ROBERT BOYLE

A BIOGRAPHY

BY

FLORA MASSON

LONDON
CONSTABLE & COMPANY LTD.
1914

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ROBERT BOYLE





THE HONOURABLE ROBERT BOYLE

From a painting by Kerseboom, in the rooms of the Royal Society.

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FLORA MASSON.

Edinburgh, March 1914.

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ROBERT BOYLE

CHAPTER I
HIS BIRTH AND FAMILY

> "... Not needlessly to confound the herald with the historian, and begin a relation with a pedigree...."—ROBERT BOYLE'S *Philaretus*.

"My wife, God ever be praised, was about 3 of the clock in thafternoon of this day, the sign in gemini, libra, Safely delivered of her seaventh son at Lismoor: God bless him, for his name is Robert Boyle."[1]

So runs the entry, under the date January 25, 1626 (7), in the private diary of the great Earl of Cork, a manuscript preserved at Lismore to this day. When he wrote those words, the Earl was already a man of sixty, who, after forty strenuous years, was nearing the zenith of his great fortunes. The Countess—his second wife—was twenty years younger: she had been just seventeen when he married her, and he a widower of thirty-seven. They had been married three-and-twenty years, and in those three-and-twenty years, at one or other of their roughly splendid Irish homes, seven daughters and seven sons had been born to them.

Their earliest home had been the College house of Youghal, "re-edified" to suit the Earl's requirements; but in these later years they were used to divide their

time travelling in state, with coaches and horses and a mounted retinue, between Youghal and the town house in Dublin and this other house of Lismore, already “one of the noblest seats in the province of Munster.”[2] And the Earl was still busy “re-edifying” this also,—building stables and coach-houses, pigeon-houses and slaughter-houses, storing the fishponds in his park with young carp and tench from Amsterdam, and “compassing” his orchards and terraced gardens with a huge turreted wall,—when this fourteenth child, the “Robyn” that was to prove the greatest of all his children, was born at Lismore.

The story of how Mr. Richard Boyle became the great Earl of Cork is one of the most brilliant romances of the British Peerage. It has been often told, nowhere more graphically than by the Earl himself, in his brief *True Remembrances*.[3] So triumphant and so circumstantial, indeed, are the Earl’s “Remembrances,” that many generations of ordinary-minded people have made the mistake of thinking they cannot possibly be true. Only of recent years, since, in fact, the Earl’s own letters and the Earl’s own private diary, kept to within a few days of his death, have been given to the world under the title of the Lismore Papers, has the cloud of incredulity rolled aside; and the character of this man stands out to-day in its integrity, to use his own words, “as cleer as the son at high noon.”[4]

It is the character of a great Englishman, one of Elizabeth’s soldier-statesmen and merchant-adventurers: a man typically Elizabethan in his virtues and his faults, though he was to live far into

the unhappy reign of Charles I. Passionately Protestant, passionately Royalist, a fine blend of the astute and the ingenuous, with strong family affections, splendid ambitions and schemes of statecraft, he was relentless in his prejudices and enmities, indomitably self-sufficient, and with as much vitality in his little finger as may be found in a whole parliamentary Bench to-day. He raised himself from “very inconsiderable beginnings” to be one of the greatest subjects of the realm, one of the greatest Englishmen of his day.

He had been born at Canterbury, the second son of the second son of a country squire—one of the Boyles of Herefordshire. His father had migrated into Kent, married a daughter of Robert Naylor of Canterbury, and settled at Preston, near Faversham. Here, when Richard was ten years old, his father died, leaving his widow to bring up her family of two daughters and three sons on a modest income as best she could. Mrs. Boyle had managed very well. The eldest son, John, and Richard, the second, were sent to the King’s School, Canterbury, and from there (Richard with a scholarship) to Bennet College, Cambridge.[5] John Boyle duly took Orders, while Richard, the cleverer younger brother, went up to London to study law. At one-and-twenty he seems to have been settled in chambers in the Middle Temple, clerk to Sir Richard Manwood, Chief Baron of the Exchequer. At his mother’s death (Roger Boyle and Joan Naylor his wife were buried in Preston Parish Church), Richard Boyle decided that he would never “raise a fortune” in the Middle Temple, and must “travel into foreign kingdoms,” and “gain learning, knowledge, and experience abroad in the world.” And the foreign kingdom toward which he turned his strenuous young face was Ireland: Ireland in the

reign of Elizabeth, in the year of the Armada. It was five-and-twenty years since the Irish chieftain Shan O'Neil had presented himself at Elizabeth's Court, to be gazed at by peers and ambassadors and bishops as if he were "some wild animal of the desert."[6] Shan O'Neil had stalked into the Queen's presence, "his saffron mantle sweeping round and round him, his hair curling on his back and clipped short below the eyes, which gleamed under it with a grey lustre, burning fierce and cruel."[7] And behind him were his bare-headed, fair-haired Galloglasse, clad in their shirts of mail and wolfskins, with their short, broad battle-axes in their hands. The chieftain had flung himself upon his face before the Queen with protestations of loyalty and fair intention; and all those five-and-twenty years the attitude of Ireland had been one of submission and protestation, flanked and backed by wolfskins, shirts of mail and battle-axes. The Desmond Rebellion had been quelled amid horrors. It was still a "savadge nation"[8] this, to which Mr. Richard Boyle was setting forth: an Ireland of primeval forests and papal churchlands, of vivid pastures and peel towers and untamed Erse-speaking tribes. With its ores and timber, its grasslands and salmon-fishing, its fine ports, and, above all, its proximity to Elizabethan England, it was a land teeming with industrial possibilities; but it bristled and whispered with race-hatred and creed-hatred, with persecution and conspiracy. This was the Ireland that was being eagerly peopled and exploited and parcelled out by Elizabethan Englishmen.

And so, on Midsummer Eve 1588, another clever young man arrived in Dublin. He had twenty-seven pounds and three shillings[9] in his possession, and on his wrist and finger he wore the two "tokens" left

him by his dead Kentish mother—the gold bracelet on his wrist, worth about £10, and the diamond ring on his finger, the "happy, lucky and fortunate stone" that was to stay there till his death, and be left an heirloom to his son's son and successive generations of the great Boyle family.

The Earl never forgot the accoutrements and the various suits of clothes with which he started in life when, at two-and-twenty, he shut the door of his chambers in the Middle Temple behind him: "A taffety doublet cut with and upon taffety; a pair of black velvet breeches laced, a new Milan fustian suit, laced and cut upon taffety, two cloaks, competent linen and necessaries, with my rapier and dagger." And he must have carried letters of introduction also, which procured the young lawyer employment and influential friends; for Mr. Richard Boyle was very soon launched on Dublin society, and was on friendly terms with at least two men who hailed from his own county of Kent, Sir Edward Moore, of Mellifont, in Meath, and Sir Anthony St. Leger, who was living in Dublin. It is more than possible that he met also at this time the poet Spenser; for Dublin must have been Spenser's headquarters since 1580, when he came over to Ireland as Secretary to the Lord Deputy. Spenser, who it is believed had been through all the horrors of the Desmond Rebellion, was, in 1588, after having held various appointments, leaving Dublin to take up his bachelor abode at Kilcolman, a peel tower abandoned by the Desmonds and assigned, with some thousands of acres around it, to this English poet-politician, already known as the author of the *Shepheard's Calendar*. At Kilcolman, in this peel tower in a wild wooded glen among the Galtee Hills, about thirty miles south of Limerick, Sir Walter Raleigh came to

stay with Spenser when he too was in Ireland, inspecting the vast Irish estates that had been assigned to him. It was there they read their poems aloud to each other, and that Raleigh persuaded Spenser to go back with him to London, together to offer their poems to the Queen. During the first year or two, therefore, of Boyle's sojourn in Ireland, while he was working his way into the notice of Englishmen of influence there, Spenser was in London, being lionised as the Poet of Poets, the author of the first three books of the *Faerie Queene*.

When Spenser returned to Ireland with a royal pension as Clerk to the Council of the Province of Munster, Richard Boyle was already clerk, or deputy, to the "Escheator General," busy adjusting the claims of the Crown to "escheated" Irish lands and titles—travelling about, and making enemies of all people who did not get exactly what they wanted out of the Escheator or the Escheator's clerk. Both Boyle's sisters had joined him in Ireland, and both were soon to marry husbands there; and somewhere about this time his cousin, Elizabeth Boyle, daughter of James Boyle, of the Greyfriars in Hereford, was in Ireland, and the poet Spenser, back from his London visit, the literary hero of the hour, met and fell in love with Boyle's cousin Elizabeth. She is the lady of the *Amoretti* and *Epithalamium*; "my beautifullest bride," with the "sunshyny face," and the "long, loose, yellow locks lyke golden wyre," whose name the poet-lover was to trace in the yellow Irish sands, and of whom he sang so proudly—

> "Tell me, ye merchants' daughters, did you see
> So fayre a creature in your town before, ...?"

They were married in the Cathedral of Cork in the

summer of 1594. A few months later, Spenser turned his face Londonwards again, taking with him presumably his English wife, and certainly the other three books of his *Faerie Queene*. He was to return to Ireland once again.

In 1595, a year after Spenser's marriage to Elizabeth Boyle, Mr. Richard Boyle married a young Limerick lady, Joan Apsley, one of the two daughters and co-heirs of Mr. William Apsley, a member of the Council of Munster. Joan Apsley's five hundred a year in Irish lands, "so goodly and commodious a soyle,"[10] was to be the foundation of Mr. Boyle's fortunes. She left it all to him when she died, at Mallow, "in travail with her first child," and was buried in Buttevant Church with her little stillborn son in her arms.

After his wife's death, Richard Boyle, now a landowner and a man of some importance in Munster, had his time full fighting his personal enemies. There were powerful men among them, and by his own account they "all joined together, by their lies, complaining against me to Queen Elizabeth." It was impossible, they said, he could have advanced so rapidly by honest means. They accordingly accused him of embezzlement and forgery, and, because some of his wife's relations were well-known Catholics, they accused him—staunch Protestant as he was—of acquiring lands with Spanish gold, of harbouring priests, and being himself a papist in disguise. They even accused him of stealing a horse. For a time he was actually kept in a Dublin prison, and when by a kind of fluke he found the prison doors opened to him, and was intending to "take shipping," and to "justify" himself before the Queen in London, the General Rebellion of Munster broke

out. In the debacle, Mr. Richard Boyle—his wife's lands wasted and his moneys gone—did manage to escape to England. And so did the poet Spenser—Spenser, marked of the rebels, the author not only of the *Faerie Queene*, but of the *View of the Present State of Ireland*. Why did Spenser ever return to Ireland to undertake the duties of Sheriff of Cork? Spenser and his wife and children were at Kilcolman when the Rebellion broke out. They fled for their lives; and the old peel tower of the Desmonds was burnt to the ground. One of their babies, Ben Jonson told Drummond of Hawthornden, was left behind, and perished in the flames.

Spenser was to die in poverty in London, to be buried near to Chaucer in Westminster Abbey, the poet-mourners flinging their pens into his grave. Spenser's wife—Mr. Richard Boyle's cousin—was to live on in Ireland, to bring up her children (her son Peregrine was the "Joy of her Life") and to marry yet twice again. Twice her great kinsman saw his cousin's hand "given in marriage." She had her compensations in life—but there never was another *Epithalamium*.

Arrived in London, Mr. Richard Boyle, through the friendly offices of Anthony Bacon, whom he had known at Cambridge, was presented to the new Lord Deputy, the Earl of Essex, then just starting for Ireland. Queen Elizabeth may have had her reasons for clapping Mr. Boyle so unceremoniously into the gate-house of the Tower just as he was thinking of going back to his old Chambers in the Middle Temple. It is possible she was waiting for her new Deputy's reports from Ireland. In due time Richard Boyle was fetched before her, and he did "justify" himself to his Sovereign. Her splendid royal words

were burnt in upon his memory to the last day of his life:[11]—

"By God's death, these are but inventions against this young man." And again: "We find him to be a man fit to be employed by ourselves."

Boyle was received at Court, and when he was sent back to Ireland it was as Clerk to the Council of Munster, the very post that Spenser had held. He bought Sir Walter Raleigh's ship, the *Pilgrim*, freighted her with victuals and ammunition, sailed in her, "by long seas" to Carrickfoyle, and took up his new work under the splendid Presidentship of Sir George Carew. His wife's lands were recovered: "Richard Boyle of Galbaly in the County of Limerick, Gent.," waited on Carew through all the siege of Kinsale, and was employed by him to carry the news of victory to the Queen in London. There he was the guest of Sir Robert Cecil, "then principal secretary," in his house in the Strand, and was taken by Cecil next morning to Court, and into the bedchamber of her Majesty, "who remembered me, calling me by name, and giving me her hand to kiss."[12]

Quickly back in Ireland, Richard Boyle became the Lord President's right hand in all his strenuous services to the Crown: in later years one of the few literary treasures in the great Earl's "studdie" was the copy of Carew's *Hibernia Pacata* given him by his Chief. It was Carew who sent him in 1602 to London, furnished with letters to Cecil and to Sir Walter Raleigh, recommending him as a fit purchaser of the Raleigh Estates in Ireland. The thousands of acres in the counties of Cork and Waterford known as the "Raleigh-Desmond Estates" were then and there, in London, bought from Sir Walter Raleigh "at a very low rate." In Richard Boyle's hands, the waste lands

that to Raleigh had been a source of anxiety and money loss were to become the best “settled” and most prosperous territory in Ireland, and a source of wealth and power to him who made them so. For Richard Boyle was not only a great landowner, he was a shrewd man of business, a capitalist and a large employer of labour. It was, says Grosart, “his perseverance and governing faculty and concentrated energy that transformed bleak mountain and creation-old fallow moor and quaking bog into hives of population and industry.”[13]

Sir George Carew went a step further. He “dealt very nobly and fatherlike” with Mr. Boyle in recommending him to marry again. And the lady whom Carew had in view for his *protégé* was Katharine Fenton, the seventeen-year-old daughter of Sir Geoffrey Fenton, the wise and enlightened Secretary of State. There is a pretty tradition handed down in the Boyle family—the Earl’s own daughter used to tell it—that Mr. Boyle first met his second wife when he was a very young man newly arrived in Dublin. Calling one day on business at Sir Geoffrey Fenton’s house, and waiting in an ante-room till the great man should be disengaged, Mr. Boyle had “entertained himself” with a pretty child in her nurse’s arms; and when Sir Geoffrey at last appeared and apologised for having kept his visitor waiting, the young man “pleasantly told him he had been courting a young lady for his wife.” This must have been in 1588. The marriage took place fifteen years later, and a great deal had happened in the interval. Joan Apsley and her baby were buried in Buttevant Church, and “Richard Boyle of Galbaly in the County of Limerick, Gent.” had purchased the vast Raleigh Estates. In July 1603 he was a wealthy widower of

thirty-seven, and Katharine Fenton was seventeen.

“I never demanded any marriage portion with her, neither promise of any, it not being in my consideration; yet her father, after my marriage, gave me one thousand pounds[14] in gold with her. But this gift of his daughter to me I must ever thankfully acknowledge as the crown of all my blessings; for she was a most religious, virtuous, loving, and obedient wife to me all the days of her life, and the mother of all my hopeful children.”[15]

Elizabeth was dead, and James I reigned in her stead. Sir George Carew—the new Lord Deputy—had conferred a knighthood on Mr. Boyle on his wedding day. Two years later he was made Privy Councillor for the Province of Munster, and thenceforward there was to be no stop nor hitch in the upbuilding of his great fortunes. In 1612, after another visit to London and an audience of King James, he found himself Privy Councillor of State for the Kingdom of Ireland. He was created Lord Boyle, Baron of Youghal, in 1616, and Viscount of Dungarvan and Earl of Cork in 1620. His home life had run parallel with his public services. “My Howses,” “My deare Wife,” “the Children,” “my Famullye,” fill an important place in the Earl’s life and diary and letters; while the wife’s few little epistolary efforts to her husband have only one beginning: he was to her always “My owne goode Selfe.”

Robert Boyle speaks of his mother’s “free and noble spirit”—which, he adds, “had a handsome mansion to reside in”—and of her “kindness and sweet carriage to her own.”[16] The hopeful children came quickly. Roger, the first, born at Youghal in 1606, was sent at seven years old to England, at first to his uncle John, then Dr. John Boyle, a prebendary

of Lichfield, and a year later to his mother's relatives, the Brownes, of Sayes Court, Deptford. There was an excellent day-school at Deptford, to which Roger Boyle was sent; and a rather pathetic little figure he must have cut, going to and from school, with "shining morning face" in his baize gown trimmed with fur.[17] On high days and holidays he wore an ash-coloured satin doublet and cloak, trimmed with squirrel fur, and a ruff round his little neck; and his baby sword was scarfed in green. Mrs. Townshend, in her *Life of the Great Earl*, points out that the child wore out five pairs of shoes in a year, and that his book of French verbs cost sixpence. He was to die at Deptford, after a very short illness, when he was only nine years old. The Brownes were terribly distressed, and did everything they could. Mrs. Browne moved him into her own chamber, and nursed him in motherly fashion. His Uncle John was sent for, and sat by the little fellow's bed till he died. The physician and apothecary came from London by boat and administered a "cordial powder of unicornes' horns," and other weird "phisicks." "Little Hodge" was very patient, and said his prayers of his own accord; and after he was dead Mrs. Browne found that in his little purse, which he called his "stock" (he must have been very like his father in some ways), there was still more than forty shillings unspent. All these details, and many more, were sent in letters to the parents at Youghal, and to the grandparents, Sir Geoffrey and Lady Fenton, in Dublin, after "my jewel Hodge," as the grandfather used to call him, was buried in Deptford Parish Church.

There were by this time four daughters, born in succession: Alice, Sarah, Lettice, and Joan; a second son, Richard, born at Youghal in 1612; and a fifth

daughter, Katharine, who was a baby in arms when "little Hodge" died. A few months after his death came Geoffrey; and then Dorothy in 1617, and Lewis two years later. Another boy was born in 1621 and christened Roger; Francis and Mary followed in 1623 and 1624; and then came the fourteenth child, "my seaventh son", and the Earl made that memorable entry in his diary at Lismore: "God bless him, for his name is Robert Boyle."

CHAPTER II
AN IRISH CHILDHOOD

> "He would ever reckon it amongst the chief misfortunes of his life that he did never know her that gave it him."—ROBERT BOYLE'S *Philaretus*.

A fortnight later, there was a christening in the private chapel at Lismore. The Earl's chaplain and cousin, Mr. Robert Naylor, officiated, and a large house-party gathered for the event. Lady Castlehaven, who was to be the child's godmother, arrived with her family and retinue just in time, and the godfathers were Lord Digby and Sir Francis Slingsby. Lord Digby was living in the house as a newly made son-in-law, and the boy was to be named Robert after him.

The Earl's large family of "hopeful children" were already growing up and scattering when this fourteenth baby made its appearance among them. Alice, the eldest daughter, at nineteen, had been for some years the wife of young David Barry, the "Barrymore" who had been brought up in the family almost like one of the Earl's sons. Sarah, the second, at a tender age, had been transferred to the care of the Earl's old friend, Lady Moore, at Mellifont, and was married, on the same day as her sister Alice, to Lady Moore's son. He died very soon afterwards; and Sarah, at seventeen, had been a little widow for three years, living again under her father's roof; and on the Christmas Day before Robert Boyle's birth, Sarah had

been married a second time—to Robert, Lord Digby, in her father's chapel at Lismore.

Lettice, the third daughter, had been intended for Lady Castlehaven's son, but the young man's religious views were "not conformable"; and she and her sister Joan were accordingly kept at home, with a London season in view. "Dick," the now eldest son and heir, already "my Lord Dungarvan," was at home, being mildly tutored by the Earl's chaplain, and living in a boy's paradise of saddle-horses and "faier goshawks," with an "eyrie of falcons" and occasional "fatt bucks" and "junkettings"; but little Katharine, who came next, had been sent away into England to Lady Beaumont—at Coleorton in Leicestershire—mother of Sapcott Beaumont, the little girl's prospective husband. Geoffrey, who would have been ten years old when Robert was born, had died as a baby. Tradition says he tumbled into a well in the Earl's Walk in Youghal; but the Earl's diary, in mentioning the death, makes no reference to the well. Dorothy, now nine years old, was already destined for Arthur Loftus, Sir Adam Loftus's son; and in the autumn before Robert's birth she had been fetched away to be brought up in the Loftus family at Rathfarnham. Francis and Mary were quite young children in the nursery; and now Robert, the fourteenth baby, as soon as he "was able without danger to support the incommodities of a remove," was to be carried away from Lismore in the arms of his "Country Nurse."[18] The Earl, so Robert Boyle says, had a "perfect aversion to the habit of bringing up children so nice and tenderly that a hot sun or a good shower of rain as much endangers them as if they were made of butter or of sugar." Lady Cork's opinions do not seem to have been asked; perhaps, in those three-and-twenty years, she had taught herself

to think, if not to feel, in unison with her "owne goode selfe." And so Robert Boyle, like his brothers and sisters, was to be reared during those first months of his life by a foster-mother, and owing to the movements of his family at this time was to be left with her longer than he would perhaps otherwise have been. He was to be rocked in an Irish cradle, or rather nursed, Irish fashion, in a "pendulous satchell" instead of a cradle, with a slit for the baby's head to look out of.[19] By slow degrees, this boy, born amid all the pomp and seventeenth-century splendour of his father's mansions, was to be inured to "a coarse but cleanly diet," and to what he afterwards so characteristically described as "the passions of the air." They gave him, he says, "so vigorous a complexion" that 'hardships' were made easy to him by 'custom,' while the delights and conveniences of ease were endeared to him by their 'rarity.'

Happy months of babyhood, lulled in a cottage mother's arms, or suspended, between sleeping and waking, in that fascinating medium that was to become afterwards his life-study! Wise little head of Robert Boyle, looking out of that slit in the "pendulous satchell," baby-observer of the firelight, and the sunlight and the shadows, enjoying, without theory, as he swung in it, the "spring of the air"! And meantime the baby's family was preparing for a season in London.

The House of Lismore was still being "re-edified" during the months that followed the birth of "Robyn." The gardens and terraces were being laid out; the orchard wall was still building. Dick, the eldest son, and Arthur Loftus, the destined son-in-law, had been allowed to go to Dublin for the horse-races, with allowance for "wyne and

extraordinaryes," "horse-meat," "small sums," and "idle expenses." The Earl liked to give presents: each New Year in his diary is a record of presents given and received; and while he seems to have kept the laced shirts and nightcaps made for him by his daughters, he had a habit of handing on the more costly gifts to other people. He was at this time tipping his musicians at Lismore, and commissioning his trusty emissary, Sir John Leeke, to buy smock-petticoats for Lady Cork and her mother Lady Fenton, who, since Sir Geoffrey's death, had made her home for the most part with her daughter and her great son-in-law. And the Earl had given his married daughters a breeding mare apiece—each mare "with a colt at her feet," while braces of bucks and saddle-hackneys had been dispersed among various friends. His daughter Sarah's (Lady Digby's) first child—a great event in the family—was born at Lismore in October; and towards the end of 1627, with the London visit in view, the Earl dispatched a footman with letters into England. Early in the spring of 1628, Sarah, with her lord and baby, left Lismore; in April, Mary Boyle was fetched away to be brought up under Lady Clayton's charge at Cork; Lady Fenton also left Lismore; and little Francis was carried off to Youghal by Sir Lawrence Parson's lady. As the visit to England drew nearer, the Earl made his last will and testament—in duplicate. "Thone" copy was to be locked up in his great iron chest at Lismore, which was fitted with three keys, to be left with three trusted kinsmen, who were to add to the chest the Earl's moneys as they accumulated; and "thother" copy was to be carried by the Earl himself into England.

On April 21st a great cavalcade—the Earl and his wife, with their two daughters, Lettice and Joan, and

the rest of their party and retinue—set out for Youghal, where on May 7th they took shipping (a captain had been hired to “wafte them over”) and reached London on May 16th;—not without adventures, for they were chased by a Dunkirker of 300 tons, and though the family escaped, the footmen and horses following in another barque were taken and carried off to sea.

That London season of 1628, when Charles I was the young King of England! What a busy, self-important, gratifying time it was, and what an amount of feeing and tipping and social engineering was requisite to carry it through! The Earl was received by the Duke of Buckingham and presented to the King. He engaged a steward for his household, and rented my Lord Grandison’s house in Channell Row, Westminster.[20] In June Lady Cork and her daughters were presented to the Queen, who kissed them all most graciously. Mr. Perkins, the London tailor, a very well-known man among the aristocracy as “the jerkin-maker of St. Martin’s”, was sent for to receive his orders. The Earl must have had his mind fully occupied and his purse-strings loose; for there were at least two troublesome lawsuits going on at this time about his Irish estates and industries, and he was employing the great Glanville as his legal adviser. But nothing seems to have interfered with the somewhat stodgy gaieties of that London season of 1628. And in preparation there were purchases of upholstery and table-linen in Cheapside; of “wares” for the ladies of the family, in Lombard Street; velvet, cloth of gold, and what-not. How different all this from the old-young life in the shabby chambers in the Middle Temple, or the weeks spent in the Gate-house, waiting to be called before Queen Elizabeth! But the great self-made man had not

forgotten the old days. He had always given a helping hand to his own kith and kin: Ireland was sprinkled with his “cozens.” His brother John, the poor parson of Lichfield, had the good fortune to at least die Bishop of Cork. And now, on this visit to London, the Earl had no intention of neglecting his “cozen,” the lawyer Naylor of Gray’s Inn, or his “cozen” the vintner Croone of the King’s Head Tavern in Fleet Street.[21]

The Earl of Bedford had offered his house of Northall for the autumn; and visits were paid in state, with coaches and horses, to the Bedford family and to the Earl’s old Chief, Carew. Carew, now Earl of Totness, lived at Nonsuch, near Epsom, the wonderful house of Henry VIII’s reign, set in its park of elms and walnuts, with its gilded and timbered outside, ornamented with figures of stucco, and paintings by Rubens and Holbein.[22] Little wonder, in the circumstances, that the Earl of Cork’s coachmen and footmen all demanded new liveries.

In August the whole family removed to Northall, and later in the year they visited Lord and Lady Digby at Coleshill in Warwickshire, and Lady Beaumont at Coleorton in Leicestershire. Here the match between “Katy” and Sapcott Beaumont was broken off, the money arrangements not satisfying the Earl, and Katy was handed over to Lady Digby’s charge. While the Cork cavalcade were moving about from one great house to another, there came the news of the murder of Buckingham at Portsmouth; but this tragic event did not interfere with a visit to Oxford in September. The party that set out from Coleshill, on September 1st, included Lady Digby, whose second baby was born inconveniently the day after their arrival in Oxford, in the house of Dr.

Weston, Lady Cork's uncle, in Christchurch. "Dick" was now at Christchurch, with Arthur Loftus and the young Earl of Kildare; and Lettice and Joan both met their fates during this visit, Lettice marrying, very soon after, George Goring, handsome, plausible, dissolute and cold; while Joan was promised to the wild young "Faerie Earle" of Kildare.

Back in London, after taking Eton on the way, the Earl of Cork and his wife and daughters made a little pilgrimage. They all rode to "my Uncle Browne's to Deptford," and visited little Roger's grave in Deptford parish church. They "viewed" the monument that the Earl had set up there, and for which the "Tombe-maker" had sent in his bill. And the Earl was so pleased with it that he employed the same man to make "a faier alabaster tombe" over the grave of his parents, in the parish church of Preston in Kent.

As the year drew to a close, the Earl's moneys from his furnaces, forges, ironworks, "tobackoe farms" and what-not, were added to the great iron chest at Lismore; and Christmas and New Year gifts were showered among his English friends. A manuscript Bible was sent to Dr. Weston for Christchurch Library; "cane-apples" (variously described as the Arbutus and the Espalier apples) and pickled scallops from Ireland, to other friends; "a rare lyttle book" to the Earl of Arundel, and usquebaugh to the Earl of Suffolk. Sir Edmund Verney's new butler from Ireland came in for the Earl's own scarlet doublet with hose and cloak, while the Archbishop of Canterbury[23] accepted a "ronlett of usquebaugh" and a piece of black frieze for a cassock.

And then the Earl made an ominous entry in his diary: "I gave Dr. Moor £5 and Dr. Gifford 20*s.* for

visiting my wife in her sickness"; and "my wife's phisick" is an item in the Earl's accounts. But they spent the early spring at Langley Park near Windsor, and in April were back again in Channell Row, where on April 15th Lady Cork's fifteenth child—a little girl—was born. In June they removed to Lord Warwick's house in Lincoln's Inn; and in October 1629—the baby Margaret being left behind them with her nurse and maid—they were back in Ireland again.

The return journey had been made with even more pomp and ceremony than the setting forth eighteen months before. For one of the King's ships, the *Ninth Whelp*—one of the fleet of "Lion Whelps," built at Deptford—was at the last moment put at their disposal to "wafte them over." Lord Cork distributed presents among the ship's company, and gave the captain at parting a magnificent pair of fringed and embroidered gloves, to which Lady Cork added a black silk night-cap, wrought with gold. The men, horses and luggage, followed safely in two barques—no Dunkirker being sighted on the way.

Before the Earl left Ireland, he and the Lord Chancellor[24] had not been on the best of terms. But now, fresh from the civilisation of the Metropolis, and with all the reflected glory of a crossing in the *Ninth Whelp*, the Earl, by the King's desire, made up his quarrel with the Chancellor. Both were sworn Lords Justices for the joint government of Ireland in the absence of a Deputy; and both resolved to "join really in the King's Service"—a resolution which they were, for a little while, to keep. Meantime, Mr. Perkins, "my London Tailor," had sent over to Dublin an enormous trunk of magnificent wearing-apparel, and a very long bill; and the retiring Lord Deputy[25]

delivered up the King's Sword and government of Ireland to the Lord Chancellor and the Earl.

This was in October 1629. On the 16th of February following, 1630, Lady Cork died at Dublin.[26] It had "pleased my mercifull God for my manifold syns ... to translate out of this mortall world to his gloriows kingdome of heaven the sowle of my deerest deer wife...."

The baby Peggie—ten months old—was still in England; and the ex-baby Robyn, reared by his country nurse, was just three years old. Had the lady of the "free and noble spirit," in those short months spent in Dublin, between October and February, been able to see Robyn again—to hold him in her arms a little moment—before she died?

For a year or two after Lady Cork's death, the Earl was very busy with the government of Ireland and the management of his own family and estates; and his migrations were for a time to be only from his Dublin town house to the Council Chamber and Great Hall of Dublin Castle. Lady Cork had been buried with solemn ceremonial in the Chancel of St. Patrick's Church, in the same tomb with her grandfather the Lord Chancellor Weston and her father Sir Geoffrey Fenton, Secretary of State. The business connected with "my deer wive's ffunerals" occupied the Earl for some time; and a splendid black marble monument was in course of erection in the upper end of the chancel of St. Patrick's. Meantime the widower was surrounded by his children;—the Barrymores and their children, and Lady Digby with her comfortable husband, while Lettice Goring, with or without George Goring, was always coming to and fro from England. Poor Lady Lettice Goring was not a happy woman. She had

nearly died of smallpox when she was thirteen, and perhaps on this account her education had been woefully neglected. There was a certain amount of cleverness in her of a small-natured type; but she was childless, delicate, and discontented, with a continual “plaint.” Her younger sister, Katherine, was of a very different nature. Handsome, intelligent, and high-spirited, by far the finest character of all the Earl’s daughters, Katherine, now that her engagement to Sapcott Beaumont had been broken off, was at sixteen quickly affianced and married to Arthur Jones, Lord Ranelagh’s son, and carried off to Athlone Castle, a gloomy old Norman castle in Roscommon;—with how small a chance of happiness in life she fortunately did not know.

The two boys, Lewis and Roger—Lord Kynalmeaky and Lord Broghill—were fetched to Dublin and entered at Trinity College; and Joan was married to the Earl of Kildare as soon as that young nobleman returned to Ireland in company with her brother Dick. The baby Peggie was brought from England with her nurse and maid; and sometime in 1631 the two youngest boys, Francis and Robert, were brought home; and “my children,” their little black satin doublets, and “Mownsier,” their French tutor, began to find a place in the Earl’s diary. It was then, too, that the Earl began to make those settlements, the first of many, in various counties, on “Robyn”, and that a son of one of the Earl’s own old servants was engaged “to attend Robert Boyle.” The minute philosopher, at five years old, had his own valet.

Anxieties and triumphs jostled each other in the Dublin town house. Lady Fenton did not long survive her daughter, and a great cavalcade, headed by the Earl and his sons and sons-in-law, rode to her funeral

at Youghal. In November 1631 the Earl was made High Treasurer of Ireland[27]; that winter, in leisure hours, he must have written his *True Remembrances*, the manuscript of which was finished and "commended to posterity" in June 1632—just after the Earl, the Lord Chancellor, and the young Earl of Kildare, had been given the Freedom of the City of Dublin. Early in that year, Dorothy had married Arthur Loftus and settled down at Rathfarnham, and that same summer Dick, "my Lord Dungarvan," in company with Mr. Fry his tutor, set off on his foreign travels. Dungarvan's marriage with the daughter and heiress of Lord Clifford was already on the *tapis*. Lord and Lady Clifford lived at Skipton, in Yorkshire; Dungarvan was to be received in audience by King Charles, and to take Yorkshire on his way abroad; and "thaffair," so dear to the Earl's heart, was very soon to bring him home again. A husband was to be found for Peggie, now that she was three years old; and the Lord Chancellor and the Lord Primate were to have long confabulations with the Earl on this important matter. Kynalmeaky was already proving himself an anxious, brilliant young spendthrift, and was to be sent to sea in the *Ninth Whelp* to learn "navigacon" and "the mathematiques" from that same Captain who wore the fringed gloves and embroidered night-cap. The sons-in-law were a trial. George Goring was continually borrowing, Kildare perpetually losing at dice and cards. He "battered and abused" with marrow-bones the Earl's best silver trenchers, and then won £5 from his father-in-law for "discovering" to him the culprit! Lord Barrymore, after living eighteen months with his wife and all his family under the Earl's roof, went back to Castle Lyons without so much as saying thank-you. As for the household staff, the "servant trouble" existed

then as now. That Christmas of 1632 one of the Earl's scullerymen "did most unfortunately by jesting with his knife run my undercook into the belly whereof he instantly died in my house in Dublin"—a most unpleasant domestic episode; and it happened at the very moment when the splendid black marble tomb in St Patrick's had been finished and paid for!

But all this was as nothing to the griefs of the next few months; the premature birth of Lady Digby's baby under the Earl's roof, the hurried christening before it died, and the death of the young mother,—that little Sarah who, a widow at seventeen, had been married to Lord Digby, the Earl's most comfortable son-in-law, on the Christmas Day before Robyn was born.[28]

It was a dark summer, the summer of 1633, in the Dublin town house; and the Earl and his children were still in the first days of their mourning, when Wentworth, the new Lord Deputy, arrived in Dublin: *A most cursed man to all Ireland*, wrote the Earl in his diary, *and to me in particular*.

The story of Wentworth's government of Ireland, a government "hardly paralleled in the annals of pro-consulship,"[29] has given material for many books; but through all the chapters there runs the underplot of Wentworth's personal relations with the Earl of Cork. From the first moment, on that July morning, 1633, when the Earl—the Lord High Treasurer—set out in his coach to meet the Lord Deputy and his suite "walking on foot towards the cytty"—a wall of enmity had stood up between these two great men. There is no more human reading than the private diary record of those uneasy years that followed; and unconsciously, by mere enumeration of daily incidents, the Earl has made his own character and

the character of Wentworth stand out as clearly as if they were both alive and facing each other in a Parliament of to-day. There is the character of the strenuous old Elizabethan Protestant, with its angles and its softnesses, the man of sixty-seven, who for five-and-forty years had been the man on the spot. Royalist to the backbone, he had served in Ireland three sovereigns in succession. It was the country of his adoption. To a great extent, he felt he had made it what it was; and now, in yielding up the sword and government to Wentworth, he was proudly satisfied that Ireland was being yielded up in "generall peac and plenty."

And there is the character of Wentworth, the man who had come—who had been sent—to rule; the much younger man, of more recent education and more cultivated tastes, of a different code of living. But he was as obstinately masterful, and his energy and insolence were that of manhood's prime. He, too, was there to do the King's service, none the less fervently that he had been, not so long before, a leader of the popular party in the English Parliament, and had only recently, so to speak, crossed the floor of the House. Already, in that dark head of his were schemes and purposes undreamed of in the old Earl's homely philosophy. They were to be unfolded in those confidential letters to Laud—great schemes, known afterwards as his "policy of Thorough," his government of all men by "Reward and Punishment." But in the meantime, with all outward deference and ceremonial, the Earl of Cork hated Wentworth and his government in advance, and Wentworth regarded the Earl of Cork with personal dislike, for he knew him to be the most important man in Ireland—a man who would not be subservient; a man in the Lord Deputy's path.

So the diary tells its own story: the story of the troublous official life of the Council Chamber and of Wentworth's Irish Parliaments; the story of Wentworth's sharp pursuit of the Earl's titles to his Irish lands; and the story of the private life in the Earl's Dublin house, with its social duties and family anxieties. Wentworth had married his third wife privately, in England, a year after the death of his second wife, and not long before his departure for Ireland. She had been sent over to Dublin six months before him, to live rather mysteriously in Dublin Castle, under her own unmarried name—as "Mistress Rhodes." But immediately on Wentworth's arrival, her identity was revealed: the Lords Justices were duly presented to the Lord Deputy's lady, and permitted to salute her with a kiss. And the diary records kind visits, and return visits, between the Castle and the Earl of Cork's Dublin town house; little card-parties at the Castle, when the Chancellor and the Treasurer both lost sums of money to the Lord Deputy; games of "Mawe,"[30] also for money, and private theatricals acted by the Lord Deputy's gentlemen. The old Earl sat through a tragedy, on one occasion, which he found "tragicall" indeed, because there was no time to have any supper. And then, but six months after Wentworth's arrival, there came the first hint of the trouble about Lady Cork's black marble tomb in St Patrick's.

Mr. Bagwell has pointed out[31] how, to the old Elizabethan, whose "Protestantism was not of the Laudian type," there was nothing amiss in the fact of a Communion-table standing detached in the middle of the Church. The Earl, in erecting his monument, had indeed improved the Chancel of St. Patrick's, which had been earthen-floored, and often in wet weather "overflown." He had raised it, with three

stone steps and a pavement of hewn stones, “whereon,” the Earl wrote to Laud, “the communion-table now stands very dry and gracefully.” Laud himself had found it hard to interfere, in the face of general opinion supported by two Archbishops.[32] But Wentworth was obdurate, and the King himself was appealed to. It was considered a scandal that the Cork tomb should remain “sett in the place where the high altar anciently stood.”[33] In the end, the great black marble monument was taken down, stone by stone; and in March 1635 Wentworth was able to write to Laud: “The Earl of Cork’s tomb is now quite removed. How he means to dispose of it I know not; but up it is put in boxes, as if it were marchpanes or banqueting stuffs, going down to the christening of my young master in the country.”

The reference to “my young master” is evidently to Lady Kildare’s baby, whose birth—and the fact that it was a boy—was the event of the moment in the Cork household: indeed, the old Earl had a bet on with Sir James Erskine, on the subject. In November 1635 the tomb had been re-erected where it now stands, in the south side of the Choir, and outwardly, at least, after a long struggle, the matter was ended. Lord Cork knew nothing of that sneer in Wentworth’s letter to Laud about the marchpanes and the banqueting stuffs; and when Wentworth arrived at the Earl’s house one evening in December 1635—he was rather fond of dropping in unexpectedly—and joined the Earl and his family at supper, the diary records that the Lord Deputy “very nobly and neighbourlyke satt down and took part of my super without any addicon.” But between July 1633 and that December evening of 1635, many things had happened in the Cork family.

The captain of the *Ninth Whelp* had been obliged to report that Lewis, my Lord Kynalmeaky, had run badly into debt at Bristol. Dungarvan had been recalled, and sent to England with his tutor, about "thaffair" of his marriage with Mrs. Elizabeth Clifford. George Goring had been assisted with money to buy a troop of horse; and "our colonel"—and poor Lettice after him—had sailed for the Netherlands, and soon settled at The Hague. Little Peggie, her prospective jointure and husband provided, had been put meanwhile, with Mary, under the care of Sir Randall and Lady Clayton at Cork; and Mr. Perkins, the London tailor, had sent the Earl his new Parliament robes of brocaded satin and cloth of gold. Dorothy Loftus's first baby had been born at Rathfarnham, and Katherine Jones's first baby at Athlone Castle. Both were girls; hence, that wager of the Earl's that his daughter Kildare's next baby would be a boy. The Earl of Kildare, with his dice and cards, had been causing everybody anxiety; and there was a quarrel about family property going on between the Digby and Offaley family and the "Faerie Earle." Wentworth had interfered, and in the autumn of 1634 Kildare, having taking offence, had "stolen privately on shipboard," leaving his wife and children and a household of about sixty persons "without means or monies." The delinquent was very soon to come home again; but late in 1634 the old Earl had broken up the Kildare establishment and settled his daughter and her children in his own newly built house at Maynooth, riding there with her, and dining with her "for the first time in the new parlour", and sending her two fat oxen "to begin her housekeeping there."

Dick, "my Lord Dungarvan," on the other hand, had been proving himself a very satisfactory son: not

very clever, perhaps, but eminently good-natured and sensible. He had acquitted himself admirably in England, writing comfortable letters to his father, who was much gratified to hear that his boy had taken part in the Royal Masque. It must have been the great Royal Masque in Whitehall, on Shrove Tuesday night, February 18th, 1634: the *Cælum Britannicum*, which followed on the still greater Masque of the Inns of Court. The words were by the poet Carew, the music by Henry Lawes, who had set Milton's *Comus*; and the scenery was by Inigo Jones. The King himself and fourteen of his chief nobles were the Masquers, and the juvenile parts were taken by ten young lords and noblemen's sons. No wonder that the old Earl was proud of "Dick".

And Dungarvan had made such good progress with his wooing that in July a pretty little letter, neatly wax-sealed on floss-silk, had come to the Earl of Cork, beginning: "My Lord,—Now I have the honour to be your daughter." In September 1634 the indefatigable *Ninth Whelp* brought Dungarvan and his bride to Ireland. The Earl met them at their landing, and drove them back in triumph—three coaches full—to his town house in Dublin. All the available members of the family, little Robert Boyle included, were gathered to welcome the new sister-in-law. It was a great alliance, in which Wentworth himself, by marriage a kinsman of the Cliffords, had lent a hand. For the time being, it was to draw the Lord Deputy into the circle of the Earl's family, though the personal relations between the Deputy and the Earl were to become even more strained.

CHAPTER III
SCHOOLDAYS AT ETON

> "Where the Provost at that time was Sir Henry Wotton, a person that was not only a fine gentleman himself, but very well skilled in the art of making others so."—ROBERT BOYLE'S *Philaretus*.

In December 1634, after nearly seven years' absence, the Earl of Cork and his family returned to the House of Lismore. They had not been gathered there, as a family, since the April of 1628, when the Earl and his wife and daughters set out on their journey to London. But Parliament was adjourned, and Dungarvan and his wife were with them, and everything pointed to their spending Christmas in their home of homes: "And there, God willing, wee intend," wrote the Earl the day before they left Dublin to Lady Clifford at Skipton Castle in Yorkshire —"to keep a merry Christmas among our neighbors, and to eate to the noble family of Skipton in fatt does and Carps, and to drinke your healthe in the best wyne wee can gett...." His new daughter-in-law, he says, "looks, and likes Ireland, very well." She was every day winning the affection and respect of the "best sort of people"—her husband's and her father-in-law's most of all. Incidentally—for he was treading on delicate ground owing to the family connection between Wentworth and the Cliffords—the Earl mentions that he is being "sharply persued" in his Majesty's Court of the Star Chamber about his titles to the college and lands of Youghal; and he is

only sorry that “this attempt” should be made upon him just at the time of his daughter-in-law’s arrival in Ireland.

It is not two hundred miles by rail from Dublin to Lismore; but in those days travelling was slow and difficult; and the Cork cavalcade—the family coach and the gay company of horsemen surrounding it—were four days upon the road. Robert Boyle never forgot that eventful journey.[34] The English daughter-in-law and her attendant lady, and the old Earl and all his five sons, were of the party, the youngest, Robert, not eight years old. Each night they “lay” at hospitable houses on the road, and all went well till, on the fourth day after passing Clonmell, as they were crossing the “Four Miles Water”, their coach was overturned in mid-stream. Robyn remembered every detail of the adventure: how he had been left sitting alone in the coach, “with only a post-boy,” and how one of his father’s gentlemen, “very well horsed,” recognising the danger, rode alongside and insisted on carrying the little fellow—very unwilling to leave the apparent safety of the inside of the coach—in his arms over the rapid water; how the water proved so much swifter and deeper than anybody had imagined that horses and riders were “violently hurried down the stream,” and the unloaded and empty coach was quickly overturned. The coach horses struggled till they broke their harnesses, and with difficulty saved themselves by swimming.

So much for the memory of a little sensitive eight-year-old. The Earl’s diary record is brief and to the point. His coach was “overthrown”, his horses were “in danger of drowning”, but they all, God be praised, arrived safely at Lismore, and the journey

had cost him £24.

Christmas was kept at Lismore, and the last two days of the old year at Castle Lyons, where the Earl's son-in-law, Barrymore, feasted them most liberally. He could scarcely have done less, after that eighteen-months' visit to the Earl's town house in Dublin. And so this year ended.

With the New Year 1635 came the Claytons from Cork, bringing Mary and little Peggie on a visit to their father. A week or two later the Earl went back alone to Dublin for the last session of Parliament, leaving Dungarvan and his wife to keep house at Lismore; and the four boys—Kynalmeaky, Broghill, Frank and little Robyn—were all left under the charge of their tutor, Mr. Wilkinson, who was also the Earl's chaplain.

It was a severe winter: the very day after the Earl set out from Lismore there began to fall at Clonmell "the greatest snow that ever any man now living did see in Ireland." The House of Lismore must have stood, very white and quiet, looking down over the precipice into the swirling Blackwater below it. All about it, white and silent too, lay the gardens and orchards, the fishponds and park lands, and the wooded wildernesses; and the mountains beyond were hidden in falling snows. The roads could not have been easy riding between Clonmell and Dublin, but the Earl and his servants reached Dublin in safety, and he sent back by Dungarvan's man "two new books of Logick" for the versatile Kynalmeaky's further education.

Kildare had come back to Dublin also, and not too soon; for he and his young wife were to make up their differences over a little grave. Early in March their eldest little girl died under the Earl's roof in

Dublin; and a few days later Lady Kildare's boy was born—the "young master" of Wentworth's vindictive letter to Laud.

But spring was at hand, and the Lismore orchards were in blossom. The Earl was busy buying more lands and manors to be settled on Robyn, and writing to his English friends about a "ffrench gent" to accompany his sons Kynalmeaky and Broghill as "governour" on their foreign travels. Great sheet-winged hawks, also, were brought "to fflye for our sports"; and in July Lord Clifford and his suite arrived from Yorkshire on a visit to Lismore. The Earl of Cork was in his element. A great hunting-party had been arranged, and the huntsmen filled the lodge in the park. Dungarvan and his wife—Lord Clifford's daughter and heiress—the Barrymores, and Katharine and Arthur Jones, were all gathered at Lismore. Lord Clifford was to see this Munster home at its very best; its terraces and rose-gardens aflame with colour, its orchards heavy with fruit, its pigeon-houses and watermills and fishponds and the great turreted walls—all the "re-edifications" in fact, that had been the work of years. And the seventeenth-century interior must have been as imposing; for there was furniture of crimson velvet, fringed with silver, and furniture of black and scarlet velvet brocade. The walls were hung with tapestry, the floors were spread with Turkey rugs. There were high-backed chairs and low-backed chairs, and Indian embroideries, and "long cushions" for the embrasured window-seats. The Earl's hospitable tables were furnished with fish, beef, venison, and huge all-containing pies—to be washed down by Bordeaux wine, usquebagh, and *aqua vitæ*; and they groaned also beneath their burden of silver;—flagons and trenchers, "covered salts," "costerns," kettles and

ladles of silver and silver gilt; while the “ewers and basons” in the bedrooms were of silver, the great gilded beds hung with scarlet cloth and silver lace and the ceilings of the children’s nursery and the Earl’s “studdie” were of “fretwork”—their walls of “Spanish white”.

Katharine and Arthur Jones went back to Athlone early in September. The hunting-party was dispersed, and the House of Lismore was emptying again. It must have been on one of those autumn days before Katharine left Lismore that there happened the little “foolish” incident about Robyn and the plums: an incident which the elder sister would tell, long afterwards, when Robert Boyle had made his world-wide reputation, and she and he were growing old together in the house in Pall Mall.[35]

Dungarvan’s wife had already made a special pet of Francis, who was indeed a lovable and happy-tempered boy. But it was Robyn who was his sister Kate’s favourite. She seems to have felt a special tenderness for this little fellow with a little independent character of his own, so different from all his brothers: a little fellow with a stutter, attributed by his family to his habit of mimicking some children with whom he had been allowed to play; a little fellow who was “studious” at eight years old, and so hopelessly and tactlessly truthful that the old Earl—fond old disciplinarian that he was—had never been able to “find him in a lie in all his life.”

And so with the plums. Lady Dungarvan, in delicate health, was being petted by all the family; and Katharine Jones had given “strict orders” that the fruit of a certain plum tree in the Lismore garden should be preserved for Lady Dungarvan’s use. Robyn had gone into the garden, and, “ignoring the

prohibition," had been eating the plums. And when his sister Kate taxed him, "by way of aggravation," with having eaten "half a dozen plums,"—"Nay, truly, sister," answered he simply to her, "I have eaten half a score."[36]

Mr. Wilkinson and a certain "Mownsier" had between them taught Robyn to speak some French and Latin and to write a fair hand; and now that he was in his ninth year, and Frank twelve years old, they were to be sent to Eton. The Earl had been in correspondence for some time with his old friend Sir Henry Wotton, not only about this matter, but about a "governour" who should take Kynalmeaky and Broghill abroad. Accordingly on September 9, 1635, a few days after their sister Katharine and Arthur Jones had left Lismore, Francis and Robert, with Carew their personal servant, under the charge of the Earl's own confidential servant, Mr. Thomas Badnedge, left Lismore for Youghal, there to embark for England, "to be schooled and bredd at Eaton." Badnedge was to carry the purse, with £50 in it, and if he wanted any more was to draw upon Mr. Burlamachy, the Lord Mayor of London. And the Earl gave the boys at parting £3 between them: "the great God of Heaven", he wrote in his diary, "bless, guyde and protect them!"

It was not till September 24 that the little party actually sailed from Youghal, for they waited a whole week for a wind, and then they were "beat back again" by a storm. But at last, "though the Irish coasts were then sufficiently infested with Turkish gallies," they reached Bristol in safety, having touched at Ilfracombe and Minehead on the way. There was a short stay "to repose and refresh themselves" at Bristol, and then their journey was

"shaped" direct for Eton College. It was of course a journey by coach-roads; and their first sight of English scenery was in late September.

They arrived at Eton on October 2; and Mr. Badnedge delivered the two boys safely into the charge of Sir Henry Wotton. Their "tuicon" was to be undertaken by Mr. John Harrison, the "chief schoolmaster."

Shortly after their arrival, Francis penned a little letter to his father, the Earl of "Korke," to be carried back to Ireland by one of their escort. He began on bended knees with hearty prayers, and went on to say that he had no news to tell except some things he had observed on his travels, but these he would leave the bearer of his letter to narrate, "in regard I am incited by my school exercise." Sir "Hary Wutton" had been very kind to them, entertaining them the first day of their arrival at his own table. He had also put at their disposal "a chamber of his owne with a bedd furnished afore our own wilbe furnished." The young lords at Eton had also been most friendly, especially the Earl of Peterborough's son, with whom Frank and Robyn were, for the present, to dine and sup. And there was a postscript to say that Mr. Badnedge had been very kind "in all our travels," and had sent them a supply of linen from London after their arrival, for which they were "much bound to him."

A few days later Mr. John Harrison, the "chief schoolmaster," also wrote to the Earl of Cork, a letter concise, dignified, and satisfactory.

He confirmed the arrival at Eton of the Earl's two sons, "whoe, as they indured their journeye both by sea and land, beyond what a man would expect from such little ones so, since their arrival, the place

seemed to be suiting them wonderfully well". He tells the Earl that "Mr. Provost" had been so kind as to put the boys under his care, and lets the Earl know, in parenthesis, that he, John Harrison, is at present the "Rector" of the school: "I will carefully see them supplyed with such things as their occasions in the colledge shall require, and endeavour to sett them forward in learninge the best I can."

