Clarendon's 'History of the Rebellion'

PART III.—THE 'HISTORY OF THE REBELLION.'

DURING the earlier part of his exile none of Clarendon's children or relatives had been allowed to visit him. By the Act of Banishment even correspondence with him was rendered treasonable. In 1671 the English government relaxed its severity, and on 8 May his second son, Laurence Hyde, was granted a pass to go to France to see his father. Clarendon removed from Montpellier to Moulins in order to facilitate their meeting, which took place about the beginning of June 1671.¹ A second visit took place in 1678. Laurence in some meditations on the anniversary of his father's death describes himself as 'having had the good fortune to attend him twice in these seven years of his banishment, and spent, indeed, only five weeks in both times with him.' As earl of Rochester Laurence Hyde, some thirty years later, edited and published the *History of the Rebellion*, and Clarendon now confided his literary schemes to him. 'He was pleased,' writes the son, 'to discuss with me of several actions of his life, more like a friend and upon equal terms than a father, and to give me the perusal of several of his writings.'² It is evident that Laurence Hyde brought with him from England some of the papers referred to in the 'Life,' which Clarendon had felt the need of whilst he was writing, and had hitherto been unable to procure.³ Among these were Walker's narratives of the campaigns of 1644 and 1645, some letters which passed between Charles I and the French ambassador Montreuil in 1646, Clarendon's own account of 'the western business' and of the duke of Hamilton's imprisonment, and, most important of all, the six books of the original 'History,' written between 1646 and 1648. This is proved by the fact that Clarendon at once set to work to complete his unfinished 'History,' and used all these papers in compiling it.

During the next twelve months the *History of the Rebellion* was completed and put together. The eighth book is undated, but there

¹ *Calendar of State Papers*, Dom., 1671, p. 215; cf. Lister, *Life of Clarendon*, iii. 478-84.

² Singer, *Diary of Henry, Earl of Clarendon*, &c., i. 645.

³ See *ante*, pp. 259-60.

can be little doubt that it was written in July 1671. The ninth book is dated at the beginning 12 August 1671, and at the end 17 Sept. The eleventh is dated at the end 21 Nov. None of the other books, or rather fragments of books, are dated, but, as Clarendon set to work upon the 'Continuation' of his 'Life' on 8 June 1672, the *History of the Rebellion* must have been completed before that time.

The reasons which made Clarendon take up again the abandoned 'History,' instead of at once continuing the autobiography, upon which he had so recently been engaged, are not difficult to conjecture. No doubt the sight of his manuscript 'History' awoke in him the desire to finish his work, as the sight of his unfinished 'Meditations on the Psalms' had done a year or two earlier. But other motives also inspired him, and among them was the desire to earn literary fame as an historian. The question how history should be written was one of the subjects which occupied Clarendon's thoughts during his exile. He tells us that he 'entered upon the forming a method for the better disposing the history of England, that it may be more profitably and exactly communicated than it hath yet been.' In his essay 'On an Active and on a Contemplative Life' he discusses at length the qualifications necessary to make a good historian, criticising and comparing those famous foreign historians Strada, Bentivoglio, Grotius, and D'Avila, 'four eminent persons of the age in which we live, who were all men in their several degrees of great lustre in the world, who all writ histories of the same or near the same times.' Of these four, said he, two, D'Avila and Bentivoglio, 'may worthily stand by the sides of the best of the ancients. . . . Both their histories are excellent, and will instruct the ablest and wisest men how to write, and terrify them from writing.' On the other hand only a small part, if any, of English history had been tolerably written, and our native historians were feeble creatures.

It hath been the fate of our country, which hath in all ages been the field of great and noble actions in peace and war, and hath contributed so much to the growth and improvement of arts and sciences (all which are the most proper subjects of history), to have its transactions derived to posterity by men, who have had no other excuse for their presumption than their good will.

The value of a history, he argued, depended upon the qualifications of the writer, upon his judgment and his experience as well as his knowledge.

There was never yet a good history written but by men conversant in business, and of the best and most liberal education. . . . It is not a collection of records, or an admission to the view and perusal of the most secret letters and acts of state (though they are great and necessary contributions), which can enable a man to write a history, if there be an

absence of that genius, and spirit, and soul of an historian, which is contracted by the knowledge and course and method of business, and by conversation and familiarity in the inside of courts, and [with] the most active and eminent persons in the government; all which yields an admirable light, though a man writes of times and things which were transacted for the most part before he was born.

The best histories, he concludes, must be those written by men of affairs telling the story of their own times, and dealing with men and events of which they have some personal knowledge. One of the merits of Bentivoglio and D'Avila is that 'commonly the greatest persons they have occasion to mention were very well known to them both, which makes their characters always very lively.'

It must have occurred to Clarendon when he wrote these words that he possessed just those qualifications which he pronounced theoretically essential. The desire to show how English history should be written, to illuminate for posterity one portion of the past of his own country, and to be numbered himself amongst famous writers, was undoubtedly amongst his motives for completing his 'History.'

Clarendon had also a more immediate and practical purpose in completing his book. To the last he deluded himself with the belief that he would be allowed to return home to end his days amongst his family. Each relaxation of the king's rigour seemed a presage of forgiveness. In a dedication addressed to Charles in 1673 he speaks of 'a hope which sustains my weak, decayed spirits that your majesty will at some time call to your remembrance my long and incorrupted fidelity to your person and your service.'⁴ Literary services, the only ones he could now render, might, he thought, help to secure his pardon, and obtain him the indulgence he desired. His *History of the Rebellion* seemed to him to be such a service. 'My banishment,' he wrote to the king, 'hath hitherto been the more supportable to me, in that I think I have performed a work, under this mortification, which I began with the approbation and encouragement of your blessed father, and when I had the honour to be near your majesty.' In another passage he describes it as 'a work at least recommended, if not enjoined, to me by your blessed father, and approved and in some degree perused by your majesty, which I hope will be to the honour of his majesty's memory and your own magnanimous sufferings.'⁵ If the thought of future fame did not move the king, Clarendon had a second string to his bow. Perhaps a political treatise, or something more immediately

⁴ *Miscellaneous Tracts*, 1727, pp. 179-82.

