resolved to embrace your good will towards him with all the favour he can be able to show you, and in particular to let you know, that he never minded to quarrel with any who did as you have done by commandment, and not (as you writ) out of malice, he craves your assistance in all the particulars of that matter, that you can be able to let him know, and gives you many thanks for that which you have done already. I will assure you, you will not serve a thankless master.*

Some time after this, the master of Gray proposed that Cecil should propitiate James towards himself, and towards Gray, by letters which, professing to be private, should nevertheless find their way into the king’s hands. I know not whether Cecil took this advice, but I suspect that he preferred and soon commenced a less circuitous method of addressing the successor. This correspondence, if preserved, is still secret. Fifteen letters have been published which have for more than seventy years passed in the world as “the secret correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil with James VI. King of Scotland.” A reader not acquainted with the book will be surprised to hear, that it contains not one letter from James to Cecil, or from Cecil to James. They are mostly written by Lord Henry Howard †, and addressed to Lord Mar, and Mr. Bruce; nor has the editor, a learned antiquary and a judge, supported, either by evidence or by argument, the title which he has given to his book. It appears to me quite clear on a perusal of the letters themselves, that although they may perhaps have been written under general instructions from Cecil, and although the answers were shown to him, he did not see the letters; and is no more responsible for their contents, than for the almost euphuistical style in which they are written. It is surprising that the judicial mind

* A letter in the State Paper Office, dated 9th of July, 1601, and signed 9. 8. The letter makes an unintelligible allusion to some voyage to be made by Cecil, with Lord Cobham (as the cypher is explained); and to a villainous part played by Lord Sayquaher, who had “lyed monstrously,” probably of Cecil.

† Second son of the celebrated Earl of Surry, and afterwards known with little credit as Earl of Northampton.
of lord Hailes should not have perceived that the burden of the proof, that letters written between two parties, signing their names, constituted a correspondence between two other parties, lay justly upon him; it is still more surprising that he should have made his statement with passages before him which Cecil could not have seen, unless we imagine a complete scheme of unnecessary mystification. In Howard’s letters there are distinct averments, that certain passages were inserted, in disobedience of Cecil’s instructions, and his correspondent is warned not to notice in his answers certain parts of the letters from England, evidently because Cecil was not to know that they had been written. Elsewhere, hints are given as to the purport of the answers, because Cecil is to see them.

Cecil was no doubt well aware that Howard corresponded with lord Mar and Bruce, many of the letters were probably written under general instructions from him, and the answers, or some of them, were shown to him; but Howard’s character was too selfish, intriguing, and officious, and his language too obscure, to allow of our treating his letters as those of any person but himself. Admitting, however, that Cecil is to be made responsible for these letters (excepting only those passages from which the writer himself disconnects him), I really do not see any thing to blame in the correspondence so far as it respected the queen, whose interests were not in any instance sacrificed for the sake of gratifying James, or securing his succession.

With George Nicholson the queen’s agent in Scotland,

* Letter II. November 22. 1601.—“Cecil forbade me to advertise these particulars, because they are of no great consequence to the main; and yet he thinks that any one of these small leaks would let in a great deal of water, into the vessel of our traffic, if the least point came to discovery.” Letter III.—“You must not touch one word in your letter of the consultations and canons of Durham House, because I had not warrant to advertise them; although I was the instrument of bringing the chief things to discovery.” Again, letter IV.—“After I had folded up this letter, ready almost for the seal, I was sent for by Cecil... Letter VII.—“I pray you dear Mr. Bruce, by the next, let Cecil perceive again that your promise is precisely kept, &c.” Letter XII.—“It remains, dear Mr. Bruce, that first, you write no word in answer to all those doubts, and answers, by the next, which Cecil may see, and thereupon unjustly suspect juggling.”
Cecil kept up an official correspondence; this man, it appears, on one occasion at least, addressed Cecil on his more private interests, and the following was thereply:—

"October, 1602. Since the writing of my letter I have received yours of the 12th of October, by the convoy of the lord Scroope, for which, although I note in you much good affection towards me in your dealings with the king, yet I may not hide from you still one resolution, which is, that I never will be otherwise, to that king or any, for hope or fear, than as her Majesty shall have just cause to conceive of their sincerity towards her, for Mr. Nicholson, more than that my heart could never, nor never shall accuse me, of any practices against princes; yet by the grace of God, I never will have other dealing with that king than as you see, and for the course which you takes with him in offering to be a means for me, it is his own double diligence, and none of mine, or if he will say that ever I wrote to him in cypher the value of six words, let me have the shame of it before God and man, for I thank God I am not yet so miserable as to need any such mediation, and therefore if the king told it you for me to know it, and keep it private, and will do so; or if the king will be contented that I should challenge him for it, I will make him recant it, for I take God to witness it is a fiction. I pray you therefore observe a mean in your report of my courses wherein, as I promise by God's help that they shall never be built upon unworthy foundations, so I desire not your endeavour or labour to speak any thing for me but truth, or to conjecture that I do aim at any other acceptation or correspondence than such as is necessary for her Majesty's secretary and humble servant."

This is not the letter of a man conscious of doing his royal mistress a secret injury.

The most reasonable ground of inculpation is, that the correspondence was studiously concealed from queen

* I do not find this letter in the State Paper Office. There is one from Nicholson to Scroope, conveying the packet, and alluding to some public matters which are noticed in the sequel of Cecil's answer, which is in draft under his own hand.
Elizabeth.* Let us hear Cecil himself, who, in writing to sir Henry Wootton concerning the dismissal of a secretary, thus justifies the correspondence and its concealment:—"I was loath that he should have come to some discovery of that correspondence which I had with the king our sovereign;... he might have raised such inferences thereof as might have bred some jealousy in the queen's mind, if she had known it, or heard any such suspicion to move from him, wherein, although I hope you remain secure, if her majesty had known all I did, how well there should have known the innocency and constancy of my present faith. Yet, her age and orbit, joined to the jealousy of her sex, might have moved her to think ill of that which helped to preserve her. For what could more quiet the expectation of a successor, so many ways invited to jealousy, than when he saw her ministry that were most inward with her, wholly bent to accommodate the present actions of state for his future safety, when God should see his time."§

It may, perhaps, be admitted, that a minister of scrupulous delicacy and lofty sentiments, would have abstained from a political transaction which he found it necessary to conceal from his queen; that he possessed not this chivalrous character is the utmost that can fairly be urged in disparagement of Cecil.

Lord Hailes's collection contains but one letter from James himself. ||

* Every body has heard a story of the means taken by Cecil to keep his secret from his mistress.—"The queen taking the air on Blackheath, by Greenwich, a post summoned her to inquire from what quarter his business came, and hearing from Scotland, she staid her coach to receive the packet; but the secretary, sir Robert Cecil, being in the coach with her, fearful that some of his secret conveyances might be discovered, having an active wit, calls for a knife suddenly to open it, lest puts off and delays might beget suspicion; and when he came to cut it, he told the queen it looked and smelt ill-favourably, coming out of many nasty budgets, and was fit to be aired and opened before she saw it; which reason meeting with her disaffection to ill-scents, hindered her smelling out his underhand contrivances."—Kennet ii. 622.

† This avowal, be it observed, is not inconsistent with my opinion, that Cecil did not see Henry Howard's letters.

‡ Sic.

§ To sir Henry Wootton. 29th of March, 1608. Sidney Papers, ii. 326.

|| Some of Howard's letters allude to the direct correspondence between James and Cecil. See p. 64. 85.
That letter, addressed to lord Henry Howard, displays perfect confidence in Cecil, and affords no countenance to the statement of Lingard, that the king reproved Cecil for his inculpation of other English statesmen, or for his insinuations against the Scottish queen. True it is, that while expressing his trust in the provident wisdom of Cecil, who had completely overcome his prejudice, he speaks with less respect of the "ample Asiatic and endless volumes" of lord Henry Howard. He made the just distinction, which English writers have overlooked, between the minister and his friend.

A Scottish author gives us one letter from James, which is strikingly indicative of his good opinion of Cecil, and of Cecil's fidelity to his own queen. Spottiswood tells us, that Beaumont, the ambassador who was sent from France a short time before Elizabeth's death, and who brought to Cecil "a letter of infinite kindness" from Henry IV., talked to Cecil of the injury which his interests would sustain by the change of sovereign. "The secretary, that was no child, knowing that the ambassador did but sound him, for making some other project, answered, 'that this was the reward of unsotted duty, when ministers did only regard the service of their sovereigns, without respect of their own particular; and that for himself, he should never grieve to endure trouble for so just a cause, the same being, to a man that valued his credit more than his security, a kind of martyrdom; notwithstanding, he supposed that things passed would not be called to mind, or if so, were, and he saw his case desperate, he should flee to another city, and take the benefit of the king's royal offer.' The ambassador being so answered, made a fair retreat, saying that, 'in case the king of Scots did carry himself towards the king of France with the respect that was his due, he was not prepared to impeach his interests.' The secretary replying, 'that it was a wise resolution his master had taken,' the ambassador

† Spottiswood's History of the Church of Scotland, 1602. p. 471-472.
ceased to tempt him any farther in that business." Cecil reported all this to king James, whose answer was this:—"As I do heartily thank you for your plain and honest offer, so you may assure yourself that it would do me no pleasure that you should hazard either your fortune or reputation, since the loss of either of these would make you the less available to me. No, I love not to feed upon such fantastical humours, although I cannot let busy-bodies to live upon their own imaginations:" adding, after a blasphemous comparison, "I protest in God's presence, that, for your constant and honest behaviour to your sovereign's service, I loved your virtues long before I could be certain that you would deserve at my hand the love of your person; wherefore go on, and serve her truly that reigneth as you have done; for he that is false to the present will never be true to the future."

The same author shows, that the representations against Northumberland*, for which Lingard supposes Cecil to have been rebuked†, had, on the contrary, their full effect; for when that noblemen addressed James on the state of his prospects, with some disrespectful allusions to Elizabeth, the Scottish king charged him "to forbear such writing," and this rebuke was communicated to Cecil's agent.‡

It has been much the practice to censure Cecil for prejudicing the mind of James against Ralegh, and his two friends Cobham and Northumberland, who are styled in the correspondence a diabolical triplicity.§ It is true that Henry Howard tells a long, and not very intelligible, story of schemes adopted by these three men, or rather by two of them — for Northumberland is represented as their tool — for making a merit with king James, and with Cecil||, by offering to reconcile

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* Henry Percy, ninth earl.
† P. 477.
‡ "Touching the answer of king James to the earl, I must speak with admiration." That this was the letter to Northumberland, appears from the tenor of the correspondence, from the date, and from the expression,—"His majesty advised him, out of his royal care of others, not to send often in." Lord H. Howard to E. Bruce, 1 April, 1603. See Corr. pp. 64, 65.; and Spott. 472.
§ P. 33.
|| P. 30.
them, and, at the same time, to instil into queen Elizabeth a suspicion that Cecil was negotiating with James. It would appear (but really it is not easy to discern Howard’s meaning), that Cobham betrayed to Cecil some part of the schemes which are called by Howard “the consultations and canons of Durham House,” (the place of meeting), and that Cecil treated the information with great indifference, and could not be brought to make to this officious and interested meddler any declaration of his future views. * Then came Raleigh†, professing to communicate to Cecil the overtures which had been made to him by the duke of Lenox, and relates, perhaps rather boastfully, his refusal to entertain any motion “that should either divert his eye or diminish his sole respect for his own sovereign.” The queen’s minister could not but applaud this behaviour, but would not undertake to represent it to Elizabeth. It would be thought, he said, intendent to “pick a thank” of the queen, and to injure Raleigh’s interests with the king.

Mr. Bruce was desired by lord Henry Howard to acquaint the king with the dealings of the duke of Lenox with Cobham and Raleigh, in order that he might compare it with the duke’s own report. * You must not touch one word in your letter of the consultations and canons of Durham House, because I had not warrant to advertise them.”‡ But Cecil did offer recommendation through Mr. Bruce to the king, that he would not mention a communication between Lenox and the triplicity. Henry Howard suggested a conclusion, that the king should be persuaded to thank Cecil for the light he receives of Cobham and Raleigh by his advertisement; and if it please his majesty,” he continues, “to speak of them suitably to the concert § which Cecil holds, it will be the better; for Cecil swore to me this

* P. 46. † Ib. ‡ P. 49. It appears to me clear that Howard means that Bruce is not to notice these matters in his next letter, because he had no warrant from Cecil to mention them to Mr. Bruce, and therefore wished to conceal the fact of his communication; just as on a former occasion he mentions matters which Cecil distinctly forbid him to notice. This is therefore one of the proofs that Cecil did not see Howard’s letters.

§ Should not this be conceit?
day*, that dyo erinacii, that is, he and they would never live under one apple tree. The thing which Cecil would have me print in the king’s mind, is the miserable state of Cobham and Ralegh, who are fain to put their heads under the girdle of him whom they envy most, and that they cannot escape his walk with all their agility, which, if you seem* in your letter by the king’s direction to observe, you will tickle the right humour."

I have made these copious extracts because they are the favourite citations of those who inculpate Cecil; for currying favour with James, for giving him a bad opinion of Ralegh, and preventing him from reaping the advantage which Cecil proposed to himself.† But it must be borne in mind that, although the fact of Cecil’s correspondence with James is known, independently of Henry Howard’s letters, it is only from those letters that we obtain the knowledge of his inculpation of Ralegh; and if the verbose and mysterious epistles of the future earl of Northampton are good authority for Cecil’s warning of James against Ralegh and the others, they are good also for the provocation; and for Cecil’s ignorance of the most offensive and criminatory language. The consultations of Durham house fully justified the minister as regarding the three associates as his enemies, but even without the knowledge of those deeper intrigues, acquired through the suspicious channel of Henry Howard, Cecil was fully warranted in dissuading James from listening to their counsels.

In quitting this celebrated correspondence, I beg it to be observed that the authority of Henry Howard, such as it is, exhibits Cecil as the guardian of lord Southampton’s life, and as the person most inclined to deliver Essex. ‡

An ill opinion of Ralegh was not confined to Cecil:

* P. 52. This passage affords no proof, but a strong presumption, that Cecil did not see the letters.
† The most vehement of these attacks, is in sir E. Brydges’s Censura Literaria, iv. 179.
‡ See Cor. 219, noticed by Southey, iv. 346.
Northumberland, one of the three friends, after acquitting all English politicians of "plotting with any foreign princes," and acknowledging that Cobham and Raleigh were "in faction contrary to some that held with James's title," speaks thus of sir Walter, in his correspondence with king James: — "I know him insolent, extremely heated, a man that desires to seem to be able to sway all men's fancies; all men's causes; and a man that out of himself, when your time shall come, will never be able to do you much good, nor harm." It is fair to add the more favourable testimony which immediately follows: — "Yet I must needs confess what I know, that there is excellent good parts of nature in him; a man whose love is disadvantageous to me in some sort, which I cherish rather out of constancy than policy, and one whom I wish your majesty not to lose, because I would not that one hair of a man's head should be against you that might be for you." * This qualified recommendation of Raleigh, by one who was at least his political friend, might naturally deter James from placing confidence in Raleigh.

The long reign of Elizabeth was drawing to a close; but Cecil still abstained from any declaration of his sentiments in regard to the succession to her throne. The Scottish king and the English minister probably understood each other; Cecil had no other view than the succession of James, and it was with the full concurrence of the king that he disclaimed any concern in the question of succession. James apparently preserved a corresponding secrecy, and never spoke of Cecil's attachment to his interests. †

The question of the succession was connected with

* Letters from Northumberland to king James, in Aikin's James L, 58. It is a matter of regret that extracts only are given of these letters, and no date.
† Henry Howard, while securing to himself the advantages of an early adhesion to the interests of the successor, endeavoured with remarkable dexterity to persuade other countries that they would lose nothing by the postponement of their declaration until after the establishment of James upon the throne. P. 128-9.
some proceedings concerning the catholics, in which Cecil had necessarily some part.

Persons, and the Spanish and Romanist party among the catholics, proposed, under the secret patronage of Pope Clement VIII., a union of all catholics in support of c successor of that persuasion, and even entertained a visionary scheme for marrying Arabella Stuart to the cardinal Farnese, who traced his pedigree to John of Gaunt.†

The other division of catholics under Paget, professed more moderate views, merely hoping to obtain, in return for their promised support of James, some favour for the members of their church. They disavowed all connection with the party of Persons, and sought the protection of secretary Cecil.‡ They so far succeeded in obtaining some facilities in their correspondence and publications, as to excite scandal among the puritans, and suspicion among the more violent, that the minister intended to tolerate the two religions; an intention which the queen was under the necessity of disclaiming in a royal proclamation, in which a distinction was made between the two parties among the catholics.§

* Aldobrandini.
† I know not he w.
‡ Winwood, 1. 51. 52. 89. 161. 373. Lettres d'Ossat, v. 34. 60. For some part of this statement there is only the authority of Lingard; but he is likely to be right on such a point. Lingard, viii. 477.
§ November 5. 1602. "Of late much contention and controversy has arisen between the jesuits and the secular priests combined with them on the one part, and certain of the secular priests dissenting from them in divers points on the other part, thereby a great difference of offence against us and our state, betwixt one and the other sect, hath manifestly appeared. The jesuits, and the secular priests their adherents, seeking and practising by their continual plots and designs, not only to stir up foreign princes against us to the invasion and conquest of our kingdom, but also even to murder our person. The other secular priests not only protesting against the same as a thing most wicked, detestable, and damnable, but also offering themselves in their writings and speeches to be the first that shall discover such traitorous intentions against us and our state, and to be the foremost, by arms and all other means, to suppress it; so as it is plain, that the treason, which locked in the hearts of the jesuits and their adherents, is fraught with much more violent malice, perils, and poison, both against us and our state, than that disloyalty and disobedience which is found in the other secular projects that are opposite therein unto them." The queen, however, proceeds to impute to the whole body of catholics "disloyalty and disobedience," and charges them with "insinuating into the minds of all sorts of people, (as well the good that grieve at it as the bad that thirst after it), that we have some purpose to grant a toleration of two religions within our realm, where God, (we thank him for it, who seeth
It was certainly not until Elizabeth was on her deathbed, that she declared her pleasure as to the succession to her throne. I say, her pleasure, because all writers, I know not why, have attached great importance to the declaration of the dying queen, as if the succession depended upon it. No account which I have seen strikes me as sufficiently authentic; but it appears most probable that Cecil sought and obtained a declaration in favour of James. Whether that declaration was couched in the remarkable language * which has been reported, I do not undertake to pronounce.