But it was from Carew,[37] the boys' personal servant, that the Earl was to hear all about everything. Carew's first letter touched lightly on the "long and tedious navigation and great travels by land," and went straight to the subject of subjects —"my two young masters." They had been there only a few days, but they were "very well beloved for their civill and transparent carriage towards all sorts, and specially my sweet Mr. Robert, who gained the love of all." Sir Henry Wotton had been "much taken with him for his discourse of Ireland and of his travails, and he admired that he would observe or take notice of those things that he discoursed off."

Then followed an account of Sir Henry Wotton's kind reception of the boys, and the lending of his furnished chamber till their own should be ready: "We injoy it yett," says Carew, "which is a great favor." The boys had dined several times already with Sir Henry Wotton. They were very "jocond", although they showed a "studious desire", and they had "very carefull and reverend masters." There is just a hint of home-sickness, a longing for the sight of the old Earl and the brothers and sisters and the roughly splendid Irish life; but Carew quickly goes on to tell the "Order of the Colledge," especially "touching my young masters' essence." The boys dine

in hall, with the rest of the boarders;[38] and the Earl of Northampton's four sons, and the two sons of the Earl of Peterborough, with other "Knights' sons" are at the same table. "They sitt permiscously—noe observing of place or qualitie"; and at night they supped in their own rooms, Mr. Francis and Mr. Robert supping with the Earl of Peterborough's sons, providing, of course, their own commons. Carew mentions the "fasting nights" and the fact that the College allows no meat to be cooked on Fridays or Saturdays; and he hints that the College commissariat requires a good deal of supplementing. Master Robert is too busy with his lessons to write a letter, but sends his love and duty: "They are upp every morning at half an hour afore 6, and soe to scoole to prayers."

Sir Henry Wotton, the Provost of Eton[39] of that day, was nearing the end of his eventful, chequered life when Robert Boyle, not yet nine years old, came under his care. He was indeed a contemporary of the old Earl, and a Kentish man as well—one of a fine old Kentish stock; but no two men could have been more unlike. He had taken his B.A. at Oxford, and with a slender purse set out on his seven years' wanderings in European cities, the very same year in which Mr. Richard Boyle had turned the lucky ring on his finger and landed on Irish shores. But that had been forty-seven years before—back in the mists; and the years between those youthful wanderings and this pleasant old age in the Provost's lodging at Eton had been years of risky secret missions and ill-paid political intrigue. He had been private secretary to Essex in London, private correspondent abroad, Ambassador at Venice. In those years, many a fine intellect with big ambitions had gone under. Sir

Henry had come off better than many, in spite of his slender means and an undeniable weakness for libraries and laboratories and picture galleries in the intervals of diplomacy. It was he who had been sent by the Duke of Tuscany on the secret mission to Edinburgh to tell James VI that he was going to be poisoned, and to carry with him the little packet of Italian antidotes, not known at that time in the Scottish pharmacopœia. He had stayed three months with the Scottish King; and no wonder that when James ascended the throne of England Sir Henry Wotton was one of the men then in London whom the King desired to see. He was a favourite at Court; and his lifelong homage to the Princess Elizabeth, the unhappy Queen of Bohemia, is well known.[40]

He had risen to great things, and might have risen to greater still if it had not been for one brilliant Latin epigram written in an album. Even King James, with pleasant memories of a packet of antidotes and a most delightful guest in Stirling Castle, found it hard to forgive the Latin epigram—"a merriment," poor Wotton had called it—written in an album in an indiscreet moment many years before, and officiously forwarded from Augsburg to the Court of London: "*An Ambassador is an honest man sent to lie abroad for the good of his country*." It is said to have ruined Sir Henry Wotton's diplomatic chances; and when, after some other missions, he came home in 1624, it was as a penniless man still, with plans of literary work and a sufficient stock of memories grave and gay. He had consorted with princes and statesmen, with artists, men of science, and men of letters. He had worked for Essex and known Raleigh, and Francis Bacon was his cousin. Among his friends abroad he had counted Beza, Casaubon, Arminius and Kepler. He had watched Kepler at work in his

laboratory, and he had supplied Bacon with facts. And when Bacon sent him three copies of his *Novum Organum* when it first appeared, Sir Henry sent one of the copies to Kepler.

When Thomas Murray died, and Sir Henry Wotton was selected, out of many candidates, for the Provostship of Eton, he was so poor that he was obliged to borrow money to enable him to settle down there. King James would have granted him a dispensation, but he preferred to conform to the rule that the Provost of Eton must be a man in Holy Orders. He had been duly ordained deacon, and, being a man of liberal views, had steered "a middle way between Calvinism and Arminianism."[41]

When the two young sons of the Earl of Cork arrived at Eton, Sir Henry Wotton had been Provost for ten years, and Eton could scarcely imagine itself without him. With a royal pension in addition to his Provostship, and assisted by a strong staff of Fellows of the College—the learned Hales, John Harrison and the rest—he was taking life easily, in the evening of his days, among his books and curios, his Italian pictures, and those manuscripts—biographies of Donne and Luther, and the History of England,—which he always meant to finish and never did. He was not quite so active as when he had first come among them with his new views of teaching, and had put up the picture of Venice, where he had lived so long as Ambassador, and had hung on the wooden pillars of the lower schools his "choicely drawn" portraits of Greek and Latin orators and poets and historians, for the little Eton boys to gaze at with round English eyes; but his familiar figure was still a daily presence, coming and going amongst them in his furred and embroidered gown, "dropping some

choyce Greek or Latin apophthegm" for the benefit of the youngsters in class. He was still a "constant cherisher" of schoolboyhood, taking the "hopeful youths" into his own especial care, having them at his own hospitable table, picking out the plodding boys and the boys of genius, and himself teaching best in his own memorable talk. He liked to indulge in reminiscences of Italy—"that delicat Piece of the Worlde"; and he sometimes looked wistfully Londonwards, though in his gentle, deprecatory way he spoke of it, especially in November, as a "fumie citie." In his last years he nursed hopes that he might succeed to the mastership of the Savoy; meantime, from his Provost's Lodging, he could look across the "meandering Thames and sweete meadows,"[42] to the great pile of Windsor Castle in its "antient magnificence"; and he read and ruminated and smoked—he smoked a little too much, according to his friend Izaak Walton—and counted his "idle hours not idly spent" when he could sit quietly fishing with Izaak Walton in the river-bend above the shooting fields, then, as now, known as Black Pots. When Robert Boyle went to Eton in 1635, to be an Eton boy meant not only being "grounded in learning" by such men as Hales and Harrison, but being "schooled and bred" under the daily influence of this soft, rich, delightful personality.

The two boys were known in the school as Boyle *A* and Boyle *I*: Robert was Boyle *I*. According to Carew, they must have grown with astonishing rapidity during their first months at Eton. Mr. Francis was not only tall, but "very proportionable in his limbs," and grew daily liker to his brother, Lord Dungarvan. He was not so fond of his books as "my most honoured and affectionate Mr. Robert, who was as good at his lessons as boys double his age." An usher, "a careful

man", was helping them with their lessons, and Carew was keeping an eye on the usher. Versions and dictamens in French and Latin filled their time, and Carew could not persuade them to "affect the Irish," though Robert seems to have shown a faint, intermittent interest in that language.[43] As for Mr. Robert, he was "very fatt, and very jovial, and pleasantly merry, and of ye rarest memory that I ever knew. He prefers Learninge afore all other virtues and pleasures. The Provost does admire him for his excellent genius." They had acted a play in the College, and Robert had been among those chosen to take part in it. "He came uppon ye stage," wrote Carew, exultant, to the Earl of Cork; "he had but a mute part, but for the gesture of his body and the order of his pace, he did bravely."

The little fellow was not yet nine years old, and his stutter must have made it highly desirable that the part should be "mute"; but "Mr. Provost" had already made choice of a "very sufficient man" to teach both the boys to play the viol and to sing, and also to "helpe my Master Robert's defect in pronontiation." Carew was afraid the study of music, which "elevats the spirits," might hinder their more serious lessons; though up to that time the conduct of both boys had been exemplary. They had said their prayers regularly and been equally polite to everybody, and were very neat in their "aparelling, kembing, and washing." The elder brother had been laid up with "a cowld that he tooke in the scoole," which Carew attributed entirely to the fact that he had outgrown his clothes; and Mr. Perkins, the London tailor, had been "mighty backward" in sending their new suits. Even with a bad cold, Frank was his usual pleasant, merry self; and when Mr. Provost, according to his custom, prescribed "a little phisique," the boy drank

it cheerfully to the last drop—and "rejected it immediately after." Sir Henry Wotton wrote himself to the Earl, describing the whole episode with an accuracy of detail worthy of Kepler's laboratory.

Meantime, Sir Henry himself had assured the Earl that the "spiritay Robyn's" voice and pronunciation had been taken in hand by the Master of the Choristers. Robyn also had caught cold that first winter at Eton. He had "taken a conceit against his breakfast, being alwaies curious of his meat, and so going fasting to church." But on this occasion, such was the spiritay Robyn's popularity, that the whole College seems to have risen in protest against Mr. Provost's prescription of "a little phisique." And Robert recovered without it, and "continued still increasing in virtues."

It is somewhat surprising that the younger brother should have been the favourite, for it was Francis Boyle who had the "quick, apprehensive wit," and whose delight was in hunting and horsemanship; and it was Robyn who dissuaded him, exhorting his elder brother to learning in his youth, "for," says he, "there can be nothing more profitable and honourable." With his "fayre amiable countenance," this child of nine, according to the ebullient Carew, was "wise, discreet, learned and devout; and not such devotion as is accustomed in children, but withall in Sincerity he honours God and prefers Him in all his actions."[44]

It is very certain that the spiritay Robyn was not fond of games. There is no enthusiasm for active sports in his *Philaretus*, not even of a certain sport that the boys engaged in on winter evenings in the hall, for which every recent comer was obliged to "find the candles"; and a very expensive time for

candles it was, according to Carew. But Mr. Robert learnt to “play on music and to sing”, and “to talk Latin he has very much affected.” And it speaks very well for both Frank and Robyn that, their tastes being so unlike, they remained such excellent friends. “Never since they arrived,” according to Carew, had two ill words passed between them; which he thought was rare to see, “specially when the younger exceeds the elder in some qualities.” Some of the noble brothers in the College were continually quarrelling; but “the peace of God is with my masters.” It had been noticed even at the Fellows’ table: “Never were sweeter and civiller gents seen in the Colledge than Mr. Boyles.” The only thing in which they do not seem to have excelled was in letter-writing. Master Frank could not write to the Earl because his hand shook; and Master Robyn could not write because he had hurt his thumb.

And so winter and spring passed, and the summer came, and with it “breaking-time” at Eton. Mr. Provost, Mr. Harrison, and everybody else went away. The two boys, and Carew with them, spent their holidays with their sister Lettice in Sussex. It could not have been a cheerful visit, though Carew assured the Earl that there was “nothing wanting to afford a good and pleasant entertainment if my honourable Lady had not been visited with her continuall guest, griefe and melancholy.” So extremely melancholy was the Lady Lettice Goring during this visit that it made the two boys “cry often to looke upon her.” And yet they must have made a pretty pair to gladden the eyes of an invalid woman. For Mr. Perkins, the London tailor, had sent them some fine new clothes—little shirts with laced bands and cuffs, two scarlet suits without coats, and two cloth-of-silver doublets.

Robert Boyle's own recollections of Eton were written a good many years after he left it. He always remembered with gratitude the kindness of Mr. John Harrison, in whose house, in that chamber that was so long in furnishing, the two boys lived—except for some holidays at "breaking-time," usually spent in Sussex—from October 1635 to November 1638.

From the very beginning John Harrison must have recognised that in "Boyle *I*" he had no ordinary boy to deal with. He saw a "spiritay" little fellow, with a fair, amiable countenance, a slight stammer, which the child did his best to amend, and the unstudied civilities of manner of a little prince. According to Boyle himself, Mr. Harrison saw "some aptness and much willingness" in him to learn; and this chief schoolmaster resolved to teach his pupil by "all the gentlest ways of encouragement." He began by often dispensing with his attendance at school in ordinary school hours, and taking the trouble to teach him "privately and familiarly in his own chamber."

"He would often, as it were, cloy him with fruit and sweetmeats, and those little dainties that age is greedy of, that by preventing the want, he might lessen both his value and desire of them. He would sometimes give him, unasked, play-days, and oft bestow upon him such balls and tops and other implements of idleness as he had taken away from others that had unduly used them. He would sometimes commend others before him to rouse his emulation, and oftentimes give him commendations before others to engage his endeavours to deserve them. Not to be tedious, he was careful to instruct him in such an affable, kind, and gentle way, that he easily prevailed with him to consider studying not so much as a duty of obedience to his superiors, but as

a way to purchase for himself a most delightsome and invaluable good."[45]

All which means that Mr. Harrison was making a very interesting experiment, and that his system happened to succeed in the case of Robert Boyle. The boy learned his "scholar's task" very easily; and his spare hours were spent so absorbedly over the books he was reading that Mr. Harrison was sometimes obliged to "force him out to play." And what were the books that were read with such zest? It was, Robert Boyle says, the accidental perusal of *Quintus Curtius* that first made him in love with "other than pedantick books"; and in after life he used to assert that he owed more to *Quintus Curtius* than ever Alexander did: that he had gained more from the history of Alexander's conquests than ever Alexander had done from the conquests themselves.[46]

His other recollections of his Eton schooldays are for the most part of accidents that happened to him there. He was not so good a horseman as his brother Frank. Once he fell from his horse, and the animal trod so near to his throat as to make a hole in his neckband, "which he long after preserved for a remembrance." Another time his nag took fright as he was riding through a town, and reared upright on his hinder feet against a wall; and the boy just saved himself by slipping off. Yet a third time he nearly met his death by a "potion" given him "by an apothecary's error"; and it is interesting, in the light of what happened and did not happen in Boyle's later life, to hear that "this accident made him long after apprehend more from the physicians than the disease, and was possibly the occasion that made him afterwards so inquisitively apply himself to the study of physick, that he might have the less need of

them that profess it."[47] The fourth and last of this almost Pauline enumeration of disasters was the falling, one evening, of the greater part of the wall of the boys' bedroom in Mr. Harrison's house. The two brothers had gone early to their room; Robyn was already tucked into the big four-post bed, with its "feather bedd, boulster, and two pillows," and the curtains of "blew perpetuana with lace and frenge", [48] and Frank was talking with some other boys round the fire when, without a moment's warning, the wall of the room fell in, the ceiling with it, carrying bed, chairs, books and furniture from the room above. A bigger boy rescued Frank from the debris and dust, the chair in which he had been sitting broken to pieces, and his clothes torn off his back; and Robyn, the future chemist, peeping from the blew-perpetuana curtains, remembered to wrap his head in the sheet, so that it might serve "as a strainer, through which none but the purer air could find a passage."

It is observable that there is no mention of any of those accidents in the letters to the Earl of Cork from either the Provost or the boys' personal servant, Carew. Perhaps it was as well that the Earl, much harassed at home, should not be told everything that was happening at Eton. As it was, he knew too much. Some go-between—Mr. Perkins, the tailor, or somebody equally officious—must have told the Earl in what manner Carew—"poor unmeriting me", as Carew called himself in one of his fascinating letters to the Earl—had been utilising his idle hours by the meandering Thames. Frank and Robyn, and Carew with them, were spending their holidays with Lady Lettice Goring, when one morning Sir Henry Wotton, sitting in his study at Eton, received a letter from the

Earl of Cork. The contents came as a thunderbolt. “Truly, my good Lord,” Sir Henry Wotton wrote back to the Earl, “I was shaken with such an amazement at the first percussion thereof, that, till a second perusal, I was doubtfull whether I had readd aright.” For everybody in the college was so persuaded of young Mr. Carew’s discretion and temper and zeal in his charge, and “whole carriadge of himself,” that it would be “harde to stamp us with any new impression.” However, Mr. Provost had somewhat reluctantly put away his pipe and “bestowed a Daye in a little Inquisitiveness.” And he had found that the Earl, in Dublin, was quite right; that between Carew and a certain “yonge Mayed, dawghter to our under baker—” and Mr. Provost could not but own that she was pretty—there had passed certain civil, not to say amorous, language. The old Provost was evidently disposed to look leniently on this particular foolish pair. Had he not himself once, in his youth, written a little poem which began—

O faithless world, and thy most faithless part
A woman’s heart!
...
Why was she born to please, or I to trust
Words writ in dust?[49]

However, Sir Henry told the Earl he was going to talk to Carew on his return from Sussex, and warn him how careful, in his position, he ought to be; and he would write again to the Earl after seeing Carew. But, in the meantime he wished to reserve judgment: “For truely theare can not be a more tender attendant about youre sweete children.”

And after all news travelled slowly. Those little love passages were already six months old: “Tyme

enough, I dare swere”—wrote the old diplomatist, sitting alone in his study, with his Titian and his Bassanos looking down upon him—“to refrigerat more love than was ever betweene them.”

CHAPTER IV
THE MANOR OF STALBRIDGE

> "... He would very often steal away from all company, and spend four or five hours alone in the fields, and think at random: making his delighted imagination the busy scene where some romance or other was daily acted."—ROBERT BOYLE'S *Philaretus*.

After the boys went to Eton, the Earl had very unpleasant things to think about. Wentworth was pressing him hard. It is true that the little dinner-parties and card-parties and private theatricals at the Castle were going on as if there were no Star Chamber behind them. In January 1636 the Lord Deputy was inviting himself to supper at the Earl's Dublin house, and bringing Lady Wentworth with him. Lady Dungarvan's baby was born in March, a "ffair daughter", to be christened Frances, and to figure in the old Earl's diary as "lyttle ffranck"; and the Lord Deputy himself stood sponsor, though he had just lost his own little son, and the Dungarvan christening had been postponed till the Wentworth baby had been buried. But the Lord Deputy's "sharp pursuit" of men was going on all the same. In February, before the death of Wentworth's child and the Dungarvan christening, Lord Mountmorris had been degraded from the office of Vice-Treasurer, "tried by a Commission and sentenced to be shot, for no other crime than a sneer" against Wentworth's government.[50] The sentence was not to be carried out; but it became every day more evident that

"whatever man of whatever rank" opposed Wentworth, or even spoke disrespectfully of his policy, "that man he pursued to punishment like a sleuth-hound".[51]

At the beginning of that year, the Earl of Cork had made his "Great Conveighance," by which he entailed all his lands upon his five sons. Wentworth had taken exception to the conveyance of some of these lands to the Earl's eldest son, Lord Dungarvan; and in February a "sharp and large discourse" had taken place between the Lord Deputy and the Earl. In April the Star Chamber Bill against the Earl, dealing with his titles to the churchlands of Youghal, was still under discussion; and Wentworth was now pressing for the payment of money, by way of ransom, which was at first to be £30,000, but was afterwards reduced to £15,000.

The Earl was still asserting his right to his lands, and unwilling to compound—no-one had ever heard the Earl of Cork, he said, "enclyned to offer anything." Things were at this pass when at the end of April Lady Dungarvan, six weeks after her baby's birth, fell sick; and the next day, "the smallpockes brake owt uppon her." On that very day, under pressure from his friends and from his son Dungarvan, who went down on his knees before his father, the Earl of Cork gave way. Very unwillingly, on May 2, he agreed to pay the £15,000 "for the King's use," and for his own "redemption out of Court"—though his "Innocencie and Intigritie" he declared, writing in his own private diary, were "as cleer as the son at high noon." The old Royalist, even then, believed that if his King only knew how undeservedly the mighty fine had him imposed, "he would not accept a penny of it." The Earl was hard

hit, though his great Conveyance was at last signed and sealed, and he could talk of drinking a cup of sack “to wash away the care of a big debt.”[52] It is comforting to note that he had meantime cash in hand not only to tip Archie Armstrong, the King’s Jester, who seems to have passed through Dublin, but to pay for two knitted silk waistcoats for his own “somer wearings.”

While all this was going on, Kynalmeaky and Broghill were enjoying what the Earl called their “peregrination.” A tutor had been found to accompany them on their foreign travels; a M. Marcombes, highly recommended to the Earl by Sir Henry Wotton, as a man “borne for your purpose.” Sir Henry wrote from London, where he had been spending a week or two, and was returning next day “to my poore Cell agayne at Eton”;[53] but he gave the Earl a careful account of Marcombes, whom he had seen in London. He was “by birthe French; native in the Province of Auvergne; bredd seaven years in Geneve, verie sounde in Religion, and well conversant with Religious Men. Furnished with good literature and languages, espetially with Italian, which he speaketh as promptly as his owne. And wilbe a good guide for your Sonns in that delicat Piece of the Worlde. He seemeth of himself neither of a lumpish nor of a light composition, but of a well-fixed meane.”

M. Marcombes had already won golden opinions in the family of Lord Middlesex, a former Lord Mayor of London; and was well known to the then Lord Mayor, Mr. Burlamachy, who also wrote to the Earl about him. And Mr. Perkins, the tailor, seems to have put in a word; for there had been a meeting in the “fumie citie” between Sir Henry Wotton and M.

Marcombes and Mr. Perkins, at which Sir Henry had found the French tutor's conversation "very apposite and sweet."

So in the early spring of 1636 Kynalmeaky and Broghill, with their governor M. Marcombes, had set out from Dublin on their foreign travels, stopping long enough in London to kiss the King's and Queen's hands, and obtain the royal licence and passport to travel; and they took letters also to Sir Henry Wotton at Eton, and to Frank and Robyn, and poor unmeriting Carew.

The Earl of Cork himself, in the early stages of his struggle with Wentworth, had thought of going to London, to "justify himself" once again, as he had done when he was a young man, and Elizabeth was Queen. But he was no longer a young man, and Charles I was not Queen Elizabeth, and the Lord Deputy, when he found it out, had objected strongly to the Earl's little plan. On the contrary, the Lord Deputy had gone to England himself, in the summer of 1636; and though Sir Henry Wotton was under "a kind of hovering conceypt" that the Earl of Cork was coming over, and there was even a rumour that he was to be offered the Lord Chancellorship of England, the old Earl was to remain for two more years in Ireland. He was busy as usual, moving about, on assize and other duties, between Dublin and Lismore and Cork; paving the terrace at Lismore with hewn stones, dedicating the free schools and almshouses there, setting up an old servant in Dublin in a "tobacko" business, and paying Mr. Perkins's bill for those little scarlet suits and cloth-of-silver doublets that Frank and Robyn were wearing in their Whitsuntide holidays. Sir Henry Wotton was able to tell the Earl that Lady Lettice would see Frank in

better health and strength than he had been in either kingdom before, while Robert would “entertayne her with his pretie conceptions, now a greate deale more smoothely than he was wonte.”

The Earl had not given up his English project; on the contrary, it was to mature into the purchase of a little bit of England for his very own; and his choice had fallen on a “capitall howse, demesne, and lands” in Dorsetshire. Accordingly in the autumn of 1636 he bought the Manor of Stalbridge, and sent over a steward, Thomas Cross, to take possession. At Stalbridge the Earl would be a near neighbour of the Earl of Bristol—his son-in-law Digby’s uncle—at Sherborne Castle.

The year 1636 had been a trying year; and one of the first expenses in the New Year 1637 was a fee to Mr. Jacob Longe, of Kinsale, “my Jerman physician,” for plaisters and prescriptions, “to stay the encrease of the dead palsy which hath seized uppon all the right side of my boddy (God helpe me) £5.” And though the returns for the year shewed a “Lardge Revenew,” and the diary record for the year ended in a note of triumph, with a triple “Amen, Amen, Amen,” there was yet sorrow in store that no revenue, however large, could avert. For Peggie, the Earl’s youngest daughter, was ill. The Earl had paid £5 to Mr. Higgins, the Lismore doctor, to give her “phisick, which he never did”; and either because of this, or in spite of this, Little Peggie did not get well. She died in June 1637, in Lady Clayton’s house in Cork, where she and Mary had lived all this time together. The Lady Margaret Boyle, youngest daughter of the Earl of Cork—eight years old when she died—was buried in the family tomb at Youghal.

It was not till Midsummer 1638, when the last

instalment of the mighty fine had been paid, that the Earl began his preparations for a prolonged visit to England. He revoked all other wills, and again made a last will and testament; and at the end of July he actually set out for England, taking with him his daughter Mary, Lord and Lady Barrymore, and several of the grandchildren.

The parting was a sad one between Mary Boyle and Lady Clayton, who had just lost her husband, and, a childless woman herself, had been a real mother to "Moll" and "Peggie." But the Earl had a grand marriage in view for his daughter Mary; and he had yet to discover that Lady Mary had a will of her own: that of all his daughters it was she who had inherited his own indomitable pride. Hitherto, she had been a child, brought up away from him; to be gladdened from time to time by a happy visit or a New Year's gift. But even these are indications of the little lady's tastes and character. It was to Mary the Earl gave the "ffether of diamonds and rubies that was my wive's," long before he could have known how defiantly she would toss that little head of hers. She must have been a fair horsewoman already at nine years old; for it was to her that the Earl sent the dead mother's saddle and saddle-cloth of green velvet, laced and fringed with silver and green silk; and it is certain she inherited the Earl's love of fine dressing, from the choice of various small gowns of figured satins and rich stuffs of scarlet dye. Of even more significance is the old Earl's gift of Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*, "To my daughter, Mary Boyle," when this imperious young creature was only twelve years old. Do little girls of twelve read Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* to-day? There was to come a moment when, if the Earl had ever read it himself, he must have heard in "Moll's" voice, as she

answered him, some echo of Sidney's teaching—

"... but a soule hath his life
Which is held in loue: loue it is hath ioynd
Life to this our Soule."

After the usual delays at starting, the *Ninth Whelp* made a good passage; and the Earl and his party reached Bristol safely on Saturday August 4. As usual, presents were dispensed to the ship's captain and company, together with what remained of a hogshead of claret wine. Next day, Sunday, the whole family went obediently to church; and on Monday morning, leaving the others to follow with the servants and luggage, the old Earl, riding a borrowed horse, set off by himself to find his way to Stalbridge.[54]

A wonderful peace and stillness falls on the Dorsetshire uplands at evening after a long, hot summer day. Up hill and down dale and up hill again go the Dorsetshire lanes, between their tangled hedges, through a country of undulating woods and downs and soft green pastures. The lark sings, high up, invisible: a far-away, sleepy cock-crow or faint bark of sheepdog breaks the silence; the grazing cattle bend their brown heads in the fields.

The Earl was in England again, the land of his birth. It was perhaps not altogether a prosperous and satisfied England, in August 1638. The heavy hand of taxation was on even these pastoral uplands. The heart of England was throbbing with political unrest. But on that evening, at least, there could have been only the lark's ecstasy, and the sweet smell of wild thyme and woodsmoke in the air. Ireland, the distressful country of his adoption, lay behind the old man, and with it the memories of fifty strenuous

years;—all that was hardest and proudest and tenderest in a lifetime.

Lord and Lady Dungarvan were already at Stalbridge with “lyttle ffrancke.” There was another baby-daughter now, but it had apparently been left at Salisbury House, in London. Dungarvan had ridden some six miles upon the road to meet his father. It was still daylight when, riding together—the old man must have been pretty stiff in the saddle, for he had ridden nearly sixty miles that day—they came in sight of the Elizabethan manor standing among elms and chestnut trees, surrounded by park lands and hayfields and orchards: “My owne house of Stalbridge in Dorcetshier; this being the firste tyme that ever I sawe the place.”[55]

After this, the movements of the Earl and his family read rather like a Court Circular. Not much is heard of the life that must have been going on in the little town itself, with its Church and market Cross; but the mere presence of this great Irish family among them must, by the laws of supply and demand, have wrought many changes in the little market town. The Earl paid his love and service to his neighbour and kinsman, the Earl of Bristol, at Sherborne Castle, and the Earl and Countess of Bristol, with all their house-party, immediately returned the visit; after which the whole family at the Manor were “feasted” for two days at Sherborne Castle. The Earl of Cork and his house-party rode to “the Bathe”, and return visits were received at Stalbridge from friends at “the Bathe”. And a week or two later the Earl, attended by Dungarvan and Barrymore, rode to London, and was graciously received by the King and “all the Lords at Whitehall.” The King praised the Earl’s government

of Ireland, and the Archbishop of Canterbury was particularly friendly.

Lady Barrymore and Lady Dungarvan had between them undertaken to ease the Earl from the “trowble of hows-keeping,” and for this purpose were allowed £50 a week, and more when they wanted it; and the cellars and larders at Stalbridge were replenished from time to time with gifts. A ton of claret wine and six gallons of aqua vitæ arrived as a New Year’s gift from Munster, and “veary fatt does” from English friends; while among his assets the Earl counted, besides the produce of his Stalbridge lands and woods, the twenty stalled oxen, the powdered beef, the bacon and salted salmon that were sent from his Irish estates.

Thomas Cross, his steward, became “seneschal”;—perhaps there was a seneschal at Sherborne Castle; and there was a Clerk of the Kitchen and a large staff of household servants, men and women, and a long list of rules for the management of the household drawn up and signed by the Earl himself.[56] And of course the “re-edification” of the Manor House began at once. There was water to be carried in leaden pipes; new furniture to hasten home from the London upholsterer, who dwelt at the sign of the Grasshopper; a red embroidered bed, a tawny velvet carpet, couch and chairs. There was a new coach to buy, and the paths and terraces at Stalbridge were to be stone paved exactly like the paths and terraces at Sherborne Castle. Stairs with a stone balustrade, and carved stone chimney-pieces were to be added to the Manor;—one at least carved with the Earl’s coat of arms “compleate,” and reaching nearly to the ceiling, “fair and graceful in all respects.” There was a limekiln to build, and pit coal to procure and cane

apples[57] to be planted in the orchard. But charity only began at home; and in this case it did not prevent a subscription being sent—"a myte" of £100—to help the Archbishop of Canterbury in his scheme of "re-edifying Pawle's Church in London."

Meantime, all the Earl's daughters and sons-in-law, except Dorothy and Arthur Loftus, who remained in Ireland, seem to have found their way, separately or together, to the Manor of Stalbridge; while grandchildren, nieces and nephews and even "cozens" were welcomed under its roof. The Dungarvans made their headquarters there, and the Barrymores, and the little Lady Mary, who was now fourteen, and to be considered a grown-up young lady, with an allowance of £100 a year "to fynde herself." And they were presently joined by the Kildares, and Katharine and Arthur Jones. Even the plaintive Lettice and her lord stayed for some time under the Earl's roof.[58] And in March 1639, after an absence of three years, Kynalmeaky and Broghill, with M. Marcombes, returned from their "peregrination". They found Frank and Robyn already at Stalbridge, though not in the great house itself. For their father had taken the boys away from Eton on his return journey from London in November 1638, and since then they had been boarded out with the Rev. Mr. Dowch at the Parsonage, scarcely "above twice a musket-shot" distant from their father's house. Their three years at Eton had cost, "for diett, tutaradge and aparell," exactly £914 3*s.* 9*d.*

When the Earl of Cork visited Eton and took his two boys away, Sir Henry Wotton must have been already ill. Since his return after the summer breaking-time of 1638 the old Provost had suffered

from a feverish distemper, which was to prove the beginning of the end.[59]

It is possible that during the Provost's illness extra duties had fallen on Mr. Harrison, the Rector; in any case the two boys had been removed from the care of their "old courteous schoolmaster," and handed over to "a new, rigid fellow;" and things were not going quite so happily for them at Eton as heretofore. Moreover, poor Carew, the romance of the underbaker's daughter nipped in the bud, had, from overmuch fondness for cards and dice, come utterly to grief.

It was during this last year of Robert Boyle's schooldays—in the April of 1638, before Sir Henry Wotton's illness, and while all was going on as usual at Eton—that Mr. Provost had entertained at his hospitable table a guest whose life was to be strangely linked in after years with that of some members of the great Boyle family. This was John Milton, then a young poet, living with his father at Horton—not far from Eton—and just about to set out on his Italian journey.[60] Was Robert Boyle one of the "hopeful youths" selected by the Provost to dine at his table that day when Milton dined there? And did Robert Boyle listen to the talk that went on at table between Milton and his friend, the learned Hales, and Sir Henry Wotton? It was very pleasant talk. When Milton returned to Horton he ventured to send the Provost a little letter of thanks and a copy of his *Comus* as a parting gift; and Sir Henry sent his own footboy post-haste to Horton, to catch Milton before he started, with a pretty letter of acknowledgment and an introduction to the British Agent in Venice. It is noteworthy that the advice Sir Henry Wotton gave to Milton, and the advice he

always gave to his own pupils when they were setting out on a career of diplomacy abroad, showed that, while the old man had not forgotten his experience of the Augsburg album, his kindly cynicism remained unchanged. *I pensiori stretti*, was the advice he handed on in his charming letter to Milton,—*ed il viso sciolto*; while to all young Etonians travelling in diplomacy he used to say, *Always tell the truth; for you will never be believed.*

It is hard to say how much Robert Boyle may have owed to the guidance and talk of Sir Henry Wotton. Boyle remembered him as a fine gentleman who possessed the art of making others so; and it was John Harrison's methods of teaching that had impressed the boy. Yet it must not be forgotten that the Provost's tastes were not only literary and scholarly; that he had not only surrounded himself with a library of books that Robert Boyle in his boyhood must have envied—Sir Henry Wotton was of a scientific turn of mind: he was fond of experimenting. Ever since the days when he had watched Kepler at work in his laboratory and supplied his cousin Lord Bacon with facts, he had been accustomed to occupy himself, in more or less dilletante fashion, with such little experiments as the distilling of medicinal herbs and the measurement of time by allowing water to pass through a filter, drop by drop; and it was Sir Henry Wotton whom Izaak Walton consulted about the preparation of "seductive-smelling oils" in the catching of little fishes. And who could it have been, in that last year that Robyn spent at Eton, who lent him the books that "meeting in him with a restless fancy" gave his thoughts such a "latitude of roving"? Robyn had been away from school on a visit to London, and there had fallen ill of a "tertian ague", and had been

sent back to Eton to see if good air and diet might not do more for him than all "the Queen's and other doctors' remedies" had done. His own phrase[61] is that "to divert his melancholy they made him read the State Adventures of Amadis de Gaule, and other fabulous and wandering stories." Who was the "they" at Eton? It could not have been the "new, rigid fellow". Amadis de Gaule may have been part of Mr. John Harrison's system of education, but one would like to believe that Sir Henry Wotton had some hand in fashioning Robert Boyle—that his whole library was open to the boy, not only the books of romance and adventure in it that gave Robyn's thoughts such a "latitude of roving." One would like to believe that the torch was indeed passed on from Kepler's laboratory, and by the study of one of those three copies of Bacon's *Novum Organum*, into the hands of England's first great experimental chemist.

Be that as it may, Sir Henry Wotton was already ill when Frank and Robyn were removed from Eton in November 1638; and it was Mr. Harrison who duly sent after them to Stalbridge the furniture of their chamber—the blew perpetuana curtains and all the other things so carefully inventoried by poor Carew. And Carew himself no longer served his sweet young masters: he had been succeeded by a manservant with the suggestive name of Rydowt, who appears to have been a married man, and was accommodated with a little cottage of his own at Stalbridge, with a garden which the Earl planted with "cane apples" from Ireland. The boys were to live and learn their lessons with Mr. Dowch at the Parsonage; and that "old divine" was very soon to discover that Robyn had not learnt much Latin at Eton after all, and "with great care and civility" to proceed to read with him the Latin poets as well as the Latin prose-writers.

And while the Earl gave Frank a horse of his own, and knew him to be happy and gallant in the saddle, it was Robyn who was the old Earl's Benjamin, most loved of all his sons. The family saw a likeness in Robyn to his father—a likeness both in body and mind. It is difficult to credit the Earl of Cork with any of his youngest son's habit of "unemployed pensiviness," but there must have been something in Robyn when he was quite a little fellow—a quiet self-reliance—that impressed the old Earl strangely. Robyn was only twelve years old; he had as yet shown none of the traits of character that the Earl so "severely disrelished" in some of his sons and sons-in-law. And so, when he gave Frank the horse, the Earl listened perhaps with some wonderment to Robyn's "pretie conceptions" in excellent language, spoken still not quite smoothly; and he was content to let the boy wander as he liked. He gave his Benjamin the keys of his orchard, not afraid to leave him in a very paradise of unplucked apples, "thinking at random."

CHAPTER V
THE HOUSE OF THE SAVOY

> "You shall have all this winter att the Savoy, in S^r^. Tho. Stafford's howse, the greatest familie that will be in London (I pray God the ould man houlds out)."—Letter from Sir John Leeke to Sir Edmund Verney, 1639: *Verney Memoirs*, vol. i.

The Earl's gift of a horse to his son Frank had been made at a psychological moment. For Frank, at sixteen, was not over robust, and Robyn, not much more than twelve, was scarcely fitted to defend his King and Country; and they must have just watched their three elder brothers, Dungarvan, Kynalmeaky and Broghill, ride off in great spirits from Stalbridge to join the King at Newcastle or York. War was in the air, and rumours of war; and Stalbridge Manor and Sherborne Castle, and the villages of Dorsetshire and all the great families in England, were astir, as day by day and week by week the troops of English horse and foot were moving northwards to engage against what the old Earl turned off so lightly in his diary as the "Covenanting, rebelleows Skots."

In January 1639 a circular letter had been sent out in King Charles' name to all the English nobility, asking them to state how far and in what manner they were ready to assist the Scottish Expedition; and week by week, according to their means and their political inclinations, the English nobles—Laudians and Puritans alike—had been sending in their

answers: £1000, and twenty horse; twenty horse and attendance in person or by substitute; £1000 in lieu of horse; £500 and twelve horse; and so on.[62] And some gave willingly, and some gave grudgingly, and some evaded promising to give anything; and one or two were brave enough to refuse—and to give their reasons why. Even at Court there was "much contrarity"; it was a case of "soe many men soe many opinions."[63] Wentworth, over in Ireland, had written offering his King £2000, and if necessary more to his "uttermost farthing". And the Earl of Cork, at Stalbridge, had not done badly either, though he seems to have had his reservations about this levying of money and troops. His neighbour, the Earl of Bristol, at Sherborne, was one of those who had evaded promising anything in the meantime.

But in February and March Dungarvan and Barrymore had been in London, and just at this time also Kynalmeaky and Broghill had arrived back in London with M. Marcombes. During this visit to London Dungarvan had been led into an undertaking to serve his King in the Scottish Expedition: a rash undertaking, made without his father's "privitie"; "an unadvised engagement" is the Earl's comment in his diary. But all the same the Earl supplied his son and heir with £3000 to raise and arm a troop of a hundred horse—a magnificent subscription, which at the time caused much talk at the Court of Whitehall. Lord Barrymore, at the same time, had been commissioned by the King to hurry across to Ireland with letters to Wentworth, and to "raise and press" a thousand Irishmen, foot-soldiers, into the King's service against the Scots.

The very day that Barrymore set out for Ireland on this mission the Earl of Bristol left Sherborne for the

rendezvous at York. A day or two later King Charles himself set out from London on his journey northwards, and in April, Kynalmeaky and Broghill were being fitted out with arms and saddles and "armors of prooff", in order to accompany their brother Dungarvan. In the beginning of May, Dungarvan's wagons and carriages began their journey from Stalbridge; and on May 9 the Earl's three sons, Dungarvan, Kynalmeaky, and Broghill, rode out of Stalbridge with Dungarvan's troop of one hundred horse. Three of his five sons! "God, I beseech him," wrote the Earl in his diary, "restore them safe, happy, and victorious, to my comfort." It was then that he gave Frank a horse for his very own, and that the small philosopher was allowed to pocket the orchard keys. And the family at the Manor settled down to wait for news of their soldiers —so slow of coming in those old days. The ladies and the children were left behind in the care of the old Earl, M. Marcombes, and Mr. Dowch, the parson.

There were a good many ladies at the Manor during the summer of 1639. A bevy of daughters had gathered about the old Earl, and were "exceeding welcome unto" him. And it is not to be supposed that it was by any means a doleful household while the men of the family were away. For the women of the Boyle family, whatever their education had or had not been, were every whit as clever by nature as the men: "Believe it," wrote the family friend, Sir John Leeke, to Sir Edmund Verney, about the ladies of the Boyle family, "Ould Corke could not begett nothing foolish." Lady Dungarvan, his daughter-in-law, and his daughters Lady Barrymore, Lady Lettice Goring, Lady Katharine Jones and the little Lady Mary Boyle, were all at Stalbridge at this time, together with several of the grandchildren and all the "retinues."

And in picturing this family gathering it is strange to remember that at least three of these noble women must have been marked by the scourge of the smallpox. Lady Dungarvan had never been beautiful; and her recent attack of smallpox, however it may have altered her pleasant face, had not left her any less cheerful and good-natured than when she first came a bride amongst them, and won, by her charming person and manner, the liking of the "best sort of people" in Ireland. It was a charm that was to outlive her youth: "A very fine-speaking lady," wrote Samuel Pepys of her many years later; "and a good woman, but old, and not handsome; but a brave woman." And so overcome was Mr. Pepys by his first sight and salutation of this noble lady at Burlington House that he managed to set his periwig afire in the candle that was brought for the sealing of a letter. [64]

Lady Barrymore had also suffered severely from smallpox soon after her child-marriage, and at the same time with her sister Lettice. This illness, and the subsequent disappointments of life, had left Lettice Goring a querulous invalid. She was shockingly illiterate, and she was small-minded, though she was not a stupid woman. But Lady Barrymore seems to have kept all her charms—not the least of them her "brave hart". She was clever, very political and chatty; "very energetic and capable, very amusing and very lovable."[65] And then there was Lady Katharine—wife of Arthur Jones;—the one of all the Earl's daughters with the finest intellect, the finest character, and, according to report, the most beautiful face. Weighed down as she was by a miserable marriage, she was to rise above all the trials of life, to be remembered by later generations as "Milton's Friend," the "Incomparable

Lady Ranelagh", the "dearest, dearest, dearest sister" of Robert Boyle. "A more brave wench or a Braver Spiritt you have not often mett withall," Sir John Leeke wrote of her in the summer of 1639; "she hath a memory that will hear a sermon and goe home and penn itt after dinner verbatim. I know not how she will appeare in England, but she is most accounted of at Dublin."

Sir John Leeke, who had married Sir Edmund Verney's half-sister, was related also to the Barrymore family, and lived with his wife and children in a house on the Castle Lyons estates. It was Lady Barrymore who figured in his delightful letters as "My deare Mustris", and "the worthiest of woemen". But it was Katharine Jones, and the sorrow that looked out of her sweet face, that had won all his chivalrous devotion. "My pretious Katharine", he wrote, "is somewhat decayed from the sweetest face I ever saw (and surely I have seen good ones)."

The little Katy—who might have married young Sapcott Beaumont, and so become one of a family known afterwards for its generous patronage of art and literature, the family so kind to the Poet Wordsworth—had been given, at fifteen, to "honest Arthur Jones", who would some day be Viscount Ranelagh. Her marriage portion had been duly paid down, as per agreement, at Strongbow's tomb in Christchurch, Dublin, on Midsummer Day 1631. She had been carried off to Athlone Castle; and though she had since lived a good deal under her father's roof, and had evidently always been a special object of her own family's care and affection, she had, none the less, ever since her marriage-day, been in legal bondage to a man who was a gambler and a churl. In

this summer of 1639, the old Earl, writing to Lord Ranelagh, the father of Arthur Jones, was begging him rather pathetically not to insist on his son's return to Ireland, but to allow Katharine and Arthur to spend the winter together in the House of the Savoy: "They shalbe both lodged and dyeted in my house and hartily welcome." He seems to have hoped that a winter in London might improve Arthur Jones, "now that he hath given over immoderate play in Corners."[66] But if the Earl was determined, for his favourite daughter's sake, to make the best of a miserable business, Sir John Leeke in his letter to Sir Edmund Verney was more outspoken. "She is keapte and long hath bine by the foulest churl in the worlde," he wrote: "he hath only one virtue that he seldome cometh sober to bedd...."[67]

It is scarcely to be wondered at if the youngest of this bevy of sisters, the little Lady Mary Boyle, looked dubiously on the thing called Husband, as she saw it in one or two types of brother-in-law that presented themselves to her girlish scrutiny. With her own horses, her own handsome allowance, and a great deal of her own way, this little lady of fourteen was not disposed to "change her condition." The stormy romance of her life was to come all too soon; but in the meantime the Beauty was still sleeping. In three of her sisters' marriages, she could have seen little of that "Heart Exchange" of which we may imagine her to have been reading in her volume of Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*—an opinionative little lady, probably in a scarlet gown, on some sequestered seat in the manor garden.

"My true-love has my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange one for the other given."

Not of George Goring, handsome, plausible, dissolute and cold; nor of Kildare, who deserted wife and children and pawned the family silver; nor of Arthur Jones, who played immoderately in corners, and habitually went tipsy to bed, could it ever have been said by any woman, however wifely and compliant—

> "His heart in me keeps me and him in one,
> My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides."

No: Mary Boyle, at fourteen, was not disposed to change her condition; and so it was with a ready-made aversion to matrimony that, in the summer of 1639, she received Mr. James Hamilton,[68] son and heir of Lord Clandeboye, who arrived by paternal invitation at the Manor of Stalbridge. The Earl of Cork and Lord Clandeboye had been for some time in correspondence about this alliance; and Mr. James Hamilton, immediately on his return from his foreign travels, which had included "a general survey" of Italy and France, had sent his own man to Stalbridge with letters heralding his arrival, and had followed a day or two later, travelling in some state, with his tutor and other attendants. There seems to have been no fault to find with the young man. According to Lord Clandeboye, his son was "a hater of vice, and a Lover of Noble partes, and of vertuous industries"; but all the same Mary Boyle expressed, in no measured terms, "a very high averseness and contradicon" to her father's commands. She would have nothing to say to this suitor for her little fourteen-year-old hand; and with much chagrin the Earl was obliged to write in his diary, "being refused in marriadge by my unrewly daughter Mary, he departed my hows the second of September to the Bathe."

But between May and September many things of importance had happened at the Manor of Stalbridge. The Scottish engagement had come quickly to an end. It was May 9 when Dungarvan and his two brothers had left Stalbridge; and from time to time letters had been coming to the old Earl from his sons in camp near Berwick. But on Midsummer Day, about two o'clock in the morning, Broghill had clattered into the courtyard of the Manor, having ridden post-haste from the camp to bring his father the first happy news of the "Honourable Peace" concluded with the Scots. It was, of course, but a "seeming settlement," and of short duration: the beginning, indeed, and not the end of civil war. But Dungarvan's troop of horse was disbanded, and, according to the Earl's diary, the English army was dissolved before poor Barrymore landed out of Ireland with his "yrish regiment of 1000 foot." In July, George Goring joined his Lady at the Manor, and they left together for "the Bathe". Dungarvan and his brothers were back at Stalbridge, and the King and Queen were in London again. And early in August, Sir Thomas and Lady Stafford arrived on a visit to the Earl of Cork; and the diary records "my Lady Stafford and I conferred privately between ourselves towching our children, *and concluded.*"

This private conference in the Stalbridge parlour decided the fate of the sweet-spirited Frank. My Lady Stafford, when she married the Earl's "trew friend," Sir Thomas Stafford, gentleman usher to the Queen, [69] was the widow of Sir Robert Killigrew of Hanworth in Middlesex, and the mother of several Killigrew children. One of them was the notorious Tom Killigrew, page of honour to Charles I, court wit, playwright, and boon-companion of Charles II;

and another was the little Mistress Elizabeth Killigrew, "both young and handsome,"[70] and at this time one of the Queen's maids of honour. And now Francis Boyle was to marry Elizabeth Killigrew.

It ought to be said that the old Earl, in the Stalbridge parlour conference, "held it fitter" that a contract, rather than a marriage, should be arranged; and that it was the King himself who intervened, approving of the plan of foreign travel, but adding: "We conceave that a compleate and perfect marriage wilbe most convenient & honorable for all parties."[71]

It was precisely at this juncture that Mr. James Hamilton arrived upon the scene; and it was just two days later, as the family coaches were in readiness to drive the whole house-party to Sherborne Castle, to "kill a Buck" and dine with the Earl and Countess of Bristol, that Katharine Jones's third baby made its premature appearance in the family circle. "But my daughter shall never be one of his Majestye's Auditors," said the good-natured old Earl, "since she can keepe her reckoninge noe better." And he recalled how her sister Digby had served him the same way during that long-ago visit to Oxford.

It must have been a trying time at the Manor, with match-making, and buck-killing, and babies, and "re-edifications" all mixed up together in most admired disorder. But everybody behaved beautifully in the circumstances. Lady Stafford stood sponsor at the baby's hurried christening, and afterwards presented the Earl of Cork with a "lyttle glass bottle of Spiritt of Amber for curing the palsy"; which looks as if Frank's marriage-negotiations, and the baby's birth, and the unruly Mary's "averseness and contradicon" had altogether been a little too much for the old

man.

By September, however, the guests were all gone, and the Earl was receiving letters from the King and Queen, expressing their “several wishes” for the marriage of Frank and the little maid of honour. And accordingly on September 19, Frank and Robert, under the charge of M. Marcombes, and with forty shillings each for pocket-money, were dispatched to London, on a visit to Sir Thomas and Lady Stafford. Frank, God bless him! was at sixteen to “make his addresses to the Lady,” while Robert Boyle, in his thirteenth year, looked on and philosophised.[72]

The old Earl had given Frank a letter, to be delivered into Lady Stafford’s hands—

“I do now send this bearer to offer his service unto you, and to be commanded and governed by you.”

It is a touching letter. The old man was obeying his King’s commands, but he was full of fatherly anxiety; proud, fond and dubious. He intended to spare neither care nor charge in giving Frank a noble breeding in foreign kingdoms; he would have preferred a contract; the boy’s extreme youth, his further education, the difficulty of sending him back after his marriage “to be governed by a tutor”, were all in the old man’s mind as he wrote; and he begged the prospective mother-in-law also to take them into consideration: “ffor I send him unto you as a silken Thrid to be wrought into what samples you please either flower or weed, and to be knotted or untyed as god shalbe pleased to put into your noble hart. Yet, in my best understanding, a good and sure contract is as bynding as a marriage, espetially when all intenc̃ons are reall, as myne are, and ever shalbe; which are accompanied with a strong assurance that this childe of myne will prove religious, honest, and

just, though he be modest and somewhat over bashfull.... What he is, is with himself and yours...."

Early in October, the Manor of Stalbridge was dismantled, and the Earl of Cork, with the rest of his family and retinue, set out in state for London. Sir Thomas Stafford had arranged to lend his old friend his House of the Savoy for the winter, "bravely furnished in all things except linen and plate," which were being brought from Stalbridge.

Lady Barrymore and Lady Katharine Jones "with their Lords and Children" were to be lodged in the adjacent houses, but were to take their meals with the Earl their father in the Savoy;[73] and, as the Lady Mary expressed it many years later, "when we were once settled there, my father, living extraordinarily high, drew a very great resort thither."[74]

Now that Kynalmeaky and Broghill were out of leading strings, their "Governour" was transferred to the two younger boys; and it was arranged that as soon as Frank and Mrs. Betty Killigrew were united in the bonds of matrimony, M. Marcombes was to carry both the boys off on their "peregrination". Sir Henry Wotton had hinted at some such scheme when he told the Earl that Marcombes was "borne for your purpose"; and indeed M. Marcombes—the guide and teacher of Robert Boyle from his thirteenth to his eighteenth year—was a remarkable man. "He was a man"—wrote Robert Boyle in later years—"whose garb, his mien and outside, had very much of his nation, having been divers years a traveller and a soldier. He was well-fashioned, and very well knew what belonged to a gentleman.... Scholarship he wanted not, having in his greener years been a professed student in Divinity; but he was much less

read in books than men, and hated pedantry as much as any of the seven deadly sins."

Before company, the governor was "always very civil to his pupils, apt to eclipse their failings, and set off their good qualities to the best advantage;" but in his private conversation he was cynically disposed, and "a very nice critic both of words and men." His worst quality seems to have been his "choler"; and Robyn soon learned that to avoid "clashing" with his governor he must manage to keep his own quick young temper in submission.

This was the man with whom, all the summer of 1639, Robert Boyle had read the *Universal History* in Latin, and carried on "a familiar kind of conversation" in French. And this was the man in whose charge Frank and Robyn were to set off on their travels when Frank's wedding was over. They were to go to Geneva, where Broghill and Kynalmeaky had been before them, where there was now a Madame Marcombes in readiness to receive them.[75] For during his previous peregrinations in France and Switzerland with Kynalmeaky and Broghill, Marcombes, quite unknown to the Earl, had met and married his wife. She was a Parisian lady, of good civic connexions, and she was an excellent housewife. Marcombes had actually run away from Kynalmeaky and Broghill for a day or two to tie the nuptial knot. The Earl had at first been angry, but had forgiven Marcombes; indeed the charge of Kynalmeaky and Broghill was not an easy one; perhaps the Earl realised that Marcombes, under the circumstances, required a *besseres Ich*; and, in any case, Marcombes would have been difficult to replace. For he was—he says it himself—"an honest and Carefull man"; and he told the Earl in plain

words while he was acting as governor to Kynalmeaky and Broghill that the title of governor was but “a vaine name, specially when those yt a man has under his Charge have kept so long Companie with hunters and players, and soe many Gentlemen that will humour them in anything and will let them know their Greatnesse, as my young Lords have been used in Ireland.”[76]

Marcombes had found no fault with my Lord Broghill: “I may assure your Lordship yt you shall have both honour and comfort in him.... Every one yt knows him Loves him and speakes well of him and without any compliment”; but Kynalmeaky, the brilliant young libertine, though “a young Lord of many good parts,” loved his pleasures too well. “I looke at home very narrowly to his drinking and abroad to his borrowing”, Marcombes had reported to the Earl. Moreover, both the boys had had smallpox in Genoa; but he had brought them both safely back to Stalbridge in time to join their brother Dungarvan’s troop of horse in the Scottish engagement; and it must have been with a sigh of relief that he turned his attention to the two younger boys, Frank and Robyn.

