

estimating the claims of both to the confidence they demanded from parliament. At first Charles had given great hopes.

The satisfaction with which the people welcomed their new king was only deepened by his conduct at the outset of his reign. He was already known for his sobriety and temperance, and he speedily showed an appreciation of the responsibilities of his new position. He drew up rules for himself, dividing the day, from his very early rising, for prayers, exercises, audiences, business, eating, and sleeping. He announced that he would be constant in religion, sincere in action, and that he would not have recourse to subtleties in his dealings. He liked matters to be discussed in his presence in the Council, with all the arguments for and against, when he would declare his pleasure, after carefully noting the chief points. Every morning he showed himself in the privy chamber to the lords and officials in attendance, where he detained some in conversation and saluted others, leaving all happy and devoted. He insisted upon strict decorum at Court, where each one had his appointed place, returning to the rules of Queen Elizabeth (*Calendar*, 1625-6, p. viii).

A year later opinion had changed.

He began his reign with a great show of industry and attention to business, but this did not last long. He soon betrayed his dislike for arduous affairs, and Contarini wrote rather sarcastically of the unusual energy he showed when news came of the battle of Lutter. For the rest he let Buckingham act, and ostentatiously stood aside. For all this he cherished very lofty ideas of the prerogatives of kingship, perhaps derived from a book of maxims which he studied attentively but which no one was allowed to see. Suspicions of his autocratic views got abroad early, and it was even rumoured that he would not be crowned, so that he might avoid taking the oaths and remain more absolute (*ibid.* p. lvii).

Contarini devoted a good deal of attention to the struggle between Charles I and Parliament, coming to the very just conclusion that the more the king and government kept devising means to dispense with parliament, the more they diminished their own authority (*ibid.* p. 516). But on the details of the constitutional struggles these dispatches do not throw much light: contemporary English newsletters are far more valuable. On the other hand, these volumes contain a mass of information about commercial affairs, especially about English trade in the Mediterranean and the Levant, and furnish material of first-rate value for the economic historian.

In conclusion, Lando's letter of 6 August 1621, relating to Amerigo Salvetti, is worth noting. 'It seems evident from this dispatch', says Mr. Hinds, 'that he was not the accredited agent of Tuscany at the English Court', as he is often said to be (*Calendar*, 1621-3, p. 98). It is surprising that Mr. Hinds does not refer to the collection of Salvetti's newsletters printed by the Historical MSS. Commission in 1887 (*Eleventh Report*, Appendix, part i). They cover the years 1625-8, and furnish interesting parallels to the ambassadorial dispatches.

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*The Life of Sir Henry Vane the Younger.* By JOHN WILCOCK, M.A., D.D., F.R.H.S. (London: The St. Catherine Press, 1913.)

'Few general readers know more about Vane than that Milton addressed a sonnet to him, and that Cromwell, on a celebrated occasion, prayed to

be delivered from him', says Dr. Willcock. For this reason he has produced the present life of a man who played a prominent part in a great crisis of English history, and with Vane's relation to that crisis the work is primarily concerned. With regard to his private family life, material is slight, and of that aspect very little is said. The first eighty pages contain some account of his ancestry and early years, including his unfruitful search for religious peace and toleration in New England and his unfortunate experiences as governor, for a few brief months, of Massachusetts. Later (pp. 253-63) there is reference to his mystical religious views and his influence as a religious leader, with an attempted criticism of his obscure theological writings, of which it is indeed impossible to pierce the 'peculiar darkness' deprecated by Burnet. The two last chapters describe his imprisonment, trial, and execution after the Stuart restoration, while various appendixes comprise an analysis of his books and published speeches, letters written by him from York in 1644, his suppressed speech from the scaffold, the full text of the Morland Papers concerning the plot of 1659 for assassination of Charles II and James of York, and further genealogical details regarding the house of Vane. The rest of the book, two-thirds of the whole, deals with the history of England from 1640 to 1660 and with the part acted by Vane upon the public stage during those twenty years.

The author claims for his hero first rank as a statesman, a supremacy in the national counsels equal to that of Cromwell in the field and the high-souled disinterested patriotism of a Roman senator of the best period. If the evidence adduced scarcely justifies claims so extensive, it goes far to prove a rare diplomatic skill and an extraordinary administrative ability in the man who, alone of all the Rump, possessed any adequate grasp of European affairs, and at the same time efficiently filled the posts of secretary and treasurer to army and navy through dangerous and difficult years. But perhaps the most telling testimony to Vane's powers is to be found in the verdict of Charles II that he was 'too dangerous a man to let live'. With regard to other qualities there is more room for dispute. That Vane spent health and wealth in the public service is undeniable, but, personally in advance of his times on all questions of civil and religious liberty, he lacked the adaptability needful to successful statesmanship; his resolute refusal of consent to the dissolution of the Rump was inconsistent with his own theory that 'the origin of all just power is in the people', while his curious subtlety of brain drew from Cromwell the epithet of 'juggler'. The most interesting part of the book is indeed that which describes the personal relation of these two men, Cromwell and Vane, at first a close and affectionate intimacy, changed later by political differences to bitter enmity. It is there that the author claims chiefly to enlarge the boundaries of historical knowledge, but except with regard to this and to the Morland Papers the book contains little matter fresh to the historical student. It is, however, well written, well indexed, furnished with good illustrations, which include four interesting portraits of its subject, and will well serve the general purpose for which it is intended.

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