On the death of Elizabeth, Robert Cecil acknowledged James as his king, and was immediately taken into favour, and confirmed in his post of secretary. His enemies have said that he obtained James’s favour through the influence of Sir George Hume †, and of Roger Aston ‡, a gentleman of the king’s bed-chamber. Surely his former communications with the king, and his actual position in the government of England, may account sufficiently for his appointment to the post of secretary.

On his journey to London the new king was for four days the guest of Cecil, at Theobald’s §, where he was entertained with great magnificence ||, and the first peer-

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* “I will have no rascal to succeed me.” See Camden in Kenet, 653. Somers’s Tracts, i. 246; Cary’s Mem., 122; Birch, ii. 306; and lastly, D’Israeli’s Curiosities of Literature (1834), vi. 120; also on Raumer, ii. 194.

† Afterwards Earl of Dunbar.

‡ Miss Alkin copies Weldon in styling Aston the ‘king’s barber’ (i. 103.), and Lodge (iii. 186) calls him a menial servant. He says, however, that he was a gentleman of Cheshire, and the situation which he held was probably one of those which, in a royal household, is held by a gentleman. From his letters to the State Paper Office, I cannot infer that he was a low man. He became master of the wardrobe.

§ In the parish of Cheshunt, Herts. Brayley, vii. 236.

|| Not only James and his numerous train, but all who came to see their new king, were plenteously feasted. Nicholls, i. 107, 111, 135.
age which he conferred, was the barony of Cecil of Essenden, upon his host.*

Yet a letter, which the new baron wrote to sir John Harrington, shows that he was not perfectly happy under the change of sovereign. "You know all my former steps, good knight; rest content, and give heed to one that hath sorrowed in the bright lustre of a court, and gone heavily even to the best seeming fair ground. 'Tis a great task to prove one's honesty, and yet not spoil one's fortune. You have tasted a little herof in our blessed queen's time, who was more than a man, and (in troth) sometimes less than a woman. I wish I waited now in her presence-chamber, with ease at my food, and rest in my bed; I am pushed from the shore of comfort, and know not where the winds and waves of a court will bear me; I know it bringeth little comfort on earth; and he is, I reckon, no wise man that looketh this way to heaven. We have much stir about councils, and more about honours. Many knights were made at Theobalds, during the king's stay at my house, and more to be made in the city. My father had much wisdom in directing the state; and I wish I could bear my part so discreetly as he did. Farewell, good knight, but never come near London till I call you. Too much crowding doth not well for a cripple, and the king doth find scanty room to sit himself, he has so many friends, as they choose to be called, and heaven prove they lie not in the end. In trouble, hurrying, feigning, suing, and such like matters, I now rest your true friend, R. Cecil.† Lord Cecil's dissatisfaction with the new court was observed by foreigners; nor did he conceal his regrets. The imperious Elizabeth had required her ministers to address her kneeling; and Cecil, to one

* May 13. 1603. "The manner of the creation of the four barons at the Tower was, that they came not in before the king in part of their robes, as other barons created were accustomed to do, but coming before the king in their ordinary apparel, they had their robes laid on their shoulders, and their patents read and delivered unto them. The cause why they came not in their robes was for that the deformity of sir Robert Cecil, he being a little man, almost a dwarf, and extremely crookshoultered, should not be discerned nor much noted of the beholders; albeit, each man present perfectly knew of these imperfections." Harleian MSS. 5677., quoted in Nicholls' Progresses, iv. 145.

† May 27. 1603. Nugæ Antiquæ, i. 345.
who congratulated him on his delivery from this onerous and degrading obligation, answered "Would to God that I yet spake upon my knees."*

There were, however, no indications of estrangement on the part of the new king. Cecil's friends, lords Henry and Thomas Howard, were among the new members (six Scots † and six English) of James's privy council, nor were any of the councillors known to be hostile to Cecil, unless it were Northumberland.

Another letter of this period is subjoined, as illustrative of Cecil's style and habits, and perhaps indicating some jealousy of the Scots: — "This place ‡ is unwholesome, all the house standing upon springs. It is unsavoury, for there is no savour but of cows and pigs: it is uncaseful, for only the king and queen, with the privy chamber ladies, and some three or four of the Scottish council, are lodged in the house, and neither chamberlain nor the English councillor have a room; which will be a sour sauce to some of your old friends that have been merry with you in a winter's night; perchance they have not removed to their bed in a snow storm. . . . The Earl of Nottingham hath begun the union, for he hath married the lady Margaret Stewart. All is well liked, and the king pleased, and so I end, with my service to my lady, and with a release now to you for a field hawk, if you can help me to a river hawk that will fly in a high place: stick not to give gold, so she fly high, but not else."§

Ralegh did not participate in the favour of the new king. || The antipathy of James to this celebrated man,

* Beaumont's deep. August 1603. Von Raumer's, 10th and 17th centuries, ii. 291.
† Lingard says (ix. 7.) that these Scotsmen were introduced into the privy council by Cecil's advice, or at least with his approbation. How does Lingard know this? and what does he mean by "condescending to purchase the friendship of the Scottish favourites"? It was surely natural that James should bring some Scots into his council.
‡ The palace of Woodstock.
§ To Lord Shrewsbury, Sept. 1603. Lodge, iii. 186.
¶ Miss Aikin (James I. i. 398) has perpetuated a statement, whence originating I know not, that a party, probably headed by Ralegh, desired to impose limitations and conditions upon James at the time of his accession; and that Cecil successfully resisted the attempt. I see no reason for believing either part of this statement.
has been variously ascribed to the representations of
Cecil, and to Raleigh's enmity to Essex. * It has been
said that James had a prejudice against all the enemies
of Essex; that he forgave Cecil, but never Raleigh. †
It is certain that he forgave Cecil, (if indeed there
was any thing to forgive) but even if Raleigh had not
been the known enemy of Essex, his own character in
the world might have deterred James from employing
him. If Cecil did aggravate the prejudice of his new
master, or advise him against the employments of one
who had now become his political opponent, the counsel
was neither unwarranted nor unprovoked. I have al-
ready mentioned Raleigh's parliamentary opposition.
Historians ‡ more partial to Raleigh than to Cecil, have
taught us to believe, that Raleigh, in a memorial ad-
dressed to James, represented Cecil as the author of
Essex's death, and a partaker in the execution of queen
Mary. If these charges were true, the accused would
be equally justified in avoiding the accuser; but we have
seen that Cecil was much more innocent than Raleigh
in regard to Essex: and he had not even at the close of
the lengthened proceedings against Mary, any share in
the administration of affairs. §

In reverting to foreign affairs, I come to another of
those passages of Cecil's life of which the report of a
rival and the criticisms of a foreigner, have been too

* "It is said that Cecil is doubtfull as to his position; finding the king
partly better informed, partly more obstinate than he thought. Cobham
calls Cecil no better than a traitor. Raleigh is hated throughout the king-
dom. The new queen is enterprising, and affairs are embroiled. I will not
conceal from you, that I have acquaintance and intelligence enough to
enable me to sow and cultivate dissensions, so far as your majesty may
instruct me to do so — not that I advise such a course, or offer myself to
conduct it, for I do not approve it. It is neither consonant to reason nor
to my inclination." This is given by Von Raumer in his "History of the
16th and 17th Centuries, illustrated by original Documents," ii. 195.) as the
abstract of the reports of the French ambassador Beaumont, in May 1608.
Abstracts of this sort are very unsatisfactory; but I see no reason to doubt
the fidelity of this, or to question the accuracy of Beaumont's statement.
If the ambassador was well informed, James was not the only person who
thought ill of Raleigh.

† Wilson, in Kennet.
‡ Welwood, in the Notes upon Wilson, ii. 663. from Back's manuscript,
and lately Cayley, i. 355.
§ He was twenty-four years of age, but had not begun even to assist his
father.
readily accepted by our popular historians. Our knowledge of the transactions of this period is almost entirely derived from the famous Sully*, at this time marquis de Rosny, who was dispatched by Henry IV., in 1603, to engage England once more in the war† from which Henry had against her remonstrances withdrawn; and to bring about a close alliance between the two crowns, and, if possible, an extensive association chiefly of protestant princes, in opposition to the house of Austria.‡

Sully brought to the English court a prejudice against Robert Cecil, and an opinion of the variable character of the English§ which led him to expect some success from his own adroitness in negotiation; yet he saw, as

* Maximilian de Bethune, Duc de Sully, born 1560, died 1641.
† In the latter part of Elizabeth’s reign there had been conferences between the English ambassador at Paris, and the French government respecting the renewal of the war, but there was little of eagerness or distinctness on either side. In 1591 occurred the well known conference between Elizabeth and Sully at Dover, in which the queen suggested some extensive plans for erecting independent republics of the Low Countries and Switzerland, for equalising in extent, riches, and power the great kingdoms of Europe, and for other grand objects. I have somewhere seen these cited as proofs of statesmanship in Elizabeth. To me the whole appears a solemn farce. From Roy, in Petitet, iv 36.
‡ See the instructions to Sully in Economies Royales, p. 261. This book consists of a narrative of events addressed to Sully by his secretaries, but it also contains many letters from Sully himself, and other original documents; from these, the Memores de Sully, to which most writers refer, were compiled, but the original work is a much better authority, and Sully’s letters to the king, written in the first person, possess also the attraction of which the writer of the memoirs boasts, with the additional advantage of authenticity. The greater part of the text is taken from these letters. According to M. Levesque de la Ravallière, the secretaries were not in the account of the embassy to England, as he supposes them to be elsewhere, fictitious persons; I find no doubt of the authenticity of Sully’s own letters. Acad des Inscriptions, xxi. 541.
§ J’ai estimé fort à propos et très agréable à votre Majesté que je lui représente en peu de paroles ce que j’ai reconnu de l’humeur et du naturel de cette nation laquelle comme c’est un peuple exclus, et posé par la nature à milieux des flots impétueux et des ondes variables et inconstants de ce grand océan, aussi est il merveilleusement ingénu et disproportionné en ses délibérations et en lui même produisant quant en même temps des actions tout différentes de ses paroles que si l’on était persuadé par d’expérience, il servit impossible de croire qu’elles procélassent toutes d’une même personne et d’un même esprit—Car étant poussées et mues d’une hystérie et outrecuidance naturelle elle reçoit facilement toutes leurs imaginations et fantasias pour vérités et la fin de leurs désirs et affections pour certitude et événemens infaillibles sans les avoir mesurées et balancées avec la sureté requises en icelles, l’état de choses présentes et la condition des hommes avec lesquels ils ont à traiter, et sans avoir jugé par quelles voies et par quels chemins ils peuvent parvenir à la possession de ce qu’ils souhaitent si ardue en, sorte que la moindre objection ou difficulté les fait incontinent et le plus souvent sans raison pertinente, départir de ce qu’ils avoient, ce leur semblait il si sage et si utilement conclu et arrêté, et qui étant après bien aplanché et examiné par des maximes d’état se reconnoit plutôt proceder d’une pure arrogance et simple nonchalance, que d’un conseil bien digéré, et sans aucun égard des moyens.
every sensible man must see, that no success obtained by cleverness in diplomacy will have a permanent endurance, and he therefore wisely counselled his master to trust rather to his own resources. We shall presently see whether Sully's diplomacy furnished an exception to the general rule.

Sully tells us* that he found Cecil disposed to peace with Spain, without having sufficiently considered the effect of the abandonment of the United Provinces, and the consequent ruin of their Indian trade, and navy, and the Frenchman conceived that he was more likely to make an impression upon the king.† To him, therefore, at his audience of ceremony †, he addressed a speech which his secretaries term "une harangue de Soldat," and which certainly, if peculiarly characteristic of the military style, was the speech of a French soldier.‡ Neither in this audience nor in the first conference upon business was there much more than compliment and stag hunting,—a topic upon which the diplomatist let the king enlarge at will, while he took a survey of the court, and prepared himself for more important discussion. He soon discovered that the queen, Anne of Denmark, had a stronger mind than James, who strove in vain to

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* P. 316.
† At Greenwich, June. Econ. p. 340.
‡ P. 394. This speech, "which pedagts found too short," laments the absence of the more than human eloquence which was necessary to describe Henry IV., and the inability to do justice to the memorable virtues of James. The soldier-like speaker was therefore obliged to confine himself to designating the two kings as the wonder of kings in all ages.
control her; and that Cecil had separated himself from his old friends, and had united himself to the two Scottish factions of Lenox and Mar; their jealousies, as well as those of the king and queen, gave him great embarrassment, and Sully held it to be impossible even for Cecil, with all his ability, subtlety, and artifice to keep down these intrigues. The Scots, however, were now willing to be friends with him, in order to profit by his knowledge of English affairs. But on the other hand an English party, composed chiefly of Southampton, Mountjoy, and other friends of Essex, began to have credit with the king. To all these difficulties was added that of the malcontents, who continued to increase in numbers, and at the head of whom Sully placed Northumberland, Cobham, and Raleigh, "des plus brouillons, artificieux et inventifs d'Angleterre†;" all of these came to the French ambassador‡ with stories of courtly schemes for espousing the interest of Spain against those of France and projects among discontented French noblemen for raising up independent states in Poitiers, Guienne and other provinces of France. Sully gave little credit to these stories, nor did they deserve any, but they serve to display the intriguing spirit of the triplicity. Some of Sully's notions as to the politics of the English court may perhaps be deemed fanciful. The English king he thought, in opposition to an opinion now received, hated Spain and the Spaniards, the Romish church, and the Jesuits, but was ardently desirous of re-establishing the ancient house of Burgundy, independently of Spain and Austria. Among his counsellors, Mar, Mountjoy, Erskine, Kinloss, and others, who were about the king's person looked only to the promotion of his greatness, and the acquisition of his favour, with a penchant towards France. The Howards, Hume, the chancellor Ellesmere§, and the

* "Par une prudence, laquelle ne se trouvera pas, ce dit-on, bien com
† P. 358.
‡ Letter of 25th June, p. 355.
§ Sir Thomas Egerton.
treasurer Buckhurst*, with Cecil himself, were of the old English humour; that is, enemies of France, not partial to Spain, and absolutely bent upon restoring the house of Burgundy. Northumberland and Northampton, with Cobham and Raleigh and others, composed a third party, desirous of change everywhere, and constantly struggling among themselves for the supremacy, which it was generally supposed the lawyers and men of letters would obtain.

I am at a loss to understand this project for resuscitating the house or kingdom of Burgundy.† Extensive projects were not in Cecil's line; the King himself was, perhaps, still less unlikely to entertain one, though very little likely to pursue it with ardour; but of this Burgundian scheme I find no trace, except in these letters of Sully, nor does he give any intelligible explanation of it.‡

In a second audience, the French ambassador proposed that the two kings should, if James desired it make a joint peace with Spain, in order to gain time and rest, with a view to establishing hereafter in the Low Countries a province or a government that should be agreeable to them both; continuing, it would appear, to give secret aid to the Hollanders, so as to prevent their being over-run by Spain. "Why then should we do other," said James in effect, "than bring about a peace between Spain and her provinces, and be ourselves the guarantees of it."§ Although Sully professes to have satisfied the

* Thomas Sackville, ancestor of the duke of Dorset.
† The ancient kingdom of Burgundy comprised modern Burgundy Franche Comté, the Valais, and the Lorraine, as well as Switzerland and Savoy; and at one time extended into Provence.
‡ Though I have taken pains to collate the Economies with the Mémoires I can hardly feel confident of accuracy when I see how much of the latter is not borne out by the former. In the enumeration of factions, the Mémoires add to the mention of Cecil, "du moins autant qu'on le pouvait conjecturer d'un homme qui étoit tout mystère; car il se séparait des uns, et des autres, ou il se réunissait à eux, selon qu'il le jugeoit à propos pour l'intérêt de ses affaires particulières." Many other observations given as Sully's, I cannot find in his letters. There is a curious specimen of the misrepresentation of England by a foreigner, in the Notes to the letters of Cardinal de la Houssaye by that laborious editor of diplomatic records, Amélie de la Houssaye. It is said that Cecil had been a protestant, a calvinist under Edward VI., a Romanist under Mary, and protestant again under Elizabeth. Edward and Mary were both dead before Cecil was born.
§ P. 365.
king, that the ill faith of the Spaniards would defeat the object of this proposition, it really was wiser and more honest than that which the French diplomatist proposed.*

It was in this state of his discussion with James, that Sully had a conference by the king's order, with the lord admiral Howard, lord Northumberland, lord Mar, lord Mountjoy, and lord Cecil† who was the spokesman. There was a little fencing to avoid the first word; and Sully pretended that an unfair advantage was taken of his faintness, when the English deputies called upon him to say what course would be the best for the two kings to take, especially for the recovery of Ostend from the Spaniards: Cecil without more words told Sully that the English government would not be persuaded to continue the war, without France; that peace would be very convenient to them, but that the Hollanders had represented so urgently that it would be their ruin, that although the expenses incident to the accession of the king,‡ would make it impossible to undertake any operation in the present year, they would endeavour to cooperate with France in the next, but proposed that in the mean time France should undertake the recovery of Ostend. This part of the suggestion Sully declined, hinting that if his master acted singly, he would possibly require some separate acquisition. The English now broke up the conference, professing themselves unprepared for my final resolution.