On the 24th of October, Francis Boyle was married to Mrs. Elizabeth Killigrew, in the King’s Chapel of Whitehall. The King gave the lady away with his own hand, and a royal feast in Court was made for the young couple. The King and Queen were both present; and the old Earl and three of his daughters (probably Lady Barrymore, Lady Katharine Jones, and Lady Mary Boyle) sat at the royal table, “amongst all the great Lords and Ladies.” The King himself “took the bride out to dance....”

And four days later, “to render this joy as short as

it was great,"[77] Frank was packed off to France with Robyn and M. Marcombes. Having kissed their Majesties' hands, the boys took a "differing farewell of all their friends." The bridegroom was "exceedingly afflicted" to have to leave his little new-made wife; but the spiritay Robyn was on tip-toe of excitement at the thought of foreign travel and adventure. On October 28, 1639, they set out with their governor and two French servants from the House of the Savoy. So far the sweet-spirited Frank had done everything that was expected of him; but there was a scene at parting. For the bride was to be left behind in the Savoy under the Earl of Cork's care, with the unruly Lady Mary as her "chamber-fellow." And so unwilling was Frank to tear himself away that the old Earl was incensed; and Frank, in those last troubled moments of leave-taking, forgot to buckle on his sword—the sword, as well as the lady, was left behind!

CHAPTER VI
ROBYN GOES ABROAD

O ye windes of God, blesse ye the Lord: praise him and magnifie him for ever.

...

O ye fire and heat, blesse ye the Lord: praise him and magnifie him for ever.

...

O ye ice and snow, blesse ye the Lord: praise him and magnifie him for ever.

...

O ye lightnings and clouds, blesse ye the Lord: praise him and magnifie him for ever.

...

O ye Children of men, blesse ye the Lord: praise him and magnifie him for ever.

Benedicite omnia opera: Black Letter Prayer Book of 1636.

The little party—five in all—Francis and Robert, and M. Marcombes, with their two French servants, "took post for Rye in Sussex; and there, though the sea was rather rough, they hired a ship," and "a prosperous puff of wind did safely, by next morning, blow them into France."[78] They were a day and night at sea, and "a little tossed att night"; they had escaped the perils of the deep and of "ye Donkirks"; and after stopping for a short refreshment at Dieppe, they set off towards Rouen and Paris.[79] They enjoyed the company of several French gentlemen on the road, of which they were glad; for a robbery had been "freshly committed in a wood" between Rouen

and Paris, through which the travellers would be obliged to pass by night. Marcombes sensibly observed that the very next day after the robbery would be the very safest time to ride through the wood; and accordingly they continued their journey. At Rouen, Robyn was fascinated by the great floating bridge, which rose and fell with the tide water; and in one of his "pretty conceits," such as had so amused Sir Henry Wotton at Eton, the boy compared this bridge at Rouen to the "vain amorists of outward greatnesse, whose spirits resent" (*i.e.* rise and fall with) "all the flouds and ebbs of that fortune it is built on." And this so soon after Frank's gay wedding in Whitehall!

Arrived in Paris on November 4, unmolested by brigands on their journey, Marcombes and the two boys spent some days in "that vast chaos of a city," where they were shown most of the "varieties," and met several English friends—among them one whom M. Marcombes heartily disliked, Frank's new brother-in-law, Tom Killigrew, with the honeyed tongue, brother of the little bride who had been left behind in the House of the Savoy. They also called on the English Ambassador; but the great event of their visit to Paris has been described in Marcombes's first letter to the Earl.[80]

Mr. Francis, he says, had been so troubled at the moment of his departure from the Savoy on account of his father's anger against him, that he had quite forgotten where he had put his own sword and the case of pistols which the Earl had given the boys; and Marcombes had been obliged, when they arrived at Paris, to buy them "a kaise of pistolles a piece", not only because of the dangerous state of the roads in France (witness the robbery freshly committed in

a wood), but because it was "ye mode" in France for every gentleman to ride with pistols; and people would "Laugh att" the Earl's hopeful sons if they were without them. A sword also had been bought for Mr. Francis, and "when Mr. Robert saw it he did so earnestly desire me to buy him one, because his was out of fashion, that I could not refuse him that small request."

They left Paris, with their new swords and pistols, a little company, "all well-horsed," numbering some twenty altogether, and including two delightful "Polonian" Princes, who were "Princes by virtue and education as well as birth." It was a nine days' journey to Lyons, and on the way they rested, among other places, at Moulins, which the future experimentalist remembered for its "fine tweezes." But romance was at this time nearer to the boy's heart than chemistry; their way had lain through a part of the French Arcadia, "the pleasant *Pays de Forest*, where the Marquis d'Urfé had laid the scene of the adventures and amours of that Astrea with whom so many gallants are still in love, long after both his and her decease."[81]

Lyons itself, where they stayed for a time, seemed to Robert Boyle "a town of great resort and trading, but fitter for the residence of merchants than of gentlemen." They crossed the mountains that had formerly belonged to the Duke of Savoy, but were now in the territory of the French king, and they saw the Rhone in its narrowest part, between the rocks, "where it is no such large stride to stand on both his banks"; and after three days' journey from Lyons, they reached Geneva, a little Commonwealth whose quick and steady prosperity under the "reformed religion" had made it the theme "not only of

discourse but of some degree of wonder." There, for nearly two years, the boys were to board with M. Marcombes and his wife and family, and to find themselves in a little ready-made circle of friends; for Barrymore and Kynalmeaky had been there together, and boarded at the Villa Diodati. Philip Burlamachy, the former Lord Mayor of London, who did so much business with the Earl of Cork, and who, it will be remembered, had recommended Marcombes to the Earl, belonged to Geneva, and was related by marriage to the Diodati family there; and Mr. Diodato Diodati, the banker, and Dr. John Diodati, the famous Italian Protestant preacher, were among the chief Genevan residents. "The church government," wrote John Evelyn about Geneva, only a year or two later, "is severely Presbyterian, after the discipline of Calvin and Beza, who set it up; but nothing so rigid as either our Scots or English sectaries of that denomination."

Geneva was, as Marcombes had pointed out to the Earl when he took the boys there, not only a very convenient place for himself—for his home and family were there—but "by reason of the pure air and the notable Strangers always passing through it, and the conveniences for all kinds of Learning there, a very good place for the two boys to be educated in." They would be among those who though "farr from puritanisme" were very orthodox and religious men, and they would be in no danger from conversation with "Jesuits, friars, priests, or any persons ill-affected to their religion, king or state." In a word, Frank and Robyn were to be bred in a commonwealth of educated toleration; and its fine influences were to remain with Robert Boyle—who lived there a little longer than his brother—all through his life.

From time to time, Marcombes wrote comfortable letters to the Earl in London. Supplies of money had, so far, come regularly; but as yet no letters had arrived from the Earl of Cork, who was, as will be seen later, beset by family cares and public anxieties. Marcombes and the boys had settled down to regular lessons at set hours. The lessons were to include rhetoric and logic, arithmetic and Euclid, geography, the doctrine of the spheres and globe, and fortification. They were to take lessons with a fencing-master and a dancing-master, and they played at mall and tennis—this last a sport that Robert Boyle "ever passionately loved." And they read together in a "voluminous but excellent work" called *Le Monde*; but above all Robyn, if not Frank, was indulged in the reading of romances, which not only "extreamely diverted" him, but also taught him French. And as they talked no English, but "all and allwayes French," Robert became very soon "perfect" in the French tongue, while Frank could "express himself in all companies."[82]

Marcombes was evidently very proud of having a second batch of the Earl of Cork's sons put under his care; and Frank and Robyn proved pupils more to his taste than Kynalmeaky and Broghill had been. For one thing, they had come to him fresh from school; and he found the very young bridegroom and the younger philosopher, "noble, virtuous, discreet and disciplinable." "I think", he wrote to the Earl, "I neede not much Rhetorike for to persuade your Lordship that Mr. Robert Loves his booke with all his heart." And Robert also danced extremely well; and so anxious was he to excel in fencing, that the good-natured Marcombes was "almost afraid y^{t} he should have left a quarell unperfect in England." As for Frank, he was taking to his lessons with a "facilitie

and passion" that surprised Marcombes, seeing that the boy had "tasted a little drope of ye Libertinage of ye Court." Francis had been well provided with clothes in London; but Master Robert had been furnished in Geneva with a complete black satin suit, the cloak lined with plush; and Marcombes gave the boys every month "a piece ye value of very neare two pounds sterlings for their passe time."

That first winter in Geneva was an exceptionally cold one, and a great deal of snow had fallen "on ye grounde." The Governour's letters to the Earl reported the boys to be growing apace. Mr. Francis's legs and arms were considerably bigger than when he left England. The mountain air and the dancing and fencing were doing both boys good, though Mr. Robert still preferred sitting by himself, "with some book of history or other"—the romances are not mentioned—and required some persuasion "to playe at tennisse and to goe about." He was, however, in excellent health. "I never saw him handsomer," wrote Marcombes to the Earl; "for although he growes so much, yet he is very fatt and his cheeks as red as vermilion." The frosty air had brought them "to such a stomacke that your Lordship should take a great pleasure to see them feed.

"I doe not give them Daintys," he wrote: "but I assure your Lordship that they have allwayes good bred and Good wine, good beef and mouton, thrice a week, good capons and good fish, constantly disches of fruit and a Good piece of cheese: all kind of cleane linen twice and thrice a weeke, and a Constant fire in their chamber, where they have a good bedd for them and another for their men."

Marcombes describes in detail the order of their days in the Genevan household. Every morning

during their first months in Geneva he taught them rhetoric and Latin; and after dinner they read two chapters of the Old Testament—with "expositions" from Marcombes on those points they did not understand; and before supper they read Roman history in French, and repeated "ye catechisme of Calvin with ye most orthodox exposition" of difficult points; and after supper they read two chapters of the New Testament. And they said their prayers morning and evening, and twice a week they went to church. "There is, my Lord," ended Marcombes, with a little flourish of self-satisfaction, "a Compendium of our employment!"

But all these months no answers to their various letters had come from the Earl in London. They had left London on October 28, and it was apparently the middle of February before the boys heard from their father; and then two packets of his long-expected letters, both written in January, arrived together. The formal, reverential little letters which the boys were in the habit of penning to the Earl were letters chiefly remarkable for their beginnings and endings. They usually began "My most honoured Lord and Father," and ended with some such peroration, as "with my dayly prayers to God for your Lordship's long life, health and happiness, and with the desire to be esteemed all my life, My Lord, your most dutiful and obedient Son and humblest Servant."

A modern reader would scarcely credit, from such a peroration, the existence of a deep natural affection; and there was certainly not the kind of untrammelled love of the modern child for the modern parent. And yet the ornate solemnity of these little seventeenth-century letters only cloaked the tender humanity beneath. It was but a literary form;

and under it, in spite of the foster-parentage of babyhood, the subservience of youth, and the rigour of parental authority, the strong human love was there in the seventeenth century as now. When the long-expected packets arrived at M. Marcombes's house in Geneva, and the boys gathered about their governour to receive their father's letters, so overjoyed and excited was the "Spiritay Robyn" that his hesitation of speech—which had almost disappeared—returned in full force; and for some minutes he stammered and stuttered so atrociously that Frank and Marcombes could scarcely understand what he was saying, and had much ado to "forbeare Laughing."

And what was the Earl's news? Much had been happening in London, both inside and outside the House of the Savoy, since October 1639; but evidently only an abridged edition reached Marcombes and the boys in Geneva.

Lady Barrymore had been very ill, but was recovering. Lady Dungarvan,[83] whose second little girl had died at Salisbury House, in London, before the boys left London, had a little son at last; but "lyttle Franck," the Dublin-born daughter, remained the old Earl's pet. The heir was born on November 17 in the House of the Savoy, and christened in the Savoy Chapel by the name of "Charles," the King himself standing sponsor, while the Countess of Salisbury was godmother, and the other godfather was the Marquis of Hamilton. But the great news of all was the news of Kynalmeaky's marriage—a very splendid marriage it had been—with the Lady Elizabeth Fielding, one of the ladies of the Queen's privy chamber, and daughter of the Earl and Countess of Denbigh. Their other daughter was

married to the Marquis of Hamilton, and the Countess of Denbigh herself was a sister of the King's favourite, the murdered Buckingham.

The marriage of Lord Kynalmeaky and the Lady Elizabeth Fielding had been arranged under royal auspices. The King had dowered the lady, and the wedding, like Frank's, had been in the Royal Chapel of Whitehall. The King had given away the bride, and "put about her neck" the Queen's gift of a rich pearl necklace, "worth £1500." There was much revelling, dancing and feasting afterwards, and the King and Queen "did the young couple all honour and grace." The Earl of Cork, always a strange mixture of generosity and thrift, had supplied £100 for Kynalmeaky's wedding garments, and lent him "my son Franck's wedding shoes" for the occasion.

Broghill also was to be married. "Your friend Broghill," the Earl wrote to Marcombes, "is in a fair way of being married to Mrs. Harrison, one of the Queen's maids of honour, about whom a difference happened yesterday between Mr. Thomas Howard, the Earl of Berkshire's son and him, which brought them into the field; but thanks be to God, Broghill came home without any hurt, and the other gentleman was not much harmed; and now they have clashed swords together they are grown good friends. I think in my next I shall advise you that my daughter Mary is nobly married, and that in the spring I shall send her husband to keep company with my sons in Geneva."[84]

The old Earl, when he wrote to Marcombes in January 1640, did not guess the sequels to these two little romances. For though the wedding clothes were making, Broghill was never to marry Mrs. Harrison, whom he, like many other gallants, had

"passionately loved." On the contrary, it was Mr. Thomas Howard, "not much harmed," who was to be the happy man; and the lady whom Broghill was presently to marry was the Lady Margaret Howard, the beautiful daughter of the Earl and Countess of Suffolk, and a cousin of Mr. Thomas Howard. The two young men had clashed swords to some purpose; but Lord Broghill's marriage with Lady Margaret Howard comes into another chapter.

Nobody exactly knows who was the noble suitor that was to marry Mary Boyle and be packed off to Geneva like a schoolboy immediately afterwards. For Mary Boyle had once more expressed her "very high averseness and contradicon" to the Earl's counsels and commands. She had again refused Mr. James Hamilton, though all her brothers and sisters and several of her brothers-in-law, and all her best friends—poor little unruly Mary!—"did entreat and persuade," and the old Earl "did command." Vanquished for once, the Earl of Cork had been in treaty with more than one other youthful suitor for Mary's hand. But Mary Boyle has told her own story. [85] "Living so much at my ease," she says, "I was unwilling to change my condition." After Frank's marriage, his wife Betty lived with the Earl in the House of the Savoy, where she and Mary Boyle became close friends and "chamber fellows." Betty obtained "a great and ruling power" over Mary, "inticing her to spend" (as she did) "her time in seeing and reading plays and romances, and in exquisite and curious dressing." Betty Boyle had many of the young gallants of the Court at her beck and call, and one of them was Mr. Charles Rich, second son of the Earl of Warwick. Charles Rich was "a very cheerful and handsome, well-bred and fashioned person, and being good company, was very

acceptable to us all, and so became very intimate in our house, visiting us almost every day." Charles Rich also had been in love with Mrs. Harrison, but not so deeply as to prevent his acting as Mr. Thomas Howard's second in the duel; and after that for a time he had considered it only civil to absent himself from the House of the Savoy. When he did come again it was to transfer his attentions to the Lady Mary; and Frank's wife played go-between. "A most diligent gallant to me," says Mary of Charles Rich, many long years after their forbidden love-making and runaway marriage; "applying himself, when there were no other beholders in the room but my sister, to me; but if any other person came in he took no more than ordinary notice of me." And every night when Mary laid her little unruly head upon the pillow she resolved that Charles Rich must be given his dismissal, and that Betty must be told never again to mention him to her as a husband. And somehow every morning it seemed impossible to carry out her resolution; and she made her toilet, and put on her most exquisite and curious dress, and looked the proud and charming little lady that she was.

But Marcombes and the boys in Geneva knew nothing of all this; and for that matter neither as yet did the old Earl. The noble suitor about whom he was in treaty when he wrote to Geneva was certainly not Charles Rich—who was only a second son, "with £1300 or £1400 a year at the most"; and who, if he dared to pay his court to the Earl of Cork's youngest daughter, must do it clandestinely with the connivance of Betty Boyle.

The spring and summer of 1640 passed uneventfully in the Marcombes household. Spring and summer in Geneva; the peaceful little Calvinist

town, basking under a hot sun and a blue sky; the bluer waters of the Lake with the big-winged boats upon it; the vivid greens of the middle distances, and the far-away mountain-peaks white with the everlasting snows! And the lessons went on as usual, the boys giving their governour "all ye satisfaction of ye worlde".... "I would I was as able to teache as Mr. Robert is able to conceave and to Learne." It is true that the witty and wicked Tom Killigrew came down on them from Paris, and favoured them with a little of his "sweet and delectable conversation"; but Marcombes told the Earl that he did not think Mr. Killigrew would stay long in Geneva, "which perhaps will be ye better for your Sons." When he did depart, he left with Marcombes a fine watch and some ruby buttons to be sent to his sister Betty in London. And the little household settled down again—rhetoric and logic to be succeeded by mathematics, history and geography, the chief points of religion, and more dancing-lessons. Mr. Francis was learning to vault. He and Marcombes had received the Sacrament at five o'clock on Easter morning; but Mr. Robert would not receive it, "excusing himself upon his yonge age," though Marcombes assured the Earl he did not abstain "for want of good instruction upon ye matter." In June they had gone a little jaunt into the Savoy country. "We were two days abroad," wrote Marcombes to the Earl, "and were never so merry in our lives."

But were the boys so merry? Frank, influenced perhaps by Tom Killigrew and the letters which came from his little wife at home, was beginning to be restive, and begging his father to allow them to go on into Italy, and so be the sooner home again. And Robert Boyle?

It was in the very heat of that summer of 1640 that there happened to Robert Boyle “an accident which he always used to mention as the considerablest of his whole life.”

“To frame a right apprehension of this,” he says in his *Philaretus*, “you must understand that though his inclinations were ever virtuous, and his life free from scandal and inoffensive, yet had the piety he was master of already so diverted him from aspiring unto more, that Christ, who long had lain asleep in his conscience (as he once did in the ship) must now, as then, be waked by a storm.”[86]

About the dead of night, after a long, hot summer day, he had suddenly wakened to find himself in the midst of one of those thunderstorms so indescribably grand and terrible among the Alps. He “thought the earth would owe an ague to the air,” and every clap was both preceded and attended with flashes of lightning so frequent and so dazzling that he began to imagine them “the sallies of that fire that must consume the world.”[87]

The winds almost drowned the noise of the thunder. The rains almost quenched the flashes of lightning. The Day of Judgment seemed at hand; and the consideration of his “unpreparedness to welcome it, and the hideousness of being surprised by it in an unfit condition,” made the boy “resolve and vow that if his fears were that night disappointed, all his further additions to his life should be more religiously and watchfully employed. The morning came, and a serener cloudless sky returned, when he ratified his determination so solemnly that from that day he dated his conversion; renewing, now he was past danger, the vow he had made whilst he believed himself to be in it.”

Afterwards, Robyn blushed to remember that the vow had been made only in fear; but he comforted himself by thinking that “the more deliberate consecration of himself to piety had been made when the earth and sky had regained their equanimity, and with no less motive than that of its own excellence.” The hour of terror had been also the hour of realisation. This trembling child, already a student of Nature, had begun amidst the winds and lightnings to realise dimly the existence of Elemental Mysteries which made the whole world tremble too. And yet, did not even these atmospheric exacerbations flash and thunder out the command to praise Him and magnify Him for ever? Were not the deepest, most terrible of Elemental Mysteries but part of a Universal Benedicite?

CHAPTER VII
THE DEBACLE

> "But (as when in summer we take up our grass-horses into the stable, and give them store of oats, it is a sign that we mean to travel them) our Philaretus, soon after he had received this new strength, found a new weight to support."—ROBERT BOYLE'S *Philaretus*.

In the spring of 1641, some months after the thunderstorm episode, Marcombes bought horses, and they set out on a three weeks' tour in the neighbouring country. The Earl had not yet given his permission for the Italian tour, and Francis and Robert had been sixteen months at their lessons, and were beginning to long for a holiday. Riding and walking, they visited Chambéry, Aix, and Grenoble, and then found their way into "the wild mountains where the first and chiefest of the Carthusian Abbies does stand seated." Robyn's "conversion" by the thunderstorm appears to have been quite unknown to Frank and Marcombes: they had no conception of the thoughts that were churning in the boy's head.

It was the Devil, so Robert Boyle says in his *Philaretus*, who, taking advantage of the deep raving melancholy of the place, and the pictures and stories to be found in the Monastery of Bruno,[88] the Father of the Order, tempted him with "such hideous thoughts and such distracting doubts of some of the fundamentals of Christianity, that, though his looks did little betray his thoughts, nothing but the

forbiddenness of self-dispatch hindered his acting it."

It was more probably an acute attack of home-sickness, following on a prolonged diet of "ye catechisme of Calvin"; but it was remembered, by this sensitive boy, as a very real temptation. He wrote to his father when they returned to Geneva, mentioning the little tour only as one "wherein we have had some pleasure mingled with some paines." It was a sad little letter: "Your Lordship seems," says Robyn, "to be angry with my brother and I." They had not written often, or fully enough; and letters that are all beginnings and endings do not tell much. Marcombes, on the other hand, wrote ebulliently to the Earl. He never forgot to sing the praises of his pupils—Robyn, especially, was *semper idem*, and "Capable of all good things"; while the nature and disposition of both boys were "as good and sweete as any in the worlde."

On their return to Geneva, they had found letters from the Earl, giving them leave to travel into Italy; and during the summer of 1641 the boys were "fincing", and "dansing", and learning Italian, and holding their heads well and their bodies straight, and Mr. Francis was now taller than my Lord Dungarvan, while as for Mr. Robert, he was "an Eale", tall for his age, and big proportionably. They rose betimes, loved to ride abroad, and always came home with "a very good stomacke." And as Marcombes assured the Earl that they went regularly to church, and in private also "sarved God very religiously", it may be supposed that the months of "tedious perplexity", of which Robert Boyle speaks in his *Philaretus* and of which Marcombes and Frank knew nothing, were drawing to a close. There came a day, indeed, when Robyn no longer excused himself

from receiving the Sacrament by reason of his "yonge age." It pleased God, he says, one day that he had taken the Sacrament to restore to him "the withdrawn sense of his favour."

Although the Earl of Cork had given his permission, he was very dubious about the wisdom of the Italian journey.

"For," wrote the Earl in London to Marcombes in Geneva, "we have lately had a popish priest hanged, drawn and quartered; and a many moe in prison which I think wilbe brought to the like cloudy end, for that they did not depart the Kingdome by the prefixed date lymited by the late statute."

The Earl's friends in London, "suspecting revenge," had advised him against the Italian journey, and drawn horrible pictures of an Inquisition worse than death. But the old man was anxious to satisfy the boys' desires, and really wanted them to learn Italian, and to see "all those brave Universities, States, Cities, Churches, and other remarkeable things"[89] which only Italy could show them. And so they were to go; but Marcombes was to take great care of them, and to remember that the Earl was entrusting "these my Jewells" to him in a strange country.

In preparation for Italy, Madame Marcombes was making for them all kinds of new linen; and Marcombes bought for them three suits of clothes apiece, and they were to have more when they reached Florence—"where I doe intend to keep them a coach, God willing."

Marcombes was anxious that the Earl should obtain for them a letter (in Latin) from the King, "to all Kings, Princes, Magistrates," etc., in which

Marcombes himself should be named “by name and surname.” And they ought also, he said, to have a special licence from the King to allow them to travel in Rome, “least your Lordship or your sons should be questioned hereafter.” The Genevan household were up in arms against Tom Killigrew, who had gone home and reported, most untruly, that Marcombes was keeping the boys short of clothes and pocket money.

In July 1641 Robyn wrote again to his father. The Earl seems to have been still angry with “my brother and I”:—“My most honoured Lord and father, I desire with passion and without any question to go into Italy, but I protest unto your Lordship that I doe not desire it half so much as to heare from your Lp; for the three moneths (or Thereabouts) that we have been deprived of that sweet communication seem to me 3 long Ages, and would to god that the interruption of that pleasing commerce may proceede from your private and publique employments.”

Marcombes also had written to the Earl of Cork. He dared not be so bold, he said, as to beg for some news of “ye affaires of ye Island.” They, in Geneva, had heard of Strafford’s death, “ye catastrophe of ye last Deputy of Ireland”; but they did not know who was his successor,[90] or what had become of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and of “ye armys both of England and Scotland.” In Geneva, by the grace of God, they were enjoying a profound peace: “ye storme having been driving another way.”

It was September 1641 when the boys and their governour, all “well horsed”, bade good-bye to Madame and the children, and set off on their long-talked-of Italian journey. Once more they crossed the

"hideous mountains"; they saw the source of the Rhine "but a brook," and came down in the valley of Valtollina, a little earthly paradise abounding "with all that Ceres and Bacchus are able to present."

Robert Boyle always remembered standing on the spot where the little town of Piur, "once esteemed for its deliciousness," had about a quarter of a century before been suddenly submerged and buried so deep that "no after search by digging has ever prevailed to reach it." And still among the Alps, but surrounded by higher mountains, "where store of crystal is digged," and which "like perpetual penitents do all the year wear white," the boy found himself, for the first time in his life, *above the clouds*. He never forgot how, as they descended *la Montagna di Morbegno*, he looked down on the clouds that darkened the middle of the mountain below them, while he and his companions were above, in "clear serenity."

From the Grisons they passed into Venetian territory and the vast and delicious plains of Lombardy, through Bergamo, Brescia, Verona, Vincenza and Padua, to Venice, Bologna, Ferrara and Florence. They were very young; and their "peregrination" must not be compared in the matter of sightseeing and adventure with John Evelyn's tour taken over much the same ground—only the reverse way—a year or two later. At Florence they sold their horses, and settled down for the winter of 1641-2; and there they resumed their lessons, Italian chiefly and "modern history"; and Robyn read the *Lives of the Old Philosophers*, and became so enamoured of the Stoics that he insisted on "enduring a long fit of the toothache with great unconcernedness."[91] In all his journeys, he had carried his pet books with him.

Frank laughed at his younger brother's inveterate habit of reading as he walked—"if they were upon the road, and walking down a hill, or in a rough way, he would read all the way; and when they came at night to their inn, he would still be studying till supper, and frequently propose such difficulties as he met with, to his governour."[92]

While they were wintering at Florence, Galileo died "within a league of it." They never saw him; but they read and heard a great deal about the "paradoxes of the great Star Gazer"; and Robert carried away with him from Italy an undying memory of the attitude of the Romish Church to scientific discovery. Galileo's paradoxes had been "confuted" by a decree from Rome, "perhaps because they could not be so otherwise"; and the Pope had shown himself "loth to have the stability of that earth questioned, in which he had established his kingdom." It was in Florence that Robert Boyle heard the story told of the friars who reproached Galileo with his blindness, telling him it was "a just punishment of heaven", and of the sightless astronomer's memorable answer: "He had the satisfaction of not being blind till he had seen in heaven what never mortal eyes beheld before." In Florence, Marcombes and his pupils lodged in the same house with some "Jewish Rabbins," from whom Robyn learned a great deal about pre-Christian "arguments and tenets." Frank, perhaps, was more interested in the carnaval, and the ducal tilts, and the gentlemen's balls, to which both the brothers were invited. And Marcombes took good care of the Earl's "jewells", though they were allowed to look open-eyed upon all the vice, as well as the splendour, of seventeenth-century Italy: "the impudent nakedness of vice" Robert called it then and

afterwards. He had never found, he used to say, “any such sermons against the things he then saw as they were against themselves.”[93]

In March 1642 they were in Rome, where it was thought safest for Robert to pass for a Frenchman. English Protestants were at the moment especially unpopular, and Master Robyn was less willing than his brother Frank to “do at Rome as the Romans do.” Rome itself indeed seems to have disappointed the young Puritan. After all his studies in Latin history and literature, it was a disappointment to find Rome dominated, not by victorious legions, but by what he called “present superstition.” He found Modern Popes where the Ancient Cæsars should have been, and “Barberine bees flying as high as did the Roman Eagle.” It was a come-down, certainly; but the little party did a good deal of sightseeing of the simple kind; and they saw the Pope and his Cardinals in chapel, and Robyn’s observant eyes watched a young churchman after the service “upon his knees carefully with his feet sweep into his handkerchief” the dust that had been consecrated by his Holiness’s feet. Robert Boyle did not gather up any dust; but he obtained and read the Latin and Tuscan poems written by this same Pope. “A poet he was,” was Robyn’s verdict of Pope Urban VIII; a poet—and some other things besides.

To escape the heat of Rome they returned to Florence, by Perugia and Pistoia, and thence by the river Arno to Pisa and Livorno. From Livorno they coasted in a felucca, drawing up their boat on shore every night and sleeping in some Mediterranean townlet, to Genoa; and so, travelling by slow degrees, by Monaco, Mentone, Nice and Antibes, they reached Marseilles in May 1642.

At Marseilles, they expected to find letters from the Earl of Cork, and bills of exchange to carry them on to Paris. Hitherto, though difficulties of transit had now and then arisen, their quarterly allowance had been punctually sent. The Earl had allowed them £500 a year in Geneva, and £1000 a year while they were in Italy; and the money had always come to hand, thanks to the combined activities of Mr. Perkins the tailor, Mr. Philip Burlamachy, a certain Mr. Castell, "merchant stranger," who travelled between England and Geneva, and, last but not least, Mr. Diodato Diodati, the Genevan banker. Once or twice while they were in Italy letters had come from home, and they knew vaguely that sinister things had been happening there. And Frank and Betty wrote to each other: Betty was begging Frank to come back to her, and even threatening to come to him; and so terror-struck was Marcombes at the bare suggestion that he was looking "very narrowly" after poor Frank. He had of late been keeping Frank very short of money, lest he might do "I doe not kgnow what."

And then at Marseilles, even while they were idly waiting for their bills of exchange and watching the French King's galleys put to sea with about two thousand slaves tugging at the oars, there came to Francis and Robyn, and to Marcombes too, for that matter, a rude awakening.

"Ye affaires of ye Island" had been going from bad to worse. Wentworth's tragic end was almost an old story in May 1642, so quickly had events been hurrying on. He had got his earldom at last, in January 1640. For one little year he was indeed Earl of Strafford and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; he had headed the loan to King Charles for the expenses of

the second “Bishops’” War. Strafford was in the King’s Cabinet, and the Earl of Cork had been made a Privy Councillor. On April 13, 1640, the “Short Parliament” had met, and it had been dissolved on May 5—“the doleful Tuesday, when the Parliament was dissolved before any Act was passed.”[94] The Earl and his family were back at Stalbridge in July; and now it was Broghill’s turn to raise “a Hundred Horse for Scotland,” and Kynalmeaky and Barrymore and George Goring were all bound for the North in the second “Bishops’ War”. But by November the war was over, and the Parliament (that was to be the Long Parliament) had met. On November 11, Strafford was impeached and called to the Bar of the House on his knees (“I sitting in my place covered,” wrote the Earl of Cork in his diary); and on November 25 Strafford was in the Tower. All through the London winter of 1640, and right on into the spring of 1641, Strafford and Strafford’s trial filled the minds of all men, not in London only, but throughout England, Scotland and Ireland. During those fateful months, the diary gives one or two vivid glimpses of the Earl’s old enemy. There is no description of the scenes in the Houses, or the trial itself in Westminster Hall; the grim pageant of Lords and Commons; the plates of meat and bottles of drink being handed from mouth to mouth; the royalties in their little trellissed rooms; the King apart, “anxiously taking notes”; the ladies also, moved by pity, with paper, pens and ink before them, “discoursing upon the grounds of law and state”[95]. None of these things finds a place in the diary. The Earl’s old eyes were fixed upon Strafford, and Strafford only: Strafford on his knees before the Bar, with his six attendant lawyers; Strafford bringing his answer—his “18 skins of parchment,

close-written"—into the House of Peers; Strafford attempting, in his own defence, to "blemish" the Earl of Cork with "accusations...."[96]

It was a grim time. And yet, such is human life, while Strafford was in the Tower and the Committee of the Commons preparing his indictment, all London was talking of my Lord Broghill's brilliant marriage with the Lady Margaret Howard, daughter of the late Earl of Suffolk, in "the Lord Daubigne's house in Queenes street covent garden."[97]

"At Charing Cross hard by the way
Where we (thou knowst) do sell our hay,
There is a house with stairs...."

There is no description of Broghill's wedding from the Earl of Cork's pen; but Sir John Suckling has left a very graphic account of it in his "Ballad upon a Wedding," which, it is said, was hawked about the London streets at the time.[98]

The bridegroom, "pestilent fine," walked on before all the rest:—London had not forgotten the duel with Mr. Thomas Howard.

"But wot you what? the youth was going
To make an end of all his wooing."

And the bride was a beautiful creature: the blush on her cheek was like a Catharine pear—"the side that's next the sun"; while her red underlip looked as if "some bee had stung it newly."

"Her finger was so small the ring,
Would not stay on which they did bring,
...
Her feet beneath her petticoat,

Like little mice, stole in and out
As if they feared the light."

This was the bride for whom Broghill had forgotten Mrs. Harrison and the duel in which nobody was hurt. This was the beautiful "Lady Pegg," who was to prove herself a woman "beautiful in her person, very moderate in her expences, and plain in her garb; serious and decent in her behaviour, careful in her family, and tender of her lord"[99]—nay, more, in Broghill's after-life it is easy to see that he had not only a brave helpmeet, but a clever one. Robert Boyle himself has called her the "great support, ornament, and comfort of her Family."[100]

The old Earl was in his place when, after many long debates and "sevral heerings", Strafford was sentenced to death—only eleven voices of all the Lords declaring "not content"; and on May 12 Strafford—to whom the King had pledged his word that not a hair of his head should be touched—was beheaded on Tower Hill. "*As he well deserved*" is the brief comment in the Earl of Cork's diary.

And what had the Earl's young daughter, the "unrewly Mary," been doing? She and Frank's wife, Betty, having spent the summer at Stalbridge with the Earl and his customary house-party, were now back in town, staying with Lady Dungarvan in her house in Long Acre. Betty had taken the measles, and Mary had promptly followed suit; and they had both been packed off to another house in Holborn. Charles Rich had shown such anxiety about Mary that the family's suspicions were at last aroused; and Betty's mamma, very much afraid of the Earl of Cork, had threatened to tell everything, "and in a great heat and passion did that very night do it."[101] Betty in

the meantime contrived to give the lovers one more chance. Charles Rich went down on his knees before the convalescent Mary, and remained in that attitude for two hours, while Betty kept guard at the door; and “so handsome did he express his passion” that Mary at last said “yes.” The very next day Broghill—himself a married man—carried his little sister off in disgrace to a very small house near Hampton Court which belonged to Betty’s sister, Mrs. Katharine Killigrew; and there for weeks Mary lived in exile, Charles Rich riding down daily to see her. His father, the Earl of Warwick, and Lord Goring interceded with the old autocrat, and at last their combined influence carried the day The Earl saw, “and was civil to,” Mr. Charles Rich, and Mary’s portion was to be £7000. It was now Mary who went down on her knees before her father, begging for his pardon. The old man upbraided her, shed some tears, and told her to marry Charles Rich as soon as she liked.

It might be supposed that this was enough, but no;—Mary Boyle at sixteen had been “always a great enemy to a public marriage.” She much preferred running away. Charles Rich was quite willing, and the young people were privately married on July 21, 1641, in the little parish church of Shepperton, near Hampton Court. And a few days later, Mary’s elder sister, the Lady Katharine Jones, too kind and too wise to be angry with so rare a thing as a love-match, especially when the wedding was over, accompanied the young couple in her carriage to the Earl of Warwick’s house of Leeze in Essex, and handed them over to the care of that patriarchal family.[102]

Some of the Cork family,—the Barrymores, and Kynalmeaky, without his wife,—seem to have been

already in Ireland in the autumn of 1641; and the Earl of Cork was making his own preparations to return to Lismore. He had been buying six black horses and harnesses for his new light travelling coach, a sedan chair lined with carnation velvet, and a "horslytter," with two black stone coach-horses. August is a hot month for "feasting" in any case, and the summer of 1641 had been particularly hot, and the plague and smallpox were rife in London; but in August the old Earl had entertained at his Cousin Croone's at the Nag's Head Tavern in Cheapside all the Lords, Knights, and Gentlemen of the Committees of both Houses of Parliament for Ireland; and a few days later, Cousin Croone, at the Nag's Head, had "feasted" his great kinsman the Earl of Cork.

During those last months also the Earl had been busy settling his affairs: there was the purchase of Marston Bigot in Somersetshire for Broghill and his wife, and the purchase of the smaller Devonshire estate of Annarye, and the settling of Stalbridge on Robert, his Benjamin. There was the paying of debts and bonds and jointure moneys, and the packing, locking, sealing and lettering of "yron chestes" and "lyttle trunckes" and "lyttle boxes," to be left behind in the care of various trusted friends. Among them were boxes of deeds and writings for Frank, to be left with Betty's stepfather, Sir Thomas Stafford; and at least two other boxes, "fast sealed", for Robert, one of them to be left with the Earl's friend, Lord Edward Howard of Escrick, and the other, containing duplicates, with the Earl's own cousin, Peter Naylor, the lawyer, of New Inn. Stalbridge was to belong to Robert after the Earl's death, besides the Irish lands already settled on him, and a house specially built for him at Fermoy. And the old man had set his match-making old heart on a splendid marriage for

Robyn—with the Lady Ann Howard, the very young daughter of Lord Edward Howard of Escrick, first cousin of “Lady Pegg.” One of the Earl’s last rides in England was with his son Dungarvan to Hatfield to take leave of the Salisbury family; and there also he saw “my Robyn’s yonge Mrs.,” to whom on this occasion the Earl presented “a small gold ring with a diamond.”

The last visit of all was to Leeze in Essex—carried there in Charles Rich’s own coach—to bid good-bye to the beloved “unrewly Mary”. The last of the Earl’s many gifts in England appears to have been to an “infirme cozyn” of his own—a welcome gift from one old man to another—“a pott of Sir Walter Raleigh’s tobackoe.”[103]

There were a good many leavetakings with English friends and kinsfolk between London and Stalbridge, and an almost royal progress from Stalbridge by Marston Bigot—where he held a “Court”—to the coast. Lady Kynalmeaky had been persuaded to accompany her father-in-law to Ireland, and Broghill and his wife crossed with them. The Dungarvans were, apparently, to follow shortly after. Youghal was reached on October 17, and a day or two later the Earl and his family were at the House of Lismore again.

The old biographers give a picturesque account of a great banquet at Castle Lyons in honour of the Earl’s home-coming. They tell how, while Lord Barrymore was feasting his guests, the old Earl was called out of the banqueting hall to see a messenger, who, in a few breathless, horror-stricken words, brought him tidings of the bloody outbreak of rebellion in Munster. A week or two later Lord Barrymore—the only one of the old Irish nobility to

remain absolutely loyal to the Protestant cause—was buying ordnance for the defence of Castle Lyons. Lismore was being strengthened and stored with ordnance, carbynes, muskets, Gascoigne wines and aqua vitæ. Gunpowder and match were being bought in large quantities, money was being paid out on every hand—the Earl was "maintaining" everything and everybody—and money was getting ominously scarce. In December, Lady Kynalmeaky left Ireland for the Hague, and Kynalmeaky took over the charge of Bandonbridge, with a troop of horse and 500 foot, "all English Protestants." In January 1642, Broghill was defending Lismore with a troop of horse and 200 "good shot." He was a dependable son: "My lord," he wrote to his father, "fear nothing for Lismore, for if it be lost it shall be with the life of him that begs your lordship's blessing, and stiles him, my lord, your lordship's most humble, most obliged, and most dutiful son and servant, Broghill." The old Earl himself had undertaken to hold Youghal, to keep the command of that harbour, and to "preserve that towne"; and he was never to leave it. The sheet-lead on the "tarras" of the old college was to be torn up to make "case-shott" for his ordnance. Pikes, muskets, halberds and "brownbills"—everything in the shape of a weapon—were collected from Devonshire and Dorsetshire and everywhere else, and the "Mortall Sowe" was to play a great part in the defence of Bandonbridge and Lismore. Dungarvan, at the head of 1200 foot, was with the Lord President.[104] The Protestant ladies had left, or were leaving, for England or the Hague; but Dungarvan's wife and Broghill's wife stayed as long as possible on the spot.[105]

It was from Lismore—just before the Earl was sent to defend Youghal—that he negotiated the bills of

exchange to be sent through Perkins, the London tailor, to Marcombes: the quarterly allowance of £250 for the three months from March 1 to June 1, 1642. And it was from Youghal, on March 9, that he sent the letter—one of the finest and saddest appeals ever written by a father to his children—that was to greet Marcombes and the boys on their arrival at Marseilles.[106]

It is a long letter. The Earl had received their news from Florence, and was glad to hear of their health and proficiency; but the thought of them, and how hereafter they were to subsist, was most grievous unto him—

"And now or never," he wrote to Marcombes, "is the tyme for you to give yourself honour, and to make me and them your faithfull friends for ever hereafter. Necessitie compells me to make you and them know the dangerous and poore estate whereunto, by God's providence, I am at this instant reduced."

An account of the outbreak and course of the Rebellion follows; of Dungarvan's and Kynalmeaky's and Broghill's doings, and of the Earl's own position in Youghal. It was a case of about "200,000 in armes and rebellion against a poor handful of British Protestants."

He tells Marcombes how in January he had scraped together with much difficulty—by selling of plate—the £250 for their quarterly allowance, and made it over to be paid by Mr. Perkins to Mr. Castell. So far he had punctually supplied them—"which longer to doe I am no waies able." The £250, when they should receive it, must be husbanded carefully, and employed to bring both boys home again. They must land at Dublin, Cork, or Youghal. If they cannot

do this, they must go to Holland and serve under the Prince of Orange. They must, in any case, manage to maintain themselves: “for with inward greefe of soul I write this truth unto you that I am no longer able to supply them ... but as I am compelled in my age to doe, so must they in their younger yeares comẽnd themselves....

“But if they serve God and be carefull and discreet in their carridge, God will bless and provide for them as hitherto he hath done for me, who began in the raising of my fortune by good endeavours; without any assistance of parents and friends....” And he knows Marcombes is too generous to leave the boys, “my two yong Sonnes that are soe deere unto me,” till he can see them safely shipped for Ireland or “well entred in the warres of Holland”—as they may desire and Marcombes advise.

This, then, was the letter that Marcombes and the two boys received at Marseilles. It was then May, and the letter was dated March 9; it was already two months old. They must have looked blankly at each other. How were they to carry out the Earl’s wishes? How were they both, without money, to make their way home? *No bill of exchange had reached them: Mr. Perkins, the London tailor, had played them false.*

It seems to have been arranged between them that Frank, the elder brother, who at nineteen would be of some use at his father’s side, should, with Marcombes’s assistance, make his way as quickly as he could to Ireland and to Youghal. There is no mention of Betty in this moment of decision. Marcombes was evidently able to scrape together enough money out of what they still had to carry one of the boys home—and it was to be Frank. And Robyn? Robyn at fifteen was an “Eale” still. Had

Marcombes sometimes exaggerated, in his letters to the Earl, Robyn's stature and strength? The sequel will show. Poor Carew, in the Eton days, and Marcombes himself, wrote of Robyn as a boy of sedentary habits, and a little "thicke." If the truth must be told, there was not much of the soldier in Robert Boyle. He was the student, thinker, dreamer; and he knew himself to be unqualified, at fifteen, "to be received among the troops." And, without money, it was quite impossible to provide himself with the necessary "equipage."

Apparently they all three—Marcombes, Frank, and Robyn—went on as far as Lyons; and there it seems likely they parted: Frank in the saddle, his horse's head turned towards Ireland, and Robyn and Marcombes returning in deep melancholy to Geneva. There Robyn was to wait for further orders—to employ his time in learning to make "an honourable living." It is all told in his sad little letter, written from Lyons to the Earl at Youghal: a letter which may have been carried to Ireland in Frank's pocket.

"My most honoured Lord and Father, Having according to your Lordship's order and directions seriously pondered and considered the present estate of our affairs, we have not thought it expedient for divers reasons that my Brother will tell your Lordship by word of mouth that I should goe into Holland; for besides that I am already weary and broken with a long journey of above eight hundred miles, I am as yet too weake to undertake so long a voyage in a strange country, where when I arrive I know nobody and have little hope by reason of my youth to be received among the troops...." He explains that the money had not come; but M. Marcombes had offered to keep him at Geneva till

they should hear further from the Earl, “or till it pleased God to change the face of the affaires”; and Robyn had gratefully accepted this offer. He hoped to fit himself to defend his religion, King, and country, “according to my little power....

“... If your Lordship hath need of me in Ireland, I beseech your Lordship to acquaint me therewith and to believe that I have never beene taught to abandon my parents in adversity, but that there and in all other places I will always strive to shew myself an obedient sonne....”

Frank, he said, was ready to take horse to “goe towards Ireland, to secoure your Lordship according to his power,” and would carry all their news. And Robert ends his letter—

“I most humbly take my leave, commending your Lordship and him and us all unto the protection of Almighty God, beseeching your Lordship to believe that whatsoever misery or affliction it pleaseth God to send me I will never doe the least action unworthy of the honor that I have to be, my Lord, your Lordship’s most dutiful and obedient son, Robert Boyle.”[107]

Dr. Grosart, in editing the Lismore papers, found the original letter much damaged, a large piece of it having been torn away in the breaking of the seal. The Earl had evidently torn it open hastily in his anxiety to know what “my Robyn” was going to do. Whether or no Frank delivered the letter into his father’s hands, Frank was certainly quickly back in Ireland, and very much on the spot. By August 1 Robyn had received a letter from Frank, full of enthusiasm for Kynalmeaky’s conduct at home.

For Kynalmeaky was in his element at last. “I have

left Sleeping in ye afternoone," wrote Kynalmeaky to his old father in Youghal. The son who had shown "all the faults a prodigall inordinate young man can have, which if he take not up in tyme will be his ruine and the breaking of my hart", was redeeming himself. Kynalmeaky's wife (the Earl of Cork always called her "my deare deare daughter-in-law") had not been able to live with her husband; even the younger brothers must long ago have known what Kynalmeaky was. And now Frank had written to tell Robyn in Geneva that Kynalmeaky was acting like a hero. And Robyn, so far away from home, had written off on August 1 a little letter of tender admiration to this elder brother, who had set them every bad example and yet had kept such a place in their hearts. On the margin of this letter Robyn added a little boyish postscript—only to say he could not express in words what he was feeling, and ending with "Adieu, Dearest Lewis, idle Cosin. Bon Anné, Bon Solé, bon Vespré. Adieue a Di vous commande."

Did Kynalmeaky ever have this letter? It was dated from Geneva, Aug. 1, and it was endorsed by the Earl of Cork himself, "from my sonn Robert to his brother Kynal. Rec. 13 Oct." Had it been sent to the Earl, with Kynalmeaky's papers—or had it indeed come too late? For the battle of Liscarrol had been fought on Sept. 3. The Earl's loyal son-in-law, Lord Barrymore, and all the Earl's sons except Robert, fought in that battle.[108] And at the Battle of Liscarrol Kynalmeaky was killed; killed on his horse, by a musket-shot through the head. It was Frank—the "sweet-spirited Frank," fresh from the fencing and dancing and vaulting lessons in Geneva and Italy—who, "carrying himself with undaunted resolution," rescued his brother's body and horse, and kept troop and foot together.

The old man did not know then which of these two sons to be proudest of. It was a grim satisfaction to the Earl, after all that had passed, when “Kynal” had been buried in Lismore Church, to sit down and make that entry in his diary: “Six of the rebell ensignes were carried to his widdoe.”[109]

Robyn was to hear from his father once or twice after that. The Earl held out brave hopes of being able to procure some “office” for his boy “at his coming over.” And he sent his own “choice dun mare” to Lismore, with orders that it was to be “kept and drest carefully” for Robyn, when God should send him home again. And when Broghill’s wife, “Lady Pegg,” was at last obliged to return to England, the old Earl gave her a commission to buy for him a ring “besett rownd with diamonds,” and to present it, from him, to her fair young cousin the little Lady Ann Howard, whom he thought of always, even in those dark days, as “my Robyn’s yonge Mrs.”

There is something Shakespearean in the mood in which this old fighter lived his last months and drew his last breath. Shut up in Youghal, “preserving” that town for his King, his sons away fighting, his daughters and grandchildren scattered, Kynalmeaky and Barrymore dead, and poor Lettice dying,[110] his lands despoiled, his fortune vanished, he was still the great Earl of Cork, the head of a great family, the old man of action and experience, the Elizabethan soldier-statesman to whom the younger men, statesmen and kinsmen alike, turned in this hour of extremity, and not in vain. There is nothing stronger or more human of its kind, or more characteristic of the man, than the positively last will and testament made by himself in Youghal so late as November 1642, ten months before his death.[111]

The end came, nobody knows exactly when, but about the very time of the signing of the truce at Sigginstown, in the middle of September 1643, “from infirmities incident to old age, and the want of rest and quiet.”

He was buried in the great tomb at Youghal. All his life he had believed in three things: in God’s Providence, his own integrity of purpose, and the righteousness of a Cause. And in the debacle—in his and Ireland’s darkest moment, when the clouds hung low over his native land and the land of his adoption—his belief in these three things remained unmoved.

Shakespeare has told us how Faith and Uncertainty go hand in hand—

“If it be now, ’tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now: if it be not now, yet it will come....”

CHAPTER VIII
IN ENGLAND AGAIN

> "And though his boiling youth did often very earnestly solicit to be employed in those culpable delights that are useful[112] in and seem so proper for that season, and have repentance adjourned till old age, yet did its importunities meet ever with denials, Philaretus ever esteeming that piety was to be embraced not so much to gain heaven, as to serve God with...."—ROBERT BOYLE'S *Philaretus*.

In the summer of 1644, a slim, sunburnt, foreign-looking youth came back into the London he had left when he was quite a little fellow, nearly five years before. Even now, he was not yet eighteen, and he was still an "Eale". None of his family expected his return; he had little or no money in his purse, and but vague ideas as to what he was going to do next.

How things had changed! Where were the King and Queen, whose hands Frank and he had kissed? And the gay Court that had clustered about them? And his Father! There was no "Great Earl of Cork" any more; no "greatest family in all London," living "extraordinarily high," in the House of the Savoy; no child weddings in the royal chapel at Whitehall. What had become of Frank's wedding shoes, that had been lent afterwards to poor Kynalmeaky?

There can have been little but troops, and talk of troops, on the dusty summer roads, as Robert Boyle came towards London; and the quick, hot jargon of

names and phrases that was in all men's mouths—the political idiom of the moment—must have been doubly difficult to understand by the boy who had so long been living in studious exile, speaking "all and allwayes French," and breathing an atmosphere of profound peace—"the storme having been driving another way."

As he neared London, Robyn's thoughts must have been still with the Marcombes household, till so recently his home, and the little circle of learned and pleasant Genevan friends whom he had left behind him. For Marcombes had more than fulfilled his trust. No remittances had come to Robert Boyle since the old Earl wrote that letter to Marcombes in March 1642. The boy had been running up a big debt, of money and gratitude alike, to his governour: "As for me," he had written to his brother Kynalmeaky about Marcombes (the old letter is scarcely decipherable in parts), "he hath so much obliged me the ... despaire of ever being able to desingage myselfe of so many and so greate ... that I have unto him."[113]

And when at last, eight or nine months after the Earl's death, Robyn, chafing in his idleness and exile, made up his mind to break from his surroundings and find his way home somehow, Marcombes had used his own interest in Geneva to "take up" for his pupil "some slight jewels at a reasonable rate," by the sale of which, from place to place, the boy might pay his way back to London.

