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# THE STATE PAPERS OF THE EARLY STUARTS AND THE INTERREGNUM

By MRS. S. C. LOMAS

*Read June 19, 1902*

THE subject of the Stuart State Papers cannot be better introduced than by quoting the words of that excellent historian and admirable editor, Mr. John Bruce, words which, although written in reference to the reign of Charles I., are equally applicable to the years which preceded and followed it. The term State Papers, Mr. Bruce says, is a convenient general title, under which the papers may be easily and properly recognised—'a title clearly applicable to them with reference to the place of their deposit, and generally so with reference to their actual character ; but it is by no means put forth as a precise diplomatic description of every single document.' For, 'intermingled with sign manuals, proclamations, orders, and correspondence of the Council, letters of the Secretaries of State, of the Lord High Admiral, and of other important public functionaries—great and primary evidences of the acts of the King's Government—there occur papers, some entirely private,' which have 'evidently found their way thither by the accidents to which in disturbed periods the papers of public men are subject. With some slight exceptions they are now all intermingled, and arranged chronologically in one great series. Together they form a collection of papers, public and private, general and individual, local and personal, which has not indeed the definiteness, or what may even be called the grandeur, of some of our great series of public records, but they constitute

a collection which cannot be surpassed for facility of consultation, and one which . . . will be found to develop the facts of our national history in a way and to a degree altogether unexampled.<sup>1</sup>

A State Paper, strictly so called, might be defined as a letter, report, order, or other document, written by an official person, from the Sovereign downwards, on a more or less official subject. In this sense it is the direct descendant of the diploma of earlier times. To this class may be added a second, which has more affinity with our Records, viz. the entry books, letter books, and journals, containing copies of official correspondence or orders and proceedings of official bodies. Closely connected with these is an immense mass of documents which had an official destination, although not an official origin, such as the petitions to the Sovereign, his Privy Council and his ministers, or to Parliament. And with all these are found the miscellaneous and varied private and family papers which add so much to the human interest of this department of our national archives. Private papers of the secretaries and other officers of State in many cases remained mixed up with their official ones, and others found their way in by deposit in lawsuits or causes before the Star Chamber and Court of High Commission, or during proceedings in the Court of Wards. When these Courts were abolished in 1641 the papers then in their custody drifted in amongst the State Papers.

It is evident that documents of the nature of State Papers must have been deposited in the Royal Treasury from very early times, although not many of the early ones (more perishable and less carefully guarded than the Records) have survived.

They were, no doubt, at first kept in chests in the Abbey of Westminster (*i.e.* the Royal Treasury) and in the receipt of the Exchequer (*i.e.* the official treasury); whence they were removed to the Chapter House, some being also preserved in the Treasury at the Tower and some in the Rolls Chapel. In

<sup>1</sup> Preface to the *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*, 1625, 1626.

1578 the State Paper Office was erected, as the Queen's Library, at Whitehall, and the first Keeper—Dr. Thomas Wilson, one of the Masters of Requests—was appointed. The 'Library' had many resting-places. The larder of the Privy Seal Office, the tower of the old gateway at Whitehall, an upper floor in the Lord Chamberlain's office, an old house in Scotland Yard, and another old house in Great George Street are all mentioned in turn as repositories.

The documents had a narrow escape from the fire at Whitehall in 1619, and were a good deal injured by being 'hastily cast into blankets' for safety on that occasion. In 1750, when the old gateway was pulled down, the State Papers stored there were found in a deplorable state of decay, for in consequence of broken windows not only had damp got in, but pigeons had got in also, and had built their nests upon the shelves. A few years later there were fresh complaints of decay, and also of the sad havoc made by 'weevils.' In 1833, however, the treasures were safely lodged in a fire-proof building in St. James's Park, and in 1854 were transferred to the Public Record Office and placed under the control of the Master of the Rolls.

