Did James the First of England die from the effects of poison, or from natural causes? / by Norman Chevers.

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DIE FROM

THE EFFECTS OF POISON,

OR FROM

NATURAL CAUSES?

BY

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All readers of History are aware of a report, extensively current at the time, that the death of King James the First was due, not to natural disease but to empoisonment. This rumor cannot be dismissed by the historian as one of those popular errors or malicious figments of personal rancor or party malice which, even up to the present day, apprehensive of the satire,—

> Ad gremium Cereris sine cæde et vulnere pauci
> Descendunt reges et sicca morte tyranni,—

have attributed the deaths of leaders to unfair means,—but in a manner so vague and so palpably inconclusive as to place, at once, the bane and its antidote before every candid and impartial enquirer. On this remarkable occasion, the report rested, mainly, upon medical testimony strongly supported by circumstantial evidence. It was employed, openly, by a Parliament as a means for effecting the destruction of a royal favorite whose intolerable power in the state had become paramount and almost absolute. It was used by a people against their king from whom they were determined to wrest the privileges of constitutional liberty. It was the impulse which drove an assassin's knife into Buckingham's heart. It was the spark igniting that train which exploded in the Great Rebellion and in the death of King Charles the First upon a scaffold at Whitehall.

It may be considered, by some, that we have given undue importance to the operation of this question in the contest

between Charles and his Parliament. It will, however, generally be found that, in the fiercest struggles of parties, there has been some circumstance of aggravation, not brought forward to the front of the arena, which has stung the combatants to desperation, has rendered all compromise impossible, and has given a deadly character to the strife. It cannot be doubted that, when Charles the First ascended the throne, there were, in parliament, a body of men who were resolved, at all hazards, to put down the Duke of Buckingham and to limit monarchical power. There were many sufficient causes for impeaching Buckingham. Charles maintained his prerogative in a manner which his warmest advocates must admit to have been tyrannical. Still it appears possible that the contest might have been brought early to an amicable conclusion had not the opponents of the King and Duke been armed with the accusation that Charles supported and advanced, despite the execrations of all England, the minion whose hands were stained with his royal father's blood. The great strength of Charles Stewart was in his, now, unimpeachable morality, piety and virtue; and his opponents, when calculating their resources for the encounter, did not overlook the importance of circumstances which armed them with the power to accuse him of condoning a great crime in such a manner as to expose himself to the suspicion of parricide.

The king cannot but have perceived the danger and intricacy of the position in which he was thus placed; but it is clear that, knit as his heart was to Villiers by a brotherly affection which was not the less sterling because it was misplaced, and absolutely confident as he must have been of their mutual innocence of the crime in question, the whole weight of his kingly and chivalrous feeling was thrown into the task of, at once, vindicating his friend and defending his own sacred prerogative.

Most unhappily, this vindication and defence were conducted, not with candour and fortitude, but with that haughty narrow-minded stubbornness and Punic faith which led all Charles's political struggles to calamitous issues.

Many of our chief historians concur in viewing as unworthy of belief the suspicion that the Duke of Buckingham, faulty as he was, was guilty of this atrocity, and have repudiated the idea that Charles the First could, possibly, have esteemed and supported Buckingham as he did, facing with him the full storm of a nation's anger, had he not been

absolutely confident in his favorite's innocence of his father's murder. Still, not a few authorities,—having closely searched the historical records of those times, and taking fully into account the unprincipled character of Buckingham,—cannot resist the argument of Rapin de Thoyras that, when the time and circumstances of this unexpected death were jointly considered with the embarrassments it delivered the favorite from, and the advantages it procured him, it was difficult not to suspect him. Several historians, especially Burnet, Rapin, and the continuator of Mackintosh's History, leave Buckingham's case nearly undefended; and there are some, even in recent times, who scarcely hesitate to place the stigma of murder upon him.

Thus Dr. Charles Mackay remarks, in his "Memoirs of Extraordinary Popular Delusions," that,—"James himself is supposed, with great probability, to have fallen a victim to it" [the practice of poisoning] "In the notes to Harris's Life and Writings of James I, there is a good deal of information on the subject. The guilt of Buckingham, although not fully established, rests upon circumstances of suspicion, stronger than have been sufficient to lead hundreds to the scaffold."

Brodie has introduced the question at issue in the following terms; —"Credulity has been so often imposed upon by accounts of the death of princes, that every tale of that nature ought to be listened to with the utmost caution. But a wide distinction should be drawn between a popular rumour and a specific charge by the legislative assembly of a great country; and, considering the profligate character of this favourite, and the relation in which he had stood to the late king, considering that one of that King's minions had committed the most deliberate murder to save himself from the detection of some secret crime; it is not wonderful that he, the successor of that convicted murderer, should, to rescue himself from destruction, have perpetrated a similar deed. Modern authors, however, availing themselves of the ridicule with which vague reports of the deaths of princes are now generally and justly regarded, have treated the story with a sneer as the offspring of credulity in a benighted age; and the vulgar reader, who would greedily swallow a silly rumour of the passing hour, partly recoils from inquiry in confusion, partly feels the triumph of improved intelligence in smiling at the easy faith of former times. But whoever coolly weighs all the circumstances, may be of opinion that, though the matter may now be beyond the reach of certainty, it was not without reason

the enlightened men of that age were discontented at being so unconstitutionally defeated in their attempts to bring it to a trial."

Brodie then proceeds to state the leading points upon which the accusation of poisoning rests. He does this more fully than any other author with whose writings we are acquainted. To most of the points he gives more importance than the generality of modern historians have done, but his arguments, generally, do not carry conviction to our mind. We shall deal with them in their proper places. His conclusion is as follows:—"The cause of the zeal with which this question has been taken up by writers is that Charles was, subsequently, implicated; but I am clearly of opinion that there is no ground for suspecting him:—it is not like his character, he had no motive for his father's immediate removal, and, in the nature of things, must soon have succeeded. I do not think that Buckingham's character, considering all matters, can suffer by the imputation."

We have said that the accusation upon which the suspicion of this criminality rests was preferred by a physician. It is true that the statement of Dr. Eglisham is so palpably fraught with evidence of his personal malice against the Duke of Buckingham that few modern readers can have placed implicit confidence in it. Still it would appear that—(with the exception of the comments by Dr. Welwood, the historian, whose medical judgment is more than questionable and whose propensity to make the most of all statements against the Stuarts is notorious)—no medical review of Eglisham's story and of the whole of the few extant circumstances of the king's last illness has ever been attempted. It will, we think, therefore, be, at least, within our power to show whether there is or is not, now in existence, any medical evidence in proof of the report that King James the First died from the effects of poison. We consider that this enquiry involves points of great historical and medico-legal interest.

It can scarcely be questioned that, latterly, King James's infatuation for Buckingham was greatly shaken; and that, occurring when it did, the king's death improved the favorite's position, if it did not avert his fall. Wilson is, probably, correct in urging that Buckingham had grown apprehensive that the king would set up Bristol, his deadly enemy, against him to pull him down. Lord Clarendon asserts that "He" [the King] "wanted only a resolute and brisk counsellor to assist him in

destroying the Duke; and such an one he promised himself in the arrival of the Earl of Bristol." Burnet says that King James, in the end of his reign, was become weary of the Duke of Buckingham, who treated him with such an air of insolent contempt that he seemed, at last, resolved to throw him off, but could not think of taking the load of Government on himself, and so resolved to bring the Earl of Somerset again into favor as that lord reported to some from whom I had it. He met with him in the night in the gardens at Theobalds; two bed-chamber men were only in the secret; the king embraced him tenderly and with many tears; the Earl of Somerset believed the secret was not well kept; for soon after, the king was taken ill with some fits of an ague and died of it." Burnet adds "My father was then in London and did very much suspect an ill practice in the matter, but perhaps Dr. Craig, my mother's uncle, who was one of the king's physicians, possessed him with these apprehensions; for he was disgraced for saying he believed the king was poisoned."*

It must have been constantly present to the mind of Buckingham that King James's infatuation in his favor had nothing good or durable in its nature; that it would, in all probability, abandon him suddenly with some horrible catastrophe; and that, latterly, it had perceptibly begun to fail;—whereas he had succeeded in obtaining, over the mind of Charles, an ascendancy which, cautiously managed, had in it most of the elements of permanence.

Some time previous to the king's death, rumors had arisen that Buckingham had designs against his throne and life. According to Weldon and others, the Marquis Ynoiosa, the Spanish Embassador Extraordinary in London, sent one Padre Mecestria a Spanish Jesuit and a great statesman, to King James to let him know that he, under confession, had found the king was by Buckingham or by his procurement to be killed, but whether by poison, pistol or dagger he could not tell, and that the king acquainted Buckingham with what he had heard. Wilson repeats this, with the addition that Ynoiosa hinted that the best that the king could expect from Buckingham would

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* Burnet's statement is strongly confirmed by a letter, addressed by Somerset to the King, published in the XVII volume of the Archæologia, in which the broken favorite concentrates all that was most tellingly damnatory in the current reports against Buckingham's political character.

be confinement to a country house in some park.* Undoubtedly, this report of an intention to depose James had some currency at Court. On the 10th and 21st of May 1624, the Venetian Envoy Vallaresso writes that the Spaniards "excite fear in the mind of the King at the same time of his son, of Buckingham, and the parliament, who are intended to reign in his place, and to leave him nothing but a deer park to hunt in. He suspects, complains, whines, but has, perhaps, himself a hand in this game of intrigues and accusations, in order to make others feel the fears to which he is subject."†

According to Doctor Wadd‡ one of the manuscript volumes in the hand-writing of Sir Theodore Mayerne preserved in the Sloane collection of manuscripts, relates to King James's health and personal habits. The publication of copious extracts from these manuscripts,—which are in twenty volumes folio and quarto, and which are described as recording the disorders, prescriptions for and cures of persons of both sexes,—would be a highly valuable and important addition to both historical and medical literature.

The king's complexion was "white and ruddy."§ His hair auburn. He is described, by a contemporary writer‖, as being "of a middle stature, more corpulent through his clothes than in his body. Yet fatt enouch, his clothes ever being made large and easie, the doubletts quilted for stiletto proofe, his breeches in grate pleits and full stuffed. He was naturally

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* It is shown, in Lodge's Illustrations of British History (vol. 3 page 305) that, soon after the discovery of the Gunpowder Treason, it was suddenly reported that the king had been stabbed with a poisoned knife at Woking in Surrey. It appears also to have been rumored that the Earl of Somerset had plotted to poison the king. We are told, in the last chapter of *Truth brought to light and discovered by Time*; reprinted in vol. 2 of Somers's Tracts, page 301—that "the tongues of the vulgar began to walke, some say that Northampton and Somerset had combined with the Spaniard for a summe of money to deliver them up the navy, and that Sir William Monson, vice admiral, should have done it the next spring; that the king and the whole state should have been poysoned at the christening of the countess's child (for she was then with child) and many more rumours were spread not worth speaking of, to excite the people against them and to make the matter more painful and grievous to the world."

† Raumer, Vol. 2, page 282.

‡ Mems, Maxims, and Memoirs.

§ Williams's Funeral Sermon, "Great Britain's Solomon, a Sermon preached at the Magnificent Funeral of the most high and mighty King James," Somers's Tracts vol. 2 page 33.

‖ Balfour.

of a timorous disposition, which was the greatest reason of his quilted doubletts. His eyes large ever rolling after any stranger came in his presence, in so much as many for shame have left the roome, as being out of countenance. His beard was werey thin; his toung too large for his mouthe and made him drink werey uncomlie as if eating his drink, with came out into the cupe of each side of his mouthe. His skin was all soft as tafta sarsnet, which felt so because he never washt his hands, onlie rubbed his fingers ends slightly with the wett end of a napkin. His legs were very weak, having had (as was thought) some foule playe in his youthe, or rather before he was borne,* that he was not able to stand at seven yeires of age; that weakness made him ever leaning on other mens' shoulders, his walk was ever circular, &c. He was very intemperate in his drinking;† however in his old age, and Buckingham's jovial suppers, when he had any turn to do with him, made him sometimes overtaken, which he would the next day remember, and repent with tears. It is true that he drank very often, which was rather out of a custom than any delight, and his drinks were of that kind of strenghth, as Frontiniack, Canary, High Canary wine, and Tent wine, and Scotish Ale, that had he not had a very strong brain, might have daily been overtaken, although he seldom drank, at any one time above four spoonfulls, many times not above one or two." The same authority adds,—that "His dyet and journeys were so constant that the best observing courtier of our time was wont to say, was he asleep seven years, and then awakened, he would tell where the King every day had been, and every dish he had had at his table."

The king's time was nearly equally divided between his study and the chase. In 1604, a proclamation was devised that none should come to him on hunting days which days of sport occupied one half of his year.‡ He was a miserable

* Sir Kenelm Digby attributed the King's timorous disposition and, especially, the fact of his shuddering at a drawn sword to the horror of his mother (who was then pregnant) at the butchery of Rizzio in her very presence.

† Nevertheless, a statute against drunkenness was past in the 21st year of his reign.

‡ Writing at this time, the Earl of Worcester, who was in attendance upon the King, says "Since my departure from London, I thinke I have not had two howers out of twenty-four of rest but Sundays, for in the morning wee are on horsbake by 8, and so continew in full carryer from the deathe of one hare to another, untyll 4 at night; then, for the most part, wee are five myle from home; by that tyme I find at my lodging some tymes one, most comonly two pakets of letters, all which must bee answered before I sleepe."

horseman, but his courtiers invented for him a sort of "hunting made easy" in the practice of which, notwithstanding their system and his own great caution his majesty sustained falls.*

His habits of intemperance were of very old date. Within a few months of his accession to the throne of England, he drank at an entertainment which he gave to the ambassadors of Denmark and Brunswick, for five hours, until he fell senseless upon the table.† In October 1604, Beaumont,—referring to the measures which Anne of Denmark was then taking with a view that Prince Henry should, in future, reside in her court,—wrote that the Queen had said to him,—"It is time that I should have possession of the Prince, for the King drinks so much, and conducts himself so ill in every respect, that I expect an early and evil result." He adds, "I know that she grounds herself in this, that, according to her expressions, the men of the house of Lenox have generally died, in consequence of excessive drinking, in their fortieth year, or become quite imbecile, the King growing, daily, more weak and contemptible, the consideration of the Queen increases in proportion."

We are told,‡ in 1614, eleven years before his death, that "this year, as it was the meridian of the king's reign in England, so was it of his pleasures. The king was excessively addicted to hunting and drinking, not ordinary Frenchand Spanish Wines, but strong Greek wines; and, though he would divide his hunting from drinking these wines, yet he would compound his hunting with these wines, and, to that purpose, he was attended with a special officer, who was, as much as he could be, always at hand to fill the king's cup in his hunting when he called for it." The same authority continues, "I have heard my father say that, being hunting with the king, after the king had drank of the wine, he also drank of it; and, though he was young and of a healthful disposition, it so disordered his head that it spoiled his pleasure and disordered him for three days after. Whether it were drinking these wines, or from some other cause the king became so lazy and unwieldy that he was treist on horseback, and as he was set so would he ride, without posing himself on his saddle; nay, when his

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* Pictorial History.
† Raumer.
‡ Roger Coke, as cited in Somers's Tracts.

hat was set on his head, he would not take the pains to alter it, but it sate as it was put on."*

The accounts of the king's habits given by the foreign envoys at the court of England, cited by Von Raumer,† when brought together, afford us a most extraordinary picture of one who, for a long series of years, continued, gradually, to impair the vigour of his mind and body by a course of systematic vice and intemperance. In 1606, Villeroi writes that the king had, lately, been represented in a play as cursing and swearing because he had been robbed of a bird; beating a gentleman because he had called off the hounds from the scent; and as being drunk, at least, once a day.‡ In 1621, Tillieres writes that, in order to confer an honor on the house of the Duke of Buckingham, the King determined to drink to excess at a banquet there. "When he was a good way advanced and full of sweet wine," he appears to have been guilty of some disgusting indecency, which the translator has the good sense to omit. The ambassador adds:—"Had I not received this account from trustworthy persons, I should have considered it impossible: but this King is as good for nothing as possible, suffers himself to be walked in leading-strings like a child, is lost in pleasures, and buried, for the greater part of his time, in wine." In November of that year, Tillieres speaks of the king's sullenness in the performance of public business having increased "since violent headaches had weakened him and attacked him both in body and spirit." Early in 1622, the same person writes "The vices of the king weaken his intellect, as appears from the letters which he has written to the parliament, and in which the want of order, connection, and judgement is apparent."—"He sinks so low in his nullity that sloth now appears to him the highest and only enjoyment," and "the end of all is ever the bottle." In May of that year.—"For my part, I am convinced that the secret," [Buckingham's influence over the king] "lies in his infamous licentiousness, his total want of spirit, and the

* This is, probably, merely an ill natured description of the king's usual manner of riding. According to Baker,—"It is said that he had such a fashion in riding, that it could not so properly be said he rid, as that his horse carried him; for he made but little use of his bridle, and would say a horse never stumbled, but when he was reined.

