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Author(s): S. A. Swaine

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TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

THE ENGLISH ACQUISITION AND LOSS OF DUNKIRK.

BY THE REV. S. A. SWAINE, F.R. Hist. Soc.

To the student of English history the campaign in Flanders, undertaken by Cromwell in 1657 in conjunction with the French king, is one of great interest and importance. Yet, strange to say, to all, except to the plodders in the by-paths of history, it is one of the least known of the episodes in the story of that wonderful man, who according to Macaulay was the 'greatest prince that ever ruled England.' Justice has not yet been done to the memory of one to whom the English nation owes more perhaps than to any other ruler, or statesman, to whom for so brief a period the destinies of the country have been entrusted. Something has been attempted of recent years in this direction, and something done—especially by Carlyle—but it amounts to no more than an instalment of the sum total of that justice which was due. When that interest comes to be taken in the measures and achievements of the great Protector which they deserve, it will be found and confessed that the Flanders scheme, which he did not live long enough to fully realise, was one of the greatest of them.

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It is with that scheme that we have to deal in the present paper.

After having disposed of the 'King of Scots' at the battle of Worcester, the way was open to the patriots who were to the fore at the time to take such measures for the safety, peace, and prosperity of the realm as they conceived to be most likely to conduce to that end. It soon became evident, however, amid the difficulties which the factions of the time produced, that only one course could be adopted, if the country was to be saved from horrors, worse even than those which for years past it had been her unhappy lot to experience ; and that was practically to confide the protection and government of the nation to the only man strong enough for the task, the hero of Dunbar and Worcester.

It is beside the mark to discuss here the large question of the policy of Cromwell, and the way in which he carried that policy out when the reins of government were fairly in his grasp. It is sufficient to say that it was nobly conceived, and firmly executed—that it contemplated, and secured as far as possible in those still ticklish times, the freedom and well-being of the nation at home, and respect and influence abroad. Never had the power of England been felt to be greater among Continental nations than during the protectorate, and never even during that protectorate itself had it been felt to be greater than during the closing years of Oliver's life. What great schemes for the welfare of England, and the good of the Protestant world generally, that great mind was revolving when death overtook him, it would be difficult to say ; but that such schemes were being revolved the story of Dunkirk, taken in connection with other things, seems conclusively to show. This certainly may be said, that Oliver was determined to have and maintain a footing on the Continent, his immediate object being to suppress piracy in the Channel and to give wider scope and larger opportunity to English merchandise, while his ultimate object, no doubt, was to secure such a position as would give him not only the right to make his voice heard in Continental councils, but the easy

opportunity of striking a heavy blow against either the Spanish or French, or any other Continental foe, if occasion arose to demand it.

Why Dunkirk should have been chosen for such a purpose is very evident. Reference has just been made to the piracy which was practised in the English Channel, from which, be it observed, English shipping very largely suffered. Dunkirk and Ostend were at that time simply nests of sea-robbers ; and it is stated on good authority that, during the brief war which preceded the capture of their town, the Dunkirkers possessed themselves of no less than two hundred and fifty of our vessels, both small and great. If Oliver had had no other reason for wishing to possess himself of the place than that of putting down this lawlessness, and securing the safety of the shipping of his country, it would have been a good and sufficient one, and ample justification for the course he pursued. But there was another reason. Dunkirk was in the possession of Spain, and everyone knows what the relations between England and that country were at that time. To attack Popish Spain, especially in those very Netherlands where she had wrought such desolation, would be regarded as a meritorious act. There can be no doubt, then, that Oliver's policy in endeavouring to obtain Dunkirk was not only *his* policy but *the policy of the country*, in whose eyes it would be a compensation, if not a full one, for the loss of Calais about a century before.

In carrying out his designs, Cromwell showed himself no less astute than in forming them. He chose his instruments with great sagacity. An illustration of this is given in the kind of man he selected for this particular work—William Lockhart, of Lee. This gentleman was a Scotchman and a soldier, who had fought for Charles I. and afterwards for his son, but who, having received an affront from the latter which he regarded as unpardonable, considering what he had done and suffered in his cause, after remaining for some time in seclusion, at length threw in his lot with the Commonwealth, and entered the service of the Protector. Moreover, he became

allied to the protectoral house by marriage with Robina Sewster, Oliver's niece. This was the man to whom was confided the embassy to France at this critical juncture, and the management of the difficult affair contemplated. The way in which Sir William—for he possessed the knightly degree—carried on the negotiations, and brought them to a successful issue, completely justified the Protector's choice. An alliance, offensive and defensive, was at length concluded with France, by which England engaged to supply six thousand troops, who as soon as they landed should come into the pay of France, and together with a French force should lay siege to Gravelines or Dunkirk, the latter, whether taken before Gravelines or afterwards, to be permanently delivered into English hands; moreover, England was to supply a fleet which should co-operate with the land forces from the sea, and it was further agreed that no peace should be concluded with Spain except by joint consent. This was in 1657. There is an important letter of Lockhart's among the 'Thurloe State Papers,' addressed to the Secretary of the Council, in which these and other points are set forth. Its importance justifies its insertion here *in extenso*.

'MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR,—I left Paris upon fryday so betyms, as I did not receive those commands, that day's post might bring me from your honor, nor shall I meet with those may come by tomorrowe till thursday or fryday next ; so that I must begg pardon, if my return to them shall not be so soon dispatched. Sir, having the opportunity of a safe conveyance of this by my brother, I shall with the greater freedome give ane account of what is aggreed unto concerning Dunkirk ; but by reason of the captain's importunity to be going, I can only mention the most matterial poynts.

'In the first place, Dunkirk and Mardyk shall be besieged once in Appryl with ane army of 26,000 men, whereof 20,000 French and 6,000 English, at the which time his highness's fleet is to beseedge it by sea.

'Secondly, If there be no possibility of carrying Dunkirk till the army can (by being masters of Gravelinns) have communicatione with France by land, in that case, Gravelinns shall be beseedged as aforesaid, and at it's surrender shall be put into his

highness's hands, with all the forts and posts belonging too it, which he is to keep till he be possessed of Dunkirk and Mardyck.