The custodian of the State Papers during the early part of the Stuart period was Sir Thomas Wilson (nephew and successor of the first Keeper), who was both zealous and energetic. When a Secretary of State resigned, the King issued a warrant for the handing over of his papers to the Keeper, and for the giving up of such as were in the private keeping of the retiring secretary or his family. These warrants Wilson exerted every effort to have put into execution, but not with complete success. When Winwood resigned he entirely declined to surrender the documents in his possession, and although the energetic Keeper managed in the end to get most of them, he did not obtain them all. He also secured most of Lake's, Naunton's, and Morton's papers, but only partially succeeded as regards Conway's, as will be seen hereafter. In fact Secretary Conway had but a poor opinion of this additional Government office. He said it was a new

one, and one to little purpose. The Keeper retorted that although Conway made little use of it other people valued it.

Wilson spent eight years in arranging the papers under his charge, and made the division into Domestic and Foreign, which still obtains.

Dorchester's papers were duly captured in 1632, and Sir John Coke, on retiring in 1640, declared that he had resigned everything except certain documents which had been taken by Vane and Windebank, and that a more exact delivery and discharge had not been made by any Secretary of that age. A glance at the Coke papers, calendared by the Hist. MSS. Commission, does not quite bear out the worthy Secretary's assertion.

The most noteworthy of Sir Thomas Wilson's immediate successors was Joseph Williamson, who, upon entering on his office at the Restoration, made the most praiseworthy efforts to recover the vast quantities of papers which were missing belonging to the years of the Interregnum. Unfortunately the King's papers, from the beginning of the Civil War until the surrender of Oxford, had been designedly burnt by Nicholas ; Bradshaw, as President of the Council of State, had taken many of those belonging to the Commonwealth period, and an enormous quantity were in Thurloe's hands, who, we are told, 'burnt what would have hanged a great many.' Happily there remained vast stores which he did not consider dangerous, and although Williamson never recovered them, their contents have not been lost to posterity. He did recover the very valuable series of entry books of the Council of State, and many other important papers. Indeed his zeal in hunting up stray papers was as great as Sir Robert Cotton's had been, but with the difference that he put them into his office, while Sir Robert kept all that he could beg or borrow—to use no stronger word.

Williamson enjoyed the noble salary of 160*l.* a year, out of which he had to pay his clerks. At one time there were five of these, but, from Robert Ball's account in 1674, they appear to have chiefly spent their time in preparing the

newsletters which were such a feature of that day, and in collecting materials for the official gazette of which Williamson was the editor. The later history of the State Paper Office need not concern us here. But it may just be mentioned that the zeal of the early Keepers does not appear to have been emulated by those of the eighteenth century, for when Sir Stanier Porten was examined by the Commissioners for Public Accounts he stated that he had found the office a sinecure, and had allowed it to remain so. It was this declaration that led the Commissioners in their printed report to state that the office had no duties attached to it and might be abolished.<sup>1</sup> Mr. John Bruce, Sir Stanier's successor, was determined to change all this. He demanded more salary and more help, and at once set to work to place matters on a sounder basis. In 1795, the minutes of Council declared that the office of Keeper had been rendered efficacious and useful, and generously gave orders—that a room should be furnished for his accommodation. No deputy or clerk, however, was allowed him, and the only help he could procure was by persuading Dundas to lend him one of the clerks from the India Office. While hard at work with this small assistance, he continued to besiege the Government with memorials, especially drawing attention to the excellent system which obtained at Paris, established by Colbert, the minister of Louis XIV. In the end he got what he demanded—a salary of 500*l.* a year for himself, three clerks at three, two, and one hundred a year respectively, and 200*l.* a year for current expenses; and thus initiated the working of what has now become a valuable and important branch of the national archives.

Three well-defined sources may be enumerated from which the existing State Papers of the Stuart period have been derived.

1. The State Papers in official custody, of which we have hitherto been speaking, now preserved in the Public Record Office. They include the Domestic Papers (which for the

<sup>1</sup> See *Papers relating to the State Paper Office*, vol. iv. Nos. 157, 158.

Stuart period means Scotch as well as English), Irish, Foreign, and Colonial, these last being, however, as might be expected, in much smaller compass in the Stuart period than in later times ; also the Privy Council Registers, which are at the Privy Council Office.

2. Secondly, we have State Papers not in official custody, but remaining in the families of officials, such as the Cecil Papers at Hatfield or the Coke Papers at Melbourne Hall.