There was still less of result from a conference which Cecil now had with count Aremberg, the representative of the Spanish Netherlands, who told him that he was only used to war, and came merely to know what James's designs were, that a man of letters might be sent to

* According to the Memoires (vi. 362 of edit. 1767), James avowed in this audience a difference with his ministers as to the relations of England with France and Spain. I find nothing of this in the Economies, pp. 360—368, which clearly narrate the same audience.

† P. 371.

‡ It astonishes us who are accustomed to the modern scale of war expenditure, that he mentioned the expenses of the queen's funeral, the reception, and the coronation of the king, and the reception and mission of ambassadors.
treat of them. From this coldness on the part of the archduke toward England, Sully expected from Cecil greater frankness in treating with him; but still he apprehended that it would be rather in appearance than reality, especially in one "who never did any business thoroughly, but always kept something for a bonne bouche, which undid all that one thought one had well concluded before."* The practice which Sully here imputes to Cecil as a fault, has been generally thought, except perhaps by Sir William Temple, essential to diplomacy.

According to the French ambassador, Cecil would not visit Aremberg, unless accompanied by Lord Kinloss, a caution which Sully ascribes to his diffidence of his own position, and the fear of misrepresentation by his enemies†; this may have been the motive of Cecil, but it might perhaps be accounted for by the want of boldness, which is everywhere to be traced in his political conduct.

The ministers of James, and it may be said the affairs of England might now have been embarrassed by the imprudence of the king, who entertaining Sully, and Beaumont, the ordinary French ambassador, at his own dinner table, adverted without preface or ceremony to the project of a double marriage between the royal families of France and England. The project was in Henry's instructions to his ambassador, in contemplation of a joint and open war with Spain; but it would appear that Sully had not mentioned it to James, and he insinuates that it would not have been mentioned if his Britannic majesty had put water into his wine.‡

I know not whether it is to this dinner that the earl of Worcester § alludes, in a letter containing unfortunately the only report we have from an Englishman of

* P. 377.
† Sully's of 30th June, p. 376.
‡ P. 381. Miss Aikin (James I. 133.) treats this project as entirely the scheme of the English king, but it is clearly stated in the Instructions, (Econ. Roy. p. 279) and I rather suspect, that although Sully in writing to his court, puts a different face upon the affair, he really had thrown it out to James as a bait.
§ Edward Somerset, first earl, ancestor of the duke of Beaufort.
what passed in Sully’s embassy. This slight notice confirms, so far as it goes, the suspicion which we may reasonably entertain, that if we could have Cecil’s report of the conferences, the superiority of the Frenchman in cleverness and straightforwardness might not be so apparent. “This day M. Rosny dined with the king in state, and the French ambassador Leger, and meaneth very shortly to take his leave. He would fain have concluded a firm amity with our master, but playeth the sinner, and will make no proposition at all; we, on the other side, very willing to embrace friendship and hold correspondence with his master, but keep close within bounds until we discover their ends: what the conclusion will be the end must discover.”

At the next conference the deputies of the States were present. Barneveldt, the chief of them, having in the meantime apprised Sully that Cecil did not conceal the intention to make peace with Spain, retaining nevertheless, the cautionary towns, for the payment of the debt. In this event, the Dutchman avowed an intention to obtain the towns by force, and solicited the aid of the French ambassador, who made only a general reply.

Cecil, however, came to this conference prepared to concert with the French a scheme of secret assistance to the united provinces, professing at the same time, that though his master was willing to save the states, he would not ruin himself for them, and therefore made the repayment of Henry’s debt a condition of the proposed co-operation. To this proposal, Sully made objections more earnest than reasonable, while Cecil declared that England could employ no other funds. Hereupon the English secretary, according to the representation of the Frenchman, began,—“as it was his custom to play a part of subtlety, and to turn everything to advantage; endeavoured to make the Dutch and French ministers confess that they had said things of which they had never thought, and appeared very

* Beaumont the ordinary ambassador.
† To lord Shrewsbury, June 19, 1603. Lodge iii. 166.
happy* when by the confused and embarrassed terms which he used, he had brought the matter to such a point that nobody knew what to understand."

I suspect that the mystification was in Sully himself, who follows up this narrative, which, be it always observed, is his narrative only, by a correct statement of the position of affairs. "Your majesty," he writes to Henry IV., "will not carry on war, without the English — and the English cannot carry it on without payment from you, and from the States, and this payment: neither you nor they can make." This is plain enough, but it is possible that James, talked over by the French diplomate, had given instructions to his ministers more favourable to Sully's objects than his own peacefulness and poverty allowed: his minister might be glad to see the impracticability of his master's views exposed upon discussion.

But the persevering Sully, obtaining a fresh audience of the king himself, recovered more than the ground he had lost, and succeeded in persuading James that his ministers had not acted up to the avowed intentions of their master. Having exacted from the weak monarch an oath of secrecy†, he pretended that he preferred the cause of the protestant church even to his king, his fortune, his wife, his children, and all other human considerations, and having found that the Austrian and other catholic princes were bent upon the destruction of whatever was opposed to Romanism, proposed as from himself (though it was in truth in conformity with his instructions)‡ a league offensive and defensive between

* Montreuil une allegresse fort grande, p. 182. In the first volume of our Foreign Statesmen, p. 211, this is erroneously translated, it produced much gaiety—it is clearly Cecil who was glad.

† This scarcely credible fact is affirmed by the writers of the Econ. Roy., 401. In Sully's letter to the king, which it follows, the suggestion of a league is mentioned, and Sully's avowal of devotion to the protestant cause, but not James's oath. On the contrary, it would seem that the king made Sully swear that he would not mention, except to his own master, what passed at this memorable conference. See self, p. 425.

‡ Perhaps not exactly conformable. In these instructions (Econ. Roy. p. 250.), the project includes "méne la guerre," and has less of a protestant, and more of a spoilative character. But Sully was especially instructed to make these suggestions as from himself, pretending that he should not submit them to his master, until approved by England and the States; — and this is the man so indignant at the subtleties of Robert Cecil!
France, England, and the States, in which all protestant princes, and enemies of the house of Austria, should be included. James listened with great approbation to all this, which was developed at great length, and when the Frenchman assured him that the debt should be put in a train of liquidation, was so entirely pleased, that, embracing the ambassador, he offered to join with Henry in signing a treaty to be prepared by Sully and himself. This was immediately done; James then called his counsellors, and ordered Cecil without any reply or dispute “to prepare the necessary writings,” and left Sully in high glee, and his ministers in dudgeon.*

The French ambassador left England soon afterwards, but not before he had obtained an oath from James that he would put his signature to a formal treaty conformable to the preliminaries agreed upon with Sully.†

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* Sully to Henry IV. 10th of July, 1602. p. 421.
† So say the secretaries, v. 9.

In these preliminaries, it was agreed (Lecon. Roy. p. 21.) that the ancient treaties between France and Scotland, and the treaties between France and queen Elizabeth, should be renewed; that a defensive league should be made between France and England, and their allies, especially the United Provinces; and that the two kings should procure from the king of Spain, and the archdukes, that they should leave these provinces in reposo, or at least acknowledge them to be their subjects, or those of the empire, upon such reasonable conditions that they should not become subject to an absolute dominion; and as the Spaniards may protract the negotiation to be begun with this view, the two kings will assist the United Provinces with a good sum of money, and with a sufficient number of soldiers, to be raised in the dominions of the king of England, but paid and maintained by France, who shall supply the Hollanders with the necessary sums; one half being furnished by France on her own account, and the other taken in discharge of so much of the French king’s debt to England; all this to be done secretly, so as not to disturb the peace subsisting between France and Spain, or that which England, in imitation of France, may make with Spain. But if England should in consequence, be attacked by Spain, France shall assist her with a force of not less than 6000 men, paid by herself, and shall then pay off the remainder of her debt in four yearly instalments. If France shall be attacked, England shall assist her with a similar force, and the payment of the debt shall be suspended. If both should be attacked, or should agree to make open war upon Spain, France shall defend the Low Countries with 20,000 men, and a sufficient force into her southern provinces; and shall also send a fleet of galleys to the Levant, by way of diversion. England shall send two powerful fleets to the Indies, and to the coasts of Spain; and shall employ a land force of not less than 6000 men, without demanding payment of the debt. Neither king shall make peace without the other, “ni aucun des deux roïs puise faire paix, amoindrir les forces cy-dessus, s’il se départir des actes d’hostilité que par le consentement mutuel l’un de l’autre
After the departure of the ambassador extraordinary, Beaumont resumed his functions, and his reports although full of exaggerated praises of Sully, prove that, even in his opinion, the lessons of that able minister had taken but a slender root in the mind of James, who, having a natural desire for peace, already, as Beaumont informs Henry IV. began to listen to the specious offers of the Spanish ambassador. One topic of Beaumont's commendation is, Sully's boldness in laying before king James himself his complaints of the English ministers, and his cleverness in putting down, by prompt and plain arguments, the subtleties and sophistry of Cecil in particular, who, thus far as he was, acknowledged his rival to be the greatest statesman in Europe. What really passed between Sully and James, or his ministers, we have not the means of knowing, for implicit reliance cannot justly be placed upon the reports of that diplomat himself, or his admiring colleague*; but I confess that I cannot set a high value upon diplomatic ability, the effect of which disappears so soon as the diplomatist departs.

According to M. Beaumont†, (for Sully's own reports are not so particular), "Cecil sometimes finding himself defeated by M. Rosny, endeavoured to puzzle him, and put him out of temper, by proposing things which were quite out of the question; and he gave to the king a false report of what had passed in the negotiation in order to divert him from that which he had agreed upon with Sully, who was so far from being moved to anger by the absurd propositions of Cecil, as that minister probably desired, that he always made light of them,

* Langard is more cedulous. He says (ix. 10.), "Sully taught the king to mistrust the fidelity of his own counsellors, &c. Cecil was openly charged with duplicity." Yet it seems that in a few weeks Cecil had "entire possession of king James." And have only Sully's boast for believing he ever lost it.
† To Henry IV. Econ. Roy. v. 15. no date.
and so well represented the truth to the king, that he
would only abide by what had passed by word of
mouth with the marquis, and reproached Cecil in the
presence of the ambassador, with having misrepresented
many things which he had said with much apparent
sincerity and affection. Yet, even at the moment, this
ardent admirer of Sully’s diplomatic powers disputed
t heir efficacy, for he only deduced from all this success,
that something might have been done, if Sully had had
full powers, which might be difficult at another time,
and in other hands. And he very soon apprised Sully,
that although the English minister interposed delays
and artifices, andordon rang with his praises at the
expense of Cecil*, that minister and his Scottish allies
had entire possession of King James, and Cecil himself
managed him as he pleased; so that it became advisable
for the king of France to assure the English secretary
in a letter from himself, that Sully had made a satisfac-
tory report of the good understanding that had existed
between them. I know not whether this letter was
written, but when full powers came to Beaumont, the
treaty was executed without the expected opposition
either from Cecil or the queen†; and presents were
distributed to the amount of sixty thousand crowns, of
which Cecil’s share consisted of three dozen buttons of
gold, enriched with diamonds. After all, the truth is
that the engagements into which James entered by this
treaty were very general, and really bound England to
nothing, which it had not always been Cecil’s policy to
do; that is, to prevent the United Provinces from falling
absolutely under the dominion of Spain. Of any arma-
ment to be sent from England with this object, France
was to defray the expense; and England took care that
in the event of a joint war, her fleets should be spe-
cially employed in furtherance of her own commercial
and maritime interests.‡ The count of Soissons,
Sully’s enemy at the court of France, was perhaps not

* P. 35.  † P. 49.
very far wrong when he depreciated the success of the ambassador, and called his treaty "nothing more than a project of hopes and fair words, without any certainty that they will ever be executed."*

It has been necessary to pursue Sully's history of this treaty, because a great portion of the merit which he assumes to himself rests upon his triumph over Cecil, and the destruction of James's confidence in his minister. But, in comparing the new stipulations with Cecil's language, as reported by Sully himself, I am inclined to ascribe the boast of the French negotiator to that habit of "exaggerating the worth of his own actions, and lessening that of others," to which, according to Henry himself‡, this celebrated statesman was addicted. Nor is there much doubt but that his picture of James's reproof of Cecil is overcharged. No mention is made in any known correspondence of the period, of this singular occurrence, at which some of Cecil's enemies are said to have been present; nor is there evidence of any diminution of confidence at this time between the king and his minister, on whom he shortly afterwards conferred new honours: for, on the 13th of May, 1603, Cecil was created viscount Cranborne, and, on the 4th of May 1605, earl of Salisbury, by a patent which enumerated "his faithfulness, circumspection, stoutness, wisdom, dexterity, providence, and care, not only in the great and weighty affairs of council, but also in all other expeditions of the realm."‡

At this time, the king wrote to Cecil in terms of much familiarity. "My little Beagle," he says in a letter of August 5, probably 1603, "ye and your fellows there are so proud now that ye have gotten again the guiding of a feminine court in the old fashion, as I know not how to deal with you. Ye sit at your ease, and direct all the news from all parts of the world comes to you in your

* Sullv, v. 28. ‡ Biog. Dict. xxi. p. 22. † Sidney Papers, ii. 235.
chamber. The king’s own resolutions depend upon your posting despatches; and, when ye list, ye can (sitting on your bedsides), with one call, or whistling in your fist, make him to post night and day till he come to your presence. Well I know Suffolk is married, and hath also his hands full, in harbouring that great little proud man that comes in his chair. But for your part, Master 10 (Cecil), who is wanton and wifeless, I cannot but be jealous of your greatness with my wife; for, besides, that the very number of 3 (lord Henry Howard) is well liked of by women, his face is so amiable, as it is able to entice, and his fortune hath ever been to be great with shq-saints. But his part is foul in this, that, never having taken a wife to himself in his youth, he cannot now be content, with his grey hairs, to forbear another man’s wife. But for expiation of this sin, I hope that ye have all three, with the rest of your society, taken this day a cup of thankfulness for the occasion, which fell out at a time when he durst not avow me: and here hath been this day kept the feast of king James’s delivery at St. John Stone, in St. John’s House. All other matters I refer to the old knave, the bearer’s report: and so fare ye well.

James R.”

What James says here of Cecil’s attention to queen Anne is mere banter; but it appears that the little deformed man had favourites of the fair sex. In the lady Anne Clifford’s† lively account of the queen’s progress to London, in which she staid for a short time at Dingley’s, sir Thomas Griffin’s, she says, that thither came my lady of Suffolk ‡, my young lady Derby, and my lady Walsingham §, which three ladies were the great favourites of sir Robert Cecil.” I am

* Nicholls’s Progresses, in. 263.
† Daughter of George, earl of Cumberland, and afterwards countess successively of Dorset and Pembroke. Nicholls, l. 78. 174.
§ Elizabeth, daughter of sir T. Manhood, wife of sir Thomas Walsingham, of Scadbury, in Kent.
a little puzzled by this union of names: for the young lady Derby, I think, must have been Cecil’s niece, the daughter of his sister, lady Oxford.* The other ladies, I fear, had more celebrity than character: lady Wal- singerham, in particular, is supposed to have been a special favourite with the secretary.

The party of the malcontents, whose existence appears to have been notorious, now plotted one of the wildest schemes of treason which the seventeenth century produced. Historians have not satisfied themselves of the real character of the mysterious and ill-devised plots, of which Arabella Stuart and the Infanta of Spain, catholic ascendency and puritan toleration, were the curiously mingled objects†; nor can I elucidate what others have left in darkness. Our present inquiry is, whether Cecil was justified in the share which he had in the conduct of the proceedings against Ralegh, who was accused of participating in this insane proceeding.

It appears to have been by Cecil that Ralegh was first subjected to examination. The minister had been informed of a plot for surprising the king’s person, in which George Brooke, the brother of Cobham was concerned.‡ Ralegh’s habitual connection with Cobham, coupled with his own discontent, involved him in suspicion; and Cecil, meeting him on the terrace at Windsor, summoned him before the council. Either at this

* Frances, wife of Edmund Vere, seventeenth earl, whose daughter Elizabeth married William, sixth earl of Derby. I cannot make out a date for the following anecdote: — “Lady Derby wore about her neck, and in her bosom, a portrait; the queen copying it, inquired about it, but her ladyship was anxious to conceal it. The queen insisted upon having it; and discovering it to be the portrait of young Cecil, she snatched it away, and tying it upon her shoe, walked along with it; afterwards, she pinned it upon her elbow, and wore it some time there. Secretary Cecil hearing of this, composed some verses, and got them set to music; this music, the queen insisted upon hearing. In his verses, Cecil sang that he repined not, though her majesty was pleased to grace others, he contented himself with the favour she had given him, by wearing his portrait at her feet, and on her elbow.” — “D’Israeli’s Curiosities of Literature,” p. 21.
‡ This plot was called the “Surprising Tresson,” or the “Bye.”
or at a subsequent examination, Ralegh confessed, that Cobham had offered him 10,000 crowns, "which he was to have for the furtherance of the peace between England and Spain, — a measure of which he was the avowed opponent. By his own account Ralegh treated this offer with levity. Shortly afterwards, Ralegh, of his own accord, told the lords of the council, that he suspected that Cobham had conference with Aremberg, the ambassador of the Austrian archduke. The ground of this suspicion was, that he had observed Cobham go frequently to the house of Lawrency, a follower of Aremberg. Being asked by lord Cecil his opinion of Lawrency, he answered, "If you do not apprehend Lawrency, it is dangerous, he will fly; if you do apprehend him, you shall give my lord Cobham notice thereof." This hint of the danger of letting Lawrency escape, or of advertising Cobham of his apprehension, fully justified the conclusion of the king's government, that with the knowledge or in the opinion of Ralegh, something wrong was going on with the Austrian minister. The committal to prison, which thereupon occurred, would, even in these times, be the natural course. While they were both in the Tower, Ralegh contrived to send a letter to Cobham by captain Keymis, acquainting him, that "he had been examined, and had cleared himself of all." Keymis added, according to Cobham, that Cobham "might be of good comfort, for one witness could not condemn a man for treason."

