

Literature.

CHARLES THE FIRST IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

As the king advanced along the floor he turned his head from side to side, perusing with deliberate and steady glance the lineaments of every member whom he passed, and if when at a distance not one eye had sought him, so when he now stood close beside them not one eye avoided him. Each, as Charles came into his direct line of vision, met his hard gaze with an unblenching and unloosing brow; for not one man—even of those the most devoted to his will, of those who would have served him at that moment, who afterwards did serve him with their whole hearts and lives—but was disgusted, angered, full of deep sorrow, almost to despair. Little there was, however, of the stormy and more stronger passions painted upon the brows of those who sat thus fearlessly braving the temper of a king whose wrath was no less lasting and vindictive than it was hot and sudden. The expression that prevailed most largely was of mingled aspect, half pity, half defiance. But when the tyrant—for that action, if that only, justified the title—approached the seat of Cromwell, and his glance fell upon those grim ungainly features, then Ardenne witnessed—for his eye was still attracted, why he knew not, with strange sense of fascination toward the puritan—then Ardenne witnessed that which in aftertimes he often called to mind, and never without awe and wonder—a dark conflict—a conflict of eye, countenance, and bearing, between those two men so eminently thrown together, and blended in their spheres of good or evil action. The glance of Charles, when first it fell upon the coarse and most unpleasant lineaments of Oliver, was instantly averted, but averted as men ever turn the eye away from objects naturally hateful and unseemly. At that point of time the face of Cromwell was as tranquil, as immovable, as that of his great future rival; but the tranquillity was no less different than is the stillness of a hushed volcano and the peaceful calm of heaven. The corded and swollen veins upon the temple, the eyebrows lowered and contorted, the balls gleaming beneath them with a fixed and baleful light, the nostrils rigidly extended, and the lips pressed so tightly that they alone of his whole aspect were of a livid whiteness. Ere Edgar had the time to think, had there been any matter yet for thought, the eye of Charles stole back, half timidly as it appeared, towards that tiger-like and glaring face. Then as it met the sinister and ominous stare of fierce defiance, it brightened also—vivid and keen, with a falconlike and noble splendour. For some short space they gazed—those two undisciplined and haughty spirits—into each other's very souls—mutually, as it seemed, conscious at a glance of irremediable and desperate hostility. The king's look, quiet, although high and angry, and most unutterably proud—Cromwell's sarcastic, bitter, furious and determined, and withal so savagely triumphant, so mirthful in its dire malignity, that Ardenne thought he never had beheld a countenance so fiendishly expressive. And Charles Stuart's expression—after a fixed encounter of ten seconds' space—Charles Stuart's haughty aspect quailed beneath it, and as he passed along—for the whole occurred in less time than were needful to recite it—he gazed no more around him, but went directly onward, looking upon the ground, toward the speaker's chair. But the stern, democrat, as if conscious that his genius had prevailed, cast his eyes round him with an air of loftier feeling than Edgar had as yet observed him wear. It was a trifle, at the period when it passed, and none but he noticed it; but after times and after deeds stamped it, no more to be erased, upon the tablet of his soul. Meanwhile the king reached the chair; and Lenthall, the bold speaker, who had hitherto sat still, as proud, and far more placid than his visitor, arose and stepped out stately and cool to meet him. Then the king mounted to his place, stood upon the step, but spoke not, nor sat down—there he stood, gloomily gazing upon the house, with a dark look of sullen anger, for many minutes. At length he spoke. "Gentlemen," he said, in a high voice, clearly audible to the most distant corner, though neither musical nor pleasing,—"Gentlemen of the Commons, I am sorry for this my cause of coming to you. Yesterday I did send a sergeant to demand some, who by my order were accused of treason. Instead of prompt obedience, I received a message!" and he uttered the last word with the most concentrated scorn and insolence. "I must, then, here declare to you, that though no king that ever was in England could be more careful of your privileges than I have been, and shall be, yet I can tell you, treason hath no privilege, and, therefore, am I come to tell you, that I must have these men, and will, wherever I may find them!" As he spoke, he looked around the hall with a deliberate air, scanning the faces of all present, if he might find his men; then raising his voice higher yet, he called aloud; till the roof rang again. "Ho, I say, Master Hollis, Master Pym." No answer was returned, nor any sound, save an increased and angry tumult in the lobby, with a brandishing of partisans, and producing of concealed but ready pistols, so that some members thought to see the soldiers instantly rush into the chamber. After a little pause, finding he got no answer, he turned to the speaker. "Say," he exclaimed, "say, Mr. Speaker, be any of these men here present?" For a moment Lenthall paused, as doubting whether to hurl his own defiance, and that of the assembled commons, into his very teeth; but ere the echoes of the monarch's voice had ceased, he had resolved upon the wiser and most prudent part, and bending with most deferential courtesy his knee, "I have, sir," he replied, "nor eyes to see, nor tongue to speak in this place, save as this house, whose servant I am, sworn, shall order me. And