3. Thirdly, the State Papers found in 'made' collections, *i.e.* collections acquired by gift or purchase. First amongst these stand the British Museum and the Bodleian Library, but there are many very fine collections of this sort in private hands—such as those of Mrs. Morrison, Sir Richard Tangye, Mr. Hodgkin, &c.

The State Papers Domestic of James I.'s reign at the Public Record Office are contained in 215 volumes. Of these 178, or, counting the Addenda, 187, consist of letters and miscellaneous papers ; the others, of such documents as ordnance and navy papers, proclamations, musters, petitions, Exchequer documents, entry books, documents in relation to forests, crown lands, Trinity House, &c.

The Gunpowder Plot papers were long ago bound by themselves in two volumes, or rather one volume in two parts. A few of the most noteworthy have been placed in the Public Record Office Museum.

To give an account of the State Papers of James I.'s reign would be to give an epitome of the history of that time. The treatment of Catholics and Puritans, the plantation of Ulster and the colonisation of Virginia, the proceedings of the Parliaments, the King's foreign policy, the story of Arabella Stuart, the divorce of Essex, the fall of Somerset, the execution of Raleigh, the disgrace of Sir Edward Coke and Lord Chancellor Bacon, the rise of Buckingham, the Spanish marriage, and the beginning of the Thirty Years' War—all these things appear, one after another, in the documents amongst our national archives.

As regards the condition of the country, the state of trade

and other economic matters, many valuable papers will be found indexed in the Calendars under the headings of customs and excise, coinage, cloth, coal, gold and silver, salt, silk, sugar, tobacco, wines, wool, and other commodities. We get prices, quantities, uses ; complaints of cheating and enactments against it ; perpetual murmuring against monopolies and loud lamentation at the decline of agriculture, owing to the turning of arable land into pasture.

In fact, the papers of James I.'s reign are full of complaints—against monopolists and farmers (as, for instance, the salt-petre men, who used their privileges in the most outrageous manner) ; against purveyance and purveyors ; against enclosure by the landowners of the 'common lands ;' complaints too of foreign workmen taking the bread out of English workmen's mouths, and of foreign fishing-boats interfering with English fishing rights. For the condition of the poor there are the reports of the justices of peace concerning the keeping of order, punishment of rogues and vagabonds, fines for non-attendance at church, swearing, or drunkenness, and means used for 'setting the poor on work.'

There are also many papers relating to the great trading companies, the Russian or Muscovy, the Turkey or Levant and the great 'Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies,' which had just got its charter, and which was the forerunner of the more celebrated company of later days. The bulk of the papers of the East India Company are, however, at the India Office, where they have been partially reported on by Mr. F. C. Danvers. In 1604, at the time of the negotiations with Spain, a Bill for free trade was brought in, and in connexion with this there are some good lists of commodities.

The foreign papers of the Stuart period have not yet been calendared, but are open to inspection. They have been carefully sorted and arranged by official hands, but, until they are edited, it is, of course, impossible that difficult questions of undated papers or of old versus new style should adequately be considered. The foreign papers of James I.'s reign are ex-



ceedingly interesting. Every one knows the celebrated story of the play at Antwerp, in which the post comes puffing on to the stage, declaring that the Palsgrave will soon have a huge army, for the King of Denmark was to send him 100,000, the Hollanders 100,000, and the King of Great Britain 100,000—that is, Denmark would send 100,000 red herrings, Holland 100,000 cheeses, and King James 100,000 ambassadors. We may be more grateful for the embassies than the Palsgrave had reason to be, for to the King's fondness for them we owe the despatches which bring the European politics of that day so vividly before us. The names which come first to our mind are those of Sir Thomas Roe and Sir Henry Wotton. Much of Sir Thomas Roe's diplomatic correspondence is at the Public Record Office, and will be found amongst the papers of the various States to which he was successively accredited. One volume, lent to Robert Harley and never returned, now forms vol. 1901 of the Harley Manuscripts at the British Museum; and other letters of his are at the Museum, amongst the Harley, Egerton, and Sloane Manuscripts; the journal of his mission to the Mogul is also there in part.<sup>1</sup> Some of Roe's despatches have been edited by Mr. Gardiner for the Camden Society, and his correspondence during his embassy in Turkey, 1621–1628, was printed in 1740.