'Thirdly, To the end their may be no jealousie betwixt England and France upon the account of their treating with Spayn, England and France are oblydged to conclude no peace with Spain (except it be by joint consent) till after the expiratione of 12 months, to be counted from the date of this treaty. This is the greatest lenth I can bring this particular too, save that the cardinall is willing in September or October next to renew our agreement for the following campagne, and so successively from year to year, so long as the two states shall be fitt to continue a joynt warr against Spayn.

'Fourthly, The 3,000 men to be levyed by his highness shall be employed for the defence of his garison of Dunkirk after its surrender; and his highness is not oblydged to levy others in their roome for the French; so that he is at no more expense then the advance of the levy-money, seeing it will be impossible to keep Dunkirk and Mardyck with a lesser number of men then 3,000; and if Gravelinns be first taken, he may draw out of his own 3,000 men such a number, as shall be sufficient for its garrison, without being oblydged to make up againe to the French.

'Fifthly, Your garisons, whether of Dunkirk or Gravelinns, may raise contributions from Flanders for the maintenance.

'Sixthly, The article concerning liberty of conscience is agreeable to my instructions.

'Seventhly, Their is a better maintenance settled upon the officers and soldiers of the 6,000 English, than ever hath been given in France to any, save the French and Swiss guards. Their is a commander in chief allowed, six chaplains, six chirurgeons, six secretaries, and one physician. Every soldier hath five pence per day in money, and two pence in bread. The best common regiments have but two pence and bread, and the most of the new raised have nothing but their bread. I have agreed the difference I had with the officers of the finances or treasury about their dewes. The cardinall would not alter their wages, but allows half-a-crown by the head more, which will bear that and all the other little expences of the transmitt of the money, and their will be a rest over, of which I shall give you an account.

'This is all I can remember in the hurry I am now in, save that an agreement to this purpose had been signed upon fryday last, if their had not fallen out a difference about the language it was to be writt in. Count Brien and Mr. de Lion urged that their king in his own court could speak no other language then his own; and there-

fore they offered to give me the *traject de Campagne* they were to syn, in French. I told them, I was content to receive it, so they would tak myn in English. They would doe nothing before they consulted the cardinall; and at last my overture, that it should be in Latin was accepted of; and to the end, that tyme may be given for its translation, the syning is delayed till monday come sennight.

'Sir, I am ashamed to send this scribble in the disorder it's in, but I hope your wonted goodnesse to me will prevail for your pardon to,

'May it please your honor,

'Your most humble and obedient servant,

'WILL LOCKHART.¹

'Diep ²⁶/₁₈, Feb. 1659.'

Cromwell began at once to fulfil his part of the bargain, levying the stipulated number of infantry and putting them into new red uniforms. Sir John Reynolds, who at the time was serving in Ireland as Commissary-General of Horse to his brother-in-law, Henry Cromwell, was appointed commander-in-chief, and Thomas Morgan his Major-General. In the month of May of the last-mentioned year the English troops landed at Boulogne, and before long were on the march, not, as perhaps they expected, along the northern coast towards Calais, Gravelines, and Dunkirk, but towards Cambray, full seventy miles inland. The French General, Marshal Turenne, seemed determined to utilise the valour of the English contingent for his own purposes before those of Cromwell. Lockhart at once remonstrated, but as has been said by a writer in reference to this, he 'found himself so suffocated with French politesse that he was compelled to drift along with events which for the present were clearly out of his hands.'² Cardinal Mazarin, who at this time, as is well known, directed the destinies of France, admitted that assaulting Cambray in this way was not strictly in accordance with the treaty, but hoped that the English Protector would eventually recognise the wisdom of the move. In concluding the interview in which he thus spoke, he begged the ambassador to accept a handsome

¹ *Thurloe State Papers*, vol. vi. p. 63.

² *The House of Cromwell*, &c. By James Waylen, p. 185.

calèche and six horses ; but Lockhart, seeing what was meant, had courage and uprightness sufficient to refuse the bribe. Still, however, there was so much delay that Oliver's patience was getting exhausted, and in a letter to Lockhart, dated August 31, he says :—

'I am deeply sensible that the French are very much short with us in ingenuousness and performance. . . . To talk of giving us garrisons which are inland, as caution for future action—to talk of what will be done next campaign—are but parcels of words for children. . . . I positively think (which I say to you) they are afraid we should have *any* footing on that side of the water, though Spanish.'¹

In a second letter relating to the same subject, he urged that Dunkirk should be taken before Gravelines if possible, but either of them rather than neither, and offered to send over, if the French would bear the charge, two of his old regiments, and 'two thousand more'—by which apparently he meant two thousand new levies—if the design were against Dunkirk. This letter he concludes thus :—

'But if indeed the French be so false to us that they would not let us have any footing on that side the water, then I desire, as in our other letter to you, that all things may be done in order to the giving us satisfaction for our expenses incurred, and the drawing off of our men. And truly, Sir, I desire you to take boldness and freedom to yourself in your dealing with the French on these accounts.—Your loving friend,²

'OLIVER P.'

Carlyle says :—

'This letter naturally had its effect. Indeed, there goes a witty sneer in France—The Cardinal is more afraid of Oliver than of the Devil. He ought, indeed, to fear the Devil much more, but Oliver is the palpabler entity of the two. Mardyke was besieged straightway, girt by sea and land, and the great guns opened on the 21st day of September. Mardyke was taken before September ended, and due delivery to our General was had of Mardyke.'³

It should be observed here, that Mardyke was a fortress lying between Gravelines and Dunkirk, and was of greater

¹ *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, Edition 1870*, vol. v. p. 91.

² *Ibid.* p. 94.

³ *Ibid.* p. 94.

importance than it otherwise could have been on account of the fact that it guarded the sea approach to Dunkirk. At that time the only entrance from the sea to the latter place was by a channel lying between the shore and an immense bank of sand, called the Schurken, running parallel with the shore. Inasmuch, therefore, as Mardyke commanded the opening of this channel, it was of no small importance that it should be in the hands of the besiegers.