therefore must I pray your majesty to pardon me that I return no further answer." "Ha, sir," returned Charles, sharply, and with incipient fury; but a moment's thought convinced him that the humble answer of the speaker defied at once, and rendered hopeless, any charge of violence against him. "Ha, sir," again he said, but in a milder tone, "I do believe my eyes are full as good as yours, and I do see my birds are flown, but this I tell you, and see ye look to it—I hold this house to send them to me. Failing of which, I shall myself go seek them. For, sir, their treason is most foul, and such as you shall thank me, all of you, now to discover. And I assure you, on a king's word I assure you, that I did never mean any violence, and they shall have fair trial—I meant not any other." He waited not for further words, perchance he doubted what reply he might receive to this last false asseveration—palpably, unquestionably false—for wherefore brought he his disbanded soldiery, his rude and ruffian bravoos, with rapier, partisan, and pistol, into the very precincts of the house. Wherefore, unless he had designed to hale the accused members forth by the strong arm of tyrannous authority. Stepping down from his chair, he walked, uncovered still, but at a quicker pace than that at which he entered, toward the lobby; but now, as he departed his looks were not turned haughtily from side to side, but sadly bent upon the floor; nor was his passage silent as before—for member after member started up as Charles went past him, with bent brow and clenched hand, and groans both loud and deep saluted him. As he came nigh the seat of Cromwell, the king raised his visage, haggard now and pale, as with an anxious curiosity to look upon the man before whose eyes he felt himself to have recoiled; and as he met it Oliver sprang upon his feet, his long tuck rattling in the scabbard as he rose, and stamping on the floor with fury, shouted aloud, in tones not mild nor measured, the word "Privilege." A dozen voices took it up, though not so loudly, nor with so marked defiance as the first daring speaker, and the whole house was in the wildest and most uncontrolled confusion. Delightedly would the despotic prince, had he but dared it, at that moment have cried on!—have given the word expected by his myrmidons, for massacre and havoc—have bid the swords, which were already thirsting in their scabbards, leap forth and drink their fill of that most noble blood of England. But, thanks to heaven, he dared not. There would have been no object worthy of the risk—no gain to justify the detestation he would have so heaped upon his head. He did not dare; and therefore smothering for the time his virulent and vengeful fury, he departed—the door swung heavily behind him; and with no muttered curses on the head of him who lacked the spirit to perform what he and they yearned equally to execute, frustrate of their desired vengeance, unsatisfied and balked, his hiring desperadoes filed out from the venerable walls their presence had so shamefully polluted.

CROMWELL DISSOLVING THE LONG PARLIAMENT.