Wotton's despatches are likewise to be found amongst the volumes of Foreign State Papers—chiefly, of course, in those of Germany. The *Reliquiæ Wottonianæ* include many of his letters, and a series of his despatches, 1617–1620, of which the originals are in the Eton College Library, has been printed by the Roxburghe Club.

Besides the 'in' letters, which have always been in official keeping, Wotton bequeathed his own collection to the State Paper Office. Another particularly interesting series of letters comprises those of Sir Dudley Carleton, ambassador from James I. to Holland. Part of his correspondence during the years 1616–1620 was printed by Lord Hardwicke in 1757,

Add MSS. 6115 and 19277.

and other letters by Sir Thomas Phillips in 1841. Letters from our ambassadors abroad at this period are to be found in 'Cabala,' Dr. Birch's 'Historical View' (1592-1617), and elsewhere; but what is printed is only a small part of the mass of correspondence.

These despatches of our ambassadors abroad are by no means the dry diplomatic documents which by many they are conceived to be. On the contrary, they are storehouses of information concerning the doings and the gossip of foreign courts, mingled with observations on affairs at home by some of the shrewdest and most cultured men of that day. It is impossible here even to give the smallest outline of the contents of these papers. The allusions to a single incident of European interest—the Gunpowder Plot of 1605—would occupy more space than has been placed at my disposal, but one or two points may be noted in illustration of our subject.

At the end of 1605 Sir Thomas Parry was minister in Paris, Sir Thomas Edmondes was at Brussels, Sir Ralph Winwood at the Hague, and Sir Charles Cornwallis had been sent on a mission to the Court of Madrid. To all of these Cecil himself wrote, announcing the discovery of the powder plot; and, as an instance of the use to be made of the State Papers by a practised hand, may be mentioned the skilful way in which Mr. Gardiner deduced evidence in support of his view that the Government only very gradually acquired their knowledge of the plot from these letters to the ministers abroad.

Also we have here an instance of the different sources from which we obtain our documents. The draft of the letter to Parry is at the Public Record Office. The letter signed and sent to Edmondes is amongst the Stowe Manuscripts at the British Museum. A copy of that to Cornwallis is in a letter book amongst the Cotton Manuscripts, and is printed in Winwood's 'Memorials.'

But the answers of the ambassadors are all amongst the State Papers, and it is very interesting to see the different ways in which the news was received at the various courts. It

is amusing to find that whilst in Protestant States much sympathetic abuse of the Catholics is duly reported, in the Roman Catholic States the suggestion is heard that the plot must surely be a device of the 'wicked Puritans.'

As the years go on, we find, of course, much attention given to affairs in the Palatinate during the Thirty Years' War, and to the negotiations for the Spanish match. And from the letters of consuls and agents abroad we get a great deal of information concerning English and foreign ships, and in relation to trade. The letters being mostly from Englishmen, a very large proportion of them are written in English, but there are many in Latin and French (chiefly as enclosures) and some in Dutch, Italian, and Spanish. German documents are, as might be expected, very rare.

Besides the original State Papers, there are at the Public Record Office several very valuable series of transcripts of papers relating to England preserved in foreign archives. For the early Stuart period, the Simancas transcripts, containing Gondemar's despatches, are especially important; Panzani's and Con's despatches to the Pope have been partially copied from the Vatican archives; also Rossetti's letters to Cardinal Barberini, from those preserved in the Barberini Palace in Rome; and, for the Commonwealth and Protectorate, Bordeaux's despatches, copied from the 'Archives des Affaires Etrangères' at Paris. Rawdon Brown's Venice transcripts are also at the Public Record Office, and other Venetian and Simancas transcripts will be found at the British Museum, to which they were presented by Mr. Gardiner.

The State Papers of Charles I.'s reign, up to the beginning of the Civil War, are exceedingly voluminous and important. Mr. Gardiner once said that Charles I. did two good things, which covered a multitude of sins. He abolished tithes in Scotland and he seized his retiring secretaries' papers. The credit for this latter act of piety must, however, as we have seen, be partly given to Sir Thomas Wilson, the indefatigable Keeper of that day. There are 477 volumes of Charles I. 'letters and papers,' besides volumes devoted exclusively to

such subjects as Popish recusants, forests, draining of the fens, the city of London, Court of Wards, fee farm lands, and the trial of the King ; also volumes of proclamations, grants, petitions, docquets, certificates of arms and funeral certificates, with several boxes of parchment documents.