† History of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, illustrated by original documents,

‡ Op. cit. vol. 2, p. 220.

reckless state of dissolution of his intellect."—"Many say if even young persons die, it cannot possibly last long with an old man, they place their hope in the Prince of Wales." In October,—"The weightest and most urgent affairs cannot drive this king to devote to them even a day, nay an hour, or to interrupt his gratifications, these consist in his betaking himself to a remote spot, where, (out of the sight of men) he leads a filthy and scandalous life, and gives himself up to drinking and other vices, the very remembrance of which is sufficient to give horrible displeasure. It appears as if the more his strength wastes away, the more these infamous passions increase, and, passing from the body over to the mind, assume double power." February 1623, "Buckingham confirms him in everything and hopes that, the more he abandons himself to all pleasures and to drunkenness, the weaker will be his understanding and spirit, and so much the easier will he be able to rule when other ties of connection are dissolved."—In February and March 1623, Vallaresso, the Venetian Envoy writes,—"The King is mutable, artificial, close, attached to peace, timorous; the proper artificer of every mischance. Good principles and feelings are extinguished in him. He loves nothing but himself, his own convenience and pleasures; he distrusts every one, suffers from extreme weakness of mind and is tyrannized over by a constant fear of death."

Doubtless, these accounts were over-coloured; we have, however, sufficient reason to fear that they were, substantially, true.

While upon this point, we may mention that, in reporting the King's death, Effiat, then the French ambassador, does not once hint that it had been otherwise than natural.* At this very time, however, Charles had almost become a son of France; consequently the minister of that nation was constrained to be discreet in speaking of all that related to him and to Buckingham, his favorite.

Making all allowance for the manifest virulence which distorted the truth of a very large proportion of the historical writings of that day, it can scarcely be doubted by any industrious enquirer that King James's habits of life were a strange admixture of inexpressible grossness with extraordinary application to recondite study—a system which, it is needless to urge, was as little as possible conducive to health and longevity.

* Raumer, vol. 2, p. 291.

It is generally stated that, for a considerable time previous to his death, the king's intemperate habits had begun to tell, visibly, upon his constitution. He became heavy and bloated in person and subject to severe attacks of gout, and he was, consequently, in a large measure, debarred from taking his usual exercise in hunting. According to Dr. Godfrey Goodman, Bishop of Gloucester,*—who deemed himself, with some reason, fit to deliver his opinion upon the case being the last man that did the king homage in the time of his sickness,—"King James every autumn did feed a little more than moderately on fruits; he had his grapes, his nectarines, and other fruits in his own keeping, besides, we did see that he fed very plentifully on them from abroad." "I remember," continues the Bishop, "that Mr. French, of the spicery, who sometimes did present him with the first strawberries, cherries, and other fruits and kneeling to the king, had some speech to use to him,—that he did desire his majesty to accept them, and that he was sorry they were no better—with such like complimental words; but the King never had the patience to hear him one word, but his hand was in the basket. After this eating of fruit in the Spring time, his body fell into a great looseness, which although, while he was young, did tend to preserve his health, yet now being grown towards sixty, it did a little weaken his body,† and going to Theobalds, to Newmarket, and stirring abroad when as the coldness of the year was not yet past almost, it could not be prevented but he must fall into a quartan ague.

It does not appear probable that the type of the fever was quartan. Fuller, says‡ "A tertian ague, (commonly called,

* The Court of King James the First, by Brewer, vol. 1, p. 409.

† The following passages, from one of the king's letters to Buckingham, (given in Brewer's Goodman vol. 2 page 382) illustrate the extreme rashness with which James indulged this craving for fruit, without regard to the state of this health. "Then I made little Dicce wrytte my excuse to thee yesterdaye, for not wrytting myselfe, I was verrie sicke of a great fluxe that morning; but now I thanke God I ame well, in spyte of thee." * * * "I send thee an excellent Barbarie melon; in goode faithe, I hadde no mellons since thy pairting till yesternight. This letter is not dated but appears to have been written not long before the king was attacked with his fatal illness. The King suffered severely from some form of bowel complaint in 1719, which brought him to the brink of the grave. He was attacked when he was on his way from Newmarket to Royston. As this occurred shortly after the death of his Queen, it was said that his stomach was "disordered by grief."

‡ Church History.

in Spring, for a king rather physical than dangerous). But soon after his ague was heightened into a fever; from mischief meeting therein. First, the malignity of the malady in itself had to be cured: secondly, an aged person of sixty years current: thirdly, a plethoric body full of ill humours: fourthly, the king's averseness to physic and impatience under it. Yet the last was quickly removed, above expectation, the king, contrary to his custom, being very orderable in all his sickness. Such sudden alterations some apprehend a certain prognostic of death; as if, when mens' minds acquire new qualities, they begin to habit and clothe themselves for a new world." Baker merely describes the disease as "an ague: the ordinary highway, especially in old bodies, to a natural death."

Sir Simonds D'Ewes speaks of the disease as, "at first, but an ordinary ague, though, at last, it turned to a burning fever." According to Sir Anthony Weldon, James "was seized on by an ordinary tertian ague, which at the season, according to the proverb, was physic for the king, but it proved not so to him."

Dr. Eglisham says that the king was "sick of a certain ague, and that in the Spring was, of itself, never found deadly."

Lord Clarendon's report is, that—"the king's death was occasioned by an ague (after a short indisposition by the gout) which, meeting many humours in a fat unwieldy body of 58 years old, in four or five fits carried him out of the world."

The author of the Pictorial History says that the disease was called by the Doctors a tertian ague, "but it would appear that he had also the worst kind of gout upon him." Howitt, apparently following Lingard, goes further and says that the illness "soon developed itself as gout at the stomach." I do not find any authority for these statements, which appear to be extravagantly free readings of what Lord Clarendon placed on record.

The disease set in early in March 1625. When attacked with his fatal illness, the king had been hunting* and, finding himself indisposed, retired to Theobalds. According to Dr. Wadd, Sir Theodore Mayerne left an ample account of his attendance on the king. This does not, however, appear ever to have been published, although it must be a document of very great interest, and we believe that there is not any other medical narrative of the whole progress of this

* Weldon.

sickness. Mr. Jesse has gathered from Mayerne that, previous to the fatal attack, the king had been, for some time, suffering from gout, stone, and gravel.

According to Spotswood,* James appears to have entertained a sort of presentiment of his own death. He had been much affected by the deaths of the Duke of Richmond and the Marquis of Hamilton. "When the branches," he said, "are cut down, the tree cannot long remain." He was so averse to physic that, even in his worse attacks, his physicians were unable to persuade him to have recourse to it.† In this his last illness, however, he became more amenable to treatment. When those about him endeavoured to re-assure him by quoting the proverb "An ague in the spring is physic for a king." He replied, "True—but the saying is meant for a *young* king."

The duration of the illness, from the first ague fit, appears to have been about three weeks, but even this is not quite certain. Howell, who was on the spot at the time, states that he died on the 14th day of his illness; Baker says that the king died "after a month's languishing"—Dr. Lingard and the author of the Pictorial History, whom Howitt follows, also say that he died on the fourteenth day of his illness. This can scarcely be the case if Fuller was correct in saying that there had been as many as seven ague fits a week previously to the king's death.

The king was in the 59th year of his age.

The court physicians were promptly in attendance. Of the earlier progress of the illness we are not told anything in published reports, indeed we have not any particulars until about a week before the fatal issue when, most unhappily for their own reputations, the Duke of Buckingham and his mother, the Countess, began to meddle in the treatment,—administering to the king (as was generally asserted unknown to his physicians) a white powder and applying plasters to his wrists and side. We shall return to this subject in considering the report that King James was poisoned.

We gather some important particulars, regarding James's last moments, from an imperfect manuscript collection made by the celebrated Sir Thomas Browne, cited by D'Israeli in his Curiosities of Literature and also in Philips's Life of Archbishop Williams. On the 22nd of March, Lord Keeper

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* Cited by Jesse.

† Aulicus Coquinariæ.

Williams received a letter from the court, to the effect that it was feared his Majesty's sickness was dangerous to death, "which fear was much confirmed, for he, meeting Dr. Harvey on the road, was told by him that the king used to have a beneficial evacuation of nature, a sweating in his left arm, as helpful to him as any fontanel could be, which, of late, failed."

"When the Lord Keeper presented himself before him, he moved to cheerful discourse, but it would not do. He stayed by his bedside until midnight. Upon the consultations of the physicians in the morning, he was out of comfort, and, by the Prince's leave, told him, kneeling by his pallet, that his days to come would be but few in this world." [We are, elsewhere, told that he said "He came with the message of Isaiah to Hezekiah to exhort him to set his house in order, for that his days would be but few in this world."] "I am satisfied," said the king, "but pray you assist me to make me ready for the next world, to go away hence for Christ, whose mercies I call for and hope to find."

Wadd has cited the following brief account of Dr. Sir William Paddye's attendance upon the king. It was found at the end of a common prayer book in the library of St. John's College.

"Being sent for to Thibaulde butt two daies before the death of my soveraigne Lord and Master King James, I held it my christian dutie to prepare hym, telling hym that there was nothing left, for me to doe, (in ye after noone before his death ye next daie at noone) but to pray for his soule. Whereupon ye Archbishop and ye Lord Keeper, Byshop of Lincoln, demanded if his Majestie would be pleased that they should praye with hym, whereunto he cheerfullie accorded. And, after short praier these sentences were by ye Byshop of Lincolne distinctly read vnto hym, who with eies (the messengers of his hert) lifted up unto Heaven, at the end of every sentence, gave to us all, thereby, a goodlie assurance of those graces and civilie faith, wherewith he apprehended the mercy of our Lord and onelie Saviour Christ Jesus, acchrdinglie as in his goodlie life he hath publiquelie professed."

Writing thus, as we must consider most privately at the end of his prayer book, we cannot believe that Sir William Paddye would have refrained from hinting the fact had any suspicions of unfair play in the king's case arisen out of his professional attendance at the death bed. Sir William was a leading

Fellow of the College of Physicians, and a very distinguished member of St. John's College, Oxford. He held the office of Reader of the Anatomy Lecture at Barber Surgeon's Hall from 1596 to 1609. His powers of observation, therefore, can scarcely be questioned.

Mr. Joseph Mead wrote an account of the king's death to Sir Martin Stateville which, it would appear, is not extant.* In a second communication,† he says:—"My late relation of his late Majesty's sickness and death, though I heare not for the general contradicted, yet, by some, many of the particulars are, for circumstance, diminished. I am told for certaine that, after Friday at night till the houre of his death, his tongue was swolne so big in his mouth, that either he could not speak at all, or not to be understood." This is given as a sign of poisoning (it might result from poisoning by corrosive sublimate). The same was asserted (untruly) to have happened to Charles the Second in his last illness—that his tongue had swollen as big as a neat's tongue.

Mead continues—"He desired, when he first understood that death was near him, to have received the communion at the hands of the Bishop of Winchester; but he was so sick, when he was sent for, that he could not come. Fuller, quoted by Ellis, says "Four daies before his death" (that is on Thursday) "he desired to receive the sacrament, and being demanded whether he was prepared, in point of faith and charity, for so great mysteries, he said 'He was,' and gave humble thanks to God for the same. Being desired to declare his faith and what he thought of those books he had written in that kind, he repeated the articles of the creed one by one, and said he believed them all as they were received and expounded by that part of the Catholick Church which was established here in England and said, with a kind of sprightliness and vivacity, that, whatever he had written of this faith in his life, he was now ready to seal with his death. Being questioned in point of charity, he answered presently, that he forgave all men that offended him, and desired to be forgiven by all Christians, whom he had in any wise offended. Then, after absolution read and pronounced, he received the sacrament. Mead continues, "He had three hours' private talk with

* Its discovery would be interesting. It may, possibly, be still extant among the D'Ewes correspondence.

† Dated April 9th 1625, Ellis 1st series, vol. 3 p. 182.

the prince, all being commanded from him a two or three romes off to be out of hearing."

Charles appears to have mentioned that, during this interview, his royal father solemnly exhorted him to bear a tender affection for his wife, to preserve constancy in religion, to uphold the Church of England, and to take the family of the Palatine under his protection.* Sir Thomas Browne's M.S. goes on to say that, from the time at which the king's physicians pronounced his state to be dangerous, the Lord Keeper never left him or put off his clothes to go to bed. "The king took the communion and professed he died in the bosom of the church of England, whose doctrine he had defended with his pen, being persuaded it was according to the mind of Christ, as he should shortly answer it before him. He stayed in the chamber to take notice of everything the king said, and to repulse those who crept much about the chamber door and into the chamber; they were, for the most, addicted to the church of Rome. Being rid of them, he continued in prayer while the king lingered on."

There is a dark passage in Weldon to the effect that the disgrace into which Williams, subsequently, fell was occasioned by his speaking too freely of what he had seen or heard in this chamber of death. Weldon says:—"It were worth the knowledge what his" [the king's] "confession was, or what other expressions he made himself, or any other; but that is only known to the dead Archbishop Abbot, and the living Bishop Williams, then Lord Keeper, and it was thought that Williams had blabbed something which incensed the king's anger and Buckingham's hatred so much against him that the loss of his place could not be expiatory sufficient, but his utter ruin must be determined, and that not upon any known crime but by circumstances and examinations to pick out faults, committed in his whole life-time; but his greatest crime for the present (no question) was *lapsus linguæ*, but *quod defertur non aufertur*, for, although he escaped by the calm of this parliament, yet is he more ruined by this parliament and his own folly; and truly we may observe the first judgment of God on him, for flying from the Parliament his protector, to give wicked counsel to the king, his former prosecutor."

Considering the timidity of James in all that concerned

* Rushworth, vol. 1. p. 155.

his personal safety, and, taking into account his perfect knowledge of the fact that—(although, unquestionably, a very large proportion of those nearest to his person were creatures of Buckingham)—those who crowded down to Theobalds, at the first notice of his precarious state, were split into bitterly opposed factions, we cannot doubt that, had he entertained even the remotest suspicion that he had been poisoned by any person, he would have taken immediate and effectual measures for securing protection and redress from the opposite party.

A little before break of day, on the Sunday, he expressed a wish to have another interview with Prince Charles, who, instantly, rose and came, in his night-dress, to the king's bedside. The dying monarch endeavoured to raise himself on his pillow, as if he had something of importance to impart; but, by this time, his speech was inaudible. In his last moments, however, when the prayer commonly used at the hour of death was concluded, he repeated, once or twice, the words "*Veni, Domine Jesu*!" and, shortly afterwards, ceased to breathe without any appearance of pain.* The Lord Keeper closed the king's eyes with his own hand. "Thus," says Howell, on the fourteenth day of his illness, [on the 27th of March 1625,] King James "went to his last rest, on the day of rest, presently after sermon was done."

"All that have eyes now wake and weepe;
He who, waking, was our sleepe
Is fallen asleepe himselfe, and never
Shall wake again till wakt for ever.

Death's iron hand hath closed those eyes
That weere att once three kingdomes spies,
Both to foresee, and to prevent
Dangers as soone as they weere meant.

That head whose working braine alone
Wrought all mens' quiett but his owne
Now lyes at rest; Oh let him have,
The Peace he lent us, to his grave."

Joseph Mead reports that, "When his body was opened by the physicians; they found his heart of an extraordinary bignes, all his vitalls sound, as also his head, which was very full of braines, but his blood was wonderfully tainted with

* Spotswood, Echard, Howell's Letters, Wilson cited by Jesse.

melancholy; and the corruption thereof supposed the cause of his death."

There is, according to Sir H. Ellis, in the Harleian Manuscript 383, the copy of a letter from a Mr. William Neve to Sir Thomas Hollande, concerning the embalment and bringing to town of the body of King James; the writer says, "The King's body was, about the 29th of March, disbowelled, and his heart was found to be great but soft, his liver freshe as a young man's, one of his kidneys very good, but the other shrunke so little as they could hardly find it, wherein there was two stones. His lites and gall, blacke; judged to proceed of melancholy. The semyture of his head so stronge as they could hardly breake it open with a chesill and a sawe; and soe full of braynes as they could not, upon the openinge, keepe them from spilling; a great marke of his infinite judgment."*

Beneath an original print, of the King's death, by Hollar described in the Mirror of Literature, (which we shall, presently, have to notice further) it is mentioned, among other explanatory details, that—"The physicians who opened him reported his intestines to have been very much discoloured,

* Sir Simonds D'Ewes, evidently, followed Mr. Neve's authority. He says, "Being embowelled, his heart was found to be very great, which argued him to be very considerate, so extraordinary fearful, which hindered him from attempting any great actions. His liver was as fresh as if he had been a young man, one of his kidneys sound, the other shrunk and two little stones found in it; his lights and gall almost black, which proceeded, doubtless, from excessive care and melancholy" [a rather absurd misreading of the word "melancholy"—very natural in a non-professional person.] "The semitures of his skull were so strong and firm as they could scarcely be broken open with a saw or chisel; and the pia mater so full of brains, as they could scarcely be kept from spilling. His bowels were speedily buried in a leaden vessel, and the body the same day removed to London."