The fortress being taken, the English troops took up their quarters in it, and waited with what patience they could command for the operations of the spring.

Before spring arrived, the command under Sir William Lockhart of the English troops devolved upon Major-General Morgan, Sir John Reynolds having been cast away in a Dutch pink—in which he had embarked in threatening weather, contrary to advice, to cross to England—on the Goodwin Sands, and drowned. The new commander was a Welshman, as his name would indicate—a little man, physically, but a good soldier. He has left us an account of this campaign, which is very rare and curious. Only a few copies are now in existence, one of which may be found in the British Museum. It bears, like most of the publications of those times, a somewhat ponderous title, which is as follows:—*A True and Just Relation of Major-General Sir Thomas Morgan's Progress in France and Flanders with the Six Thousand English in the Years 1657 and 1658, at the Taking of Dunkirk and other Important Places. As it was Delivered by the General Himself.* We shall presently quote Sir Thomas Morgan's account of the capture of the town *in extenso*; but must first notice one or two matters which lead up to it.

The spring of 1858 had come, and all eyes and thoughts were presently turned towards the field of action. Meanwhile Cromwell improves the occasion, as was his wont, and endeavours to 'make assurance doubly sure,' by sending over his son-in-law, Lord Falconberg, as ambassador-extraordinary to the King of France. He was the bearer of a letter to this monarch, which reads as follows:—

'To the Serene and Potent Prince Louis, King of France, our August Friend and Ally.

'No sooner was the news brought that your Majesty had reached your camp, and sat down in such force before Dunkirk, that stronghold and refuge of pirates, than I entertained the joyful hope that now at last by God's blessing the seas might be navigated without fear of sea-robbers. And may your Majesty's arms speedily take vengeance on Spanish frauds, through which one Captain has by gold been corrupted to the betraying of Hesdin, and another perfidiously surprised at Ostend. I am, therefore, sending the most noble Viscount Falconberg, my son-in-law, to hail your Majesty's arrival in a camp so near to our shores, and to express personally that your Majesty's affairs engage not only our steadfast alliance, but our constant prayers that the great God would keep you from harm, and that our mutual friendship, so long as it lasts, may serve the Christian cause.—Your Majesty's most affectionate,¹

'OLIVER P.'

'From our Court at Whitehall, May, 1658.'

Falconberg was received with great cordiality, and much ceremony and splendour. The friendly relations between the Court of England and that of France seemed of the most complete and satisfactory kind.

The coveted fortress, which was being held by the Marquis of Leyda, was already invested. Writing on May 8, Lockhart refers to a sortie which the enemy had made, and which was gallantly repulsed by the besiegers. He describes it in the following terms :—

'Upon thursday last, towards the close of the evening, the enemy sallied out upon the point of our trench with all their horse, amounting to 43 troupes in six squadrons, which made a body of 700, as the prisoners then tooke assert. These horse were supported with two battalions of foot, and intended to have passed at a little opening we had left in our trench, in order to the drawing of a line of communication betwixt our approach and that of the trench. They were very vigorously repulsed, when they first offered to force their passage ; and finding that station too hott for them, they went up towards the point of the trench, and passed where some ground was

¹ *Literæ Nomine Senatus, Anglicani, Cromwellii, Richardique, &c. A Joanne Milto, p. 253.*

not broken, and so thought to have scoured the backside of our trench ; but they no sooner offered that way, but the two battalions in the trenches were ordered to quitt their posts, and to face them in the plaine field, which they did with a great shout encouraging one another ; and at the same time the reserve commanded by Lieutenant-Collonel Haynes, marched downe from a high downe, which covers the entry of our trench ; so that all the 14 companies that were in the aproach, were in battle, ready to relieve the enemy ; and our reserves of horse, coming up at the same time, the dispute did not last long : the horse did execution upon them in their retreat, till they entered the barriers or scrupisons upon their counterscarpe. This action was performed in the face of all the canon and musqueteers, that were upon that part of the walls or outworks ; and certainly both the officers and soldiers of our body did as much as could be expected from men whom God had enabled not only to see what their present duty was, but also to performe it exactly. I knowe his highness will not take it ill, that I have bin larger in this account than needed ; the account passeth for a handsome one in the report of the French, who are not over apt to flatter us ; and the enemy have bin so well satisfied with the supper they then gott, that hitherto they have not expressed any apetite for a breakfast, or any other meale of that nature. Sir Bryce Cockran commanded the 19 companyes : I had occasion to be near him, and a witness to the truth of what I have related ; and sent off next morning at lest a 120 wounded men ; the number of the killed was not great ; but I know many of the wounded will dye. Their was none of the officers above the quality of a lieutenant, killed or wounded.

‘WILLIAM LOCKHART.’¹

The Stuart-Spanish army contained, beside the Prince de Condé, who was then at war with his own country, the three English princes, Charles, James, and Henry Stuart, and a force of three or four thousand English and Irish. It was not long before Marshal Turenne, who had the supreme command of the allied English and French army, heard that they were advancing along the coast from Nieuport to the relief of the beleaguered town. It was manifest that the decisive hour was approaching.

At this point we take up the narrative of the English commander, who says :—

¹ *Thurloe State Papers*, vol. vii. p. 126.

‘The enemy came on to *Bruges*, and then Mareschal *Turenne* thought it high time to call a Council of War, which consisted of eight Noble-men, eight Lieutenant-Generals, and six Mareschals du Camp ; but never sent to Embassadour *Lockhart*, or Major-General *Morgan*. The whole sense of the Council of War was, That it was great danger to the Crown of *France* to hazard a Battle in that streight Country, full of Canals and Ditches of Water ; and several Reasons being shown to that purpose, it ran thorough the Council of War, to raise the Siege if the Enemy came on. Within half an hour after the Council of War was risen, Major-General *Morgan* had the Result of it in his Camp, and went immediately to Embassadour *Lockhart*, to know if he heard anything of it : He said he heard nothing of it, and complained that he was much afflicted with the Stone, Gravel, and some other Impediments. Major-General *Morgan* asked him to go with him the next Morning to the Head-Quarters. He said he would, if he were able.