Here, as in the case of the James I. State Papers, an account of their contents would be an epitome of the reign. Briefly, we find, as we might expect, that the early papers are much concerned with the Cadiz expedition, the struggles of the early parliaments, the expeditions to the Isle of Rhé and to Rochelle, the impeachment of Buckingham, the prosecution of Eliot and his brother patriots.

With the end of the war, naval and military preparations fall into the background, and what Clarendon described as a period of the greatest possible calm and felicity begins. The 'period of calm,' as seen in the State Papers, is a tossing sea of restlessness and dissatisfaction, varied by the measures taken to suppress the discontented spirits.

We note, however, the King's encouragement of commerce, discovery and colonisation, the works of drainage proceeding in Yorkshire and the Fens, the great efforts made, chiefly under Laud's auspices, for the repair of St. Paul's—efforts, alas ! so soon to be made nought by the Great Fire—and we get a most important series of justices' returns, showing the modes of relief of the poor, the penalties enforced on sturdy rogues and vagabonds and other culprits, the fines inflicted for non-attendance at church, the billeting on the parishes, and sundry other matters.<sup>1</sup> In the Calendars for 1634–1635 and onwards, these returns are thrown into a tabular form for facility of reference.

Papers of the Secretaries of this part of the reign—Coke and Dorchester, and after him Windebank—are of course found in large numbers. Coke was a most active and zealous official, and kept matters, as Windebank loudly complained,

<sup>1</sup> These papers have been utilised and extracts from them printed by Miss Lennard in her history of the Poor Relief.

very much in his own hands. He probably doubted, with good reason, the discretion of his colleague.

From their papers, even without other knowledge, we should be able to form a fair guess of the opinions of the various men. Almost all the papers concerning the prosecution of Papists, for instance, are written by, addressed to, or endorsed by Coke. Windebank would have nothing to do with this branch of the service, and is even complained of for impeding it. We are now approaching the Ship Money period, and for the next few years papers relating to this unpopular assessment are found in large numbers, and its development from the long-established tax on the port towns to a general assessment (a change made in the first instance from an honest belief that it was a fairer plan) can be traced. Incidentally, the returns of the officers appointed to fix the assessments give valuable information as to the relative conditions of the various counties and the relative importance of the towns.

The papers relating to the revival of the Forest Rights of the Crown, the reports sent to Laud during the great 'metropolitan visitation' instituted by him throughout the province of Canterbury, the Book of the Acts of the High Commission Court, the proceedings in the Star Chamber, are all most helpful to the study of the state of England, and, amongst other illustrations of King Charles's close attention to finance, a very important paper is to be found under date of March 1635, being an 'Account of all the Extraordinary Receipts paid into the Exchequer during the first Ten Years of the King's Reign,' showing at a glance the chief items of an expediture of more than two millions.<sup>1</sup>

The papers of 1635 are very naval indeed. The movements of the fleet—the first ship-money fleet—more ship-money schemes, the difficulty of getting proper assessments made, these things constitute the contents of the great bulk of the papers; and those of the next two or three years are of much the same sort. At this time the plague was very bad,

*S. P. Dom.*, Car. I. cclxxxv. 89.

and in this connexion attention was more than usually drawn to the overcrowding in London, concerning which there are some interesting documents.<sup>1</sup> Yet the city was not allowed to extend, and certain commissioners, with Inigo Jones at their head, jealously watched to prevent any attempts in that direction. Under date August 1637 will be found an important report of the College of Physicians on this subject.

From the time of the attempt, in 1637, to force the new Liturgy upon Scotland, there are many papers relating to that country, and to the preparations for and carrying out of the expeditions against it. Ship-money papers still abound in 1637 and 1638, and in this latter year there are documents relating to the rising of the country people against the Bedford Level, notable for Oliver Cromwell's championship of the interests of the commoners against the adventurers.

Amongst the undated papers of 1638 is a list of pictures painted by Vandyke for the King.<sup>2</sup> Many others of these undated papers are interesting from an economic point of view.