D'Ewes's notion about the King's heart was quite in accordance with the pseudo-philosophical folk-lore of that day. We are told, in Thomas Lupton's "A Thousand Notable Things," that,—"The quieter beasts have the lesser gals; *the fearfuller, the greater hearts;* the lighter, the more leaping, the more liver; the merrier, the more pleasant, the greater spleene; and the greater voice, the more lights; much like to these verses following:—

Cor ardet, pulmo loquitur, fel commovet iras.
Splen ridere facit, cogit amare jecur.

That is,—

"The heart doth burn, the lungs do speak,
The gall to ire doth move;
The spleen or milt doth make us laugh,
The liver makes us love."

and his body extremely distorted." We cannot discover any authority for this last statement.*

According to Sir Robert Gordon, Tutor of Sutherland, gentleman ordinary of his privy chamber (who with a few others of the Privy Chamber "both Scottish and English" conducted the private funeral of the King's body on the 4th of May, the public funeral being performed, with great state and magnificence, on the 7th of that month) "One thing was remarked in the attendance of the body of that great and bountiful King; that, whilst his body lay at Tibolls and Denmark-house, it was least attended upon by those vnto whom he was most beneficial, yea some of them whom he raised from the verie dust (cheiflie the Duke of Buckingham), came never to sie the corps vntill the funerall day; and moreover (which I am ashamed to report, bot to the reproach of those who governed all things at that time, vnto whom he was so bountifull, as of nothing to advance them to the highest honors and offices), the dead bodie of that mightie monarch, for the space of eight dayes that it abode at Tiboll's, lay naked, without any cover saveing a whyt sheet; which grieved and galled the hearts of such of his servants as could neither help it nor durst controll it."

"Thus,"—(as Sir Philip Warwick wrote in describing how the attendants, having placed the corpse of Buckingham on the hall table in Mr. Mason's house, left it deserted as if it had been lying on the sands of Ethiopia),—"upon the withdrawing of the sun, does the shadow depart from the painted dial.'

Eglisham says—"Buckingham's creatures did spread abroad a rumour, in London, that Buckingham was so sorry for his Majesty's death that he would have died, that he would have killed himself, if they had not hindered him; which your petitioner purposely enquired after of them, that were near him at the time, who said that "neither in the time of his majesty's sickness nor after his death, he was more moved than if there had never happened sickness or death to his majesty. One day when his majesty was in great extremity, he rode post to London to pursue his sister-in-law," [Lady Purbeck] "to have her stand in sackcloth in St. Paul's for adultery. And another time, in his majesty's agony, he was busy in contriving and concluding a marriage for one of his cousins."

Laud was preaching before the Lords of the Council when,

* Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland.

before he was come to the middle of his sermon, the certainty of the King's death (more generally known amongst them) the confusion which he saw in the faces of all the company, his own griefs, and the dolorous complaints made by the Duke of Buckingham, made him leave the pulpit, and bestow his pains and comforts, where there was more need"* Men express their grief so differently, and it is so difficult to form a judgment of the feelings of others, even when we are associated with them, that it appears to us that nothing can be made of the above statements. Buckingham may have grieved for the king as for a father and benefactor; he may have felt, inwardly, rejoiced that death had paralysed the hand which was about to pluck him down from his high estate; he may, —as a courtier, who was still, ostensibly, the dying King's prime favorite,—have considered that loud expressions of grief befitted the occasion. His conduct, in this respect, can throw no light upon his guilt or innocence in the matter of the King's death.

Dr. Lingard states that, whatever was the real nature of the King's illness, "under his obstinacy in refusing medicine, and the hesitation or ignorance of his physicians, it proved fatal." Following in the same line, but with less explicitness, Vaughan† says:—"His malady consisted partly of a tertian ague and partly of gout aggravated by unskilful treatment and an aversion to medicine. Now we have shown direct evidence in proof of the fact that,—doubtless, instinctively, conscious of the extreme severity of this his last illness,—James displayed no unwillingness whatever to avail himself of medical treatment; indeed we shall, presently, see that, according to the Duke of Buckingham's account, he was even over-anxious to take anything which promised a hope of cure. We cannot discover Lingard's grounds for asserting that the royal physicians displayed hesitation or ignorance in the treatment of this case. It is very doubtful whether, even in the present day, with quinine at their command, an equal number of our best physicians would succeed in curing such an attack of malarious fever in an old, intemperate, and gouty man, with a weak heart and diseased kidneys, who allowed himself to be dosed, at the most critical stage of his illness, with domestic remedies of the least appropriate kind.

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* Heylen's Life of Laud, p. 131—as cited by Brodie.

† The History of England under the House of Stuart, including the Commonwealth, page 164.

We now return to the question of the interference of the Duke of Buckingham and his mother, the Countess, in the treatment of King James's case. The earlier and more dispassionate accounts of this occurrence (omitting, for the present, the Duke of Buckingham's own explanation of his conduct) may be given first. Rumors of the physicians' vexation at Buckingham's interference went speedily abroad. Howell, who was at Theobalds when the King died, alludes, in a letter to his father, to the "mutterings" of some Scotch Doctors that a plaster had been applied by the Duke's mother to the "outside of the King's stomach." But he says that the King died of fever. According to Fuller, who, however, appears to have mainly, relied upon the Parliamentary proceedings, the Countess of Buckingham contracted much suspicion to herself and her son for applying a plaister to the King's wrists without the consent of his physicians. And yet it plainly appeared that Dr. John Remington of Dunmow, in Essex, made the same plaister; one honest, able, and successful in his practice, who had cured many patients by the same; and piece whereof applied to the King, one ate down into his belly, without the least hurt or disturbance of nature. However, after the applying thereof the King grew worse, "the physicians refused to administer physic unto him until the plaisters were taken off, which being done accordingly, his fifth, sixth, and seventh fits were easier, as Dr. Chambers* said On the Monday after, the plaisters were laid on again, without the advice of the physicians; and his Majesty grew worse and worse, so that Mr. Hayes, the King's Surgeon, was called out of his bed to take off the plaister. Mr. Baker, the Duke's servant, made the King a jalop, which the Duke brought to the King with his own hand, of which the King drank twice, but refused the third time. After his death, a bill was brought to the physicians to sign, that the ingredients of the jalop and plaisters were safe; but most refused it, because they knew not whether the ingredients mentioned in the bill" [prescription] "were the same in the jalop and plaisters. This is the naked truth, delivered by oath from the physicians to a select committee two years after, when the Parliament voted the duke's act 'a transcendent presumption'; though most thought it done without any ill intention."

* In the year 1616 James Chambers, the King's Physician, received £250 ready money paid out of the Exchequer, by way of free gift. Somers's Tracts, vol. 2, p. 381.

It is here well worthy of note that,—while thus delivering their evidence, on oath, in a manner by no means favorable to the Duke of Buckingham,—the physicians state none of the most aggravating circumstances alleged by Eglisham, and neither declare nor hint that they believe the King was poisoned. They merely show that, *after* the plasters were first applied, the King grew worse. This might occur in the course of nature, or the plasters may have done harm, but that they had not poisoned the King is proved by the fact that, when the plasters had been taken off, his fifth, sixth, and seventh fits were easier. On the Monday following, the plasters were laid on again, and the King grew worse and worse, so that it became necessary to take them off. The King did not die until the forenoon of the following Sunday. The King drank twice of a julep brought to him by the duke, but it is not positively stated that these draughts produced any violent symptoms (although it was, afterwards, made to appear so)—much less that the physicians believed that they contained poison. All that the medical evidence shows is that the physicians most strongly objected to the Duke's unwarrantable meddling in their royal patient's case, that, in their opinion, it did harm, and that they, very properly, refused to sign the prescription brought to them by the Duke.

It may be considered surprising that the Countess of Buckingham should have had courage to tamper with such a case as the King's. We shall, presently, see that, according to the Duke's statement, the King insisted upon having the plasters and the posset-drink. Apart from this, however, Mary Beaumont appears to have been capable of any amount of quackery. Wilson says that she dealt much with mountebanks and that "her fame had no great savour." M. Tillieres describes her* as "a woman who meddles in everything, and is as bold as she is shameless and bad-intentioned." Unhappily, the race of these ignorant and irresponsible meddlers in the perilous practice of physic has not yet died out. Few and happy are those practitioners who have not been beset and afflicted by them in the hours of their greatest anxiety.

According to the author of the Historical and Biographical Memoirs of George Villiers 1, Duke of Buckingham reprinted by Smeeton—"Will Sanderson† very roundly says

* Raumer, vol. 2, p. 261.

† William Sanderson was Secretary to the Duke of Buckingham, and wrote the "History of King James of Great Britain," in answer to Wilson's Life of King James.

that what Buckingham gave James to drink was a posset drink of milk and ale, hartshorn, and marygold flowers, ingredients harmless and ordinary; and though, says he, the doctors were offended that any one durst assume this boldness (of applying the plaster) without their consent; by after examination, all men then were assured of the composition, and a piece thereof eaten down by such as made it; and the plaister many months afterwards in being for further tryal of any suspition of poyson."

If, as is very possible, a posset drink, of the kind described above, was given to the King, it, probably, much aggravated his illness. Nothing could have been less appropriate to administer to an old man of broken constitution, with renal disease, who had been suffering for a week from a serious form of low intermittent fever. Still it may have answered fairly, in Remington's practice, among the sturdy Essex graziers, and may have rather done good than harm when taken (as we shall presently see Buckingham alleges that it was) for the cure of ague by young and healthy men like Palmer and himself. In the edition of his "Essay on Diseases incidental to Europeans in Hot Climates," published so lately as 1808, Dr. Lind mentions, among the remedies used by the vulgar in intermittents, "A pint of a strong decoction of horse radish in stale beer. A pint of strong beer in which some broken pieces of glass bottles or of flint stones, heated in the fire, have been quenched and boiled." "Half an ounce of brimstone in a glass of strong beer, taken three mornings successively." "A quarter of a pint of gin with a teaspoonful of pepper." He adds—"By the spirits or wine drank at the approach of the fit, the patients become intoxicated; and they, for the most part, increase the quantity, until that effect is produced, which occasions a very severe head-ache, and aggravates the hot fit, but sometimes puts a stop to the future returns of the disease; a cure attended with great pain and danger." "Many of the other remedies, taken before the fit, operate by producing a sweat." What follows is remarkable. "From the violent operation of the ignited flint or glass quenched in beer, and frequently of the crude brimstone, some arsenical particles may be suspected to be conveyed by them; and, in that case, there will be no difficulty to account for their efficacy in curing inveterate agues."

Some will remember the case of a Superintending Surgeon in the Bengal Medical Service, who died in 1856, whose fatal attack was excited by a draught of beer shortly followed by

one of milk, taken soon after his arrival at Simla when much reduced by disease.

Pereira, in enumerating the cases in which the internal use of Hartshorn (Sesquicarbonate of Ammonia) proves serviceable, as a stimulant and sudorific, says that, in intermittent fevers, it is sometimes of advantage, given during the cold stage, to hasten its subsidence.

All the trace which we now have of the use of the *Calendula Officinalis*, or common Marygold, in medicine, appears in the practice which some housewifes have of using the flowers as a garniture to the weakest possible broth when administered to the sick. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, however, it was valued as a most powerful remedy. We are told in Thomas Hill's "Gardeners' Labyrinth, Black Letter, 1586," Among many other "Phisicke benefits and helpes of the marigolde," that "If seven graines waight of the juice of the flowres be drunke with three ounces of white wine, and repeated sundry mornings, it helpeth the quartaine."

Mr. Joseph Mead,—writing* on the 9th of April, a fortnight after the King's death,—mentions that "The Countess of Buckingham, the Tuesday before he died, would needes make triall of some receipt she had approved; but being without the privitie of the Physicians, occasioned so much discontent in Dr. Cragge† that he uttered some plaine speeches, for which he was commanded out of the Court, the Duke himselfe (as some say) complaining to the sick King of the word he spake."

In the letter already cited, which was written at about the same time, Howell, who appears to have been friendly to the Duke, says—"He died of a fever which began with an ague,

* Sir H. Ellis's Original Letters, 1st Series, vol. 3 p. 182.

† Two Doctors Craig, the elder and the younger, were physicians to King James, each receiving a yearly salary of £100. It is note-worthy that one of the Craigs was selected by the King, Rochester and Northampton to attend Sir Thomas Overbury during his mortal illness in the Tower. If, as appears most probable, the Craigs were adherents of Somerset and had been whispered about on account of their participation in Overbury's case, their hostility to Buckingham and their excessive zeal in sifting anything which bore the appearance of unfair play in the treatment of the King may be readily understood. Craig's dismissal is alluded to in the concluding remarks appended to Weldon's "Court and Character of King James"—"Nay D. Crag, his Phisitian who, from his very childhood, had the general report of a very honest man, for expressing himself like an honest man in the King's presence, was instantly dismissed, and could never recover his place or favour more."

and some Scotch doctors mutter at a plaster the Countess of Buckingham applied at the outside of his stomach."

It will be noticed that some of the narratives mention plasters applied to the wrists, others a black plaster placed on the side or stomach. Both were perfectly orthodox applications in the treatment of ague in those times. The "Pharmacopœia Bateana," (1720), has an *Epicarpia Febrifuga*, or Febrifuge Wrist Poultice, ["The pulses of the wrist" were spots frequently chosen for the application of powerful external remedies.*] Likewise the *Emplastrum Febrifugum magnum.*†

So also, in the modern work already cited, the celebrated Dr. Lind says, "External applications have considerable efficacy in this disease" [ague]. "Compositions of frankincense, cinnabar, camphire, wood soot, turpentine, and the like, applied to the wrists, or sometimes to the pit of the stomach, have been recommended by several eminent authors; particularly "Fuller's Frankincense plaster." Elsewhere, he says, "Among the external applications used by the vulgar, for this disease, are a hard-boiled egg split, and applied hot to the wrists; camphire and saffron hung in a bag at the pit of the stomach; rubbing the back-bone with garlic, bruised spiders, and tobacco applied to the wrists. Petroleum applied

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* "R. Powder of White Hellebor .. .. .. ℥ss.
Nitre .. .. ℥ij.
Pulp of Figs .. .. q. s.

So as to make a mass into a poultice. Apply it to the wrists two hours before the fit of a tertian.

"Spread it upon leather and apply it to both wrists, letting it lie on all the time of the hot and cold fit (if the ague comes); when the fit is over renew it again. It is reported that, at two applications, or three at the most, it has cured tertians, when many other things have failed."

† "R Frankincense ... . ℥iv.
Oyl. Olive .. .. ℥i. vel. q. s.
Cinnabar .. .. ʒij.

Melt and make an emplastrum that may stick.

"Spread it upon an oval piece of leather about eight inches long and five inches broad, and apply it to the pit of the stomach, letting it lie on as long as it would stick; *then renew it once more if you have occasion.*

"It cures all sorts of agues, whether Quotidian, Tertian, or Quartan, without any other help, and then mostly in one application. In an hundred examples together it has not failed me!!"

either to the feet or wrists ; yarrow to the feet. Rue with the buds of honey-suckle, bramble, and elder to the wrists or feet. To the wrists or feet they also apply mouse-ear with vinegar and salt, wall-pepper, shepherd's purse, sun-dew, vervain, and other plants. These are generally applied about an hour before the fit."

Bishop Goodman says—"Certainly there never lived a better natured man than Buckingham was." But he, presently, continues that—"the physicians taking one course" [for the King's cure] "and the plaster another, I fear the King was wronged between both ; and I wonder why the King's surgeons, as I take it, Mr. Watson and others who opened the body, had not been examined," [he is speaking of the parliamentary enquiry] ; "as likewise Mr. Woolphengus Banger,* the King's Dutch apothecary, a very honest man, who did there daily attend ; yet, I confess, in my own particular, I had some informations both from him and from the surgeons, and, in truth, I was not well persuaded of the death of the King."

According to Lord Clarendon, who was also friendly to the Duke of Buckingham, "Many scandalous and libellous discourses were raised [after the King's death] without the least colour or ground, as appeared after the strictest and most malicious examination that could be made, long after, when nobody was afraid of offending Majesty, and when prosecuting the highest reproaches and contumelies against the royal family was held very meritorious." Upon this Brodie remarks,—"I know of no investigation except that which was stopped by the dissolution of this parliament."

Having now given the earlier accounts, and those published by contemporary writers, who were either known to be attached to the Duke, or who could not to be suspected of malice against him, we turn to somewhat later testimonies by men who were, avowedly, hostile to Buckingham.