⁵ 'Epistle Dedicatory' to *A Brief View and Survey of the Dangerous and Pernicious Errors to Church and State in Mr. Hobbes's Book entitled Leviathan*. The 'Epistle' is dated 10 May 1673.

⁶ *Ibid.*; *Clarendon State Papers*, vol. iii. Appendix, p. xl.

connected with the problems of the present, might win him the desired reward.

I spend all my time (he wrote) in praying for your majesty, and endeavouring to do you some service, even in the impotent state that I am in. I have finished an answer to Mr. Hobbes's *Leviathan*, to which I have not seen any answer, at least to the most pernicious parts of it; and if it might be printed with your majesty's leave, it would, in my own judgment, prove for your service. . . . If I know anything of the constitution of the government of England, and of the nature and temper of that faithful nation, the publishing of this poor discourse may be of some use and service to your majesty; that all the world may know how much you abhor all those extravagant and absurd privileges, which no Christian prince ever enjoyed or affected.⁷

Charles, however, had more sympathy with the theory of royal power set forth by Hobbes than with the constitutional views of Clarendon. We are justified in concluding from these passages that Clarendon thought the *History of the Rebellion* a service to the cause of monarchy in England, and hoped it would help to purchase his pardon. This is one of the reasons why in compiling that work Clarendon omitted from it most of the severe reflexions upon the faults of Charles I which he had ventured to insert in his autobiography.

A third motive which induced Clarendon to undertake the completion of his 'History' was regard for his own political reputation. The vindication of himself from the charges upon which he had been impeached, though transmitted to England for publication, had never been published. The autobiography upon which he had spent nearly two years was intended for his family, not for the public. Under these circumstances a history which was the exposition of his political career would serve to defend his memory, even better, perhaps, than a more formal apology.⁸ Indirectly it might

⁷ *Clarendon State Papers*, vol. iii. Appendix, p. xlii; 'Epistle Dedicatory' of *A Brief View*.

⁸ This is suggested in a letter to Edgeman, Clarendon's secretary, written in 1654. The writer, Richard Watson, after expressing his joy at the king's order vindicating Hyde from the charges of Sir Richard Grenville, and desiring to know what Lord Gerrard's accusation against Hyde is, continues: 'What the reason is I know not, but I have in severall places found people of the King's partie too partially prepar'd to credite any charge against that noble person, whom I assure you I have severall times industriously vindicated, and spoke more upon mine own knowledge for his honour, than I am sure they could on theirs against it. I will deale plainlie with you, though it may be somewhat boldly. I feare some little height of spirit, some passionate expressions dropt from it and some unsatisfactorie answers given to the importunities of necessitated persons have layd the foundation for all this malice upon which ambition and aemulation have built the structure and pinacle (?) of this charge. I cannot see what is left, beside innocencie, for Mr Chancellor to doe himselfe right, and give others their deserts, but a publication of his historie, which I hope is most faythfully penned, whereby however he must displease many persons whose shame posteritie may reade in it, he will be sure to gain himselfe that partie whose fidelitie and prudence have merited so complete a character as he can give of them in better

effect what he could not do directly, especially if his own part in public affairs was made a little clearer by the insertion of a few passages from the autobiography.

For these different reasons Clarendon set to work to complete and to put together the *History of the Rebellion* as soon as he received his papers from England. He worked with great rapidity, and, as he was able to begin writing the 'Continuation' of the 'Life' in June 1672, the completion of the *History of the Rebellion* must have occupied him from June 1671 to June 1672. The sixteen books of the *History of the Rebellion* fall naturally into two divisions. The first part consists of books i. to vii.; in these the original 'History,' written between 1645 and 1648, is supplemented by passages from the 'Life,' written in 1668 and 1669. The second part consists of books viii. to xvi.; in these the 'Life,' written in 1668 and 1669, is supplemented by additions to the 'History,' written for the purpose in 1671-2, and by incorporating nearly the whole of two papers written in 1646.

It will be convenient to treat these two parts separately, and to begin by examining the manner in which the books forming the first part were put together. As we have seen, the original 'History' consists of six books, numbered i. to vii., with a place left for a fifth book which had never been written. Clarendon filled up the gap by dividing the first book into two and altering the numbers of the three succeeding books, so that the missing fifth was replaced by what had been originally the fourth book. Books i. and ii. were mainly taken from the 'Life.' In the first book only 81 sections of its 218 are derived from the original 'History;' in the second book there are 48 sections from the 'History' as against 82 from the 'Life.' In the later books there are, on the other hand, more sections from the 'History' than from the 'Life.' In the third book about 82 out of 271 sections are from the 'Life;' in the fourth, 82 out of 358; in the fifth, 40 out of 419; in the sixth, 49 out of 412; in the seventh, 67 out of 416. As a rule the passages of the 'Life' thus inserted in the framework of the 'History' contained accounts of incidents not mentioned in the earlier work. But sometimes Clarendon had written two accounts of the same event, and in such cases he frequently replaced the account standing in the original 'History' by a longer and more detailed version from the 'Life.' In this way his original accounts of the Scottish revolt and the Short Parliament were suppressed in favour of the much fuller narratives now in the text of book ii. So too the summary enumeration of the popular leaders in the Long Parliament, and

language than any man I know of our nation. If His Honour thinks it too great an adventure I wish he would bestow his copy on them who will lay all they are at stake to doe him service in that way.'—Richard Watson to Edgeman, Feb. 1654. Clarendon MSS. xlvii. 389.