And now he was there; and the life of the little Swiss University town lay behind him, too recent to be forgotten: the life of a "well-fortified city," with the great Gothic fabric of a Cathedral in its midst, on one of whose four cannon-mounted turrets there stood "a continual Sentinel." It was a Cathedral, of

course, no longer. It was there that the celebrated Dr. John Diodati, and the brilliant young Professor Morice better known as Alexander Morus, “poet and chief professor of the University,” discoursed eloquently after the discipline of Calvin and Beza. [114] Dr. Diodati preached on Thursdays in Italian to his Italian Protestant Congregation, and on Sundays in French, with his hat on, after the “French mode.” Dr. Diodati lived at the Villa Diodati, on the south bank of the lake, two miles out of the city: the old Bishop’s Palace was now the prison. The University was a “faire structure,” with its class-rooms, its hall, and its excellent library. And Divines and Professors, in their gowns and caps and hats, flitted about the wooden-arcaded streets. There was an “aboundance of bookesellers”; and good screwed guns and Geneva watches, pewter and cutlery, were to be bought; and amongst the hoary relics of Julius Cæsar and a pagan Rome there stood the Town Hall, with the Cross Keys, and the City Motto: *Post Tenebras Lux*.[115]

The only *Campus Martius* that Robyn had ever known had been the fields outside Geneva, where every Sunday after the evening devotions the young townsmen were allowed to exercise their arms, practising diligently with the gun and the long and cross bows, for prizes of pewter plates and dishes. Robert Boyle had brought his bows and arrows back with him to London. He must have practised with the rest, as John Evelyn did two years later, on that peaceful *Champs de Mars*, and played with the rest on its “noble Pall Mall.” He had known the gardens of rare tulips and other choice flowers outside the earthen fortifications, and he must have seen Geneva also in its sterner moods. For that same “Mars’ Field” was the place of public execution; and in Geneva there was then no hospitality of extradition-law.

Capital crime in other countries was capital crime there. Fugitives from other countries were put to death in the sunshine of that spacious field; and for the Genevans, by Genevan law, adultery was death. [116]

But Geneva and its Mars' Field lay behind him. And in front? Robert Boyle must have heard something of what had been happening at home. Accounts had reached him from time to time of the "dreadful confusion of affairs" in England, Ireland and Scotland. During those last two years in Geneva he must have heard all kinds of rumours of the struggle that was going on between the Parliament and the Crown, between the Prelates and the Presbyterians. His friends in Geneva must have talked of the Solemn League and Covenant, and the Great Assembly of Divines that was meeting in Westminster; and of Archbishop Laud, then still alive, still in prison, his trial still deferred.

But it takes seeing to realise civil war. When Robyn arrived in England it was to find a kingdom in arms against itself, a nation divided into two great opposing armies; husbands and wives taking different sides, fathers and sons in opposite camps, brother against brother. The king's headquarters were at Oxford; Prince Rupert with his Royalist army was in Lancashire. York was defended by the Marquis of Newcastle against the combined Parliamentarian forces under Manchester, Fairfax and Cromwell. Robert Boyle had arrived in England almost on the eve of the battle of Marston Moor.

And what to do? There was only one thing at this moment that the great Earl's Benjamin could think of doing. He was no soldier, this dreamy youth, with his books and his bows and arrows; but force of

heredity—a kind of force of inertia—would have carried him into the Royalist camp. His brothers were all soldiers; though it is doubtful if he knew, when he came home, where they were and what they were doing. The very politics of the various members of this scattered family, the "sides" they were taking in the quick march of political events, must have been a puzzle to him. And so it was Robert Boyle's intention to join the army, where he told himself he would find, besides his brothers, "the excellent King himself, divers eminent divines, and many worthy persons of several ranks." But he knew also that "the generality of those he would have been obliged to converse with were very debauched, and apt, as well as inclinable, to make others so."

If Robert Boyle had joined the King's army! It is difficult to think of him in "armor of prooff," and quite impossible to picture him as a laughing Cavalier. He disliked "customary swearing"; he drank water; he did not smoke; he dearly loved to point a moral; and he never adorned a tale. It is certain no officers' mess would have endured him for ten minutes, in the rôle either of sceptical chymist or of Christian virtuoso. And what would have become of the Invisible College, and the Royal Society?

But, fortunately for them, for him, and for posterity, it was to be ordered otherwise. It happened that his sister Katherine, now, since the death of her father-in-law,[117] Lady Ranelagh, was in the summer of 1644 actually living in London, and "it was by an accident" that Robyn found her out; an accident to which he used afterwards to ascribe "a good part of his future happiness."

In later years, when Robert Boyle was giving Bishop Burnet some of the facts of his life for an

intended biography, he did not mention what the "accident" was. Perhaps, so soon after the Restoration, he had still reason to be discreet in the use of names; for Lady Ranelagh, in the summer of 1644, was very much among the Parliamentarians.

In the light of after events, one or two possibilities suggest themselves, if it be forgivable in anything concerning an experimental chemist to indulge in speculation. Marcombes must surely have furnished Robyn with letters to persons in London who would be of practical help to the boy on his arrival. Who were they? Mr. Perkins the tailor had proved perfidious, and was out of the question. There were Peter Naylor, the lawyer-cousin in New Inn, and Cousin Croone of the Nag's Head, and Philip Burlamachy, once Lord Mayor, with whom the old Earl had done so much business, and who was also a relation of the Diodati family, Dr. John Diodati's wife being a Burlamachy. But it could scarcely be called an accident if in a business call on any of these Robyn had obtained his sister's address. It must have been some chance meeting with, or news of, her in some unexpected quarter.

Other men there were to whom the boy may well have carried letters from Marcombes or his Genevan friends. There was Dr. Theodore Diodati, the London physician—brother of Dr. John in Geneva,—who knew a great many people in London; and there was Samuel Hartlib, the naturalised German, the merchant-philanthropist who knew everybody and whom everybody knew. And there was Milton himself, a friend of the Diodati family in Geneva, and a friend also of Dr. Theodore Diodati and Mr. Hartlib. Dr. Theodore Diodati lived in the parish of St. Bartholomew the Less, not far from Milton's

house in Aldersgate Street, and Hartlib was living in Duke's Place, Aldgate. He was a man with many hobbies and interests, and a large correspondence. He conducted, in fact, "a general news agency," and must have been as well known in Geneva as in London from his connexion with Durie and the great project of a union of all the Protestant Churches of Europe, and for his friendship with Comenius, and his active part in the scheme which the English Parliament was then itself taking up of a reform, on Baconian lines, of the English Universities and Public Schools. It is certain that Hartlib was one of Robert Boyle's earliest friends in London; that Hartlib and Milton were intimate, and that Milton had first addressed his *Tract on Education* to Hartlib. And it is difficult to believe that Milton was unknown—by name at least—to Robert Boyle. For Milton had been in Geneva in the summer of 1639, just before Frank and Robyn went there. Milton's great friend Charles Diodati was the son of Dr. Theodore in London and the nephew of Dr. John of Geneva; and when Milton passed through Geneva on his way home from his Italian tour Dr. John had been very hospitable to him. Milton had been an honoured guest at the Villa Diodati, and it is supposed that he heard there the news of Charles Diodati's death. Even if Robyn had not met Milton at Sir Henry Wotton's table when Milton dined at Eton, he may well have heard in Geneva all about Charles Diodati and John Milton, and the *Epitaphium Damonis*—the Latin poem that Milton wrote on his return home, in memory of his dead friend. And it is probable he knew of *Comus*, acted by the Bridgewater family, and of *Lycidas* also, and Milton's friendship for Edward King, the brilliant young Irishman, whose relatives in Ireland must have been well known to the Boyle family. Robyn

may well have read the *Epitaphium Damonis* in the Villa Diodati; and in the house of the Italian teacher and refugee, Count Cerdogni, he may have looked through the famous autograph album in which Milton had written the words (of which Robyn would certainly have approved)—

> "If Vertue feeble were,
> Heaven itself would stoop to her."

It is not so certain that Milton's prose would have pleased the boy;—the church-politics, the anti-episcopal pamphlets, and the divorce tract that had recently been the topic of conversation in London. There is no trace of a personal friendship between Milton and Robert Boyle. Their paths constantly crossed, but they were to walk apart. Boyle deplored religious controversy, and did not sympathise with the sects and sectaries. And yet it is here that the possibility of the "accident" comes in. For Lady Ranelagh was a very progressive Puritan, whose interests were already bound up with the Parliamentarian Party and its reforms. She must have known Milton well personally or by reputation at this time, and she can have had no bad opinion of him or his prose-writings, or she would not have sent, as she did, her own nephew, young Lord Barrymore, to be one of Milton's pupils. Barrymore, only four years younger than Robert Boyle, was one of Milton's resident pupils when, in September 1645, Milton removed from Aldersgate Street into a larger house in Barbican with the purpose of being able to board a larger number of boys. Lady Ranelagh was later on to send her own boy, Dick Jones, to be taught by Milton; her friendship for Milton was to endure through many troublous years; in his own words she stood "in place of all kith and kin"[118] to

him in his blindness and solitude; and her good offices seem not to have stopped even there. May it have been through this Diodati-Milton-Hartlib connexion that Robert Boyle and his sister Ranelagh were brought together?

But London was not so large a place in 1644. Cousin Croone was presumably still at the Nag's Head in Cheapside, and people met in Cheapside in those days. Had not Dr. John Diodati himself, on his one visit to London in 1627, run up against the very man he most wanted to meet—Mr. Bedell, afterwards the Bishop—in Cheapside? Whatever the "accident" was, Lady Ranelagh received her young brother with open arms. Her address in that summer of 1644 still remains uncertain, though not long afterwards she seems to have been living in the house in the Old Mall which was to be her home to the end of her life. [119] It may have been in Pall Mall that Robyn came knocking at his sister's door. Lord Ranelagh—he had taken his seat in the House of Peers in February 1644—was probably in Ireland, for there is no mention of him as one of the family circle at this time; and the husband and wife, as the years went on, had lived more and more apart. Lord Ranelagh, who had run through his own and his wife's money, lived in Ireland, and Lady Ranelagh in London. She was in the receipt, for some reason unexplained, of a pension from Government of £4 a week, and was otherwise helped by the members of her own family.

For nearly five months, Robert Boyle lived with his sister and her young children,[120] and a strongly Parliamentarian sister-in-law—wife of a member of the House of Commons.[121] And Mary, "my Lady Molkin," as Robyn calls her, now Charles Rich's wife, and daughter-in-law of the great Earl of Warwick,

was not far off, whether at Warwick House in Holborn, or at “delicious Leeze” in Essex. Mary had had her troubles, since her romantic marriage three years before. She had lost her first baby, a little girl, when it was “one year and a quarter old,”[122] and her second child, a boy, had been born just at the dark time of the old Earl’s death. Charles Rich had kept back the bad news till his young wife was “up again.”[123]

In his sister’s house, Robert Boyle found himself in the very thick of the Parliamentarian interests. She was still a young woman—only thirty—and a very clever woman, highly educated for her time, and popular by reason of her “universal affability.” In her house, Robyn came to know, as real friends, “some of the great men of that Party, which was then growing, and soon after victorious.”[124] Her house was, in fact, even then, a rendezvous of the Parliamentarian Party. And what a vehemently interesting time it was, in London! Both Houses were sitting: the Westminster Assembly was busy with the new Directory of Worship and the new frame of Church Government. In September, Essex was beaten by the King’s forces in Cornwall; and Manchester and Cromwell were back in London from the north. During the last weeks of Robert Boyle’s sojourn under his sister’s roof, the talk must have been all of, if not with, Manchester and Cromwell, and of Cromwell’s “Toleration Order” and the abolition of the use of the Prayer Book. In October the King was moving back to Oxford, and there was fought the second battle of Newbury. And now the thoughts of the Parliament men were veering round from Church Government to Army Reform; and towards the end of that year, the talk was of Cromwell’s “Self-denying Ordinance” and the great changes it would carry

with it; and of the new modelling of the Army—the "new noddle" as the scoffers called it. And all the time Hartlib, in Aldgate, was immersed in his social and educational schemes; and Milton, in Aldersgate Street, was teaching his boys and writing his second divorce tract and his *Areopagitica*; and all the time Laud was lying in the Tower, his trial dragging wearily on. What did Robert Boyle think of it all after the profound peace of Geneva?

Whatever was in his thoughts at this time—and it is very certain Robert Boyle had no intention of giving up the Book of Common Prayer, or any book he might wish to keep—there was no more talk of joining the King's Army; and when at last, towards the end of the year, the state of the roads south-west of London permitted it, it was under a Parliamentarian escort that the young Squire found his way into Dorsetshire, to take possession of his own Manor of Stalbridge. Through his sister's influence with her Parliamentarian friends, Robyn had got "early protection for his English and Irish estates."

Even with this protection, there were difficulties in front of him. There must have been a sadness about his solitary return to the Manor, empty except for the child-memories of five years before. The fair chimney-pieces and carved balustrades, the beautiful rose-coloured furniture "hastened home" for those great house-parties of 1639—must have talked to him of a chapter of his life wiped out for ever. What things had happened there! There was the arrival of Mary's suitor, and Mary's high averseness and contradiction, and the young man's discomfiture and departure to the Bath: Mary was the same imperious little woman now, as then; she now had a "high

averseness" to Charles Rich's "engaging in the wars." Here poor Lettice had drooped and complained, and George Goring, with his wounded leg, had limped up and down stairs. Then there was the "private discourse" in the Stalbridge parlour, that had settled poor Frank's fate: Betty had refused to live with the old Earl after Mary's marriage, and had gone her own way; she was now, nominally with the Staffords, at The Hague, the gay little courtier that she was, a Killigrew all over!... There were the paths where Mr. Dowch had discoursed Latin Syntax, and where Robyn had first come to know the cheerful and choleric Marcombes, as they talked in "familiar French" about all the European cities they were going to see. Through these gates Frank and Robyn had come "home" after the years at Eton—the "blew-perpetuana" curtains following duly. Through these gates, he and Frank and Marcombes had passed, on that memorable journey to London, where Frank was to "make his addresses" to Betty in the Savoy. All round him lay the fields where he had dreamed, and the orchards of which he had been so proud to possess the keys. And it was all his own, now—all empty and neglected: "my own ruined cottage in the country":[125] a depressing place for a boy of eighteen to return alone to. One of the first events of the new year, 1645, the news of which could have reached Stalbridge was the execution of Laud on Tower Hill.

Nobody could have been very glad to see Robert Boyle come back again; least of all Tom Murray, whom the old Earl had left in charge, and who proved himself to have been, during his reign there, as untrustworthy as Mr. Perkins the London tailor. "The roguery of Tom Murray" was one of the first difficulties that faced the young squire.

Two other pieces of business, however, could have admitted of no delay. Marcombes was to be repaid; and partly to that end, apparently, in August 1645, as soon as Robert Boyle could put his hands on some of his own money, he set out from Stalbridge, “the necessities of my affairs,” as he explained in a letter to his brother Broghill, “calling me away (according to the leave the Parliament has given me) into France.”[126] By August 1645, the New Model had done extraordinary things. In the spring, Cromwell and Waller had been in the west of England. Naseby had been fought in June, and the King’s private correspondence taken and published. In July, George Goring had been badly beaten in the west; Bath had surrendered on July 30. Was Robert Boyle still at Stalbridge on August 15, when Sherborne Castle was stormed and battered—Sherborne Castle, where the old Earl and his sons had killed that buck and dined the very day that Lady Ranelagh’s baby had been born? Probably not. It was probably wise that he should absent himself, “according to the leave the Parliament had given him.” At any rate, he was well away from English shores again when on September 10 there came “the splendid success of the storming of Bristol.”[127]

It is not known if Robert Boyle went so far as Geneva, or whether he actually saw his old governour again; but in any case his visit was a brief one. His business was done, and he was back in London before the end of that year, staying with Lady Ranelagh, and able to attend to the other business that remained to be done—if indeed it had not been done before he left Stalbridge in August.

There were, it will be remembered, certain deeds in a sealed box left by the old Earl in the hands of

Mr. Peter Naylor of New Inn. But they were duplicates. The originals had been left with Lord Howard of Escrick, the father of “My Robyn’s yonge Mrs.” and the uncle of Broghill’s wife, Lady Pegg. They embodied the old Earl’s last effort in family match-making; a fitting match for the youngest son of the great Earl of Cork, which would further unite the families of Cecil, Howard, and Boyle; already intermarried, as Broghill’s wife was a niece of Lord Edward Howard, Lady Salisbury his sister, and Lady Dungarvan’s mother a Cecil. The old Earl had done his very best for his Benjamin. And it is a mistake to suppose it probable that the children had never met. They may very well have made shy advances to one another during those weeks in the autumn of 1639 when Frank and Robyn were in London, just before Frank’s wedding. The House of the Savoy and Salisbury House were very near each other; the families were often together; and little Ann Howard —her mother dead—was often with Lady Salisbury. The two children may even have made a pretty and much-admired pair at Frank’s wedding in Whitehall, and hence may have come the old Earl’s confident “My Robyn’s yonge Mrs.” But there it had ended: the children, if they met then, had never seen each other since; and in five years they had both grown up. It was in 1642 that the old Earl commissioned Lady Pegg to carry to her little cousin the ring “besett rownd with diamonds”; but now it was 1645, and many things had happened. The vast Irish estates had been devastated in the Rebellion. Dorsetshire had been scourged by civil war; and Robyn had come back penniless and foreign-looking from Geneva, and was returning to his “ruined cottage in the country” to examine and administer his disordered affairs as best he could.

A boy of eighteen, Robert Boyle had come back heart-whole. Evelyn has left it on record that there were very few fair ladies in Geneva, when he and Captain Wray[128] and the poet Waller stopped there on their homeward journey, in 1646. “This towne,” wrote Evelyn, “is not much celebrated for beautifull women, for even at this distance from the Alps the gentlewomen have something full throats; but our Captain Wray ... fell so mightily in love with one of Mons. Saladine’s[129] daughters that with much persuasion he could not be persuaded to think on his journey into France.” Robert Boyle had not fallen in love with any of M. Saladine’s daughters; and his views on the subject of marriage would scarcely have been understood by Captain Wray. “Marriage,” wrote Robert Boyle from Stalbridge when he was scarcely twenty, “is not a bare present, but a legal exchange of hearts;—and the same contract that gives you right to another’s, ties you to look upon your own as another’s goods, and too surely made over to remain any longer in your gift.”

Curiously enough, “my Robyn’s yonge Mrs.” had already come, by an even shorter process of reasoning, to the same conclusion.

The Lady Ann Howard was a particular girl-friend of Anne Murray[130]—a daughter of that Murray who had been Provost of Eton before Sir Henry Wotton. Lady Ann Howard often stayed with the widowed Mrs. Murray and her daughter in their house in St. Martin’s Lane; and during the summer months of 1644 the two girls were constantly together at the house of Anne Murray’s elder sister, Lady Newton, at Charlton in Kent. It was a house surrounded by a garden with quiet walks in it. Lord Howard of Escrick’s eldest son, brother of “My

Robyn's yonge Mrs.," was often there, for he was in love with Anne Murray; and Mr. Charles Howard—a young cousin of the Howards—was often there too, for he was in love with his cousin, Lady Ann. Anne Murray has left a pretty description of the love-making that went on in that garden. They called it *amour* in those days, and they were all ridiculously young. Lord Howard of Escrick, the father, was a Parliamentarian, and at this time very busy as one of the ten Lords who were lay members of the Westminster Assembly; but he was not too busy to come and fetch away his son and daughter when he heard what was going on. The four young people had been very happy in that garden. Anne Murray has described how once Charles Howard took his fair cousin by the hand, and "led her into another walke, and left him and I together." "Him" was Lord Howard of Escrick's son and heir, who straightway proposed to "I." But Anne Murray was not allowed to say "yes"; her mother shut her up, and she was fed on bread and water. With the Lady Ann and Charles Howard it was quite different. The boy-cousin can have had no reason to conceal his feelings, unless indeed it were the prior claim of the absent Robyn. Charles Howard's brilliant career may be read in any *Peerage*. He was a soldier and a man of parts at sixteen. He was to serve Cromwell and to become one of Cromwell's Lords, and to be created Earl of Carlisle at the coronation of Charles II. He was the "finest gentleman"; and he won his cousin Ann, who was "My Robyn's yonge Mrs."

Robert Boyle also seems to have acted his part as became "a very parfit gentle knight" and the old Earl's Benjamin. There can be little doubt that a passage in an undated letter from Lady Ranelagh to her brother belongs to this period, and ends, for him,

the episode. “You are now,” she says, “very near the hour wherein your mistress is, by giving herself to another, to set you at liberty from all the appearances you have put on of being a lover; which, though they cost you some pains and use of art, were easier, because they were but appearances.”[131]

The Howard cousins, Mr. Charles Howard and the Lady Ann, must have been married very shortly after, if not before, Robert Boyle returned from his flying visit to France at the end of 1645. The box of deeds left with Lord Howard of Escrick must have come back into Robyn’s hands. The little lady was to pass out of his life almost before she can be said to have entered it. Twenty years afterwards the Lady Ann was still a young woman, though she was the mother of grown-up children, when Mr. Pepys made the entry in his diary: “I to church: and in our pew there sat a great lady, whom I afterwards understood to be my Lady Carlisle, a very fine woman indeed in person.”

CHAPTER IX
THE DEARE SQUIRE

> "... When a Navigator suddenly spies an unknown Vessel afar off, before he has hail'd her, he can scarcely, if at all, conclude what he shall learn by her, and he may from a Ship that he finds perhaps on some remoter coast of *Africa*, or the *Indies*, meet with Informations concerning his own Country and affairs; And thus sometimes a little Flower may point us to the Sun, and by casting our eyes down to our feet, we may in the water see those Stars that shine in the Firmament or highest visible Heaven."—ROBERT BOYLE: *Occasional Reflections on Several Subjects*.

It was in March 1646 that Robert Boyle once more set out from London to ride into Dorsetshire. The Manor of Stalbridge was to be his home for the next five or six years.

What fate had overtaken the Earl's choice dun mare that waited at Lismore for Robyn's home-coming? The old order had changed; and it was on a borrowed courser, "none of the freest of his legs," that Robert Boyle made the journey. Lord Broghill was with him, and they had the company of a States-Messenger, who was travelling the same way. The account of their long ride, by Farnham and Winchester and over Salisbury Plain is a little romance in itself.[132] The war was drawing to an end. The King was again at Oxford:—it was not long before his escape, in disguise, to the Scots at Newcastle. The new-modelled Army had very nearly

completed its work of conquest in the south-west. The Cavaliers were out between Egham and Farnham, but the travellers dodged them.[133] Farnham was deserted—"all the townsmen having gone to oppose the King's Army." Robert Boyle almost lost himself in meditation, "invited by the coolness of the evening and the freshness of the garden," in which he walked up and down waiting for his supper. The travellers supped, and retired quietly to bed; and it was not till the dead of night that they were roused by a thundering at the chamber door. Robyn slept in his clothes and stockings: "my usual night-posture when I travel." He produced his bilboa from under his pillow, and a pistol from one of his holsters; his bows and arrows were not far off. But it turned out to be only the town-constable with a group of musketeers, in search of somebody else. "Away went my gentleman," wrote Robyn gaily to his sister, "in prosecution of his search; and I even took my bows and arrows and went to sleep."

They dined next day at Winchester, and lay that night at Salisbury; and there Robyn overtook his trunks, which had been sent on in front of him. In the middle of Salisbury Plain they were surrounded by a party of horse, who would have searched them for "Malignant Letters" such as "use to be about the King's Picture in a Yellow-Boy."[134] But the States-Messenger carried them safely through, and they rode on, past weary troops of foot, "poor pressed countrymen," goaded on by the party of horse. "Amongst them," wrote Robert Boyle, "I saw one poor rogue, lacqueyed by his wife, and carrying a child upon his shoulders." Even then, as now, "new models" leave much to be desired.

In spite of his bilboa and pistols, Robert Boyle hated the sight of war. “Good God!” he wrote, “that reasonable creatures, that call themselves Christians too, should delight in such an unnatural thing as war, where cruelty at least becomes necessity....”

He reached Stalbridge in safety; but the weather had broken, and was wretchedly cold. “We all suspect the almanac-maker of a mistake in setting down March instead of January.” The bad weather kept him indoors, and was “so drooping that it dulls me to all kinds of useful study.” Even his country neighbours were prevented from making their usual “visitations.” Robert Boyle was depressed: Stalbridge was not so lively as London. “My stay here,” he says, “God willing, shall not be long.”

There were still troops in the neighbourhood, and the plague had “begun to revive again”; there had been cases at Bristol, and at Yeovil, only six miles off. Dorsetshire was suffering from “fits of the Committee”;[135] and at the Manor itself there were many calls on the Squire’s slender purse. This had for the time been replenished by one of his brothers; and he was going to cut down some of his wood, to repay the loan. He was arranging to make “my brother’s sixty trees bear him some golden fruit”; but this was to be done by instalments—one third at May Day next. And meantime he was trying to settle down to his “standish and books”; but even writing did not come easily. “My Ethics,” he wrote to his sister (of a little treatise he had begun, one of his first literary attempts), “go very slowly on.”[136]

And the days must have passed slowly too. “I am grown so perfect a villager, and live so removed,” runs a letter to Lady Ranelagh, “not only from the roads, but from the very by-paths of intelligence, that

to entertain you with our country discourse, would have extremely puzzled me, since your children have not the rickets nor the measles."[137] He was feeling the difficulties of his position, in being one of a family so important to both political parties. "I have been forced to observe a very great caution and exact evenness in my carriage, since I saw you last," he wrote to Marcombes in Geneva; "it being absolutely necessary for the preservation of a person whom the unfortunate situation of his fortune made obnoxious to the injuries of both parties and the protection of neither." And his money matters were still in disorder, as indeed were everybody else's. Out of his Irish estates he had not received "the worth of a farthing."

The roguery of Tom Murray at Stalbridge, however, had had one good result: it had obliged Robyn to make "further discoveries into æconomical knowledge" than he would otherwise have done. He had turned Tom Murray away, "to let him know that I could do my business very well without him"; and then, towards the end of 1646, Tom Murray was to be taken back: "Having attained to a knowledge of my own small fortune beyond the possibility of being cheated, I am likely to make use of him again, to show my father's servants that I wish no hurt to the man, but to the knave."

In October 1646, Robert Boyle was back on a visit to London, perhaps to see the great Essex buried "in kingly state." On that day, the solemn pageant just over, he sat down to write a letter—a wonderful letter for a boy not yet twenty—to Marcombes in Geneva. He wrote of the long procession of four hundred officers, "not one so low as a captain," the House of Peers, the House of Commons, the City-

Fathers, and the Assembly of Divines, that had followed Essex to the grave. But to Robert Boyle the "pageants of sorrow" had "eaten up the reality"; the "care of the blaze" had "diverted men from mourning."[138]

His letter to his old governour gives a vivid picture of the political conditions of the time. In England there was "not one Malignant garrison untaken"; in Wales "but two or three rocky places held out for the King." The Scots were about to deliver up their garrisons and return into their own country, the Parliament having agreed to compound with them for all their arrears. A sum of £300,000 had been agreed upon, but "the first payment is yet in debate." The King was still at Newcastle, "both discontenting and discontented"; and the Scots would be obliged to make up their minds how to "dispose of his person," which the Houses had "voted to remain in the disposition of both Houses of Parliament." People were flattering themselves with hopes of a speedy settlement of things, but Robert Boyle was not so hopeful. He has, he says, "always looked upon Sin as the chief incendiary of this war"; and yet, "by careful experience," he has observed that the war has "only multiplied and heightened those sins to which it owes its being." And his simile is characteristic: "As water and ice," he adds, "which by a reciprocal generation beget one another."

In Ireland the state of things was no more hopeful than nearer home. The news of Lord Ormonde's peace must have reached Geneva; but Robert Boyle explains carefully to Marcombes the respective attitudes of the three parties;—the Protestant English proper; the "mere natives," who hoped by rebellion "to exchange the Throne of England for St. Peter's

Chair," or "to shake off the English yoke for that of some Catholic foreign prince"; and, thirdly, the Catholic Lords of the English Pale—"so we call the counties about Dublin"—who are "by manners and inclination Irish, though English by descent."

In Inchiquin's absence from Munster, Broghill, Governor of Youghal, had been left in full command. [139] Robyn is very proud of Broghill, not only as a gallant soldier, but as "none of the least wits of the time." Broghill had come to England to appeal for troops and supplies for Munster;[140] but Parliament was so slow in granting them that "the physic will not get thither before the patient be dead."

And then Robert Boyle gives Marcombes a piece of his mind about the sects and sectaries:—

"The Presbyterian Government is at last settled (though I can scarce think it will prove long lived) after the great opposition of many, and to their no less dislike." But many people had begun to think it was high time to "put a restraint upon the spreading impostures of the sectaries," who had made London their general rendezvous. The City "entertains at present no less than 200 several opinions in point of religion." Some have been "digged out of the graves," where they had been long condemned to lie buried; others have been "newly fashioned in the forge of their own brains"; most are but "new editions of old errors."

"If the truth be anywhere to be found," wrote the young philosopher, "it is here sought so many several ways that one or other must needs light upon it." But he speaks with respect of that kind of tolerance that tries to see even in impostures "glimpses and manifestations of obscure or formerly concealed truths," and that would not "aggravate

very venial errors into dangerous and damnable heresies."

"The Parliament is now upon an ordinance for the punishment of many of these supposed errors; but since their belief of their contrary truths is confessedly a work of divine revelation, why a man should be hanged because it has not yet pleased God to give him his Spirit, I confess I am yet to understand...."

After this the letter goes off into domestic and personal matters. Robert Boyle had been in company with the Archbishop of Armagh[141]—"our Irish St. Austin"[142]—and had been telling him of Marcombes's French translation of a sermon of the Archbishop's, "The Mystery of the Incarnation." "He seemed very willing that you should publish it, upon the assurance I gave him of the fidelity of its translation." Lady Ranelagh and Broghill were anxious to find Marcombes some more pupils; but all the great families of England were at present "standing at a gaze." Whether peace or war be the outcome of events, "it is probable that a good many of them will make visits to foreign climates."[143]

Robyn himself had seen a variety of fortune since he and his governour had parted: "plenty and want, danger and safety, sickness and health, trouble and ease." He had actually once been a prisoner in London, "on some groundless suspicion," but had quickly got off with advantage. At Stalbridge he was pursuing his studies by fits and starts. "Divers little essays, both in prose and verse, I have taken the pains to scribble upon several subjects"; and as soon as he can "lick them into some less imperfect shape" he will send some of the "least bad" to Marcombes in Geneva. He tells Marcombes about his study of

ethics, and his desire to "call them down from the brain into the breast, and from the school to the house"; and he mentions his little treatise that goes on so slowly.

"The other humane studies I apply myself to are natural philosophy, the mechanics, and husbandry, according to the principles of our new philosophical college, that values no knowledge but as it hath a tendency to use." And he begs Marcombes to inquire for him into the "ways of husbandry" practised about Geneva; "and when you intend for England, to bring along with you what good receipts or good books of any of those subjects you can procure, which will make you extremely welcome to our *invisible college*."

The "Invisible College," the embryo of the Royal Society of London, was then already in existence. Since some time in 1645, a little club composed of a few "worthy persons inquisitive into natural philosophy" had been holding its weekly meetings; sometimes in the lodging of the physician, Dr. Jonathan Goddard, in Wood Street, Cheapside; sometimes at a "convenient place" in Cheapside itself,—in fact, the Bull's Head Tavern; and sometimes in Gresham College, near by. Its originator was Theodore Haak, who, like Hartlib, was a naturalised German; and among its first members were Dr. John Wallis, clerk to the Westminster Assembly; Dr. Wilkins, afterwards Warden of Wadham College, Oxford, and brother-in-law of Oliver Cromwell; Foster, the professor of astronomy at Gresham College; the young William Petty; Dr. Goddard himself; and one or two other "doctors in physic" more or less well known in London. They had their telescopes and microscopes and their attendant apothecaries, etc.; and,

"precluding theology and state-affairs," they wandered at will among the sciences,—the physics and chemics, and mechanics and magnetics,—"as then cultivated at home and abroad." Hartlib was from the very first connected with this club: "The Invisible College of his imagination seems to have been that enlarged future association of all earnest spirits for the prosecution of real and fruitful knowledge of which this club might be the symbol and promise."[144]

His early letters to Robert Boyle at Stalbridge are full of the subjects under discussion. And there is no doubt that it was to a great extent the fascination of these weekly meetings in Wood Street, and the company he met there, that drew Robert Boyle so often to London and kept him in London as long as he could manage to stay there.

"I have been every day these two months," he wrote to his friend Francis Tallents, in February 1647,[145] "upon visiting my own ruined cottage in the country; but it is such a labyrinth, this London, that all my diligence could never yet find a way out on't ... the best on't is, that the corner-stones of the *invisible*, or as they term themselves, the *philosophical college*, do now and then honour me with their company ... men of so capacious and searching spirits, that school-philosophy is but the lowest region of their knowledge; and yet, though ambitious to lead the way to any generous design, of so humble and tractable a genius, as they disdain not to be directed to the meanest, so he can but plead reason for his opinion; persons that endeavour to put narrow-mindedness out of countenance by the practice of so extensive a charity that it reaches unto everything called man, and nothing less than a

universal goodwill can content it. And indeed they are so apprehensive of the want of good employment, that they take the whole body of mankind for their care."

And he concludes his panegyric with the recital of their chiefest fault, "which is very incident to almost all good things; and that is, that there is not enough of them."

The London outside this pleasant coterie was not so congenial to Robert Boyle. Above all, the sects and sectaries were his abomination. They were coming over from Amsterdam like so many bills of exchange; they were like "diurnals," eagerly read, and then in a day or two torn up as not worth keeping. They were "mushrooms of last night's coming up." "If any man have lost his religion," he wrote, "let him repair to London, and I'll warrant him he shall find it: I had almost said too, and if any man has a religion, let him but come hither now, and he shall go near to lose it.... For my part, I shall always pray God to give us *the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*...."[146]

One immediate outcome of these club meetings in Wood Street was a little scheme, evidently aided and abetted by Lady Ranelagh, which filled all Robyn's thoughts on his return to Stalbridge in the spring of 1647. He was going to set up a laboratory of his own, in the empty manor-house. It was a scheme not easy to carry out in those days; and his first efforts were to result in dire failure. "That great earthen furnace," he wrote to Lady Ranelagh, "whose conveying hither has taken up so much of my care, and concerning which I made bold very lately to trouble you, since I last did so, has been brought to my hands crumbled into as many pieces as we into sects; and all the fine experiments and castles in the

air I had built upon its safe arrival have felt the fate of its foundation. Well, I see I am not designed to the finding out the philosopher's stone, I have been so unlucky in my first attempts at chemistry. My limbecks, recipients, and other glasses have escaped indeed the misfortune of their incendiary, but are now, through the miscarriage of that grand implement of Vulcan, as useless to me as good parts to salvation without the fire of zeal. Seriously, Madam, after all the pains I have taken, and the precautions I have used, to prevent this furnace the disasters of its predecessors, to have it transported a thousand miles by land that I may after all this receive it broken, is a defeat that nothing could recompense, but that rare lesson it teaches me, how brittle that happiness is that we build upon earth."[147]

These words breathe the first hint of a melancholy in Robert Boyle's life, the causes of which—though he did his best to conceal and conquer them—are not far to seek.

As early as 1646, when he was not yet twenty, there comes into his letters the note of physical suffering. Like many scholars and thinkers, Robert Boyle was very sensitive about physical pain, and the chances of infection and disease. As a boy at Eton, it will be remembered, the "potion" held more than ordinary terrors for the spiritay Robyn. Perhaps he had heard about little Hodge, who had died at Deptford, after so dutifully swallowing the powder of unicorns' horns. But even if not, he must have seen the same thing happening all about him; he must have known well enough that medical treatment in his day was steeped in the optimism of blackest ignorance. The plasters and powders and potions and

purges with which the Faculty “wrought” so boldly on every disease, and the weird and melodramatic endings which were their usual results, had given Robyn “a perfect aversion to all physick.” He believed that, in most cases, it “did but exasperate the disease.” Had not he seen “life itself almost disgorged together with a potion”? It was his own childish experiences that inclined this experimentalist, all his life, to “apprehend more from the physician than the disease,” and set him to apply himself to the study of physic “that he might have the less need of them that profess it.” And so, though he was to count among his friends of the Philosophical College and elsewhere the most learned and eminent physicians of his time, and as he grew older came to trusting very humbly and gratefully to the skill of more than one of them, Robert Boyle’s tendency, all through life, was to simplify medical treatment, and as far as possible to doctor himself with the aid of an intelligent and obedient “apothecary.”

If he had known that he was to live till he was sixty-five, and that the five-and-forty years that lay before him were to be years of more or less invalidism and suffering! But the long future was veiled; at twenty, the months in front of him were all-important. And he must have known as early as 1646 that his attacks of pain and “ague fits” were caused by the existence of renal calculus—the “gravel of the kidneys” of his day. He knew of it when he wrote the letter to Hartlib (a fellow sufferer) in which he gratefully thanks good Mrs. Hartlib for a “receipt” or “sanative remedy,” which she had sent him in one of her husband’s letters, against a disease that Robyn calls “so cruel in its tortures and so fatal in its catastrophe.”[148]

Stalbridge, with this fact realised, was no longer the home of glad possibilities it may at first have promised to be; which the old Earl, in leaving it to his Benjamin, had certainly intended it to be. But Robert Boyle was making the best of it. “As for me,” he wrote to Hartlib—“during my confinement to this melancholy solitude, I often divert myself at leisure moments in trying such experiments as the unfurnishedness of the place and the present distractedness of my mind will permit me.” Friends and neighbours came about him; these were certain “young knights” and young Churchmen and “travellers out of France,” who appear under fancy names in his *Reflections*: Eusebius, “a Dr. of Divinity,” Eugenius and Genorio, “Travellers and fine Gentlemen,” and Lindamor, “a learned youth, both well born and well bred.” If they were not actually his guests at Stalbridge, Robyn “took pleasure to imagine” them to “be present with me at the occasion”; and poetic licence has suggested that Lindamor may have been Robyn himself, in some of his moods, though he still figures in some of them as Philaretus and speaks in others of them of “Mr. Boyle”—even while he is using also the first personal pronoun. The Earl of Bristol’s family at Sherborne Castle were pleasant neighbours, and the family of Sir Thomas Mallet, at Poynington—Sir Thomas and his Lady, and Mr. John Mallet their son, and the young lady whom John Mallet was to marry—“the fair young lady you are happy in,” as Robert Boyle called her.

Robyn’s own family—scattered and busy as they were—came to see him sometimes. He says himself that his sister, Lady Ranelagh, was “almost always with him during his sickness”;[149] and his brother Frank seems to have been a welcome and cheerful

guest at Stalbridge; while Robyn himself rode over now and then to Marston Bigot, when “dear Broghill” and Lady Pegg were there. But his laboratory and his “standish” and books, and especially his correspondence with Hartlib in London, were a great resource. It was at this time that he was writing the little essays he spoke of to Marcombes. Among them was his *Free Discourse against Customary Swearing*, which in manuscript pleased his relations, and was dedicated to his sister Kildare.[150] And it was then also that he was writing his *Occasional Reflections upon Several Subjects*, which so delighted Lady Ranelagh.[151] They afford many glimpses into Robert Boyle’s life during the years spent at Stalbridge. He is to be seen in them as the young Squire of gentle, studious tastes and simple habits, sitting, book in hand, over the slow-burning wood fire in the parlour with the carved stone chimney-piece “fair and graceful in all respects”; or riding his horse along the up-and-down-hill Dorset lanes; angling by the side of a stream, or walking in his own meadows, with his spaniel at his heels: philosophising as he goes; observing all things always; dreaming, perhaps, a little too—within bounds. The very titles of his *Reflections* are an epitome of the life of those Stalbridge days. The spaniel is a constant companion, in weal and woe:—

Upon my Spaniel’s carefulness not to lose me in a Strange place, and *Upon his manner of giving Meat to his Dogg*, are two of these *Reflections*.[152]

There is nothing very original in Robert Boyle’s method of feeding a dog, except that it carries with it his inevitable moral conclusions; but the youthful essay hands down the picture of master and dog to posterity:—

"For but observe this Dogg. I hold him out meat, and my inviting Voice loudly encourages and invites him to take it. 'Tis held indeed higher than he can leap, and yet, if he leap not at it, I do not give it him; but if he do, I let it fall half-way into his mouth."

Spaniels have fetched their masters' gloves from time immemorial; but none quite so graphically as Robert Boyle's:—[153]

"How importunate is he to be imployed about bringing me this glove! And with what Clamours and how many fawnings does he court me to fling it him! I never saw him so eager for a piece of Meat as I find him for a Glove. And yet he knows it is no Food for him, nor is it Hunger that creates his Longings for it; for now I have cast it him, he does nothing else with it but (with a kind of Pride to be sent for it, and a satisfaction which his glad gestures make appear so great, that the very use of Speech would not enable him to express it better) brings it me back again...."

In the mere names of these *Reflections* may be traced the manner in which he spent his days: *Upon distilling the Spirit of Roses in a Limbick*: *Upon two very miserable Beggars begging together by the Highway*: *Upon the Sight of a Windmill standing still*: *Upon his Coaches being stopt in a narrow Lane*: *Upon the Sight of a fair Milkmaid Singing to her Cow*:[154] *Upon Talking to an Echo*: *Upon a Child that Cri'd for the Stars*;—in which last are quoted Waller's lines—

> "Thus in a starry night fond children cry
> For the rich spangles which adorn the sky."

One of the *Reflections*, *Upon the Eating of Oysters*, possesses a secondary interest: it is supposed to have suggested to Swift his *Gulliver's Travels*. Like others of

the *Reflections*, it is written in the form of conversation between *Eugenius* and *Lindamor*.[155]

"EUG.—You put me in mind of a fancy of your Friend Mr. Boyle, who was saying, that he had thoughts of making a short Romantick story, where the Scene should be laid in some Island of the Southern Ocean, govern'd by some such rational Laws and Customs as those of *Utopia* or the *New Atlantis*, and in the Country he would introduce an Observing Native, that upon his return home from his Travels made in Europe should give an account of our Countries and manners under feign'd Names, and frequently intimate in his Relations (or in his Answers to Questions that should be made him) the reasons of his wondring to find our Customs so extravagant, and differing from those of his Country...."

The *Reflections* show Robert Boyle as he lived and thought and felt; as he rose early on a "fair morning," and looked up at the "variously coloured clouds," and listened to the lark's song overhead; as he picked up a horse-shoe, watched boys at their games, or tried a prismatical or triangular glass; as he fished with a "counterfeit fly" along the river-banks, or let the fish run away with the more homely bait; as he looked at his own shadow cast in the face of a pool, or his own face in a looking-glass with a rich frame. What an opportunity was the magnetical needle of a sundial, or the use of a burning-glass, or the drinking of water out of the brims of one's own hat! What food for reflection was a syrup made of violets, or a glow-worm included in a crystal viol! What thoughts fluttered about the tail of a paper kite flown on a windy day, or about a lanthorn and candle carried by on a dark and windy night! And

Robert Boyle did once shoot something, as may be seen from the title of one particular *Reflection*:

"Killing a Crow (out of a window) in a Hog's trough, and immediately tracing the ensuing *Reflection* with a Pen made of one of his Quills...."

Very early in his life there was, alas! the least touch of the valetudinary about the "deare Squire." It was not all fair mornings and larks and roses. One section of his little book of essays is devoted to "the accidents of an ague," and deals with the invasion, the hot and cold fits, the letting of blood, the taking of physick, the syrups and other sweet things sent by the doctor, the want of sleep, the telling of the strokes of an ill-going clock in the night, the thief in the candle, the danger of death, the fear of relapse; and at the end, when Robyn is his own man again—the "reviewing and tacking together the several bills filed up in the Apothecary's Shop."

In the summer of 1647, Robert Boyle had been ill; but in the autumn he paid some visits among his relations, and early in 1648 he went to Holland, "partly to visit the country," and partly to help his brother Frank conduct his brilliant wife home from The Hague—a mission that must have required all Frank's sweetness of spirit and all Robyn's philosophy. In the summer of 1648, Robert Boyle was again in London;—this time, Lady Ranelagh had taken rooms for him in St. James's.

CHAPTER X
A KIND OF ELYSIUM

> "This blessed plot, this Earth, this Realme, this England,
> This Nurse, this teeming wombe of Royall Kings,
> Fear'd by their breed and famous for their birth,
> Renowned for their deeds, as farre from home,
> For Christian seruice, and true Chiualrie,
> As is the sepulcher in stubborne Iury
> Of the World's ransome, blessed *Marie's* Sonne.
> This Land of such deere soules, this deere-deere Land,
> Deere for her reputation through the world...."
>
> Shakespeare's *Richard the Second* (First Folio, 1623).

Shakespeare was a little out of date in the summer of 1648, when Robert Boyle came to town from Stalbridge to the lodging in St. James's taken for him by his sister Ranelagh. "This England" was then still in the throes of civil war; was, in fact, at the moment plunged in what is known as the Second Civil War. [156] When Robert Boyle arrived in town, everybody was talking of the risings in the English counties (Dorsetshire itself among them), and the revolt of the fleet off the Kentish coast. The King was in the Isle of Wight: since Robert Boyle had written his letter to Marcombes in October 1646, the King had been bandied about from the Scots to the English, from the Parliament to the Army, from Holmby House to Hampton Court; and now, having escaped into the Isle of Wight only to find himself virtually a prisoner in Carisbrooke Castle, he was yet in secret negotiation with Ormonde in France, and with

Hamilton and the Royalists in Scotland. Just at this time, “in spite of Argyle and the Scottish Clergy”, a Royalist army was marching into England. The Queen and Prince and the Royalist Court at St. Germains were on tip-toe of expectation; while the young Duke of York had escaped from London abroad, disguised in girl’s clothes.[157] Ormonde was with the Court in France, and Inchiquin in Ireland had declared himself a Royalist. There had been also successive Royalist risings in Wales and in the English counties. Of the Parliamentary Party, Lambert was in the north, Cromwell in Wales; and Fairfax and Ireton—the Kentish rising crushed—were now besieging Colchester.

And what was Robert Boyle doing during this London visit? After all, London was in the circumstances the most civilised place to be in. Robert Boyle was listening to the Earl of Warwick’s very full account “from his own mouth” of his recent negotiations with the rebellious fleet;—the Earl of Warwick, who was Mary Boyle’s father-in-law. And then, when the Earl of Warwick himself was hurrying off to Portsmouth to deal with the “disobedient ships” there, Robert Boyle was supping quietly with the ladies of the Warwick family at Warwick House in Holborn, and hearing from them all the latest gossip about the Essex rising, and the behaviour of his brother-in-law Charles Rich. By their account, Charles Rich had been the “grand agitator in this Essex business.” And the young Squire was much amused to hear also that the newly chosen Admiral of the revolting ships was none other than one Kemb, a minister,—“a mad, witty fellow,” Robert Boyle calls him, “whom I have often been very merry with, his wife being sister to the honest red-nosed blade that waits now on me.”[158]

Times had changed, indeed, since England was the royal throne of Kings, another Eden, and a demi-paradise. No doubt the Invisibles met as usual in Wood Street, and Robert Boyle was often in congenial company with Hartlib and the others there or at Gresham College. Young Lord Barrymore was no longer with Milton in the Barbican. Milton had given up his school, and he and his wife and their one little girl were living in High Holborn—very near to Warwick House—and Milton was now leading a literary life, but keenly watching the doings of Parliament and Army; it was some months before he was made Secretary of Foreign Tongues to the Council of State. The young philosopher in St. James's, who had his own ideals, was watching them too, as keenly; though exactly how Robert Boyle felt about the trend of events it is very difficult to guess. His "exact evenness of carriage" never deserted him: to use his own words, "The point of a mariner's needle shows its inclination to the Pole both by its wavering and rest." Royalists, Parliament-men, Army-men, Churchmen, Presbyterians, and Independents,—he was in the midst of them all, bound to many of them by ties of friendship and kinship, but steadfastly going his own way. If he was in the company of Mary's father-in-law, the Earl of Warwick, he was also in Archbishop Usher's study, listening to a very different kind of exposition, and he was writing affectionately to "dear Broghill" in his difficult position in Munster. If he spoke of "Our Masters" at Westminster, he spoke also of "Our Brethren" across the Borders. On the whole, like Milton in Holborn, but from quite another standpoint, Robert Boyle seems to have fixed, if not his faith, his expectations, upon the New Model. "Victory," he wrote, "is as obedient as the very

Parliament to the Army."[159]

And meantime Lady Ranelagh was doing her best to push her young brother's literary interests, and make his London visit a pleasant one. She had been showing one of his manuscripts to her friend the Countess of Monmouth. The Countess was the daughter of an old acquaintance of the Earl of Cork, Lionel Cranfield, the clever merchant-adventurer, Lord Mayor of London, High Treasurer, and first, Earl of Middlesex. It may be remembered that Marcombes had been tutor in the Middlesex family before he took Kynalmeaky and Broghill abroad. The Countess had read and liked the manuscript, and had sent the young Squire a flattering message and invitation in a note to his sister Ranelagh. And it was with more than ordinary pleasure that Robert Boyle sat down to indite his little letter of reply, a model of seventeenth-century epistolary homage, to the Countess of Monmouth at Moore Park—

"Madam," so runs the letter: "in your ladyship's (imparted to me by my sister Ranelagh) I find myself so confounded with civilities, that if she that blessed me with the sight of your letter had not (for her own discharge) exacted of me this acknowledgment of my having seen it, I must confess I should scarce have ventured to return a verbal answer, deterred by the impossibility of writing without wronging a resentment[160] which I can express as little as I deserved the praises and the favours that have produced it."

And so on. The Countess had suggested the publication of his pamphlet. But she did more: she had invited the young Squire to pay a visit to Moore Park, and to bring his manuscript in his pocket—

"As for my pamphlet, Madam, had it expected the

glory of entertaining you, it should certainly have appeared in a less careless dress ... yet my just sense of the smallness of the accession the Press can be to the honour of your ladyship's perusal makes me decline its publication. And as that paper cannot have either a higher applause or nobler end than the being liked and practised at Moore Park, so if it have either anyway diverted your ladyship, or had the least influence upon my lord, I have reached my desires and gone beyond my hopes. However, Madam, I am richly rewarded for writing such a book by being enjoyned to fetch it where you are. So welcome a command is very unlikely to be disobeyed; but my obedience, Madam, must be paid to the order, not the motive. The fetching of my book may be one effect of my remove, but not the errand of it; for sure, Madam, your modesty cannot be so injurious, both to yourself and me, as to persuade you that any inferior (that is, other) motive can be looked upon by me as an invitation to a journey which will bless me with so great a happiness as that of your ladyship's conversation, and give me the opportunity of assuring you, better than my present haste and my disorder will now permit me, in how transcendent a degree I am, Madam, your Ladyship's humble and obliged servant, Robert Boyle."

It was a particularly cold, wet July[161]; the confusions of the country seemed to have infected the very air; and those people who were "wont to make fires, not against winter but against cold," had "generally displac'd the florid and the verdant Ornaments in their chimneys," where "Vulcan" was more proper than "Flora."[162]

But it must be taken for granted that the sun shone out one day, not long after the folding and

dispatching of this letter to the Countess; and that Robert Boyle and his horse did find their way by the old coach-road from London into Hertfordshire. And when they came to the little town of Rickmansworth, lying sleepily in the valley, clustered about the huge Church in its midst, horse and rider must have turned upwards to the left, under spreading oak-trees. The “common way” still runs upwards through the Park.

For Moore Park, that once belonged to Shakespeare’s Earl of Pembroke, “stands on the side of a hill; but not very steep.” Sir William Temple has described it, as it was in that day, when the Monmouth family owned it, “the sweetest place, I think, that I have ever seen in my life, either before or since, at home or abroad.” The length of the house lay upon the breadth of the garden. The great parlour, where the Countess would receive her guest, opened on the middle of a terraced gravel-walk, set with standard laurels, which looked like orange-trees out of bloom. There were fountains and statues and summer-houses in that garden—“the perfectest figure of a garden”—and shady cloisters, upon arches of stone, clustered over with vines. And beyond lay a wilderness, which was always in the shade. Robert Boyle must have been a happy man that day, as he alighted before those portals with his manuscript in his pocket.

Henry Cary, second Earl of Monmouth, was a Royalist peer: his younger brother, Thomas Cary, was the faithful groom of the bedchamber to Charles I. They were sons of the old Robert—the man who, the moment Queen Elizabeth was dead, had started on his record ride from London to Edinburgh to be the first to tell James VI that he was King of England.