It is almost needless to urge that, in weighing the evidence in this case, it is of the first importance to consider, not only upon whose authority it rests, but also when it was first adduced : whether shortly after King James's death, or not until after King Charles fell upon troublous times. Weldon (whose scurrilous book was published in 1650, in a spirit of implacable hatred to the exiled house of Stuart), tells us

* We do not find this name elsewhere. In 1617, John Wolfgango Rumlero was apothecary to both the King and Queen, receiving an annual fee of £40 for each office.—Somers's Tracts, *ut sup. cit.*

that the King confessed to a servant of his that the disease was not ague. The servant "cryed, 'Courage, Sir, this is but a small fit, the next will be none at all;' at which he most earnestly looked, and said, 'Ah, it is not the ague afflicteth me, but the black plaster and powder given me, and laid to my stomach;' and, in truth, the plaster so tormented him, that he was glad to have it pulled off, and, with it, the skin also; nor was it fair dealing,—if he had fair play (which himself suspected), often saying to Montgomery, whom he trusted above all men in his sickness, 'For God's sake look I have fair play,'—to bring in an Empiric, to apply any medicines, whilst those physicians appointed to attend him were at dinner; nor could any but Buckingham answer it with less than his life at that present, as he had the next, parliament had it not been dissolved upon the very questioning him for the King's death, and all those that prosecuted him utterly disgraced and banished the Court. Buckingham coming into the King's chamber, even when he was at the point of death, and an honest servant of the King's crying: 'Ah, my Lord, you have undone us, all his poor servants; although you are so well provided, you need not care;' at which Buckingham kickt at him, who caught his foot, and made his head first come to the ground, when Buckingham presently rising, ran to the dying King's bed-side and cried, 'Justice, Sir, I am abused by your servant,' at which the poor King mournfully fixed his eyes on him, as who would have said,—'Not wrongfully,'—yet without speech or sense."

It will be remarked that, in the above account, Weldon more than hints that Buckingham had the audacity to admit an empiric to the King's chamber, while the Court Physicians were absent at dinner. This is not confirmed even in Eglisham's statement. We, however, have the facsimile of a rare print, formerly in Mr. Beckford's collection, in which this incident is represented. The King is lying, apparently in great anguish; beside him is one holding a medicine-flask, saying "I'll warrant you." In a description of this print, in the twenty-fifth volume of the *Mirror of Literature*, it is noted—"It is certainly Dr. Lamb who is standing by the bed, holding the bottle, as the portrait very much resembles that of him published by Mr. Thane." This is not very convincing,—Thane's portraits are not remarkable for their authenticity. On the other side of the bed,

stands Buckingham, whispering "Thanks to the Chymist." Beside him is an ecclesiastic, evidently Lord Keeper Williams, who exclaims, piously, "*Sumus fumus.*" In front, is a table, or bier, covered with a mort-cloth, at which a lady, in mourning apparel,—(possibly the Queen of Bohemia, or England personified)—is seated, weeping and ejaculating "Not by Art, but Chymicallie." This print is by the estimable and loyal, Wenceslaus Hollar. From the Interregnum until his death, Hollar was a ruined man, working for booksellers; consequently, some others of his works, like this, are unworthy of his honest and truthful character.

According to Wilson,* (who had studied medicine for two years at Oxford,) "The King that was very much impatient in his health, was patient in his sickness and death. Whether he had received anything that extorted his aguish fits into a fever, which might the sooner stupify the spirits and hasten his end, cannot be asserted; but the Countess of Buckingham had been tampering with him, in the absence of the doctors, and had given him a medicine to drink, and laid a plaster to his side, which the King much complained of, and they did rather exasperate his distemper than allay it; and these things were admitted by the insinuating persuasions of the Duke, her son, who told the King they were approved medicines, and would do him much good. And though the Duke often strove to purge himself of this application, as having received both medicine and plaster from Dr. Remington at Dunmow, in Essex, who had often cured agues and such distempers with the same; yet they were arguments of a complicated kind not easy to unfold, considering that, whatsoever he received from the doctor in the country, he might apply to the King what he pleased in the Court. Besides, the act itself (though it had been the best medicine in the world) was a *daring* not justifiable; and some of the King's physicians muttered against it, others made a great noise, and were forced to fly for it; and, though the still voice was quickly silenced by the Duke's power, yet the clamorous made so deep impressions, that his innocence could never wear them out."

One of the physicians alluded to above was Dr. Eglisham. Dr. Welwood, in his note to the above passage in Wilson's

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* Kennet's Complete History of England. The History of James the 1st, by Arthur Wilson, Esq. Vol. II., p. 790.

History, says that Eglisham, who was one of the King's physicians, was obliged to flee beyond seas for some expressions he had muttered about the manner of his Majesty's death, and lived at Brussels many years after. It was there he published a book to prove King James was poisoned, giving a particular account of all the circumstances of his sickness, and laying his death upon the Duke of Buckingham and his mother. Welwood had read the book some fifteen years previously, in the hands of Don Pedro Ronkillo, the Spanish ambassador, who told him that it had been translated into High-Dutch, about the time Gustavus Adolphus was entering into Germany for recovering of the Palatinate, and that by a secret order of the Court of Brussels, to throw dirt upon the royal family of England.* Although Welwood was always sedulous in raking out the blackest scandals against the Stuarts, he generally dealt with them in a tolerably impartial manner. He says,—"The truth is, this book of Eglisham's is wrote with such an air of rancour and prejudice, that the manner of his narrative takes off much from the credit of what he writes." This book does not appear to be known at present, but it seems nearly certain that it was published during the Duke's life-time, as Sir Henry Wotton states that, two hours before his execution, Felton told Sir Richard Gresham (Greham ?) that he had only two inducements to assassinate Buckingham. "The first, as he made it in order, was a certain libellous book written by one Eggleston, a Scottish physician, which made the Duke one of the foulest monsters upon the earth; and, indeed, unworthy not only of life in a Christian Court, and under so virtuous a king, but of any room within the the bounds of frail humanity, if his prodigious predictions

* Some further enquiry, regarding Eglisham and the works in question, is much needed. How far did the statements contained in the book seen by Welwood agree with the quarto pamphlet published in London in 1642. Was Eglisham alive when this latter pamphlet was published, and was he bribed to issue it, as, Buckingham having been long dead, its only intention, then, could be to injure Charles? Eglisham wrote tolerably well. He appears to have been a kind of henchman to the Duke of Hamilton. He says: "The Marquis's father, who with the right hand on his head and the left on mine, did offer us (young in years so joined) to kiss his Majesty's hand, recommending me to his Majesty's favour, said, 'I take God to witness that this young man's father was the best friend that ever I had, or shall have in this world.' Whereupon the young Lord resolved to put trust in me; and I fully to addict myself to him to deserve of him as much commendations as my father did of his father."

had the least semblance of truth. The second was the Remonstrance itself of the Lower House of Parliament against him, which, perchance, he thought the fairest cover, so he puts in the second place." Further clear evidence of the publication of Eglisham's libel, in the Duke's life-time, will be given presently.

Welwood, apparently relying upon memory, cites from this publication the following passage about the plaster applied to the King's stomach.

He says, "It was given out to have been *Mithridate*,* and that one Dr. Remington had sent it to the Duke, as a medicine with which he had cured a great many agues in Essex. Now Eglisham denies that it was mithridate, and says, neither he nor any other physician could tell what it was. He adds that, Sir Matthew Lister† and he being, the week after the King's death, at the Earl of Warwick's house in Essex, they sent for Dr. Remington, who lived hard by, and asking him what kind of plaster it was he had sent to Buckingham for the cure of an ague, and whether he knew it was the King the Duke designed it for? Remington answered that one Baker, a servant of the Duke's, came to him in his master's name, and desired him if he had any certain specific remedy against an ague, to send it him: and, accordingly, he sent him a mithridate spread upon leather, but knew not till then that it was designed

* Mithridate was generally employed, in the form of a confection, as an internal remedy. It was long considered to be an antidote for every known poison. *The London Pharmacopœia* of 1746 retained this Confectio Damocratis or Mithridatium. It contained more than forty constituents. For its composition, *vide* Gray's Supplement to the Pharmacopœia, by Redwood, 2nd edit., p. 650. Mithridate, at that time, appears to have been a popular remedy which found a place in the spiceries of ladies-bountiful. In Lady Penelope Spencer's Household Books, preserved at Althorpe and recently cited by the Rev. J. Simpkinson in "*The Washingtons*," we find, in July 1623, the entry—"Powther Sugar 2 barrels, currants, resons, spices, &c., &c. Cumfitts of all sorts, a small quantity Mithridate, Dies Cordin [Diascordium] and Permacetty, of every one of them a little."

† Sir Matthew Lister was, afterwards, physician in ordinary to King Charles I. and President of the College of Physicians. As he survived until 1657, it might be supposed that he would have placed on record a denial of this assertion of Eglisham's, had it been false—but it is very probable that Eglisham's first publication never came under his notice. The libellous pamphlet of 1642 contains nothing that a man of seventy-seven, who never published any thing, would be likely to attempt to refute in print.

for the King." But continues Eglisham, "Sir Matthew Lister and I showing him a piece of the plaster we had kept, after it was taken off, he seemed greatly surprised, and offered to take his corporal oath that it was none of what he had given Baker, nor did he know what kind of mixture it was." This positive assertion of Remington's forms an important point in our enquiry. Whether Eglisham's assertions are trustworthy will be considered presently. Was Remington's evidence credible in such a matter? Was he a quack fever doctor, or a regular practitioner? Eglisham calls him "Doctor," a designation which a royal physician would hardly give to an obscure country empiric. Buckingham speaks of him as "the Earl of Warwick's physician." But he was not of the Earl's household, as Eglisham says that "he lived hard by" the Earl's house in Essex. He is generally spoken of as "Dr. Remington of Dunmow." Doubtless, therefore, he merely attended the Earl's family, being the nearest practitioner. Miss Aitken, who was, probably, aided by Dr. Aitken's research, says that the Duke and his mother "were distinguished patrons of empirics, who in those days commonly professed alchemy and fortune-telling also, and thus fastened by a treble hold on the weakness of human nature. *One of these quacks* furnished the Countess with a plaster and drink, which he affirmed to be sovereign remedies for ague, &c." This is more directly to the point at issue than Fuller's general remark, that Remington was "one honest, able, and successful in his practice." Assuredly, the character of his prescriptions,—a mithridate plaster and an ale posset,—shows that he was, to say the least, a prescriber of the humblest class. Weldon's allusion to the introduction of an "empiric" in the absence of the King's physicians, will here be borne in mind. It may still be possible to ascertain who John Remington was. One taking upon himself, without due instruction and license, the responsibilities of a physician, would not hesitate to screen himself by a lie when implicated in so serious a matter as the death of a King who had been surreptitiously dosed with his medicines.

Eglisham, *wishing to make use of Remington's authority in support of his own leading statements*, would not be likely to enter very closely into the question of his professional qualification,—as, at that time, quacksalvers were not in the ascendant. In the year 1618, shortly after the incorporation of the Society of Apothecaries, a warrant was sent to all magistrates in the city of London to take up all

reputed empirics and quacks, and to bring them before the Censors of the College of Physicians; and the King himself sent letters to the Lord Mayor to the same effect.*

In 1642, there was published in London a tract, entitled *The Forerunner of Revenge; being two petitions: the one to the King's most excellent majesty; the other to the most honourable Houses of Parliament. Wherein are expressed divers actions of the late Earle* [*sic*] *of Buckingham, especially concerning the death of King James and the Marquis of Hamilton, supposed by poison. Also may be observed the Inconveniences befalling a State, where the noble disposition of the Prince is misled by a Favourite. By George Eglisham, Doctor of Physick, and one of the Physicians to King James of happy memory, for his majesty's Person, above ten years' space.*"† This production is so full of acrimony towards the Duke of Buckingham that some have considered that it must have first appeared in his life-time; indeed, the document is worded as if the Duke were still living and in power, and would seem to be intended to appear to have been presented to the King just after his father's death. Here, however, is a plain evidence of falsehood and bad faith. Had Eglisham, as he wished it to be believed, candidly laid his statement before King Charles at the time of his accession in 1625, and had it been disregarded, he would, we may safely assume, have strongly insisted and have adduced evidence in proof that such was, actually, the fact, when he republished the libel in 1642. The document is full of internal evidence that it never was even intended to be submitted to the King or Parliament. The spirit of insolent offence against King Charles I. in which it is written, and the bitter anti-monarchical principles‡

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* Wadd.

† Eglisham's name does not appear in the list of the Royal Physicians, Surgeons, and Apothecaries, who received salaries from the Exchequer in 1617.—Somers' Tracts, *ut sup. cit.* Neither have we any authority, not even his own, for believing that he was in attendance upon King James in his fatal illness. He says, however, that King James, from the third year of his age, did practise honourable tokens of singular favour towards him; daily augmenting them in word, in writ, in deed, accompanied them with gifts, patents, offices, recommendations, both in private and public, at home and abroad, graced so far that he could scarce ask anything but he could have obtained it.

‡ Thus—"There is no judge in the world more tied to do justice than a King, whose coronation tieth him to it by solemn oath, which if he violate, he is false and perjured. It is justice that maketh Kings,

with which it is fraught, however, afford sufficient motives for its publication at a time when the quarrel between the King and his Parliament was becoming deadly.

Eglisham first sets forth the grounds upon which he accuses the Duke of Buckingham of poisoning the Marquis of Hamilton, in doing which he is, self-evidently, guilty of the grossest exaggeration,* and then takes up the case of

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justice that maintains Kings, and injustice that brings Kings and Kingdoms to destruction, to fall into misery, to die like asses in ditches, or a more beastly death, eternal infamy after death, as all histories from time to time do clearly manifest. What need hath mankind of Kings, but for justice? Men were not born for them, but they for men," &c. "What greater, what more royal occasion in the world could be offered to your majesty, to show your impartial disposition in matters of justice, at the first entry of your reign, than this which I offer in my just complaint against Buckingham, by whom your majesty suffereth yourself so far to be led that your best subjects are in doubt whether he is your King, or you his?"

It will scarcely be believed that one who would write in such a spirit would, as we shall see Eglisham asserted he did, refuse the written testimony of an inquest of physicians, to the effect that his patron and dearest friend had been poisoned, because he was confident that the author of the crime would be, providentially, discovered!

* Eglisham's unprincipled exaggeration in describing the appearances presented by the Duke of Hamilton's body after death, must be particularly taken into account here. Where the medical details are so few, the safest course that we can take, at this distance of time, is to judge them by their internal evidence of probability. Discovering among them one palpably *intentional* misstatement, we are justified in believing that the whole narrative was heightened by falsehood. In a letter [published in Brewer's Goodman, Vol. II., p. 406,] to Mr. Mead, dated March 4th, 1624-5, (immediately after the Marquis's decease) we are told, "On Tuesday, between one and two in the morning, died the Lord Marquis of Hamilton, not without suspicion of poison, as is said, because, after death, his whole body, with neck, face, and head, swelled exceedingly, and was strangely spotted." This is, probably, a true contemporary account of what was observed. D'Ewes also, in speaking of the decease of Ludovic Stuart Duke of Richmond and Lennox, says "His death was generally reported to be natural, by an apoplexy, though many suspected it to be violent, by poison; which latter conjecture was the rather believed after the death of James Hamilton, Marquis of Hamilton, another Scotchman, a while after, in March ensuing, a little before King James deceased; the manner of whose death, and the view of the dissected body upon his decease, much confirming men's suspicions that he perished by a violent intoxication" [drugging.] Let us see how these facts are rendered in Eglisham's second pamphlet, eighteen years subsequently. Although he asserts that the Marquis would never suffer him to go out of his sight in his sickness, and although this sickness appears to have been

the late King, who,—being sick of an ague, not, in itself, of a serious character,—" The Duke took his opportunity, when

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of considerable duration as Eglisham states that he perceived the Marquis to be in danger four days before his death, *he never even hints what the symptoms from which the Marquis suffered were;* he merely asserts that, " All the time of his sickness he judged him to be poisoned, but his poison was such and so far gone that none could help it." Even in those days, learned and honest physicians were not wont to write and reason in this manner. When they had a case to prove, they stated it in such a manner that no member of the profession could misunderstand it. He goes on to say that, no sooner was the Marquis dead, " when the force of the poison had overcome the force of his body, but it began to swell in such sort, that his thighs were swollen six times as big as their natural proportion ; his belly became as big as the belly of an ox ; his arms, as the natural quantity of his thighs ; his neck as broad as his shoulders ; his cheeks over the top of his nose, and his nose not to be seen or distinguished ; the skin of his forehead two fingers high swelled ; the hairs of his beard, eye-brows, and head so far distant from one another, as if an hundred had been taken out between each one ; and, when one did touch the hair, it came away with the skin as easily as if one pulled hay out of an heap of hay. He was all over his neck, breast, shoulders, arms, and brows (I say) of divers colours ; full of waters of the same colour ; some white, some black, some red, some yellow, some green, and some blue, and that as well within his body as without. Also the concavities of his liver green ; his stomach, in some places, a little purpurated with a blue clammy water adhering to the sides of it ; his mouth and nose foaming blood ; mixed with froth mightily, of divers colours, a yard high. Your petitioner, being sent for to visit the body, and his servants all flocked about him, saying " See, see ;" presently weeping, said, " He was poisoned, and that it was not a thing to be suffered."