the short characters of the persons killed at Edgehill, were succeeded by full-length portraits of them extracted from the 'Life.' Not less than fifty new characters were thus inserted in the *History of the Rebellion*. To make room for these additions Clarendon omitted several of the manifestoes and papers which he had included in the original 'History,' and also some of the didactic digressions on politics in general. The process of omission and substitution was not always carefully done. In a couple of cases at least the *History of the Rebellion* contains two contradictory versions of the same incident. For instance, there are two accounts of the introduction of the Militia Bill in it, one taken from the 'Life,' the other from the 'History,' and they do not agree.⁹ There are also two accounts of Lunsford's appointment as governor of the Tower, which contradict each other in the most flagrant fashion. In that derived from the 'History' Clarendon represents the exceptions made against the choice as mere pretexts, saying that Lunsford was 'not then known enough and of reputation equal to so envious a province.' In the account derived from the 'Life' he confesses that Lunsford was 'so little known, except upon the disadvantage of an ill character, that in the most dutiful times the promotion would have appeared very ingrateful.'¹⁰

Some slight verbal changes of course were needed in order to make the additions from the 'Life' fit into the text of the 'History,' but the only important alteration which Clarendon made was the omission of references to himself. For instance, in book vi. an account is given of the different expedients by which the king obtained money to raise an army—the plate of the Oxford colleges, contributions from the catholics, and the sale of a peerage. In inserting this passage from the 'Life' Clarendon suppresses any mention of his own share in suggesting and carrying out these expedients. Instead of 'Mr. Hyde had spoken to the king' we get 'it was proposed to the king;' and for 'the king was informed that if he would depute Mr. Hyde' there is substituted 'if he would depute a person much trusted by him.'¹¹ Sometimes these suppressed words throw considerable light on the development of Charles I's policy. In book vii. a passage is inserted from the 'Life' relating the origin of the anti-parliament called by the king at Oxford, and the history of the letter sent by the peers at Oxford to the privy council of Scotland in the hope of preventing the threatened invasion. 'In these straits,' says the *History of the Rebellion*, 'the king considered two expedients which were proposed to him, and which his majesty directed should be both consulted

⁹ *Rebellion*, iii. 244-6, iv. 95-100. The first is from the 'History,' the second from the 'Life.'

¹⁰ *Rebellion*, iv. 101-2 and 147. The second account is from the 'Life.'

¹¹ *Rebellion*, vi. 57-8, 65-6.

in the council.' In the 'Life' Clarendon had written: 'The chancellor of the exchequer proposed two expedients to the king, which the king liked well, and wished they might both be consulted in the council.'¹² These alterations were designed to give an impersonal air to Clarendon's reminiscences and prevent any appearance of egotism, but the result is that in very many cases a vague periphrasis is substituted for a definite statement, so that the turns and changes of royalist politics become involved in unnecessary obscurity. Moreover the anecdotes and personal digressions added interrupt the sequence and order of Clarendon's story, and produce a certain incoherence and confusion. This is the result of patching one narrative with fragments taken from another. Though the original 'History' lacked much of the interest which the portraits of Hyde's contemporaries give to the *History of the Rebellion*, it was on the whole a more consecutive and a better arranged narrative.

In the second part of the *History of the Rebellion*—that is, in books viii. to xvi.—the process of compilation was absolutely different from that adopted in the first part. Instead of piecing together two previously existing narratives, with the changes and suppressions necessary to make them fit into each other, Clarendon had to write an entirely new narrative to supplement the 'Life' which he had already written. This new narrative consists of a number of fragments of varying length, with references to the manuscript of the 'Life,' showing where they are to be inserted. It is bound up now with the manuscript of the 'History,' written in 1646-8, forming a sort of continuation to it.¹³ Dr. Macray and other editors usually speak of this supplement under the title of the 'History,' like the earlier narrative, though it would have been better to distinguish in some way these later additions from the original 'History.' In these nine books passages marked as derived from the 'History' belong to the period 1671-2, and are of later date than those derived from the 'Life,' whereas in the preceding seven books passages from the 'History' are of earlier date than those from the 'Life.'

Books viii. and ix. require a more detailed examination than the succeeding books, because the question of their composition, and consequently of their historical value, is more complicated than it is in the case of the others.

The first question to be settled is the date of book viii. Ranke supposes it to have been written in 1648, and other writers have followed his lead.¹⁴ The fact is, however, that not more than

¹² *Rebellion*, vii. 323.

¹³ Now Clarendon MS. 112; described under the heading 16198 in Mr. Madan's *Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library*, iii. 588.

¹⁴ *History of England*, vi. 5, 15.

twenty lines of the present book viii. were written in 1648, and those lines originally formed part of book vii., and were transferred to their present place in 1671. They are the lines in § 1 of book viii. beginning with the words, 'The great preparation that was made at London,' and ending with 'so that he had in all . . .'¹⁵ The manuscripts of the 'History' prove this very clearly, and it is confirmed by the contents of book viii. As we have seen, Clarendon was obliged to stop in 1648 at the close of book vii., because he had not received either Walker's narrative of the campaign of 1644, or Hopton's narrative of the events which led up to the battle of Cheriton. He had commenced his account of Hopton's movements, but was obliged to break off in the middle of a sentence for want of exact information as to his numbers. After writing six lines on p. 517 of the original 'History' he left the rest of that page and the whole of p. 518 blank, resolving to fill them up when Hopton's narrative came, and then went on to complete the rest of book vii., which ends on p. 527 of the manuscript. At some later time he completed this unfinished account of Hopton's campaign, but it required more space than he expected. He filled the rest of p. 517 and the whole of p. 518, and then went on to the blank page at the end of book vii. and covered pp. 528, 529, and 530. The whole of this passage is written in a darker ink than book vii. and the original 'History' in general, and the same darker ink is used in the additions to the 'History' made in 1671-2, which occupy the latter part of the volume. Moreover at the end of this passage, in the same dark ink, and therefore written at the same time, the words 'vide pa. 262' are added. This reference to the pagination of the 'Life' proves that the passage was written later than 1669.¹⁶ Another proof that this account of Hopton's campaign was not written in 1648 is afforded by Edgeman's transcript of the original 'History.' Hyde during his first exile had a transcript of the original 'History' made for his own use by his secretary, William Edgeman. It does not include the account of