† Jardine, 412. 416. Ralegh afterwards put a lighter colour upon this offer. "It is true my lord Cobham had speech with me about the money, and made me an offer. But how and when? voluntarily, on a day at dinner, sometime before count Aremberg, coming over: for he and I being at my own board, arguing and speaking violently, he for the peace, and I against the peace, the lord Cobham told me, that when count Aremberg came, he would yield such strong arguments for the peace, as would satisfy any man; and withal (as his fashion is to utter things easily), what great sums of money would be given to some counsellors for making the peace, and named the lord Cecil and the earl of Mar. Answering, bade him make no such offer unto them, for by God, they would hate him, if he did offer it." P. 426.
‡ This plot, whatever it was in which Aremberg was concerned, was styled the "Man;" it was only in this that Ralegh was said to be implicated.
§ This is from Ralegh's own statement. Jardine, 412.
Ralegh disavowed at the trial this verbal addition*; but it was a part of the information given to the minister. Cobham afterwards confessed, "that he intended to go to Flanders and to Spain, to deal with the king for the 600,000 crowns, and to return by Jersey; and that nothing should be done until he had spoken with sir Walter Ralegh for the distribution of the money to them which were discontented in England. Then, when Ralegh's letter was shown to him, he broke out into exclamations against Ralegh, calling him villain and traitor, and saying that he would now tell all the truth, that he had never entered into these courses, but by his instigation, and that he would never let him alone. Beside, he spoke of plots and invasions of the particulars whereof he could give no account, though Ralegh and he had conferred of them."† This accusation, on an application made privately to him from Ralegh, he afterwards retracted‡; but he did not retract the confession of his own mal-practices.

His brother Brooke confessed that "there had letters passed between Cobham and Arencberg, for a great sum of money, to assist a second action for the surprising of his majesty;" and is said to have expressed his belief, that what was known to Cobham was known to Ralegh.§

If we may give credit to M. Beaumont, the French ambassador, Ralegh as well as Cobham had made treasurably, or at least corrupt overtures, to him and his predecessor Sully; and the existence of a plot favoured by the court of Spain, was made known to James by the king of Denmark. ||

* Jardine, 433. Tytler describes this letter, by Keymis, as purporting, "that Ralegh had cleared him (Cobham) of all suspicion." If such was the tenor of the letter, it furnished a very strong suspicion against Ralegh himself, whose own participation is thus acknowledged. Coke (Trial 389.) cites the words thus:—"I have been examined of you, and confessed nothing." See sir Toby Matthew's Collection, p. 281.
† Jardine, 411.
§ See Beaumont's Despatches, as quoted by Carte, iii. 718. 721.
These despatches from the French ambassador, who held that Ralegh was "justly though not legally condemned," clearly show that the plot was not an artifice, or a fancy of the ministers. I do not know how far a presumption of Ralegh's guilt may be deduced from a fact mentioned in Beaumont's letter, and confirmed by his journal quoted by Cayley, Sir Walter while in the Tower, attempted to stab himself with a knife.

The apprehension of Ralegh, with the other accused persons, was reported by Cecil to the English ministers abroad, in terms consistent with the account which I have here given. Cecil also gave the account which follows to Sir Ralph Winwood, ambassador at the Hague: "In the second," that is the treasonable dealings with Spain, "the lord Cobharn confessed himself guilty, and so doth his brother Mr. George Brooke; but Sir Walter Ralegh yet persists in denial of the main treasons, which though he doth, by having gotten some intelligence of the lord Cobham's retractation, yet the first accusation is so well fortified, with other demonstrative circumstances, and the retractation so blemished by the discovery of that intelligence which they had, as few men can conceive it comes from a clear heart. Always he shall be left to the law, which is the right all men are born unto."†

The view which Cecil here takes of the effect of the presumptive evidence against Ralegh, is not unreasonable. It was indeed difficult to believe that his denial of guilt came from a clear heart. The whole transaction was enveloped in mystery. Practices, which if not treasonable, approached very nearly to treason, and especially a treaty for receiving money from an enemy, to be distributed in England, had been acknowledged, and the confession agreed with information received from foreign powers. Those concerned in these practices were the associates of Ralegh, who acknowledged that money to be procured from this enemy, had been

* See Cecil's Letter to Sir Thomas Parry. — Cayley, i. 360.
† 3d October, 1603. Winwoody ii. 6.
offered to him by one of the parties. He had himself discovered to the government, the dealings of this person with the agent of that enemy; and this same person had at one time averred, that Raleigh had been his instigator to these courses.

Was it possible for the government of James, would it be possible for any government, wishing to maintain itself, to permit a man in Raleigh's then circumstances, to go not only unpunished, but untried. In these days indeed, no man so situated would be self-contented, or retain his place in society, without a judicial investigation of his conduct.

Yet Cecil has been subjected to censure*, of great and unaccountable severity for doubting Raleigh's innocence, and for putting him upon his trial. No part of the conduct of Cecil has been more censured, than the exhibition to Cobham of the letter in which Raleigh mentioned the dealings with Aremberg. I know not wherein consists the impropriety of this proceeding. I have not a sufficient acquaintance with legal practice to enable me to pronounce whether it was consistent with modern rules; but it appears to me, that modern practice is chiefly defective in the extreme reserve which it prescribes in communications to or from the prisoner. Yet even at this day, I apprehend it would be quite within rule, to communicate to a prisoner a document wherein the offences of which he is suspected are set forth by a supposed accomplice. And if this communication should produce confession and recrimination,

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* Especially by the most recent of his biographers, Mrs. Thomson and Mr. Tytler. The speculations of the latter (as noticed in the 8th vol. of Fraser's Magazine) are too wild, and supported by too many misrepresentations and misquotations, to require detailed notice. The character of Mrs. Thomson's may be collected from one specimen. Cecil is blamed for using the expressions quoted in the text, in his letter to Winwood, as to Raleigh's presumed guilt, "after Raleigh's asseverations of innocency," according to this lady, a prisoner's plea of "not guilty" ought to be tantamount to an acquittal. Mr. Jardine says, "In the evidence produced on the trial, there is sufficient matter to excite a suspicion that Raleigh was implicated in a treasonable conspiracy." This is enough to justify the putting him on his trial, although there is no part of the evidence so substantial and free from objection as to form a reasonable ground for a confident opinion. P 396.
the ends of public justice would be the better accomplished.

This exhibition of the letter, has been treated as a cunning device to obtain a crimination of Ralegh, but surely its object was to procure a confession from Cobham. The accusation of the accomplice was a consequence which no sagacity could foresee.* Not Ralegh but Cobham was the person injured, if injury there was.

Some time previously to the trial, Ralegh again asserted his innocence, in a letter † addressed to Cecil, with lords Nottingham‡, Suffolk§, and Devonshire.|| He affirmed that he had not suspected that the money offered to him was intended for the purpose of surprising the king. He denied all knowledge of Cobham’s intended journey to Spain. "By what means that revengeful accusation was stirred, you" he said, "my lord Cecil knew right well that it was my letter about Keymis." He certainly refers to the letter shown to Cobham. The designation of it as the "letter about Keymis" is unintelligible, but might perhaps be explained if the whole letter were in our hands.

There is nothing else remarkable in this letter, except the apparent consciousness of weighty presumptions against him, and the appeals to mercy which pervade this address, and still more a letter ¶ addressed to the king. That Ralegh’s innocence was certain appears not to have been the opinion of any one contemporary; that it was manifest appears scarcely to have been his own.

It is impossible to peruse, even without the strict notions of a modern lawyer, the proceedings upon Ralegh’s trial, without deciding that he was condemned

* Not only Tytler (p. 292.), but Cayley (ii. 27.) has supported this representation of the "device" used, by the authority of a contemporary writer whose statement is quite otherwise. "By a device," says the writer of a letter, in Sir Toby Matthews’s collection (p. 281.) Cobham, was brought to think that Ralegh had accused him."
† Cayley, 1. 307.
‡ Charles Howard, lord Howard of Effingham, who commanded against the Armada.
§ Thomas Howard, lord Howard of Walden, and first earl of Suffolk.
|| Charles Blount, lord Mountjoy, lately created earl of Devonshire, while the patent preserving that title in the Courtenays was dormant.
¶ P. 372.

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upon insufficient evidence. Robert Cecil sat as one of his judges, and must consequently share in the blame which attaches to the irregular and illiberal treatment of the accused; by which, no doubt, the jury were influenced in their verdict. But the part which Cecil himself took in the proceedings was, in almost every instance, favourable to the prisoner. Personal demeanour is assuredly matter upon which contemporary evidence has peculiar weight. In the letter from a member of parliament preserved by Sir Toby Matthews, his behaviour is contrasted with that of Coke, the attorney-general, whose conduct was utterly disgraceful to him, as a lawyer or a gentleman.

On more than one occasion, Cecil interfered to protect the prisoner against the interruptions and vituperations of Coke; so much so indeed, as to cause the attorney-general to "sit down in a chafe."†

The narrative which the secretary gave from the bench, of his share in the apprehension and examination, is quite fair and correct; nor was any part of it impugned by Raleigh. One of the charges against Sir Walter, was the giving to Cobham Persons's book against the king's succession. He affirmed that he took it out of Cecil's library. This Cecil confirmed, alleging as a reason for its being found there, that it was necessary for privy counsellors to keep such books.

Raleigh adopted the same defence for himself, and when Coke told him in a taunting reply, that he was no privy counsellor, Lord Salisbury protected him by the observation, that though he was not a sworn counsellor, yet he had been called to consultation.‡

Thus far all was favourable to Raleigh; but the most important point was the request of Raleigh that Cobham

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* The lord Cecil carried himself favourably towards him that day, the attorney-general most insolently. Sir Toby Matthews, p. 279.
† Cayley, 415, 418, 425. S. T. ii. 8, 17, 18, 21, 26.
might be confronted with him. This request was at Cecil's suggestion referred to the judges, in whose decision against the production of Cobham Cecil undoubtedly showed no indisposition to acquiesce. At this day, I cannot hesitate in declaring that justice was not done to Raleigh, when he had not the opportunity of cross-examining his accuser. But I do not believe that the practice of the courts of justice, previous to the seventeenth century, had been such as to require the judges to insist upon the examination of Cobham. According to a very learned and candid historian*, "to be confronted with the witnesses, was in that age (he is speaking of the reign of Edward VI.) a favour rarely granted to state criminals." It had been denied to the protector Somerset, whose brother had not even been heard in his own defence. It could not reasonably be expected that Cecil should propose to overrule the decision of the judges.

While I think that it was the duty of Cecil, as a minister, to put Raleigh upon his trial, and that there is no ground for imputing to him harshness in the conduct of it, I cannot admit that he ought to have been deterred from the performance of this duty by any recollections of former intimacy. There never did exist, nor did Cecil at any time affect, that feeling of perfect confidence which makes it impossible for one friend to believe any evil of another. There was nothing in Raleigh's character, which made it impossible that he should be concerned in a wild political enterprise, or that he should accept money from a foreign power. Cecil was, I suspect, in the state of belief in which we may reasonably be at this moment: he saw in the whole affair an unintelligible mystery; it appeared to him "that dangerous designs had been entertained," and that Raleigh was involved in them: of the extent of his guilty participation, he could form no decided opinion.

Raleigh, though not his friend, could scarcely now be deemed his rival; there is no reasonable ground for

* Hallam's Const. Hist. i. 54.
charging him with a systematic plan for bringing Ralegh to the block; there is, on the other, none for believing that he was eagerly anxious to save him.

Some stress has been laid* upon a remark by the French ambassador, that Cecil, in the prosecution of Ralegh, "acted with a heat more suitable to his own interests and passions, than to a becoming zeal for the good of the realm." † This opinion given on the first discovery of the plot has no reference to what passed on the trial: nor is it, as the opinion of a foreigner always hostile to the English minister, entitled to much weight.

That which appears to me most objectionable in Cecil's behaviour on the trial is his continued expression of regret and reluctance, and even of affection for Ralegh ‡: without agreeing with the vituperators of Cecil, that this was altogether affectation, I acknowledge that it was the part of a courtier, and greatly overacted. Had it been coupled, as his enemies pretend, with active hostility towards its object, it would have been wickedly disgraceful; united as I believe it to have been, with a passive acquiescence in the judgment against him, it is distasteful to a manly mind.

Cecil's demeanour at the trial, as well as his station in the council, would entitle him to a full share of the credit which may belong to those who advised James to spare the life of Ralegh §; but we have his assurance || that neither he nor any other of James's counsellors had

* Thomson. † Beaumont. Desp. July 23. 28. 30.; in Carte, iii. 719. ‡ "I am in great dispute with myself to speak in the case of this gentleman; a former dearness between me and him, tied so firm a knot of my conceit of his virtues, now broken by a discovery of his imperfections. I protest, did I serve a king, that I knew would be displeased with me for speaking in this case, I would speak, whatever came of it; but seeing he is compacted of piety and justice, and one that will not mislike of any man for speaking the truth, I will answer your question." State Tr. ii. (Cayley i. 397.) || "I would have trusted Sir Walter Ralegh as soon as any man; though since for some infirmities the bands of my affection have been broken, and yet reserving my duty to the king my master, which I can by no means dispense with, by God, I love him, and have a great confidence in myself." (Cayley, 414.) Excepting your faults (I call them no worse) by God I am your friend. Cayley, 421. § Mrs. Thomson says, p. 293., that the Lords of the Council with one accord, urged James to show mercy, but she gives no authority. || Winwood, ii. 10. 12th December, 1603.
any share in this act of comparative mercy. According to his own account, which is consistent with the practice of those days, though it would be quite incredible under the present system, this question of life and death was resolved by the king alone; and the warrant to stay execution was sent to the sheriff of Hampshire from the king’s bedchamber, not from the secretary’s office. *

This fact gives a greater air of sincerity to the answer which would otherwise appear evasive, returned by Cecil to lord Grey’s application for his interference. “Till my lords (on whom I attend by his majesty’s order) have spoken with the king, I can say no more than this, that I have neither power nor purpose to proceed in this, but by their direction, who have more judgment and longer interest in matters of justice and honour than I have.” † During Raleigh’s confinement in the Tower, which lasted three years after Salisbury’s death, there was no intercourse between them, except that Cecil occasionally received official reports of his health. ‡ It would appear indeed that on one occasion, Raleigh was brought before Cecil, who accorded to him some further liberty in his prison. §

Within about one year after the conclusion of Sully’s mission, peace was concluded between England and Spain. It is generally said that Cecil had not much share in this transaction, which has brought much obloquy upon the reign of James; and his previous letters continually refer to it as a matter which it did not rest with him to arrange ||; but he was unquestionably one

* Archaeologia, xxii. 175.
† Thomson, 490.
‡ Thomson, 306. 495.
§ Cayley, ii. 41. The same writer (p. 48.) quotes from sir Anthony Weldon, a story of a re-examination of Cobham, and a deceitful report of it made to the king. Weldon’s unsupported testimony has never been thought worthy of credit.
|| “To thee my judgment of what particular things will be concluded in the treaty is more than I can do, for anything which is yet passed; but when I observe the fashion of things, how they are carried, I do conclude sufficiently that peace we shall have, without the company of the states of the Low Countries, whose fall or standing is the only object of
of the plenipotentiaries who negotiated it, and he took some pains to defend its provisions, in his correspond-ence with sir Ralph Winwood, ambassador at Paris.

It is objected to the treaty, that the terms, as between England and Spain, were not sufficiently favourable; and that the right to succour the Netherlands ought not to have been abandoned. The first objection deserves little weight; exclusive of the United Provinces, there was no fair point of contest between the two states *, nor any justifiable ground for continuing the war. And the English ministers very properly declined any more intimate connection with Spain, than one of "friendship and amity only, with mutual trade to each other's dominions;"† and would not consent to an interdiction of trade with the Netherlands. But the promise to abstain from supplying the Netherlands with the means of resisting Philip, was inconsistent with the recorded opinions of the English court, and of Cecil in particular, whose apprehensions of the consequences of the subjugation of the Netherlands had been repeatedly avowed. Cecil appears to have rather unwillingly agreed to give this promise, and he takes great pains to explain, that there was no stipulation for recalling troops actually in Flanders; and that "in that part of the article which only relateth to that which his majesty bindeth himself unto, that his majesty promiseth neither to punish nor to slay, but only that he will not consent, of which word you know the latitude as well as I."‡

* See Hume, vi. 27.
† Cecil to Winwood, 4th June, 1604. See Hume, ii. 22.
‡ To Winwood, 4th September, 1604. "Itera," said Cecil, quoting from Barneveldt himself, "Itera occidit sed spiritus vivificat, for so treaties are commonly carried between great princes, where many things
A stipulation, constructed with an intention of evading it, belongs to a species of diplomacy of which I cannot approve; yet he must have read the life of Elizabeth under a strange prejudice, who shall quote it as an instance of departure from the policy of that mysterious princess. But there is good ground for believing that there really was an understanding between the English and Spanish governments upon this point.

are left to interpretation, for saving reputation for those that will make no quarrel for things done, though they never give consent thereto by their treaty. And so shall it appear in the course of his majesty's carriage towards these countries in all things consonant to honour and reason. To which assurance if you shall speak with M. Barnevelt at any time, add this much from me, that if they be not apt to multiply their own jealousies, they shall find all friendly and just correspondence; wherein I am so far from making it appear that his majesty has only reserved this power in the secret of his own heart, contrary, as it seems to the law of the letter, as I do protest unto you that there is not, in my opinion, any one article which carrieth show of greatest suspicion, whereof we have not plainly made before hand, our interpretation to themselves; in what sort they may expect the execution. For first, for trade with them we have admitted no exception more than the matter of the placard, which with no reason we could have trusted upon, seeing they stand in direct terms of hostility. Secondly, for that clause which may seem hardest, where there is a declaration, that all such as help them must be punished, ut pacis pertusetur, that was literally accorded unto, because there was never any peace made where subjects are not forbidden to carry warlike support or victuals to the open enemy of the other side. In which, if construction should be made, that voluntaries may not, therefore pass by, that article (besides that it was openly protested, and is and shall be practised, that the king will forbide none to any side,) first, you see that there is no publication to revoke those companies that are there already, which was in France at the peace making: next, you shall find, in that part of the article which only relateth to that which his majesty bindeth himself unto, that his majesty promises neither to punish nor to stay, but only that he will not consent, of which word you know the latitude as well as I." ii. 27.