‘Next Morning Mareschal *Turenne* sent a Noble-man to Embassadour *Lockhart* and Major-General *Morgan*, to desire them to come to a second Council of War. Immediately, therefore, Embassadour *Lockhart* and Major-General *Morgan* went with the Noble-man to Mareschal *Turenne’s* Camp ; and by that time they came there the Council of War was ready to sit down in Mareschal *Turenne’s* Tent.

‘Mareschal *Turenne* satisfied the Council of War that he had forgot to send for Embassadour *Lockhart* and Major-General *Morgan* to the first Council of War, and therefore thought fit to call this, that they might be satisfy’d ; and then put the Question, Whether, if the Enemy came on, he should make good the Siege on *Newport* side ; and give them Battle or raise the Siege ? And required they should give their Reasons for either. The Mareschals du Camp ran away with it clearly to raise the Siege, alledging what Danger it was to the Crown of *France*, to hazard a Battle, within so streight a Country, full of Canals, and Ditches of Water ; further alledging, that if the Enemy came upon the Bank, they would cut between Mareschal *Turenne’s*, and Major-General *Morgan’s* Camps, and prevent their conjunction. Two of the Lieutenant-Generals ran along with the Mareschals du Camp, and shew’d the same Reasons : But Major-General *Morgan*, finding it was high time to speak, and that otherwise it would go round the Board, rose up, and desired, though out of course, that he might declare his mind, in opposition to what the Mareschals du Camp, and the two Lieutenant-Generals had declared. Mareschal *Turenne* told him he should have freedom to speak his Thoughts. Then Major-General *Morgan* spoke, and said, That the

Reasons of the Mareschals du Camp and the two Lieutenant-Generals had given for raising the Siege, were no Reasons ; for the Streightness of the Country was as good for the *French* and *English* as for the Enemy : *And whereas they alledged, that if the Enemy came on the Bank between Furnes and Dunkirk, they would cut between Mareschal Turenne's and Major-General Morgan's Camps ;* Major-General *Morgan* replied, It was impossible for they could not March upon the Bank above eight a Breast ; and farther he alledged that Mareschal *Turenne's* Artillery and small Shot would cut them off at Pleasure. He added, That that was not the way the Enemy could relieve *Dunkirk*, but that they would make a Bridge of Boats over the Chanel, in an hour and half, and cross their Army upon the Sands of *Dunkirk*, to offer Mareschal *Turenne* battle.

‘Farther Major-General *Morgan* did alledge, what a Dishonour it would be to the Crown of *France*, to have Summon'd the City of *Dunkirk*, and broke Ground before it, and then raise the Siege and run away ; and he desired the Council of War should consider, that if they raised the Siege, the Alliance with England would be broken the same hour.

‘Mareschal *Turenne* answered, *That if he thought the Enemy would offer that fair Game he would maintain the Siege on Newport side, and Major-General Morgan should march, and make Conjunction with the French Army, and leave Mardike side open.* Upon Mareschal *Turenne's* Reply Major-General *Morgan* did rise from the Board, and upon his knees begg'd a Battle, and said, that he would venture the Six Thousand English, every Soul. Upon which Mareschal *Turenne* consulted the Noble-men that sat next him, and it was desired, that Major-General *Morgan* would take a turn or two without the Tent, and he should be call'd immediately. After he had walked two turns, he was call'd in ; as soon as he came in Mareschal *Turenne* said, *That he had considered his Reasons, and that himself and the Council of War resolved to give battle to the Enemy, if they came on ; and to maintain the Siege on Newport side and that Major-General Morgan was to make Conjunction with the French Army.* Major-General *Morgan* then said, *That with God's Assistance we should be able to deal with them.*

‘The very next Day at four in the Afternoon the Spanish Army had made a Bridge of Boats, crossed their Army on the Sands of *Dunkirk* and drew up into Battalia within two miles of Mareschal *Turenne's* lines before he knew anything of them. Immediately all the *French* Horse drew out to face the enemy at a Mile's distance, and Mareschal *Turenne* sent immediate Orders to Major-General *Morgan*, to march

into his Camp with the Six Thousand *English*, and the *French* Brigade of Horse ; which was done accordingly.

‘The next day about eight of the Clock, Mareschal *Turenne* gave Orders to break Avenues on both the Lines, that the Army might March out in Battalia. Major-General *Morgan* set his Soldiers to break Avenues for their marching out in Battalia likewise. Several Officers being with him as he was looking on his Soldiers at work, Embassadour *Lockhart* comes up with a white Cap on his Head, and said to Major-General *Morgan*, *You see what Condition I am in, I am not able to give you any Assistance this day, you are the older Soldier, and the greatest part of the Work of the day must lie upon your Soldiers* (? Shoulders). Upon which the Officers smiled, and so he bid *God be with us*, and went away with the *Lieutenant-General* of the *Horse* that was upon our left Wing ; from which time we never saw him till we were in pursuit of the Enemy. When the Avenues were cleared, both the *French* and *English* Army Marched out of the Lines towards the Enemy. We were forced to March up in four lines (for we had not room enough to Wing, for the Canal between *Furnes* and *Dunkirk*, and the Sea) till we had marched above half a mile ; then we came to a Halt on rising Hills of Sand, and having more room took in two of our Lines.