¹⁵ 'The great preparation that was made at London, and the fame of sending Sir William Waller into the west, put the king upon the resolution of having such a body in his way as might give him interruption, without Prince Morice's being disturbed in his siege of Plimmoth; which was not thought to be able to make long resistance. To this purpose the Lord Hopton was appointed to command an army apart, to be levied out of his garrison of Bristol and those western counties adjacent newly reduced, and where his reputation and interest was very great, and by which he had in a short time raised a pretty body of foot and horse; the which receiving an addition of two very good regiments (though not many in number) out of Munster, under the command of Sir Charles Vavasour and Sir John Paulett, and a good troop of horse under the command of Captain Bridges, all which had been transported, according to former orders, out of Ireland to Bristol since the cessation, the Lord Hopton advanced to Salisbury, and shortly after to Winchester; whither Sir John Berkeley brought him two regiments more of foot, raised by him in Devonshire; so that he had in all . . .'

¹⁶ See Dr. Macray's notes to viii 1 and viii. 17, and the manuscript of the 'History,' p. 530.

Hopton's campaign, which is represented only by a gap of several pages.¹⁷

An analysis of the contents of book viii. leads to the following conclusions: Out of the 286 sections of which it is composed about 124 are derived from part iii. of the 'Life,' which was concluded on 6 Nov. 1669. The remaining 161 sections are derived from what is called the 'History,' or rather the additions to the 'History' now bound up with it. Of these additions about 64 sections exist in Clarendon's own handwriting; the other 97 sections are only to be found in the transcript of his manuscript made for the press. But the distinction between these two portions of the 'History' is of no practical importance. Both portions are based on the same authority,¹⁸ present the same characteristics, and were obviously written at the same date. Internal evidence shows that they could not have been written in 1648, as Ranke supposes, for they contain references to events which took place either during Charles II's exile or after his restoration. Clarendon alludes to the execution of Charles I, the deaths of Colonel Urry (1650) and General King (1652), the noble behaviour of the marquis of Newcastle during his exile, and the exploits of General Middleton after he changed the parliament's service for the king's (1648-1654). When he mentions the birth of the princess Henrietta he describes her as 'a daughter that was afterwards married to the duke of Orleans,' which marriage took place in 1661.¹⁹ When he relates Sir William Morton's surrender of Sudeley Castle to Waller he adds that Morton was afterwards made a judge of the King's Bench, 'where he sat many years, and discharged the office with much gravity and learning.' Now Morton's promotion took place in November 1665.

In the second place, the exact details about the military transactions of 1644 which are given in both these portions of the 'History,' are in each case derived from Sir Edward Walker's narrative of the campaign. Clarendon's accounts of the battle of Cropredy Bridge, the surrender of Essex in Cornwall, the relief of Basing House, the second battle of Newbury, and the movements which led up to those events are all founded upon Walker. Consequently these accounts must have been written later than 1669, for at that date, as the parallel passages in the 'Life' show, Clarendon had not Walker's narrative with him. In putting together book viii. of the *History of the Rebellion* he always

¹⁷ Edgeman died about January 1655, and it might be inferred that the passage in question was not written till later. The manuscript is in the Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS. D. 811. On the reasons for making this transcript see Hyde's letter to Nicholas, *Clarendon State Papers*, ii. 318.

¹⁸ 'His Majesty's Happy Progress & Success from the 30th of March to the 23rd of November 1644,' Walker's *Historical Discourses*, 1705, p. 1.

¹⁹ *Rebellion*, viii. 52, 71, 79, 87, 88, 113.

omitted the short accounts of those incidents contained in the 'Life,' and substituted for them the long and detailed accounts founded on Walker. As there is no evidence that Clarendon obtained Walker's narrative from England until the visit of his son Laurence in June 1671, the composition of all that part of book viii. which is not taken from the 'Life' must be assigned to the summer of 1671.

Let us turn from the question of the date of book viii. to the question of its historical value. The parts which are derived from the 'Life' are extremely untrustworthy. Clarendon's narrative of Marston Moor is absolutely worthless, and his account of the origin of the Self-denying Ordinance and the proceedings connected with it is of the same character.²⁰ The long story of Antrim and Montrose which concludes the book is hopelessly confused by chronological errors.²¹ On the other hand Clarendon's account of the negotiations at Uxbridge, in which he himself was one of the king's commissioners, is full of interest,²² and the comparison of Wilmot and Goring is one of his most finished pieces of character-drawing.²³

As to the parts derived from the 'History,' Clarendon, having the use of Walker's exact and detailed narrative, and following it throughout very closely, gives an excellent account of the movements of the king's army during the campaign of 1644. He supplements Walker's account of the king's council of war by giving characters of its members, and by expatiating on the feud between the military and civilian advisers of the king. Besides these very instructive additions, which make the history of the campaign much more intelligible, he adds some particulars about the defence of Oxford.²⁴

Ranke, who compares the narratives of Walker and Clarendon, suggests that the latter is unjust to Wilmot, and does not give him sufficient credit for the success at Cropredy Bridge. There is hardly sufficient evidence to decide this question, but it is very evident that Clarendon is extremely unfair to Goring in his account of the operations in Cornwall. Describing the escape of Sir William Balfour and the rest of the parliamentary horse when the infantry of Essex's army were obliged to lay down their arms, he attributes it entirely to Goring's negligence. Goring, he says, was warned of the intended attempt to escape, and was so posted that he could have prevented it; but

the notice and orders came to Goring when he was in one of his jovial exercises; which he received with mirth, and slighting those who sent them, as men who took alarms too warmly; and he continued his delights

²⁰ *Rebellion*, viii. 78-5, 189-97.

²¹ *Ibid.* viii. 268-79.

²² *Ibid.* viii. 211-52.