Ilume says—"As the Spaniards made no complaints on the head of assistance sent to the Hollanders, it appeared that by secret agreement, the king had expressly reserved the power of sending it. In this respect, James's peace was more honourable than that which Henry IV. himself made with Spain. This latter prince stipulated not to assist the Dutch; and the supplies which he secretly sent them were in direct contravention to the treaty." (vi. 28.) In his letter to Farry, just quoted, Cecil says, "The count of Aremberg has in mild terms expostulated with the king, for suffering levies at this time to be made for the Low Countries, but he has therein only received the ordinary answer, and very truly. First, that the king has neither given commission, nor allowed any pay to any; next, that he is a king of many people not active bodies, to whom he cannot deny liberty to serve either princes, or states, not enemies." Surely at that time, the true answer was, we are at war with Spain, and may lawfully annoy her, either by regular troops, or permitted volunteers. There is in the British Museum the argument of two of the privy council to king James I., immediately after his coming to the crown of England, touching sending aid to the United Provinces." The affirmative is maintained, under the head of "Jugum, Utile, Tuum." The arguments are made to fall in with James's kindly prejudices, as one is, that the king of Spain did not hold these provinces as king, but as earl. But some better reasons follow.
The most recent of the treaties which Elizabeth had contracted with the States, had thrown upon them more and more of the burden of their own defence, and that no one of them restrained England from making a separate peace. On the contrary, the treaty of 1598 * for which so much praise has been bestowed upon the judgment of Burleigh, referred in terms to the possible conclusion of a peace between England and Spain †, and provided in that event for reduced instalments of the Dutch debt to England.

The government of the United Provinces, whose representative as Cecil tells us ‡, had been apprised of the negotiation, made not as it would appear, any vigorous remonstrance against the treaty, and was content to accept the explanations of the king's ministers.

If this treaty involved no breach of faith, it certainly produced no actual injury to British interests, and it would be difficult to show that, as compared with the niggardly and reluctant succours which Elizabeth had latterly afforded to the states, it retarded at all the successful termination of their contest with Spain.

The Spaniards nevertheless, according to sir Charles Cornwallis, English ambassador at Madrid, found the treaty beyond their hopes, and it is remarkable that in a private letter § to Cecil, Cornwallis, his subordinate in office, gives a highly unfavourable opinion of the treaty, of which Cecil was one of the makers, and tells him that the Spaniards attribute it to corruption. This letter does not counteract the evidence which those of Cecil furnish of his participation in the treaty ||, but it affords an additional proof of the absence of that general and undisputed responsibility, which our present constitution attaches to a principal minister of England.

* Camden, 610.
† Art. 2. Dumont, p. i. 569.
‡ June 13, 1604. Winwood ii. 23.
§ June 2, ii. 75.
|| Cornwallis offers to get a list of the supposed English pensioners of Spain, p. 96. The ground of his objection was not so much the desertion of the Dutch, as the loss of an opportunity of winning honour and wealth at the expense of Spain.
Of one other circumstance this letter affords presumptive evidence—the absence of any imputation of bribery against Cecil himself.

In the first parliament of James, which met on March the 19th, 1603-4, Cecil sat as a peer: his name appears as the bearer of occasional communications from the king: but there is no record of a speech, nor any thing to show how deeply he was concerned in advising those proceedings on the part of James and his government which gave to this first parliament of the king, a character of discontent even beyond that of the last parliament of the queen. There are no means of ascertaining the particular part which Cecil bore in these transactions; but it must be admitted that the ministers, of whom Cecil was one of the principal, were not successful in their management of the conflicting interests and tempers of the king and the house of commons.

For the prefix and argument, in some parts really good speech, with which James opened this parliament, the royal pedant is alone responsible. But I cannot separate Lord Cecil from the transaction which first attracted the notice of the commons, and from which some writers have dated the commencement of the great struggle between king and people. In the proclamation* for calling the parliament, the king, after dilating upon rather common truths in very good language, charges all persons interested in the choice of knights of the shire to select them out of the principal knights or gentlemen within the county, and for the burgesses that choice be made of men of sufficiency and discretion without desire to please parents or friends, that often speak for their children or kindred, avoiding persons noted in religion for their superstitious blindness one way, or for their turbulent humours other ways . . . .

"We do command that no bankrupt or outlaws be chosen, but men of honour, good behaviour and sufficient liveli-

hood." The sheriffs are charged not to direct a writ to any ancient town being so ruined that there are not residents sufficient to make such choice, and of whom such lawful election may be made, and all cities and boroughs, and inhabitants of the same are charged, that none of them seal any blanks, referring or leaving to any other to insert the names of any citizens or burgesses to serve for such city or borough, but do make open and free election according to the law, and set down the names of the persons whom they choose before they sign the certificate."* All returns are to be filed in chancery, and if any be made contrary to this proclamation, the same to be rejected as unlawful and insufficient, and the place to be fined for making it, and any one elected contrary to the purport, effect, and true meaning of this proclamation to be fined and imprisoned. Although this proclamation, in prescribing to the electors the mode in which they should exercise their franchise, and in reserving to the chancery a power of deciding upon the validity of elections, assumes a prerogative for which there was no warrant, it must be admitted to contain no injunction unfavourable to the cause of freedom. On the contrary some of the provisions might have emanated from a "parliamentary reformer." But the law laid down in the proclamation and the jurisdiction established by it, were at least in one instance used by the government to ensure the return of their own friends. This attempt the commons resisted with partial success.

Of this transaction we have an account from Cecil himself. "If you have heard," he says to sir Ralph Winwood, "any thing of any question between the king and the lower house of parliament, you may satisfy yourself (whatsoever you may hear) that the cause was only by lack of understanding of what was intended by his majesty, and not any other point of importance. So

* It is remarkable that Mr. Hallam, whose abstract of the proclamation (l. 408.), I have otherwise followed, does not notice this strong piece of presumptive evidence, of a practice of direct nomination by the patrons of boroughs; which practice, however, he elsewhere states to have prevailed, "from the earliest time."
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as if I did not conceive that idle discourses are apt to make comments upon all things, according to the levity of their own brain, I should not have touched it at all; for to be short, it was no more but this, that sir Francis Goodwin having laboured to be knight of Buckinghamshire, to the exclusion of an ancient counsellor sir John Fortescue, it was advised by the king's learned counsel and judges whether there were not some means by the laws to avoid it; whereupon it being found that he was outlawed (and so certified by the sheriff) consequently a new writ was sent forth, by virtue whereof sir John Fortescue was chosen. Notwithstanding, the lower house having had notice that he was once chosen, and having found that the outlawry was pardoned in effect by his majesty's general pardon upon his inauguration (although, in true construction of law, he is not rectus in curia, until he hath sued out his scire facias,) they somewhat suddenly fearing some opposition (which was never intended) allowed of him and rejected the other; which form of proceeding appeared harsh to the king rather in form than matter. And, therefore, being then desirous that the higher house might have some conference with the lower house (which we as of ourselves did intimate unto them), they grew jealous of that proposition, as a matter which they disliked to yield to after a judgment; and therefore did rather choose to send to the king, that they would be glad to show himself the reasons (to whom they owed all duty as their sovereign) rather than to any other, taking it somewhat derogative from their house to attribute any superiority to the higher house, seeing both houses make but one body, whereof the king is the head. This being done after two conferences in the presence of the king, the council, and judges, the matter was compounded to all men's likings; wherein that which is due, is only due to Caesar; for, but for his wisdom and dexterity, it could not have had any conclusion with so general an applause: this being found by debate to be most certain, namely, that neither of them both were duly re-
turned, and therefore resolved of all parties, that a new writ should go forth by warrant from the speaker, wherein none of them should stand to be elected; and so much for the truth of that cause."

The minister attempts to make light of an occurrence which was really of considerable importance; yet there is nothing here, in regard to facts, materially inconsistent with the parliamentary record.†

There is in the first place a fair avowal that, upon the election of a candidate unpalatable to the court, search was made for some legal means of avoiding the election. So far this proceeding is not (except that the judges were called to consultation) distinguishable in point of constitutional tendency, from that of advice and assistance given to a government candidate, who conceives that his successful opponent is under a legal disqualification. I apprehend that there has not yet been a government in England which would hesitate to give advice and assistance to a friend so situated. If at this day no government would call in the aid of the judges, or would attempt to set aside a disqualified member by the authority of the crown, it is because the independence of the judges is now established, the privileges of the commons are clearly understood, and legally defined. If the present was the first instance in which the claim of the crown had been put forward, so probably was it the first in which the election of a disqualified person had been questioned; and there was no original absurdity in superseding by the process of the king's courts of law, the election of a person whom the law made ineligible: for it is observable that the law laid down in the proclamation was not confidently or finally disputed by the commons; their objections were to the tribunal by which it was enforced, and to the judgment pronounced by that tribunal. And it must be admitted that the decision in chancery appears to have been such

* Lord Cecil to Mr. Winwood, 12th of April, 1604. ii. 10.
† Parl. Hist. i. 997. 1011.
as justly to expose that court to the charge of undue compliance with the wishes of the government.

It is not the least among the remarkable passages of this transaction that the king having in vain desired the commons to confer with the lords, was attended by a deputation of commons, with whom he personally argued the point. In their own words, the argument was "delivered from his royal majesty's own mouth, with excellent strength and light of reason, more than before in that point we heard or did conceive."*

While this language was used by the remonstrating commons, the minister might be justified in ascribing to the personal dexterity of his master the favourable issue of the dispute, which ended, as he informed Winwood, in a compromise. If it be granted that this struggle was the commencement of the great contest, the admission does not necessarily imply proportionate blame to its authors. The greatest events spring from causes from which it is neither expected nor intended that they should follow.

There may have been, and was, a want of that rare sagacity which notes with one glance the distinctions of times and circumstances, and points at once to remote consequences; we may admit that Cecil had not the talent of foreseeing results; but acquit him of a systematic design to produce them.

The project of the union with Scotland was James's own: Cecil introduced it to the house of lords, but "it had been conceived by the king's majesty himself, and the same written out as his majesty did dictate."†

This favourite scheme came to nothing, as did others which were mooted; and the commons were in a humour so little favourable to James, as to induce him to send a letter "written with his own hand ‡," declining any present supply.

* Parl. Hist. 1010. In speaking of the king's language, sir Francis Bacon used phrases of compliment really blasphemous; "that the eloquence of a king was unimitable," was the weakest of his expressions!
† Lord's Journals, 21st of April, 1603. ii. 784. See Von Raumer, ii. 905.
‡ The Parl. Hist. adds, "but corrected as to the spelling," the journals do not record this imputation upon his majesty's orthography.
Many considerations must be weighed before we censure, on account of the ill humour of the commons, Robert Cecil, or the ministry, or the king himself. Even in the latter days of Elizabeth, a spirit of independence had appeared in the house of commons, and among the people; and undoubtedly the character, opinions, habits, I may add, the person and language of James, were ill calculated to check the progress of a sentiment, to which the skilful policy of Elizabeth was becoming unequal. *

Under the then system of government the success of an administration depended much more than in our days, upon the character and talents of the sovereign. He was deemed a faithful counsellor who obeyed the commands of the king. There was not at that time either a cabinet, or a prime minister, responsible in law and in public opinion, for all acts of the crown, and for the measures of every department of government; nor was there at the head of each branch a minister legally accountable. The monarch not infrequently overruled the suggestions of the ministers, even in matters of ordinary administration, and often no doubt compelled them to adopt proceedings which they had not advised, and which they did not approve. It does not even appear that, in such cases a minister thought it his duty to remonstrate. Remonstrance with resignation as the alternative, was at this time unknown. It was not until the reign of Elizabeth that the office of secretary of state in particular had necessarily carried with it a seat in the privy council. And even after the king's secretary had been thus exalted, it would seem that his functions resembled those of the office created in our time, of private secretary to the king.† It was his duty to execute the commands and signify the pleasure of his master; and his signature which certified the king's authority, did not involve the secretary himself in any

* See Hallam, i. 401. 423.
† Nicholas observes (p 46.), that "the duties of the king's principal secretary seem formerly to have more closely resembled those of the king's private secretary than those of the secretary of state of the present day."
peculiar responsibility; nor was the counter signature of the secretary essentially necessary to a document conveying the king's pleasure in regard to matters which are now confined to that office. Much was done in the privy council; the counsellors who were few in number, constituted a sort of cabinet, and the secretary of state, now always one of them, shared in the responsibility. The communications of the council, which embraced various matters, and particularly instructions to ministers abroad, which now proceed from a secretary of state, were signed by the counsellors, and all were equally responsible: but it does not appear that this council deliberated, or gave advice upon the personal acts of the sovereign, which were numerous and important, many of these, it is probable, did really proceed as some do now, in form, from the mere motion and special grace of the king; and the ministers were frequently kept in ignorance of his majesty's intentions, until they were carried into effect. In this very parliament James wrote a letter to the house of commons, wherein he declined a present subsidy. It is hardly possible that he could have written this communication without consultation with his high treasurer, an officer of great and independent power; yet the letter itself was written with his own hand†, and the measure apparently his own.

We have seen James engaged in an active discussion with the deputies of the house of commons, and an important proceeding resulting from this discussion. According to modern practice, there would only have been an address, and an answer, which answer would have been read by the king from a written paper, previously prepared by his ministers, who would have been responsible for every word. I offer these remarks, in order that Robert Cecil, important personage as he was in the councils of James, may not be judged by the modern rules of ministerial responsibility. If on the one hand,

* As in the instance of Raleigh's reprieve.
† See p. 125, ante.
he can claim no part of the praise bestowed upon the "unimitable oratory" whereby James persuaded the commons to annul the return of Goodwin, in those unusual and injudicious proceedings, neither is he to bear all the blame attached to the illegal return of Fortescue.

About this time a remarkable correspondence occurred between Cecil and Mathew Hutton, archbishop of York, from which some notion may be formed of the secretary’s opinions, if not upon the general subject of religious toleration, at least upon the comparative dangers to be apprehended at the beginning of the seventeenth century from papists and from puritans.

The archbishop adverted to some orders, which he had received from the council, for proceeding against puritans according to law; and to take care that the places of those who might be ejected, might be supplied by conforming ministers. The aged prelate expresses his wish, that a like order were given to proceed against papists and recusants, as being more than the puritans, contrary in substantial points of religion and anxious for the establishment of the pope’s authority, and their own religion. He makes this special appeal to Cecil, as the son of Burghley. “Good, my lord Cranborne, let me put you in mind, that you were born and brought up in true religion; your worthy father was a worthy instrument to banish superstition, and to advance the gospel. Imitate him in this service especially.” And he takes this opportunity of complaining of some of the prevalent habits of the king, “as one that honoureth and loveth his most excellent majesty with all my heart, I wish less wastening of the treasure of the realm; and more moderation in the lawful exercise of hunting, both that poor men’s corn may be less spoiled, and other his majesty’s subjects more spared.”

In answering this letter, Cecil paid judicious com-
pliments to the zeal of the archbishop, but expressed his 
regret, that "through want of better information," his 
views of the intentions of the king and his ministers in 
regard to religion were obscured. He told him, "that 
he had always held it for a certain rule, since he had 
any knowledge, that the papists were carried on the left 
hand with superstitious blindness;" but added, with a 
prophetic anticipation of the occurrences of the next 
reign, that "the puritans, as the archbishop had termed 
them, were transported on the right with unadvised 
zeal."* The first punishable for matter essential; the 
second, necessary to be corrected for disobedience to the 
lawful ceremonies of the church; wherein, although 
many religious men of moderate spirits might be borne 
with, yet such are the turbulent humours of some, that 
dream of nothing but a new hierarchy, directly opposite 
to the state of a monarchy, as the dispensation with 
such men, were the highway to break all the bonds of 
unity, to nourish schism in the church, and common- 
wealth. . . . Where your lordship seemeth to speak fear- 
fully, as if in labouring to reform the one, there were 
some purpose to tolerate the other; I must crave pardon 
of your lordship to reply thus much till I hear you 
touch the particulars, that it is not a sure foundation to 
build upon bruits, nam linguae magister populus; and 
all these phrases of they say, are the common mother, 
and nurses of slanders; neither can I be persuaded 
otherwise, forasmuch as I have observed in the place 
I have held (within the compass whereof some, more 
than vulgar bruits do fall,) but that whosoever shall 
behold the papists with puritan spectacles, or the puri- 
tan with papistical, shall see no other certainty than the 
multiplication of false images." After these very just re- 
marks upon the danger of trusting to common report, 
or to representations prejudiced by party (from which, 
indeed, no character has suffered more than Cecil's 
own,) he promised him the support of the council in 
the execution of the laws against the papists.

* Another word applicable to the Puritans has been obliterated.
And now," he proceeds, "for that which concerns myself, to whom your lordship hath given a friendly caveat, under the title of a great counsellor, I love not to procure or yield to any toleration, a matter which I well know no creature living dare propound to our religious sovereign: although I am far from the vanity to esteem my fortunes worthy the style of greatness, yet dare I confidently profess that I will be much less than I am, or rather nothing at all, before I shall ever become an instrument of such a miserable change."

In concluding, he ascribes James's prodigality to the necessity of a liberal expenditure at the commencement of a reign; and defends hunting as a "manlike and active recreation, such as those to which the good emperor Trajan was disposed."