‘Major-General *Morgan* seeing the Enemy plain in Battalia, said before the Head of the Army, *See yonder are the Gentlemen you have to trade withal*, upon which the whole Brigade of *English* gave a Shout of Rejoycing, that made a roaring Eccho betwixt the Sea and the Canal. Thereupon the Mareschal *Turenne* came up with above a hundred Noble-men, to know what was the matter and reason of that great Shout. Major-General *Morgan* told him *’Twas an usual Custom of the Redcoats, when they saw the Enemy, to Rejoyce*. Mareschal *Turenne* answer’d, *They were men of brave Resolution and Courage*. After which Mareschal *Turenne* returning to the Head of his Army, we put on to our March again. At the second Halt the whole Brigade of *English* gave a shout, and cast up their Caps into the Air, saying, *They would have better Hats before Night*. Mareschal *Turenne*, upon that Shout, came up again, with several Noblemen and Officers of the Army, admiring the Resolution of the *English*, at which time we were within three quarters of an hour of the Enemy in Battalia. Mareschal *Turenne* desired Major-General *Morgan*, that at the next halt, he would keep even front with the *French*, for says he, *I do intend to halt at some distance, that we may see how the Enemy is drawn up, and take our Advantage accordingly*. Major-General *Morgan* demanded of his Excellency, *Whether he would*

Shock the whole Army at one dash, or try one Wing first? Mareschal Turenne's reply was, *That as to that Question he could not resolve him yet, till he came nearer the Enemy.* Major-General Morgan desired the Mareschal *not to let him Languish for Orders*, saying, *That oftentimes Opportunities are often (sic) lost for want of Orders in due time.* Mareschal Turenne said, *He would either come himself and give Orders, or send a Lieutenant-General*; and so Mareschal Turenne parted, and went to the Head of his Army. In the meantime, Major-General Morgan gave Orders to the Colonels, and Leading Officers, to have a special Care, that when the *French* came to a halt, they keep even front with them; and farther told them that if they could not observe the *French*, they should take Notice when he lifted up his Hat (for he marched still above three-score before the Center of the Bodies). But when the *French* came to halt, it so happened, that the *English* pressed upon their Leading Officers, so that they came up under the shot of the Enemies: But when they saw that Major-General Morgan was in a Passion, they put themselves to a stand. Major-General Morgan could soon have remedied their Forwardness, but he was resolved he would not lose one Foot of Ground he had advanced, but would hold it as long as he could. We were so near the Enemy, the Soldiers fell into great Friendship, one asking, is such an Officer in your Army; another, is such a Soldier in yours; and this passed on both sides. Major-General Morgan endured this Friendship for a little while, and then came up to the Center of the Bodies, and demanded, *How long that Friendship would continue*; and told them further, that for anything they knew, they would be cutting one another's Throats within a minute of an hour. The whole Brigade answered, *Their Friendship should continue no longer than he pleased.* Then Major-General Morgan bid them tell the Enemy, *No more Friendship; Prepare your Buff-coats and Scarfs, for we will be with you sooner than you expect us.* Immediately after the Friendship was broke, the Enemy poured a volley of Shot into one of our Battalions, wounded three or four, and one drop'd. The Major-General immediately sent the Adjutant-General to Mareschal Turenne for Orders, *Whether he should charge the Enemies Right Wing, or whether Mareschal Turenne would engage the Enemies Left Wing*, and advised the Adjutant-General not to stay, but to acquaint Mareschal Turenne that we were under the Enemies Shot; and had received some Prejudice already; but there was no return of the Adjutant-General, nor Orders. By-and-by, the Enemy poured in another volley of Shot into another of our Battalions, and wounded two or three. Major-General Morgan observing the Enemy mending Faults,

and opening the Intervals of the Foot, to bring Horse in, which would have made our Work more difficult, called all the Collonels and Officers of the Field together, before the Center of the Bodies, and told them, *He had sent the Adjutant-General, but when he saw there was no hope of Orders, he told them if they would concur with him, he would immediately charge the Enemies right Wing.* Their answer was, *They were ready whenever he gave Orders.* He told them, *He would try the right Wing, with the Blew Regiment, and the four hundred Fire-locks, which were in the Interval of the French Horse ; and wished all the Field Officers to be ready at their several Posts.* Major-General *Morgan* gave Orders that the other five Regiments should not move from their Ground, except they saw the Blew Regiment, the White and the four Hundred Firelocks, shock'd the Enemies Right Wing off of their ground, and further show'd the several Colonels what Colours they were to charge, and told them moreover, *That if he was not knock'd on the Head he would come to them.* In like manner, as fast as he could, he admonished the whole Brigade, and told them *They were to look in the face of an Enemy who had violated and endeavoured to take away their Reputation, and that they had no other way but to fight it out to the last man, or to be killed, taken prisoner, or drowned; and farther that the Honour of England did depend much upon their Gallantry and Resolution that day.*

'The Enemies Wing was posted on a Sandy Hill, and had cast the Sand Breast high before them : Then Major-General *Morgan*, did order the Blew Regiment, and the four Hundred Firelocks to advance to the Charge. In the mean time Major-General *Morgan* knowing the Enemy would all bend upon them that did advance, removed the White Regiment more to the Right, that it might be in the Flank of them by that time the Blew Regiment was got within push of Pike.

'His *Royal Highness* the *Duke of York*, with a select party of Horse, had got into the Blew Regiment, by that time the White came in, and exposed his Person to great Danger : But we knew nobody at that time. Immediately the Enemy were clear shock'd off of their Ground, and the *English* Colours flying over their heads, the strongest Officers and Soldiers Clubbing them down. Major-General *Morgan*, when he saw his opportunity, stept to the other five Regiments which were within six score of him, and ordered them to advance, and charge immediately : But when they came within ten Pikes length, the Enemy perceiving they were not able to endure our Charge *shak'd their Hats, held up their Handkerchiefs, and called for Quarter ;* but the Redcoats cry'd aloud, *they had no leisure for Quarter.* Whereupon the Enemy fac'd about and would not endure our Charge, but fell to