²³ *Ibid.* viii. 169.

²⁴ *Ibid.* viii. 27-88, 58, 74, note, 94.

till all the enemy's horse were passed through his quarters, nor did he pursue them in any time.

Walker, however, does not blame Goring at all, and shows that he was stationed in such a position that it was not in his power to obstruct their march. Instead of being at Lostwithiel, near which point Balfour passed through the royalist lines, Goring was stationed at St. Blase, four miles to the south-west of it, and beyond Essex's army. He had with him all the king's horse but 500, and it was owing to the fact that he had been moved thither on 24 August that Balfour was able to escape on 31 August. Walker goes so far as to say that, owing to the disposition of the king's forces, Essex's foot might have escaped as well as the horse.

Had he either known our present condition, or made use of what he could but know, that our horse were engaged behind him, he might have either brought us to fight without our horse, or made his retreat good over the heath without much opposition. And then if he had been but four hours' march before us, and entered the enclosing country, it had not been in our power to have done him any other mischief than at most to compel him to leave his cannon.²³

Clarendon was aware of these facts. In section 111 he describes Goring's movement to St. Blase, and in section 132 he copies Walker's criticism almost verbatim. 'If they had then known that all the king's horse, his guard only excepted, were at that time quartered behind them, about St. Blase, their foot might very well have marched away with the horse, their cannon only being left behind.' Apparently Clarendon did not perceive the contradiction which existed between the censure which he passed on Goring and the facts which he stated on Walker's authority. The truth is that he and Goring had quarrelled in 1645, and he could believe anything to the discredit of his enemy. In 1669, when Clarendon was writing the 'Life,' he had made the same charge against Goring in almost the same words, and, as he said that Goring 'lay then quartered at Liskeard,' the charge had some plausibility in it.²⁴ In 1671, writing with Walker's narrative before his eyes, he corrected his mistake about Goring's position, but was too careless or too prejudiced to withdraw the charge of misconduct. Clarendon's censures of Rupert, Wilmot, Goring, and other military leaders always require careful testing, for he was not only ignorant of military affairs but personally hostile to the military party amongst the king's advisers.

Book ix. of the *History of the Rebellion* presents none of the difficulties as to the date of its composition which complicate the

²³ *Rebellion*, viii. 116; Walker, *Historical Discourses*, p. 69.

²⁴ *Rebellion*, viii. 96, note.

study of book viii. Its foundation is the two narratives written by Hyde at Jersey in 1646; one 'concerning the western business,' which, as we have seen, is dated at the beginning 29 June 1646, and at the end 31 July 1646; the other on the conduct of the prince's council towards the duke of Hamilton, which is dated 10 Sept. 1646. These two narratives supply the greater part of book ix. The 'Relation of the Western Business' is a full account of transactions in the west from the time the prince of Wales came thither from Oxford to his departure for Jersey, containing a very detailed vindication of the conduct of the prince and his council towards Greenville and Goring, and ending with the correspondence between the king and the prince's council about the prince leaving England.²⁷ As it is based throughout on documents, and was written within a few months of the events themselves, it is extremely accurate in matters of fact.²⁸ Clarendon suppressed certain passages of the 'Relation' when he compiled book viii., as being trivial or superfluous. 'One contains a statement of his attitude towards Goring before their association in the west began. He says that he regarded Goring from the first with distrust. 'I cannot dissemble myself to have contracted so steady a resolution, upon the former passages of the Lord Goring's life and the observation of his nature, not to mingle with him in any action or counsel of trust or importance.' On the other hand he had no personal hostility towards him, and even found pleasure in his society. 'His particular deportment to me was not only full of civilities but of extreme endearment, and his conversation, with reference to my own humour and appetite, full of pleasure and delight.''²⁹ The quarrel was due to the perennial hostility between the civil and military authorities, aggravated by the defects of Goring's character, and by his intrigues to gain or retain independent command. Though Clarendon writes as the advocate of the council, his judgment on Goring's character is correct enough, but whenever questions of policy or strategy are involved in the dispute his conclusions are more contestable.

The part of book ix. which is derived from the 'Life' consists merely of two sections relating to the formation of the New Model.³⁰ The portion of the 'Life' dealing with the events of 1645 is dated 9 Nov. 1669; it is a mere skeleton consisting of heads of the different subjects which the author intended to include, and references

²⁷ A transcript of this by William Edgeman, endorsed by Clarendon 'Concerning the Western Business,' is now Clarendon MS. 113 in the Bodleian Library. The original is in the volume containing the 'History' (Clarendon MS. 112), ff. 453-500, followed on ff. 500-5 by the narrative about Hamilton.

²⁸ This narrative occupies about 102 sections of the 178 forming book ix., and that relating to the duke of Hamilton occupies about 8 sections.

²⁹ *Rebellion*, ix. 20, note.

³⁰ *Ibid.* ix. 4, 5.

to the narrative of the western business which he hoped to procure from England.³¹

The remainder of book ix., consisting of about sixty-six sections and forming about one-third of the whole, is composed of additions to the 'History' written in 1671, which are dated at the beginning 'Moulins, 12 Aug. 1671,' and at the end 19 Sept. of the same year.³² The accounts given therein of the movements of Charles I and his army, of the battles of Naseby and Rowton Heath, of the stormy interview between the king and Prince Rupert at Newark, and of the king's return to Oxford, are all based upon Walker's *Brief Memorials of the Unfortunate Success of His Majesty's Army and Affairs in the Year 1645*.³³ Clarendon adds nothing material to Walker's narrative of these events, except some reflexions on Naseby, a note on Rupert's relations with Goring, and directions, which were subsequently carried out by his editors, for inserting some of the king's letters.³⁴ He completes Walker's narrative and concludes the book with an account of the negotiations which took place between the king and the parliament during the winter of 1645.