With the year 1640 we once more have parliaments, and an immense number of papers relating to them; reports of speeches, journals of proceedings, copies of orders, news-letters, public and private, papers relating to the impeachment of Strafford and Laud and other 'evil counsellors'—notices of bills passed and courts abolished, and the other hundred and one things which the name of the Long Parliament conjures up before our minds. In 1641 the rebellion in Ireland brings a fresh class of documents—proceedings, orders, and contracts by the various committees appointed in London for procuring money and providing clothes, arms, munition, and victuals for the troops despatched to Ireland. Meanwhile evidences of friction between King and Parliament

<sup>1</sup> One house in Dowgate Ward, belonging to Sir F. Clarke, was reported as containing eleven married couples and fifteen single persons. Another, in Silver Street, containing ten rooms, accommodated ten families, 'divers of whom had lodgers.'

<sup>2</sup> His charge was 20*l.* for a half-length and 25*l.* for a full-length (equal, perhaps, to about 80*l.* and 100*l.* at the present day), but the King usually insisted on an abatement.

multiply, preparations on each side begin to show themselves, and thus in 1642 we reach the beginning of the Great Civil War.

From this time the character of the State Papers undergoes a change. The King was away from London. His officers of State, his treasury, his household, were with him at Oxford or elsewhere ; most of the papers, up to the surrender of Oxford, were, as before stated, burnt by Nicholas, and for what remain we must look in other places than the national archives.

The work of the Parliament party was chiefly carried on by means of committees—primarily and mostly committees of Parliament, though in some cases outsiders were added—and the books and papers of these committees, their proceedings, orders, and correspondence, form a mass of material by the side of which the ordinary State Papers are almost a negligible quantity. Of ‘letters and papers’ there are only fourteen volumes for the six years 1643–1648 inclusive.

The papers of the principal committees were to a certain extent arranged long ago—some of them even by the clerks of the committees themselves, to whom also we owe some useful indexes. And long before they were calendared, some one (it is not known who or when) arranged the committees in an alphabetical sequence, by one of the letters of which all the papers and books of a given committee were and still are distinguished.<sup>1</sup>

The committee marked E is, for the beginning of the Interregnum, the most interesting of all. This is the Committee of Both Kingdoms, often called the Derby House Committee, from its first place of meeting, and consisting of twenty-one Englishmen (seven peers and fourteen members of the House of Commons) and four Scots.

It was appointed in February 1644 instead of the old Committee of Safety. During the first year or two of the war, the forces, chiefly consisting of local levies, were directed

<sup>1</sup> This is the origin of the mysterious E, G, or I which searchers have to write on their tickets when sending for these documents.

by Parliament itself, as having entire control of the militia ; but with the advance of the Scottish army some more definite system was found necessary.

The proceedings of this committee were not, like those of the rest, confined to some specific object, for it may be said to have carried on the government for Parliament, having power not only to manage the war but to negotiate with foreign States. It was, however, debarred from any negotiations with the King or Assembly at Oxford without orders from the Parliament.

Its records are contained in twenty-eight volumes, consisting chiefly of journals of the proceedings of the committee, and entry books of letters sent to the commanders and of letters from the commanders to the committee. These last are of supreme importance, as from them we get an authentic account of the military operations of the Parliament forces from the best possible source, the despatches of generals and officers in the field. Unhappily only two volumes of these letters remain, extending from June 1, 1644, to February 16, 1645, but the letters and instructions sent to the commanders are almost complete up to the time of the dissolution of the committee in December 1648. The instructions were very ample—far too much so sometimes for the generals, who complained of being tied down and not allowed a sufficiently free hand.

Owing to the character of this committee, its papers have not been treated separately, but are calendared in the regular series of Domestic State Papers.

Although the Committee of Both Kingdoms has been mentioned first, from its position amongst the State Papers, it was by no means the first to be appointed. The earliest was the Committee for Advance of Money, which was instituted at the beginning of the war in 1642, and lasted until 1655. Its object was to find money for carrying on the war against the King, at first partly by borrowing and partly by voluntary and compulsory assessments, and later by special assessments on the estates of delinquents. The records and



papers of this Committee are contained in 165 volumes. Its order books form a complete series, in fourteen volumes, its 'minutes' fill five, its general papers twelve more. Seventy-seven volumes are occupied with 'cases'—*i.e.* the collected papers relating to each of the cases brought before the committee. Besides these, there are volumes of assessments (chiefly in London and Middlesex), informations, acquittances, summonses, certificates, receipts, and other miscellaneous matters, and a large number of manuscript indexes. The documents of this committee are calendared in three volumes, with one index in the third volume for the whole.