Moreover, he said that,—" Albeit his speech might cost him his life, yet seeing his sorrow had extorted that speech out of him, he would make it manifest, and would have a jury of physicians." Presently, some of my Lord Marquis of Hamilton's friends said, ' We must send to my Lord Duke, that he may send his physicians ;' but your petitioner replied " What have we to do with the Duke's physicians ? Let us have indifferent" [impartial] " men. Captain Hamilton hearing your petitioner so boldly take exceptions at Buckingham, and judging that he had good reason for what he had spoken, said, " For all that, let us send to the Duke ; and signify that all who have seen the Marquis's body, both physicians, chirurgeons, and others, may see that he is poisoned ; and that his friends desire more physicians out of the College of London, besides the Duke's physicians, to bear witness in what case the Marquis's body is in ; and then, if the Duke's conscience be guilty (said the Captain) it will shew itself :" as others out of London, whom he caused first to be brought unto him, before they went to see the Marquis's body, giving them his directions in these words, viz. : " My Masters, there is a bruit" [report] " spread abroad that the Marquis of Hamilton is poisoned ; go see, but beware what you speak of poison, (which he said in a threatening form of delivery,) for every nobleman that dieth must be poisoned."

all the King's Doctors of physic were at dinner (upon the Monday before the King died, without their knowledge or

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If his conscience had not been guilty, should not he have commanded the physicians to inquire by all means possible, and make it known, rather than to suppress the speech of poisoning so worthy a man?

These physicians being come, your petitioner, with one hand leading Doctor More to the table, where the Marquis's body was laid, and with the other hand throwing off the cloth from the body, said unto him, "Look you here upon this spectacle." At the sight whereof Doctor More, lifting up both his hands, heart, and eyes to the heavens, astonished, said, "Jesus, bless me. I never saw the like; I cannot distinguish a face upon him;" and in the like manner all the rest of the doctors, and also the chirurgeons, affirmed that they never saw the like, albeit that they had travelled and practised through the greatest part of Europe. Only one, that said "My Lord of Southampton was blistered all within the breast, as my Lord Marquis was." Doctor Leceister, one of Buckingham's creatures, seeing Doctor More and others so amazed at the sight of my Lord's body, drew first him aside, and then the others, one after another, and whispered them in the ear to silence them.*

"Whereupon many went away, without speaking one word; the others, who remained, acknowledged that these accidents of the dead body could not be without poison; but they said, they could not know how such a subtle art of poisoning could be brought into England. Your petitioner replied, 'That money would bring both the art and the artist from the farthest part of the world into England;' from whence, since your petitioner's departure, he hath conferred with the skilfullest pest-masters that could be found, who visit the bodies of those that die of the venom of the pest. They all admire the description of my Lord Marquis's body, and testify that never any of the pests have such accidents, but carbuncles, rubons" [bubons?] "or spots, no such huge blisters with waters, and such a huge uniform swelling to such dimensions, above six times the natural proportion. But he hath met with some who have practised the poisoning of dogs, to try the force of some antidotes; and they have found that some poisons have made the dogs sick for a fortnight or more, without any swelling, until they were dead, and then they swelled above measure, and became blistered, with waters of divers colours; and the hair came away with the skin, when it was touched."

"The physicians, then, who remained" [why are they not named?] "were willing to certify, under their hands, that my Lord Marquis was poisoned" [which, if true, is a lamentable proof of their ignorance]. "But your petitioner told them,—'It was not needful, seeing we must needs attend God's leisure to discover the author, the manner being so apparent, and so many hundreds having seen the body, to witness it;' for the doors were kept open for every man to behold and be witness if he would."

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* A letter written by Catherine, Duchess of Buckingham, to her husband when he was in Spain, shortly before this, reprinted in Brewer's Goodman, Vol. II., page 309, shows that Dr. More was her Grace's physician, and that he stood high in her confidence and esteem.

consent) and offered to him a white powder to take, the which he a long time refused; but, overcome with his flattering importunity, at length took it in wine, and immediately became worse and worse, falling into many swoonings and pains and violent fluxes of the belly, so tormented that his majesty cried out of this white powder, "Would to God I had never taken it! It will cost me my life."

"In like manner also the Countess of Buckingham, my Lord of Buckingham's mother, upon the Friday after (the physicians being also absent and at dinner, and not made acquainted with her doings,) applied a plaster to the king's heart and breast, whereupon he grew faint and short-breathed, and in a great agony. Some of the physicians, after dinner, returning to see the king, by the offensive smell of the plaster, perceived something to be about him, hurtful to him, and searched what it should be, and found it out, and exclaimed that "the King was poisoned." Then Buckingham entering, commanded the physicians out of the room; caused one of them to be committed prisoner to his own chamber, and another to be removed from Court; quarrelled with others of the King's servants in his sick majesty's own presence, so far that he offered to draw his sword against them in his majesty's sight. And Buckingham's mother, kneeling down before his majesty, cried out with a brazen face, "Justice, justice, Sir. I demand justice of your majesty." His majesty asked her for what? "For that which their lives are no way sufficient to satisfy, for saying that my son and I have poisoned your majesty." "Poisoned me!" said he: with that, turning himself, swooned, and she was removed."

Professing that he was freely offered, but refused to receive, the most valid written testimony of the alleged fact, this rash assertor brought forward his incredible statement unsupported by a single vestige of corroborative evidence! Every medical man who reads the above description will perceive that it is a most gross exaggeration of the appearances which usually present themselves in the rapidly decomposing corpse of a full-bodied person rapidly cut off, whether by disease, accident, or poison, but which, although they were, popularly, believed then and long afterwards to do so, are never received now as indicating death by poison. In the report of a physician who wrote with such direct purpose and with so much command of language as Dr. Eglisham did, such exaggeration amounts to absolute falsehood.

"The Sunday after his majesty died; and Buckingham desired the physicians who attended his majesty, to sign with their own hands a writ of testimony, that the powder which he gave him was a good and safe medicine; which they refused." * * * * *

"Immediately after his majesty's death, the physician who was commanded to his chamber was set at liberty, with a caveat to hold his peace; the others threatened, if they kept not good tongues in their heads.

"But in the meantime the king's body and head swelled above measure; his hair, with the skin of his head, stuck to the pillow, and his nails became loose upon his fingers and toes."

In those times, no report of poisoning appears to have been considered at all convincing, unless it could be added that the victim's hair and nails suffered. This falling off of the hair and nails, whether in the living or in the dead body, was then considered a very strong evidence of poisoning. We have, already, seen how much importance Eglisham attached to this appearance in the body of the Duke of Hamilton. In a letter, written in 1613, Spifame, the French ambassador, says that the Countess of Essex "poisoned her husband three or four times, which, however, only had the effect of making him lose his hair and nails, and having his breath so infected that he became still more offensive than before," etc. (Raumer, Vol. II., page 231.) According to Weldon, one Symon Marson, a musician in the service of Sir Thomas Monson, was employed in carrying poisoned jelly and tart to Sir Thomas Overbury in the Tower. Upon his examination, "My Lord told him, 'Symon, you have had a hand in this poysoning business.' 'No, my good Lord, I had but one finger in it, which almost cost me my life; and at the best, cost me all my hair and nails;' for the truth was, Symon was somewhat liquorish, and finding the sirrup swim from the top of a tart, as he carried, he did with his finger skim it off." So also Dugdale, in stating the case of Lady Douglas Sheffield, who claimed to have been lawfully married to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leceister, urges that the Earl "designed to despatch her out of this world; for certain it is, that she had some ill potions given her, so that, with the loss of her hair and nails, she hardly escaped death."

According to Dr. Taylor (*On Poisons*, Second edition, page 363) exfoliation of the cuticle and skin of the tongue,

with the falling off of the hair, has been witnessed as the result of chronic arsenical poisoning. Paris has a similar remark.

The separation, early after death, of the cuticle, with the hair and nails, is merely a sign of early decomposition, which, *cæteris paribus*, is most liable to occur in persons of full habit of body dying suddenly whether from poison or any other cause. It is, however, well known that arsenic, *per se*, has no tendency to promote rapid putrefaction; on the contrary, it is one of our most powerful antiseptics.

It is, certainly, very remarkable that, throughout his narrative, Eglisham nowhere states that he was in attendance during the King's illness (unless he was the physician commanded to his chamber—but this appears to have been Dr. Craig), nor does he give the slightest hint that he was credibly informed of the truth of that which he so strenuously represents.

We find a remarkable note of the King's last illness by Sir Robert Gordon, of Gordonstoun,* whom his biographer styles "a bitter enemie, so long as he professed it." He says, "Vpon Sonday, by eleven of the clock in the morning, the 27th day of March, one thowsand six hundred and tuentie-fyve yeirs, James, the sixt of that name, King of Scotland, and the first of that name, King of England, the first monarch of Great Britane, dyed of an ague at Tibolls, tuelff myles from London, in the fyftieth yeir of his reigne in Scotland, and of England the tuentie-third, not without great suspition of poysone; for the Monday before his death, the Countes of Buckinghame (the Duke of Buckinghame his mother) gave the king, by her sonne's direction, a potion vnknowne to his physicians, vnder pretext of ridding him the sooner of his ague; yea, although both shoe and her sone, the duke, wer inhibited by the physicians to give the king that phisick, they gave it him the second tyme; after the recept whereof, his majesty's tertian ague turned into a quotidian, which never left him (together with that bloodie flux) vntill his death. That which was rumored to be the occasion of the fact, wes, becaus his majestie became now wearied of the Duke of Buckinghame, by reasone of his vnsufferable pryd and vnbrydled ambition, and wes about (even when he seikned)

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* Op. Citat. page 392.

to abate him, which he and his mother, the countes, perceaveing, they hastened his Majestie's death by these meanes, being assured of King Charles his affection towards her sone the Duke. For the which fact, the Duke of Buckinghame wes brought in question by the Parlament held at London, the yeir 1626, and wes, by the Lower House of Parlament, found guyltie of a transcendent presumption of a dangerous consequence. Bot the Parlament wes abruptlie dissolved by the king, to the admiration and grieff of all good men, befor the duke came to his ansueir in the Vpper House; wherby he then escaped."

When the King's case came to be the subject of Parliamentary enquiry, it was stated by the physicians that the symptoms which followed Buckingham's treatment were "great distempers, as droughts, raving, fainting, an intermittent pulse." We have seen that Eglisham declared that the white powder produced fainting-fits, pains in the belly, and violent purging, and that the plaster* occasioned faintness, shortness of breath, and great agony. These two accounts may be reconciled with each other, except in one most essential particular, *viz.* the "violent fluxes of the belly," or, according to Gordon "that bloodie flux." If,—late in the case, subsequent to Buckingham's interference,—dysentery set in, it appears almost incredible that the physicians would not have mentioned it with the other complications. Bishop Goodman's account and others already cited appear to show that the King suffered from bowel complaint before he was attacked with fever. This might, readily, have been brought on again and aggravated by maltreatment, especially by the use of ale and milk possets, without any suspicion of poisoning. That the King took a large dose of arsenic or corrosive sublimate, in the form of a white powder, *and survived the effects of its violent operation for a week,* is not to be believed. That the plasters which were applied failed in producing the relief which was intended, and occasioned much distress, such as Eglisham describes, in the then reduced condition of the patient, is probable, but that any such application could occasion violent symptoms of poisoning, in so short a time, is not to be credited.

We apprehend that few medical men, in the present day, are aware what powerful effects were, formerly, nay even up

* The state of the heart, "great but soft," is proof that intermittent pulse, faintness, and shortness of breath could be easily induced.

to the beginning of the present country, attributed to external applications in the treatment of ague. Dr. Lind says, in his Chapter on Agues*—"I knew a gentleman, labouring under a very obstinate intermitting fever, who, by applying to the wrists whites of eggs beat up with salt, at the approach of the fit, often prevented it; especially when a vesication ensued. Bruised garlic will often produce the same effects, *but is apt to produce fainting fits in delicate constitutions*, being too acrid and irritating."

It will be noticed that Eglisham, who assuredly would not have overlooked any aggravating circumstance, says nothing of the plasters having been, surreptitiously, applied *twice*, as is stated in Fuller's narrative and in the parliamentary proceedings.

Until it can be shown whether Eglisham was one of the physicians who attended the King in his last illness,—of which we believe no proof has yet been adduced, although he very possibly was,—we must doubt whether his statement is not a compound of hearsay and exaggeration, concocted by a violent man who hated both King Charles and the Duke, and given, a second time, to the world (very possibly garbled, by others, for the occasion) precisely at a time when it was likely to act most upon excited popular feeling, to the prejudice of both.

If it can be proved that Eglisham was in attendance upon the King, the evidences of rancour and exaggeration, which his narrative contains, and its utter want of circumstantiality, will remain to discountenance the veracity of his statements and the justice of his inferences from facts.

Indeed, the probability, if not the fact, that Eglisham was a most unprincipled slanderer has been, as nearly as possible, established. The evidence which we have that Eglisham offered to publish a recantation of his scandalous pamphlet, and that the Duke of Buckingham received this overture with indignation and disgust, can hardly be questioned. Sir William Sanderson, the historian, writes,†—"King James I., ill and dying, the Duke of Buckingham was advised to apply a plaster to his stomach, which he did, with proper advice of doctors, physicians of the King. But the King dying, the Duke was

* Op. Cit. (published in 1808), page 344.

† We have not the "History of King James of Great Britain" to refer to, but the passage, which we cite from the second volume of Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting*, is, evidently, Sanderson's.

blamed: one Eglisham published a scurrilous libel, and flew away into Flanders. I was told by Sir Balthazar Gerbier [though his testimony be odious to any man] that Eglisham dealt with him in Flanders for a piece of money [not more than four hundred guilders to defray the charges] to imprint his recantation, on which the Duke bid Gerbier join knavery together, and spit their venom till they split, and he would pay for printing that also."

Brodie is not willing to give any weight to this statement. He says, "Sanderson's testimony is none of the best on any point, and here his story is incredible; for he says, Gerbier, whose testimony he pronounces odious to any man, told him. Now, would the Duke, (who was so far from despising the charge against him that, while he avoided a real trial, he purposely underwent the mockery of one, to calm the public feelings, by causing an information to be filed against himself in the Star Chamber; nay, such was his soreness on this head, that he rose *nine times* in one morning in the House of Lords, to fasten the charge of treason upon Diggs for the imputed offence of having implicated the King as an accessory*) have neglected so noble an opportunity of vindicating his character? Or would Gerbier, if he did speak at all, after this alleged rebuff, have only told the fact to Sanderson, who had such an antipathy to him."

This is very narrow reasoning, and it displays a great want of insight into Buckingham's disposition. What proof had Mr. Brodie that Gerbier mentioned the fact to none but Sanderson? Gerbier and Sanderson were associated as members of Buckingham's household; one as the Duke's "man of taste;" the other as his secretary. They were, very probably, intimate until they quarrelled, and they had abundance of time to fall out after the Duke's death (in 1628), as Gerbier lived until the year 1667, and Sanderson until 1676. Brodie strangely overlooks the fact that the truth of Gerbier's assertion is strongly supported by the much more reliable authority of Sir Henry Wotton, who tells us,† "Of the Duke this I know, that one having offered for his ease to do him that kinde of service" [to write an "apology" or exculpation of his public conduct,] "he refused it with a pretty kind of thankful scorn, saying, that he

* Abbot's Narrative in Rush. Vol. I., page 450.

† *Reliquiæ Wottonianæ.* Edition of 1651, page 25.

would trust his own good intentions which God knew, and leave to him the pardoning of his errours; and that he saw no fruit of apologies, but the multiplying of discourse; which surely was a well settled maxime. And for my particular, (though I am not obnoxious to his memory) in the expression of Tacitus,—*neque injuria, neque beneficia,* saving that he shewed me an ordinary good countenance, and if I were, yet I would distinguish between gratitude and truth, I must bear him this testimony, that in a commission laid upon me by sovereign command, to examine a lady about a certain filthy accusation grounded upon nothing but a few single names taken up by a footman in a kennel and straight baptised. A list of such as the Duke had appointed to be poisoned at home, himself being then in Spain,* I found it to be a most malicious and frantic surmise, and the most contrary to his nature, that I think had ever been brewed from the beginning of the world, howsoever countenanced by a libellous pamphlet of a fugitive physician even in print; and yet of this would not the Duke suffer any answer to be made on his behalf, so constant was he to his own principles."