Book x., like book ix., was written in 1671, and embodies extracts from the 'Life' and from two earlier narratives. The concluding portion of the long 'Relation of the Western Business,' which filled so large a space in book ix., occupies nine sections of book x. It treats of the removal of the prince of Wales from Scilly to Jersey.³⁵ Next comes an account of Lord Digby's negotiations in Jersey and Paris, and of his attempts to arrange for the removal of the prince either to Ireland or to France. This is a passage extracted from the paper on the life and character of Digby written by Clarendon in 1668.³⁶ It contains reminiscences of conversations between Digby and Hyde, and reports of conversations between Digby and Mazarin. In the third place, the story of the prince's wanderings is completed by an account of the queen's message commanding her son to join her in France, of the debate in the prince's council which took place thereupon, and of the embarkation of the prince in obedience to the queen's order.³⁷ This was written in 1671, and a comparison between it and the long memorandum on the same subject which Clarendon wrote in 1646 shows that he had not the memorandum with him at the time of writing; ³⁸ for there are many small mistakes in the facts as given in the later account, though it agrees in substance with the earlier one. We have, therefore, in this short episode of the Prince of Wales's stay at Jersey a patch-

³¹ 'Life,' ed. 1857, i. 200-4.

³² *Rebellion*, ix. 1, 178.

³³ *Historical Discourses*, ed. 1705, p. 123.

³⁴ *Rebellion*, ix. 80, 41, 70, 74, 90.

³⁵ *Ibid.* x. 8-12.

³⁶ *Ibid.* x. 18-20; *Clarendon State Papers*, iii., Appendix, lvil.

³⁷ *Rebellion*, x. 37-47.

³⁸ See Hoskins, *Charles II in the Channel Islands*, i. 429-39 and 443-5.

work narrative composed at three different periods, in part an almost contemporary record, in part reminiscences written twenty-two or twenty-five years later by one who was an actor in the events related; and while a portion of the reminiscences can be tested by contemporary documents amongst Clarendon's papers, the accuracy of another portion cannot be so controlled.

Clarendon's account of the negotiations which led to the flight of Charles I to the Scots is of a different nature. He no longer writes as an actor, but as an historian, not to vindicate his own conduct but the conduct of another. His vindication of Montreuil, he says, 'can be imputed only to the love of truth, which ought, in common honesty, to be preserved in history as the soul of it, towards all persons who come to be mentioned in it.' He had obtained from England the documents which are now amongst the Clarendon State Papers, and was conscious that he wrote with authority. 'I have in my hands,' he said, 'all the original letters which passed from him to the king, and the king's answers and directions thereupon, or such authentic copies thereof as have been by myself examined with the originals.'³⁹ In the same way when Clarendon comes to relate the negotiations of the king with the Scottish leaders in December 1648, it again becomes clear that he had documents at his disposal. His son had evidently brought with him to France a copy of the treaty which Charles I had signed at Carisbrooke on 26 Dec. 1647; for in the four sections which Clarendon devotes to the subject he not only accurately summarises the clauses of the treaty but frequently quotes their very words.⁴⁰ These are exceptional cases, and in the whole of the remainder of book x. Clarendon depended entirely upon his memory. In his account of the king's flight from Hampton Court, for instance, he had no documents to consult, though he tells us that he had read both Berkeley's and Ashburnham's narratives, and 'conferred with them both at large, to discover in truth what the motives might be which led to so fatal an end.'⁴¹ His verdict, like that of later historians, is that both men were honest, but both unwise; but when he comes to give reasons for the verdict erroneous statements of every kind drop from his pen. He starts by a mistake of two months as to the date of the flight, which he puts about the beginning of September 1647 instead of on 11 Nov.⁴² If he makes blunders of this kind in dealing with the history of the king and the royalist party, it is not surprising that his treatment of the policy of his opponents and of the characters of their leaders

³⁹ *Rebellion*, x. 23.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* x. 162-5. The treaty is printed in Gardiner's *Constitutional Documents*, ed. 1899, pp. 847-53.

⁴¹ *Rebellion*, x. 134.

⁴² *Ibid.* x. 127.

should be completely untrustworthy. His account of the quarrel between the army and the parliament is so confused and erroneous as to be worthless, and in the utterances attributed to Cromwell he gives his imagination free play.⁴³ At best they are a hazy recollection of contemporary rumours.

Book xi., which was completed on 21 Nov. 1671, is largely derived from part v. of the 'Life,' written about two years earlier, but in the case of this book and of the later books in general the distinction between their component parts is of no practical importance. If there is any difference it is that the 'Life' is now more accurate than the 'History,' whereas the reverse was the case in the earlier books; for as the 'Life' deals mainly with transactions in which he was personally concerned, his memory is more trustworthy than it is when he is writing of public events which left a less lasting impression on his mind. For that reason his narrative of the proceedings of the prince in Holland and on board the fleet, and of the intrigues of which the prince was the centre, is far more valuable than his account of the politics and military affairs in England. His account of the second civil war contains every kind of error. Confusing what happened in 1650 with what happened in 1648, he represents Fairfax as refusing to fight against the Scots, and by a second confusion of the events of 1648 and 1646 he describes that general as winding up the war by the capture of Raglan Castle. In his account of the Kentish rising he omits all mention of Fairfax's battle at Maidstone. He leaves out altogether Cromwell's campaign in South Wales, saying that he marched directly against the Scots 'and troubled not himself . . . with what was done in Wales.' Twice over in referring to the treaty with the king at Newport he represents Charles as having been at that time for two years a prisoner at Carisbrooke, whereas he had really been confined there for rather less than a year.⁴⁴ But just when one becomes inclined to dismiss his whole account of the second civil war as a farrago of blunders, it becomes evident that there are certain cases in which he is writing with documentary evidence of real value before him. His account of the battle of Preston is clearly based on Sir Marmaduke Langdale's narrative of the fight, and his account of the doings of Sir Philip Musgrave and his band of northern royalists is likewise based on Musgrave's own story. Both these papers are in the Clarendon collection, and were, no doubt, brought to Moulins by Laurence Hyde.⁴⁵ With them came evidently the letter from the king to the prince of

⁴³ See *Rebellion*, i. 88.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* xi. 111, 158.