run, having the English Colours over their Heads, and the strongest Soldiers and Officers clubbing them down, so that the Six Thousand *English* carried Ten or Twelve Thousand Horse and Foot before them. The *French* Army was about Musquet Shot in the Rear of us, where they came to halt, and never moved off of their Ground. The rest of the *Spanish* Army, seeing the Right Wing carried away, and the *English* Colours flying over their Heads, wheeled about in as good Order as they could, so that we had the whole *Spanish* Army before us: and Major-General *Morgan* called out to the *Colonels*, *To the right as much as you can*, that so we might have all the Enemy's Army under the *English* Colours. The Six Thousand *English* carried all the *Spanish* Army, as far as *Westminster Abbey* to *Paul's Churchyard*, before ever a *French-man* came in, on either Wing of us; but then at last we could perceive the *French* Horse come powd'ring on each Wing, with much Gallantry, but they never struck one stroke, only carried prisoners back to the Camp. Neither did we ever see the *Embassadour Lockhart*, till we were in pursute of the Enemy, and then we could see him amongst us very brisk, without his white Cap on his Head, and neither troubled with Gravel or Stone. When we were at the end of the pursute, Mareschal *Turenne*, and above a Hundred Officers of the Army came up to us, and said, *They never saw a more Glorious Action in their Lives, and that they were so transported with the Sight of it, that they had no Power to move or to do anything.* And this high Complement we had for our Pains. In a word, the *French* Army did not strike one Stroke in the battle of *Dunkirk*, only the Six Thousand *English*. After we had done pursuing the Enemy, Major-General *Morgan* rallied his Forces, and marched over the Sands where he had shock'd them at the first, to see what Slaughter there was made. But *Embassadour Lockhart* went into the Camp as fast as he could, to write his Letters for England, of what great Service he had done, which was *just nothing*. Mareschal *Turenne* and Major-General *Morgan*, brought the Armies close to invest *Dunkirk* again, and to carry on the Approaches. The *Marquis de Leida* happened to be in the Counterscarp, and received an accidental Shot, whereof he died; and the whole Garrison being discouraged at his Death, came to Capitulate in few Days; so the Town was surrendered, and *Embassadour Lockhart* march'd into it with two Regiments of *English* for a Garrison; but Major-General *Morgan* kept the Field, with Mareschal *Turenne*, with his other four Regiments of *English*.¹

¹ To be found in the *Harleian Miscellany*, vol. iii. p. 341.

It will have been noticed in the foregoing that the Major-General was a self-sufficient little man, and that he betrays a tendency to brag. But, excepting the warmth of colouring which his picture presents, it may be taken, as other accounts show, as in the main correct. The 'letters to England,' which Ambassador Lockhart was in so much haste to write, are contained in 'Thurloe'—at least one of them; and as this letter (which, however, was not written till the day following the action) is not lengthy, and enables us, with the foregoing account, to get a tolerably correct idea of the English view of the battle, we insert it here:—

'Colonel Lockhart to Secretary Thurloe.

'MAY IT PLEASE YOUR LORDSHIP,—Yesterday's action can be more surely and plainely related by my lord Howard, then by myselfe, he haveing done himselfe the right to informe himselfe very particularly of all that passed, as being an eye-witness. He left our Camp in the afternoone, and went on board his vessell, and I thinke he had not weighed anchor when one came to mee from Mr. Turenne, and told mee, there was a necessity of giving battell to the enemy to-morrow morning. I was much surprized with the shortnes of the warneing and more with the strange providence was in it; for I had one of the most violent fitts of the stone upon mee, that I almost had in my life; but finding there was no midds, but either fighting or abandoning the siege, I chose rather to trust God with the event of a battell, then to give over so hopeful a cause; and so about ten a clocke drew out the forces, and put myselfe on their head in my coach, and reached Mr. Turenne's quarters next morninge by breake of day. We spent some 3 howers in putting our forces in baitell, and about 8 of the clock marched up to the enemy, who kept his ground till we should come up to him. I, having the command of the left wing, rancountered the right of the enemy, where all his old Spaniards were, and posted so advantageously, as, when I considered my worke, I looked upon forcing them as altogether impossible; but necessity haveing no law, I ordered my owne regiment to attempt it before, and at the same time, having some commanded men upon the strand, which were to have seconded the horse, I made them attaque the Spanish upon the flank, and after the hottest dispute that I ever saw, it pleased God to give us successe, and with that advantage, as the enemy seeing their best men forced in their most advantageous post,

did not in all the rest of the battell behave themselves as I expected. The rout was universall, but not so closely pursued by the French horse as I could have wisht. There was a rumor that Mr. le prince was taken, and the pretended duke of York slaine ; but after examination, that appeared to be false, though a great many else of quality are taken, as Mr. Bouteville, and count Bologne, and a prince whose name I cannot remember ; and besides a great many, Mr. de Camps, of which I shall give your lordshipp a most perticular account by the next. We kept our aproaches, and our bridges upon the channells ; but I being forced to draw out, and finding that 1,000 men were not able to secure my quarter, I left it to the hazard, and found it all burnt downe at my returne. My owne losses were most considerable ; but all thoughts of them were drowned in a greater ; for I have not one officer in my own regiment who is not dangerously wounded or killed, except one captain, and a captain-lieutenant, and some fower lieutenants, ensigns, and serjeants. The truth is, my lord, I have fallen asleep, I knowe not howe often, in writeing this ; and so shall only pray, that we may be made sensible of the good hand of God, which hath bin wonderfully with us this day. I pray for the continuance of his highness' health, and the encrease of his glory and hapiness.

‘ I am,

‘ May it please your Lordshipp,

‘ Your most humble and obedient servant,

‘ WILL. LOCKHART.’¹

There is a document, printed in ‘Thurloe,’ giving another account, the original of which—so the margin states—was in the possession of the Earl of Shelburn (1742). Who the author was does not appear. It is as follows :—

Mardike, $\frac{1}{4}$, 1658.

‘The Spanish army appeared in two bodies before the line before Dunkirk, thursday the 3rd of June, which occasioned the Marshal Turenne the next day to draw off the whole army, upon some considerations of the difficulties of both maintaining the siege, and fighting the enemy. The French army, with the conjoined English forces, divided themselves into two wings. The right wing consisting of 1,000 foot, and 6,000 horse, commanded by Marshal Turenne, undertook the dispute with the prince of Conde. The left wing, being made up with all the English foot, under the command of the lord Ambassador Lockhart, (now their general) and 3,000 French horse,

¹ *Thurloe State Papers*, vol. vii. p. 155.