Next in chronological order came the Committee for Sequestrations (letter B), whose mission was to seize and sequester the estates of royalists or delinquents and of Papists or recusants. It consisted of a central committee, sitting in London, with local committees in each county. Of this committee we have all six order books, but very few general papers.

The county committees got in great sums of money, but though the losses of the delinquents were enormous, the gain to the State Exchequer was very small. A good deal has been said of their ill-behaviour, and local rivalries were, at the time, freely brought to bear, those who were out of employment accusing those who were in of all manner of malpractices, and often of being royalists in disguise. But to any one who has carefully studied the papers of these county committees, and has seen the enormous demands made upon them, especially by the commanders of the local forces, the only wonder is that they sent up any money at all.

The State, however, needed more funds, and in 1644 a new and very important committee was appointed, *i.e.* the Committee for Compounding with Delinquents, or Goldsmiths' Hall Committee (letter G). Its origin was very unpretending. In September 1643, when money to pay the Scots army was urgently needed, a joint committee of the House of Commons and citizens of London was appointed, and called the

Committee for Scottish Affairs. With it was allied a like committee for providing money for the Lord General's army. The portion of these United Committees which dealt with the raising of the money presently became known as the Goldsmiths' Hall Committee, the original title being restricted to those who dealt with its disbursement for the Scots army. At first the books were kept separately, but before long the Committee for Scottish Affairs was completely merged in the other. In 1644, power was given to the Goldsmiths' Hall Committee to compound with delinquents, but it was never a prosecuting committee. Its business was not judicial but financial, and the estates were in all cases sequestered by the Committee for Sequestrations.

The object of the Committee for Compounding was to save working expenses and prevent fraud, by inducing delinquents to come forward and state voluntarily upon oath the value of their estates, giving in what was called a 'particular' thereof, upon which they were allowed to compound for their future peaceable enjoyment of their property by paying a large amount as composition money. The rate varied according to the class in which the delinquent was placed. An erring M.P. had to pay half the whole value; those engaged in one war, a sixth: those (later on) who had been in both wars, a third. 'Traitors,' *i.e.* the leaders or chief supporters of the King's cause, were not allowed to compound at all. They were 'excepted' from the various acts of composition, and their lands confiscated and sold, or given by way of reward to the leaders on the Parliament side, part of the Marquis of Worcester's lands, for instance, being conferred on Cromwell.

Amongst the delinquents actually in arms those who got off most easily were such as were in garrisons which surrendered on articles of war. The Committee for Compounding often thought that they escaped too lightly, and sometimes protested against or tried to evade the articles; but in such cases an appeal to Fairfax or Cromwell was invariably successful, for both these generals insisted most

emphatically upon the honourable carrying out of the conditions for which they had pledged their word.

The records and papers of the Committee for Compounding fill 269 volumes. Of these, vols. 61-227 consist of 'cases,' *i.e.* documents brought together bearing upon the individual compounders. These were arranged and bound early in the last century, and form the two magnificent series known as the 'Royalist Composition Papers.'<sup>1</sup> The Committee was formed and re-formed, its powers increased and diminished, its place of meeting changed from Goldsmiths' Hall to Haberdashers' Hall, and in its old age it was called the 'Committee for Advance of Money and Sequestrations, thereby causing considerable danger of confusion with the earlier committees of those names. The papers of this committee are exceedingly valuable for the information they give concerning the royalist families of that time; for names both of persons and places, values of estates, dates of death, &c., and they also contain a good deal of topographical information. They are calendared in five volumes, with an index—or rather two indexes, one general and one for place-names—for the whole, in the last volume.