⁴⁵ Langdale's narrative (Clarendon Papers, no. 2862) is printed in Carte's *Original Letters*, i. 159, and in the *Fairfax Correspondence*, iv. 60. It should be compared with *Rebellion*, xi. 73-7. Sir Philip Musgrave's 'Relation' (Clarendon Papers, no. 2867) is printed in the *Miscellany of the Scottish History Society for 1904*. Compare with it *Rebellion*, xi. 16, 18, 52-4, 92-6.

Wales quoted by Clarendon, and the other documents relating to the treaty which are summarised in the *History of the Rebellion*.⁴ The originals had been copied for him by Edgeman some twenty years ago, perhaps with a view to the continuation of the 'History,' but more probably for political uses.

The following books (xii.-xv.) do not require either separate or detailed treatment. They are derived mainly from parts v., vi., and vii. of the 'Life,' written between November 1669 and August 1670, and supplemented by the additions to the 'History' written in 1671-2. With each succeeding book the amount of these additions diminishes in importance and extent. Clarendon throws very little light on English politics during the Commonwealth, and equally little on the conquest of Ireland and Scotland. His treatment of these subjects is vague and general, and chronological errors are very frequent. He misplaces the rising of the Levellers at Burford, antedates the proposed appointment of Lambert to command in Ireland, makes the emigration of the Irish soldiery take place about a couple of years too soon, &c.⁴⁷ His account of Dunbar is worthless; that of the march into England and the battle of Worcester, while containing a few anecdotes of interest, contributes nothing to the understanding of the campaign.⁴⁸ Clarendon, however, prides himself on the fulness and exactitude of his narrative of the escape of Charles II after that battle.

Besides all those particulars which the king himself was pleased to communicate unto him so soon after the transaction of them, and when they had made so lively an impression upon his memory, and of which the chancellor at that time kept a very punctual memorial, he had at the same time the daily conversation of the Lord Wilmot, who informed him of all he could remember. And after the king's blessed return into England he had frequent conferences with many of those who had acted several parts towards the escape; whereof many were of his nearest alliance, and others his most intimate friends.⁴⁹

Dr. Macray notes, 'The inaccuracy of Clarendon's narrative of the escape, with respect both to times and persons, is well known.' 'In Clarendon,' says another commentator on the narrative, 'there is no lack of minute and circumstantial detail, but hardly is there a single fact truly stated.' A third reprints it in a collection of documents relating to the escape for the purpose of showing 'its discrepancy, in many points, from the matter in which the other documents agree.' He adds, 'The most material errors will be noticed in the course of the narrative by the letter D at the foot of

⁴⁶ *Rebellion*, xi. 189; *Clarendon State Papers*, ii. 444.

⁴⁷ *Rebellion*, xii. 70, 148, 151.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* xiii. 21-2, 52-76.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* xiii. 108.

the page,' and accordingly its twenty-eight pages are marked by twenty-nine D's.⁴⁰

Such errors were inevitable when in his old age Clarendon attempted to set down in circumstantial detail what he had heard from others many years earlier, and it does not necessarily follow that his account of negotiations in which he was personally concerned, or deliberations in which he took a leading part, is equally inexact. His account of the situation of affairs at the Hague, of the coming of the Scottish commissioners to negotiate with Charles II, and of the deliberations of the young king's council is vivid and fairly correct. It is evident that he had copies of some of the papers of the Scottish commissioners before him, also of the declaration of the king to the states-general, and doubtless of the abortive manifesto drawn up by himself but rejected by the king's council.⁴¹ The long account of his embassy to Spain and residence at Madrid was also in all probability drawn up with some assistance from documents. The embassy to Spain was one of the causes of Clarendon's ignorance of English affairs during the early part of the Commonwealth. He rejoined the king in December 1651 after a separation of over two years. Henceforth the intrigues of the royal court, the personal history of the king and his brother, and the quarrels of the royalist chiefs form the staple of Clarendon's narrative. It was only gradually that Clarendon attained a paramount position amongst the king's advisers: more than once it was threatened by personal intrigues, or by differences of opinion as to policy. All this he relates in detail, and with some inaccuracy in particulars, but representing truthfully enough the attitude of parties and the characters of persons. The policy which he recommended his master to adopt was a passive one.

The marquis of Ormond and the chancellor believed that the king had nothing at this time to do but to keep quiet, and that all his activity was to consist in carefully avoiding to do anything that might do him hurt, and to expect some blessed conjuncture from the amity of Christian princes, or some such revolution of affairs in England by their own dis-

⁴⁰ *Rebellion*, xiii. 86, note; Hughes, *Boscobel Tracts*, ed. 1857, pp. 8, 109.

⁴¹ Sections 9, 10, 12, 27 of book xiii. are summaries of various documents. For their originals see *Old Parliamentary History*, xviii. 542, xix. 16; Carte, *Original Letters*, i. 260. The closeness with which they are followed shows that Clarendon had them before him. In the manuscript of the 'Life' there is this passage printed by Dr. Macray as a footnote to *Rebellion*, xii. 99: 'All that passed at the Hague both with the States and the Scots is more particularly contained in papers and memorials which will be found in the hair cabinet, out of which anything that is material may be added or altered; as also the names of all the ministers at that time in Madrid are in a paper book that stands in the shop.' The paper book was probably Edgeman's Diary, Clarendon MS. 137. See *ante*, p. 260. For the 'abortive manifesto' mentioned above see the *English Historical Review* for April 1893.

contents and divisions amongst themselves, as might make it seasonable for his majesty again to show himself.⁵²