under the command of the Marquis of Castleneuf, were assailed by a good body of the enemy, under the conduct of Don John of Austria, the Duke of York, and the Marquis of Carasene. The English, after a hot dispute, shattered all that party, that opposed them. The Marquis of Carasene is supposed to be killed ; but some say, he was taken and released by a soldier for 10,000 crowns. The forlorn of English foot, consisting of half his excellency the lord ambassador's regiment, and part of that commanded by lieutenant-colonel Haines, was led on by lieutenant-colonel Fennerick, his excellency's lieutenant-colonel, in whose company was that noble young gentleman Mr. Henry Jones of Oxfordshire, a voluntier, who went lately over with my lord Falconbridge. Fennerick was shot through the body, and Jones shot through the shoulder, and wounded in two other places, and not yet heard of ; and all the officers of the lord ambassador's regiment killed or wounded, except himself and Colonel Drummond, a voluntier, that went also over with the lord Falconbridge, accompanied his excellency the lord ambassador in all this action. He had one horse shot under him, and being with difficulty re-mounted, was pushed off by a pike ; but is not wounded. The English acted miracles in this battle. Major-General Morgan came on with the rest of the men a good trot ; but it was faster than Monsieur's gallop ; and when they had beaten that part of the army under Don John of Austria, marched to the assistance of Marshal Turenne, whom they found in some disorder ; but by their assistance the day was won. The enemy within Dunkirk in this time burnt our huts, and took most of our tents. It being now late, relation cannot certainly be sent of the number or quality of the prisoners ; but I suppose near 3,000 may be taken, and half that number killed. Prisoners of quality here are one Memorancy, lieutenant-general to the prince of Conde, and one Coligne of the same quality, and one Bouteville, a great officer. Don John was once taken by the bridle. This relation being taken just after the battle by a weary hand, must refer you to a more particular account by the next ; only know, the French acknowledge to our nation the honour of this victory.'¹

As we have already been informed by Morgan, the town capitulated only a few days after the Battle of the Dunes, the garrison having been discouraged by the loss of the governor, the Marquis de Leyda. Lockhart saw to it that much time did not elapse before the prize was secured, and in English

¹ *Thurloe State Papers*, vol. vii. p. 156.

possession. We find him, therefore, on June $\frac{15}{25}$, writing from the town to Secretary Thurloe as follows :—

‘ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR LORDSHIPP,—I can add nothing to what I said in the morning,¹ save that by the goodness of God your servant is now master of Dunkerke ; and indeed it is a much better place than I could have imagined : blessed be God for this great mercy, and the Lord continue his protectione to his highness, and his countenance to all his other undertakings ; and lett his lyfe be pretious in his eyes, and his family prosper. So prayeth

‘ My Lord,

‘ Your most humble servant,

‘ WILL LOCKHART.’²

The next day Admiral Montagu, who was in command of the fleet, wrote to Secretary Thurloe, dating from the ‘ Naysebye,’ as follows :—

‘ MY LORD,—Be pleased to accept this two or three words, which is only to give you notice of my lord ambassador’s beinge in possession Dunkerke yesterday. This morninge I am goinge to him to conferr together, and intend about night to dispatch unto you matters more at large.

‘ I am, my Lord,

‘ Your most faithful humble servant,

‘ E. MONTAGU.’³

Further details, although many and interesting, need not be entered into. Suffice it to say, that though the possession of Dunkirk by the English was by no means pleasing to the French, they made a virtue of necessity, and acquiesced in it as handsomely as they could. Even before the town was actually captured, the Duc de Crequi was despatched to Cromwell, and the keys of the place, or more probably keys which for the time did duty for them, were formally presented to him. But how did the townsfolk themselves regard the transfer? From a lengthy letter of Lockhart’s, dated

¹ The letter of the morning to which he refers, was one in which he describes an interview which he had just had with the Cardinal, and declares his intention of drawing out the forces, with which to take possession of the town.

² *Thurloe*, vol. vii. p. 176.

³ *Thurloe*, vol. vii. p. 177.

two days after the short note just given, it would appear that they took to it kindly :—

‘The ecclesiastics here,’ he says, ‘doe find so little of that ill treatment from us, which the Spanyards threatened them with, as they pretend they are well satisfied with us ; and say wee use them better than either the Spanish or French did, which probably is true. But all that’s done for them is lyke washing of the Black-moore, for their hearts cannot be gained ; and what is done for them, is rather done to satisfy others, then out of any hopes to doe good upon them. The citizens would make us beleieve, that they have long wished to be under his highness’ government, provyded the liberty of their religione might have been secured. I make it my interest to perswade them I beleieve all their faire professions, and my businesse to watch over them as enemies in our bosome.’¹

No doubt the ambassador was right in the judgment which he formed of the temper of the people, and that their kindly taking to English rule was more in seeming than in reality. In the British Museum Library there is an interesting MS., written about that time, which contains, in French, a lament, supposed to be delivered by Dunkirk, of which the following is a translation :—

‘The field renowned of many a bloody fight,
I’ve been attacked by land, attacked by sea ;
The very elements make war on me,
And league with man to desolate me quite.
Thus all to swell my sorrow seem agreed ;
For, rather than accord me timely aid,
Holland to speak her mind is sore afraid.
Spain fights for me, but Spain oppresses too ;
And gallant France consents—can it be true ?
Though gaining nothing by the wanton deed
To sacrifice me to Britannia’s greed.’

The new governor of the town at once devoted himself to its improvement, and especially to the repair and extension of its defences. He added a new tower to Fort Leon, and substituted brick and stone for wood in various places, thus

¹ *Thurloe*, vol. vii. p. 178.

rendering the munitions more solid and permanent. Along the foot of the glacis he led an additional watercourse, and built a fort about a mile south of the town, and called it Fort Oliver. There is reason to believe, too, that his was the project, afterwards carried out for the French by the eminent engineer Vauban, of cutting through the Schurken, and so effecting a direct entrance to Dunkirk from the deep sea in lieu of the tortuous one hitherto used.

