, "if hee have mony enough to carry him" (p. 274). Happily both these difficulties were somehow surmounted. Before the end of the month



he was in Bruges staying "at my Lord of Taraghs,<sup>a</sup> very civilly used" (p. 278), until his own house could be prepared, and on 7th May Ormonde conveys to Nicholas permission to join him. The Secretary's removal to Bruges of course accounts for his correspondence with Ormonde coming to an end, but there must be some other reason for the paucity of other letters during the rest of the year. Only five in fact remain that are of sufficient interest to print, two from Lord Hatton and three from Sir Richard Browne, representing but a small proportion of the number he must have received.

G. F. W.

1 *July*, 1897.

\* A son of the well-known General Preston, 1st Viscount Tara. A letter in this volume (p. 91) gives the date of the latter's death, hitherto doubtful.