The first Earl and his Countess—a Trevanion—lay buried in Rickmansworth Church; and the second Earl and his Countess were, at the time of Robert Boyle's visit, living quietly at Moore Park, the Earl having of late withdrawn into retirement among his books and manuscripts.[163] For he was a scholar, skilled in modern languages, and a writer—though not one of his manuscripts remains. And he and the Countess were still passionately mourning the death of Lionel, their elder son and heir, who had fallen in the battle of Marston Moor. The second son was married, in London[164]; and the family at Moore Park must have consisted entirely of daughters, though the eldest daughter had been married for some years to Mary Boyle's rejected suitor, Mr. James Hamilton.[165] Mr. Hamilton had married the Lady Anne Cary a few weeks after the Lady Mary Boyle's runaway marriage with Charles Rich. But not any of the other daughters at Moore Park—and there was a bevy of them—were married, or to be married, for many years to come; which, in those days of early marriages, is a matter for some wonder, especially as it is known, on Evelyn's authority, that one at least of these daughters was "beautifull and ingenious."[166]

However pleasant the visit to Moore Park may have been, it was soon over. Early in August Robert Boyle was staying with his sister Mary at the Earl of Warwick's house of Leeze, in Essex, and there finishing his treatise on "Seraphick Love." It purported to be written "by one young gentleman to another"—to that *Lindamor*, in fact, the "learned youth both well-born and well-bred," who makes the fourth of the little quartet in the *Reflections*. The manuscript was handed, "almost sheet by sheet," as it was written, to the enthusiastic Mary; and then,

having been, after the fashion of the day, circulated among a favoured few, it was laid carefully by, among the young Squire's other papers. And in September he was back again at Stalbridge.

The last months of that fateful year must have been, in many a quiet English manor, the most dismal and depressing ever lived through. In his seclusion, with pen and ink, limbecks and recipients, Robert Boyle was to employ the months as best he could. To his Manor, set among its autumn orchards, reached by its stone-paved way between rows of elm-trees, there must have come from week to week, by friend or messenger or weekly news-sheet, the straggling tidings of those events that one after the other were hurrying the Sovereign to his doom. The second civil war had been trampled out; Cromwell's great battle of Preston had been fought and Hamilton taken prisoner, while Robert Boyle was still at "delicious Leeze," perfecting his treatise on "Seraphick Love." And before he left Leeze there had come the news of the surrender of Colchester to Fairfax, and the shooting of the two Royalist leaders. In September the Parliamentary Commissioners were in the Isle of Wight; and through the shortening days of October and November even Dorsetshire and its "bye-paths of intelligence" must have been stirred by the doings of Parliament, the "high and fierce" debate that followed the Army Remonstrance, and the *coup d'état* of the King's abduction from the Isle of Wight to the melancholy Hurst Castle on the Hampshire mainland. And then—Fairfax was at Whitehall; the Army was in possession of London.

December came, and with it the last grim struggle of Parliament and Army for the disposition of the person of the Sovereign. The King was brought to

Windsor; and, Christmas over, Lords and Commons were in the last hand-grips. The King's trial had begun: the trial of "Charles Stuart, King of England," in Westminster Hall, where Strafford had been tried and sentenced seven years before. How soon did the news of the King's sentence reach the Manor of Stalbridge? "This Court doth adjudge that the said Charles Stuart, as a Tyrant, Traitor, Murderer and Public Enemy, shall be put to death by the severing of his head from his body."

How soon did Robert Boyle hear the details of those last weeks and days and hours, with all the little traits, so kingly and so human, as the unhappy royal delinquent blindly approached his doom? How soon did some pale-faced horseman bring the news to Stalbridge of that last scene of all?—the King walking in procession through the Park, from St. James's to Whitehall; his stepping out of that Whitehall window on to the scaffold hung with black; the block and axe, and men in black masks; the companies of horse and foot below in the street; and from Charing Cross on the one side to Westminster Abbey on the other, the close-packed crowds of the populace, waiting....

"The axe descended, severing the head from the body at one blow. There was a vast shudder through the mob, and then a universal groan."[167]

Lord Broghill had given up his post in Munster under the Parliament; and he and Lady Broghill and their young children were living quietly at Marston Bigot. There Broghill amused himself by writing his *Parthenissa*; and there, in the spring of 1649, Robert

Boyle paid a visit to his brother and Lady Pegg. He, too, was busy with his manuscripts, and in pleasant enough correspondence with the Invisibles in London. But in August he was at Bath. A letter to Lady Ranelagh, dated from Bath, August 2, "late at night," was written in by no means a light-hearted vein. His "native disposition" had made him shy, he said, of disclosing his afflictions where he could not expect their redress. He was "too proud to seek a relief in the being thought to need it." Moreover, he had been ill again, of "a quotidian ague." His manuscript on "Public Spiritedness" had been laid aside, and his "vulcanian feats" abandoned.

"The melancholy which some have been pleased to misrepresent to you as the cause of my distempers is certainly much more the effect of them." He had only just arrived at Bath, having been carried there on a litter; and there he was intending to stay till he could leave it on horseback. The physicians had led him to hope he might be able to crawl to London before very long.

But the end of August found him back in his laboratory among the orchards—not very pleasantly occupied in "drawing," for his own use, "a quintessence of wormwood." He had been too much occupied of late even to write to his sister Ranelagh. There is in his letter the least little suggestion that the events of this last year—personal, it may be, as well as political—had kept even this brother and sister apart; but it was for the time only.

"For Vulcan," he wrote, "has so transported and bewitched me, that, as the delights I taste in it make me fancy my laboratory a kind of *Elysium*, so as if the threshold of it possessed the quality the poets ascribed to that *Lethe* their fictions made men taste of

before their entrance into those seats of bliss, I there forget my standish and my books, and almost all things, but the unchangeable resolution I have made of continuing till death, Sister, your

"R. B."[168]

CHAPTER XI
HERMETIC THOUGHTS

"A Monarch may command my Life or Fortune but not my opinion: I cannot command this myself; it arises only from the Nature of the Thing I judge of."—ROBERT BOYLE.

"... A general chemical council, not far from *Charing Cross*, sits often, and hath so behaved itself hitherto, that things seem now to hasten towards some settlement.... They are about an universal laboratory, to be erected after such a manner as may redound, not only to the good of this island, but also to the health and wealth of all mankind."—SAMUEL HARTLIB *to* ROBERT BOYLE, *May 1654*.

Lord Broghill had laid aside his *Parthenissa*. The story goes that in the autumn of 1649 he was meditating, under cover of a course of treatment for the gout, a visit to Spa, which would take him into the neighbourhood of the "royal orphan"; and one account, at least, of how Cromwell intercepted Broghill in London is too picturesque to be discarded.

Nobody—so runs the story—was in the secret of Broghill's little plan except his wife, Lady Pegg, and perhaps his sister Ranelagh, at whose house, in the Old Mall, Broghill arrived on a certain day in the dusk, with only four servants in attendance, to take leave of her before setting out on his journey to Spa.

"My Lord came, and was no sooner housed but

heard a voice ask for my Lord Broghill: he thereupon charged his faithful sister with treachery; but her protestation of being innocent tempered him." The messenger proved to be a "sightly Lieutenant," sent by the Lord General to know when and where he might interview Broghill; and, after a good deal of parleying, a meeting was arranged for early next morning in St. James's Garden. Cromwell was there first, with a group of his officers about him, and Broghill soon learnt that his correspondence with the "royal orphan" was discovered, and that he must make his choice. "The dilemma is short," Cromwell is reported to have said; "if you go with me in this expedition to reduce the Irish rebels, you may live, otherwise you certainly die."[169]

Whatever the details, the fact remains that Broghill accepted Cromwell's offer, and returned to Ireland with some sort of understanding that, while he would serve Cromwell and the cause of Protestantism under the Parliament, he was not to be required to fight against any but the Irish.[170] Accordingly, in December 1649, "dear Broghill" was in Ireland again, and Robert Boyle was writing to congratulate him on a brilliant series of successes at Kinsale, Cork, Bandon and Youghal. "And truly that which most endears your acquisitions to me is that they have cost you so little blood."[171] Cromwell had known his man; a veritable son of the old soldier-statesman, whose name was alive yet in Munster. There could have been no Rebellion in Ireland, said Cromwell, if every county had contained an Earl of Cork.

Other members of the Boyle family were back in Ireland. The eldest brother, Dungarvan, now Earl of Cork, the good-natured head of the family, and his no less good-natured Countess were living at Lismore

or in Dublin. Frank and “black Betty,” as Robert Boyle had dubbed the little sister-in-law, were living near Castle Lyons; and there also was Lady Barrymore, whose “wild boy,” so lately Milton’s pupil in the Barbican, was now a very young married man. To his mother’s discomfiture, and sorely against her wishes, young Barrymore had married another of the fascinating Killigrews; and the same batch of Irish letters that carried Robert Boyle’s congratulations to Broghill took also a very wise letter, written from London, to his eldest sister, Lady Barrymore.[172] He had known nothing about the marriage till it was over.

“Without pretending to excuse or extenuate what is past, having minded you that there is a difference betwixt seasonable and just, I shall venture only to represent to you that the question is not now whether or no the marriage be a thing fit to be done, but how it is to be suffered; and that as the best gamesters have not the privilege of choosing their own cards, but their skill consists in well playing the game that is dealt them, so the discreetest persons are not allowed the choice of conditions and events, but their wisdom consists in making the best of those accidents that Providence is pleased to dispense them.” And he reminds his sister that, as she has declared openly for the Royalist party, the mediation of a “crowned intercessor” in this matter is not to be disregarded. Moreover, some of her nearest friends, “though they think the match very unhappy, think it unfit the married pair should be so.”[173]

The letter heralds Robert Boyle’s own arrival in Ireland on a visit to his sister at Castle Lyons, and to the various family homes in Munster. His Irish estates were certainly calling for his attention; but

the visit was to be postponed. Broghill's diplomatic victories were but the beginning of bloody warfare. Broghill was to serve Cromwell through the whole of the war with Ireland, in a series of brilliant engagements. "A' Broghill! A' Broghill!" was the battle-cry that led on his men; and he narrowly escaped with his life in the last engagement of all—his victory at Knockbrack. Broghill was the man aimed at. "Kill the fellow in the gold-laced coat!" the Irish soldiers shouted to each other. But Broghill was not killed, though "my boldest horse," he wrote, "being twice wounded, became so fearful that he was turned to the coach."[174]

In the summer of 1650 Robert Boyle was still at Stalbridge, writing on May Day to thank Hartlib for his gossip about *Utopia* and *Breda*:[175] "my inclinations as much concerning me in *Republicâ Literariâ* as my fortune can do in *Republicâ Anglicanâ*. Nor am I idle, though my thoughts only are not at present useless to the advancement of learning; for I can sometimes make shift to snatch from the importunity of my affairs leisure to trace such plans and frame such models, etc., as, if my Irish fortune will afford me quarries and woods to draw competent materials from to construct after them, will fit me to build a pretty house in Athens, where I may live to philosophy and Mr. Hartlib."

At this time, Ireland and Athens were equally remote. Was there an attraction, other than the Invisibles, that still kept Robert Boyle within reach of London? Many years afterwards—after Robert Boyle was dead—his old friend John Evelyn, writing about him to Dr. Wotton said: "Tho' amongst all his experiments he never made that of the maried life, yet I have been told he courted a beautifull and

ingenious daughter of Carew,[176] Earl of Monmouth, to which is owing the birth of his *Seraphick Love*."

Was this, indeed, the love-story of Robert Boyle's life? If so, it was lived through between the years 1648 and 1650. As early as the cold January of 1648, at Stalbridge, on the very day he came of age, in some moment of depression or decision, the boy had made a little sacrifice to Vulcan: he had resolutely burned most of the verses, "amorous, merry and devout" that he had written in idle moments, and laid away "uncommunicated."[177] Then, when spring came, and the Stalbridge orchards were white with blossom, he had set off on his visit to London, and taken up his abode in those rooms in St. James's that had been engaged for him by his sister Ranelagh. Early in June, he was writing to his friend Mrs. Hussey—presumably a Dorsetshire friend and neighbour—a letter full of political gossip, written the very day after he had supped with the ladies at Warwick House. But how does the letter end?

"But, Madam, since I began to write this letter, I had unexpectedly the happiness of a long conversation with the fair lady, that people are pleased to think my mistress; and truly, Madam, though I am as far from being in love as most that are so are from being wise, yet my haste makes me gladly embrace the old excuse of

'Then to speak sense
Were an offence'

to extenuate my having hitherto written so dully, and my concluding so abruptly; for whilst this amorous rapture does possess, I neither could write

sense without being injurious to my passion, nor can any longer continue to write nonsense, without some violation of that profound respect which is due to you from, and vowed you by, Madam, your ladyship's most faithful and most humble servant."

If the fair lady who talked so delightfully, were indeed a "beautifull and ingenious daughter" of the Earl of Monmouth, Robert Boyle's love-story goes into a nutshell. For just a month later came the Countess of Monmouth's letter to Lady Ranelagh, which so confounded the young squire with its civilities, and contained the invitation to Moore Park. The two young people had already met, and been attracted to one another: the lady's name had been already spoken of among their mutual friends as that of a possible bride for the young Squire; Lady Ranelagh, at whose house, it is probable, they had first met, and who was certainly anxious to see Robyn with a wife of his own at Stalbridge, had been in private conclave with Lady Monmouth; and the Countess herself, the mother of a bevy of daughters, was disposed to look kindly on the young Squire, in spite of his Geneva-bred philosophy, and his not very robust health. For he was the youngest son of a very great family; cultured, amiable, virtuous—and likely to be a moderately rich man, when once his Irish affairs could be put in order. But there was the Earl of Monmouth to deal with; a Churchman, and passionately Royalist. There is a sentence in Robyn's letter to the Countess which carries with it a suggestion that she, rather than the Earl, was interested in the young suitor: "If," he says, of his precious manuscript, which she had asked him to bring to Moore Park, "it have either any way diverted your Ladyship, *or had the least influence upon my Lord*, I have reached my desires and gone beyond

my hopes." Did the Earl of Monmouth look unfavourably upon the young Puritan, or desire to extract from him promises—a statement about his religious and political convictions—which Robert Boyle was unwilling to make? And the fair lady herself—what amount of say had she in the matter? If Robyn had joined the King's Army would he have won his *Hermione*?[178] In his *Seraphick Love*, he speaks of Hermione's "cold usage." It is quite possible that this beautiful and ingenious daughter of the Monmouth family may have merely looked shyly on Robert Boyle, his manuscript treatises and his little valetudinary ways; but it is also possible that, young as she was—she can scarcely have been more than seventeen—she was a girl not only of strong hereditary feelings, brought up a strict Churchwoman and Royalist, but of spirit and conviction—a character as firm as Robert Boyle's itself. *The Martyrdom of Theodora and of Didymus*, Robert Boyle's quaint and powerful prose romance—of which only the second part was ever published, and that not until 1687—was written in his early youth, and even more than his *Seraphick Love* seems as if it may hold the internal evidence of his own love-story. If *Seraphick Love* speaks of a woman's "cold usage" the story of Theodora and Didymus explains it. The character of Theodora is worth studying, if this is indeed Robert Boyle's ideal of womanhood. It is the character of a woman young and beautiful, who is not only an uncommonly good talker, but "declares her aversion for marriage." Her reasons are given to her friend Irene, who has "solicited favour for Didymus."

"Marriage," says Theodora, "is one of the most important Things of Life; and though I esteem it a mean Notion of Happiness to think that one Person

can make either of them the Portion of another, yet Discretion, as well as Sincerity and Chastity, oblige a woman to have a great deal of Care of that which concerns the Term of her Life; and a Woman that designs to behave herself like a Wife, ought to take care in a Choice she can make but once, and not carelessly to enter on a Voyage where Shipwracks are so frequent, though she be offered a fine ship to make it in. But since my dear *Irene* takes this opportunity to know more of my Thoughts than I should disclose to any other Person, I must tell her that were I at my own disposal, and should be willing to make such a Change as I have always been averse to, Didymus's Virtues and Services would influence me more than the Advantages of Titles, Riches or Dignities of his Rivals could. But dear *Irene*, the times are such, and my Circumstances too, that it would be very extravagant for me to engage myself further in the World. For a Christian cannot think to be happy, whilst the Church is miserable, and perplexed with outward Calamities.... When I think," proceeds Theodora, "of the Church's Desolation, and that I should not only be content to be a Spectator, but an Actor in the Tragedy, I cannot relish the Complements of a Lover, nor hope for Contentment, except from a Place above the reach of Persecution. And these Sentiments," says she, "are warranted by the Apostle, who Discouraged Women that were free, in much less troublesome times, from entering into a Marriage State...."

And which of the bevy of Monmouth daughters was it that would not marry Robert Boyle?—"a beautifull and ingenious daughter," says Evelyn; that

is all that is known of her. Anne, the eldest, had in 1648 been some years married to James Hamilton, Earl of Clanbrassil; and of the six other daughters born to the Earl and Countess of Monmouth, only three seemed to have reached maturity—Elizabeth, Mary and Martha—of whom Elizabeth must have been seventeen in 1648. These three, with the Countess, his widow, were left in the Earl's will—dated July 1659—his co-heirs. They were then all three unmarried; the Earl their father left some of the property under certain conditions relating to their being, as he quaintly expressed it, "in my life preferred in marriage or otherwise dead." It was not till some years after the Earl of Monmouth's death that Mary and Martha married—Mary becoming the second wife of the Earl of Desmond and Martha the second wife of the Earl of Middleton. Elizabeth died in December 1676, and was buried a few months before the Countess of Monmouth, her mother, in Rickmansworth Church. The inscription on the stone over her grave is not an ordinary one—

Sacred to the Memory
of ye Right Honble ye Lady Elizabeth
Cary one of ye Davghters & Co-heirs
of the Right Honble Henry
Lord Cary Baron of Leppington
and Earle of Monmovth. Shee
dyed the 14th day of December in
the year of ovr Lord 1676 & in
the 46th year of her age having
livd all her time vnmarried bvt
now expecting A joyfvll Resvrrec^{tion}
and to be joynd to her onely
Spouse and Saviour Jesvs Christ,
lies here interd near the said
Earle her Father.

Was this the heroine of Boyle's love story—the *Hermione* whose "cold usage" sent him to write his *Seraphick Love* at Leeze?—the woman whose views on a Marriage State found their way into his *Martyrdom of Theodora and of Didymus*? It will probably never be known. Whoever the lady, whatever the reason, the affair seems to have been, in modern parlance, "off" before the end of 1648. And yet, a whole year later, in December 1649, Robert Boyle was in London again, scorching his wings at the flame.

"I know Frank will endeavour to persuade you," he wrote to his sister Barrymore, "that it is the thing called Love that keeps me here"; and to Lord Broghill, at the same date, "My next shall give you an account of my transactions, my studies, and my *amours*; of the latter of which black Betty will tell you as many lies as circumstances; but hope you know too well what she is and whence she comes not to take all her stories for fictions...."

Some strong attraction, then, in or near London, there undoubtedly was, and Robert Boyle's family knew of it; but all their thrusts were successfully parried in what Sir Henry Wotton had called Robyn's "pretty conceits." In company Robert Boyle was to "prate" with "pure raillery" of "matrimony and amours." He was to pity those who "dote on red and white." He never could deplore the lover who "by losing his mistress recovers himself." He was to declare that he had "never known the infelicities of love except by others' sufferings"; to write exultantly about "this untamed heart." He had, he said, so seldom seen a happy marriage, that he did not wonder "our Lawgivers should make marriage indesolvable to make it lasting." Marriage was "a

Lottery, in which there are many blanks to one prize." And yet Robyn was as sensitive as he was proud. Not in company which prated of "matrimony and amours," he had his own ideal. Love to him remained "the Noblest Passion of the Mind"; and at twenty-one he acknowledged the existence of "a peculiar unrivaled sort of Love, which constitutes the Conjugal Affections." Lady Ranelagh, frustrated in one attempt, might go on hoping. "If you are in the west," she wrote at a later date to this incorrigible brother, "let me beseech you to present my humble service to my two Lady Bristols, and wish you would disappoint Frank[179] by bringing a wife of your own to Stalbridge, a business I must still mind you of, though you give me cause to doubt you will as hardly pardon me those few words as the rest of the trouble given you here by your K. R."

But there was to be no other fair lady in Robyn's letters or in Robyn's life—no lady whose conversational powers ever again produced in him an "amorous rapture." He returned to his "kind of Elysium," and the lethal chamber of chemical research. And when once a rumour reached his relatives in Ireland that he was actually married, and his nephew Barrymore's wife[180] was foremost in her congratulations, there was a touch of the philosopher-uncle in Robert Boyle's superlatively polite reply. "Alas! The little gentleman and I," he assured her, "are still at the old defiance."

Not till 1652, after Cromwell's campaign was over, and the war in Ireland nearly at an end, did Robert Boyle revisit the land of his birth. And then he did not like it. "I must sadly confess," he wrote, in very evident dejection, to his Dorsetshire friend, John Mallett, "that the perpetual hurry I live in, my

frequent journeys, and the necessary trouble of endeavouring to settle my long-neglected and disjointed fortune, has left me very little time to converse with any book save the Bible, and scarce allowed me time to sew together some loose sheets that contain my thoughts about the Scriptures."

It must have been with a strange conflict of feelings that he found himself at last in Youghal, standing before the tomb of his great father, on the very scene of the old Earl's last struggle in the Protestant and Royalist cause. He wandered about the house and gardens of Lismore once again, and found this home of his childhood, in his father's day "one of the noblest seats and greatest ornaments of the province of Munster," now "ruined by the sad fate of war."[181] The fortunes of the Boyle family were at this time at their lowest ebb, and everywhere that he went he was in the track of the brutalities of war; the very bloodstains of those last engagements could scarcely have been dried; the severed head and limbs must still have been sticking on the poles. "About the years 1652 and 1653 ... the plague and famine had swept away whole counties, that a man might travel twenty or thirty miles and not see a living creature, either man, beast, or bird, they being either all dead, or had quit those desolate places." And in the mountains so greatly had the number of wolves increased, that rewards were being offered for wolves' heads.[182]

But already, under Cromwell's powerful lord-lieutenancy, and with Fleetwood as head of the Irish Government, the work of settlement and transplantation had been begun. It was in part, perhaps, the work of transplantation in Connaught—for Robert Boyle had lands there as well as in

Munster—that called him to Ireland in 1652. He was back in London, on a flying visit, in the autumn of 1653, just between Cromwell's dismissal of the *Rump* and the sitting of the *Barebones* Parliament; when, in fact, "This House" was "to be let—now unfurnished."[183]

But he was in Ireland again a month or two before Cromwell's Protectorate was proclaimed in London, and living in Dublin through the winter of 1653-4. William Petty, his fellow-Invisible, was also there, and Benjamin Worsley, the old Army surgeon, a great friend of Hartlib and of the Boyle family. Petty had been appointed by Ireton physician-general to the Army, and was doing wonderful things in organisation, amongst other things saving the Government several hundreds a year in their drug department alone. Worsley, a delightful man in his way, full of the most astonishing scientific projects for the benefit of seventeenth-century science, had been appointed surveyor-general, to take in hand the land-survey necessary in the process of transplantation. In Petty's opinion Worsley was a bit of a quack, whose "mountain-bellied conceptions" ended usually in "abortive mice"; and when Worsley began his survey Petty thought it could be better and quicker done, and said so. The Government backed Petty, in whom they had got hold of a man of extraordinary genius and energy; and while Worsley was kept on as surveyor-general, Petty was allowed to contract to do the work of land-survey in thirteen months, importing skilled labour and London-made instruments.[184] And meantime, Robert Boyle, under Petty's guidance, was working quietly in an anatomical laboratory in Dublin. Petty, in his outspoken way, had written to Boyle while Boyle

was on his flying visit to London in 1653. Petty and Robert Boyle's own relations in Dublin were at this time a little anxious about Boyle's health and spirits; and urged by the relatives, Petty had written in the character of physician and friend, offering Boyle some sound advice. He wrote to "dissuade" him from "some things which my lord of Cork, my lord of Broghill, and some others of your friends think prejudicial to you; one of which is your continual reading." Too much reading, Petty thought, "weakens the brain," which weakness "causeth defluxions" and these "hurt the lungs." In Petty's opinion Boyle, who knew so much already, could get but little advantage from the constant study of books. Warming with his subject, Petty adventures a little more advice.

"The next disease you labour under is your apprehension of many diseases, and a continual fear that you are always inclining, or falling into, one or other." He reminds Boyle how "this is incident to all that begin the study of diseases"; how "inward causes" may produce "different outward signs," and those "little rules of prognostication, found in our books, need not always be so religiously believed." And even if people do fall ill, do they not also sometimes get well again? "Why may not a man as easily recover of a disease, without much care, as fall into it?" And then, to wind up with: "The last indictment that I lay against you is, practising upon yourself with medicaments (though specifics) not sufficiently tried by those that administer or advise them."

Physician as he was, Petty did not put his faith in "medicaments"—witness his savings in the Army drug department. "There is a conceit current in the

world," he told Robert Boyle, "that a medicament may be physic and physician alike." What a mistake!

"Recommendations of medicaments do not make them useful, but do only incite me to make them so by endeavouring experimentally to find out the virtues and application of them." And it is a hard matter to discover their true virtues. "As I weep to consider," says Petty, "so I dread to use them, without my utmost endeavour first employed to that purpose."

It is a manly, outspoken letter, though it may have seemed a little caustic at the time. And it had its effect. Robert Boyle came back to Dublin to work, under Petty's direction, at anatomical dissection—and possibly to read less. He was still ailing, still dejected, still longing to be back in London; but, "that I may not live wholly useless," he wrote to Mr. Clodius, Hartlib's doctor son-in-law in London, "or altogether a stranger in the study of Nature, since I want glasses and furnaces to make a chemical analysis of inanimate bodies, I am exercising myself in making anatomical dissections of living animals, wherein (being assisted by your father-in-law's ingenious friend, Dr. Petty (our General's Physician)) I have satisfied myself of the circulation of the blood and the (freshly discovered and hardly discoverable) *receptaculi chyli*, made by the confluence of the *venæ lacteæ*, and have seen (especially in the dissections of fishes) more of the variety and contrivances of Nature and the majesty and wisdom of her Author than all the books I ever read in my life could give me convincing notions of." While he is kept a prisoner in Ireland, he says, he will be delighted if there is anything he can do to help Clodius in an anatomical way; if there is anything "wherein my

knives may give you any satisfaction, I shall be very proud to employ them to so elevated an end." Meantime he was doing as Clodius had asked him—looking into the "mineral advantages of Ireland." But "in this illiterate country, I find all men so perfect strangers to matters of that nature, that my inquiries have been as fruitless as diligent." He can hear nothing about antimony mines; "but for iron I may be able to give you a good account of it, and to bring you over of the ore, my eldest brother having upon his land an iron-work that now yields him a good revenue, and I having upon my own land an iron-mine, to which, before the wars, belonged a (since ruined) work, which I have thoughts of resetting up. I am likewise told (but how truly I know not yet) of a little silver-mine lying in some land of mine; and very lately in a place which belongs to a brother of mine they have found silver ore very rich, for, being tried, it is estimated (as he tells me that means to deal for it) at between thirty and forty pounds a ton; but whether or no this be a mine of proportionable value we do not yet know. I was yesterday with an officer of the Army who farms a silver-mine for the State, who hath promised me what assistance he can in my mineral inquiries, and told me that a metallist and refiner whom he extolled with superlative elogies assured him that there was no country in Europe so rich in mines as Ireland, had but the inhabitants the industry to seek them, and the skill to know them."

But Robert Boyle was impatient to leave Ireland. "I live here in a barbarous country," he told Clodius in this letter, "where chemical spirits are so misunderstood, and chemical instruments so unprocurable, that it is hard to have any hermetic thoughts in it and impossible to bring them to

experiment."

In the autumn of 1654 he was back in England. In the previous year, during his flying visit to London, he had talked with Dr. Wilkins, of Wadham, about Oxford, and had probably ridden down to Oxford to see what it was like. Stalbridge was all very well, but it was removed from the by-paths of intelligence; somehow, since his illnesses, there was a sadness over its orchards which Vulcan himself could not dispel. London was a fascinating labyrinth of interests, but in Oxford he believed he could "live to philosophy." Oxford was to be his Athens. Thither, already, some of the Invisibles had migrated from London. For it was no longer the old Royalist Oxford, where the sunburnt boy with the bow and arrows had once thought of joining the King's Army. It was Oxford six years after the Parliament's Visitation and Purgation; Oxford after the imposition of the Covenant. The old Heads had conformed or been summarily ejected, the new Heads were Commonwealth men; and Cromwell himself was Chancellor. It was an Oxford where the use of the Liturgy was not openly permitted. And yet, "speech is thrall, but thocht is free," says the old Scottish proverb. At Oxford a man could still fast quietly, if he was so minded, for forty-one hours, without being sent down for it.[185] At Oxford one might still study philosophy, and mathematics, and Oriental languages unimpeded. And there was the Bodleian. Oxford was indeed "the only place in England where, at that time, Mr. Boyle could have lived with much satisfaction to himself."[186]

His horse would carry him between Oxford and London at any time: each night, on the road, he might lie under some hospitable roof of friend or

relative, in mansions set in shady parks, amid flower-gardens and fishponds. And once in London, his sister Ranelagh's door in the Old Mall was always open to him. And Gresham College, and Mr. Hartlib, and Mr. Clodius, and the rest of the Invisibles would receive him with ecstasy. The Hartlib family had moved to Charing Cross; and Hartlib and his "very chemical son" were excessively happy in their new abode.

"As for us, poor earthworms, we are crawling in my house about our quondam back-kitchen, whereof my son hath made a goodly laboratory; yea, such a one, as men (who have had the favour and privilege to see or be admitted into it) affirm they have never seen the like for its several advantages and commodiousnesses. It hath been employed days and nights with no small success, God be praised, these many weeks together."[187]

London was labyrinthine: there was an undeniable fascination about Hartlib's quondam back-kitchen; but Oxford beckoned. And so, at the age of twenty-seven, Robert Boyle went to Oxford; a student always, already known as a scholar and philosopher, one of the chief of the Invisibles,—a ready-made Don.

CHAPTER XII
OXFORD: A LEARNED JUNTO

> "... I see no cause to despair that, whether or no my writings be protected, the truths they hold forth will in time, in spite of opposition, establish themselves in the minds of men, as the circulation of the blood, and other, formerly much contested, truths have already done. My humour has naturally made me too careful not to offend those I dissent from, to make it necessary for any man to be my adversary upon the account of personal injuries or provocations. And as for any whom either judgment or envy may invite to contend, that the things I have communicated to the world deserved not so much applause as they have had the luck to be entertained with; that shall make no quarrel betwixt us: for perhaps I am myself as much of that mind as he; and however I shall not scruple to profess myself one of those who is more desirous to spend his time usefully, than to have the glory of leaving nothing that was ever written against himself unanswered; and who is more solicitous to pursue the ways of discovering truth than to have it thought that he never was so much subject to human frailties as to miss it."—ROBERT BOYLE: Preface to *A Defence of the Doctrine touching the Spring and Weight of the Air*.

Several of the original Philosophical Society had migrated to Oxford before Robert Boyle joined them there. Dr. Wilkins had been appointed Warden of Wadham at the *Visitation and Purgation* of the University in 1648; Dr. Wallis, at the same time, had been made Savilian Professor of Geometry; and Dr.

Goddard, of Wood Street celebrity, had become Warden of Merton. Robert Boyle does not seem to have been in Oxford during the *Encœnia* in July 1654. There is, at least, no mention of him in Evelyn's description of "the civilities of Oxford" during that happy week; and the friendship between Boyle and Evelyn, that was to last "neare fourty yeares," was not to begin till a little later. But Evelyn has described Oxford society exactly as it was when Robert Boyle entered it.

Mr. and Mrs. Evelyn arrived in Oxford "on the eve of the Act,"[188] and next day, after midday dinner, "the Proctor opened the Act at St. Marie's (according to custome) and the Prevaricators their drollery. Then the Doctors disputed. We supp'd at Wadham College." On Sunday, Dr. French, Canon of Christ Church, the preacher at St. Mary's, had his little fling at the Philosophers. "True wisdom," he said, "was not to be had in the books of the Philosophers, but in the Scriptures alone." He based his observations on a text from St. Matthew xii. 42: "And, behold, a greater than Solomon is here." On Sunday afternoon the famous Independent, Dr. Owen, now "Cromwell's Vice-Chancellor," preached a wonderful sermon, "perstringing Episcopacy"—a sermon that Evelyn and some others present must have found particularly trying to listen to. They dined that day with Dr. Seth Ward, who had been one of the "Prevaricators" himself, when he was at Cambridge, and was so alarmingly witty on the occasion that he nearly lost his degree. And at night they supped in Balliol College Hall—Evelyn's own college.

On Monday they sat through the whole Act in St. Mary's;[189]—the long speeches of the Proctors, Vice-Chancellors and Professors, and the creation of

Doctors “by the cap, ring, kisse,” etc. The Inceptor[190] made a most excellent oration, “abating his Presbyterian animosities which he could not withhold.” And after all this paraphernalia “there were but 4 in Theologie and 3 in Medicine,” which was thought not bad, “the times considered.” And again there was a magnificent supper with Evelyn’s “dear and excellent friend,” Dr. Wilkins of Wadham.

Happy days, two hundred and sixty years ago! There was music at All Souls, “voices and theorbos,” performed by “ingenious scholars.” And Dr. Barlow, the learned Librarian,[191] took them over the Bodleian, and showed them all the treasures, including the 800-years-old manuscript of the Venerable Bede. The Divinity School vied with the Physical and Anatomical School in entertaining the visitors; and, at St. John’s, the Library was almost eclipsed by poor Laud’s gift of mathematical instruments, and by “2 skeletons, finely cleaned and put together.” New College Chapel, much to Evelyn’s satisfaction, was still *in statu quo*, “notwithstanding the scrupulosities of the times”; and at Christ Church they saw the “Office of Henry VIII,” the gift of Cardinal Wolsey, with its wonderful miniatures and gilding, and the famous painted windows of the Cathedral, now “much abused.” In Magdalen Chapel, everything was in its “pontificall order,” except that the Altar had been “turn’d table-wise;” and there the famous musician, Mr. Gibbon, kindly played to them upon the double organ. The Physick garden was visited, “where the sensitive plant was shewed us for a greate wonder.” Canes, olives and rhubarb grew there, “but no extraordinary curiosities, besides very good fruit, which, when the ladys had tasted, we return’d in our coach to our lodgings.”

And the *Encœnia* festivities wound up with midday dinner at Wadham. “We all din’d at that most obliging and universally-curious Dr. Wilkins’s at Wadham College.” There, after dinner, they were shown the Warden’s new transparent beehives, from which the honey could be drawn without destroying the bees, and Evelyn was presented with an empty hive to carry back with him to his own garden at Deptford. Mr. Christopher Wren, that “prodigious young scholar,” that “miracle of a youth,” was of the company; and everybody wandered at will among Dr. Wilkins’s scientific and mechanical curiosities, conic sections, magnets, thermometers, “way-wisers,”[192] and all the rest, in the upper rooms and gallery of the Warden’s lodging.

The Warden, it may be observed, was still a bachelor: it was not till two years later that he married Cromwell’s sister. At the time of Mr. and Mrs. Evelyn’s visit to Oxford, that lady was still Mrs. French, wife of the worthy Canon of Christ Church, who had preached on the text, “Behold, a greater than Solomon is here!”

This, then, was the Oxford of 1654 that was to welcome Robert Boyle. He had evidently been there, looking about him, during his flying visit from Ireland in 1653; and Lady Ranelagh—an experimentalist too in her own way—had gone to Oxford afterwards to inspect the lodgings selected by her brother.[193]

“My Brother,

“It has pleased God to bring us safe to Oxford, and I am lodged at Mr. Crosse’s, with design to be able to give you from experience

> an account which is the warmer room; and indeed I am satisfied with neither of them, as to that point, because the doors are placed so just by the chimnies, that if you have the benefit of the fire you must venture having the inconvenience of the wind, which yet may be helped in either by a folding skreen; and then I think that which looks into the garden will be the more comfortable, though he have near hanged, and intends to matt, that you lay in before. You are here much desired, and I could wish you here as soon as you can: for I think you would have both more liberty and more conversation than where you are, and both these will be necessary, both for your health and usefulness."

Mr. Crosse was an apothecary, and his house was in the High Street, adjoining University College. He seems to have been recommended to Boyle as a convenient landlord, not only on account of Boyle's own fickle health, but as one who might be useful to him in laboratory work. He was a staunch Churchman, and a particular friend of John Fell, the son of the famous old Royalist Dean of Christ Church, who had been ejected at the Visitation of 1648. Many scenes have been enacted in Christ Church quadrangle, but none more melodramatic than the ejection of Mrs. Fell and her family after the Dean himself had been carried off in custody to London. Mr. and Mrs. Evelyn must have shaken their heads indeed if they were shown the identical spot in the Quad where Mrs. Fell and her lady friends had been deposited, having chosen to be forcibly carried out, rather than voluntarily walk out, of the Deanery. John Fell, the son, a student of Christ Church, had

been ejected too, but he lived on in Oxford; and one of his sisters married Dr. Willis, the physician, who set up in practice in a house in Merton Street, opposite to Merton College. In a room in this house, thanks to John Fell and his brother-in-law Dr. Willis, with one or two more strong Churchmen, the Services of the Church were to be privately maintained through all the years of the Commonwealth.

Did Robert Boyle, Geneva-bred, make one of the little semi-forbidden congregation of men and women that gathered in Dr. Willis's house for service and Communion? It is doubtful. Boyle's own letter to John Durie, written in 1647, speaks his mind on denominational differences.[194]

"It has long been," he says, "as well my wonder as my grief, to see such comparatively petty differences in judgement make such wide breaches and vast divisions in affection. It is strange that men should rather be quarrelling for a few trifling opinions, wherein they dissent, than to embrace one another for those many fundamental truths wherein they agree. For my own part, in some two or three and forty months that I spent in the very town of Geneva, as I never found that people discontented with their own Church government (the gallingness of whose yoke is the grand scarecrow that frights us here) so could I never observe in it any such transcendent excellency as could oblige me either to bolt Heaven against, or open Newgate for, all those that believe they may be saved under another...."

Evelyn, who knew Robert Boyle intimately for nearly forty years, was of opinion that he "held the same free thoughts," in matters of religion and religious discipline, "which he had of Philosophy."

He practised Christianity “without noise, dispute, or determining.” He owned no master in religion but the Divine Author of it; and, what is more, he owned “no religion but primitive, no rule but Scripture, no law but right reason; for the rest allways conformable to the present settlement, without any sort of singularity.”[195]

Only once is Robert Boyle known to have been persuaded to enter a conventicle. Curiosity led him, on one occasion, to Sir Henry Vane’s house, to hear the great man preach “in a large thronged room a long sermon.”[196] The text was from Daniel xii. 2: “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” Looking, from a modern point of view, to the possibilities of such a text on the Resurrection, it is a little disappointing to learn that Mr. Boyle stood up at the end of Sir Henry Vane’s discourse and submitted, in his gentlest Oxford manner, that the preacher had suffered the meaning to “*evaporate* into Allegory.” Sir Henry Vane was at this time at the very height of his authority in the State; and Robert Boyle, telling the story to Sir Peter Pett, explained that Sir Henry’s congregation that day was composed of “dependants on him, and expectants from him,” who would never have dreamed of questioning his interpretations of Scripture, whatsoever they might have been. “But I,” said Boyle, “having no little awes of that kind upon me, thought myself bound to enter the lists with him as I did, that the sense of the Scriptures might not be depraved.”

According to Birch, Sir Henry Vane had the last word. He had recognised in his critic the celebrated Mr. Robert Boyle; and when Mr. Boyle sat down, Sir

Henry assured him and the rest of his audience that he had only intended his remarks on the words of Daniel to be in the way of *occasional reflections*.[197]

But there was another little congregation, which met in an upper room in Oxford; a room in the house of the obliging and universally curious Dr. Wilkins of Wadham. This was the weekly meeting of the Invisibles; the "learned Junto," as Evelyn has dubbed them; a society which may be described as non-militant and non-party, and was certainly non-sectarian—the Oxford branch of the original Invisible or Philosophical College, begun in London in 1645, before Wilkins and Wallis and Goddard removed to Oxford. The Oxford branch kept up a regular correspondence with the London Society; and after a time, when Wilkins forsook Oxford for Cambridge, the weekly meetings of the Invisibles were transferred from Wadham to Robert Boyle's own rooms.

And what a brilliant little "learned Junto" it was, in spite of the scrupulosities of the times! There was Wilkins himself, an Oxford man by birth, son of the Oxford goldsmith with the "very mechanicall hands" and a head that "ran much on perpetuall motion." Wilkins was a man of about forty, "lustie, strong-groune, well-sett and broad-shouldered." His manners were courteous, as became a man who had been Chaplain to Charles I's nephew, the Prince Palatine, elder brother of Prince Rupert. A Parliament-man himself, Wilkins had taken the Covenant and the Wardenship of Wadham, and his Theological Degree. Under his tolerant rule, Wadham was flourishing, still patronised by some of the great "Malignant" families of England: Dr. Wilkins's cheerful tolerance was greasing all wheels. And

meanwhile the Warden himself was the life and spirit of the New Philosophy at Oxford—known, not only for his universal curiosity and irresistible manners, but as a writer of books. Had he not, as early as 1638, when still quite a young man, attempted to prove that the Moon might be a habitable world? And had he not, to a third edition, added the bold hypothesis, that the Moon might one day be reached "by volitation"? And in 1640 he had propounded in print the probability that this Earth itself was a planet. Clearly, the Warden was before his time; and many things besides the consciences of young cavalier-manhood were safe in his keeping.

And then there was Dr. Wallis, the mathematician, since 1649 Savilian Professor of Geometry. Wallis was about thirty-eight; a man of "moderate principles," robust and energetic, with a serene temper that was "not easily ruffled," but all the same a man who could hit out from the shoulder when he wanted to; as he did when he carried on his famous controversy with Dr. Hobbes. Wallis, as a believer in the New Philosophy, was to be among the first men to "maintain the circulation of the blood." But the particular feat which had made Wallis's fortune, some years before he went to Oxford, was a feat in "cryptologie." In December 1642 he was private chaplain to a great family in London; and one evening at supper a cypher letter had arrived, which brought important political news. The Chaplain, in two hours, succeeded in deciphering it; and after that he seems to have become "cryptologist-in-chief" to the Parliamentarian Army: he is said to have had the deciphering of the King's private correspondence taken at the battle of Naseby. He held successive City livings, was Secretary to the Westminster Assembly, and one of the founders of the Invisible Society. And

in 1649—a married man, then—he went to Oxford as Savilian Professor of Geometry and one of the most vigorous of the "learned Junto."

Dr. Goddard of Wood Street was another of them. He was a Deptford man, son of a ship-builder; in 1654 a man of about thirty-seven. He had been a student at Oxford, but had left it to study medicine abroad; and on his return he had taken his medical degrees at Cambridge. Since 1646 he had been in London, a Fellow of the College of Physicians, living in Wood Street, where he entertained the Invisibles and manufactured his *arcana*—the famous "Goddard's drops" among them—in his own private laboratory. As Cromwell's physician, he had been with Cromwell in the Irish and Scottish campaigns and in Cromwell's severe illness in Edinburgh; and on his return with him to London, after the battle of Worcester, he had been appointed Warden of Merton.

And living just opposite to Merton College was the Oxford-bred Willis, with his strong royalist and episcopal sympathies, son-in-law of the stubborn old Dean of Christ Church and the lady who had been deposited in the quadrangle. Willis was a greater man in his own profession than the inventor of "Goddard's drops." A firm believer in the New Philosophy, he was to dissect many brains: a little bit of our cerebral geography is still known as the "Circle of Willis." He is the man who discovered *diabetes mellitus*, and he may be called our first specialist in diseases of the nervous system.

These, with the "miracle of a youth" Christopher Wren, then Fellow of All Souls, and Seth Ward, the dangerously witty Savilian Professor of Astronomy, who lodged in the chamber over the gateway of

Wadham, formed the "learned Junto" that welcomed Robert Boyle to Oxford. But the Librarian of the Bodleian, Dr. Barlow,[198] must not be forgotten, though he was not an Invisible, and not at all in favour of the New Philosophy. Boyle, like many men of his time, was a student of divinity as well as of science; and he had come to Oxford partly, perhaps, on account of the Orientalists there. For he was studying Hebrew, Greek, Chaldee and Syriac, so as to be able to read the Scriptures for himself. He had learnt by himself, he says, "as much Greek and Hebrew as sufficed to read the Old and New Testaments," merely that he might do so in the Hebrew and Greek, and thereby free himself from the necessity of relying on a translation. And "a Chaldee grammar I likewise took the pains of learning, to be able to understand that part of Daniel, and those few other portions of Scripture that were written in that tongue; and I have added a Syriac grammar purely to be able one day to read the divine discourses of our Saviour in His own language." And he quotes the "known saying"—

> "Though we stream waters not unpleasant think,
> Yet with more gusto of the Spring we drink."[199]

Accordingly the Orientalists in Oxford—men like Pococke, Hyde and Clarke—were to be among his new friends; but perhaps the most intimate of all was Dr. Barlow of the Bodleian. Barlow, logician and casuist, the man who saw both sides—to our modern ideas a bit of a trimmer—was yet "a man of prodigious learning and proportionall memory." He knew exactly "what the fathers, schoolmen and casuists had said upon any question of divinity or case of conscience";[200] and with all his

accomplishments, and in spite of his limitations, he was a delightful companion—"very communicative of his knowledge"—and Robert Boyle liked him.

One other man there was, a mere boy in 1654, but in a way, perhaps, the most notable of them all: a little deformed man, with a pale, sharp, clever face, and lank dark hair that hung about his eyes; a man with a stooping figure and a quick step; a queer little solitary man who ate little and slept less, and worked restlessly and incessantly; a man, even in those young days, of a melancholy, jealous temper, warped by ill-health. This was Robert Hooke, who had come to Oxford in 1653, when he was eighteen, as servitor or chorister of Christ Church. He was the sickly, gifted son of a country parson,[201] and, too delicate to learn lessons, had used his little brain and fingers to make toy-ships that would sail, toy-guns that would go off, and toy-clocks that would go on. Then, for a time, he was with Dr. Busby at Westminster School; and at Christ Church his restless genius brought him to the notice of the Invisibles. Dr. Wilkins, with his pet dream of an excursion to the Moon, must have been pleased to find a young man who could work out "thirty ways of flying." With Seth Ward's help, Hooke studied mathematics and astronomy; and he worked for Willis in Willis's own laboratory. It was Willis who recommended him to Boyle; and when Boyle set up a laboratory at Oxford, Hooke became Boyle's personal assistant. "Boyle's Law"[202] and "Hooke's Law"[203] go together in the Handbooks of Physical Science. The air-pump, the *Machina Boyleana*, invented for his own purposes by Robert Boyle, was "perfected" for him by Hooke. "Mr. Hooke," wrote Boyle in the Introduction to his *Spring of the Air*,[204] "was with me when I had these things under consideration." The years spent working

for and with Robert Boyle were perhaps the happiest in Hooke's life. His chatty letters to Boyle, after the two parted company and Hooke became Curator of the Royal Society, show real affection and trust. They begin "Ever honoured Sir," and end "Your Honour's most affectionate, most faithful, and most humble Servant."

But these things were not the work of a day or a year. The air-pump was only the beginning, to enable its inventor to make a "just theory of the air." By this he "demonstrated its elasticity" and "that property alone was a means to find out abundance more."[205] Boyle's first publication, *New Experiments, physico-mechanical, touching the Spring of the Air and its Effects, made for the most part in a new Pneumatical Engine*, was printed at Oxford, 1660.[206] The dedicatory letter to his nephew, the young Lord Dungarvan, is dated from Beaconsfield, December 20, 1659—where, in all probability, Boyle was spending Christmas with his friend Edmund Waller, the Poet, at his house, Hall Barn. The book was attacked by Franciscus Linus and by Hobbes; and Boyle answered his "objectors" in the *Defence of the Doctrine touching the Spring and Weight of the Air*, published 1662, answering more especially Franciscus Linus, as Dr. Wallis had taken Hobbes in hand.

Do people who are not scientifically employed ever realise the absorbing, baffling, fascinating work that goes on inside a chemical or a physical laboratory? The "painful patience in delays," the "faithfulness in little things," the flash of success, the hard wall of "negative result"? Who but the "Scepticall Chymist" himself understands the Spirit of his Research?

"But it is scarce one day (or hour in the day) or night," wrote Hartlib to Boyle, in 1659, "but my soul is crying out—

"'Phosphore! redde diem; quid gaudia nostra moraris.
Phosphore! redde diem!'"[207]

It was in this spirit that Robert Boyle worked in his Oxford laboratory, through the years of the Protectorate and on to the coming of Charles II. Slowly and laboriously, and very gently, careful not to offend those from whom he dissented, he amassed and examined evidences that were to break down the old mistaken notions of the Greek and mediæval philosophy, and to build up—a very little way, perhaps, but on a new and sure foundation—the mighty structure of physical and chemical science. Its golden keys were to be handed over to Isaac Newton and Dalton, and a long and brilliant line of workers in experimental science. What if Robert Boyle, in the seventeenth century, spoke of phosphorus as "nocte-luca" and of gaseous elasticity as "spring of the air?" Dr. Wilkins, of Wadham, was only then preparing his treatise on a *Real Character*.[208] As early as 1647, Boyle himself, then only twenty, wrote to Hartlib: "If the design of the *Real Character* take effect, it will in good part make amends to mankind for what their pride lost them at the tower of Babel."[209] But even Dr. Wilkins's *Real Character* would scarcely have been the vocabulary of to-day. Boyle's Law, in whatever words he expressed it, remains incontrovertible.[210] What if he just missed the discovery of Hydrogen after actually collecting it in a receiver? The oversights of science are the inevitable dear companions of research. What if, after giving to science the definition of an element, as distinguished

from a mixture or compound, he could not go further, with the means then at hand, by suggesting any one substance as elementary? None the less, he had realised and stated a great natural fact, founding thereby a new era in science. The "Elements" of the Ancients, that had terrified him in childhood, were to be broken up; their secrets were to be extorted from them, for the good of mankind. There is an echo of the old Genevan thunderstorm, and the older *Benedicite*, in Boerhaave's eulogium of Boyle—"to him we owe the secrets of fire, air, water, animals, vegetables and frosts"; but in modern times, and in modern terms, Robert Boyle has had his recognition —

"In the days of the early Greeks, the word 'element' was applied rather to denote a property of matter than one of its constituents. Thus, when a substance was said to contain fire, air, water, and earth (of which terms a childish game, doubtless once played by all of us, is a relic), it probably meant that they partook of the nature of the so-called elements. Inflammability showed the presence of concealed fire; the escape of 'airs' when some substances are heated or when vegetable or animal matter is distilled, no doubt led to the idea that these airs were imprisoned in the matters from which they escaped; and hardness and permanence were ascribed to the presence of earth, while liquidity and fusibility were properties conveyed by the presence of concealed water. At a later date the 'Spagyrics' added three 'hypostatical principles' to the quadrilateral; these were 'salt,' 'sulphur,' and 'mercury.' The first conveyed solubility, and fixedness in fire; the second, inflammability, and the third, the power which some substances manifest of producing a liquid, generally termed 'phlegm,' on

application of heat, or of themselves being converted into the liquid state by fusion.

"It was Robert Boyle, in his *Skeptical Chymist*, who first controverted these ancient and medieval notions, and who gave to the word 'element' the meaning that it now possesses—the constituent of a compound."[211]

So the truths that Robert Boyle's writings held forth have, in spite of opposition, established themselves, as he himself believed they would establish themselves, in the minds of men.

CHAPTER XIII
POLITICS AND PHILOSOPHY

"Died that arch rebell Oliver Cromwell, cal'd Protector."—EVELYN'S *Diary*, Sept. 3, 1658.

"And if the common charity allowed to dead men be exercised towards him, in burying his faults in the grave with himself, and keeping alive the memory of his virtues and great aims and actions, he will be allowed to have his place amongst the worthiest of men, ... I doubt his loss will be a growing affliction upon these nations, and that we shall learn to value him more by missing him—a perverseness of our nature that teaches us, in every condition wherein we are, therewith to be discontent, by undervaluing what we have, and overvaluing what we have lost. I confess his performances reached not the making good of his professions; but I doubt his performances may go beyond the professions of those who may come after him."—LADY RANELAGH to LORD BROGHILL, from Youghal, Sept. 17, 1658.

"O human glory vain! O death! O wings!
O worthless world! O transitory things!
Yet dwelt that greatness in his shape decayed
That still, though dead, greater than death he laid,
And in his altered face you something feign
That threatens Death he yet will live again."

ANDREW MARVELL, "A Poem upon the Death of his Late Highness the Lord Protector."

