

XXXIV.

New-Castle, June 24th, 1646.

DEAR HEART,

I cannot express the contentment I had by thine of the 22^d of June^a (which I received Saturday last), it telling me, in a few words, almost all which (for the present) I would know, for the queen hath secured the prince, and made a full dispatch to me of my business. Albeit my misfortunes be such as make my friends mistrust my constancy, yet thy securing [?] their doubts does me no little service; as for the queen's letters and cyphers, all day they are about me, and all night under my head, and what I cannot so keep, upon my word, shall be burnt.

The first of the two things which the queen desires of me (which is to keep myself from engagements till I shall hear from the queen by Montrevil), I shall precisely observe, but except thou, by thy kind frequent letters, assist to preserve my health, I shall not so well answer to the queens [queen?] for it.

For seriously, without compliment, thy love preserves my life, and I tell thee that those words of thine, "tout ira bien a la fin," and "nous encore," did extremely chear me, because I hope the queen had some reason to write it, besides her desire of comforting me. Yet I desire her not to mistake my condition, for the best I can expect is to have propositions from London (wherein the Scots will only join in point of church government), such as I can never yield to, as the militia for twenty years, and many others as ill; and now it is a folly to think they will go less^b so long as they see none to resist them, knowing that the Scots will not; so that all my endeavours must be the delaying my answer (till there be considerable parties visibly formed), to which end I think my proposing to go to London, if I may be there with safety, will be the best put-off, if (which I believe to be better), I cannot find a way to come to thee. I refer

^a See note post, p. 52.^b See p. 4, note ^a.

me freely to thee to judge which of these are best, or whether there be a better; but be confident that my business cannot be done here, where, if I stay any time, I am lost. I earnestly desire thee that thou wilt freely admit Ashburnham into all counsells which concern my business, and fully intrust him therein, that he may be ready at an hour's warning to be returned to him who is eternally thine,

CHARLES R.

XXXV.

New-Castle, July 1st, 1646.

DEAR HEART,

I had the contentment to receive thine of the 28th of June upon Saturday last. The same day I got a true copy of the London propositions, which ('tis said) will be here within ten days, and now do assure thee that they are such as I cannot grant without loss of my conscience, crown, and honour; to which, as I can no way consent, so, in my opinion, a flat denial is to be delayed as long as may be, and how to make an handsome denying answer is all the difficulty. For which I shall take the advice of Montrevil and the French ambassadour, delaying my answer (if it be possible) until one or both of them come; but if I cannot, I intend to make my delay upon my going to London (upon condition I may be there free and in safety), there to be better informed with the reasons of their propositions, and to make mine own.

Concerning Prince Charles, I have fully declared my resolution formerly; yet, least there may be need (hoping there will not), I do enjoin thee, as thou lovest me, to command him expressly to wait upon thee, and stay with thee, 'til he shall receive my further orders, and all his council and servants that they assist him to obey this my command, as likewise that he do nothing without the queen's advice, knowing that the queen will encourage his counsell to debate things, as they used to do, the better to prepare her judgements. For