At a late hour Oliver, who was waiting at Whitehall, in his own private chambers, was advertised of these unjust and strange proceedings, and instantly commanded a company of soldiers to repair to the house, entered, and took his seat among the members. He was more plainly—nay even slovenly—attired than at any time when he had appeared in public for several years. His dress was of plain and coarse cloth, all black, doublet, cloak, and hose; with stockings of worsted rolled up to his mid thigh. While the debate continued, Cromwell sat immersed apparently in thought, and listening most attentively to the opinions of the different orators. The speaker, at length, rose, as if to put the question—then beckoning to Harrison, who sat opposite him, Cromwell stood up calmly, and as that officer approached him—"now is the time," he said, "now I must do it," and forthwith he put off his hat, and began speaking in a mild tone, and more to the point than usual in his harangues, expressing his disapprobation, although moderately and in measured terms, of the motion before the house. But gradually, as he kindled with his subject, his speech became more vehement and fiery—his words rolled forth in one unbroken stream of bitter and severe invective, scorching and blighting as the electric flash—his features were inflamed with tremendous passion—his eyes lightened—and his whole frame expanded with a most perfect majesty of wrathful indignation. He rebuked them for their self-seeking and profaneness, their frequent denial of true justice, their oppression, their inordinate and selfish love of power, their neglect to the brave and honest, their idolizing the lawyers, their tramping under foot the valiant men who had bled for them in the field, their tampering with the false and time-serving Presbyterians. "And for what," he cried, with loud and vehement tones, "for what all this, what, but to perpetuate your own ill-gotten power—to replenish your own empty purses—empty through riot, and debauchery, and bribery, and every kind of ill, which it befits not you to perpetrate, and which it were to me even degrading to mention, or to think of. But, now I say," he went on, stamping fiercely on the ground, "your time hath come. The Lord hath disowned you. The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, hath done with you. He hath no need of you any more! Lo! he hath judged you, and cast you forth, and chosen fitter instruments to him, to execute that work in which you have dishonoured him." "Order," exclaimed one of the bolder of the members. "Order—I rise to order—never have I yet heard any language so unparliamentary, so insolent,—the rather that it cometh from our own servant—one whom we have too fondly cherished—one whom, by raising to this unprecedented and undue elevation, we have endowed with the daring and the power thus to brave us." For a few minutes Cromwell glan-