This correspondence was communicated to James by lord Worcester, who attended him in a tour which he was then making, "He was merry," says lord Worcester, "at the first, till, as I guessed, he came to the wasting of the treasure, and the immoderate exercise of hunting; he began then to alter countenance, and in the end, said, it was the foolishest letter that ever he read, and yours an excellent answer, paying him soundly, but in good and fair terms." *

* P. 294. Although Cecil had no concern in the subjoined communication from James to sir Thomas Parry, (Oct. 3. 1603), I print it as curious in reference to the king's disposition towards a comprehension. — "For as we did ever know how much his (the pope's) amity was to be valued as a prince of honour and greatness, though there has nothing more dissuaded us than how to cherish and maintain a sound and lawful correspondence, without being subject to those inconveniences which often happen to princes, sometimes by the weakness, sometimes by the corruption, of their own instruments." After assuring Parry that he had no such apprehension as to him, he proceeds: — "We have ever desired that all manner of differences were well reconciled, as we have always wished (and so do still) that some good course might be taken by a general council (lawfully called), whereby it might once for all be made notorious, which is the doctrine of antiquity nearest succeeding to the primitive church, and which are only novelties which are to us naturally so much displeasing (wheresoever we hear of them or find them), as there is nothing savouring of greatest antiquity in the church of God, which we would not have duly observed, if it can be simply sustained by the word of holy scripture; so far, we protest, we are from any wilful, obstinate, or pre-occupied passion, as we would with our heart yield to an uniformity in all things, that should not directly tend to maintain corruption, utterly repugnant to the word of God; that thereby the peace and unity of all the Christian church might be secured, and so be the more enabled jointly to resist the common and avowed enemy of God and all Christians." Sloane MSS. 4100. No. 199.
At this period Cecil had an opportunity of showing that the deformity of his person, and the weakness of his constitution, did not prevent him from resenting an offence. "The earl of Salisbury and others," says Donne, "were arbitrators in some differences between Hertford * and Monteagle †; Hertford was ill satisfied in it, and declared himself, so far as to say, he expected better usage in respect not only of his cause, but of his expense and service in his ambassage ‡; to which Salisbury, alluding to his marriage with lady Catherine Grey, replied, that considering how things stood between his majesty and Hertford house, at the king’s entrance, the king had done him special favour in that employment of honour and confidence, by declaring in so public, and great an act and testimony, that he had no ill affection towards him. Hertford answered, that he was then and ever an honest man to the king; and Salisbury said, he denied not that, but yet solemnly repeated his first words again. So that Hertford seemed not to make answer, but pursuing his own word said, that whosoever denied him to have been an honest man to the king, lied. Salisbury asked him if he directed that upon him; Hertford said, upon any who denied this. The earnestness of both was such, as Salisbury accepted it to himself, and made protestation before the lords present, that he would do nothing else till he had honourably put off that lie. Within an hour after, Salisbury sent him a direct challenge by his servant Mr. Knightley. Hertford required only an hour’s leisure of consideration, (it is said it was only to inform himself of the special danger of so dealing with a counsellor), but he returned his acceptance, and all circumstances were so clearly handled between them that St. James’s was agreed for the place, and they were both come from their several lodgings, and upon the way to have met, when they were interrupted by such as from the

* Edward Seymour, earl of Hertford, eldest son, by the second marriage, of Edward first duke of Somerset, the Protector.
† William Parker.
‡ He had been sent on an embassy to Brussels.
king were sent to have care of it." * Cecil thus got out of a disagreeable adventure, into which, according to the only account we have of the transaction, he was led, by a want of courtesy, of which he is not in general accused. He could not but act as he did, after the offensive words had been uttered by Hertford, but he appears to have provoked them by unnecessary taunts.

The parliament was appointed to re-assemble on the 5th of November, 1605; but its meeting was postponed, for reasons which the mention of that particular day will suggest. Cecil has divided with his royal master the praise of sagacity in the discovery of the powder plot, from the anonymous letter. According to his own account †, Cecil and other lords of the council, coupling the information which had been received of some great stir among the catholics, with the mysterious intimation of the letter, were sufficiently aware of what was intended before they went to the king. ‡

It was in this age too much the practice for members of the government to sit as judges at state trials, and to take a part in the proceedings, in a mixed character of judge and witness. * Catholic writers say, that on the trial of father Garnet, Salisbury lost his temper; but nothing appears in the proceedings liable to more than the general objection of interference. Indeed, in this trial, as in that of Ralegh, Cecil's remarks evinced much consideration for the prisoner; and Garnet acquiesced in the minister's assertion, that the accused had been very well treated in prison. §

Sir Everard Digby, when on his trial, urged in defence or palliation of his participation in the conspiracy certain promises to the catholics, which he alleged to have

* Donne's Letters, p. 214.
† 9th of November, 1605. Winwood, ii. 170; and see Lodge, iii. 301.
‡ See Cecil to Cornwallis, 9th of November, 1605. Winwood, ii. 170.
§ State Trials, ii. 243. Salisbury also said to Garnet, "This interlocution of yours to Hall, overheard by others, appears to be digitus dei, for thereby had the lords some light and proof of matter against you, which must have
been broken by James's government. Salisbury answered him from the bench, but the allegations were too vague to admit of more than a general denial.

One consequence of this plot was the imprisonment of Northumberland, and the imposition of a heavy fine upon him; upon a charge preferred in the star chamber, for protecting his relative Percy, one of the conspirators, and for endeavouring to be at the head of the papists, and to procure them toleration.†

It is probable that Lord Salisbury, who inherited Lord Burleigh's hatred of the Roman catholics, and was even suspected of an inclination to the puritans, participated cordially in the penal enactments against the Romanists which followed this extraordinary plot. There is no record of his speeches, or indeed of any debates upon the new statute.‡ But Cecil himself when alluding, in his correspondence with Winwood, to the "many things which have been enconsiderable" in the session of 1605–6, mentions especially "the zeal of both houses for the preservation of God's true religion, by establishing many good laws against those firebrands, jesuits and priests, that seek to bring all into confusion."§ If we may trust to the evidence of the French ambassador, Boderie, which is here supported by probability arising from James's avowed sentiments, Cecil, in joining with the commons in these measures, went rather beyond the

been discovered otherwise by violence and coercion; a matter ordinary in other kingdoms, though now forborne here." Upon these words, Miss Akin (i. 396.), founds her reference to Cecil's "detestable doctrines promulgated on the state trials; and above all, his atrocious and most shameless assertion that torture itself might justifiably be inflicted on free-born Englishmen, at the will and pleasure of their sovereign." Really, considering that this authoress herself tells us (p. 270), "that torture was more frequently used by Elizabeth than by any of her predecessors, or perhaps all of them put together," Cecil is not to be severely condemned for saying that torture was the alternative of the milder and quite justifiable method which was adopted for coming at the truth. To say (ib.) that the credit of forbearance is due to James rather than to his ministers is perfectly gratuitous.

* State Trials, ii. 187. 193.
† Collins, ii. 336.
‡ 3 Jac. i. c. 5. Parl. Hist. i. 1063–4. See Lingard, ix. 94.
§ 7th of June, 1606. ii. 218.
wishes of the king, who was irritated against the house of commons, mostly composed of puritans. *

But if, in this particular, Cecil had less than was usual of the royal approbation; he obtained at least a temporary popularity. "He has gotten," says Sir Henry Neville, "much love and honour in this parliament, by his constant dealing in matters of religion: some part of it was found in the, attendance to the installation †, being such as I dare avow, never subject had in any memory." "I hope," he adds, "it will confirm and strengthen him in his good proceedings." ‡

Salisbury appears also to have taken the popular view of one of the grievances which in this session § occupied the attention of both houses.

The ancient prerogative of purveyance had become, especially under Elizabeth ‖, burdensome and odious, of which the king’s English ministers were so much aware, as to have advised him to issue a proclamation ‖‖, as he entered London for the first time,—"to cease the exactings of all monopolies and protections that hindered men’s suits at law, and to forbid the oppressions done by purveyors and cart-takers."

The abuses practiced by purveyors, were now taken up by the house of commons. The proceedings are not very clearly related, but we have some heads of speeches which may serve as specimens of the spirit and taste of those debates.

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* Boden, i. 81. Cecil had certainly a strong protestant feeling. "His majesty," he had written in October 20, 1605, to Edmundes, in Flanders, "and all who love the gospel begins to be very sensible of the strong and visible torrent wherewith the ill-affected in this state are carried into those parts, only to satiate themselves upon idolatry and superstition, for which surely ere & be long, it will be high time to provide." Birch, Neg. 231.

† He was installed knight of the garter, at Windsor, on the 12th of May, 1606. Birch, Neg. 256. — "He set forward from his house in the Strand, being almost as honourably accompanied, and with as great train of lords, knights, gentlemen, and officers of the court, with others, besides his peculiar servants, very richly attired, and bravely mounted, as was the king when he rid in state through London; and the lord Thomas Howard, viscount Bindon, being also very honourable accompanied and attended." Nicholls, ii. 48.

‡ To Winwood, 4th of June, 1606, ¶ 216. § 1605-6.

‖ Sinclair’s History of the Revenue, i. 206.

¶ 7th of May, 1603. Stowe, 824.
The commons' articles concerning purveyors had been communicated to the lords. The lords made answer, and a conference took place.* The earl of Salisbury spoke first, being styled by the reporter of the conference, "the principal pen of the kingdom." He thus exhorted the two houses to agreement: "This house," he said, "and that, like two hands that washed one another, helped one another, laboured together," and recommended discussion rather than contention." "Modestus et justus dolor, linguam non dentes habet." But he joined with those who condemned the system. "Purveyors, taxers of the commonwealth, an article of his creed. They would join well with us, in chasing out a purveyor, as an hobgoblin." The discussion seems to have been a little discursive, and to have touched the king's pecuniary necessities. "Let it," said Salisbury, (the money) "never come into the exchequer; distribute it as you will, only help his want." Whether Cecil was insincere in his declarations against purveyance, whether he was over-ruled by his colleagues, or by the house, or whether there really was reason in the representations of the lords' committee that "the bill was in many things inconvenient†, and not fit to be further proceeded in," we know not; but it was laid aside by the lords.‡

About this time, lord Salisbury once more entertained king James at Theobalds, together with his brother-in-law, Christian IV. of Denmark.§ The entertainments given to the Danish monarch do no credit to the age.

In reading the description of them, we may at least boast of excelling our ancestors in sobriety, particularly in our females. For details, I refer to sir John Harrington, though I fear that these disgusting orgies are not altogether foreign to our subject, inasmuch as the grave statesman whose life I write, was intimately

‡ A second bill to the same effect was rejected. Parliament was prorogued on May 27. 1606. Parl. Hist. i. 1071.
§ 24th July. Stowe, 885.
concerned in them. He was, indeed, the responsible devisor of a representation, in which the queen of Sheba fell at the feet of the modern Solomon: — Faith staggered, Hope failed, and Charity could scarcely cover the multitude of their sins; while Victory was overcome by wine, and Peace "made war with her olive branch." The lord of the mansion, however, was more successful in his personal undertakings; for he "did miraculously please both kings, with good meat, good wine, and good speeches."*

Theobalds was, not long afterwards, given to the crown, in exchange for Hatfield, at this day the seat of the lords of Salisbury. It is said† that Cecil was a great gainer by this arrangement, which was nevertheless very acceptable to James, and to queen Anne, upon whom Theobalds was settled.

We are told, that Cecil was the reputed author of some "beaux vers," which were composed on this occasion; but we have not the means of appreciating the "grande facilité d'esprit" which they are said to have evinced.

After the peace of 1603, Cecil took the principal part, which properly belonged to him, in the subsequent correspondence with Spain, as well as the United Provinces. This correspondence exhibits him as the reputed enemy of the Spanish connection. "To your lordship," says Cornwallis ‡ to Cecil, "here is attributed much as to one whom they account the most efficient and able counsellor that ever king was served with; and some of the most judicious of them wish the king their master were possessed of such a one, in lieu of divers whom he entertains. Yet are they not well assured of your

* Nugg, i. 348—54, and Nicholls, ii. 63.
† Bodmer, ii. 254. The representations by foreign ambassadors of facts and motives, must be received with great caution, especially when they concern a minister whose policy was obviously English.
‡ 1st June, 1605. Winwood, ii. 74. Charles Cornwallis, younger brother of William, who was ancestor to the late marquis and earl Cornwallis.
love to this nation, and desire of the continuance of this peace."

Whatever may have been the sentiments of Cecil, his conduct evinced a resolution of strict neutrality. The task of the minister in the period which followed the treaty of peace, was one of much difficulty. The Dutch interrupted our commerce with the Spanish ports*, and most unwillingly acquiesced in the neutrality of England. They remonstrated against a proclamation which was issued for recalling all English seamen from foreign service, "though it could not be denied but that their enemy did receive thereby a greater prejudice." † They violated our neutral position, by actually engaging a Spanish fleet under the guns of Dover Castle.‡ In the correspondence which this rencontre occasioned, Cecil exhibited a spirit of just neutrality, with a leaning in his mind towards the States. He would not listen to the Spanish invitation to hostility against the United Provinces, and refused to transport to Flanders the Spanish troops which had been landed at Dover, in consequence of the illegally conducted attack of the Dutch. § He did not press a suggestion which he once made, that, in consideration of the very peculiar and irregular circumstances of the case, the Spaniards should be permitted to transport themselves, without molestation from the enemy ||; but told them that, if they could not find their own way across the strights, they must be reconveyed to Spain. ¶

The violations of neutrality, or rather the breaches of treaty, on the part of Spain, were more offensive. The complaints from our merchants of illegal captures and confiscations** were neglected, and harbour was given in

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* Winwood, ii. 31-34-6-577.
† March 31, 1605. ii. 55.
‡ P. 81.
§ 10th August, 1605. 106.
|| P. 134.
¶ At the same time lord Arundel, who was in the service of the archduke, was forbidden to go over under the protection of count Villa Mediana, the ambassador; and having got on board ship by bribery, was ordered home. Birch's Hist. View, 825.
** These grievances had been the subject of petitions to parliament towards the end of the session of 1606-7. See Parl. Hist. i. 1119. There is
Spain, and in the Milanese, to Irishmen and others, who had been engaged in rebellion against the English government.* The impunity of these occurrences has been adduced as a proof of the weakness of the government. It is very difficult to name the precise point at which remonstrances founded upon detailed and disputed circumstances, should take the form of an hostile threat; and it is probable that the pacific disposition of James, perhaps of Cecil also, more than any predilection for Spain, occasioned an excess of forbearance, in regard to the offensive proceedings of the Spaniards. The English minister in Spain actually requested of the privy council that, in order to invigorate his representations at the Spanish court, he might be "strongly reprehended for his slow proceeding, in the suit of the complaining merchants."† It was evident that the Spaniards were no longer in any dread of the English government. "They had advertisement out of England, that thence there was nothing to be feared: that the king had deeply wounded the hearts of most parts of his subjects in both kingdoms, and had not a penny in his treasury to pay a soldier." To those who held this language, Cornwallis answered, very justly, that all the discontented would be reconciled, and "cast themselves at his majesty's feet, at what instant soever he pleased to strike up his drums against Spain." "I wished them," he said, "to assure themselves that if, at this session of parliament, there were the least signification given of his majesty's intention to dissolve what he had concluded with Spain, he would

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* Winwood, ii, 189, 219, 400. See also, 406, 413.
† In the session of 1625 of the English merchants.
have more subsidies offered, than himself would require."

It was under this impression that Cornwallis, whose residence in Spain had not reconciled him to the house of Austria; and who considered the peace of 1604 "as a reparation, not a building," afterwards suggested the expediency of a "galliard motion in parliament, founded upon some reason for leaving the peace, with a large offer for support of the king's charges," might in like manner, quicken the proceedings of the Spaniards. These suggestions, which were addressed with great freedom to the privy council, were not adopted. The prospects of success became, for a time, more encouraging: but it does not appear that full redress was at any time obtained. Reprisals were thought of, but considered as of doubtful advantage to the English merchants, who had large stocks in Spain. Salisbury at one time suggested the withdrawal of those goods, as a preparation for hostilities; but the anxiety for peace prevailed. If Salisbury did not go quite so far as James in his abhorrence of war, he certainly made no effectual resistance to the peaceful propensities of his master. When he "found it high time to impart unto his majesty the representation of Cornwallis, it was chiefly for his own discharge, 'who never loved to carry great things alone.'"

While these discussions were pending, two projects were set on foot by the court of Spain: first, for a league, offensive and defensive with Spain, and a match between prince Charles of England, and the infanta of Spain, who was to have for her dower the Spanish dominions in the Low Countries; and secondly, for reducing the Low Countries to the dominion of Spain, by the aid of the king of England, who was to receive one million of
ducats annually, for the charge of maintaining certain towns, which were to be assigned to England, as security for the conditions to be granted by Spain to the Dutch.

The proposed alliance was declined, upon the grounds on which it had been rejected at the period of the peace.

It was added, that in such a case "the States of the Low Countries would utterly despair, that there was not the smallest grain or spark of his majesty's affection remaining any more towards them; and would not fail to cast themselves into the hands and protection of France."*

The Spanish government was informed, that the king had already used his good offices, in order to persuade the Dutch to a peace, and it was recommended that Spain should make another "attempt. Cornwallis was authorised to propose the match. The proposition led only to desultory discussion.† There was no eagerness on either side, though, in the beginning, it seems, the Spaniards revived the well-known proverb, said to have originated with the duke of Alva,—"Con todo el mundo guerra, y paz con Inglaterra."‡

The affairs of the Low Countries now gave rise to a lengthened discussion between England, France, Spain, and the States themselves, in which our historians, implicitly following French writers, have found cause for the severest censure of the English government: and although king James is the more favourite object of objugation with the English writers, the French critics have dwelt upon the subtlety and insincerity of his minister Salisbury.