Wotton, it is true, does not assert that Eglisham offered to recant what he had said; but,—when we find that Buckingham (not being far-sighted enough to perceive what seeds of mischief it contained) considered Eglisham's libellous pamphlet so insignificant that he would not permit his friends publicly to disprove its despicable falsehoods,—it is easy to understand that he would have disdained so mean and foolish a measure as that of paying the slanderer to revoke his libel. It is certainly surprising that a man of honor and learned advocate should consider that, when Buckingham rejected this base offer, which was a palpable snare, he "neglected a noble opportunity of vindicating his character!" Buckingham was arrogant and incautious in

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* This refers to the following statement, by Eglisham, which must have appeared in his original pamphlet, as Sir Henry Wotton died in 1639, and the "Forerunner of Revenge" was printed, or rather re-printed, in 1642. "Also a paper was found in King Street, about the time of the Duke of Richmond's death, wherein the names of all those noblemen, who have since died, were expressed: and your petitioner's name also set next to my Lord Marquis of Hamilton's name, with these words: 'To embalm him.' This paper was brought by my Lord Oldbarro's daughter, cousin german to the Lord Marquis."

many of his actions ; but, here, his conduct was that of a high-spirited, sensible man, falsely accused, and strong in the confidence of his own innocence. Brodie was, evidently, ignorant of the fact which, it appears to us, is perfectly conclusive upon the question at issue, that Gerbier has left a clear account of this important circumstance in his manuscript memoirs,* in which he fully confirms the statements of Sanderson and Wotton. He says, "The falseness of his libels, he" [Eglisham] "hath since acknowledged, though too late. During my residence at Bruxelles, this Eglisham desired Sir William Chaloner, who was then at Liege, to bear a letter to me, which is still extant : he proposed, if the King would pardon him and receive him into favour again, with some competent subsistence, that he would recant all that he had said or written to the disadvantage of any in the Court of England, confessing that he had been urged thereunto by some combustious spirits, that for their malicious designs had set him to work."

A close scrutiny into all that relates to the Eglisham pamphlets is much needed. Search in foreign libraries, especially in Belgium and Holland, might, very probably, bring to light a copy of the *original* libel of which Eglisham, undoubtedly, was the author, published during Buckingham's life-time, that is some considerable time previous to August 1628. We have, already, adduced clear evidence of the fact, that the tract entitled "The Fore-runner of Revenge," published, in London, in 1642, was, by no means, a literal re-print of the original production. To what extent was it garbled? Had Eglisham any hand whatever in it? It is worthy of remark that another production of this kind also appeared in 1642, it is entitled "*Strange Apparitions ; or, the Ghost of King James : with a late Conference between the Ghost of that good King, the Marquis of Hamilton's, and George Eglisham's, Doctor of Physick ; unto which appeared the Ghost of the late Duke of Buckingham, concerning the Death and Poisoning of King James, and the rest.*" Printed at London for J. Aston, 1642." This has been re-printed in the fourth volume of the Harleian Miscellany, page 528. Did J. Aston also publish "The Forerunner of Revenge?" The use of the words "Printed at London" in the title

* Cited by D'Israeli in his *Curiosities of Literature.*

of each, renders it probable that they came from the same press ; and, if they did, the self-evident falsehood of one leaves us at liberty to doubt the authenticity of the other. " Strange Apparitions" is a preposterous version of the " Fore-runner," evidently vamped up with a desire to attract the attention of the vulgar. It contains one or two points of information upon matters regarding which the other paper is silent. Thus Eglisham's Ghost is made to say :—" For fear that I, George Eglisham, should discover you, as I have now done, to be the poisoner, I was sought to be murdered, but I fled into Holland ; and there, by your appointment, I was stabbed and killed." To which Buckingham replies :—" I do acknowledge that my mortal hatred unto thee was great ; and I acknowledge myself guilty, too, of thy death, Dr. Eglisham." According to D'Israeli, whose authority was probably Gerbier, Eglisham was found dead, assassinated in his walks by a companion. It is scarcely necessary to urge that, if Eglisham died previous to 1628, the publication of 1842, differing as it does from that which appeared antecedent to that date, must be of very doubtful authenticity. If, on the other hand, Welwood was correctly informed that Eglisham " lived at Brussels many years after," the leading statement of " Strange Apparitions" falls to the ground. Is the date of Eglisham's death known ? Again, in this publication, King James is made to say, " A petition was drawn by my Doctor, George Eglisham, (wherein he most lovingly amplified the ingratitude of thee, my favourite Buckingham, in poisoning me his sovereign,) which he then presented to my son King Charles, and to the Parliament, for he had vowed to revenge our death : but they, taking no course for the examination of thy guiltiness (by reason of thy plot which dissolved that Parliament) Dr. Eglisham was fain to go over into Holland, to avoid the fury of thy malice." That the " Fore-runner" papers were ever submitted as a *bonâ fide* petition to the King and Parliament, with a view to bringing about a candid enquiry, no one who carefully peruses them and observes the tone of gross insolence to King Charles which runs through them will, for a moment, believe. They are not an appeal to the King ; they are a gross attack upon him. They are in a style which would have brought their writer to the pillory, if not to the quartering block, in 1628 ; but which might be safely adopted, among the King's enemies, in 1642. Still, in his address to the King, he says that he has " obscured " himself, and that he

is beyond the reach of the Duke and his minions; and he, undoubtedly, gave free circulation to a libel, resembling the "Fore-runner," previous to 1628. We should have considered it needless to expend so much time in sifting anything so palpably frivolous as the Eglisham pamphlets, had not that learned advocate George Brodie given undue prominence to them in his "History of the British Empire," and had it not appeared that the circumstances of their publication need further enquiry.

It is unquestionable that suspicions of unfair play, in the conduct of Buckingham, during the King's fatal illness, were rather widely spread among the physicians in attendance; and it is clear that, equally alarmed and offended by the Duke's most rash and unjustifiable interference in the case of their royal patient, some of these gentlemen possibly incited by Eglisham, smarting under the recent loss of his kind and powerful patron the Marquis of Hamilton, spoke with great freedom. The conduct of Dr. Craig,—although indiscreet and, we believe, unjust towards the Duke,—in venturing to blame the powerful favourite in the very presence of their dying master,—appears to have been most spirited. His consequent arrest and exclusion from the Court, and the knowledge that such a *fracas* as this had taken place, could not fail to spread, among the public and the medical profession, a deeply-rooted conviction that the unpopular Duke had been detected in the commission of a desperate crime.

Eglisham asserts that Buckingham was "infamous for his frequent consultations with the ring-leaders of witches, principally that false Doctor Lambe, publicly condemned for witchcraft." Elsewhere, he says, "Likewise a mountebank, about that time, was greatly countenanced by the Duke of Buckingham, and by his means procured letters, patents, and recommendations from the King, to practise his skill in physic through all England; who, coming to London to sell poison, to kill man or beast within a year, or half a year, or two years, or a month or two, or what time prefixed any man desired; in such sort that they could not be helped nor discovered."

"Moreover," he adds, "the Christmas before my Lord Marquis's death, one of the Prince's footmen said that some of the great ones at Court had gotton poison in their belly, but he could not tell who it was."

The fate of the wretched impostor Lambe will have to be noticed at a later stage of our narrative.

In the August following the old King's death, Buckingham began to be the subject of vigorous attacks in King Charles's first Parliament. On the 6th of that month, Sir Robert Cotton, the Antiquary, became the first assailant, in a speech which strongly displayed that growing spirit of independence which, a few years afterwards, put an end, for ever, to absolute monarchy in England. Cotton suggested broadly that the national honor and interests had suffered from the weak and evil councils of the favorite, in the renewal of the Spanish match and by the withdrawal of the English forces from the Palatinate. He counselled the King to rely upon the judgment of his wise, religious and worthy servants; and not to be led by "young and single counsel."

Three days later, the Commons were dissolved, abruptly and without notice, upon the pretext that the Plague, which at that time raged in England, have made its appearance at Oxford, where the Parliament were then sitting.

Before Parliament again met, Lord Keeper Williams was disgraced and removed from office. We have, already, seen that, according to Weldon, it was rumored that King James had revealed something of consequence, on his death-bed, to the Bishop and the Archbishop of Canterbury which the former had blabbed. It is not, however, necessary to believe this as the Lord Keeper is known to have been absolutely, but in secret, the Duke's enemy, and to have been detected in intrigues to countermine him.

In November, Charles resorted to the extraordinary artifice of securing the exclusion from Parliament of seven members distinguished for their hostility to Buckingham, by selecting them as Sheriffs for the ensuing year. The effect of this was merely to confirm the determination of the House to crush the power of Buckingham to whose treacherous counsels this weak device was, of course, imputed.

On the 2nd of February 1626, King Charles the First was crowned in Westminster Hall. He went, by the river, from Whitehall, and landed at the Parliament Stairs. Sir Simonds D'Ewes, who was present, says that there was a wooden scaffold in Westminster Hall upon which some ceremonies were to be performed before the coronation. He stood at the lower end of the stairs of the scaffold when the King and Buckingham came close together to ascend the steps. "The Duke put forth his right hand to have taken the King by the left arm and to have assisted him in his ascending; at which his Highness at an instant got his left hand under the Duke's

right arm, and, whether he would or not, led him up the stairs, saying, 'I have more need to help you, than you have to help me.'" "Which speech," D'Ewes adds, "I the rather thought upon when the said Duke being questioned in the Parliament ensuing for his life, the King, to prevent his further danger, made an abortive dissolution of that great assembly."*

On the 6th of February 1627, King Charles's second Parliament met, prepared with several charges of the gravest character against Buckingham and resolute in seeking justice upon "the great delinquent."† Charles, in answer to their address, absolutely upheld his favorite. "I must let you know," said he, "that I will not allow any of my servants to be questioned amongst you, much less such as are of eminent place and near unto me. The old question was, what shall be done to the man whom the King will honour? but now it hath been the labour of some to seek what may be done against him whom the King thinks fit to honour. I see that you especially aim at the Duke of Buckingham." Unawed by royal menace, the Commons proceeded vigorously in their attack upon the Duke. Sir Edward Coke was one of the excluded seven, having been pricked down as sheriff of Buckinghamshire, although he had brought his best legal tact and erudition to work in discovering exceptions against the High Sheriff's oath. Coke had long owed Buckingham a deadly grudge, on more than one account, and, most especially, in the matter of his daughter, Lady Purbeck. He had, however, an able representative in the person of Clement Coke, his sixth son, who, with Dr. Samuel Turner, member for Shrewsbury, a physician and disappointed courtier, followed in the pursuit with great vehemence. "It were better,"—exclaimed Coke,—"to die by an enemy than to suffer at home."

The King replied to all objections by declaring his strong attachment to Buckingham and by reprehending the House for their freedom of expression. "Mr. Clement Coke told you," said he, "that it was better to be eaten up by a foreign enemy than to be destroyed at home! Indeed, I think it more honour for a King to be invaded and almost destroyed by a foreign enemy than to be despised by his own subjects."

Shortly afterwards, John Earl of Bristol petitioned to be heard in an accusation of the Duke and upon the subject of his own wrongs.

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* Vol. 1, page 292. † Mackintosh.

On the 21st of April, the Lord Keeper delivered a Royal message to the House of Lords, to the effect that certain charges would be preferred against the Earl of Bristol before the House on account of his alleged offences in Spain and his "scandalising the Duke of Buckingham immediately, and his Majesty by reflection." Sir Robert Heath, the Attorney General, presented himself at the bar of the House of Lords, and exhibited a charge of high treason and other crimes, in nine articles, against Bristol, who immediately urged that his own charges against the Duke and Lord Conway might be received first by the House, and that Buckingham should be placed in the same situation with himself as to personal restraint and custody. The House decided that the King's charge against the Earl of Bristol should have the precedence "yet so that the Earl's testimony against the Duke be not prevented, prejudiced, or impeached." An attempt was made by the King and Buckingham to remove the case of Bristol from the House of Lords to the King's Bench, where the accused could have no counsel, no witness against the Crown, no knowledge of the evidence against him. The Lords, however, would not allow the case to be taken out of their jurisdiction.* The Earl of Bristol brought a counter-impeachment against the Duke and Lord Conway, without introducing, in distinct terms, the charge of interfering in the management of the late King's case, but setting forth, in his twelfth charge, that he had revealed to King James the injuries which Buckingham had done him; upon which, a few days before his sickness, the King sent Bristol word that he would hear him against Buckingham, "which the Duke himself heard, and not long after his blessed Majesty sickened and died, having been, in the interim, much vexed and pressed by the Duke."

In a few days, a new charge of transcendant presumption, in applying a plaster and giving a drink to the late King, was startled by the Commons against the Duke. Considering the deadly character of the struggle between Bristol and the Duke, it appears certain that, had it not been found impossible to collect valid evidence to prove that the King died by poison, a direct charge of murder would have been brought against Buckingham. As it was, the minor but still very serious accusation was clumsily and weakly brought in,—as an afterthought.

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* Mackintosh.

The thirteenth article of the charge sets forth so comprehensively the alleged circumstances of the case that it is necessary to cite it in full.

XIII "Whereas special care and order hath been taken by the laws of the realm, to restrain and prevent the unskilful administration of physic, whereby the health and life of man be much endangered; and whereas most especially, the royal persons of the kings of the realm, in whom we their loyal subjects humbly challenge a great interest, are, and always have been esteemed by us, so sacred, that nothing ought to be prepared for them, or administered unto them, in the way of physic or diet, in the times of their sickness, without the consent and direction of some of their sworn physicians, apothecaries, or surgeons: and the boldness of such (how near soever to them in place and favour) who have forgotten their duties so far as to presume to offer anything unto them beyon their experience, hath been always ranked in the number of high offences and misdemeanors. And whereas the sworn physicians of our late Sovereign Lord King James, of blessed memory, attending on his Majesty in the month of March, in the 22nd year of his most glorious reign, in the times of his sickness, being an ague, did, in due and necessary care of, and for the recovery of his health, and preservation of his person, upon and after several mature consultations in that behalf had and holden, at several times in the same month, resolve and give directions, that nothing should be applied or given to his Highness, by way of physic or diet, during the said sickness, but by and upon their general advice and consents, and after good deliberation thereof first had; more especially by their like care, and upon like consultations, did justly resolve, and publicly give warning to and for all the other gentlemen, and other servants and officers of his said late Majesty's bed-chamber, that no meat or drink whatsoever should be given unto him, within two or three hours next before the usual time of, and for the coming of his fit in the said ague, nor during the continuance thereof, nor afterwards, until his cold fit was past: the said Duke of Buckingham, being a sworn servant of his said late Majesty and in his Majesty's said bed-chamber, contrary to his duty, and the tender respects which he ought to have had for his Majesty's most sacred person, and after the consultations, resolutions, directions and warning aforesaid, did, nevertheless, without any sufficient warrant in that behalf, unduly cause and procure certain plaisters, and a certain drink or potion to be provided for the use of his said Majesty, without the direction or privity of his said late Majesty's physicians, not prepared by any of his sworn apothecaries or surgeons, but compounded of several ingredients to them unknown: notwithstanding the same plaisters or some plaister like thereunto, having been formerly administered unto his said Majesty, did produce such ill effects, as that some of the said sworn physicians did altogether disallow thereof and utterly refused to meddle any further with his said Majesty until these plaisters were removed, as being hurtful and prejudicial to the health of his Majesty; yet, nevertheless, the same plaisters, as also a drink or potion, was provided by him the said duke; which he, the said duke, by colour of some insufficient and slight pretences, did, upon Monday the 21st day of March, in the 22nd year aforesaid, when his Majesty, by the judgment of his said physicians, was in the declination of his disease, cause and procure the said plaister to be applied to the breast and wrists of his said late

Majesty. And then also, at and in his Majesty's fit of the said ague, the said Monday, and at several times within two hours before the coming of the said fit, and before his Majesty's then cold fit was passed, did deliver, and cause to be delivered several quantities of the said drink or potion to his said late Majesty; who, thereupon, at the same times, within the seasons in that behalf prohibited by his majesty's physicians, as aforesaid, did by the means and procurement of the said duke, drink and take divers quantities of the said drink or potion. After which said plaisters, and drink or potion applied and given unto, and taken and received by his said Majesty as aforesaid, great distempers and divers ill symptoms appeared upon his said Majesty, insomuch that the said physicians finding his Majesty the next morning, much worse in the estate of his health, and holding consultation thereabout, did, by joint consent, send to the said duke, praying him not to adventure to minister to his Majesty any more physic, without their allowance and approbation. And his said Majesty finding himself much diseased and affected with pain and sickness, after his then fit, when by the course of his disease he expected intermission and ease, did attribute the cause of such his trouble unto the said plaister and drink which the said duke had so given, and caused to be administered unto him. Which said adventurous act, by a person obliged in duty and thankfulness, done to the person of so great a King, after so ill success of the like formerly administered, contrary to such directions as aforesaid, and accompanied with so unhappy event, to the great grief and discomfort of all his Majesty's subjects in general, is an offence and misdemeanour of so high a nature, as may justly be called, and is by the said Commons deemed to be an act of transcendent presumption, and of dangerous consequence."

The several articles of the indictment were enlarged upon by advocates, most of whose names are famous in history;—Herbert, Selden, Pym, Sherland, Wandesford.