ced on the bold speaker, as though astonished at the excess of his audacity had robbed him of the faculty of speech, then casting his hat on his disordered locks, he pulled it doggedly down upon his brows, and with a stride that made the whole house echo, advancing on the gentleman who was yet speaking, "Come, sir," he said, in a low hissing voice through his set teeth, gripping the while his dagger hilt, as though he would have stabbed him on the spot, "come, come, sir, I will put an end to your loud prating!" Then turning his back suddenly on him whom he addressed, he paced to and fro in the hall, his whole face black with the blood which rushed to it as violently as though it would have burst from every pore and vein, his broad breast panting and heaving with emotion, and his entire aspect displaying the most un-governable and tremendous passion. "You are no parliament, I say," he shouted at the pitch of his stentorian voice, "you are no parliament—ho, bring them in—without there! Bring them in." There was a sudden pause—a moment of unutterable terror—for such was the expression painted upon the faces of the members of the long parliament. When, years before, a king had dared to violate, in a far less degree, the privileges of that high assemblage, their own undaunted valour, fired by a sense of right—a proud, uncompromising feeling of their inborn worth—had well nigh armed those patriots to battle with such weapons as chance afforded them against the licensed cut throats of the sovereign. But, as the door flew open, and Colonel Worsley entered with a guard of twenty musketeers, black and base apprehensions sat on the pallid brows of three fourths of those present, nor did one man, of the whole number, offer to make the least resistance, to draw a sword, to raise a hand, or even to exchange a look with the strange person, who, from so lately being their servant, or at least their equal, had then by one bold effort, rendered himself their master—their unquestioned, undisputed master. "This is not honest," cried Sir Harry Vane, at length, when he had rallied from the first surprise; "it is against morality, and common honesty." Words cannot picture, language of man cannot describe, the change that flashed across the sparkling lineaments of Oliver. An instant—short instant only—ere Vane addressed him, all had been virulent and active fury, lashed as it were by its own goadings into a state purely animal and uncontrollable. Now the fierce glare of anger instantly subsided, leaving the face, for the moment, as passionless and vacant as an infant's. But ere there was time—not for words—but for thought—the deepest sneer of scorn, of loathing unutterable, undisguised contempt, succeeded. "Sir Harry Vane," he replied, in a low stern whisper, which drove the blood curdling through his veins. "O Sir Harry Vane, the Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane. Honesty and Sir Harry Vane. Morality and Harry Vane,—who, if he had so pleased, might have prevented this—who is a juggler—a mere hypocrite—and not common honesty himself! A parliament, I do profess, a precious parliament—of drunkards—knaves!—extortioners!—adulterers! Lo, there," he added, pointing to Challoner, "there sits a noted wine bibber—a very glutton and drunkard. There," casting his eyes towards Henry Marten and Sir Peter Wentworth, "there are two most foul adulterers." Then turning on his heel, as if he had already said enough, and in a voice as quiet and unruffled as if he had not been in anywise excited, commanded them to clear the house. "I," exclaimed Lenthall boldly, for seeing that no violence was offered, he had recovered his scared spirits, "I am the speaker of this house, lawfully by its members chosen, and save by vote of those same members, or by actual force, I never quit its precincts while in life." Then Harrison stepped slowly up the body of the long hall to the chair, attended by two musketeers; laid his hand on Lenthall's shoulder, and prayed him to descend, and without further words, he came down from his seat, and putting on his hat, departed from the house, all crest fallen and astounded. Algernon Sydney followed him at once, though with a statelier mien and bolder bearing, eighty more of the members moving with him towards the door. While there had seemed to be the slightest chance of any opposition to his will, Cromwell had stood in silence, with his arms folded on his breast, facing the speaker's chair, with a dark scowl on his brow and his lips rigidly compressed; but now, when he perceived that all, without more words, were skulking away from the house, he once again addressed them. "It is you," he exclaimed, "it is you, who have thrust this on me. Night and day have I prayed the Lord that he would slay me, rather than put me on the doing of this work." "Then wherefore do it," asked Allen bluntly, ere he left the house, "if that be so grievous to you? There is yet time enough to undo that which has already been done—and as your conscience tells you, ill done my Lord Cromwell." "Conscience, ha, Conscience, Alderman," returned Oliver, "and what did thine tell thee, when thou, as treasurer of the army, didst embezzle much more than one hundred thousand pounds to thine own use. What sayest thou to that, good alderman? Ho, ho, methinks I have thee. Guards, apprehend this peccator. Away with him, away with him, I say," and he stamped angrily upon the floor as to enforce his words, "until he answer for his deep-misdoings." Sullen, humiliated, and unpitied, for they had lost already the respect of honest men of all denominations, the members of that parliament, which had dethroned and slain a powerful monarch—destroyed the constitution, and disenfranchised the people of a mighty nation—vanquished all foreign foes, and raised their country from a secondary to a first rate power in Europe, now sneaked away to find a miserable refuge in the despised obscurity of private life,—deserted by the people in their turn, whom they had first deserted at the dictates of a

depraved and poor ambition. When all had gone forth from the hall, the worker of this mighty revolution fixed his eyes upon the mace, which lay on the board before the speaker's chair. "What shall we do," he said, "with the fool's bauble? Here, carry it away," and at that word, a private of the guard bore off that ancient emblem of the people's delegated power, on which, not to preserve his soul, Charles Stuart would have dared lay a finger of offence—and bore it off at the first bidding of the simple citizen of a small English borough, raised by his own strange sagacity and the indomitable firmness of his simple will to a far loftier station than the proudest despot of the east. Cromwell then snatched the instrument of dissolution from the trembling fingers of the clerk; ordered the great doors to be locked, and girt by his devoted guard, returned to his own palace at Whitehall, in all save name a king.—*Novel of "Oliver Cromwell."*