The discussions commenced with a request from the States, that England "would covertly assist them with a round sum of money, by the example of the French king §, or that his majesty would remit a part of their debt, or that some part of the debt due from France

† 17th March, 1605–6; 201, and see 363.
‡ Cornwallis, November, 1605. ii. 168.
§ June 7. 1606. P. 218.
might be paid to them. And in this last suggestion the French minister Beaumont concurred. An answer, consistent with honour and good faith, was given by Cecil in these words: "To the first, it hath been often answered him, that howsoever the French king may have reason to justify his proceedings in that which he doth, (although his treaty of peace may prescribe him the contrary) yet in the king our master the case is not alike, who having as yet never received any offence well proved from the king of Spain, would be loath to give him so great a cause of jealousy and scandal on his part. Besides, when his majesty shall be disposed to break his peace with Spain, he will not begin such a practising course, but declare himself absolutely and roundly in it, according to the present state of his affairs, and the due respect to which his majesty's faith and honour (which he respecteth above all things), shall lead him."* An expectation was held out of further indulgence in the matter of repayment.

While these transactions as to the States were in progress, Henry IV. sent to London a new representative, from whose correspondence we learn much of the politics of the French court, and of its notions of Salisbury, and of the English policy. M. de la Boderie came, specially instructed to cultivate Salisbury, on account of "the authority and power which he had in the conduct of affairs."† The talents of this diplomatist gave a value to his estimate of James and his ministers; in many points it was undeniably correct. Boderie did perhaps not over-rate James's indisposition to war and the loss of character which England sustained through the unresented injuries committed by Spain. And he was perhaps not wrong in ascribing to Cecil a participation in the counsels, by which, if the interests of England sustained no considerable injury, her reputation did suffer some disparagement.

* 7th June, 1606. P. 217.
† May, 1606.
‡ 15th April, 1606. Ambassades de M. de la Boderie en Angleterre, i. 6.
These were offences committed by England against herself. But the practised and systematic French diplomatist had the habit, common to his school, of attributing to those with whom he treated a tortuousness of intention, and a complexity of purpose*, which exist in fact more rarely than in imagination.

In truth, with the exception of the toleration of the Spanish grievances, neither Boderie, nor his correspondent Villeroy, though liberal in the use of depreciating language, imputes any thing to Cecil which "would, if proved, support an inculpation. They were angry, because England would not prefer, above all things, a close alliance with France, for the mere love of France herself. France had preceded England in making a separate peace with Spain, and had even more completely deserted the States†; feeling now somewhat stronger, she had an inclination to return to her former policy, and desired a renewal of the alliance with England. Her ministers could find nothing but a crooked and hostile policy, in the doubts which England entertained of the propriety of thus following all the turns of her neighbour. The English minister did not forget the purpose of the alliance;—to secure England against the maritime power of Spain, and to maintain the independence of the States. Thus, when Spain offered her alliance, to be cemented by a royal marriage, Cecil alleged, as a main reason for declining it, that it would make the States hopeless of success against Spain, without throwing themselves into the arms of France; a result equally hurtful to the interests of England.

It is not discreditable to Salisbury, that while the

* See Bod. i. 69.
† "In making of the peace with Spain, his majesty plainly avowed his confederacy and intercurse with them; whereas France by their peace did utterly disavow all their precedent and future correspondence, by conditioning to revoke all those that served them. And though since, they have entered into a cause of assistance, yet it is not upon open and direct terms, but by underhand and disavowed evasions of former debts, and other like pretences." Salisbury to Winwood, 6th June, 1607. ii. 313. See the Instructions to Spencer and Winwood, ii. 369.
Spaniards deemed him so much their enemy*, that their emissaries were supposed to threaten his life, France should attribute to him a preference of Spain. He had in fact no partiality for one or the other. He was one of those persons who, as Boderic, himself says of the English people, think themselves so strong, and are so proud (si glorieux) within their island, that they think that no power, however great it may be, can do them injury.† Villeroy, too, said justly, “His master and he have their own end, and think that they can maintain themselves in the state in which they are, in spite of the whole world.”‡ Boderic was, perhaps, justified in adding, in the then state of England, “neither can they injure others;” but neither he nor Villeroy formed a correct notion of the English minister, when they imagined that by rough language they might turn him from his purpose.§ If Cecil sometimes yielded too pliantly to the humours of his own master, he was in no instance diverted from his English policy by the menaces or the persuasion of a foreign power.

At this time, apparently, a hint came from France of a desire to renew the war. “I must deal freely with you,” writes Salisbury to Winwood, through whom the suggestion had come, “that it must be a far greater interest which must draw his majesty into such an

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* Cornwallis apprised Cecil of an intrigue in Spain to alienate the king's favour from him by means of the queen, as one who for his own ends sought to cross her desire of amity with Spain; and warned him that there were plots against his life. Winwood gave similar information of danger from the papists. Winwood, ii. 159, 205, 265. —Cecil wrote: “For myself, of whose danger by bloody practices you express your care, I can but return you thanks, and commend myself to God’s protection; and in that confidence assure you that I believe not all; only the more danger is laid before me, the more zealous it makes me of God’s and my country’s service.” “I have learned to despise the malicious stings of evil tongues, which hate me for my religion, and my country. Yet your good office in seeking to suppress those things which might raise envy unto me, (though as false as the authors of the lies are) merits my acknowledgment with thanks. The discourse no doubt is written by some Jesuit.”—17th August and 5th February, 1606. p. 249, 253. About this time a tract was published, which is attributed to Salisbury, entitled, “An Answer to several scandalous papers scattered abroad under the colour of a Catholic Admonition.” London, 1606. It is not in the Museum. See Winwood, 192.

† P. i. 348.
‡ P. 325, 396.
§ Ib. Si vous en parlez vertement et sèchement; p. 326.
action, than hath yet been propounded; for to undertake a war anew, which should have no other object than the settlement of a third party (which party may prove in the end as uncertain to us as any other*), were a work of too great difficulty to be compassed now, unless it might bring with it some access of power to this kingdom of one kind or other, to countervail the hazard and expense which we should be forced to undergo in it.”†

The refusal of assistance from England probably accelerated the conclusion of a truce between the United Provinces and the archdukes; who, for reasons which it puzzled Salisbury to discover, offered to acknowledge them as a free state.‡ This event was desirable for all parties, notwithstanding that it was brought about without the interference of England. When secretary Prado avowed the circumstance to Cornwallis, adding that he thought it would come to little effect, *for my lord of Salisbury would be adverse to any such agreement*; “I answered,” says the English minister, “that he much mistook lord Salisbury and his dispositions; for, might there be a good peace, safe, honourable, and profitable, for all parties interested; upon the peril of my soul I durst avow, that there is not a counsellor in christendom who would more willingly put his head and hand into it.” Prado replied, that “none could understand it more ably, if his will were answerable to his power.”§ Cornwallis was right. Salisbury was a practical statesman, and though he felt that his master ought to have been acquainted beforehand with the intention of the States—and though he could not penetrate the motives of Spain in acknowledging their independence, he readily fell in with this new course of events, whereby a desirable end appeared likely to be accomplished even by

* Upon this most important and neglected consideration, as applicable not only to the United Provinces, but to any country in behalf of which England may have thought it proper to interfere, I take the liberty of referring to an article in the 19th vol. of the Foreign Quarterly Review, p. 135.
† 21st February, 1606-7. li. 297. See Bodenri, li. 18-79.
undesired means. He only determined not to interfere further unless solicited by the States.*

This difficulty was soon removed: while the several powers were preparing for the proposed conferences, the archdukes made a vigorous remonstrance against the aid given by England to the Dutch. Salisbury answered their representations, d’une façon si ouverte et si brusque†, that they could answer nothing. He told them that "there was nothing in the treaty which obliged England to abandon the states; that she had in truth aided and assisted them, as much as good faith permitted; and that she would continue to assist them, and that he would have it known, that there was no prince, be he who he might, who had recourse to England, to whose defence they would not run."

I doubt whether Cecil did hold this chivalrous language, with respect to the world in general; and the construction which, if Boderie is to be believed, he put upon the treaty with Spain, is more liberal than that which he had previously put forward. I cannot find in the domestic politics of England at this time any sufficient reason for the more warlike language which appears, not only in the questionable reports of Cecil's conferences, but in the instructions to the English plenipotentiaries which bear his name. I can, therefore, only seek that reason in the altered conduct of France. It was the opinion of the English ministers that without the co-operation of France, England could not effectually protect the states, or at least, without making efforts so great, as eventually to outweigh the advantages, precarious after all, of establishing the Dutch in an independent state.

The instructions‡ to Spencer and Winwood, now sent to the Low Countries, exhibited a determination to cooperate with France in securing the independence of the States, who were to be exhorted to embrace no conditions.

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† Boderie, 6th August, 1607, ii. 358. See Parl. Deb. 1819. xi. 1095 and 1048, for some notice of this case.
‡ Winwood, ii. 329. No date, but probably August 1607.
of peace, where the point of renunciation should be either scanty or reserved.* It was proposed that France† and England should be parties to the treaty. But the plenipotentiaries were not authorised to propose a declaration of war against Spain, as the alternative of an independent establishment of the States.

It appears to me, that Cecil was of opinion that it would be politic to make, jointly with France, a vigorous war for the defence of the United Provinces, rather than suffer them to be recovered by Spain; but he wisely preferred peace; and the state of the finances, his pacific disposition, and the still more pacific disposition of his master, and his distrust of the cordial co-operation of France, all induced him to keep the possibility of war as much in the background as possible, in his communications either with France or with the States, whom it might, he thought, induce to be unreasonable in their demands upon Spain.‡

* P. 331–2.
† On first hearing of the truce, Henry IV. had expressed his readiness to act with England either in promoting the peace or renewing the war; thinking it probable, for no good reason, that James might now alter his habitual policy. Boderie, ii. 148. April 14, 1607.
‡ Bodenr. July 4, 1608, in 366. What follows is from the instructions to Spencer and Winwood. "We think it fit that you do both, particularly to the French, and jointly with the rest, endeavour to understand what it is or can be expected of us in the point of war; of which there can be but two kinds: either by the joint resolution of France and us, or by the supplies of money underhand for the maintenance of that charge. In the first point the language of the French will be found cautious and uncertain; whereas, in the name of their king, they will affirm nothing categorically. But if they shall say, that their king will not refuse with us to make war upon Spain, it may be asked, upon what grounds—two being in peace with Spain—shall enter into war? If to maintain those countries that they fall not into the hands of Spain, those countries may be maintained, being settled in an assured peace, by the intervention of us two, and yet we may keep our peace with Spain. If the war shall be undertaken to dislodge the Spaniards out of those countries, what pretence can two Christian kings have to embrace so unjust and so unworthy a quarrel? And the Spaniards being dislodged, show shall those countries be bestowed, but that jealousy will arise between us two neighbour kings, which will break the amity between our realms? For the maintenance of the war underhand by a common treaty, it is in effect no more than to declare publicly that the princes will break their peace privately: so as if the States or French king's commissioners shall maintain discourse in that kind, you may do well first to know of the States what it is that they would ask; and so comparing it with the dry and barren return that may be looked for of such a war as this—have been all this while, to consider whether it were not better to make an actual war, wherein there are many hopes which are not in the other form to be expected, so as if it should be granted and accepted, if the war be carried with no better resolution than
Such being the sentiments and apprehensions of Cecil, it was probable that his policy would want decisiveness, and his language precision: but he who reads the correspondence of the French ambassador Boderie, together with that of the English minister, with Winwood and Cornwallis*, will not ascribe the slow and unsatisfactory proceeding in the negotiation entirely to the fault of Cecil or his master. "Il y aïait," says Boderie himself, "une telle défiance aux esprits de ce Roi (king James) et de tous ceux de son conseil, telle envie, et telles restes de cette inimitie naturelle et ancienne, qui a toujours été entre cette nation, et la notre, que ce sera un grand miracle s'ils marchent jamais avec nous, avec la franchise et sincérité qui serait nécessaire pour en tirer profit. Nous fussions d'ailleurs si peu de notre côté pour les guérir de celle maladie; que ce n'est pas merveille si nous en sentons tous les jours des nouveaux symptomes."† And again: "Nous marchons les uns et les autres avec trop d'incertitude, et de défiance pour jamais rien faire de bon."‡

But after all, as frequently happens after protracted and apparently useless and unskillful negotiations, the result was satisfactory enough.

France threw no impediment in the way of peace but in order to secure to herself the full advantage of it, proposed and finally concluded a defensive league§ with the States, to take effect after the conclusion of peace with Spain. Salisbury || made the same arrangement ¶ on the part of England, and when it appeared probable that the negotiations of the Dutch would end only in an truce, the provisional league was extended to that case also.** This was effected in spite of objections made by

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* This is much too voluminous even to be abstracted.
† Boderie, 3d Ma., 1608. Art. 237.
‡ October 1, 1608. iv. 1.
¶ Salisbury to Cornwallis, 13th November, 1607. Winwood, ii. 357.
Also 369. 376. 413. 421.
† 30th June, 1608. Dumont, p. 94.
** Salisbury to the Commissioners, 7th August, 1608. Winwood, ii. 427.
the archdukes, to whom, "to the end that his majesty's intentions in it might be more apparent to the world's view," Salisbury had communicated his proceedings.

It is not necessary to follow Boderie in his narrative of the discontents which his jealousy of the Spanish interest occasioned. The French king constantly claimed a precedence, which the prejudices or the heedlessness of the queen sometimes gave to the ambassador of Spain.

A more important cause of offence was the refusal of Salisbury to enter into a triple league with France, and the Dutch, for carrying on the war against Spain, in case of the renewal of her contest with the States. Cecil made no objection to a general defensive league with France; he would not mention the United Provinces by name, because he might thereby tempt the states-general, in which prince Maurice had a strong party for war, to reject all overtures for peace.

This refusal to include the Dutch, was given after a reference to James himself; but France ascribed the refusal, and not unjustly, to the fear of offending Spain, and would not enter into the alliance without the States; I own, that except for the specific purpose of maintaining the States, the alliance was undesirable. Together with this alliance Cecil proposed a double marriage: Henry prince of Wales with the eldest daughter of France and the dauphin with the English princess. The French court now discouraged the whole scheme, but at all events proposed that only one match, that of the English prince and French princess should be accomplished.

A truce for twelve years was concluded in April.

* Salisbury to Cornwallis, 19th May, 1608. Winwood, ii. 399. Also 31st May, p. 413, and 30th June, p. 427. 429. 433.
† Boderie, iii. 365.
‡ Birch, generally favourable to Salisbury, blames king James (Neg. 286.) for this reserve, "and for his extreme attention to money matters." I concur in the reasons given for the first, the latter was a continuation of the policy of Elizab.th.
§ Boderie, p. 413.
|| See Boderie, iii. 408.
¶ Elizabeth, afterwards the wife of Philip IV. of Spain.
** Elizabeth, afterwards the wife of Frederic V. elector palatine, and ancestress of our Brunswick kings.
1609*, under the mediation of England and France, between the Dutch provinces, recognised as a free state, and the king of Spain and the archdukes. This was all that England could reasonably desire, and quite sufficient for her interests. Though it was not until after Salisbury's death that the final pacification was effected; the independence which he so much desired was effectually established from this time. That independence was with Salisbury an essential condition. He was aware that "there was not at that day any action upon which the eyes of all Christendom looked with so great and so jealous an expectation."† His despatches, though they did not altogether reject the alternative of war, did certainly lean very much towards peace, nor does he therefore deserve any blame. And he at the same moment protested with much vehemence against the injurious representation of Richar dot, the archduke's minister, that England would have abandoned the point of independence. ‡ What he says upon this subject is obviously sincere:—"After some trouble, he could recollect no better ground for the imputation than his having dropped an opinion which might easily be justified §, that a single truce for twenty years would be better than a continued and fruitless discussion."

Besides the point of independence, the mediators insisted upon securing to the Dutch the trade to the Indies, from which the Spaniards pretended to a right to exclude them. Of this trade England and France gave the States a joint guaranty. ||

On the other hand, the English commissioners sustained the Dutch in resisting the Spaniards upon a point of which they had made a sine quâ non, which was then thought of great importance to England, as the

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† Letter to Lord Shrewsbury, 10th February, 1607. Lodge, iii. 346.
‡ Ib. 478.
§ See lords of the council to the commissioners, 8th October, 1606. Winwood, ii. 433.
guardian of the Protestant interest. The States would admit no stipulation for tolerating the Catholic religion. And sir Ralph Winwood not only refused to join with the French minister in recommending the Catholics to this indulgence, but made his refusal a point of "his service to his God, and his duty to his king." There is no letter from Cecil on this subject; it is probable that he did not feel so strongly upon it as the English ambassador.

There is abundant evidence in the official conduct of Salisbury, that whatever might have been the professions of James, he had no leaning towards Spanish interests. But he saw very correctly one reason against quarrelling with Spain. "We may say freely to you that the Spanish king hath better means by the way of Ireland, to infest his majesty's estate de praesenti, than he can the French king's; (Ireland having a party to assist Spain) which were an ill accident, until his majesty hath taken breath to fill his coffers; where, on the other side, in France there is a party ready to oppose against Spain, even although they should be coldly affected to their natural, sovereign." This was one of the grounds upon which the king declared "that in case the sovereignty should be granted without any other pernicious conditions, he dared not make himself the author of a new war by his counsel, whereof he knoweth not the consequence, nor could not assure the States of any assistance, other than shall be subsequent to a breach after a pacification, according to the contents of this treaty."*

Surely these were the views of a practical English statesman; and we have seen that the Spanish court thought Cecil much their enemy †, and very hostile to the Romish religion. There were rumours not only in Spain ‡, but in Holland §, of intentions on the part of

* Lords of the council, 7th August 1608, to Winwood, ii. 427; and see Lord Salisbury's private letter to Lord Shrewsbury, 10th February, 1607. Lodge, iii. 347.
† And see Cornwallis, 16th October 1608. ii. 440. 464.
§ P. 264.
certain Jesuits to assassinate the English minister as their principal enemy. We have not much by way of answer from Salisbury to these intimations. "For myself," he said on one occasion to Cornwallis, "of whose danger by bloody practices you express your care, I can but return my thanks and commend myself to God's protection, and in that confidence assure you that I believe not all, only the more danger is set before me, the more zealous it makes me of God's and my country's service."