"My Lady Molkin," Charles Rich's wife, now lived

almost always at delicious Leeze. For Mary had long ago become devout, and was surrounded by the Earl of Warwick's chaplains. The story of her conversion has been told by herself.[212] When she was scarcely more than one-and-twenty, her little son, her only child—"which I then doated on with great fondness"—had fallen dangerously ill. In her agony of mind, Mary, like her brother Robyn in the thunderstorm, had made a vow to God. If he would restore her child to her, she would become "a new creature." The little boy recovered, and Mary "began to find in myselfe a greate desire to go into the country, which I never remember before to have had, thinking it allways the saddest thing that could be when we were to remove." It was indeed a great change for the little lady who had lived in "constant crowds of company" ever since she had left the care of Lady Clayton in Cork. Even after her marriage with Charles Rich and her separation from Frank's frivolous little wife Betty, Mary had remained "stedfastly set against being a Puritan." But after hearing the great Usher preach "against Plays," she had given up going to see them acted, and her sister Ranelagh had encouraged her in her new course of life. Moreover, Dr. Walker, the household chaplain at Leeze, had preached "very awakingly and warmly"; and though some of the Warwick family were inclined to laugh at her, Mary pursued her own way, stealing from them into the wilderness at Leeze, and keeping to her quiet life of reading, meditation, and prayer.

She was, however, at Warwick House in Holborn towards the end of 1648, after Robert Boyle had finished writing his *Seraphick Love* at Leeze; and in Holborn Mary fell ill of the smallpox. Lady Ranelagh was then at her house in Pall Mall. She had been

fortunate enough to escape smallpox, but she was not afraid to sit with her little sister, who had been isolated in Warwick House. The great Dr. Wright was in attendance—"Cromwell's Physician," the man afterwards chosen by the Council to be sent, with Dr. Bates and an apothecary, to consult with Dr. Goddard when Cromwell was so ill in Edinburgh. Mary was scarcely convalescent when the news was brought to her sick-room of "that barbarous and unheard-of wicked action of beheading Charles I."[213]

A year or two later, while Robert Boyle was in Ireland, Mary fell ill again; this time "strangely and extremely ill" at delicious Leeze. Poor Charles Rich once more sent post-haste for Lady Ranelagh, who set out from London the very next morning. She found My Lady Molkin in an extraordinary condition, to all appearances well enough, but, "her disease lying more in stupidness than pain," she was "no more joyed" to see her sister. It was "a mortifying encounter"; Mary was "the carcase of a friend," her "soul gone as to any rational use she had of it"; her "kindness was dead."

Nerves were little understood in those days. The Essex doctor diagnosed Mary's illness as "a spice of the palsy." The Warwick family talked of "fumes of the spleen." Dr. Wright held a more modern opinion, which he confided to Lady Ranelagh; but he agreed with the opinion of the country doctor that the disease was "very inward and hidden"; and Lady Ranelagh wrote to her brother Robert in Ireland that they were "all going blindfold towards a cure."[214] Charles Rich and Mary's mother-in-law had been "very obligingly careful of, and kind to, her"; and as soon as Mary was well enough Lady Ranelagh

carried her off to London, where, under her sister's care and Dr. Wright's, she was once more restored to health. Lady Ranelagh was, in Mary's own words, "the most useful and best friend for soul and body that ever any person, I think, had."[215]

Somebody else thought so too. In 1655 Lady Ranelagh had known Milton for ten years. For the last six years Milton had been Latin Secretary to the Council of State; and he was now living in the "pretty garden house" in Petty France, Westminster, next door to my Lord Scudamore, and not far from Lady Ranelagh's house in the Old Mall. If only as the great Republican pamphleteer, one of the chief State officials under the Protectorate, Milton was a very eminent and important man, visited by many "persons of quality" besides Lady Ranelagh, and by all the learned foreigners of note who passed through London. Some of the old Hartlib-Durie circle of the Aldersgate and Barbican days, with Milton's pupils, Henry Lawrence and Cyriack Skinner, came about Milton almost daily; and among his more recent friends was the Agent for Bremen, Mr. Henry Oldenburg. Durie himself, who was Keeper of the library at St. James's, was a near neighbour. Milton's wife, poor Mary Powell, and their little son had been about three years dead; and the widower had been left with three little girls, the youngest but a month or two old at the mother's death. In 1655 they were nine, seven, and three years old, and were being brought up, in strange, motherless fashion, in the house in Petty France; while Milton himself, with the help of readers and amanuenses, pursued his work for the Council through all the difficulties of his blindness. For Milton was now quite blind.[216]

It was to visit this Milton—the Latin Secretary,

blind among his books—that Lady Ranelagh used so frequently to knock at the door of the pretty garden-house in Petty France. Her boy, Dick Jones, who was now fifteen, had, like his cousin young Lord Barrymore, been one of Milton's pupils, and was probably at this very time taking his private lessons with Mr. Milton in preparation for a year at Oxford—to be followed by a foreign tour—with Henry Oldenburg as his tutor. And Lady Ranelagh herself, fired, perhaps, by her brother Robert's study of Oriental languages, and under Milton's influence, was taking lessons in Hebrew of a Scottish divine who lodged in Holborn.

A year later—some time in October 1656—Dick Jones and Henry Oldenburg were settled at Oxford, where Dick's cousins, the Earl of Cork's two sons, were already at the University,[217] with their tutor, Peter du Moulin, in attendance on them; and all five were basking in the personality of the virtuoso-uncle, Mr. Robert Boyle. Henry Oldenburg and Peter du Moulin were both to become *protégés* of Robert Boyle.[218] Henry Oldenburg especially was to link himself with the Invisibles and the future Royal Society; and it was probably in the Oxford laboratory that Henry Oldenburg won Robert Boyle's admiration, and that Dick Jones first learned to dabble in experimental science and earned for himself his uncle's *sobriquet*, "Pyrophilus."[219]

Meantime, Henry Oldenburg and Dick Jones had kept up a correspondence with Mr. Milton in London, and Milton had written kindly to his "well-beloved Richard." Milton's letters to Dick Jones are in Latin, and there is more than a touch of the pedagogue in their tone. It seems likely, in the light of after events, that the brilliant Dick had already caused his mother

some uneasiness of mind, and that she hoped much from this year at Oxford, with her brother Robert Boyle as mentor, before Dick and Henry Oldenburg set out on their foreign tour. In October 1656 Lady Ranelagh was herself in Oxford: she had taken it on her way to Ireland, whither she was bound on a long visit, with her daughters, servants, and eight horses. [220] And she had brought with her to Oxford a letter from Mr. Milton to her son Dick. The blind secretary, left behind in London, was missing Lady Ranelagh's frequent kindly knock at the door of the garden-house in Petty France—

"And now your most excellent mother," Milton wrote to Dick Jones at Oxford, "on her way to Ireland, whose departure ought to be a matter of no ordinary regret to both of us (for to me also she has stood in the place of all kith and kin), carries you this letter herself."

As a matter of fact Milton must have been thinking of his own domestic affairs when he wrote to Dick Jones, for he was to marry his second wife, Katharine Woodcock, shortly after Lady Ranelagh's departure. But the words "to me also" carry a special meaning; for Lord Ranelagh, between whom and his wife there had long been estrangement, can have taken little part in his son's upbringing. The mother had been left to bring up her children—to stand for them, as for Milton, in the place of "all kith and kin." And, after all, Dick was not a good boy—he was but the son of his father.[221]

Lord Broghill had been quartered lately in Edinburgh. He had remained in Ireland for some time after Cromwell had re-conquered it. He had sat in Cromwell's Parliament of 1654 as Member for Cork, and he was Member for Cork and Edinburgh in

the Parliament of 1656. In 1655 he had been appointed President of Council (Head of the Civil Establishment of the new Government in Scotland), with his headquarters in Edinburgh; and according to Baillie he was more popular in Scotland than "all the English that ever were among us." But the Scottish atmosphere was not to Broghill's liking, and in 1657 he was back in London, where he was to prove himself one of the most energetic of Cromwell's supporters in the last stage of the Protectorate.

His philosopher-brother, all this time, had held himself studiously aloof from political parties and "affairs." Cromwell was approaching his zenith when Robert Boyle went to Oxford. The great warship, newly built in the spring of 1655—a ship of 1000 tons burthen, carrying 96 brass guns—had for the figurehead in her prow Oliver on horseback, trampling six nations underfoot. Scot, Irishman, Dutchman, Frenchman, Spaniard, and Englishman, in their several national garbs, lay under his horse's hoofs. "A Fame," wrote Evelyn in his *Diary*, after inspecting the ship as she lay in the dock, "held a laurel over his insulting head: the word, *God with us*."

Poor Evelyn, bereft of his Church services, lamenting that there was "no more notice taken of Christmas Day in our Churches," smuggling a Clergyman into his house at Deptford to administer the Sacrament, or stealing up to receive it in Dr. Wild's lodging in Fleet Street, could yet not resist going to look at the new warship in the dock; to hear Dr. Wilkins preach before the Lord Mayor in St. Paul's, a very common-sense sermon on the superiority of obedience to sacrifice; to stare at the proud and melancholy Quakers who were hunger-

striking in prison; and even to peep into Whitehall itself, now "very glorious and well-furnished" for the Protector. It was no doubt Evelyn's many-sidedness that made life bearable in what to him was "a dangerous and treacherous time." Ships and prisons and persecuted clergy, rare jewels, miniatures, "achates and intalias," carved wood, other people's houses and gardens and picture-galleries, the "incomparable pieces" that he loved to look at, and the incomparable performances of violin and theorbo and human voice that he loved to listen to—these were the things that made Evelyn happy, and his *Diary* so fascinating. Above all, perhaps, his passion was for "curiosities." He was almost as "universally curious" as Dr. Wilkins of Wadham himself. Those were red-letter days when he could examine a clock, whose sole balance was a crystal ball sliding on parallel wires, or a *Terrella*, showing all the magnetical deviations, or an elixir, or a perspective, or a way-wiser, or the charring of sea-coal; or when he had a glimpse into the "elaboratory" of an aristocratic friend, or a gossip about all and sundry with worthy Mr. Hartlib or Dr. Wilkins himself. It may have been Wilkins or it may have been Hartlib who, in the spring of 1656, brought Boyle and Evelyn together.[222] The good Hartlib was a friend of both. Robert Boyle was then in London; but whether or no to hear Wilkins's sermon in St. Paul's on the Superiority of Conformity to Sacrifice, is not recorded. In April, at any rate, the acquaintance between Evelyn and Boyle had begun, and Boyle and Wilkins were guests at a little dinner-party given by Evelyn at Sayes Court. It was then that Evelyn presented Wilkins with his "rare burning-glass," in return, probably, for the beehive that Wilkins had given him during that visit to Oxford in 1654. And

after dinner, the little company adjourned to look at Colonel Blount's "new-invented plows."

The friendship so pleasantly begun was to last for nearly forty years. It is to be remembered that Robert Boyle's mother and Mrs. Evelyn's family[223] were related; that Sayes Court had belonged to the Brownes, and had come to Evelyn through his wife; and that little Hodge, Robert Boyle's eldest brother, had many years before died at Sayes Court, and been buried in Deptford Church. Boyle and Evelyn were men of very different natures; but they had memories, sympathies, and friends in common. Their intercourse soon grew "reciprocal and familiar"; and it is to Evelyn we owe the finest and most intimate description that exists of Robert Boyle.[224] Boyle was to return to Experimental Philosophy at Oxford, where the lion and the lamb proverbially lay down together then as now;—the lion, as it has been wittily said, sometimes with the lamb in its inside. And Evelyn and his family at Sayes Court were to live on as pleasantly as possible, "the times considered."

In 1657 the Protectorate was in its last stage. In June, Cromwell was "his Highness," a monarch in arbitrariness and splendour, with all the formalities of purple velvet, Bible, sword, and sceptre—everything, indeed, except the Crown, and a good many things that the Crown itself might not have had. Lord Broghill, back in London, and one of Cromwell's House of Lords, had been one of the prime movers in the *Petition and Advice*, which pressed Cromwell to accept the Kingship; and report says, that when that failed, Broghill's "well-armed head" was filled with an even bolder project, an alliance between Cromwell's youngest daughter

Frances and Charles II. This, too, came to nothing; and in November 1657 Cromwell's daughter Frances was married to the old Earl of Warwick's grandson, son of Charles Rich's elder brother. This boy died in the sickly spring of 1658, four months after his wedding; and the old Earl of Warwick's death in April left Charles Rich heir-presumptive to the Earldom of Warwick.

The winter of 1657-8 had been, according to Evelyn, the severest winter that any man alive had known in England. "The crowes feete were frozen to their prey, Islands of ice inclos'd both fish and fowl frozen...." It was on Christmas Day that Mr. and Mrs. Evelyn went into London to receive the Communion in Exeter Chapel, and that the Chapel was surrounded by soldiers and the communicants surprised and taken prisoners—the soldiers' muskets pointed at them as they knelt before the Altar. The Evelyns were allowed to go home; and a month after this memorable Communion, in January 1658, they lost their little prodigy of an eldest son—just five years old—who died of a quartan ague. "Such a child I never saw: For such a child I blesse God in whose bosome he is!" He was buried in Deptford Church; and a week or two later their youngest child followed him, "after 7 weeks languishing at nurse, breeding teeth, and ending in a dropsie." The season was still very cold and sickly, and in May a public Fast was ordered "to avert an epidemical sicknesse, very mortal this Spring." But in spite of the Fast, June came in with an extraordinary storm of hail and rain, "the season as cold as winter, the wind Northerly nere 6 moneths." It may have been in consequence of this epidemic, following on an unhealthy winter, that Hartlib was even more than usually curious about the ingredients of certain

arcana—or medical "secrets" as he always called them. He mentioned one, in particular, in a letter to Robert Boyle, dated February 2, 1658. Hartlib himself had been a sufferer from the "extremity of the frosty weather."

It appears from Hartlib's letter to Boyle that Mr. Milton had in his possession a "secret" which Hartlib, and apparently Boyle also, was at this time anxious to obtain. "I shall not be wanting," wrote Hartlib to Boyle, "to obtain that secret which hath been imparted to Mr. Milton. It may be the public gentleman, that sent it unto him, will let me have a copy, in case the other should not come off readily with the communication of it. But if yours[225] would ask it from Mr. Milton, I am confident he would not deny it."

If by "yours" Hartlib meant Lady Ranelagh, that lady was still in Ireland, on difficult domestic business of her own, and far away from the garden-house in Petty France; and Dick Jones and Henry Oldenburg were on their "peregrination" abroad. Whether or no Mr. Milton was induced to part with his prescription remains unrelated. Hartlib's letter to Boyle was written on February 2, and only a few days later Milton's second wife died—the baby girl she had borne him in October was to live on into March. That spring, in his darkness and solitude, Milton's mind was turning once more to his scheme of a *Paradise Lost*. It was not exactly a time for Mr. Hartlib to trouble him about a prescription.

The news of Cromwell's illness fell like a thunderbolt on the nation. The people about him had known that all through that cold, unhealthy summer of 1658 the burdens of State, heavy as they were, were not for Cromwell so hard to bear as the sight of

a much-loved daughter's sufferings. The Cromwell family were gathered round Lady Claypole's couch when she died at Hampton Court on August 6. Cromwell himself was ill, even then, though for another fortnight his illness was as much as possible concealed, and he was able intermittently to attend to State business, and on some days even to show himself, riding with his Life Guards in the Park at Hampton Court. On August 21 it became known that the Protector was very ill of an ague, which his Physicians called a "bastard tertian"; but on the 24th they were able to remove their patient from Hampton Court to Whitehall, where again, between the ague-fits, till August 28, the Iron Man transacted public business. On that day the fits of ague changed their character; the "bastard tertian" had changed to "double tertian"—with two very exhausting ague-fits in the twenty-four hours: His Highness's strength was failing. Next day, Sunday the 29th, prayers were offered up in the Churches.

"And then came that extraordinary Monday (August 30, 1658) which lovers of coincidence have taken care to remember as the day of most tremendous hurricane that ever blew over London and England. From morning to night the wind raged and howled, emptying the streets, unroofing houses, tearing up trees in the parks, foundering ships at sea, and taking even Flanders and the coasts of France within its angry whirl. The storm was felt, within England, as far as Lincolnshire, where, in the vicinity of an old manor house, a boy of fifteen years of age, named Isaac Newton, was turning it to account, as he afterwards remembered, by jumping first with the wind, and then against it, and computing its force by the difference of the distances...."[226]

Cromwell died on September 3, and the news had reached Ireland by September 17. On September 17 Lady Ranelagh, in Youghal, wrote the long letter to her brother Lord Broghill, an extract from which stands at the head of this chapter. The man who a few days before "shooke all Europe by his fame and forces" was dead; and with his death the face of British history was changed. In Cromwell Lady Ranelagh herself had lost a generous and powerful friend; and in the last part of her letter she reverts, sadly enough, to what she calls "the penny half-penny of my own particular." For Cromwell had helped her not only with her Irish estates, but with her recalcitrant husband. "His now Highness," she says of Richard Cromwell, "seems not to me so proper a person to summon my lord[227] or to deal with him in such an affair as his father did, from whose authority and severety against such practices as my lord's are, I thought the utmost would be done that either persuasions or advice would have effected upon my lord ... soe, as there being little hopes left of bringing him to reason either here or there, I thinke my present work is to seeke a maintenance for me and my children without him."

She had consented, she says, some time before, to "retyre" among her own friends from "my lord's oppressions"; and she can now "remove lightly", not having much wealth to gather together. Owing to "the unreasonableness of my lord" her children "are neither like to be preferred in marriage nor prepared for the narrow condition their father's obstinacy condemns them to live in." She wishes people to know that "I left not my lord upon humour, but necessety, and that in soe doing I sought privacy and submitted to scarsety than persued a croud or designed aboundance to myselfe."[228]

The friendship between Boyle and Evelyn was at this time ripening in letters—letters about books, and the shapes of fruits, and recipes for varnish, and many other things—which passed between Evelyn at Sayes Court, and Boyle at Oxford. In one of these letters[229] Evelyn imparted to Boyle his pet scheme of a resident "philosophic mathematic college," to be built some five-and-twenty miles out of London, where "some gentlemen whose geniuses are greatly suitable might form themselves into a Society," and live "somewhat after the manner of Carthusians." Evelyn had planned it out to the smallest detail—the thirty or forty acres of land to be acquired, with "tall wood" and upland pasture, "sweetly irrigated." The house itself was to be a "goodly pavilion" containing gallery, refectory, library, withdrawing-room, kitchen, larders, service-rooms and what-not, all "well and nobly furnished"; and opposite to the house "towards the wood" was to be erected a "pretty chapel" and "six apartments or cells for members of the Society." And then Evelyn, prince of gardeners, goes on to describe the "elaboratory" in the grounds, with "a repository for rarities and things of nature"; the aviary, dove-house, physic-garden, kitchen-garden, plantation of orchard fruit, stalls for one or two horses, and conservatory for tender plants. The philosophers were to be allowed to play at bowls and chess, and walk—presumably two and two—in the garden paths. And Mrs. Evelyn, paragon of wives, had cheerfully consented to go and live there, and allow her husband to be a Carthusian, while she, located apparently in solitary glory in the Pavilion, reigned over the refectory and the domestic staff. This last was to consist of "a chaplain well qualified," an "ancient woman to dress the meat," a man to buy provisions and keep the garden and

stable, and a boy to run about doing everything else.

Robert Boyle must have smiled as he read Evelyn's enthusiastic letter, culminating in its pseudo-Carthusian *Orders*—

"At six in summer prayers in chapel. To study till half-an-hour after eleven. Dinner in the refectory till one. Retire till four. Then called to conversation (if the weather invite) abroad, else in the refectory. This never omitted but in case of sickness. Prayers at seven. To bed at nine. In the winter the same, with some abatements for the hours; because the nights are tedious, and the evening's conversation more agreeable. This in the refectory. All Play interdicted, *sans* bowls, chess, etc. Everyone to cultivate his own garden. One month in spring a course in the elaboratory on vegetables, etc. In the winter a month on other experiments. Every man to have a key of the elaboratory, pavilion, library, repository, etc. Weekly fast. Communion once every fortnight, or month, at least. No stranger to be easily admitted to visit any of the Society, but upon certain days weekly, and that only after dinner.... Every Thursday shall be a music-meeting at conversation hours...."

And once a week every philosopher was to "render a public account of his studies," and every man was to wear "a decent habit or uniform"; and, oh bliss! "one month in the year may be spent in London, or any of the Universities, or in a perambulation for the public benefit." How the Philosophers would prance!

This was on September 3, 1659, the first anniversary of Cromwell's death. A week or two later, Evelyn wrote again.[230] He had been reading Boyle's *Seraphick Love*, probably in manuscript, since it did not appear in print till 1660. The "incomparable book" seemed to Evelyn to have been

"indicted with a pen snatched from the wing of a seraphim." "I extremely loved you before," he wrote, "but my heart is infinitely knit to you now." And yet, the pity of it! There is a cry of appeal in poor Evelyn's letter to his friend, and there is no further mention of any Carthusian College. The little cells, and the chess, and the bowls, and the philosophers walking two and two along the garden paths are for the moment forgotten; and in their places comes a shadowy procession of fair and virtuous women—

"What think you, Sir, of *Alceste*, that ran into the funeral pile of her husband? The goodness of *Aemilia*, the chastity of *Lucretia*, the faith of *Furia*, of *Portia*?... Take away this love, and the whole earth is but a desert!"

As for St. Paul's remarks, Evelyn thinks very little of them; they were all very well for an itinerant apostle in a time of persecution, but "he confesses he had no command from the Lord." And what pious and studious wives some of the philosophers have had! Take, for example, *Pudentilla*, who "held the lamp to her husband's lucubrations." And good Madame Grotius, and others; while, not to go abroad, in London itself, "the committee-chambers, the parliament-lobby,[231] are sad but evident testimonies of the patience, and the address, the love, and the constancy of those gentle creatures...."

Is there no hope that Mr. Boyle may relent, and realise that if Love be virtuous it is seraphic? At least he may remember that in paradise, and in the ark, "there were but couples there, and every creature was in love."

Manuscript copies of *Seraphick Love* were evidently in circulation. A pirated and incorrect copy had been offered for sale to a London stationer, who had communicated with Mr. Boyle; and Boyle, who had long refused, was persuaded at last to publish it himself. It may have been in proof-form that Evelyn, in September 1659, read the little treatise—written eleven years before by a very sad young man at delicious Leeze. Eleven years had not altered Mr. Boyle's convictions; and *Seraphick Love* was to be one of the most notable, if the least characteristic, publications of the "Annus Mirabilis."[232]

Meantime the year 1659 was to be memorable to another branch of the Boyle family. On May 30, Charles Rich's elder brother, who had so recently succeeded to the earldom, died; and Charles Rich and my Lady Molkin found themselves Earl and Countess of Warwick. Five days before, Richard Cromwell had abdicated. The months of Richard's Protectorate had been, as all the world knows, months of dire confusion. With one man's death, the whole fabric of a great Republic had crumbled into dust. Lady Ranelagh came back to her house in the Mall to find a very different London from the London she had left three years before. "The nation," Evelyn has recorded in his *Diary*, "was in extreame confusion and unsettl'd, between the Armies and the Sectaries." "Several Pretenders and Parties," he wrote, "strive for the Government: all anarchy and confusion; Lord, have mercy on us!"[233]

As long as it was possible, Lord Broghill seems to have supported Richard's protectorate;[234] but before Richard's abdication Broghill and Coote were back in Ireland, and Broghill in command of Munster and Coote in Connaught were both working for

Charles II's return. Early in 1660, Monk in England and Coote and Broghill in Ireland were in communication with the Royal Orphan. Broghill's letter to Charles was carried to Breda by the sweet-spirited Frank: it is said to have been in Charles's hands before Monk's emissary had done his work. [235] Broghill's proposal, however, that Charles should land in Ireland proved superfluous. Monk's offers were eagerly accepted. Sir Edward Montagu—afterwards Earl of Sandwich—was sent to The Hague to bring back Charles II; and on May 8, 1660, "after a most bloudy and unreasonable rebellion of neere 20 years,"[236] Charles II was proclaimed in London. On May 29, he was there. Amid the blare of trumpets, 20,000 horse and foot brandished their swords and shouted aloud for joy. The pavements were strewn with flowers, the bells of the City rang out, the fountains poured out wine among the people. Ladies leaned over the windows and balconies: the Lords and Gentlemen made a brave show in their rich velvets and cloth of gold. "I stood," says Evelyn, "in the Strand, and beheld it, and bless'd God!"[237]

CHAPTER XIV
THE RESTORATION AND THE ROYAL SOCIETY

"Thence to Whitehall; where, in the Duke's chamber, the King come and stayed an hour or two laughing at Sir W. Petty, who was there about his boate,[238] and at Gresham College in general; at which poor Petty was, I perceive, at some loss, but did argue discreetly, and bear the unreasonable follies of the King's objections and other bystanders with great discretion; and offered to take oddes against the King's best boates, but the King would not lay, but cried him down with words only. Gresham College he mightily laughed at, for spending time in weighing of ayre, and doing nothing else since they sat."—PEPYS'S *Diary*, February 1, 1664.

"Bacon, like Moses, led us forth at last,
The barren wilderness he past,
Did on the very border stand
Of the blest promis'd Land,
And from the Mountains-top of his Exalted Wit
Saw it himself and shew'd us it.
But life did never to one man allow
Time to discover Worlds and Conquer too:
...
For who on things remote can fix his sight
That's always in a Triumph or a Fight?"

Lines to the Royal Society,
by ABRAHAM COWLEY.

(Prefixed to the *History of the Royal Society*

of London, by THOS. SPRAT, 1667.)

Two of the Boyle brothers were among the recipients of King's Honours at the Restoration: the old Earl would have been proud of his sons. "Dear Broghill," who, with each shake of the political kaleidoscope, showed himself like a bright central bit of glass, about which the smaller pieces fell together into a new combination,—was created Earl of Orrery, with a brilliant career of soldier-politician and dramatist before him. As President of Munster, and one of the Lords Justices of Ireland, he was to make his headquarters at Charleville, with frequent visits to England. And the sweet-spirited Frank, the boy hero of Liscarrol, became Viscount Shannon, and a Privy Councillor. Not much is known of Frank's after life, except that he lived and brought up his family on his Irish estate at Shannon Park. He seems, following the example set by his literary brothers, to have ventured, at least once, into print.[239] His wife, the "black Betty" of the letters, is better known to posterity than her husband, for she is remembered not only as Viscountess Shannon, the mother of Frank's children, but as the brilliant sister of Tom Killigrew, the wit and profligate, and as the mother of one of Charles II's natural daughters.[240]

The fortunes of the Royalist elder brother, Lord Cork, who had been diligently nursing the family fortunes through the Protectorate, were now so far reinstated that he was able to do for Charles II what the Great Earl had done for Charles I. He assisted an impecunious king with sums of money; and in recognition of his services he was, in 1663, to be created Earl of Burlington in the English Peerage. Presently, the great town house—Burlington House in Piccadilly—was being built, next door to the Lord

Chancellor's.[241] The families of Cork and Clarendon were to be further united by the marriage of Lord Clarendon's son and Lord Burlington's daughter; and another daughter was to marry Lord Hinchinbroke, son of the Earl of Sandwich, who, as Admiral of the Fleet (with Pepys as his secretary), had brought Charles back from The Hague. The prosperous and good-natured Earl of Burlington, treading softly with his compeers in the Matted Gallery at Whitehall, or making one of the group of courtiers about my Lord Duke in his Chamber, was of all the Cork family the likest to the great Earl in his ingenuous love of comfort and display. He thoroughly enjoyed his position as head of the family. It is told of him that, sailing down the Thames in some gay barge-load of noble company, he would never forget to raise his hat when he came in sight of Deptford Church. "Have I not reason?" he would say; and he would tell how there, in Deptford Church, little Hodge, the first-born, lay buried, and how by this child's death, so many years before, he, Richard Boyle, the second son, had come to be Earl of Cork. Lady Ranelagh, back from Ireland, had her reservations about the luxurious living at "my brother Corke's." "Alas!" she wrote to Robert Boyle, not long before the Restoration, "the Entertainment of Lords, Ladies, and Reasonable Creatures are yet several things, to the great grief of your K. R."[242]

But the Earl and his Countess had always been popular people. After the Restoration, when their daughter Anne married young Lord Hinchinbroke, the Earl of Sandwich's son, Lady Sandwich's gratification in this alliance knew no bounds: "They are very good condition, wise and chearfull people," she wrote just after the wedding. "She" (the bride) "hath a very fine free kind way of writing soe have

they all, something Mr. Boiles styll."[243] And poor Pepys, much hurt by not having received "a favour" after the Hinchinbroke wedding, was mollified when he met my Lord of Burlington at Whitehall; for Lord Burlington, "first by hearing the Duke of York call me by my name did come to me and with great respect take notice of me and my relation to my Lord Sandwich, and express great kindness to me." And not long after this little interview Pepys was at Burlington House, burning his periwig in the candle out of sheer nervousness. Little wonder; for he had just seen for the first time and saluted my Lady Burlington—the Lady Dungarvan of the old Dublin days, for whom the plums on the Lismore plum tree had been kept when she was expecting her first baby. [244] "A very fine-speaking lady, and a good woman," says Pepys; "but old and not handsome, but a brave woman." He was to see more of her daughter, young Lady Hinchinbroke. "I cannot say she is a beauty, nor ugly," wrote the truthful Pepys; but he had saluted her too, and she had been "mighty civil" on the occasion; a very good-humoured young niece, this of Robert Boyle's, "a lover of books and pictures and of good understanding." In honour of the young couple, Mr. and Mrs. Pepys ventured on a little dinner-party, which Pepys had "much in his head" till it was successfully over, and for which he purchased his new "pewter sesterne." The dinner was good and plentiful, and the company mighty merry. "Most of the discourse," Pepys adds naïvely, "was of my Lord Sandwich and his family, as being all of us of the family."[245]

Burlington—Orrery—Shannon. Robert Boyle, in Oxford, was, of all the great Earl's sons surviving, to remain "Mr. Boyle"—a virtuoso and an "Honourable Person." He could have been a peer, he could have been a bishop, he could have been Provost of Eton. It is said he repeatedly refused a peerage. He certainly, not long after the Restoration, declined to take Orders with a view to a Bishopric. "He was treated with great civility and respect," says Birch, "by the King as well as by the Earl of Southampton, Lord High Treasurer, and the Earl of Clarendon, Lord Chancellor of England." But to Robert Boyle the heirdom of a great family was "but a glittering kind of slavery," and "titular greatness" seemed to him "an impediment to the knowledge of many retired truths."[246] He believed that the less he participated in the patrimonies of the Church the more influence he should have in things religious. And besides—as he explained in after years to Bishop Burnet—he had felt "no inward motion to it by the Holy Ghost." For the same reason he would not be Provost of Eton. How little Sir Henry Wotton, sitting on the bank by Black Pots in the company of Izaak Walton, could have foreseen that the "Spiritay Robyn" would one day be asked to be his successor as Provost of Eton! Robert Boyle had chosen his way of life: he desired to be free to pursue knowledge for the good of mankind in the service of God. He would not fetter himself by tests and oaths; he could not alter his character. He had, as he himself expresses it, "a great (and perhaps peculiar) tenderness in point of oaths."[247] And so there is no record of him in the Matted Gallery, no glimpse of him in lawn sleeves, or with diamond hatband among the Courtiers, or among the nice critics of the Restoration Drama, who no longer cared for Shakespeare: "I saw Hamlet

Prince of Denmark played," says Evelyn,[248] "but now the old plays begin to disgust this refined age, since his Majesties being so long abroad." It is extremely doubtful if Robert Boyle ever witnessed a performance of "dear Broghill's" *Mustapha*, even when Betterton and Ianthe took the chief parts, and the King and Lady Castlemaine, and "pretty witty Nell" were there to see it.[249]

Glimpses of Robert Boyle there are, however, in those first years of the Restoration. Up to the very end of 1659 he had been living in Oxford, making the journey by coach now and then between Oxford and the London of his tastes. He was busy with his air-pump and his laboratory experiments and the publication of his *Seraphick Love*, and he was in correspondence with Dick Jones and Henry Oldenberg in Paris, and with Evelyn and Hartlib in London. "Your most noble letter," writes Hartlib to Boyle at Oxford; but Boyle's letters of this date to Hartlib do not seem to be extant. Hartlib's to Boyle were full of all sorts of gossip, home and foreign, and political even more than scientific. For Hartlib, in his old character of universal newsagent, was still able to pick up little bits of information at Westminster and in the City; and he sent Boyle a good deal of gossip about the intrigues and factions of those last months of anarchy under Monk's dictatorship; about Bradshaw's death, and the movements of Lambert, Desborough, Fleetwood, Vane, and Monk himself; and the mysterious person of whom he wrote as "C. S.," over the water. And when "C. S." was actually back in London and the Restoration was a *fait accompli*, Robert Boyle and his air-pump were in London also, both to be received with open arms by the Invisibles, and especially by Evelyn and the good Hartlib, now old and ill, and very poor, since his

pension under a Commonwealth Government had stopped.

"I went to Chelsey to visit Mr. Boyle," writes Evelyn,[250] "and see his pneumatic engine perform divers experiments." And, "To visite Mr. Boyle in Chelsey, and saw divers effects of the Eolipile for weighing aire."[251]

But, meantime, the weeks and months that followed immediately on the Restoration—weeks and months occupied with the passage of the Indemnity Bill through the Convention Parliament and with the trial of the Regicides—must have been a painful time for Robert Boyle and for his sister Ranelagh. Lord Broghill, Cromwell's right-hand man in Ireland and in Scotland, was, it is true, safe, and to come off with honours; but some other people—old family friends and political comrades—were not so happily placed. Robert Boyle had held aloof from sectaries and armies, though some of his best friendships had been among the Puritans; but Lady Ranelagh, whose house ever since the early days of the Long Parliament had been a rendezvous of the Parliamentarian Party, and whose personal sympathies and fortunes had been bound up with Cromwell's Protectorate, must have followed with a heavy heart the deliberations of the Houses which were to determine the fates of many political and personal friends. *The Regicides*: why, in the last ten years England and Ireland had been governed by Regicides! Some of them, it is true, were beyond reach. Cromwell—chief graves; but there were to be a great many exceptions to the Bill of Indemnity and Oblivion. There were those who were to be excepted as actual "Regicides"; and those who were to be excepted as "Non-regicides," and those classed as "miscellaneous exceptions." There were

men to be excepted “absolutely”—which meant their execution; and men to be excepted “non-capitally,” which meant everything but execution; and men to be excepted “for incapacitation only,” which meant a lifelong obscurity. There were men who had absconded, and men who had remained on the spot; men who had pleaded and extenuated, and men who steadfastly maintained the righteousness of their acts. How was it to fare with all and each of these? What was to be the fate of Richard Cromwell, so lately “his now Highness,” and Henry Cromwell, the broadminded and melancholy young Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—poor Henry, who had been in love with Dorothy Osborne, who was in love with Sir William Temple? And what was to become of Cromwell’s widow—“Old Noll’s wife,” the Londoners called her now: the voice of the people had strangely changed its tone. And the great men of the Party—so many of whom had been among Lady Ranelagh’s personal friends—how was it to fare with Lambert, Ludlow, St. John, Fleetwood, Haselrig, Lenthall, Whitlocke, Vane, Desborough, Pennington, Thurloe, and President Lawrence? Henry Lawrence, the President’s son, had been young Lord Barrymore’s friend ever since they were pupils together with Milton, in the Barbican. And Henry Lawrence was still one of Milton’s disciples—a constant visitor to the garden-house in Petty France. And young Lord Barrymore’s second wife was a Lawrence—Martha Lawrence. How is it possible to unravel the cruel intricacies of civil war?[252] And what would be done with Goodwin and Hugh Peters, and the blind Milton himself, whose *Eikonoklastes* and *Pro Populo Defensio* were by order of the House—issued within a week or two after the Restoration—to be burnt by the hands of the common hangman?

Hangings, drawings and quarterings were not extraordinary events in those days; but it would be interesting to know how the sentence pronounced on Major-General Harrison—first sentenced of the Regicides—affected so humane and sensitive a man as Robert Boyle. His sister Ranelagh, woman as she was, had more of the old soldier-earl in her composition, and perhaps, like her Elizabethan father, looked upon such a death as an inevitable "cloudy end."

"... The Court doth award that you ... be drawn upon a hurdle to the place of execution and there you shall be hanged by the neck, and, being alive, shall be cut down and ... your entrails to be taken out of your body, and, you living, the same to be burnt before your eyes, and your head to be cut off, your body to be divided into four quarters, and head and quarters to be disposed of at the pleasure of the King's Majesty; and the Lord have mercy upon your soul!"[253]

Was Boyle weighing the air with his Eolipile on October 13 when Pepys set off to Charing Cross to see Major-General Harrison hanged, drawn, and quartered? "Which was done there, he looking as cheerful as any man could do in that condition."[254] But in that hungry crowd Pepys could scarcely have been near enough to hear Harrison's last words, which sometimes seem to echo in Charing Cross to this day: "He hath covered my head many times in the day of battle. By God I have leaped over a wall; by God I have run through a troop; and by my God I will go through this death, and He will make it easy to me.... Now unto thy hands, O Lord Jesus, I commit my Spirit...."

Nor could Mr. Pepys have seen Harrison strike out

at the hangman half-way through the horrible, bloody work.

Mr. Evelyn did not go out purposely to see any of the executions of the Regicides;[255] but on the 17th he chanced to meet "their quarters, mangl'd and cutt and reeking, as they were brought from the gallows in baskets on the hurdle. O the miraculous Providence of God!"[256]

But what of Milton all this time—the blind Republican, to whom Lady Ranelagh had been more than all kith and kin? Had Boyle and Hartlib ever got from Mr. Milton that prescription they so much wanted?

Milton's escape from punishment at the Restoration is one of the puzzles of English history. How was it effected—by what combination of political influences—who, in fact, pulled the wires? Parliament has always been very clever in engineering itself, more or less constitutionally, out of its own tight corners; but there has never been a cleverer piece of parliamentary engineering than the way in which Milton was brought off at the Restoration. When, after Cromwell's death, Lady Ranelagh returned from Ireland to her house in the Mall, Milton was still living, almost a neighbour, in his garden-house in Petty France; still in correspondence with her boy Dick Jones and his tutor Oldenburg, in Paris; still Latin Secretary to the Council, with Andrew Marvell as his loyal assistant; and the uneasy dawn of the New Year 1660 had found him, despondent but undaunted, still fighting hard, by tract-warfare, for a doomed Republic. Milton the Pamphleteer and Lambert the General are to be remembered together as the last two opponents of the Restoration. But in March, after Milton's

printed exhortations to the Council and to Monk himself, the blind secretary had been discharged from his office, and an order issued for the arrest of Milton's publisher. And on May 7—the very day before Charles II was proclaimed in London—Milton had disappeared from the garden-house in Petty France. Nobody knows what had been done about his children, or whose friendly hand guided the blind man's steps into his hiding-place. "In the house of a friend in Bartholomew Close"—a narrow passage, entered from West Smithfield under an archway that was very old even in Milton's day[257]—Milton was to lie concealed for more than three months. His case and Goodwin's[258] came up together before the House on June 16, and it was ordered that their books were to be called in and burnt, and that the men themselves were to be "forthwith sent for in custody." But both men were in hiding, and somehow it was August 13 before the two names came up again; and at that moment the Indemnity Bill was hanging in mid-air between the Lords and Commons. Neither of the two men had been found; and though the Proclamation calling in all copies of their books for burning by the hangman was then duly placarded all over London, there was no further order for the arrest of the two men themselves. On August 28 the Indemnity Bill had passed both Houses; on August 29 it had received the King's assent, the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion was on the Statute Book, *and there was no mention of Milton in it from first to last.* Goodwin's name appeared; he was incapacitated for life for any public trust. But of Milton, the Republican pamphleteer, Cromwell's Latin secretary, who had done so incalculably much more, nothing—his name had somehow dropped out. Milton was saved—"to the surprise of all people,"

says Bishop Burnet.[259]

If Milton had been hanged with the Regicides at Charing Cross, or carted to Tyburn! And more than once during the passage of the Bill it seemed possible that it might be so. As it was, with the passing of this Act of Oblivion, and the emerging of a blind Puritan into the murky sunshine of the old London streets, Milton drops out of the story of Lady Ranelagh and the Boyle family. For a little while after the passing of the Act (his hiding-place having apparently been discovered) he seems to have been detained in custody by the Sergeant-at-Arms. Perhaps he was safer so. His offending tracts were duly burnt; his regicide comrades were duly hanged, drawn and quartered; and in December Milton was at large. Staunch friends he had had; Andrew Marvell was perhaps bravest and most indefatigable of them all; but it must have required more powerful influence than Marvell's and Davenant's to save John Milton. Had Lady Ranelagh done him one more service greater than all before? Had she enlisted the interest of her powerful brother Broghill, and of such Privy Councillors as she knew best—men like Sandwich and Manchester, and Annesley[260] and Morrice, and the old Lord Goring, poor Lettice's father-in-law,[261] and the young Charles Howard, who had married "Robyn's yonge Mrs." and was going to be first Earl of Carlisle? Had Lady Ranelagh's silken strings reached the little private Junto about the King himself—Hyde, and Ormonde, and Southampton? One remembers that Mr. Boyle had been "treated with great civility and respect by the King, as well as by the Earl of Southampton, Lord High Treasurer, and the Earl of Clarendon, Lord Chancellor of England." And it is good to think that the Boyle family—perhaps Boyle himself, whose memories

went back to the Milton of *Comus* and Eton, the Milton of the *Epitaphium Damonis* and the Villa Diodati in Geneva, may have had a hand in saving Milton, the blind Republican,—to write *Paradise Lost*. But if to any of them, it was certainly to Lady Ranelagh that Milton owed his life and freedom. There is no record of any further visits from Lady Ranelagh to Milton after that date, but it is difficult to believe her friendship for Milton ended with the Restoration. The garden-house in Petty France was to be no more his home: his blind steps turned eastward, to Holborn again, and Jewin Street, and then to Artillery Walk, near Bunhill Fields, where he was to resume and finish his great poem, and where he was to end his days. It is difficult to believe that Lady Ranelagh never again knocked at the blind man's door; and it must be taken for granted that one day in late August or early September 1667 a presentation-copy of *Paradise Lost* arrived at the house in Pall Mall.

On a November afternoon—Nov. 28, 1660—the usual little audience of philosophers had assembled to listen to one of Dr. Christopher Wren's astronomy lectures at Gresham College, in Basinghall Street. [262] Wren, who had been astronomy professor there since 1657, lectured on Wednesday afternoons during Term-time from two to three—and it was a custom for the little company to stay on after the lecture, adjourning to another room for "mutuall converse." The political disasters of the last year or two had somewhat interrupted the advancement of learning; the soldiers had, in fact, for a time, been quartered in Gresham College. But by the end of

November 1660 things were settling down again, and the lectures were going on as usual. At this particular lecture the *virtuosi* present were Lord Brouncker, Mr. Boyle, Mr. Bruce, Sir Robert Moray, Sir Paule Neile, Dr. Wilkins, Dr. Goddard, Dr. Petty, Mr. Ball, Mr. Rooke, Mr. Wren, and Mr. Hill; and their "mutuall converse" turned on the formation of a scientific society, on a broader basis than had been hitherto attempted—a society "for the promoting of Physico-Mathematicall-Experimentall Learning," to consist of weekly meetings, which were to be held every Wednesday from that date onwards.

This, it must be remembered, was no outcome of the Restoration. It was fifteen years since the Invisibles had begun their meetings, "precluding matters of theology and state affairs," sometimes at Gresham College, oftener in Dr. Goddard's house in Wood Street, or at the Bull's Head Tavern in Cheapside. Robert Boyle at that time had been a boy of eighteen, just back from Geneva, and introduced into the little Hartlib-Durie-Comenius circle to find that the Parliament men were already interested in a scheme of "Verulamian education." In November 1660 the Invisibles were fifteen years wiser than they had been in 1645. And what a fifteen years it had been! Had there ever been such a fifteen years in English History? Some of them, after the visitation of Oxford, had migrated there, taking posts vacated by Royalists, and forming the Oxford branch of the Invisible Society; and now again these same men, removed at the Restoration from their posts in Oxford University, were turning back to London. It was the old Invisible College of 1645 that was to merge itself in the Royal Society.

So, on that November afternoon 1660, in Gresham

College, a new Society was formed. It was arranged that its "original members" were to be those present, with some others then and there proposed as eligible, thirty-nine names being suggested and written down. Among them were John Evelyn, Dr. Wallis, Dr. Seth Ward, Dr. Willis, Dr. Bathurst, Sir Kenelm Digby, Abraham Cowley, John Denham, Mr. William Croone, Mr. Richard Jones, and Henry Oldenburg. Robert Boyle's influence was already making itself felt. Most of these men were Oxford colleagues, personal friends, and old Invisibles. The last three must have been his special nominations, and two of them were his own kinsmen. Dick Jones, his hopeful nephew, had just returned with Henry Oldenburg from their foreign tour. William Croone, who was nominated *in absentia* for the post of Registrar of the Society, was presumably a son of the old Earl of Cork's "Cozen Croone", the vintner of the King's Head in Cheapside;[263] because the "Croonian Lecture Fund," long afterwards bequeathed to the Royal Society by Mr. Croone's widow, was derived from "one fifth of the clear rent of the King's Head Tavern in or near old Fish Street, London, at the corner of Lambeth Hill."[264] This makes William Croone a cousin of Robert Boyle's; and he was a creditable relative, this heir of old Cozen Croone the vintner, for he was afterwards Doctor of Physic and Gresham Professor of Rhetoric; and the Royal Society owes its Croonian Lecture Fund to his and his widow's generosity, and to the takings at the old King's Head in Cheapside.

Other original members—they were afterwards "Fellows"—were added at later meetings. And what a list it was! There was Aubrey of the "Lives," and Ashmole, of museum celebrity, and Dryden and Waller the poets, and old Haak the originator of the

Invisible College, and Robert Hooke, whose services at Oxford Boyle amiably dispensed with so that he might be Curator,[265] and Peter Pett the Naval Commissioner, and Thomas Sprat, the Society's enthusiastic first biographer, and Governor Winthrop from Connecticut, and Isaac Barrow the scholarly divine,[266] and John Graunt, the "tradesman" who drew up the Bills of Mortality. Peers there were in plenty,—the Duke of Buckingham and the Earls of Devonshire, Northampton, and Sandwich, among them; and Bishops—present and future. Doctors of Physic, of course, and Lawyers of the Temple; Churchmen, Statesmen, Army-men, Navy-men, and City-men. "It is to be noted," says Sprat, "that they have freely admitted men of different Religions, Countries, and Professions of Life. This they were obliged to do, or else they would come far short of the largeness of their own declarations. For they openly profess not to lay the foundation of an English, Scotch, Irish, Popish, or Protestant Philosophy; but a Philosophy of *Mankind*."[267]

Sir Robert Moray, a Scotsman and a favourite at Whitehall, had quickly "brought in word from the Court" that the King approved of the aims of the Society. Moray, who had a laboratory of his own at Whitehall, acted for a time as interim-President, and was certainly the life and soul of the infant Society; and on May 3, 1661—not many days after his coronation, Charles II was shown, through his own great telescope, Saturn's rings and Jupiter and his satellites. His Majesty became really interested, and began to discourse astronomy as he sat at supper in Whitehall.[268] And a few weeks later—Sir Robert Moray still acting as go-between—the King granted the Society's petition for a Royal Charter, and was "pleased to offer himselfe to be entered one of the

Society." On July 15, 1662, the Charter of Incorporation passed what Evelyn calls the "Broade Seale." Lord Brouncker was elected first President and Henry Oldenburg Secretary.[269] The King presented the Society with its mace,[270] on which were emblematically embossed the Crown and Royal Arms, the rose, harp, thistle, and fleur de lys. In April 1663, however, a second and improved Charter passed the Great Seal.[271] The King in this declared himself Founder and Patron; Arms were granted to the Society, and a motto from Horace was chosen—*Nullius in Verba*. And the Royal Society kept its first anniversary on November 30, 1663, St. Andrew's Day having been selected partly as nearest to November 28, the day of its first meeting, but also in compliment, it is believed, to Sir Robert Moray, the popular Scotsman who from the very beginning had been one of its most energetic members.

Strange times! It has been rightly said that the foundation of the Royal Society was one of the few creditable events of the Restoration. Exactly a month before the Charter of Incorporation passed the Great Seal, Sir Henry Vane had been beheaded on Tower Hill, "the trumpets brought under the scaffold that he might not be heard"; and little more than a month later came the dreaded St. Bartholomew's Day, which turned nearly two thousand rectors and vicars —one-fifth of the English clergy—out of their parishes. The doings of "Our Society", meantime, read like a little oasis in a desert of intolerance. The old Earl of Cork, who had sent his sons to fight the "rebelleows" Presbyterian Scots, and spent the last days of his own life in fighting the rebellious Irish Papists, would have rubbed his eyes if he could have seen his Robyn walking in procession, side by side with the Roman Catholic Sir Kenelm Digby, each

wearing a St. Andrew's Cross pinned into his hat!

"It being St. Andrew's Day, who was our patron," says Evelyn complacently, "each fellow wore a St. Andrew's Crosse of ribbon on the crowne of his hatt. After the election we din'd together, his Majesty sending us venison."[272]

Some difference of opinion, however, there seems to have been among the philosophers about the choice of their patron saint. Pepys did not care much who the saint was, but he grumbled at having to pay two shillings for the badge.[273] Aubrey once confided to Sir William Petty that he would have preferred St. George, or, failing him, St. Isidore—"a philosopher canonised."

"No," said the irrepressible Petty, "I had rather have had it been St. Thomas's Day, for he would not believe till he had seen and putt his finger into the holes, according to the motto, *Nullius in Verba*."[274]

CHAPTER XV
THE PLAGUE AND THE FIRE

"It hath commonly been looked upon as very strange that a diligent Cultivator of Experimental Philosophy should be a zealous Embracer of the Christian Religion; and that a great Esteem of Experience and a High Veneration for Religion should be compatible in the same Person; but...."—ROBERT BOYLE, *The Christian Virtuoso*.

"The hottest day that ever I felt in my life ... I did in Drury Lane see two or three houses marked with a red cross upon the doors, and 'Lord have mercy upon us' writ there...."—PEPYS'S *Diary*, June 7, 1665.

"... it still encreasing, and the wind great ... and all over the Thames, with one's faces in the wind, you were almost burned with a shower of fire-drops ... saw the fire grow; and as it grew darker appeared more and more, and in corners and upon steeples, and between churches and houses, as far as we could see up the hill of the city, in a most horrid malicious bloody flame ... one entire arch of fire from this to the other side of the bridge.... The churches, houses and all on fire and flaming at once ... and a horrid noise the flames made and the cracking of houses at their ruine...."—PEPYS'S *Diary*, September 2, 1666.

The year 1661 saw the publication not only of Boyle's *Physiological Essays*[275] already mentioned, but of his epoch-making *Scepticall Chymist*.[276] It was the first year of "Our Society's" existence; a year

of immense interest and activity among its members; but Boyle himself was not always in London, and not indeed wholly occupied with the claims of experimental science. In 1662 he found himself unexpectedly in possession of more Irish land, a grant of "forfeited impropriations" having been obtained from the King in Robert Boyle's name, though without his knowledge. To Boyle, the gift seems to have been somewhat in the nature of a white elephant, and he applied for advice in the matter to his friend the Bishop of Lincoln.[277] He was not sure if he ought to take the grant at all, and still less decided as to what he ought to do with the proceeds. He did not wish to "reflect upon those persons of honour" who had done him the kindness unasked, and he would dearly have liked to spend the proceeds, if he did take the grant, in "the advancement of real knowledge." Ultimately he did decide to accept it, and to spend two-thirds of the proceeds in Ireland on the relief of the poor and the maintenance of the Protestant religion; while the other third was to go to the purposes of the Corporation for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England, of which the King had lately appointed him governor. This, too, had been done without Boyle's knowledge.

"So that the main benefit I intend to derive from the King's bounty," says Boyle laconically, "is the opportunity of doing some good with what, if my friends had not obtained it, might have been begged by others, who would have otherwise employed it."[278]

The matter settled—to nobody's entire satisfaction—Boyle went on with his work in Oxford, sending his communications to the Royal Society through the

secretary, Henry Oldenburg. Present or absent, Mr. Boyle was the hero of the hour at Gresham College, and his air-pump the chief attraction of its meetings. [279]

"I waited on Prince Rupert to our assembly," says Evelyn, "where we tried severall experiments in Mr. Boyle's *vacuum*. A man thrusting in his arm upon exhaustion of the air had his flesh immediately swelled so as the blood was neare bursting the veins: he drawing it out we found it all speckled."[280]

Mr. Boyle, Mr. Boyle's air-pump, and Mr. Boyle's books—especially that on the *Spring and Weight of the Air*—were the talk of the Court as well as of the College. It is quite true that "the weighing of ayre" was, in those early days of the Society's existence, its favourite occupation. A great change had come over the Philosophers. They found themselves invited into a kind of scientific *Kindergarten*, where knowledge was to be gained, not through their old black-letter books, but out of pots and pans and pendulums, and shining ores, and precious stones, and "anatomes" and "curiosities" and "things of nature." And the most fascinating thing of nature at this moment—just because, perhaps, it was intangible, invisible, elusive—was "the ayre." These men had discovered that "the ayre" possessed properties, obeyed laws; in fact, they had suddenly realized that they were all going about under an atmosphere. Mr. Boyle had shown it to be so; and there, in their midst, was the *machina Boyleana*.