Thus Dunkirk was gained. The story of its loss is much sooner told ; indeed, no patriotic Englishman can love to linger over the telling. It was on September 3, 1658, the anniversary of his famous battles of Dunbar and Worcester, that the great spirit of Cromwell was released, and England mourned the loss of one of the greatest heroes she has ever produced. The feeble rule of his son Richard lasted for nine months, and then, in that mad delirium which seized the nation, the sceptre, which he was so unworthy to wield, was handed to the contemptible and disgusting *roué*, Charles II. Public shame and dishonour soon came to England. A writer in the 'Edinburgh Review' says England until Cromwell 'had never been more than a third-rate power in Europe,'¹ a statement which is open to question ; but this certainly may be said, that our great uncrowned king raised her to a height of glory and power never before paralleled in the history of any nation in Europe. The same writer says of him, 'He humbled the proud empires of Europe by a glance. It took battles to raise himself to his place of Protector, but he became Dictator of Europe by mesmerism.'² But from her high position Charles Stuart, the second of that name, soon dragged the country down, selling the fruits of Cromwell's victories in Flanders, and bringing such humiliation upon the nation as we had not known before, and, thank God, have not known since.

The treaty for the sale of Dunkirk was signed and sealed in London on October 27, 1662. It sets forth that the said bargain was made in consideration of the sum of 5,000,000

¹ Jan. 1856.

² *Ibid.*

livres, according to the computation and value of French money, and the present currency thereof. 2,000,000 livres were to be paid down in the town at the time that it was put into the hands of his Most Christian Majesty, or his commissioners. The remaining 3,000,000 were to be paid in the course of the two years following, 1,500,000 livres each year at four payments; that is, one every three months. The three first payments were to be of 400,000 livres each, and the last of 300,000. In case the King of Spain should dispute the matter, the King of England undertook to defend the town in conjunction with the Most Christian King, by the aid of a fleet of ships. In the event of its capture by the King of Spain, his Britannic Majesty promised to assist in its recovery by a fleet sufficiently powerful to make him master of the sea. Other matters entered into the treaty, but these are of minor interest.

What had been won mainly by British valour, and certainly secured for England by British sagacity, was thus basely bartered away; the money being, to quote Bishop Burnet, 'immediately squandered away among the mistress's creatures.' Thus was Dunkirk lost, and some may be ready to say 'A good thing too.' But Englishmen then did not think so, especially English merchants. Dunkirk corsairs were soon again at work, and in the course of a very few years British traders sustained losses to such an amount as would have paid the 5,000,000 livres over and over again. It is quite possible that the time would have come when Dunkirk would have been handed over either to France or Belgium, because of the impolicy of maintaining a solitary fortress on the other side of the Channel, but there was no such impolicy then; quite the contrary. As to our right to keep it, we should have had as good a right to keep it, even down to this day, as we have to keep Gibraltar, and the wisdom, perhaps, would have been as great in the one case as in the other. However that may be, it is certain that if Englishmen in 1662 did not see what an egregious blunder was being made, they were not long in finding it out. Four years after the transfer, France

was at war with us, and the place, even down to a late period, was the occasion of constant trouble. In 1694 a combined fleet of English and Dutch vessels assaulted it, but unsuccessfully. The attempt was renewed in the following year, but with a similar result; for the projected cutting through the Schurken had long since been an accomplished fact, and the armed jetty covered by a floating battery, successfully kept the assailants at bay. Dunkirk, however, had become such a public nuisance again that it was necessary to put her depredations down, and when the Treaty of Utrecht was concluded, in 1713, the King of France was obliged to consent to a clause which ran as follows:—

‘The Most Christian King undertakes to level the fortifications of Dunkirk, to block up the port, and to demolish the sluices which scour the harbour, with this further condition, that such fortifications, port, and sluices shall never be re-constructed.’

The work of demolition was carried out by an English army under General Hill in the same year. But Dunkirk was irrepressible. Little by little the work of restoration was carried on till it became necessary in 1748, when the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was concluded between England, Holland, and France, to require in the interests of English and Dutch shipping that the defences of the port should be annihilated. Five years afterwards, however, when hostilities had again broken out between France and England, a fleet of flat-bottomed boats was despatched from it under the command of Thurot to effect a landing on the English coast. The fleet was dispersed and the commander slain, but that was not a sufficient revenge—or shall we rather say, security? When the Treaty of Paris was concluded in 1763, the British Government had to insist that the work of destruction should be repeated. The French negotiator, Count Bussi, endeavoured to arrange other terms in regard to Dunkirk, but Lord Chatham replied that the people of England considered the demolition of Dunkirk as a perpetual memorial of the subjugation of France, and that the minister who should dare

to change the conditions of the Treaty would risk his head. The defences were, therefore, again razed, and Dunkirk's teeth supposed to be extracted; but during the American War of Independence its privateers were again at work on the high seas, performing their favourite operations on English merchantmen. It is said that in four years they captured about eleven hundred and eighty-seven British ships, entailing a loss on British merchants—including the money they were compelled to pay for the ransom of their ships—of thirty million livres.

In 1793 an attempt was made upon the place by the then Duke of York, who advanced with his own division from the main body of the Austrian army, and made vigorous preparations for pushing the siege. The surrender was daily expected when the approach of General Houchard with a superior force, and the vigorous sorties of the besieged, compelled the Duke to raise the siege, and retire in haste with Field-Marshal Freitag, under whom he commanded.

We have now completed our sketch—the sketch of an episode in English history not so well known as it should be. Such a remark, indeed, applies to more than one of the great doings of Oliver Cromwell, and the shameful and calamitous acts of his successor, Charles II. Some, indeed, remembering the shame connected with the reign of the 'Merrie Monarch,' may be inclined to say, 'The less we search into the transaction the better.' But the facts of history must be honestly and impartially dealt with, for only thus can they be rightly appreciated and scientifically used. To quote the lines made use of by Thomas Hollis, the antiquary, when presenting a portrait of Oliver to the masters and fellows of Sidney Sussex College:—

'I freely declare it, I am for old Noll;
Though his government did a tyrant's resemble,
He made England great, and her enemies tremble.'

We quote the lines, however, without committing ourselves to the statement that the Protector's government 'did

a tyrant's resemble'—but this in passing. With regard to the acquisition of Dunkirk, history must record that it was a striking display of Cromwell's sagacity and patriotism, as well as of the valour of his troops; while its loss was a witness to the weakness and want of political foresight of Charles, as well as a misfortune to the country.