To prevent the king from sacrificing the cause of the English church in order to gain the support of Huguenots, presbyterians, or catholics, was Clarendon's constant preoccupation. As necessary was it to prevent zealous English royalists from fruitless conspiracies and untimely insurrections, whilst avoiding to discourage the loyal, and endeavouring to make the best of any rising actually attempted either in England or Scotland.⁵³ Political intrigues and abortive plots form, therefore, the bulk of Clarendon's story: his account of these things is largely a vindication of himself, yet it represents very truly the lines of his policy and the nature of the political situation. In details, especially in dates, there are frequent errors; for instance, Clarendon places the address of the anabaptists to Charles II at the beginning of 1658 instead of in the summer of 1656, postdates the negotiations with Sexby, and puts the royalist rising of March 1655 in April.⁵⁴

With the year 1656 a new chapter began in the history of the exiles. Spain made a treaty with Charles II, promising assistance in his restoration; Charles removed to Flanders and raised an army of some 4,000 English, Scots, and Irish for a projected expedition to England. Not till the treaty of the Pyrenees in the autumn of 1659 was this hope abandoned. Clarendon's account of this period is confused and fragmentary. He gives interesting characters of Condé and of the Spanish generals and statesmen, but neither the diplomatic nor the military side of the story is adequately treated, and his brief account of the battle of the Dunes is full of errors.⁵⁵ Except as to the history of the movements amongst the royalists in England his memory of events was indistinct. Nowhere does one more regret his separation from the papers he had left in England, and throughout it is necessary to control and supplement his statements from the calendars of his correspondence.

Clarendon's account of the history of the Protectorate is a perfunctory sketch, a vague outline which is inaccurate when he descends to details. There are some exceptions, such as the brief account of the expedition to the West Indies,⁵⁶ and at times it is evident that he had some of the pamphlets of the period at his disposal. For instance, the excellent summaries given of Cromwell's speeches to his first parliament and of that accepting the Petition and Advice must have been based on the public reports of them.⁵⁷ In the same way the army petition of 6 April 1659, the army's

⁵² *Rebellion*, xiii. 140.

⁵³ *Ibid.* xiv. 101, 123, xv. 98.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* xiv. 124, xv. 104, 138.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* xv. 15, 79, 185-9, 141. Part of the character of Lord Digby written by Clarendon in 1668 appeared in an abridged form in books xv. and xvi.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* xv. 9-11.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* xiv. 17, 44, 46, xv. 45.

declaration of 6 May about the restoration of the Long Parliament, and the submission of Richard Cromwell to the parliament, are too accurately summarised to be mere recollections of the originals.⁵⁸ Further, Monck's speech to the secluded members before their re-entrance to the house contains many of the words and phrases of the contemporary printed account.

The last book of the *History of the Rebellion* is of much greater interest than the four which precede it. As he approaches the end of his task Clarendon's narrative becomes more vigorous, more lively. He passes lightly over the fall of Richard Cromwell and the quarrels of parliament and army; he dwells at length on the royalist rising of 1659, on the treason of Sir Richard Willis, and still more fully on the treaty of the Pyrenees. He paints with dramatic skill the alternate hope and dejection of the exiled royalists during the changes of that eventful year—the futile plans formed and abandoned, and the sudden revulsion of feeling when the news of Monck's revolt against the Rump came to Brussels. The book closes with the triumph of Clarendon's policy in the union of king and parliament, but though he cites at length the Declaration of Breda and the king's letters which accompanied it, he refrains from pointing out the important part which he himself played in effecting this final reconciliation.⁵⁹ To him the Restoration was 'such a prodigious act of Providence as God hath scarce vouchsafed to any nation since he led his own chosen people through the Red Sea.'⁶⁰ While attributing nothing to himself he attributes less than other historians to Monck. Perhaps his most valuable contribution to the history of the Restoration consists in the view of Monck's action which he embodies in his story. Phillips, Gumble, Price, Skinner, and other contemporary biographers and historians, agree in setting forth the thesis that Monck, from the moment when he declared against the army's usurpation of the government, deliberately resolved to restore Charles II to his throne. They even attribute to him the intention of co-operating with Sir George Booth's rising for that purpose. Clarendon, on the other hand, asserts that in August 1659

the general had not the least thought or purpose ever to contribute to the king's restoration, the hope whereof he believed to be desperate; and the disposition that did grow in him afterwards did arise from those accidents which fell out, and even obliged him to undertake that which proved so much to his profit and glory.⁶¹ . . . It was the king's great happiness that he never had it in his purpose to serve him till it fell to be in his power, and indeed till he had nothing else in his power to do. If he had

⁵⁸ *Rebellion*, xvi. 8, 15, 15, 188.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* xvi. 171–4, 181–203; cf. Ranke, *Hist. of Engl.* vi. 23.

⁶⁰ *Rebellion*, xvi. 77.

⁶¹ *Ibid.* xvi. 100.

resolved it sooner, he had been destroyed himself, the whole machine being so infinitely above his strength, that it could only be moved by a divine hand; and it is glory enough to his memory, that he was instrumental in bringing these mighty things to pass, which he had neither wisdom to foresee, nor courage to attempt, nor understanding to contrive.⁶²

Substantially Clarendon's view is correct; Monck was led by events rather than guided by any preconceived plan. This was the impression which Monck's conduct had produced upon Clarendon's mind during the crisis of the revolution itself, in the winter of 1659 and the spring of 1660; he was confirmed in this opinion by all that he had learnt since, and it became now his deliberate judgment as an historian.

Thus his account of the close of the Great Revolution he had narrated contrasts curiously with his account of its beginning. In stating the causes of the Rebellion he had exaggerated the importance of personal influences, and attributed too much to the particular characteristics of individual men—to the pride of this man, the morosity of that, the ambition of a third, all like so many atoms contributing jointly to produce the great mass of confusion. In recounting the Restoration his point of view had altered. It is now the current of human affairs which guides men's acts, whither they know not, whether they will or not. The individual actor, even when he seems to direct the course of events, is in reality their creature.

C. H. FIRTH.

⁶² *Rebellion*, xvi. 115.