But there were other "transactions" of the infant Royal Society. In Oldenburg's letters, and Hooke's letters, and in the diaries of Pepys and Evelyn, there are vivid contemporary glimpses of what went on at Gresham College. Poor old Hartlib was dead, and

Oldenburg seems to have taken Hartlib's place as Boyle's London Correspondent. He gave Boyle the latest gossip, not only of "Our Society," but of "State affairs" at home and abroad. From him Boyle, at Oxford, heard of the visits of distinguished foreigners —Huygens, Sorbière, and others—to Gresham College. Even when the attendances were "thin," and there was not much being shown, these men were struck with admiration of "our experimental method," our "sedate and friendly way of conference," and "the gravity and majestickness of our order."

The indefatigable Secretary, overworked and underpaid as he undoubtedly was, and asking in vain for an "amanuensis," had soon put himself in touch with experimentalists in France, Holland, Germany, Italy, the Bermudas, Poland, Sweden, New England, and the East Indies. A new governor of "Bombaia" had offered his services to the Society "for philosophical purposes": "We have taken to taske the whole universe," wrote Oldenburg to Governor Winthrop in Connecticut.

There was really no form of "curiosity" of earth, or sea, or sky, that was not grist to the Gresham College mill. Chariots and watches, masonry, ores, "the nature of salts," injection into the veins and the transfusion of blood, the velocity of bullets, mine-damp, musical sounds and instruments, thermometers and barometers, fossils, shooting stars, and double keels were all mixed up in most admired disorder; and Mr. Boyle at Oxford was doing his best to interest the "Oxonians" in the work going on at Gresham College; he himself being equally interested in the experiments of transfusion of blood carried on in London and the "musical experiments" made

under his direction in the Oxford colleges. Oldenburg reported everything to him, and Hooke, too, his old assistant, who was now curator of Our Society. Winthrop had written about the ores to be found in New England, and an enthusiastic young Londoner had been planting a "Virginian garden." At one meeting of the Society there had been "a good store of discourse concerning star-shoots"; at another all the experiments were of "the descent of bodies in water." On more than one occasion a party of the philosophers—Sir Robert Moray, Dr. Wilkins, Dr. Goddard, Hooke, and others—had climbed to the top of the steeple of St. Paul's "to make the 'Torricellian experiments' of falling bodies and of pendulums." And after the Correspondence Committee had met at Mr. Povy's house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, for the purpose of collecting evidence from "all parts of the world," Oldenburg wrote to Boyle: "This was our entertainment above ground, I leave you to guess what our correspondence was underground in the grotto, and near the well, that is the conservatory of so many dozen of wine-bottles of all kinds."[281]

So the letters came and went between London and Oxford; and Boyle's manuscripts and proof-sheets were sent to Oldenburg by coach or carrier, or by Boyle's own servant. "These coachmen and carriers are incorrigible," wrote Oldenburg, when parcels were charged double and letters went astray; and there was, in particular, a "she-porter" who specially annoyed Mr. Oldenburg. Presently, Mr. Sprat was writing the Society's history—as far as it went; and Samuel Butler was satirising Gresham College up and down the town. Everybody knew that the King kept a copy of *Hudibras* in his pocket: might not the young Society suffer from Butler's sarcasm? The Secretary was ruffled and anxious; and he owned to Boyle that

he could have done a good deal more in pushing and popularising certain investigations for the Society "if I had not been afraid of *Hudibras*."[282]

But while Hudibras was ridiculing the experimentalists, and Restoration-orthodoxy was shaking its head over the new philosophy, the Society had its votaries—a good many of them, it is true, on the other side of the channel.[283] If Butler made fun of the Philosophers—

> "Their learned speculations,
> And all their constant occupations
> To measure and to weigh the air
> And turn a circle to a square"[284]—

a certain Italian enthusiast composed twenty-six stanzas of unqualified praise, one of which Oldenburg committed to memory and sent triumphantly to Boyle—

> "Heroic constellations dispense
> One ray of your celestial influence
> That with the telescope I may descry
> The sacred treasures of your Pansophy!"

Perhaps the prettiest compliment of all came from a Parisian friend of Oldenburg's, who was so charmed with Mr. Boyle's writings, and so desolated to hear of Mr. Boyle's delicate health, that he begged Oldenburg to suggest to Mr. Boyle that he should migrate into the sweet air of France. "Proposez-luy la chose: il pourra philosopher par tout, et faire provision de santé pour philosopher plus longtemps."

The message was duly delivered; but Boyle's philosophising was to go on at home, and praise and blame seem to have had small effect upon him. "I

freely confess," he wrote, "that the great difficulty of things, and the little abilities I find myself furnished with to surmount it, do often, in general, beget in me a *great* distrust even of things, whereof my adversary's objections give me not *any*."[285]

The year 1663 saw the publication of three of Robert Boyle's books. *Some Considerations touching the Usefulness of Experimental Natural Philosophy*, collected from the work of the previous year or two, was published at Oxford. *Some Experiments and Considerations touching Colour* was published in London; and in the same year he published, also in London, *Some Considerations touching the Style of the Holy Scriptures*. This last, originally suggested to him by Broghill at Marston Bigot, had been the work of some years; and at the time of its publication he was interesting himself in a scheme for the translation of the New Testament for use in Turkey. Oldenburg "rejoiced hugely" over this scheme. "I confess," says the Puritan secretary of the Royal Society, "it will be troublesome and dangerous to spread such a book as the Bible in Turkey; but yet it ought to be attempted."

The summer vacations, when Oxford was deserted, seem to have been spent by Boyle partly in London with Lady Ranelagh and among the *virtuosi*, and partly in the various family country houses, where he was always welcomed as at once the hero, the puzzle, and the pet of this great family. Delicious Leeze, in Essex, where Charles and Mary lived, was not far from London. "You shall be absolute master of your own time," Mary assured him—conscious, no doubt, that Charles did not know much about the New Philosophy. And at Marston Bigot, in Somersetshire, dear Broghill and Lady Pegg, when

they were in England, were most excellent company. Marston was not far from Stalbridge, and though Boyle did not now often stay at his manor-house, he liked to keep it in perfect order, for Frank's sake, who might have it after him. The "fruit-nurseries" of Stalbridge, especially, were well known in the neighbourhood. "I hear you have that way also a large charity for the public good of England," wrote Dr. John Beale of Yeovil, in one of his delightful screeds to Boyle.

In the summer of 1664, Boyle had been suffering with his eyes; and on his journey to the west—he was apparently that summer at Stalbridge and Marston Bigot—he stayed at Salisbury, to consult his friend and oculist, Dr. Turberville.[286]

That autumn, State affairs were almost of more interest at the moment than the transactions of the Society; and war-gossip and Court-gossip occupied a considerable portion of Oldenburg's letters to Boyle. Hooke, the Curator, wrote also, but his letters were of "the conjunction of Mercury and Sol." Boyle was back in Oxford in October; and on October 24, when Evelyn paid a visit to Oxford, he found Boyle "with Dr. Wallis and Dr. Christopher Wren in the Tower of the Scholes with an inverted tube or telescope, observing the discus of the Sunn for the passing of Mercury that day before it; but the latitude was so great that nothing appeared." The little party, disappointed, went on to the Bodleian, and to look at the Sheldonian, then building by the generosity of the Archbishop, and the great picture with too many "nakeds" in it, over the Altar in the chapel of All Souls.[287]

Boyle was still in Oxford in November, when the Duke of York and "many gallants" were going off to

join the Fleet; and in December, when the "mighty vote" of £2,500,000 was passed, that Charles II might "be possessed of the dominion at sea, and the disposal of Trade."[288] Everybody in London was feeling very rich and belligerent—the exact methods by which the money was to be raised not having been yet decided upon. That same November, Oldenburg was begging for Boyle's communications to the Society on the *History of Cold*. They would come, as he said, very seasonably, "Our Society having already, by the late Frost, excited one another to the prosecution of experiments of freezing." The frost lasted long enough to please the little London boys and the Philosophers alike. January came in, with "excessive sharp frost and snow."[289] The London streets were full of snowballs on January 2, when Mr. Pepys dined in the Piazza, Covent Garden, with my Lord Brouncker—who was a great many other things besides President of the Royal Society,—and occasioned such mirth by reading aloud to the company the "ballet" lately made "by the men at sea to the ladies in town." Who does not remember Buckhurst's—

"To all ye ladies now on land
We men at sea indite;
But first would have you understand
How hard it is to write.
The Muses now, and Neptune too,
We must implore to write to you,
With a fa la la la la!"

And it is very certain Lord Brouncker and his company laughed loudest over the second verse—

"For though the Muses should prove kind
And fill our empty brain,

Yet if rough Neptune rouse the wind
To wave the azure main,
Our paper, pen, and ink, and we
Roll up and down our ships at sea,
With a fa la la la la!"

Robert Boyle was in town during that winter of 1664-5. There were several fixtures in December, January and February, which may have drawn him there. In December he had been elected into the Company of the Royal Mines, "and into that of Battery." On December 22, Petty's double-bottomed boat, the *Experiment*, was at last launched, in the presence of the King.[290] On January 9, the Royal Society carried their new Charter Book and Laws to the King at Whitehall, for the King to write "Founder" after his name, and the Duke of York to enter himself as a Fellow. Gresham College was particularly active in February and March, and Hooke was lecturing there on the Comet which had lately been the talk of London. "Mighty talk there is of the Comet that is seen a' nights; and the King and Queen did sit up last night to see it, and did, it seems."[291] Lord Sandwich, who was with the fleet at Portsmouth, thought it was "the most extraordinary thing he ever saw." And Robert Hooke, the little deformed chorister of Christchurch, was trying to explain this phenomenon to the London of 1665: "Among other things, proving very probably that this is the very same Comet that appeared before, in the year 1618, and that in such a time probably will appear again, which is a very new opinion; but all will be in print."[292] And on February 15, the day on which Mr. Pepys was admitted a member of the Royal Society, the discussion and experiments had been on Fire: "how it

goes out in a place where the ayre is not free, and sooner out where the ayre is exhausted, which they shewed by an engine on purpose."[293]

It was after this meeting that some of the philosophers adjourned to the Crown Tavern, behind the Exchange, for a "club supper"; but though Pepys expressly mentions having seen Mr. Boyle at the afternoon meeting of the Society, he does not make it clear whether Mr. Boyle was at the club supper afterwards. He may have been: "Here excellent discourse, till ten at night," records Pepys—"and then home."

In February, Boyle brought out at last his little volume of *Occasional Reflections on Several Subjects*; youthful essays, written long before, in the Dorset lanes or by the slow-burning wood fire in his manor-house: "the mislaid scribbles which I drew up in my infancy," he calls them. The book was published by Herringman at his shop at the Anchor in the Lower Walk in the New Exchange. It was not intended to occasion the mirth that Buckhurst's "ballet" had produced: it was criticised, rather sharply, by some people at the time; but it gained an extraordinary popularity, and it was to be ridiculed as only the books that have been very popular ever are. And its appearance gave great pleasure to Lady Ranelagh, who had long begged him to collect and publish these fugitive pieces, and now at last held in her hand a little volume containing a dedicatory letter to herself—to *Sophronia*, "my dearest sister."

The spring of 1665 in London was, as everybody knows—in spite of impending war, and the absence of "many gallants" at sea—one of the gayest of gay London seasons. The theatres were full; the great "noon-hall" at Whitehall had been turned into a

playhouse. Another comet, every bit as bright as the last, was reported in the April sky. The Park was filled with fair women; chief among them, according to Pepys, was the "very great beauty," Mrs. Middleton, for whom Boyle's hopeful young nephew —Milton's pupil—Mr. Dick Jones, had quite forsaken the Philosophers.[294] And while the bees in Evelyn's garden at Deptford were making their honey and combs "mighty pleasantly," and Evelyn himself was immersed in the provision of hospital accommodation for sick and wounded seamen, in the coffee-houses the talk was all of the Dutch fleet, and of the Plague that was growing in London. Everybody was ready with a remedy, "some saying one thing and some another." On June 3, all London was on the river, listening to the guns of the opposing Dutch and English fleets;[295] and on June 7, the day before the news of the great victory arrived in London, Mr. Pepys, much to his discomfiture, saw those red crosses on the doors in Drury Lane, and the poor human appeal, "Lord, have mercy on us!"[296]

While the Plague raged in London, Lady Ranelagh and her two daughters—"my girls" she always calls them—were at delicious Leeze. It was not the same patriarchal Leeze to which the romantic runaways had been carried in Lady Ranelagh's coach. The husband and wife, who were Charles and Mary Rich in those days, were Earl and Countess of Warwick now. It was four-and-twenty years since they had been obliged to run away to be married, because Charles Rich was only a younger son. Charles Rich was "my Lord of Warwick" now. It was six years since he had succeeded to the earldom; and a great deal can happen in six years. Their son—their only child—whose illness in babyhood had so changed

Mary's outlook on life, had been reared to manhood, and had been married—a girl and boy marriage it was—to my Lord of Devonshire's very young daughter. For the sake of her boy, and to arrange this alliance satisfactorily, Mary had gone to London, leaving "the sweet quiet of the country for the horrid confusion of the town"; and from there she had written to Robert Boyle at Oxford, whom she still always called her "dearest, dearest squire," in great spirits: "We are like to be very great," she said, "for the lad is like to be a successful lover."

After the marriage, the bridegroom had been sent to travel in France, and the bride taken home by her husband's parents to Leeze; and after the boy husband came back to her, for a very little while they had all lived together, and Mary had seen her son with a wife of his own. But in May 1664 he fell ill of smallpox. They were all in London at the time, at Warwick House, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where Mary herself had had smallpox in 1648. The little wife was removed, out of the infection, to her father's house. The "young ladies," Charles Rich's nieces, who lived with them, daughters of the dead elder brother, were packed off to Leeze. "My Lord" himself was persuaded to go to his sister-in-law Ranelagh's house in Pall Mall. And then—

"I shut up myself with him," says Mary, the mother, "doing all I could both for his soul and body." But the boy died in eight days: "He wanted about four months of being of age." Mary sent the Earl of Manchester to Lady Ranelagh's house to break the news to my Lord of Warwick, who, when he heard it, "cried out so terribly that his cry was heard a great way." But Mary was "unrewly" no longer; she had made her vow and she had found her

Master: “I was dumb,” she says, “and held my peace, because God did it.”

For the second time Lady Ranelagh fetched Mary away to her own house. The great Warwick House in Lincoln’s Inn Fields was put up for sale—Mary never entered it again. Later she went to drink the waters at Epsom and Tonbridge, “to remove the great pain I had constantly at my heart after my son’s death.” And Dr. Walker, the worthy chaplain who had preached so awakingly to Mary twenty years before, after her child recovered, did his best to comfort her after her child was dead.

A year had passed since then, and now, in the summer of 1665, with the Plague raging in London, the childless pair were at Leeze again with the young ladies and the very young widow, and Lady Ranelagh and her girls; and my Lord of Warwick—much in the minority—was not quite so good-tempered as he used to be in the old-young days before he was so tormented by gout.[297]

They had left London only just in time; for early in July several of the houses in Pall Mall were infected, and one “almost emptied.”[298] The meetings of the Royal Society had been adjourned. The King and Court were gone:[299] people were rapidly leaving town. Hooke and Petty and Wilkins were thinking of removing to Nonsuch, taking an operator with them in order to carry on their experiments out of range of infection.[300] Oldenburg and his family remained in London. He had carefully separated his papers—Mr. Boyle’s, the Society’s, and his own—into bundles, and had written instructions what should be done with them should he succumb to the Plague. Robert Boyle was back in Oxford before the end of June, but before leaving town he had sent Oldenburg a

"receipt for the Sickness." Pepys, it is known, went about with a bottle of "Plague-water" presented to him by Lady Carteret, of which he took a sip when he felt particularly depressed. Whether Oldenburg drank Mr. Boyle's medicine or not is unrecorded, but he escaped infection; and the Transactions of the Royal Society, and some of Boyle's papers with them, went safely through the Plague only to suffer havoc in the Fire.

In July Lady Ranelagh was writing to her brother at Oxford, begging him to join the family-party at Leeze, and to bring any number more of his *Occasional Meditations* with him, which the ladies of the family would help him to transcribe for a second edition of his delightful book. At Leeze they were all taking "palsy-balsam." "Our palsy-balsam does wonders here," she wrote. "Crip," who seems to have been the family apothecary, major-domo, and factotum, had been very careful of them all, she says. The palsy-balsam, Crip's "jealousy," and God's providence together had kept, not only the family at Leeze itself, but the entire neighbourhood, free of infection. And all the ladies, and the Countess, and "my girls" were at Robert Boyle's service.[301]

And yet he did not go. He was still at Oxford in August, much tied in attendance on Lady Clarendon and the Lord Chancellor and their new daughter-in-law.[302] He had declined the Provostship of Eton, vacant by Dr. Meredith's death, and had accepted the degree of Doctor of Physic at the hands of the University. And he was still in Oxford early in September, when Lady Ranelagh wrote again—this time in more sombre mood, for the weekly Bills of Mortality had been grim reading. She could not help seeing a Nemesis over London: a connexion—as

awful as it was inscrutable—between "what was going on there before we left it and what has been suffered there since."[303] Would not her brother still seek a shelter at delicious Leeze?

"For my Lord of Warwick, I can assure you, as he does me, that he is not only not afraid, but desirous of your company here; he advises your lying at Kimbolton, my Lord Chamberlain's house, a day's journey from Oxford; and from thence at Audley End, another day's journey, and thence hither, but to Mr. Waller's,[304] which I hope is uninfected ... and thence to Parkhall,[305] which is also clear for aught I know, and thence hither is your nearest way, and Crip would send a man to guide you...."

And she leaves her strongest argument for the postscript—

"*If you make not haste, the Court will overtake you at Oxford.*"

Robert Boyle was no courtier. He did run away from Oxford, but not, it seems, to Leeze. He disappeared almost as effectively as Milton disappeared at the Restoration. For a time his friends did not know his retreat, and sent letters to him haphazard "by way of London." In November the Plague was decreasing, and Lady Ranelagh could report that at Leeze they were still all well—"Crip only excepted, who had lately a roaring fit of the gout, but a very short one, in respect of those he used to have at this time of year, which he attributes much to his chewing of scurvy-grass." Lady Ranelagh herself was reading all her brother's books over again to comfort herself for his absence, and was lending them, one after the other, to the "few studious persons" whom she met at Leeze. And her fingers were itching to open a sealed roll of papers

belonging to him, labelled “About Religious Matters.”

It was January 22 before the Royal Society met again. “The first meeting of Gresham College since the Plague,” says Pepys, who had, with exceptional bravery, remained in London through it all. “Dr. Goddard did fill us with talk, in defence of his and his fellow-physicians going out of town in the plague-time, saying that their particular patients were most all gone out of town, and they left at liberty, and a great deal more, etc. But what, among other fine discourse pleased me most, was Sir G. Ent[306] about Respiration; that it is not to this day known, or concluded on among physicians, nor to be done, either, how the action is managed by nature, or for what use it is.”

April came; and the brilliant, wanton Court was back in London; and Robert Boyle had come, not into London itself, but to a lodging found for him in the village of Newington, on the Surrey Side. Oldenburg had walked out to Newington one day in March, before Boyle arrived, and inspected the house and its surroundings—

“It seems to be very convenient for you,” he wrote to Boyle, “there being a large orchard, a walk for solitary meditations, a dry ground round about, and in all appearance a good air”; advantages which were accompanied by “a civil Landlord and fair Landlady.”[307]

The immediate object of Boyle’s visit to London was probably to be present at some of the performances of Valentine Greatrakes, the “Stroaker,” who was making a great sensation in London by his semi-miraculous cures. Greatrakes had

originally been a lieutenant in Lord Broghill's regiment in Munster, and had more recently—having felt an "impulse"—practised his cures in county Cork. He had come to England by Lord Broghill's advice, and had made his *début* in an attempt to cure Lady Conway's violent headaches. In this he failed; but he was more successful with other patients, and the King sent for him to Whitehall, and he was patronised by Prince Rupert. Of course, the Faculty was divided, and the Royal Society cautious. Mr. Stubbe, a worthy doctor of Stratford-on-Avon, went so far as to publish in Oxford a tract, "The Miraculous Conformist", addressed, without permission, to Mr. Boyle—to which, very naturally, Mr. Boyle took exception. It was followed by a London-published tract, "Wonders no Miracles"; and the controversy still waged about the "Stroaker" when Boyle went to London and was present at some of his "stupendous performances." Mr. Boyle made careful notes, and submitted to Mr. Greatrakes a series of written questions—which do not seem to have been answered. But in the end, Robert Boyle was one of those who, having seen the "Stroaker" at work, gave him a testimonial before he left London. The Greatrakes episode stands on the threshold of a whole realm of medical treatment undreamed of in 1666.

Meantime, Boyle's treatise, *Hydrostatical Paradoxes*, that had been slowly printing for several months, appeared early in that year. This was shortly followed by his *Origin of Forms*; and a good many of his philosophical transactions also belong to this year. Later in the summer, when the London season was over, he was living in his Chelsea lodging; but he had been ill again; and Lady Ranelagh was back in her house in Pall Mall.

Was Boyle in London from the second of September to the fifth? Did he watch, as it grew dark on the eve of Cromwell's "lucky day", from Chelsea, or from Pall Mall, that arc of fire over the poor blazing City—so lately pestilence-stricken that its burial-grounds were choked with lime, its bells still tolling, and almost every house was in mourning? Did he see the Fire of London? Probably Boyle *was* in London, for on September 10, Oldenburg was writing as if Boyle had just left town, and he says nothing in his letter to Boyle of the Fire itself, but begins, as it were, when the Fire left off. Boyle had called at Oldenburg's house to say good-bye, and Oldenburg was much disappointed that he had been out, but was glad that Boyle had been well enough to make the journey: "I cannot omit acquainting you," he goes on, "that never a calamity—and such a one—was borne so well as this is. It is incredible how little the sufferers, though great ones, do complain of their losses. I was yesterday in many meetings of the principal citizens whose houses are laid in ashes, who, instead of complaining, discoursed almost of nothing but of a Survey of London, and a design for rebuilding...."[308]

Two days later, Lady Ranelagh also wrote to Boyle; and again it is noticeable that she gives him no account of the Fire itself. She reports her own household to be as safe as it was when he left them—

"I have since taken to myself the mortification of seeing the desolations that God, in his just and dreadful judgment, has made in the poor City, which is thereby now turned indeed into a ruinous heap, and gave me the most amazing spectacle that ever I beheld in my progress about and into this ruin. I dispensed your Charity amongst some poor families

and persons that I found yet in the fields unhoused....”

And the end of her letter is equally characteristic: “Gresham College is now Guildhall, and the Exchange, and all. If the philosophers and the citizens become one corporation henceforward, it may be hoped our affairs may be better managed than they have been, unless the citizens should prove the prevailing party, which, as the worst, it is most like to do in this world, according to the small observation of your K. R.”[309]

CHAPTER XVI
A NEW LONDON

> "In the meane time the King and Parliament are infinitely zealous for the rebuilding of our ruines; and I believe it will universally be the employment of the next spring. They are now busied with adjusting the claims of each proprietor, that so they may dispose things for the building after the noblest model: Everybody brings in his idea, amongst the rest I presented his Majestie my own Conceptions, with a Discourse annex'd. It was the second that was seene within 2 Dayes after the Conflagration: but Dr. Wren had got the start of me."—JOHN EVELYN to *Sir Samuel Tuke*, September 27, 1666.

Christopher Wren had not let the ashes cool under his feet. Evelyn was picking his way among the debris—"the ground ... so hot that it even burnt the soles of my shoes"—and mourning over the ninety burnt City Churches, and the ruins of St. Paul's, "one of the most antient pieces of piety in the Christian World." He was thinking of the "poore Bookesellers," who, having trusted all their "noble impressions" to the insides of the Churches, had "ben indeede ill-treated by Vulcan." Two hundred thousand pounds' worth of books had been burnt: "an extraordinary detriment," says Evelyn, "to the whole Republiq of Learning."[310] Pepys, after the grimy fatigues of the past few days, had been "trimmed," and had gone to Church, in his Sunday best, and listened to a bad, poor sermon by the Dean of Rochester: "nor eloquent, in saying at this time that the City is

reduced from a large folio to a decimo-tertio":—the Dean, too, must have been among the booksellers. Lady Ranelagh was dispensing Robert Boyle's charity among the houseless Londoners huddled in the fields; and Henry Oldenburg was writing to Robert Boyle in Oxford. "The Stationers of Paul's," he wrote, "had suffered greatly." All their books, carried by them into St. Faith's Church, under St. Paul's, had been burnt; and amongst them were the "hitherto printed Transactions."

"Dr. Wren," he continued, "has, since my last, drawn a model for a New City, and presented it to the King, who produced it himself before the Council, and manifested much approbation of it. I was yesterday morning with the Doctor, and saw the model, which methinks does so well provide for security, conveniency, and beauty, that I can see nothing wanting as to those three main articles; but whether it has consulted with the populousness of a great City, and whether reason of state would have that consulted with, is a query to me. I then told the Doctor that, if I had had an opportunity to speak with him sooner, I should have suggested to him that such a model, contrived by him and received and approved by the Royal Society or a Committee thereof, before it had come to the view of his Majesty, would have given Our Society a name, and made it popular, and availed not a little to silence those who ask continually, what have they done?"

Wren explained to Oldenburg that he had been obliged to act quickly, "before other designs came in." And Oldenburg, in his letter to Boyle, took comfort in remembering that, after all, "it was a Member that had done it," and that, when Wren's design was accepted—as it undoubtedly would be—

all the world would know that the model of a New London was the work of a Member of the Royal Society.[311]

Robert Boyle, in his Oxford arm-chair, with his books and instruments about him, must have listened sadly to such war news, and news of Court and Parliament, as found its way to him in letters out of an anxious and distracted London. All the talk of late had been of the Navy muddle; the huge sums of money required; the poverty of the Exchequer; the mutinous and "pressed" men, and the "natural expression of passion" of the women left behind, who had "looked after the ships as far as they could see them by moonlight": a most sad state, truly, of public affairs. Distrust and anger filled the hearts of men and women, and strange rumours were afloat. During the summer, before the fire broke out, the war with the Dutch had been the one thing thought of and talked about. In June, Monk, Duke of Albemarle, and the Dutch de Ruyter had engaged in a fight "the longest and most stubborn that the seas have ever seen."[312] The English fleet had been ruined, but the English were not conquered, and in July the two fleets, refitted, had met again. This time it was the Dutch fleet that was destroyed and the Dutch who refused to be conquered. And just before the Fire of London broke out in Pudding Lane the French fleet had joined the Dutch fleet, and the English, with a weakened navy and an exhausted exchequer, were at a standstill. After the fire, when London was in ruins from the Tower to the Temple, strange rumours ran from mouth to mouth. There was "some kind of plot in this"; it was "a proper time for discontents"; it was the French who did it; it was the Dutch who did it; it was the Papists who did it; it was the old Republicans—a dire revenge on the eve

of Cromwell's Lucky Day. The prophecies in *Booker's Almanack* for the year were the topics of conversation at dinner-tables; and Lady Carteret told Pepys that pieces of charred paper had been blown by the wind as far as Cranborne,[313] and that she herself had picked up, or been given, a little bit of paper on which the words were printed: "*Time is, it is done.*"

In the spring of 1667, a Peace Congress was sitting at Breda, but an armistice had been refused; and then it was that de Witt had seized his moment and that the Dutch fleet sailed for the mouth of the Thames. The English were unready, their seamen mutinous, their coffers empty, their big ships laid up, for economy's sake, in dock. Everybody knows the panic and confusion that followed—the impotent rage of a people that felt itself betrayed: Ruyter and de Witt were at hand, coming up our own beloved Thames with "a fine and orderly fleet of sixty sail." And Monk, the Duke of Albemarle, in his shirt-sleeves, at Gravesend, was doing his best to "choke the channel."

But the Dutch were not intending to land. After they had burnt the English ships in the river, they were content to sail away again, carrying with them, as an insolent trophy, the half-burnt hull of the ship that had once been the *Naseby*, and was now the *Royal Charles*.

The rage of the Londoners knew no bounds. England was undone;—with a debauched and lazy Prince and a licentious court; "no council, no money, no reputation at home or abroad."[314] The very men who had stood in the Strand and blessed God at the Restoration now wished Cromwell back again: "Everybody nowadays," says Pepys, "reflect upon

Oliver and commend him, what brave things he did, and made all the neighbour Princes fear him."

Towards the end of 1666 Lady Ranelagh was expecting her brother from Oxford to make her a prolonged visit in the house in Pall Mall. And where Robert Boyle was, there must some kind of chemical laboratory be also.

"I have ordered Thomas," she wrote, "to look out for charcoal; and should gladly receive your orders to put my back house in posture to be employed by you, against your coming, that you may lose no time after."[315]

The Royal Society was again holding its meetings; —still, at first, under difficulties, in Gresham College, which was now the Exchequer. Hooke and Croone were both enthusiastic over the "pretty experiments" of transfusion of blood: "one dog filled with another dog's blood," is Pepys's way of expressing it. Croone told Pepys that the performances at Gresham College had given occasion for "many pretty wishes, as of the blood of a Quaker to be let into an Archbishop, and such-like." The City was still in a melancholy condition; it was difficult and dangerous to walk about the ruins, with a link, after dark; but the "Greate Streetes" were now being "marked out with piles, drove into the ground"; and people were wondering why so many of the new Churches were to be built "in a cluster about Cornhill." In January 1667, Gresham College being occupied by the Exchequer, Mr. Henry Howard, one of the Society's most generous members, put rooms in Arundel House in the Strand at the disposal of the Royal Society—

"To the Royal Society," says Evelyn, "which since the sad conflagration were invited by Mr. Howard to

sit at Arundel House in the Strand, who at my instigation likewise bestow'd on the Society that noble library which his grandfather especially and his ancestors had collected. This gentleman had so little inclination to bookes, that it was the preservation of them from imbezzlement."[316]

In May, the meetings of the Society were in full swing: May 30, especially, must have been a gala occasion—

"To London," says Evelyn, "to wait on the Dutchess of Newcastle (who was a mighty pretender to learning, poetrie and philosophie, and had in both publish'd divers bookes) to the Royal Society, whither she came in greate pomp, and being receiv'd by our Lord President at the Dore of our meeting roome, the mace, etc., carried before him, had several experiments shewed to her. I conducted her Grace to her coach, and return'd home."

Pepys gives a better account: The Duchess had invited herself; and there had been "much debate, pro and con, it seems many being against it, and we do believe the town will be full of ballads of it." In the end, gallantry prevailed among the Philosophers; and when Pepys arrived at Arundel House on foot, after his noonday dinner—it was a very hot and dusty day—he found "very much company" in decorous expectation of her Grace. She came, with her attendant women—among them the "Ferabosco," of whose beauty there had been so much talk among the gallants. The Duchess herself, in her "antick" dress, disappointed Pepys: "nor did I hear her say anything that was worth hearing, but that she was full of admiration, all admiration."

The Philosophers showed her all their best experiments—"of colours, loadstones, microscopes,

and of liquors." The *chef d'œuvre* seems to have been the turning of a piece of roasted mutton into pure blood, "which was very rare," says Pepys; and then the Duchess and her suite were escorted to her coach again, her Grace still crying that she was "full of admiration."

That was in May. Before the end of June poor Henry Oldenburg was suddenly clapped into the Tower. The news must have fallen like a thunderbolt at the next Wednesday afternoon meeting of the Society. Their Secretary was in jail.

"I was told yesterday," wrote Pepys, on June 25th, "that Mr. Oldenburg, our Secretary at Gresham College, is put into the Tower, for writing news to a virtuoso in France, with whom he constantly corresponds on philosophical matters: which makes it very unsafe at this time to write, or almost to do anything."[317]

Oldenburg was still in custody on August 8 when Evelyn called at the Tower.

"Visited Mr. Oldenburg, now close prisoner in the Tower, being suspected of writing intelligence. I had an order from Lord Arlington, Secretary of State, which caus'd me to be admitted. This Gentleman was Secretary to our Society, and I am confident will prove an innocent person."

And indeed Oldenburg was soon to be set free. On September 3 he was once more in his own home and writing to Robert Boyle at Oxford—

"I was so stifled by the prison air," says Oldenburg, "that as soon as I had my enlargement from the *Tower* I widened it, and took it from *London* into the Country, to fan myself for some days in the good air

of *Craford* in *Kent*. Being now returned, and having recovered my stomach, which I had in a manner quite lost, I intend, if God will, to fall to my old trade,[318] if I have any support to follow it."

Once again, evidently, the Boyle family had done their best for a Puritan friend in trouble. "I have learnt during this Commitment," says Oldenburg to Boyle, "to know my real friends. God Almighty bless them, and enable me to convince them all of my gratitude. Sir, I acknowledge and beg pardon for the importunities I gave you at the beginning; assuring you that you cannot lay any commands on me that I shall not cheerfully obey to the best of my power."

But the news of Oldenburg's release—though Boyle must have been glad to hear of it—had come at an anxious time. A few days before Boyle received Oldenburg's letter the Lord Chancellor Clarendon had been required to resign the Seals. The Boyle family must have known something of what was happening: the Burlingtons and the Clarendons were next-door neighbours in the two great palaces in Piccadilly, and their children were married,—"Lory Hide" to Henrietta Boyle.

"Dear Broghill"—now my Lord Orrery—had been in England by the King's wish for some little time, having left Munster under the care of a Vice-President. "Lord Orrery," says his chaplain, Dr. Morrice, quaintly, "saw thoroughly into the tempers of people and the consequences of things." And he had foreseen Clarendon's fall, and had already warned Clarendon in vain. In August, Lady Clarendon had died: "the mother of all his children and the companion in all his banishment, and who had made all his former calamities less grievous by her company and courage." Lady Clarendon had

been buried in Westminster Abbey; and alone, in his new palace, among his pictures and books, the widower had received his Majesty's visit of condolence. And then, only a few days later, had come the King's message, carried by the Chancellor's son-in-law the Duke of York. It was desirable "on various grounds, but especially for his own safety," that Clarendon should resign the Seals.

During the next day or two the Duke of York, the Duchess—Clarendon's daughter—and Archbishop Sheldon, and various other people, interceded for Clarendon with the King. And on the morning of August 26 Clarendon was sent for to Whitehall. The audience lasted two hours, in the King's own chamber, and then the Chancellor was dismissed and departed, "looking sad," through the private garden of Whitehall, which was "full of people" waiting to see him come out. Lady Castlemaine, in her smock, looked down upon the garden from her aviary window, laughing with the gallants below, and "blessing herself at the old man's going."

Next day Evelyn called on the Chancellor at his house in Piccadilly. "I found him," says Evelyn, "in his bedchamber, very sad." The tide had turned against him: the Parliament had accused him, and he had enemies at Court; "especialy the buffoones and ladies of pleasure, because he thwarted some of them and stood in their way."

All this is old reading: the fall of Clarendon is a chapter of British history. But it is not quite so well known that Lord Orrery, "dear Broghill," the uncle of "Lory Hide's" wife, was asked to take the seals that Clarendon had been forced to give up. According to Morrice, the Duchess of York appealed to Lord Orrery to take the seals and heal the breach between

the King and the Duke, whose suspected papacy was "against him." And then the Duke tried to persuade Lord Orrery; and lastly the King himself offered him the Chancellorship. But Broghill's had always been a "well-armed head"; and now that he was Lord Orrery he knew his King—and he knew his gout; and he made his gout serve as an excuse for declining the honour offered him by his King. "I am a decrepit man," he said to the Duchess of York; but he took a turn or two in his coach, in the park, planning what could be done to make the King and the Duke agree, and thinking what a pity it was that Clarendon had been so imperious—even towards the King himself.

So far Morrice. Lord Orrery went back to Ireland, and Sir Orlando Bridgeman was the new Chancellor: "the man of the whole nation that is best spoken of, and will please most people," says the fickle Pepys, who had himself, such a little while before, been "mad in love with my Lord Chancellor."

In October Lord Orrery's new play, *The Black Prince*, was produced at the King's Theatre. The house was "infinite full," the King and Duke there, and not a seat to be got by Mr. Pepys in the pit, so that he was obliged to pay four shillings for a seat in the upper boxes, "the first time ever I sat in a box in my life." In November and December both Houses were "very busy about my Lord Chancellor's impeachment," and Lory Hide was going about saying that if he thought his father had done only one of the things that were being said against him, he, Lory Hide, would be "the first that should call for judgment against him", which Mr. Waller, the poet, "did say was spoke like the old Roman—like Brutus —for its greatness and worthiness."

On December 3, Henry Oldenburg, back at his

work as Secretary of the Royal Society, was writing to Boyle of the "grand affair," the wrangle of Lords and Commons over the terms of Clarendon's impeachment. And the same letter announced that the Royal Society had "greatly applauded" Boyle's recently communicated *Experiments of Light*; and that at the Anniversary Meeting of the Society, on St. Andrew's Day, Boyle had been elected one of the new Council—"a very numerous meeting ... never so great a one before." Boyle was then still in Oxford; but Evelyn, the Chancellor's old friend, had been calling again at the great house in Piccadilly: "To visit the late Lord Chancellor. I found him in his garden at his new built Palace, sitting in his gowt wheele-chayre, and seeing the gates setting up towards the North and the fields. He look'd and spoke very disconsolately ... next morning I heard he was gon...."

Clarendon, by the King's orders, had hurriedly escaped to France, to be followed into exile by an Act of Parliament banishing him for life. Clarendon was gone; and the "Cabal" administration had begun. [319]

If the year 1667 ended anxiously for the Boyle family, the year 1668 was to prove more anxious still. Lord Orrery had returned to Ireland to take up his presidency of Munster, and was living in great splendour at Charleville; but he and the Lord Lieutenant, Ormonde, disagreed; and in the autumn of 1668 Lord Orrery had resigned the presidency and was back in England. He had "been advised," says Morrice, "that his credit at Court had begun to decline," and that it would be wise for him to be on the spot.

He was very much on the spot when Pepys met

him, in October, at Lord Arlington's house. In spite of his gout, the urbanity of the Boyle family had not forsaken him. He "took notice" of Pepys, and began a "discourse of hangings, and of the improvement of shipping"; and Pepys presently discovered that Lord Orrery was paying "a mighty compliment" to his abilities and ingenuity, "which I am mighty proud of, and he do speak most excellently."

But later in November came a rude awakening. It was now my Lord Orrery's turn to be impeached in the House of Commons, "for raising of moneys by his own authority upon his Majesty's subjects."

When the summons came, Lord Orrery was laid up with a severe attack of gout; and when he was well enough, a few days later, to answer the summons in person, he could scarcely manage to get up the steps from Westminster Hall to the Court of Request. A friend, passing by, remarked that my Lord of Orrery walked with difficulty and pain. "Yes, sir," said Orrery, "my feet are weak; but if my heels will serve to carry me up, I promise you my head shall bring me safe down again."

And it did. He made an able defence—sitting, because of his gout; and at the psychological moment, so the story runs, the King put an end to the proceedings by proroguing both Houses.[320] Impeachments might be as thick as blackberries; Lord Orrery might discourse cheerfully of "hangings" at a dinner party at Lord Arlington's house; but, after all, it was only five-and-twenty years since the old Earl of Cork had died in harness with all his sons in the field. It would have been inconvenient to overlook such services and such sacrifices as the great Boyle family in Ireland had rendered to their Kings.

No further steps were to be taken against Lord Orrery. “I am glad the House dismissed that foolish impeachment against my Lord Orrery,” wrote Mr. Stubbe, of Warwick, to Robert Boyle. Morrice says that, while the affair was in progress, Lady Pegg had been sent by her husband to Ireland “to secure the estates.” She had performed her mission “with great dexterity and expedition,” so that “if he had been impeached, his family would have been safe.” As it was, Lord Orrery returned to Ireland and Lady Pegg —to occupy himself with repairing his last great home of Castle Martyr, and to write his *Art of War*. And in December 1668 another new play—*Tryphon*—a tragedy taken from the First Book of Maccabees, was produced with great success at the Duke’s house. Mr. and Mrs. Pepys, on this occasion, “put a bit of meat in their mouths” and hurried off, to find the theatre crowded, and to sit out the performance in the eighteenpenny seats above-stairs—“mighty hot.”

So ended 1668. During the last half of the year, at any rate, Robert Boyle had been away from Oxford and in the family circle. It is probable that he was not far from “dear Broghill” in his hour of trial. After the family anxiety on this brother’s account had quieted down, there came news from Ireland that Lord Ranelagh was dead. His death can have brought little outward change to the house in the Mall. Dick Jones—whose life at Court with Grammont and the rest of the gallants must have caused Lady Ranelagh many a heartache, had been for some time employed in Irish politics and in Ireland. Ormonde had brought about a reconciliation between Lord Ranelagh and his son; and the young Pyrophilus had been member for the county of Roscommon in the Irish Parliament before his father’s death raised him to the Upper House. It is suggestive that Lord Ranelagh’s

nuncupative Will left the two unmarried daughters, Elizabeth and Frances, a sum of money, subject to their marrying with the consent of the eldest sister, Lady Mount-Alexander. It is a question whether "the girls" received any money as a result of these nuncupative paternal intentions. Elizabeth, who became Mrs. Melster, must have been the heroine of a humble love-story, for her husband is described in the old peerages as a *valet de pé*. This did not mean exactly in those times what it means to-day, nor was it exactly what might have been expected for a granddaughter of the Great Earl of Cork. And yet, it must be remembered that the old Elizabethan Peer had always about him a little *entourage* of cousin-commoners, as staunch as they were unobtrusive,—Naylors of Gray's Inn and Croones of Cheapside.

Frances, the delicate daughter—the baby born prematurely at the manor of Stalbridge—does not seem to have married at all. Lady Ranelagh had nursed "my poor Franck" through many illnesses—smallpox, of course, among them. She suffered from headaches; and nothing did them so much good as the little packets of tea—a costly luxury in those days—that Lady Ranelagh was able to procure for her by the kindness of the Oxford uncle. Elizabeth and Frances were both probably still "the girls," and living with their mother, when Robert Boyle, in 1669, left Oxford for good. Their uncle Robyn, the "deare Squire"—was long ago turned philosopher; something of a valetudinary; a virtuoso of an European fame. Philosophers of all nations flocked to see Mr. Boyle's experiments. The Royal Society—all intellectual London—was waiting for his coming.

With his books and instruments and standish—but, alas! no longer his bows and arrows—he once more,

as in the old-young days of 1644, took up his residence with Lady Ranelagh in the house in Pall Mall.

CHAPTER XVII
THE HOUSE IN PALL MALL

"... Only this methinks I am sure of, that it is a brave thing to be one of those, that shall lift up their heads with joy in expectation of a present redemption, when all these ruins and confusions shall be upon the Earth; and such brave men and women are only true Christians. Therefore, my dear brother, let us endeavour for that dignity, though in maintaining it we take courses, that have the contempt of the world heaped upon them; for to be contemned by the contemptible is glorious in the opinion of your K. R."—LADY RANELAGH to ROBERT BOYLE, September 14 (1653?).

"The Book of Nature is a fine and large piece of tapestry rolled up, which we are not able to see all at once, but must be content to wait for the discovery of its beauty and symmetry, little by little, as it gradually comes to be more and more unfolded or displayed."—ROBERT BOYLE, Second Part of the *Christian Virtuoso*, Aphorism xxi.

The intellectual atmosphere of Oxford, when Robert Boyle said good-bye to it, was not the same "ayre" that he had weighed so pleasantly in 1659. Indeed, he must have been rather glad to be out of it before the great occasion of the opening of the Sheldonian at the *Encœnia* of 1669. Evelyn, who was present, was scandalised, not only by the University Orator's "malicious and indecent reflections on the Royal Society as undermining of the University," but

by the performance of the University Buffoone, "which, unless it be suppressed," he says, "it will be of ill consequences, as I afterwards plainly expressed my sense of it both to the Vice-Chancellor[321] and severall heads of houses, who were perfectly ashamed of it and resolved to take care of it in future." The "old facetious way" had given place to ribald and libellous attacks: "In my life," says Evelyn, "I was never witnesse of so shamefull entertainment."

Boyle's old friend, Dr. Wallis, Professor of Mathematics, was equally distressed. In fact, he wrote about it to Mr. Boyle in London. Wallis had been one of those who objected to the fulsome wording of the proposed letter of thanks from the University to the Archbishop—a letter acknowledging Sheldon as their "Creator and Redeemer": *non tantus condere, hoc est creare, sed etiam redimere*.[322] And he was as angry with the University Orator's attack on "Cromwell, fanatics, the Royal Society and the New Philosophy," as he was at the abominable scurrilities of the University Buffoone. Real stage-plays, too, imported from the Duke's House, had been acted in the Oxford Town Hall—and were less objectionable than what had gone on in the Sheldonian.

But even Wallis seems to have been infected by the summer madness of that *Encœnia* of 1669. He had been entertaining some of the guests at his own house; Sir James Langham and his Lady, and other "persons of quality"; and in an after-dinner chat Sir James had been expatiating on the qualities of "an excellent lady," Lady Mary Hastings, sister to the Earl of Huntingdon—a lady for whom Sir James had a very great esteem. So highly, indeed, did he think

of “her temper, her parts, her worth, her virtue, her piety and everything else,” that he would have been quite willing to marry her himself except that she was his deceased wife’s sister, and that he was already married again. But Sir James thought—and Wallis concurred with him—that Lady Mary would make “not only an excellent wife, but an excellent wife for Esquire Boyle.” And Wallis wrote then and there to Boyle to offer to be “the happy instrument of making two so excellent persons happy in each other.”

Wallis may in his youth have studied cryptology; but in his middle age he did not understand Robert Boyle. Lady Mary Hastings probably never knew of the future that had been so neatly mapped out for her in that after-dinner chat. She married Sir William Joliffe, of Caverswell Castle, in Staffordshire. The Manor of Stalbridge stood empty; and Mr. Boyle went on living in Pall Mall.

But if Oxford was changed of late years, so also was Pall Mall—very much changed indeed since a certain dark evening of 1649, when Cromwell’s “sightly lieutenant,” carrying the message to Broghill, rode up to Lady Ranelagh’s door. One of the first things that Charles II had done was to make a new Mall in St. James’s Park, and to improve the Park itself—“now every day more and more pleasant by the new works upon it,” wrote Pepys in January 1662. A river was made through the Park; and there on frosty winter days Pepys stood to watch the gay groups “sliding with their skeates—which is a very pretty art.” The Duke of York was an accomplished skater, and the King was a great hand at the game of Mall.

"Here a well-polished Mall gives us the joy
To see our Prince his matchless force employ.
No sooner had he touch'd the flying ball
But 'tis already more than half the Mall."[323]

When Pepys stopped to have a talk with the keeper of the Mall—who was "sweeping of it" at the moment—he examined with interest its earthen flooring, spread with powdered cockle-shells. Evelyn, on the other hand, cared more about the birds and beasts that inhabited the Park—the "deare of severall countries," the guinea-fowl and Arabian sheep; the pelican, and the melancholy waterfowl brought by the Russian Ambassador from Astracan; the Solan geese, and the pet crane with a real wooden leg —"made by a soldier." Waller has described St. James's Park "as lately improved by his Majesty"—

"Methinks I see the love that shall be made,
The lovers walking in that amorous shade;
The Gallants dancing by the riverside—
They bathe in summer and in winter slide.
Methinks I hear the music in the boats,
And the loud echo which returns the notes.
...
The ladies angling in the crystal lake
Feast on the waters with the prey they take;
At once victorious with their lines and eyes
They make the fishes and the men their prize."

Mr. Waller saw everything *couleur de rose*. "I know his calling as a Poet," wrote Lady Ranelagh once to Robert Boyle, when Waller had been paying her one of his elaborate compliments, "gives him license to say as great things as he can without intending that they should signify anything more than that he said them."[324] And it is possible some of the older

inhabitants of Pall Mall did not look so kindly on the "improvements" in St. James's Park.

The old Mall, and the old game that was played there, dated back to James I. There was a "Pell Mell Close" planted with apple-trees that gave the name to Apple-Tree Yard, St. James's Square. The houses had been built on both sides of the Old Mall;—"The Pall Mall," as it was called, or "Pall Mall Walk," or "The Pavement." Its double row of seventy elm trees —140 trees in all—running its length, from the Haymarket to St. James's, may well have been the "living gallery of aged trees," in Waller's poem of 1661. Lady Ranelagh's house was one of those on the south side, at the west end, of the Mall; houses advertised as "on the Park side, with Gardens or Mounts adjoining to the Royal Gardens." There were various interesting inhabitants of the Mall about the time that Boyle went to live there with Lady Ranelagh. Dr. Sydenham, the fashionable London physician, had been living there since 1658—an old friend of theirs: one of the great Dorsetshire Puritan family of Sydenhams, of whom the doctor's brother, the Parliamentarian Colonel Sydenham, was the chief. Mrs. Knight the singer, and Dr. Isaac Barrow the divine, and the notorious Countess of Southesk who figures in the Memoirs of Grammont, were all living in the Mall. There were taverns, too, and shops, with signboards: "The King's Head," and "The Two Golden Balls." And Pall Mall was Clubland, even then: "Wood's at the Pell Mell, our old house for clubbing," wrote Pepys in 1660. But in 1670, after Boyle went to live there, it was still a rural, leafy little suburb of fashionable London, between Whitehall and St. James's Palace, nestled among the old trees, under the very shadow of Westminster Abbey and Westminster Palace; the Painted

Chamber, and the Star Chamber, and St. Stephen's Chapel—"*That house where all our ills were shaped*," as Waller called it,—after the Restoration. So rural was the Old Mall, that Dr. Sydenham used to sit smoking his pipe at his open window looking on to the Pavement, with a silver tankard of ale on the window-sill; and when once a thief ran off with the doctor's tankard, thief and tankard alike were lost "in the bushes of Bond Street."[325]

In 1669, Nell Gwynne was living on the north side, and at the east end, of the Mall, next door to Lady Mary Howard; but in 1671, she crossed over to a house on the Park side of Pall Mall, the leasehold of which had been given her by Charles II; and there, from this time till her death in 1687, "Maddam Elinor Gwyn" was living, only two doors off from Lady Ranelagh and Robert Boyle. Those strips of back gardens, with "raised mounts" in them looking over to the Royal Gardens, were very near together. Did Boyle, whose laboratory was at the back of Lady Ranelagh's house, see Mrs. Nellie on her mount, talking to the King who stood looking up at her from the green walk below? Evelyn was in attendance that day. "I both saw and heard," wrote Evelyn afterwards in his diary, "a very familiar discourse between [the King] and Mrs. Nellie, as they cal'd an impudent comedian, she looking out of her garden on a terrace at the top of the wall, and [the King] standing on ye greene walke under it...."[326]

But that was in May 1671; and by that time Robert Boyle had been very ill for eleven months, and was only beginning to recover. The year 1669, and part of 1670, had been very busy. Besides his contributions to the Royal Society's *Transactions*, he had published further work on the *Spring and Weight*

of the Air, and a second edition of his *Physiological Essays*. Du Moulin's translation of the *Devil of Mascon*, with Boyle's introduction, had appeared; and Boyle was using all his influence, personal and literary, to heal the feud between the Royal Society and the Universities, in which Sprat and Glanville, Stubbe, Crosse, and others, were taking sides. And in 1670 there appeared Boyle's *Tracts about the Cosmical Qualities of Things*, better known by the delightful title of "Cosmical Suspicions." Boyle was at this time at the height of his scientific and literary popularity: "Mr. Boiles Styll" meant very much to the intellectual London of that day. It had its disciples, and it had its critics. Evelyn has spoken of "those incumbrances" in it "which now and then render the way a little tedious"; and there were people who thought that in his literary style Mr. Boyle was not quite so happy as in his experiments.[327]

And even in these experiments, one pair of eyes, at least, was fixed upon Robert Boyle; eyes that saw as far as, and perhaps a little further than, even Boyle's. Isaac Newton—the boy who had jumped against the wind in that terrific storm that raged over England when Cromwell lay dying—was only twenty-nine in 1671; but he was already professor of mathematics at Cambridge, and a Fellow of the Royal Society. It was six years since he had noticed the traditional apple fall to earth in his mother's orchard in Lincolnshire. He himself had been tempted to seek after the philosopher's stone; and when in 1676 Isaac Newton read in the *Transactions* of Boyle's "uncommon experiment about the incalescence of gold and mercury," it was in the finest spirit, as one of Boyle's sincerest "honourers," that Newton wrote to Oldenburg, the secretary. He felt that "the fingers of many will itch to have the knowledge of the

preparation of such a mercury; and for that end some may not be wanting to move for the publishing of it, by urging the good it may do in the world. But, in my simple judgment, the noble author, since he has thought fit to reveal himself so far, does prudently in being reserved in the rest." Newton gave his reasons for doubting this theory of the transmutation of metals: he foreshadowed the "immense damage to the world" that might come from proceeding further with it. "I question not," he says of Boyle's experiments, "but that the great wisdom of the noble author will *sway him to silence* till he shall be resolved of what consequence they may be." It was because Boyle himself seemed "desirous of the sense of others in this point" that Newton had "been so free as to shoot my bolt."