"Mr. Wandesford, deputed to enlarge and aggravate upon the Thirteenth Article, commended the charity and providence of that law which makes it penal for unskilful empirics, and all others, to exercise and practise physic upon common persons without a lawful calling and approbation, branding them who thus transgress as *improbos, ambitiosos, temerarios, et audaces homines*. But he that, without skill or calling shall direct a medicine, which upon the same person had wrought bad effects, enough to have dsisuaded a second adventure; then and when physicians were present, physicians selected for learning and art, prepared by their office and oaths, without their consent, nay, even contrary to their direction, and in a time unreasonable; he must needs (said he) be guilty, albeit towards a common person, of a precipitate and unadvised rashness, much more towards his own sovereign. And so pious are overselves to put the subjects in mind of their duty towards their princes, persons so sacred, that in the attempt of a mad man upon the King, his want of reason, which towards any of his fellow-subjects might acquit him of felony, shall not excuse him of treason. And how wary and advised our ancestors have been not to apply things of this kind to the person of a King, may appear by a precedent, 32 H. 6, where John Arundel: and others of the King's physicians and chirurgeons, thought it not safe for them to administer anything to the King's person without the consent of the Privy Council first obtained, and express licence

under the Great Seal of England. "This medicine found his Majesty in the declination of his disease, (and we all wish it had left him so) but his better days were shortly turned into worse; and instead of health and recovery, we hear, by good testimony (that which troubles the poor and loyal commons of England) of great distempers, as droughts, raving, fainting, an intermitting pulse, strange effects to follow upon the applying of a treacle plaster. But the truth is, testimony tells us, that this plaster had a strange smell, and an infective quality, striking the malignity of the disease inward, which nature, otherwise, might have expelled outward. Add to this the drink, twice given to his Majesty, by the Duke's own hands, and a third time refused, and the following complaint of that blessed prince, the physicians telling him, to please him for the time, that his second impairment was from cold taken or some other ordinary cause: 'No, no,' said his Majesty, 'it is that which I had from Buckingham.'* And though there be no precedent for an act offered to the person of a King so insolent as this; yet it is true that divers persons as great as this, have been questioned and condemned for less offences against the person of their sovereign. It was an article amongst others laid against the Duke of Somerset, for carrying Edward the Sixth away in the night-time, out of his own bed, but from Hampton Court to Windsor; and yet he was entrusted with the protection of his person. Precedents failing us in this point, the common law will supply us. The law judgeth a deed done in the execution of an unlawful act, man-slaughter, which otherwise would but have been chance medley; and that this act was unlawful the

* These details are also given by Roger Coke in his "Detection of the Court and State of England, during the last four Reigns." As Coke's narrative is, evidently, compiled, *ipsissimis verbis*, from the report of these Parliamentary proceedings, it cannot, of course, be considered to have any independent weight as evidence.

Brodie has given the following remarkable passage from the MS. copy of Whitelock's relation of his embassy to Sweden—a passage which the Editor has thought proper to omit. At one of his private audiences with Queen Christina—she "fell into a discourse concerning King James, and asked what testimony there was of his being poisoned, as many have affirmed. Whitelock told her that, in the beginning of the reign of the late King Charles, that business was under examination in Parliament, whereof Whitelock was then a member." [He was one of the eight managers in the Duke's impeachment] "That the doctors who attended King James, in that sickness, did testify that, contrary to their order, a plaster and a drink with powder was given to him by the Countess of Buckingham, the Duke's mother." [Brodie remarks—the Commons charged the Duke with having given it with his own hand, but this discrepancy is immaterial] "that he took it by the persuasion of the Duke and of his mother, that the disease being a violent fever, the plaster was of an infective quality, and turned the heat inwardly, that the King took them twice, and fell into raving fits after it, and cried out, 'That which George hath given me hath killed me;' that his body swelled very much. The Queen said,—'Then certainly, he was poisoned.' Whitelock said that many believed it, but that there was any ill intention was not made to appear.

Brodie adds that—"Whitelock (whose children were nearly allied to Buckingham's family) did not keep a diary of his embassy with any view to publication, and he declares that he was careful not to speak reproachfully of any one, not even of an enemy, regarding whom the Queen made enquiries." It will, however, be perceived how very much stronger the words—"*That which George hath given me hath killed me!*" are than the expression attributed to the King in the Parliamentary report.—A strong illustration of the danger of making such statements by unaided memory. This circumstance of aggravation does not appear in Whitelocke's narrative of the Parliamentary proceedings in his "*Memorial of English affairs from the reign of Charles I.*"

House of Commons do believe, as belonging to the duty and vocation of a sworn and experimented physician, and not the unskilfulness of a young lord. And so precious are the lives of men in the eye of the law, that though Mr. Stanford saith, if a physician take one into his cure, and he die under his hands, it is not felony, because he did it not feloniously. Yet it is Mr. Bracton's opinion that, "If one that is no physician or chirurgeon undertake a cure, and the party die under his hands, this is felony. And the law goeth further, making physicians and chirurgeons themselves accountable for the death of their patients, if it appear they have transgressed the rules of their own art; that is, by undertaking a thing wherein they have no experience, or having yet failed in their care and diligence."

"Lastly, he said he was commanded by the House of Commons to desire their lordships, that seeing the Duke hath made himself a precedent in committing that which former ages knew not, their lordships will, out of their wisdom and justice, make him an example for the time to come."

Sir John Elliot, Vice-admiral of Devonshire, was appointed to make the "Epilogue" to the Impeachment. He performed this duty with equal boldness and severity. He exclaimed—"I can hardly find him a match or parallel in all precedents; none so like him as Sejanus, who is described by Tacitus,—'*Audax, sui obtegens, in alios criminator, juxta adulator et superbus.*' He carried on this comparison in terms of the most cutting sarcasm; and, although he did not actually refer to the fact that Sejanus caused Drusus to be destroyed by slow poison, he must have felt that most of those whom he addressed perceived the application. When called upon to explain his speech, he stated that he did not apply the *venefices* of Sejanus to the Duke, but excluded them.

Disraeli says "I find a piece of secret history enclosed in a letter with a solemn injunction that it might be burnt." 'The King, this morning, complained of Sir John Elliott for comparing the Duke to *Sejanus*, in which he said implicitly he must intend *me* for *Tiberius*.'" Among many other strongly condemnatory expressions, Sir John Elliot used the following—"Not satisfied with injuiries, and injustice, and dishonouring of religion, his attempts go higher, to the prejudice of his sovereign, which is plain in his practice. The effects I fear to speak, I fear to think, I end this passage, as Cicero did, in a like case, '*Ne gravioribus utar verbis quam rei natura fert, aut levioribus quam causæ necessitas postulat.*" The report of the Duke's charge was made to the Lords, Buckingham stood up and charged Sir Dudley Digges, (one of the eight chief managers) who made the "Prologue," with having spoken, at

the late conference, certain words "which so far trenched on the King's honour, that they were interpreted treasonable." Shortly afterwards, Sir Dudley Digges and Sir John Elliot were, by the King's command, committed to the Tower.

We know that Charles felt and was advised that this attack upon his favorite was, virtually, an attack upon himself and his royal prerogative. Nay more, according to Lingard, a report had been carried to Charles that the two managers, in allusion to the Thirteenth article, had thrown out a hint that Buckingham was but the inferior agent, and that a more illustrious personage had been the chief conspirator against the life of the late monarch. Disraeli quotes a very remarkable passage, from a MS. letter, to the effect that Sir Robert Cotton (Buckingham's first assailant) told a friend,—on the day on which the King went down to the House of Lords and committed Elliot and Digges to the Tower,—"that he had, of late, been often sent for by the King and Duke, and that the King's affection towards him" [Buckingham] "was very admirable and no whit lessened. Certainly," he added, "the King will never yield to the Duke's fall, being a young man, resolute, magnanimous, and tenderly and firmly affectionate where he takes."

On the 11th of May, the King went to the House of Peers and declared that, hitherto, he had been restrained by Buckingham's importunity from taking notice of and punishing the insolent speeches lately spoken, which, as touching the honor of one of their body, in a very great measure touched himself. To approve Buckingham's innocency in the matters charged against him—he, himself, could be *a witness to clear him in every one of them.* According to Lingard, the King added that he would suffer no one to insinuate of himself with impunity that he had been privy to the death of his father. He departed with the words. "And now I hope you will be as tender of my honour, when time shall serve, as I have been sensible of yours.'*

* In a letter dated 13th May from Mr. Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville (Ellis's Original Letters, vol 3, page 225, 1st Series) it is said "The King went to the House on Thursday, but what he did we hear not yet. The Lords had petitioned the King that the Duke might be restrained until these matters were examined; nevertheless, he attended his Majesty to the House, but it was said he would, that afternoon, go to New Hall. His Majesty's affection no whit abates towards him, but seems rather to increase. Lord help us, what will come of these things? the distraction

On the same day, the Commons sent a message to the Lords, by Sir Nathaniel Rich, recommending that the Duke might be arrested. No action was taken upon this bold suggestion. The Duke defended himself in a short and spirited speech. Urging his own innocency and entreating that his trial might be hastened, but protesting that he would not give way to any of the unjust demands of his accusers.

The Commons took so much umbrage at the imprisonment of their two members, and at the expression of the King's anger that they resolved to proceed in no other business until they were righted in their liberties;—and they ordered that the house might be turned into a grand committee, immediately, to sit and consider the best means of being righted in their liberties—no member being suffered to go forth. As the House sat in solemn silence, Sir Dudley Carleton, the Vice-chamberlain, addressed them in a temperate speech in which he objected to the expressions used by the movers of the prologue and epilogue. Sir Dudley Digges had gone too far beyond his commission in speaking of the death of the King's father in these words,—"That he was commanded by the House, concerning the plaisters applied to the King, that he did forbear to speak further in regard to the king's honor," or words to that effect. In this point, his Majesty ought to be assured that the House did not warrant Sir Dudley Digges. The sense of the

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is great and of great consequence, and unless God show the way out we are but in ill case. *Domine Miserere.*

The Duke being in the bed-chamber, private with the king, his Majesty was overheard, (as they talk) to use these words—'What can I do more? I have engaged my honour to mine uncle of Denmark and other Princes. I have in a manner lost the love of my subjects. And what wouldst thou have me do? Whence some think the Duke moved the King to dissolve the parliament, &c."

Weldon's commentary upon these events is, as usual, full of bitterness. He says—"But the occasion taken to dissolve it" [this Parliament] "was worst of all, for Buckingham by his insolent behaviour had not only lost that love, his hatred to Spaine had procured him, but was now grown into such an hatred that they fell on him for the death of his old master, which had been of long time whispered; the examinations bred such confusions, that it looked with an ugly deformed poysonous countenance, and nothing but the dissolution of that Parliament could have saved his dissolution, and that with a brand of shame and infamy, as well as ingratitude. I remember I heard an old Parliament man, and a noble gentleman of that Committee for examinations say at first he derided the very thought of it; but after the first dayes examination it proved so foul, as that he both hated and scorned the name of Buckingham, and though man would not punish it, God would, which proved an unhappy prediction."

House had concluded that the Duke's interference in the late King's case was only an act of presumption, indeed some of the members expressly said, "Nay God forbid that I should lay the death of the King to his charge." If Sir John Elliot, "without warrant from the House insisted upon the composition of the plaster as if there were *aliquid latet quod non patet*, this was beyond his commission from their House." It was this against which the King had taken exception, and this, with other insolent invectives, had drawn his Majesty to use his regal authority in committing the two members to the Tower.

Upon this, every member of the House, including three who were sick in the town, took the following protestation,—on the charge against Sir Dudley Diggs for saying in the matter of applying the plaster,—"that he did forbear to speak further of that in regard of the King's honour,"—

"I protest before Almighty God and this House of Parliament, that I never gave consent that Sir Dudley Diggs should speak these words, that he is now charged withal or any words to that effect: and I have not affirmed to any that he did speak such words, or any to that effect."

Within a few days, Sir Dudley Digges, having been released, protested before the House that the words imputed to him were "far from his words, and that it never came into his thoughts," and added that he had received from his Majesty a gracious testimony of his satisfaction. The King signified to the House, by the Vice-chamberlain, that he understood, out of some notes which were taken at the Conference, that Sir Dudley Digges had spoken the words wherewith he was charged,—but now was satisfied that he did not speak them. It was, however, proposed that all the reporters should produce their notes taken at the Conference. After much debate upon this question, by the House of Peers in Committee, no resolution was formed upon it; but thirty-six Lords made this voluntary protestation upon their honors—"That the said Sir Dudley Diggs did not speak anything, at the said conference, which did or might trench on the King's honour; and, if he had, they would presently have reprehended him for it."

The Lord President affirmed that he had reported the words in the same sense they were delivered unto him by the party himself, and though the connexion of them require to be explained, yet he agreed with the rest of the Lords for the party's good meaning, and made the same protestation.

Sir John Elliot, having been released from the Tower, was summoned to the House when the Vice-chambalain stood up

and objected to "the manner of his speech which he conceived was too tart and harsh to the person of the Duke." Sir John, in reply, respectfully but boldly justified and maintained his own expressions and concluded with these words,—"Lastly, touching the physic of the King, he said he brake off so abruptly in aggravation of the Duke's offence, who not content with the injury of justice, the wrong of honour, the prejudice of the state, nor that of the revenue, his attempts go higher even to the person of the King, making on that his practice in such a manner, to such an effect, that he said, he feared to speak, nay he doubted to think; in which regard he left it as Cicero did another thing,—*Ne gravioribus &c.*"

It was then resolved on the question that Sir John Elliot had not exceeded the commission given him in anything that passed from him in the late conference with the Lords. The like of the other managers.

On the 8th of June 1626, the Duke of Buckingham gave in his answer to the House of Lords concerning the articles of his Impeachment. Rushworth says, that Sir Nicholas Hyde was employed in drawing up this answer, and that to this service he owed his appointment as Chief Justice of the King's Bench. The Duke prefaced his answer with a sensible and modest speech.*

The following was his reply to the charge of presumptious meddling in the treatment of the King's disease.

To the Thirteenth Article of the charge, which is set forth in such an expression of words, as might argue an extraordinary guiltiness in the Duke, who by such infinite bonds of duty and thankfulness, was obliged to be tender of the life and health of his most dread and dear sovereign and master, he maketh this clear and true answer,—That he did neither apply nor procure the plaister or posset-drink, in the charge termed to be a potion, unto his late Majesty, nor was present when the same was first taken or applied: but the truth is this; that his Majesty being sick of the ague, took notice of the Duke's recovery of an ague not long before† and asked him how he had recovered, and what he found did

* This speech did not contain any allusion to King James's death. It is not clear to which stage of this investigation Bishop Goodman refers, where he says—"When Buckingham spake of the King, he spake with tears in his eyes, expressing much sorrow that he who had been so infinitely beholden to the King, for himself, for his kindred, for all his favors that he should now be questioned for murdering him." It is evident, however, that Buckingham took frequent occasion to rise in the house and to speak regarding the proceedings against himself and Lord Bristol.

† It appears that Buckingham was subject to attacks of ague. He, undoubtedly, suffered from this disease when in Madrid (Brewer Op. Cit. vol. 2 page 322) and he either had or feigned a similar attack at Wallingford House in May 1624, when his loyalty was impugned by the Marquis Ynoiosa and suspected by the King.

him most good? The Duke gave him a particular answer thereto, and that one, who was the Earl of Warwick's physician, had ministered a plaister and a posset-drink to him, and the chief thing that did him good was a vomit; which he wished the King had taken in the beginning of his sickness. The King was very desirous to have that plaister and posset-drink sent for; but the Duke delayed it: whereupon the King impatiently asked, whether it was sent for or not? And finding by the Duke's speeches, he had not sent for it, his late Majesty sent J. Baker, the Duke's servant, and with his own mouth, commanded him to go for it; whereupon the Duke besought his Majesty not to make use of it, but by the advice of his own physicians, nor until it should be tried by James Palmer, of his bed-chamber, who was then sick of an ague, and upon two children in the town; which the King said he would do. In this resolution the Duke left his Majesty and went to London," [We have, already, cited Eglisham's allusion to this absence] "and, in the meantime, the plaister and posset-drink was brought and applied by his late Majesty's own command. At the Duke's return, his Majesty was in taking the posset-drink, and the King then commanded the Duke to give it him; which he did in the presence of some of the King's physicians, they then no ways seeming to dislike it, the same drink being first tasted by some of them, and divers others in the King's bed-chamber; and he thinks this was the second time the King took it. Afterwards, when the King grew somewhat worse than before, the Duke heard a rumour as if his physic had done the King hurt, and that the Duke had ministered that physic to him without advice. The Duke acquainted the King therewith; to whom the King, with much discontent, answered thus,—'They are worse than devils that say it.' So far from the truth it was; which now notwithstanding as it seemeth, is taken up by some, and with much confidence affirmed. And here the Duke humbly prayeth all your lordships, not only to consider the truth of this answer, but also to commiserate the sad thought which this article had revived in him."*

On the following day, the Commons called upon the Lords for a copy of the Duke's answer, that they might consider and reply to it. The Lords promised to furnish this. The Duke then stood up and declared his intention of submitting proofs which, he declared, would wholly clear him of the seventh charge (of delivering certain ships into the hands of the French.) On the 10th, the copy of the Duke's answer was brought to the Commons. Mr. Baron Trevor and Sir C. Cæsar, who were charged with this duty, signified that the Duke had

* According to Bishop Goodman, who speaks from memory, admitting that he had not a perfect remembrance of the transactions in Parliament, Bristol, on one occasion, "Reckoning some misdemeanours of Buckingham, and how ill the King did relish them, concluded that he did wish that these things had not been some cause to hasten the King's death; which words were then understood as if the King had not died naturally. But, the next day, Bristol did expound himself, that his meaning only was in respect of the sorrow and grief which the King might, thereby, conceive. And hereupon, Buckingham took occasion in the Parliament House, to speak of the plaister, and said that a woman had a child sick of a quartan ague in the same town, and that she did use the very same plaister to her child, and the child recovered."

made a request to the Lords, which they also recommended to the Commons that they would proceed with all expedition in their reply to this answer, "that so they might go on with business of much higher concern." We are told that their journals show that the Commons proceeded immediately with the consideration of the Duke's answer; when, five days later, on the 15th of June 1626, to the astonishment and consternation of all, the King thought proper abruptly to dissolve the House.*

This most rash and calamitous step was taken in the face of earnest entreaties by the House of Lords to continue that Parliament. According to Sanderson, the King's words to the Lords, who came to intercede for a longer sitting, were, peremptorily,—"*No, not a minute!*"

Rushworth has given a copy of a Declaration from the King containing his reasons for dissolving this and the foregoing Parliaments. Howell remarks, in his notes to the State Trials, that "Such an intervention on the part of the King to prevent, (and that at the expense of four subsidies and three fifteenths, which the Commons had voted without perfecting bills for them, and of which the King had very great need) an investigation of the matters imputed as crimes to the Duke of Buckingham—one of those matters being the death of the King's father—was, unquestionably, an act of the greatest indecency and folly. In taking this course, the King, doubtless, laid his motives open to the most malicious construction: he, however, appears to have been compelled by a strong belief that he, himself, was attacked in the person of his favorite. Hume, after Franklyn, says, that "The King thought

* D'Ewes says, "Infinite almost was the sadness of each man's heart, and the dejection of his countenance that truly loved the Church or Commonwealth, at the sudden and abortive breach of the present Parliament, on Thursday the 15th day of this instant June. For the House of Commons having transmitted up George Duke of Buckingham to the Lords as guilty of many great and enormous crimes, and especially because he had given a potion and administered plasters to King James in his last sickness, of which it was doubted he died; and the Upper House, thereupon, and for some other offences, intending to question the said Duke for his life; all these proceedings received a sudden check and stop by this sudden and fatal dissolution; which happened not only most unseasonably in respect of the many blessings we missed at home by it, but also because the King had at this time many great and noble designs abroad for the restoring of God's oppressed Church and Gospel in foreign parts. All men that truly loved God, their King and country, had just cause to lament so dismal and sad an accident." Vol 1, page 301.