I cannot quit this correspondence between Salisbury and Cornwallis, without noticing one letter in which the minister rebukes the ambassador for the insufficiency of some of his reports. He thus prefaces his request of more precise intelligence: — "Although I receive from you many packets by which your care and diligence doth appear, yet, seeing that they bring not at all times that satisfaction which I could wish, not only because those things are not granted which we think just (which no way is imputed to you), but rather because you write so uncertainly of things that are visible in Spain, and of great consequence to us, I have resolved (out of my freedom which your affection deserveth) to impart unto you what I would wish amended; beyond which, be assured I do not go, being loath that you should at any time have cause to think (where I know you endure so great calamity) that I would not rather cover if there was anything amiss, than help to find it: so as therein you may be sure that I have so handled it, as that defect comes under no other man's observation."† In what good part Cornwallis took this reprehension so worthy of a kind-hearted gentleman, will appear from the commence-ment of his answer. "Most honourable lord, God will I hope, ever be pleased to give me grace rather to receive contentment in the reproof of the wise and virtuous than in the song of the fool and flatterer. I acknowledge myself bound unto your lordship for many sun-

* 17th August, 1606. ii. 253.
† Salisbury to Cornwallis, 27th September, 1607. Winwood, ii. 340.
shines of your favour, yet (I assure your lordship) take none of them for so sure an argument of your good affection as this of your reprehension; especially coming so naturally and out of so clean an air, and so much promising continuance of the former fair weather that I have enjoyed.

"My good lord, I cannot but acknowledge that, in this service, for which I never thought or said myself to have any aptness, I have out of mere inabilities committed many errors; but your lordship's love have hitherto covered the multitude of my misprisions; and your noble nature rather compassionated than complained of the faults proceeding out of inevitable infirmity. Although so true and so perfect a glass hath represented my spots, as I should far forget myself if for such I should not acknowledge them; yet, noble lord, give me leave, I beseech you, with the waters of truth to wash them from mine heart, though infirmity, accident, and impossibilities to avoid them, hath laid an apprehension of aspersion upon my face." *

In 1608, the lord treasurer † died; a few months before his death, this celebrated statesman and poet made a will, in which he noticed his principal friends and colleagues in the government: to each of the earls of Suffolk ‡, Shrewsbury §, Worcester ‖, Dunbar ¶, and North-

* 14th October, 1607. Winwood, ii. 348.
† April 19th. Thomas Sackville, first lord Buckhurst, and earl of Dorset, ancestor of the duke of Dorset. Collins, ii 119. Lodge, part iv. 5. Till I found a letter from Cecil to Hickes in the Museum, I never heard that the family of this poetical treasurer were venal. "I am very glad you have crossed Mr. Greville, and I will do all I can for you; only believe me that in this place my lord treasurer's voice will weigh down, and being sought without him will never be had, for he will violently cross it. Go therefore, in anywise to my lady Glenham, give her promise of 100l., so she will win her father to you. . . . You must tell Glenham that except you may assure me that her father likes of it, your best friends will not stir. She must deal so directly with the treasurer for the 100l., or else she may cost you. . . . For the 100l. I will find a word to pay it, or 500l. rather than fail." No date. Lansdowne, vol. 88, No. 52. Lady Glenham was Anne, eldest daughter of Dorset, and wife of Sir Thomas Glenham of Suffolk.
‡ Thomas Howard, see p. 113.
§ Gilbert Talbot, see p. 73.
‖ Edward Somerset, fourth earl of that name, ancestor to the duke of Beaufort.
¶ George Hume, see p. 91.
ampton*, sir Henry Neville and others, he bequeathed chains and rings, by way of remembrance, and attached to each bequest some words of affection or commendation.

To Salisbury, also, he left valuable jewels; but his legacy was accompanied by one much more valuable, in the elaborate eulogy which he recorded of his public and private character. As the posthumous, and almost dead testimony of one who knew Cecil well, I give an extract from this singular document. After expressions of gratitude for personal kindness, he refers to "the public merit of his friend, both towards his majesty and this commonwealth, whereby, when I behold the weight," he says, "of so many great and grave affairs, which the special duty of his place, as principal secretary, doth daily and necessarily cast upon him; and do note withal, what infinite cares, crosses, labours, and travails of body and mind he doth thereby continually sustain and undergo; and, lastly, to see with how great dexterity, sincerity, and judgment, he doth accomplish and perform the faithful service of that place. These divine virtues of his, so incessantly exercised and employed for the good of the public, I must confess, have made me long since so greatly to love, honour, and esteem him, and so firmly and faithfully fixed my heart unto him, as I daily and heartily pray unto Almighty God to continue all strength and ability, both of body and mind, in him, that he sink not under the weight of so heavy a burden; that the king's majesty in him may many years enjoy the fruitful labours of so worthy a servant; and he, in the king's majesty, may long possess the gracious favour and love of the most judicious, learned, and rarest king that ever this world produced. By the hand of whose royal and prudent direction, and the grave advice of those other wise and faithful counsellors to his highness, he may help to guide and steer the stern of this estate, in the course of safety and

* Henry Howard, the writer of the letters to Scotland.
plentiful prosperity, always keeping and preserving the
ship of this commonweal within the port and haven of
flourishing peace, so often blessed even by God himself;
and that it may there rest fast fixed to the sacred author
of our own security and quiet, and not upon the rising
of every puff of wind, to hoist* and sail into those deep
and dangerous seas, surged and bellowed with storms
and tempests of hellish war; and where no better effects
are, or can be expected, than continual doubts, wars,
and fears, of many woeful wracks, miseries, and calamities
to fall upon us. Thus, I have faithfully set down,
in some sort, the noble parts of this honourable earl,
who, besides such, his worthiness and sufficiency for
the public service, both of his sovereign and country, is
also framed of so sweet a nature, so full of mildness,
courtesy, honest mirth, bounty, kindness, gratitude, and
discourse, so easily reconciled to his foe, and evermore
so true unto his friend, as I may justly say, it were one
of the chiefest felicities that in this world we can pos-
sess to live, converse, and spend our whole life in
mutual love and friendship with such a one; of whose
excellent virtues and sweet condition, so well known to
me in respect of our long communication by so many
years in most true love and friendship together, I am
desirous to leave some faithful remembrance in this my
last will and testament, that, since the living speech of
my tongue, when I am gone from hence, must then
cease and speak no more, yet the living speech of
my pen, which never dieth, may herein thus for ever
truly testify and declare the same.”

The office of treasurer was with little delay‡, and
probably no hesitation, given to Cecil, who thus obtained
all the official rank and importance which his father had
so long possessed.

Contrary to an expectation that appears to have been

* Sic,—to hoist sail, I suppose.
† 11th August, 1607. Collins, ii. 142, 143.
‡ 4th of May, 1608. Sidney Papers, i. 325. Boderie, iii. 303.
entertained at the time*, he retained the office of secretary of state; and it appears to have been the king's intention, that he should exercise the functions of prime minister. "My master," he tells sir Henry Wotton, "has laid this honour upon me without suit†, and without merit, out of this opinion, that some experience might make me more able than any new man; and the condition of my fortune, (if not my honesty) divert me from the error of corruption, rather to make myself a superintendent over others, and take in my care, and manage matters of greatest weight and consequence, discharging the grosser part of the place by a distribution of business and despatch to every other officer, as well my adjuncts as subordinates." ‡

The appointment was thus announced by sir Henry Neville to sir Ralph Winwood: — "I am sure you have understood the advancement of our honourable friend to the place of treasurer with the same content that it lived in the whole kingdom, saving me gli interessati §, who digest it not ... well inwardly as they make show outwardly, especially the followers and dependants, whose hopes are by this means somewhat abated. But otherwise I know not any thing the king has done in that kind more universally applauded; so great a reformation many imagine will follow this change." ¶

For reformation certainly there was much necessity. The administration of Dorset, who was more than 70 years of age when he commenced it †, had left the finances in a very bad condition.

The supplies voted to the king were inferior to those of the queen's last years, and in the session of 1606-8, no supply was voted. ** The expenses of James, who had a queen and children, were necessarily greater than

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* Bodenr, ii. 247.
† Bodene says that the queen considered the treasurer as her creature. iii. 302. I doubt this.
‡ Sidney Papers, ii. 326.
§ Sic.
¶ 19th of May, 1603. Winwood, ii. 339.
† He was born in 1547; made treasurer 1598; and died in 1608, at the age of 81.
those of Elizabeth, but they were further augmented by the expensiveness of his habits, the profuseness of his disposition, and particularly his extravagant grants to Scottish favourites.* Great irregularity also appears to have crept into the administration of the treasury and exchequer.

There is good evidence, that in all matters which depended upon official care and diligence, especially in respect of the crown lands, the new treasurer made considerable improvements. † But the financial administration of Cecil, in the instance which I am now to notice, has been exposed to censure, perhaps exaggerated, but not undeserved.

The parliament, which was sitting at the death of Dorset, was prorogued in July, and did not reassemble until February 1609-10. It was in this interval that the lord treasurer, and ministers took upon themselves to increase the rate of duty payable upon the importation of several articles of merchandise, beyond that at which they had been fixed by parliament.

Although this arbitrary proceeding is not to be regarded, as if it had been adopted in the eighteenth or

* Baderie, ii. 16. 411. 427. 440. ; iii. 70. 72. 103. 189. Just before the death of lord Buckhurst, the lords of the council had remonstrated with the king on the profusion of his gifts. In a paper, "touching means to advance the king's revenue by unusual means, so as the king will take the act upon himself, and be our protector," there is this remarkable language: — "If those things may not be made the objects of private men's hopes, which are the only flowers that are left ungathered at this time to fill up the empty places of that garland of your crown, which cannot be repaired, if the garden of your majesty's treasure shall be made a common pasture for all that are in need, or have unreasonable desires." . . . . . . . .

† As liberality to well-deserving subjects doth multiply and confirm affection and duty to princes, so the benefits which are promiscuously bestowed, and without convenient consideration of merit or values, do not only beget further importunity in those that lack, but breed contempt in the gifts, and ingratitude to the giver."—Harl. MSS. No. 2907, p. 2. So early as 1603, the king was so poor, that the treasurer knew not how to procure money to pay for the king's diet."—Lodge, iii. 172. "How my lady Arabella is now satisfied, I know not; but the king hath granted 800l. yearly for her maintenance, and of it, 200l. beforehand; she shall also have dishes of meat for her people; more tables will not be allowed; and that you will think, when you shall hear that our sovereign spends 100,000l. yearly in his house, which was wont to be but 80,000l.; now think what the country feels, and so much for that." (Cecil to lord Shrewsbury, 17th of September, 1603. Th. p. 182.)

† See these detailed by sir Walter Cope, in Gutch's Collectanea Curiosa.
nineteenth century, when its illegality would have been quite unquestionable, it must be deemed to have been, even in 1608, an unjustifiable assumption of prerogative. Yet in this measure Salisbury had the sanction not only of the crown lawyers, but of the judges of the land.

Francis Bacon had been raised in 1607 to the long desired office of solicitor-general *, which up to the year 1607, had been filled by his successful rival of 1593 †, still disclaiming ambitious views, and yet being very anxious when the attorney-general was ill, he had continued during the present reign to make application to Salisbury ‡, and his letters are those of an attached and grateful adherent. He now contended stoutly for the legality of the new imposition. §

In the time of lord treasurer Dorset, the legality of the imposition was questioned by one Bates, a merchant, when the majority of the judges decided in favour of the crown ||; and the ablest speakers of those who censured the government, admitted that the tax was warranted by some recent as well as ancient precedents. I subjoin the explanation which Cecil himself gave, in the first instance, and in writing to a foreign court, where he was apprehensive that some of the charges might be opposed. He directed the attention of sir Charles Cornwallis to "certain impositions, or rather informations, of the book of rates for customs, which we have found good to increase for the most part for better relieving his majesty's present necessities, and extraordinary charges he is put to in Ireland; not with any purpose to contravene or prejudice any of the treas-

* Beaton, ii. 329, 331.
† Sir Thomas Fleming. The attorney-general Coke was made chief justice of the common pleas in 1606, when Fleming was superseded by sir Henry Hobart.
‡ To secretary Cecil, Bacon's Works, xii. 277. — To lord Cecil, 278-9. — To lord Salisbury, 14, 63, and 123. These were written from 1598 to 1603.
§ Works vi. 44.
|| The great case of impositions. Michaelmas, 1606. St. Tr. ii. 371. The writers who have censured Cecil for his augmentations of the customs, have not attended to the date of this proceeding in the exchequer.
¶ Mr. Hakewill. St. Tr. ii. 407.
ties now in force with any of his majesty's friends or allies, but only by reducing them to the ancient and allowable proportion among princes, of five in the hundred, or as near thereunto as conveniently could, by rating every sort of merchandise according to their true worth and value as now they go. For upon comparing the prices and values of things past with the present, such great oversights did appear in undervaluing of some, and overrating of others, as his majesty without offence to any might justly and lawfully intend to the reformation thereof; especially now that his present necessities do enforce him, and his ministers do look more narrowly into every thing, inasmuch as it is consistent to honour and reason: it being always held above all other things a most convenient way, and less prejudicial to any that princes do supply their urgent necessities by increase of customs, because in every particular they are less felt by their subjects, and yet in the general bring a round supply with them. Upon this foundation, or as near as we could go to it, we have rated divers sorts of merchandizes from their former rates; some to double proportion, some to a single, and some we have abated from their former rates, as the value of things could bear it: in all which his majesty usETH no more but the same liberty which is used in Spain and elsewhere; where the nature for rates for customs do rise and fall according to the worth and value of the merchandizes. Some other impositions—scarce worth such a name—we have also set either upon commodities prohibited to be brought in hither by the law, as logwood, Brazil wood, &c., or upon some commodities as we would be content to be less transported out of this realm, because of the dearth and scarcity of them at home, such as tin and lead, the latter whereof we shall be constrained to forbid absolutely to be transported; and yet such moderation hath been used in these impositions, to give the less cause of distaste abroad."

* 30th of June, 1608. Winwood, ii. 415., and Boden, iii. 342-3. See 2 James i. c. 33.
ROBERT CECIL.

It is remarkable that this defence of the new impositions as a mere adaptation of *ad valorem* duties, although adopted by Hume *, appears only in this instruction to sir Charles Cornwallis, and in a communication to the French ambassador †, and is in truth only a justification of the act as between state and state, independently of its legality with reference to the constitution and laws of either country. The lawyers ‡, who argued the case *one of English law*, placed no reliance upon this argument drawn from altered value. They founded their opinions upon general notions of the kingly prerogative, and upon some questionable precedents. In reference to these, the commons, *referring to various grievances, observed,*—"Although it be true that many of the particulars of which we now complain were of some use § in the late queen's time, and then not much impugned, because the usage of them being then more moderate, gave not so great occasion of offence, and consequently not so much cause to inquire into the right and validity of them, yet the right being now more thoroughly scanned, by reason of the great mischiefs and inconveniences which the subjects have thereby sustained, we are confident that your majesty will be so far from thinking it a point of honour or greatness, to continue any grievances upon your people, because you found them begun in your predecessor's time, as you will rather hold it a work of great glory to reform them.‖

But it was not only the limited operation of those illegal exactions by queen Elizabeth that constituted the difference between the two cases. Cecil's great fault lay in not regarding the altered signs of the times.¶ In the

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* vi. 49.
† Boderic, iii. 343. 421.
‡ State Trials, ii. 382. 407. See Hume, vi. 50. Hallam, i. 429.
§ *i.e.* were in some manner practised.
‖ Petition of grievances from the commons to king James, 1610. State Trials, ii. 519. From Petty's *Jus Parliamentarium*.
¶ In 1609 he took a just view of the mutual interests of government and people. "One thing here troubles us, that the queen hath raised many impositions and customs of late years; and some upon the French. If she shall desire abatement for her subjects, the king will do the like for his.
first place, there were symptoms even in those days of the sentiments which afterwards destroyed the monarchy. A knowledge of their ancient rights and a determination to maintain to them, with some disposition to encroach upon the prerogative of the crown, was observable among the people; it has shown itself in the latter years of Elizabeth, and would probably have made progress even if her reign had been prolonged.

But, secondly, that politic princess, cruelly and capricious and tyrannical towards the great of the land, tenacious of her prerogative, and haughty, in her addresses to the parliament, did always endeavour, and generally with success, to conciliate the good will of the people at large: her sex, her spirit, and her frugality, all combined to procure toleration of her frailties, and exaggerated praise of her better qualities. Cecil had, at the very first, perceived the inferiority of James, and it was not the part of a wise statesman to force the observation of it upon a discerning people.

Another financial resource to which Cecil resorted under the difficulties of 1609, was the ancient feudal aid, on making the king's eldest son a knight. This measure justified by Magna Charta, though out of the ordinary course, excited no opposition. We are told by a careful collector of facts, that while he thus had recourse to unusual methods of increasing the king's revenue, he did not spare his private income, but "liberally rewarded out of his own purse several of the spies which he had in all the courts of Europe."

Of his general administration of the treasury, it is very difficult to form a correct opinion; party ran high, and there is scarcely an abuse with which Cecil is not charged. But I am disposed to follow the historians who have given credit to the statements of Sir Walter

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Hereby are questions made by the financiers, whether this be good for the prince, though it be for the subject. For my own part, I told these two bodies relative in all circumstances. 15th of September, 1599. Winwood, i. 112.

* Boderie, iv. 370.
† Collins, in Sidney Papers, ii. 325.