SHERIDAN.—On the invitation of the family of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, I this day attended his funeral. I understood that it was to be very private, and that he was to be followed to the grave only by a few of his friends, and of those who had been particularly connected with him in politics. When I arrived at Peter Moore's house in George-street, to which the body had been removed, as being near to Westminster-Abbey, where it was to be buried, I was astonished at the number and description of persons who were assembled there; the Duke of York, Lord Sidmouth, Lord Mulgrave, Lord Anglesea, Lord Lynedoch, Wellesley Pole, and many others, whose politics have been generally opposite to Sheridan's, and who could grace the funeral with their presence only to pay a tribute to his extraordinary talents. How strange a contrast! For some weeks before his death he was nearly destitute of the means of subsistence. Executions for debt were in his house; and he passed his last days in the custody of sheriff's officers, who abstained from conveying him to prison merely because they were assured that to remove him would cause his immediate death; and now, when dead, a crowd of persons, the first in rank, and station, and opulence, were eager to attend him to his grave. I believe that many, and I am sure that some, of the mourners were self-invited. Such, certainly, were three of the Prince's friends, Lord Yarmouth, Bloomfield and Leach. They sent a letter from Carlton House the day before the funeral, expressing a desire to attend, and their offer was not refused. The Prince, about ten days before Sheridan's death, when he was in great distress, and after some of the newspapers had observed upon the strange inattention he met with, had sent him a present of £200; but Mrs Sheridan had the spirit to refuse it, and when she communicated to her husband what she had done he approved her conduct. The immediate cause of his death was reported to be an abscess; but the truth is, that his constitution was nearly worn out, and that his death was rapidly accelerated by grief, disappointment, and a deep sense of the neglect he experienced.—*Romilly's Memoirs.*

THE DANCE OF LIFE.—Human life is a mere dance—the nursery a *ball-room*! Old maids and bachelors, for want of partners, are compelled to exhibit in a *pas seul*. Knavery practices the *shuffle*, while pride, prudence, and experience, are professors of the art of *cutting*. Courage teaches the "*en avant*," and discretion ("*the better part of valour*") the "*en arriere*." Some are happy in the choice of "*partners*," while many are doomed to go through the whole "*dance*" with the dowerless and disagreeable Mis-Fortunes and Mis-Chances. The ambitious and would-be-great are continually struggling to show off in a particular "*set*," but, notwithstanding the pains they take in their "*steps*," frequently experience the mortification of a "*dos-à-dos*," when they are anxiously exerting all their efforts for a smiling "*vis-à-vis*." These are the "*ups and downs*" of the "*dance*." The "*lords of the creation*" (with few exceptions) are very awkward and ungainly; while "*lovely woman*" is most generally perfect in "*figure*." Love is generally "*master of the ceremonies*," but, being rather purblind, makes the most ridiculous mistakes in introducing "*partners*," and although Avarice (who officiates in the higher circles) is lynx-eyed, he commits as many errors in "*coupling*" the company as his coadjutor. Hope illumines the "*festive scene*," and away they bound on the "*light fantastic toe*,"—hands across—down the middle—up again!—till Time steps in, and throws a damp upon their merriment—the piper stops for "*want of breath*," and—the dance ends!—*Bentley's Miscellany for October.*

The tremendous expansive power of freezing water has been proved by a number of experiments. We remember reading an account of one made at Woolwich, in England, several years ago, which gave an amazing proof of the power in question. An iron-thirty-two pounder was prepared with an iron plug or tompon, twelve inches long, made to screw into the mouth of the piece with a very close and deep-cut worm, (or spiral groove,) the cannon was filled with water, the plug screwed in, and moreover fastened with strong chains and ropes to the axles; and thus charged it was exposed to the cold of a severe winter night. In the morning the chains and ropes were found broken, the worm destroyed, and the plug driven bodily out, while a cylinder of ice occupied half the space it had previously filled.

Two Harvest-homes in one year.—A farmer living at Paxford, near Camden, in this county, has finished harvesting twice this year, not having got in the last year's crop till the 1st of January.—*Cheltenham Free Press.*