Buckingham's great guilt was the being his friend and favourite," and he tells us that "all the other complaints against him were mere pretences." It appears, in Rushworth, that "Upon the impeachment of the Duke, a paper was, privately, conveyed to the King, importing that this great opposition against the Duke was stirred up and maintained by such as seek the destruction of this free monarchy: That, since the time of Henry VI, these parliamentary discoursings might never be suffered, as being symptoms of rebellions, and dethroning our King, and no one patriot daring to oppose them lest he incur the reputation of a fool or coward in his country's cause. His Majesty, therefore, strengthened himself ever with some favorite as whom he might better trust than many of the nobility tainted with this oligarchy. It behoveth his Majesty to uphold the Duke who, if he be decourted, it will be the corner stone on which the demolishing of his monarchy will be built. For, if they prevail in this, they will pull the other feathers off Royalty. They will appoint him counsellors, servants, &c. That the King and his father are concerned in the Duke's accusation; and, if he suffer for obeying his sovereign, the next attempt will be to call the King to an account" &c.

Rushworth says, "The Duke put in his answer, *and divers witnesses were examined,* but the case came not to a judicial hearing in the Court." Could it be discovered that credible witnesses were examined *upon the Duke's answer,* it would, of course, prove a very important feature in this dark case: Sir Simons D'Ewes says that it "appeared in Parliament, by the testimony of Dr. Ramsey, a Scot, and other learned practitioners in that faculty, that he was reasonably well recovered, and in their judgments past all danger till, in their absence, George Duke of Buckingham administered to him a potion and gave him plasters, after which he fell into a great burning and distemper which increased more and more till his decease." It is, however, almost certain that this has reference to the evidence collected by the House of Commons in framing the charges against the Duke.*

Beyond this point, the developement of our case does not require more than a cursory detail of Buckingham's struggles

* Who were the Physicians who gave evidence before the House regarding Buckingham's interference in the treatment of King James's case? We have seen that several contemporary writers speak of the unfavorable reports as if they altogether originated with the *Scotch* physicians in attendance.

against popular opinion during the brief remainder of his career.

Charles, having carried on a calamitous system of Government, without the aid of the House of Commons, for a year and nine months, was compelled by pecuniary need to convene a Parliament who, on the 19th of June 1628, again took up their charges against the Duke and voted a Remonstrance (a copy of which will be found in Rushworth)* which they instructed their Speaker, much against his will, to present to the King. Disraeli cites MS. authorities to the effect that, after the reading of this Remonstrance, the Duke fell on his knees, desiring to answer for himself. Eleven days afterwards, on the 26th of June, the King came down, unexpectedly, to the House of Lords and addressed both Houses in a speech in which he made use of the remarkable words.—"I must avow that I owe the account of my actions to God alone." A bill for five subsides was then presented by the Speaker and received the assent of the King, who immediately put an end to the proceedings against Buckingham by proroguing the Parliament.†

In the memoir of Buckingham published in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1756, it is stated that, on proroguing this Parliament, the King caused an order to be made in the Star-chamber, with respect to the complaints before exhibited against the Duke, that His Majesty, knowing them to be false, they should, together with the Duke's answer, be taken off the file, that no memory might remain upon record against him which might tend to his disgrace.

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* Vol. 1, page 619.

† The following epigram published in vol. vii, 2nd Series of Notes and Queries from a copy of MS. by Sir John Oglander, of the Isle of Wight, must have been written on this occasion.

In Ducem Buckinghamiæ.

Dux and Crux are of a sound,
Dux doth Rex and Grex confound:
If Crux of Dux might have his fill,
Then Rex with Grex might work their will
Five subsidies to ten would turn;
And Grex would laugh, that now doth mourn;
O Rex, they Grex doth grievously complain
That Dux hears Crux, and Crux not Dux again.

Many vague rumors regarding the King's injudicious support of Buckingham on this occasion appear to have been afloat. It is stated, in a letter from J. King to Usher Archbishop of Armagh, dated June 30th

On the 19th of June of this year, the very day on which Buckingham's crimes were, for the last time, brought before Parliament, there was committed in the city of London, in broad day light, a frantic act of popular vengeance which afforded a terrible foreshadowing of the fate which awaited Buckingham. The man commonly known as Doctor Lambe—(an empiric whom Disraeli describes as a dealer in magical arts, who lived by showing apparitions or selling the favors of the devil, and whose chambers were a convenient rendezvous for the curious of both sexes)—who was, assuredly, a vile miscreant,* ventured to emerge from the obscurity into which he had been hooted when the evil rumours of the manner of the King's death became public; and, walking disguised through Wood Street, Cheapside, was recognised by the street boys as the "Duke's Devil," and felled with stones. A crowd gathered who chased him in his tottering flight (he was eighty years old,) to St. Paul's Churchyard, striking furiously at him, and yelling "Kill the wizard, the poisoner, the devil, the Duke's Conjuror!"—vowing that they would handle his master worse and would mince his flesh until every one had a morsel of him. Lambe was so severely injured that he died, the next day, in the Poultry Compter, whither he had been carried for protection.

The King, hearing of this riot, immediately rode in from Whitehall, and was so indignant at being unable to discover the murderers that he fined the City Authorities six thousand pounds for their incompetence to maintain good order.

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of this year,—"We had great rejoicing every where for his Majesty's gracious and good agrement with the Parliament; but, some ten days ago, the House of Commons having exhibited certain Remonstrances to his Highness which as it seemed, touched the Duke; after reading thereof his Majesty rose up and said. They should, be answered, and instantly gave the Duke his hand to kiss; which the Parliament men, and others were much amazed at. God Almighty amend what is amiss, if it be his blessed will."

* According to Granger, he commenced his career as a professor of physic, caster of nativities and teller of fortunes. He was indicted at Worcester, the 5th of King James, for sorcery and witchcraft, practised on the body of Thomas Lord Windsor, of which he was found guilty; but the judgment was stayed. He was confined a long time in Worcester Castle, and afterwards removed to the King's Bench Prison in Surrey; and, while there, was, a second time, indicted for a rape upon the person of a girl eleven years of age; for which he was tried, convicted, and received sentence of death. He made friends, however, to obtain a pardon.

It is said that Lambe had predicted his own death and that of the Duke. He may, readily, have done so without any aid from magical art, seeing how strongly the signs of the times were displayed against the Duke. Mead, in one of his letters to to Sir Martin Stuteville, dated the 5th of that month, says "The old scaffold on Tower-hill was pulled down and burned by certain unhappy boys, who said they would have a new one built for the Duke." Disraeli adds that a report had arisen that Buckingham had been committed to the Tower, and that this mistake spread even to the country which blazed with bonfires announcing the fall of the minion. Carte affirms that Buckingham was not even acquainted with Lambe's person, and Mr. Jesse has drawn attention to a letter,—relating to the proceedings against Lady Purbeck, the Duke's sister-in-law and Sir R. Howard, from Sir R. Heath and Sir T. Coventry to the Duke,*—which clearly proves that, at least up to the 24th of February 1624, Lambe was no creature of the Duke's. It is just possible, however, that they, subsequently, became confederates in evil. The passage is as follows—"Concerning the point of sorcery, we do not conceive the proof such that we can conclude any sorcery to be acted, either by Lambe or Frodesham, against your Grace or the Lord Purbeck; but that the Lady Purbeck did resort often to Lambe is most manifest, and we verily think with evil intention to your brother, and that Sir Edward Howard went often with her is equally clear, but that this intention was to have any sorcery used is not so plain; so as we think the use to be made of this part the business will be rather to aggravate and make odious the other part of the offence, than to proceed upon it as a distinct crime of itself."

The popular hatred of Buckingham was by no means sated by the slaughter of Dr. Lamb. The author of *Observations on the History of the Reign of King Charles: published by H. L.* [Hamond L'Estrange] says, "But to return again to the threatening words used by the people in the murder of Doctor Lamb, I well remember that this bold rhime was spread about not long after, in pursuance of them,—

Let Charles *and* George *doe what they can,*
The Duke shall die like Doctor Lamb,

And I remember also that, about the same time, there came out a Chronogram, in which the numeral letters of *Georgius*

* Bishop Goodman's Memoirs, vol. 2, page 377.

Dux Buckinghamiæ viz: M. D. C. X. V. V. V. I. I. I.* made up the yeare 1628, to which these verses were subjoyned, and being made by chance must needs be thought a strange prognostication of that which followed, viz:

> "Since with this yeare thy name doth so agree.
> Then shall this yeare to thee most fatal bee."

The following passage occurs in another of Mr. Mead's letters (Ellis's Letters, 1st Series, vol. 3, page 252.) "On Thursday June 19th, (1628) was a Libel taken down from a post in Colman Street by a constable and carried to my Lord Mayor; by his Lordship considered on in a Court of Aldermen, and by the two Sheriffs sent to the King, with charge they should deliver it to none but his Majesty. Some part whereof (we hear saith mine author) ran thus presumptuously. 'Who rules the Kingdome? The King. Who rules the King? The Duke. Who rules the Duke? The Devil." And the Libellers there professe, let the Duke look to it; for they intend shortly to use him worse than they did his Doctor, and if things are not shortly reformed, they will work reformation themselves. At the sight thereof, they say his Majesty (and he had reason) was much displeased; and commanded that a double guard should be upon the watch every night." * *

"This week, about Wednesday, his Majesty went with the Duke (taking him in his owne coach, and so riding through the city, as it were to grace him) to Deptford to see the ships: where having seen ten fair ships ready rigged for Rochelle, they say he uttered these words to the Duke—'George, there are some that wish that both these and thou mightest both perish. But care not for them. We will both perish together, if thou doest.'"

D'Ewes says that Felton, even to his death, denied that he was impelled by private revenge, and protested—"that the love of the public good alone induced him to that act. For having read the Remonstrance, the House of Commons preferred to the King in the late session of Parliament, by which the Duke was branded to be a capital enemy to Church and State, and

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* Sir Simonds D'Ewes gives this Chronogram as follows:—

GEORGI 1 VS 5 D 500 V 5 X 10 BV 5 C 100 K 1 I 1 NGHAM 1000 I 1 Æ—MDCXXVIII

> "Thy numerous name with this year doth agree,
> But twentie-nine, Heaven grant thou never see."

that there was no public justice to be had against him, he had strong inward workings and resolutions to sacrifice himself for the Church and State."

In Dudley Lord Carleton's letter, narrating the circumstances of Buckingham's assassination to the Queen, it is said that, "Upon his apprehension, Felton alleged that the non-payment of eighty pounds pay which was due to him, and his supercession in his company partly discontented him, and yet hee sayd, that that did not move him to this resolution, but that he reading the Remonstrance of the House of Parliament, it came into his mind, that in committing the act of killing the Duke, hee should doe his country great good service. According to the Commentator upon Hamond L'Estrange's History "His" [Felton's] "first ascribing of the *fact* to the late Remonstrance was made to one Dr. Hutcheson (Chaplaine in Ordinary to the King, and then in the course of his attendance) sent by the King of purpose as soon as the sad news was brought unto him, to trie if he could learn out of him upon what motives he had committed that most horrible murder; and afterwards, again and again, both at the time of his examination before the Lords of the Councill, and finally at the very instant of his execution."

Mead* also says that Felton told the two divines, whom the King sent to exhort him to confession, that "His only confederate and setter on was the Remonstrance of the Parliament which he then, verily, thought in his soul and conscience to be a sufficient warrant for what he did upon the Duke's person." According to Sir Robert Gordon, when Felton was seized,—"their wes a note found shewed within his hatt which shewes his resolution, and withall the Remonstrance which wes maid to his Majestie by the Lower House of Parliament in the yier of God 1628, wes found in his pocket. This Remonstrance did charge the Duke to be the cause of all the evills and disasters that happened to this kingdom (both within and without) this many yeirs." We do not find this remarkable fact repeated in any of the histories.

There cannot be a doubt that the suspicion that Buckingham had poisoned King James added greatly to the detestation in which he was held by the public at large. Disraeli has reproduced a manuscript satire of this very time, entitled

* Ellis, 1st Series, vol 3, page 266.

"*Rhodomontados,*" among the doggerel of which Buckingham is made to say—

Nor shall you ever prove I had a hand,
In poisoning of the monarch of this land,
Or the like hand, by poisoning, to intox,
Southampton, Oxford, Hamilton, Lenox,
Nor shall you ever prove by magic charms,
I wrought the King's affection or his harms,
Nor fear I if ten Vitrys now were here,
Since I have thrice ten Ravilliacs as near.
* * * * *
Though Lamb be dead, I'll stand, and you shall see,
I'll smile at them that can but bark at me.

Undoubtedly, popular feeling was much in favor of Felton, as one who had relieved the country of a criminal and an oppressor. As he passed through Kinston-on-Thames, an old woman, alluding the death of Goliath, called out to him, 'Now God bless thee Little David!' Mr. Mead says that, when he was brought to the Tower on Friday night by water, multitudes of people being gathered to see him, "He desired them, all the way as he came to pray for him, who with a general voice caried, "Lord comfort thee," "the Lord be merciful unto thee," or such like words.

The fanciful discovered a clumsy anagram of his name.

Noh flie not.

John Felton.

The following halting epigram is from Sir John Oglander's MS.

"*Vox Populi.*"

"Felton live for ever, for thou hast brought to dust,
Treason, murder, pride and lust."

The convictions which this enquiry has established in our mind must have become nearly self-evident to any one who may have had patience to follow our narrative throughout.

These convictions are—That the points of aggravation which Eglisham introduced, in stating the King's case, are unworthy of credit.

That, although several historians, have given but little prominence to this question of poisoning, as one of the circumstances of aggravation which arose in the contest between King Charles and his Parliaments,—(Lord Macaulay has not even alluded to it,)—it was one which rankled desperately in the minds of the Public, the Parliament, and the King; and that it was not set at rest even when it found issue in Buckingham's

death by the hand of an assassin, and when Charles determined to work without the aid of Parliaments—a resolution which he, stubbornly, maintained up to the year 1640.

That Buckingham gave a true statement of the circumstances in his defence.

That there is not a vestige of evidence, which would be accepted in the present day, to show that King James was poisoned; and that, scanty and very imperfect as they are, the medical facts of the case render it, in the highest degree, probable that the King's death resulted from natural disease, the severity of which appears to have been aggravated by the use of common but inappropriate medicines.

Note to Pages 197 *and* 225.

Mr. Amos has gathered, from Sir Theodore Mayerne's notes, that King James was subject to a diarrhœa in the Spring and Autumn, the return of which was always preceded by his looking with suspicion on every body; and that he concealed hurts which he often met in hunting, for fear of being pressed to take physic.—*The Great Oyer of Poisoning*, p. 161.