Isaac Newton's "bolt" took effect, though it must have cost Boyle something to give up that little bit of research; for he had been, so to speak, rolling a little ball of quicksilver and gold-dust in the palm of his hand ever since the year 1652, when he was only five-and-twenty; pressing it a little with the fingers of the other hand, till it grew "sensibly and considerably hot," and timing the "incalescence" by a minute clock. He was to hover about the subject for a time, but in the end, he was to follow Newton's advice. If these two men could be present at a meeting of the Royal Society in Burlington House to-day! Their two portraits are on its walls. Their two faces look down on modern experimental science. Their self-restraint has had its reward.

Already, in 1670, Boyle was at the height of his literary and scientific popularity, the acknowledged chief of the circle of New Philosophers in London. He had long been a valetudinary, saving his strength for

his work, and holding himself aloof from uncongenial company. And he was now beginning to enjoy the ease and dignity of home life, a clever woman's ministrations and companionship, and the thousand-and-one little amenities of a home that his bachelor life in his Oxford lodgings must have lacked. But in June 1670 he had been taken suddenly ill; "a severe paralytic distemper", it was called; and eleven months later, in May 1671, he was writing a pathetic little letter to his old Dorsetshire friend, John Mallet of Poynington, describing in his own gentle words his invalid condition. "I have taken so many medicines," he wrote, "and found the relief they awarded me so very slow, that it is not easy for me to tell you what I found most good by. The things which to me seem fittest to be mentioned on this occasion are that cordial medicines, especially such as peculiarly befriend the *genus nervosum*, were very frequently and not unsuccessfully administered ... that the dried flesh of vipers seemed to be one of the usefullest cordials I took; but then I persevered in taking it daily for a great while. That I seldom missed a day without taking the air, at least once, and that even when I was at the weakest, and was fain to be carried in men's arms from my chair into the coach. That the best thing I found to strengthen my feet and legs, and which I still use, was sack turned to a brine with sea-salt and well rubbed upon the parts every morning and night with a warm hand...."

Boyle's own doctor was Edmund King—not then Sir Edmund and the King's Physician, but a London practitioner of repute, living in Hatton Gardens; a year or two younger than Boyle; a member of the Royal Society; a friend of Willis and Petty, and a great man for dissections and experiments. It was

Edmund King who was so interested in the first transfusion experiments on human subjects, and who, “with my best microscope,” noticed the appearance of living organisms in “things left in water.” And it is to be remembered that in a list of Boyle’s lost manuscripts there is one with the title “Spontaneous Generation.” It is possible that he and Dr. King may have been working together with the microscope. The “viper powder” was one of Dr. King’s prescriptions, though he is said to have preferred the “volatile salt.” It was not till some years later that Dr. King gained such celebrity by his prompt action in bleeding Charles II after his apoplectic seizure. He had a lancet in his pocket; and no other doctor was at hand.

Boyle recovered from his paralytic distemper, though very slowly. Whether it was the cordial of viper’s flesh, or the ministration of a warm human hand, he did regain strength, and was able once more to take up his work and resume his London life —always afterwards more or less the life of a studious invalid. “It has plainely astonish’d me,” says Evelyn, “to have seene him so often recover, when he has not been able to move, or bring his hand to his mouth: and indeede the contexture of his body, during the best of his health, appear’d to me so delicate, that I have frequently compar’d him to a chrystal or Venice glasse which, tho’ wrought never so thin and fine, being carefully set up, would outlive the harder metals of daily use: And he was with all as clear and candid: not a blemish or spot to tarnish his reputation.”

The mere number of Boyle’s publications during these years is remarkable, even though much of the work for them had been done before, and had only

to be arranged for publication. They dealt with the Usefulness of Experimental Natural Philosophy; the Origin and Virtue of Gems; Fire, Flame, and Effluviums; the Pressure of Solids and Fluids, and the Weighing of Water; the Properties of Sea Water, and its Distillation; the Mechanical Causes of Heat and Cold, Volatility and Precipitation and Corrosiveness; the Production of Tastes; the Hypothesis of Alkali and Acidum, and the effects of atmospheric conditions "even on men's sickness and health." And there was always the other *facet* to Boyle's intellectual nature. While he was writing of all these and other things, while he was wrapped up in Suspicions—about the hidden qualities of air, celestial magnets and attraction by suction, statical hygroscopes, laudanum, and air-bladders, and "quicksilver turning hot with gold,"—he was also deep in meditations of the "Excellence of Theology compared with Natural Philosophy." Both had always seemed to him to be the "Objects of Men's Study." He held tenaciously to the "Reconcilableness of Reason and Religion"; and his theological treatises were to run parallel with his philosophical transactions.

The later chapters of biography are of necessity a chronicle of losses. The death of the great admiral, the Earl of Sandwich, at the battle of Solebay, on May 28, 1672, removed the other splendid father-in-law of the Burlington family. His funeral, "by water to Westminster, in solemn pomp," must have affected the inmates of the house in Pall Mall as well as the families in the two Piccadilly palaces. "They will not have me live," Lord Sandwich had said sadly to Evelyn, before he sailed. It is very certain that the whole trend of politics at this time—the crypto-

catholic movement, burrowing its way into Protestant England; the *capuchins* flitting about between Whitehall and St. James's; the alliance with the French against the Dutch, and the prolonged war with Holland; the plottings and placings of the *Cabal*, and the quarrels and changes in the royal harem, which had pushed up to the very door of the house in Pall Mall—must have been utterly distasteful to Robert Boyle and his passionately Puritan sister.

Poor Charles Rich, my Lord of Warwick, who had been ill for a long time, died at Leeze in 1673, leaving Mary, a childless great lady, still surrounded by chaplains, to administer her husband's property and to see all the three "sweet young ladies," her nieces, married to satisfactory husbands of her own choosing.

A more personal loss to Robert Boyle was the sudden death of Henry Oldenburg in September 1677. He and another old friend, Dr. Worsley of the "mountain-bellied conceptions" for the good of mankind, died almost at the same time. Oldenburg had worked hard for the Royal Society since he came out of the Tower in the autumn of 1667. He had carried the Society through the troublesome time that followed the Fire of London, after the loss of its *Transactions* and during its sojourn in Arundel House. He had seen it reinstated in Gresham College, and a great collation given in its honour by the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of London. He had been overworked and underpaid, and had added to the small gains he made out of the Society's *Transactions*[328] by doing a good deal of work for Boyle personally, in proof-correcting and in translating Boyle's books into Latin. And Boyle had tried to obtain for him the Latin Secretaryship—the

very post that Milton had held—but in this he had failed. One of the last glimpses of Oldenburg and Boyle together is at a little scientific supper-party in February 1676, given by Sir Joseph Williamson, who later became President of the Royal Society when Lord Brouncker resigned. Boyle was well enough to be at this supper-party; and Evelyn and Wren and Petty and one or two others were there, and "our Secretary, Mr. Oldenburg."[329] Lady Ranelagh was away from home on a visit when the news of Oldenburg's death reached her; and, knowing how much her brother would feel his death, she wrote Boyle one of her most comfortable letters, and made arrangements to return home at once.[330] And as Oldenburg had died without making a will, and his wife (his second wife, daughter of John Durie) died just before or just after him, Robert Boyle himself took care of their children, left poorly provided for and without relations in this country. The boy had been named "Rupert," after the scientific Prince.

Mary, Countess of Warwick, survived her husband just five years. Her death at Leeze, in 1678, must have closed a chapter in the life of the sister and brother in Pall Mall. Lady Ranelagh had been with Mary in all her hours of trial—and they had been so many—the little, "unrewly" sister! Lady Ranelagh had been at Stalbridge when the Earl of Cork was so angry because Mary dismissed Mr. James Hamilton; it was Lady Ranelagh who had accompanied Charles and Mary to Leeze after their runaway marriage, and stayed with them there till Mary had found her place in that patriarchal family. It was Lady Ranelagh who had tended Mary in all her illnesses, and had taken Mary and Charles under her own roof after their son's death. And Robert Boyle, too;—how tenderly romantic Mary had been when the "deare Squire"

took refuge at delicious Leeze in the summer of 1648, and she sat beside him while he wrote his *Seraphick Love*! How she had wept over the pages as they were handed to her, the ink scarcely dry!

But an even greater loss was to come in Broghill's, my Lord of Orrery's, death in 1679. He had been ill for a year or two, and back and forward between Ireland and England, in the hands of the physicians; but otherwise he had been living the life of a great landowner on his Irish estates at Charleville and at Castle Martyr. His *Art of War*, dedicated to Charles II, had been published in 1677, and had met with a certain success. He was to have written a continuation of it, if the first volume had proved sufficiently popular. But warfare, like other things, has its fashions; and even warriors grow old: it was nearly forty years since the "Mortall Sowe" had done such good service on the walls of Lismore.

Lady Pegg was with her husband, his strong friend and helpmate, to the last. The beautiful bride of Suckling's wedding-ballad, with the slender ring-finger and the bee-stung lip, was now surrounded by children, grown up and married, some of them, and with great homes of their own. But Lady Pegg was beautiful and comfortable still. "A rose in autumn," as old Lord Goring used to say, "is as sweet as a rose in June." There is no doubt that Broghill, the soldier-statesman and dramatist—"my dearest Governor," as Robert Boyle called him—was the favourite brother, and that Lady Pegg was the chief of sisters-in-law, "the great support, ornament and comfort" of her family.

On St. Andrew's Day 1680 Boyle was elected President of the Royal Society. The anniversary meeting and the dinner that followed it had brought

a large gathering of the philosophers together. Evelyn was there, and his diary records the election of “that excellent person and greate Philosopher Mr. Robert Boyle, who indeede ought to have been the very first; but neither his infirmities nor his modestie could now any longer excuse him.” But Evelyn omits to mention that Boyle declined the presidency. He had an insuperable objection to tests and oaths. He took Counsel’s opinion in the matter, and he wrote to his old assistant Hooke,[331] explaining his “great (and perhaps peculiar) tenderness in point of oaths”; asking Hooke to convey his thanks to the Society, but begging them to “proceed to a new election.”

Less and less able now to attend the meetings of the Society, Boyle was gradually to withdraw also from the meetings of the East India Company, of which he was a Director, and of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, of which he was Governor. More and more did he retire into his quiet home-life in the house in Pall Mall, which had been enlarged to suit his purposes. There is no mention of him at the famous supper-party of the Royal Society, at which everything was cooked in Monsieur Papin’s Digestors—that “philosophical supper” which caused so much mirth and “exceedingly pleas’d all the company.” He is more likely to have been present a week or two later to see the Morocco Ambassador subscribe his name and titles in Arabic, on the occasion of his being admitted honorary member of the Royal Society.

Boyle lived, indeed, much among his books and manuscripts, and in his laboratory. With the help of an amanuensis, he carried on a large correspondence among the new philosophers of the Old World, and the Christian missionaries in the New. The New

Englanders wrote to him as their fount of charity: "Right Honourable, charitable, indefatiguable, nursing father." He had tried to spread the knowledge of the Bible in the East, in Turkish and Arabic, and in the Malayan tongue; and the publication of the Irish Bible was one of the great interests of his later years. While Narcissus Marsh[332] and others did the actual work of translation and dissemination in Ireland, Robert Boyle in Pall Mall promoted it "with his influence and purse"; and Boyle's Irish Bible was to find its way into Gaelic Scotland also, before Scotland had a Gaelic Bible of her own.[333]

But Boyle spent his money also in helping individual cases—people whose lots were less happy than he thought they deserved; poor hard-worked clergy; the "distress'd refugees of France and Ireland"; and "learned men who were put to wrestle with necessities." He did this, very quietly, for many years—usually by the hands of one or two personal friends in whose discretion he could trust. Gilbert Burnet, in those latter years, was one of these friends; and Burnet's own *History of the Reformation* would never have been published without Boyle's assistance. So quietly did Boyle dispense his charities that sometimes the very men so helped did not know from whence the help came; but Burnet says that for years Boyle spent on this form of charity more than £1000 a year, which would mean more than three times that sum to-day. And he gave impartially, without thought of race or creed, holding himself to be "a part of the human nature, a debtor to the whole race of men." Perhaps his especial *protégés* were those who had suffered for their religious and political convictions. A story of any kind of persecution would bring a flush of anger and distress

to his gentle face, and words of the deepest indignation to lips which rarely opened to “speak against men.”

Each year saw the publication of new tracts and treatises, and revised editions. They follow each other almost too quickly for enumeration. His *Discourse of Things above Reason: inquiring whether a philosopher should admit there are any such*, appeared in 1681; his *Memoirs of the Natural History of the Human Blood*, in 1684. That was the winter of the Great Frost, 1683-4, when all London bivouacked and made merry on the frozen Thames, and the smallpox was “very mortall.” It must have been a trying winter for the invalid philosopher; for London “by reason of the excessive coldnesse of the aire hindering the ascent of the smoke, was so fill’d with the fuliginous steame of the sea-coale that hardly could one see crosse the streetes, and thro’ filling the lungs with its grosse particles exceedingly obstructed the breast, so as one could scarcely breathe.”[334] And there was no water to be had from pipes or engines; the birds and beasts died in the parks, the breweries were at a standstill, and fuel was exorbitantly dear.

The treatise *Of the High Veneration Man’s Intellect Owes to God* appeared in 1685, and *A Free Enquiry into the Vulgarly Received Notion of Nature* in 1686. *The Martyrdom of Theodora and of Didymus*, written in his youth, was revised and printed in 1687; and about this time Boyle was advertising among the *virtuosi* for his lost and plagiarised manuscripts, evidently with some intention of bringing out a collected edition of his works. The only collection hitherto had been a very incomplete Latin edition, published without his knowledge in Geneva, in 1677.

In 1690 he published his *Medicina Hydrostatica*, and the first part of *The Christian Virtuoso*;[335] and in 1691—the last year of his life—his *Experimenta Observationes Physicæ*. Some of his writings, left with his executors, were to appear posthumously; and he had deposited with the secretaries of the Royal Society a sealed packet containing his account of the making of phosphorus—not to be opened till after his death.[336]

A busy life, to the last; but what a quiet life it was for the sister and brother during those last momentous years, in the house in Pall Mall! History swept past them: Kings came and went, Cabinets changed, beautiful faces faded, Parliaments were dissolved, creeds and parties wrangled and plotted, brave men—and women too—died on scaffolds and the gallows-tree and at the stake for political crimes. All the world knows about Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney; but it is sometimes forgotten that Mrs. Lisle, the wife of a regicide, laid her head on the block for "harbouring a rebel", and that Elizabeth Gaunt, for the same political crime, was burned at Tyburn.[337] A new London grew up over the old ruins—new steeples on old foundations—and fashionable new squares were built where green fields had been. And all the time a great and cumbrous Constitution was raising itself over centuries of abuse and sacrifice—a nation's blood and tears.

Events crowded the canvas: Charles II's melodramatic ending; the accession of the bigot James II; Monmouth's rising and execution; the "Bloody Assizes" of Judge Jeffreys, in Dorset and Somerset; James's league with the French; the revoking of the Edict of Nantes and the horrible atrocities that followed. Catholicism spread its fibres

throughout England, permeating Army, Law Courts, Parliament and University. Priests—Carmelites, Benedictines and Franciscans—walked about the streets of London, and a huge Jesuit school was set up in the Savoy. In Scotland, a Catholic was in command at Edinburgh Castle: in Ireland, a Catholic was at the head of the Army, and thousands of Catholic Irish were drafted into its ranks.[338]

A boy was born to James II and Mary of Modena, and there were whispered stories of imposture and the historic warming-pan. Then Protestantism closed up its ranks, the State Church and the Nonconformists combined in face of a common danger, and the hopes of Protestant England were fixed upon William and Mary. Another message carried from England to The Hague brought another Prince to English shores, but this time “to intervene in arms for the restoration of English liberty and the protection of the Protestant religion”. Another proclamation in London, but this time of an Anglo-Dutch Prince, and a Princess who was not only the daughter of James II but the granddaughter of Hyde, Earl of Clarendon. Another bloody rebellion in Ireland, another chapter of massacre and terrorism; but this time it was Ulster, and the Ulster Scots, who were fighting for Protestantism. Robert Boyle and Lady Ranelagh, growing old in the house in the Mall —two children of the great Elizabethan Puritan Earl of Cork—had watched Munster pass again into the hands of the Catholic Irish; but they lived just long enough to see William and Mary Sovereigns of England, and to have the tidings of the Siege of Londonderry and the Battle of the Boyne. One of the last reports of the Rebellion that can have reached Lady Ranelagh was the taking of Athlone by the English: it must have brought back to her the early

days of her married life, when Arthur Jones had carried her off to Athlone Castle, a beautiful, high-spirited girl of sixteen.

And now she was seventy-six. To her, if to nobody else in the world, her philosopher brother, twelve years her junior, was still “Robyn”—the “Deare Squire.” There were some empty rooms and many memories in the house in Pall Mall; but the sister and brother were together, and it was a hospitable and pleasant house, and open to many friends. Distinguished strangers from many parts of the world came to pay their respects to Mr. Boyle, the celebrated Sceptical Chymist and Christian *Virtuoso*, and his incomparable sister, the Lady Ranelagh, who for fifty years had lived “on the most public scene,” and “made the greatest figure in all the revolutions of these kingdoms of any woman of that age.”[339] The London *virtuosi*—and there were bishops as well as mathematicians among them—brought their latest literary and scientific gossip to the house in the Mall. The elder brother, old Lord Burlington, was sometimes to be found there, with a conversational statesman or two in tow, who could successfully dodge the politics of the moment by indulging in such a pleasant and safe topic as the *amours* of Mary, Queen of Scots, with “the Italian favourite.”[340] Gilbert Burnet—that eloquent and happy Scotsman south of the Tweed—sat at Mr. Boyle’s feet and took notes: his bishopric was to come with the accession of William and Mary. Even Pyrophilus must have looked in upon his mother and uncle now and then. Dick’s fortunes were up; he was an important man, had grown fat and very witty, and was building himself a fine house in Chelsea.[341] His mother’s portrait was to hang on the wall of his private closet, looking at him long after she was dead; outliving

other loves.[342]

Men and women of the younger generation of this great family were living round about Piccadilly, St. James's, and Pall Mall. One niece especially, my Lady Thanet, a married daughter of Lord and Lady Burlington, was a "greate virtuosa," known in London Society as one who "used to speak much of her uncle."[343] And Evelyn, the friend of nearly forty years, though he was a good deal older than Boyle, still found his way from Deptford to Pall Mall to visit the philosopher and his sister.

In the afternoons, Boyle was seldom without company; "neither did his severer studys," says Evelyn, "soure his conversation in the least." He had "the most facetious and agreeable conversation in the world among the ladys, whenever he happen'd to be engag'd; and yet so very serious, compos'd and contemplative at all other times; tho' far from moroseness, for indeede he was affable and civil rather to excesse, yet without formality."[344]

So popular were Mr. Boyle's cosmopolitan receptions that about the year 1689 he was obliged to put a "board" on the door in Pall Mall, mentioning the days on which he was "at home." And he actually printed an announcement, beginning "Mr. Boyle finds himself obliged to intimate to those of his friends and acquaintances who are wont to do him the honour of visiting him," and going on to explain that his "skilful and friendly physician, seconded by his best friends", had strongly advised him not to see quite so many people.[345]

The forenoons of Tuesdays and Fridays, therefore, "both foreign post-days," and the afternoons of Wednesdays and Saturdays, he proposed in future to reserve for himself, "that he might have some time,

both to recruit his spirits, to range his papers and fill up the *lacunæ* of them, and to take some care of his affairs in Ireland, which are very much disordered, and have their face often changed by the public calamities there."[346]

The announcement seems to have had the desired effect. "The mornings," says Evelyn in his description of the daily routine of Boyle's last years, "after his private devotions, he usually spent in philosophic studys and in his laboratory, sometimes extending them to night." But he told Evelyn he had quite given up reading by candle-light, on account of his eyes. His amanuensis used to read to him, and write from notes, or at his dictation; and "that so often in loose papers, pack'd up without method, as made him sometimes to seeke upon occasion, as himself confesses in divers of his works." And apparently Boyle was not more tidy than other learned men. "Glasses, potts, chymical and mathematical instruments, books and bundles of papers, did so fill and crowd his bedchamber, that there was but just room for a few chaires, so as his whole equipage was very philosophical, without formality." Among the other rooms in the house there was a small library. Boyle did not want more: "as learning more from men, real experiments, and in his laboratory (which was ample and well furnished) than from books."[347]

And the man himself, in these last years? He was "rather tall, and slender of stature, pale, and much emaciated." Owing to his delicacy of constitution, "he had divers sorts of cloaks to put on when he went abroad, and in this he governed himself by his thermometer." His little difficulty of speech had never quite forsaken him. "In his first addresses,

being to speake or answer," says Evelyn, "he did sometimes a little hesitate, rather than stam'er or repeate the same word; imputable to an infirmity which, since my remembrance, he had exceedingly overcome. This, as it made him somewhat slow and deliberate, so after the first effort, he proceeded without the least interruption in his discourse."[348]

In diet and in habit, Robert Boyle was "extreamely temperate and plaine"; nor could Evelyn, in all their friendship, ever discover in him "the least passion, transport, or censoriousnesse, whatever discourse, or the times, suggested:

"All was tranquil, easy, serious, discreete and profitable, so as besides Mr. Hobbes, whose hand was against everybody and admired nothing but his owne, Francis Linus excepted (who yet with much civility wrote against him), I do not remember he had the least antagonist."[349]

The brother and sister had both been ill in the late autumn of 1691, when Boyle wrote to Dr. Turberville at Salisbury, begging for a further prescription for his eyes. "Sight is a thing dear to all men," he wrote, almost apologetically, "and especially to studious persons." His eyes had been troubling him very much of late, especially by candle-light. "When the candles are newly snuffed," wrote this great experimental philosopher, "I see far better for a little while:" but they very soon wanted snuffing again.[350]

Evelyn was out of town on December 23, when Lady Ranelagh died; and he did not hear of her death, or of her brother's serious illness immediately after it, till it was too late. "For it was then," says Evelyn, "he began evidently to droope apace." When Evelyn returned to town, it was to stand by his old friend's grave. Robert Boyle had survived his sister

only seven days: he died on December 30, 1691.

He was buried near to Lady Ranelagh, in the Chancel of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields.[351] Burnet, now Bishop of Salisbury, preached the funeral sermon "with that eloquence natural to him on such and all other occasions," taking for his text the words, "For God giveth to a man that is good in His sight, wisdom, and knowledge, and joy."[352] "Something too," says Evelyn, "was touched of his sister, the Lady Ranelagh." But indeed it was not necessary. Her intellect and character were known to all those who stood about the grave. Her high standards and strong judgment would have been a gain to the statecraft of her day. But she was a woman; and if for more than twenty years her life had been a rich and beautiful thing as the sister of Robert Boyle, for nearly forty years before that she had been the brave but unhappy wife of Arthur Jones—"the foulest churl in the Worlde."

By Boyle's own direction, his funeral was "without the least pomp"; but round his grave there stood, besides his own many relatives, "a greate appearance of persons of the best and noblest quality."

Most of his Irish lands were entailed, and went to the eldest brother, the Earl of Burlington and Cork. "It does not afflict me," so runs the will, "that I have not children of my own to inherit my entailed lands, since they are, by that defect, to return to him, the truly honoured head of our house and family." The Manor of Stalbridge went to Frank, the Lord Viscount Shannon, together with Robyn's best watch and an affectionate message. Frank would notice that the Manor House had been kept up "for his sake," though Robyn had had no mind to live in it. Mrs. Melster, the niece who had married the *valet de pé*, is

included among Boyle's "honoured and dear nieces," and is remembered more sumptuously than the others, not because there is any difference of affection, but because of her "peculiar circumstances." There were other lands in Ireland, and many bequests and legacies to relatives, friends, and servants besides the charitable bequests left in the hands of trustees.[353] "Our Society" and the happy days at Gresham College were not forgotten. Dr. King was to have a silver standish, and to Robert Hooke, the "perfecter" of the beloved air-pump, was left "my best microscope, and my best loadstone."

When Robert Boyle made his will in the summer of 1691 he evidently had not thought it possible that Lady Ranelagh would die before him. He had made her one of his executors, and he had left her all his manuscripts and his "collections of receipts." But he had left her something else. At the very beginning of his will, first and foremost of all his worldly possessions, Robert Boyle puts a small ring:

"And as touching my temporal estate, wherewith God of His goodness hath been pleased to endow me, I dispose thereof in manner and form following; that is to say—

"I give and bequeathe unto my dear sister, the Lady Katharine, Viscountess Ranelagh, a small ring, usually worn by me on my left hand, having in it two small diamonds with an emerald in the middle, which ring being held by me, ever since my youth, in great esteem, and worn for many years for a particular reason, not unknown to my said sister, the Lady Ranelagh, I do earnestly beseech her, my said sister, to wear it in remembrance of a brother that truly honoured and most dearly loved her."

But Lady Ranelagh was dead—seven days before

Robert Boyle. What became of the small ring? And what was its story? Why had Boyle worn it on his left hand ever since his youth, holding it in great esteem? Lady Ranelagh knew—and Lady Ranelagh was dead. What was the “particular reason”? The story of the little ring, if not the ring itself, is buried in the Chancel of St. Martin’s-in-the-Fields.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Lismore Papers, first series, vol. i.

[2] *Philaretus.* Robert Boyle left a fragment of Autobiography, *An Account of Philaretus (*i.e. *Mr. R. Boyle) during his Minority*. See *Works*, ed. Birch, 6 vols., 1774.

[3] For a delightful modern biography, see the *Life and Letters of the Great Earl of Cork*, by Dorothea Townshend (Duckworth).

[4] See the Lismore Papers (referred to throughout as L. P.), edited by the late Rev. Alexander B. Grosart, D.D., LL.D., from the original MSS. belonging to the Duke of Devonshire, and preserved in Lismore Castle (10 vols.).

[5] Corpus Christi.

[6] Froude’s *History*, vol. vii. (1562).

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] Edmund Spenser’s *View of the Present State of Ireland.*

[9] Then worth about five times as much.

[10] Spenser’s *View of the Present State of*

Ireland.

[11] *True Remembrances.*

[12] *True Remembrances.*

[13] Life of the Earl of Cork in the L. P., second series, vol. v.

[14] Equal to about £5000 now.

[15] *True Remembrances.*

[16] *Philaretus.*

[17] L. P., first series, vol. i.

[18] *Philaretus.*

[19] Aubrey's Account.

[20] Oliver St. John, High Treasurer for Ireland.

[21] This celebrated tavern, "haunted by roysterers and famous for its wine" in Ben Jonson's day, and dating back into the 15th century, was in New Fish Street (Cunningham's *London*). Croone must have moved into "new and enlarged premises," for he will be found in 1641 at the Nag's Head Tavern, in Cheapside.

[22] See Evelyn's *Diary* and Pepys's *Diary*.

[23] Abbott.

[24] Loftus, Earl of Ely. He and Sir Adam Loftus of Rathfarnham were cousins.

[25] Falkland.

[26] The Earl's house is mentioned as "my Lord Caulfield's."

[27] In succession to Lord Grandison, whose house in Channell Row the Earl had rented.

[28] She was buried with her mother in the tomb in St. Patrick's.

[29] *Life of Milton*, by David Masson.

[30] Mall.

[31] *Ireland under the Stuarts*, vol i.

[32] Bulkeley and Usher.

[33] Charles I to Lord Deputy, 1634. L. P., second series, vol. iii.

[34] Though, in his *Philaretus*, he dates it a little earlier. It is, however, evidently the same that is recorded in the Earl's *Diary* under the date Dec. 17, 1634.

[35] *Philaretus.*

[36] *Philaretus.*

[37] See L. P., second series, Carew's letters from Eton to Earl of Cork.

[38] They were "commensals" at the second table. See Lyte's *History of Eton.*

[39] See the masterly biography of Wotton in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Also Izaak Walton's *Life of Wotton*, and Masson's *Milton*, vol. i.

[40] See his lines on "His Mistress, the Queen of Bohemia," Percy Society Publications, vol. vi.

[41] See Masson's *Milton*, vol. i. p. 531.

[42] Evelyn's *Diary*.

[43] Was "Irish" part of the Eton curriculum in 1635?

[44] L. P., second series, Carew's letters to the Earl.

[45] *Philaretus.*

[46] *Ibid.*

[47] *Philaretus.*

[48] L. P., second series, Carew's letters to Earl.

[49] See *A Poem written by Sir Henry Wotton in his Youth*, Percy Society Publications, vol. vi.

[50] Masson's *Life of Milton*, vol. i. p. 665.

[51] *Ibid.*

[52] It was payable in three instalments, the third to be paid on Midsummer Day 1638.

[53] Compare Prospero in *The Tempest*: "To my poor cell".

[54] L. P., first series, vol. v.

[55] L. P., first series, vol. v.

[56] Lady Warwick's *Autobiography* (Percy Society).

[57] Variously explained as being the arbutus, and espalier apples.

[58] George Goring was now Governor of Portsmouth. He had been wounded in the leg at the siege of Breda, had been going about London on crutches, and was still lame.

[59] He died, after a long illness, in December 1639. See his Hymn, written "in a night of my late sickness" (Percy Society, vol. vi.).

[60] See Masson's *Milton*, vol. i.

[61] *Philaretus.*

[62] See Masson's *Milton*, vol. ii.: First and second Bishops' Wars.

[63] L. P., second series, vol. iv.: Letter from Lord Barrymore to the Earl of Cork, 1639.

[64] Pepys's *Diary*, Sept. 28, 1668.

[65] *Verney Memoirs*, vol. i.

[66] L. P., second series, vol. v.

[67] *Verney Memoirs*, vol. i.

[68] Afterwards Earl of Clanbrassil.

[69] Son of Sir George Carew, Earl of Totness.

[70] *Philaretus.*

[71] L. P., second series, vol. iv.

[72] *Philaretus.*

[73] *Philaretus.*

[74] Countess of Warwick's *Autobiography* (Percy Society).

[75] Broghill and Kynalmeaky had boarded with the celebrated Dr. Diodati, at the Villa Diodati, outside Geneva.

[76] L. P., second series, vol. iv.

[77] *Philaretus.*

[78] *Philaretus.*

[79] L. P., second series, vol. iv.

[80] L. P., second series, vol. iv.

[81] *Philaretus.*

[82] L. P., second series, vol. iv.

[83] Lady Dungarvan's mother was a Cecil.

[84] Earl's letter quoted in Collins' *Peerage*.

[85] *Autobiography of the Countess of Warwick* (Percy Society).

[86] *Philaretus.*

[87] *Philaretus.*

[88] St. Bernard.

[89] L. P., second series, vol. iv.

[90] It was the Earl of Leicester.

[91] Birch's "Life of Boyle," in Boyle's

Works, vol. i.

[92] *Ibid.*

[93] *Philaretus.*

[94] L. P., first series, vol. v.

[95] See Masson's *Milton*, vol. ii.

[96] L. P., first series, vol. v.

[97] L. P., first series, vol. v. Daubigne's = Dunbar's. Lady Suffolk was daughter and heiress of the Earl of Dunbar.

[98] Suckling died in 1641.

[99] Morrice's account of her in his "Life of the Earl of Orrery," prefixed to the *Orrery State Papers*.

[100] Boyle to Lady Orrery: Birch, vol. i.

[101] Countess of Warwick's *Autobiography*.

[102] Countess of Warwick's *Autobiography* (Percy Society).

[103] L. P., first series, vol. v.

[104] St. Leger.

[105] L. P., first and second series, vol. v. For a masterly account of the Rebellion of 1641, read Bagwell's *Ireland under the Stuarts*.

[106] L. P., second series, vol. v.

[107] L. P., second series, vol. v.

[108] Lord Barrymore died on Sept. 29. It was thought he had been wounded at Liscarrol.

[109] L. P., first series, vol. v.

[110] She died in England in July 1643.

[111] See Mrs. Townshend's *Life of the Great Earl of Cork*.

[112] Usual.

[113] Letter to Kynalmeaky, L. P., second series, vol. v. The original letter in the Lismore Papers is much mutilated ("apparently mice-eaten"). (Grosart.)

[114] Evelyn's *Diary* for 1646.

[115] Evelyn's *Diary* for 1646. Masson's *Milton*, vol. iii.

[116] Evelyn's *Diary* in 1646.

[117] February 1644.

[118] Milton's Latin letter to Dick Jones. See Masson's *Milton*.

[119] Cunningham's *London; Pall Mall*. Account of Lord Broghill's visit to Lady Ranelagh (Morrice & Budgell).

[120] *Catherine*, *m.* (1) Sir William Parsons, (2) Hugh, Lord Mount-Alexander; *Elizabeth*, *m.* Mr. Melster; *Frances*, *d. unm.*; *Richard*, 2nd Visc. Ranelagh.

[121] Identity not known.

[122] Countess of Warwick's *Autobiography*.

[123] *Ibid.*

[124] Robert Boyle: *Philaretus*.

[125] Robert Boyle's Letter to Mr. Tallents: Birch's *Life*.

[126] Lord Broghill, who was Governor of Youghal, returned to England in 1645 (bringing with him his wife and Lady Barrymore and young Lord Barrymore) to obtain further assistance of English troops. See Bagwell's *History of Ireland under the Stuarts*, vol. ii.

[127] Masson's *Milton*, vol. iii. p. 338.

[128] Sir William Wray, member of House of Commons in Long Parliament.

[129] Tutor in Geneva to the little Lord Carnarvon.

[130] See *Autobiography of Anne, Lady Halkett* (Camden Society).

[131] Birch's *Life*, vol. vi. p. 534.

[132] Letter to Lady Ranelagh, March 1646: Birch's *Life*.

[133] Broghill seems to have been more anxious to avoid them than Robert Boyle himself. "Strange that so well-armed an head should be fearful!" says Robert Boyle in his letter to Lady Ranelagh.

[134] There is a little touch of sarcasm in this letter, which may well be a sly thrust at Lord Howard of Escrick, in his place among the Divines, as a lay elder of the Westminster Assembly. At Winchester the little party were "as nicely catechised concerning our ways as if we were to be elected in the number of the new lay elders." Lord Edward Howard's subsequent career—his expulsion from the House for receiving bribes, and his betrayal of Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney, are matters of history.

[135] The Committee of the Two Kingdoms, very active after the organisation of the New Model. It sat in, and issued its orders from, Derby House, Cannon Row, Westminster.

[136] Letter to Lady Ranelagh, March 1646: Birch's *Life*.

[137] Early letter, undated, Birch, vol. vi.

[138] It was Essex who had spoken the words that sealed Strafford's doom: "Stone dead hath no fellow."

[139] Inchiquin and Broghill had both declared for the Parliament.

[140] Bringing, it will be remembered, Lady Pegg, Lady Barrymore, and young Lord Barrymore home with him. Young Barrymore must have gone straight to Milton in the Barbican.

[141] Usher.

[142] Augustine.

[143] In due time Lord Broghill was to send his own sons to Marcombes in Geneva. The old governour was much gratified at having a batch of the second generation of the Boyle family put under his charge.

[144] David Masson's *Milton*, iii. 662.

[145] Fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge, and former tutor to Lady Pegg's brothers.

[146] Letter to John Durie about a Union of the Churches, Birch's Ed. *Works*.

[147] To Lady Ranelagh: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[148] Robert Boyle to Hartlib, May 1647: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[149] "Marginal Note" in *Occasional Reflections*, Section II, ed. 1665, p. 187.

[150] Not published till after his death.

[151] After lying many years in manuscript they were published at her entreaty—dedicated to her—after the Restoration.

[152] *Occasional Reflections*, ed. 1665, pp. 245, 161.

[153] *Ibid.* p. 256: *Upon my Spaniel's fetching me my glove*.

[154] Written after 1648.

[155] See p. 194. Lindamor, the scholarly

youth, well born and well bred, seems often in his writings to represent Boyle himself. The direct reference to “Mr. Boyle” is a favourite device of the author. Swift has satirised the *Reflections* in his “Occasional Meditations on a Broomstick,” but he has not acknowledged “The Eating of Oysters” as the inspiration of his *Gulliver’s Travels*.

[156] For historical accounts see Masson’s *Milton*, vol. iii, and Bagwell’s *Ireland under the Stuarts*, vol. ii.

[157] It was Anne Murray, the girl-friend of “My Robyn’s yonge Mrs.,” who was entrusted with the dressing-up of the young Prince. See *Diary* of Anne, Lady Halkett (Camden Society) for pretty description of the dressing-up, and the “Wood Street cake” given to the boy at parting.

[158] Robert Boyle’s letter to Mrs. Hussey: Birch’s *Life*.

[159] Letter to Mrs. Hussey.

[160] Sentiment.

[161] *Vide* Robert Boyle’s *Reflections* written in that month: “Upon the prodigiously wet weather which happened the summer that Colchester was besieged (1648).”

[162] *Ibid.*

[163] The family seem to have had their town house in Soho, and were “distinguished parishioners” of St. Giles in the Fields (see Cunningham’s *London*). The Earl, when he died in 1661, left property in Long Acre and St. Martin’s Lane, etc.

[164] He died of smallpox, 1649, and was buried in the Savoy.

[165] Afterwards Earl of Clanbrassil.

[166] Evelyn's letter to Dr. Wotton about Robert Boyle.

[167] Masson's *Milton*, vol. iii.

[168] Letter to Lady Ranelagh, August 1649: Birch's Ed. of *Works*, vol. vi.

[169] Compare Budgell's and Morrice's accounts.

[170] Bagwell's *Ireland under the Stuarts*.

[171] Robert Boyle's letter: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[172] Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[173] This wife died young. The second wife was a daughter of Henry Lawrence, presumably a sister of young Barrymore's friend and fellow-pupil at Milton's house in the Barbican.

[174] Broghill's letter to Lenthall, quoted by Bagwell. For the whole account of Broghill's part in the war, see Bagwell's *Ireland under the Stuarts*.

[175] Charles II was then at Breda, and so were the Scottish Commissioners. Montrose was executed in Edinburgh on May 21st, 1650, and the Treaty of Breda had been signed on May 3rd, pledging Charles to uphold the Covenant; but at this very time he was still using the Service Book, and Breda itself was the gay scene of nightly "balling and dancing."

[176] Cary.

[177] *Philaretus.*

[178] The heroine of *Seraphick Love*.

[179] Robert Boyle's brother Francis was his heir presumptive.

[180] This may have been young Lord

Barrymore's second wife, daughter of Henry Lawrence.

[181] *Philaretus.*

[182] Colonel Lawrence's account, quoted by Bagwell.

[183] Chalked up on the door of the House of Commons.

[184] Bagwell.

[185] *Some Worthies of the Irish Churches*, by G. T. Stokes, D.D., ed. by Dr. Lawlor, p. 74.

[186] Birch's *Life*.

[187] Letter from Hartlib to Boyle; Birch's ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[188] The *Encœnia*.

[189] The *Sheldonian* was not then in existence.

[190] Kendal.

[191] Afterwards Bishop of Lincoln.

[192] Cp. Evelyn's *Diary*, August 6, 1657: "I went to see Col. Blount, who shewed me the application of a *way-wiser* to a coach, exactly measuring the miles and shewing them by an index as we went on ... very pretty and useful."

[193] Birch's *Life*. Lady Ranelagh's letter is dated merely "Oct. 12." It must have been written in October 1653, after Boyle was back in Ireland, or so late as 1654, before Boyle left Ireland for good.

[194] Birch's *Life*.

[195] Evelyn's letter to Dr. Wotton, 1703.

[196] Birch's *Life*.

[197] Boyle's *Occasional Reflections* were not

published till 1665, but it is probable they were well known in manuscript.

[198] Bishop of Lincoln, after the Restoration.

[199] Robert Boyle to Lord Broghill: Birch's *Life*; afterwards used as *Epistle Dedicatory to the Considerations on the Style of the Scriptures*.

[200] Birch's *Life*.

[201] Of Freshwater, in the Isle of Wight.

[202] Boyle's Law, confirmed by Mariotte in 1676: "The volume of any given sample of a gas at constant temperature is inversely proportional to the pressure."

[203] Hooke's Law, 1676: *Ut tensio, sic vis*; "Strain is proportional to stress."

[204] Published Oxford, 1660.

[205] Birch's *Life*.

[206] Attacked by Hobbes and Franciscus Linus; 2nd ed. London, 1662; 3rd ed. London, 1682.

[207]

> Oh Morning Star! give back the Day;
> Why dost thou delay our joys?
> Oh Morning Star! give back the Day!

[208] *An Essay towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language*, published in folio, 1668. (The MS. was lost in the Fire of London.)

[209] Birch's ed. *Works*.

[210] Boyle's Law is not *strictly* applicable, if all modern refinements of experiment are used, to any gases except an "ideal" gas; but for all practical purposes it is exact, because the corrections to it are only minute additions,

and not alterations.

[211] Professor Sir William Ramsay, K.C.B., F.R.S., etc., in his *Presidential Address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science*, Portsmouth, 1911.

[212] *Autobiography of the Countess of Warwick* (Percy Society).

[213] *Autobiography.*

[214] Lady Ranelagh to Robert Boyle, Birch's ed. *Works*.

[215] *Autobiography of the Countess of Warwick.*

[216] Edward Phillips's account.

[217] Richard Jones was not at any college.

[218] Peter du Moulin, Royalist and Episcopalian, had been private tutor to the second Earl of Cork's family in Ireland. He translated the *Devil of Mascon*, a French story of authenticated spirit-rapping, published in 1658, with an introductory letter by Robert Boyle, to whom it was dedicated; and in 1670 du Moulin dedicated a volume of Latin poems to Boyle. He was the author of the *Regii Sanguinis Clamor*. His brother, on the other hand—Lewis du Moulin, Doctor of Physic—was a Parliamentarian and Independent, and, after the Visitation, was Camden Professor of History at Oxford.

[219] Name given by Boyle to that "hopeful young gentleman," Mr. Richard Jones, to whom Boyle addressed his *Physiological Essays*, etc.

[220] Passport granted in September 1656. See Masson's *Milton*, vol. v. Her eldest daughter, Catherine, was possibly then already married and already in Ireland. She married

(1) Sir William Parsons, (2) Lord Mount-Alexander. The two other daughters, Elizabeth and Frances, were with their mother (see later).

[221] Milton's letters to Mr. Richard Jones. See Masson's *Milton*, vol. v.

[222] Evelyn's letter to Wotton, 1703.

[223] Mrs. Evelyn was the daughter of Sir Richard Browne, English Ambassador at Paris, where Evelyn married her.

[224] See later. Evelyn's *Diary* and letters.

[225] We still say "you and yours," though not "yours" alone.

[226] David Masson. *Life of Milton*, vol. v, p. 358.

[227] Lord Ranelagh.

[228] Letter to Lord Broghill, Thurloe's *State Papers*.

[229] Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[230] Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[231] "Virile government" was apparently assailed in 1659 as it is to-day.

[232] There were nine editions between 1660 and 1708, and it was translated into Latin.

[233] Evelyn's *Diary*, May 5, and May 25, 1659.

[234] He was one of the chief of the "Dynastic" or "Court" Cromwellians, in opposition to the "Army" Cromwellians.

[235] Morrice; but Pepys mentions "Mr. Boyle" receiving a passport on April 11, and on board Montagu's ship, where he was treated as "a person of honour," on April 20.

[236] Evelyn.

[237] See Pepys's graphic account of the crossing of Charles II from The Hague, and Evelyn's account of his reception in London.

[238] Petty's invention of a "double-bottomed boat," which made a great talk at the time.

[239] *Discourses Useful for the Vain Modish Ladies and their Gallants.* 1696.

[240] Charlotte Jemima Henrietta-Maria Boyle, who married a Howard (nephew of Lord Broghill's wife). Their child, "Stuarta Howard," died unmarried.

[241] Evelyn's *Diary*, October 15, 1664. The first house, built by Sir John Denham, to be succeeded by the later house (Cunningham's *London*).

[242] Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[243] *Life of Edward Mountagu, K.G., First Earl of Sandwich*, by F. R. Harris, vol. ii. p. 179.

[244] "Lyttle Francke" *m.* (1) Colonel Courtenay, and (2) Wentworth Dillon, Earl of Roscommon. There were several daughters, and it was the fourth daughter who married Lord Hinchinbroke. The fifth daughter married Laurence Hyde, son of the Earl of Clarendon; and the third daughter became Lady Thanet, the "virtuosa," who used to speak much of her uncle Robert Boyle, *vide* Evelyn's letter to Wotton.

[245] *Diary*, 1668.

[246] *Philaretus.*

[247] Letter to Hooke in 1680, when Boyle declined to be President of the Royal Society (see later).

[248] *Diary*, November 26, 1661.

[249] "Ianthe" was the name given to Mrs. Mary Saunderson, after her part in Davenant's *Siege of Rhodes*. She married Betterton and lived till 1712, having in her time played almost all Shakespeare's great female characters—"Nell" is, of course, Nell Gwynne.

[250] September 7, 1660 (two days after Broghill had been created Earl of Orrery).

[251] March 9, 1661 (five weeks after the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw had been exhumed and hanged at Tyburn).

[252] Robert Boyle's nephew, young Lord Barrymore, had lost his first wife, Susan Killigrew, and married again in 1656, "Martha, daughter of Henry Lawrence, Esq.," presumably a daughter of the President and sister of his friend and fellow-pupil in the Barbican.

[253] Quoted from Masson's *Milton*, vol. vi. p. 85.

[254] Pepys's *Diary*, October 13, 1660.

[255] October 13, 14, and 17, 1660.

[256] Evelyn's *Diary*.

[257] Part of the Church of the Old Priory of St. Bartholomew.

[258] John Goodwin, author of the Regicide pamphlet, *The Obstructors of Justice*.

[259] Masson's *Milton*, vol. vi. pp. 184-5.

[260] Afterwards Earl of Anglesey.

[261] George Goring, Lettice's unkind husband, was dead. He was last seen in 1657, in Madrid, ill and destitute,—disguised, it is said, in the habit of a Dominican Friar.

[262] The old brick-and-timber house with its piazzas and “green court,” called after the founder, Sir Thomas Gresham, whose dwelling-house it was (1597).

[263] See previous mentions from diary of Earl of Cork, and King’s Head Tavern in Cunningham’s *London*.

[264] See the *Record of the Royal Society of London*, third edition, 1912 (Printed for the Royal Society).

[265] Oldenburg to Boyle, June 1663 (Birch’s Ed. *Works*, vi.).

[266] Who preached the celebrated sermon that lasted three-and-a-half hours, and then said he felt tired from *standing* so long.

[267] Sprat’s *History of the Royal Society of London*, 1667.

[268] Evelyn’s *Diary*, May 1661.

[269] Dr. Wilkins and Oldenburg were Joint-Secretaries, but Oldenburg did all the work.

[270] Still in constant use.

[271] By which the Society is still governed.

[272] Evelyn’s *Diary*, November 30, 1663.

[273] Pepys’s *Diary*, November 30, 1668.

[274] Record of the Royal Society of London, 1912.

[275] London, 1661.

[276] Oxford, 1661.

[277] Dr. Saunderson. It is to be remembered that Lord Broghill, as one of the Lords Justices, had the drawing up of the Act of Settlement, and that the Boyle family were already great Irish landowners, and with

hereditary claims on the country for personal service and sacrifice in the Protestant and Royalist cause.

[278] Boyle to the Bishop of Cork, May 27, 1662: Birch, vi.

[279] Now among the relics of the Royal Society at Burlington House.

[280] Evelyn's *Diary*, May 7, 1662.

[281] Evelyn speaks of Mr. Povy's "well contrived cellar and other elegancies," and again of his "pretty cellar and the ranging of his wine-bottles."

[282] Oldenburg to Boyle: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[283] Sorbière, *Relation d'un voyage en Angleterre*, 1664. Oldenburg's correspondents in various countries.

[284] Butler's *The Elephant in the Moon*.

[285] *An Examen of Mr. Hobbes' Dialogus Physicus de Naturâ Æris.*

[286] Daubigney Turberville, of Oriel College: M.D. Oxford, 1660, the well-known oculist, who, at Boyle's suggestion, later practised in London (see Pepys's *Diary*).

[287] Evelyn's *Diary*, October 24, 1664.

[288] Oldenburg to Boyle: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[289] Evelyn, January 1665.

[290] The boat foundered in the Bay of Biscay, and Petty was censured for "rashness," but he persisted in believing in his invention. See Evelyn, March 22, 1675. Petty's invention is one of the relics of the Royal Society in Burlington House.

[291] Pepys, December 17, 1664.

[292] Pepys, March 1, 1665.

[293] Pepys, February 15, 1665.

[294] *Memoirs of the Comte de Grammont.*

[295] The great victory over the Dutch, June 3, 1665. Lord Burlington's second son, Mr. Richard Boyle, was killed on the *Royal Charles*.

[296] See Evelyn and Pepys for 1665-6.

[297] *Autobiography of the Countess of Warwick* (Percy Society).

[298] Hooke to Boyle: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[299] From Hampton Court to Salisbury, and then to Oxford.

[300] Nonsuch was selected for the offices of the Exchequer, and they seem to have gone to Durdans, Lord Berkeley's house near Epsom.

[301] Lady Ranelagh to Mr. Boyle: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[302] Boyle's niece, Lord Burlington's daughter.

[303] Lady Ranelagh to Boyle, September 9, 1665: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[304] The poet Waller's house, Hall Barn, Beaconsfield.

[305] Lady Anglesey's house, near Epping.

[306] F.R.S., President of the Royal College of Physicians.

[307] Oldenburg to Boyle: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[308] Oldenburg to Boyle: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[309] Lady Ranelagh to Boyle: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[310] Evelyn's *Diary*, and Letter to Sir Samuel Tuke.

[311] The model is preserved in All Souls' College, Oxford.

[312] J. R. Green, writing in 1882: *History of the English People*, vol. iii. p. 382.

[313] Near Windsor.

[314] Evelyn's *Diary*.

[315] Lady Ranelagh to Robert Boyle: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vol. vi.

[316] Evelyn: January 9, 1667.

[317] *Diary*, June 25, 1667.

[318] Which he called "Philosophical Commerce."

[319] Morrice: *Earl of Orrery's State Papers*. Evelyn, Pepys, Oldenburg to Boyle (Birch); Green's *History*; Masson's *Milton*.

[320] Morrice.

[321] The pious royalist, Dr. John Fell, who himself preached in blank verse, and was perhaps not a disciplinarian.

[322] Wallis to Boyle, 1669: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vi.

[323] Waller, 1661.

[324] Lady Ranelagh to Boyle: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vi.

[325] See account in Cunningham's *London*.

[326] Evelyn's *Diary*, May 1671.

[327] Evelyn to Wotton.

[328] About £40 a year, which would mean

about £140 now.

[329] Evelyn's *Diary*.

[330] Lady Ranelagh to Boyle: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vi.

[331] Now a great man, not only in the Society of which he had so long been Curator. He had blossomed out as an architect, and had achieved Montague House, afterwards the British Museum.

[332] Afterwards Archbishop of Armagh.

[333] Letters of Marsh to Boyle: Birch's Ed. *Works*, vi. *Bedell's Life*, by T. Wharton Jones, F.R.S. (Camden Society). *Some Worthies of the Irish Church*, by G. T. Stokes, D.D., ed. by H. F. Lawlor, D.D. Appendix to Boyle's *Life*: Birch, vol. i.

[334] Evelyn, January 1684.

[335] The second part appeared after his death.

[336] *Transactions*, 1692.

[337] J. R. Green's *History of the English People*, vol. iv.

[338] J. R. Green's *History of the English People*, vol. iv.

[339] See Burnet's Sermon, preached at the funeral of Robert Boyle, and Birch's *Life*.

[340] Evelyn, Oct. 30, 1688.

[341] Ranelagh House, afterwards sold and turned into the famous Ranelagh Gardens.

[342] Left to his daughter in his will.

[343] Evelyn to Wotton.

[344] *Ibid.*

[345] Birch's *Life*.

[346] Boyle dictated a good deal to Burnet, and the use of the Scottish word “forenoon” suggests that Burnet assisted in the drawing up of this announcement. Evelyn, the Englishman, uses the word “morning.”

[347] Evelyn to Wotton.

[348] *Ibid.*

[349] Evelyn to Wotton.

[350] Birch’s *Life*.

[351] Where, also, Nell Gwynne had been buried in 1687.

[352] Eccles. ii. 26. The sermon was published and may be read.

[353] Among these was one to found and endow in perpetuity the Boyle Lectures—a course of eight lectures, which are still delivered yearly—“In Defence of Christianity.”

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