The letters C and D are wanting in the sequence of committees, and we do not even know what they stood for. Perhaps one of them was the powerful Army Committee,

<sup>1</sup> Manuscript indexes of these were also compiled (now, I believe, in the Literary Search Room at the Public Record Office), which are valuable and accurate, but not very easy to use, as no distinction is made between an important and a merely casual mention of a name; there are no cross references to the variants in spelling, and the old references to numbers and volumes are confusing. The best plan for finding anything mentioned in these indexes is to compare them with the list given by Mrs. Everett Green at the beginning of vol. i. of her Calendar, where old and new references are placed side by side. It has, I fear, been a cause of perplexity to students that many names in the manuscript indexes do not appear in the indexes of the Calendar. The explanation of this is that *all* the papers relating to any case are not noticed in the Calendar. If they had been, its five volumes would have extended to fifteen. The principal papers—petitions, letters, orders, &c.—are calendared, and the references given on the right-hand margin of the pages; certificates, particulars of estates, accounts, depositions, reports, &c., are, for the most part, not calendared, but their references are given on the left-hand margin. A list of the meaning of these references will be found at the beginning of vol. ii. of the Calendar.

whose records appear to have entirely disappeared, nothing being left but scattered papers, petitions, accounts sent in, &c., and an immense number of warrants for payment sent up to the treasurers, signed by the commanders, Essex, Manchester, Fairfax, and Cromwell.

F stands for the Committee for Plundered Ministers, first formed to provide for the puritan ministers ejected from their charges, and to take action against 'scandalous ministers.' It also arranged augmentations and the surrender by the sequestering Committees of tithes, &c., for the Nonconformist ministers who had taken the churches and parsonages of the ejected Anglican clergy. There are only two volumes of proceedings and one of loose papers in official custody, but other volumes are at the British Museum, Bodleian Library, and elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

H is what is known as the Indemnity Committee, whose work was to receive and decide upon the claims of those who considered themselves entitled to compensation for losses sustained during the war. Of this committee we have the complete set of order books from June 1647 to November 1655, some miscellaneous volumes, and eighty-eight volumes of 'cases' alphabetically arranged. These papers are valuable for names and estates of the Parliament party, as those of the committees dealing with delinquents are for the Royalists.

All these committees were actively at work during the King's life, and the Committee of Both Kingdoms came to an end with the monarchy. After the King's death the executive power was given into the hands of a Council of State, whose fine series of entry books (together with some papers) is known by the letter I. As the papers of the Committee of Both Kingdoms completely swamped the regular series of State Papers in the years of the Civil War, so also do those of the Council of State for the years of the Commonwealth and Protectorate. There are a few miscellaneous volumes gathered together under letter K—papers of the Trustees for

<sup>1</sup> For a list of these, see Appendix IV. of Dr. W. A. Shaw's *English Church during the Civil War and under the Commonwealth*.

Fee Farms and Crown Lands, &c.—and five cases of parchment documents ; and towards the end of the Interregnum, where materials are of the scantiest, there are taken in from the Foreign State Papers a good many letters of Nicholas and other statesmen which, although written beyond seas, bore upon English politics ; but all these go into very little compass. It is to the great collections of Thurloe, Carte, Clarendon, &c., at the Bodleian, those in private hands, and those at the British Museum that we must go for the general correspondence of the leaders of that day.

The Council of State first met in February 1648–9, and was remodelled or re-elected every year. When Cromwell was proclaimed Protector, it became his Highness's Council ; when Richard's protectorate came to an end, it once more took its original title, but the records are treated as a continuous series.

Of this succession of Councils we have an almost unbroken series of order books, either draft or fair, from February 1648–9 to October 1659, which give us its proceedings from day to day. Of the letter-books we have only six, there being none after March 1652 until the re-formation of the Council after Richard's abdication, but this matters less as the orders for the letters to be written are in the day's proceedings. There are several volumes of warrants and passes, a few concerning foreign affairs, Scottish records, military matters, the accounts of smaller committees, &c., and four order books of the Committee of Safety at Wallingford House during the usurpation of power by the army in 1659.<sup>1</sup> The Council at first met at Derby House, but before long removed to Whitehall.

Of other State Papers proper for Charles I. and the Commonwealth we have the Irish, which are somewhat scanty, but happily can be supplemented from other quarters, and the Foreign, for which the description given for James I. still holds, *mutatis mutandis*, as regards the names of ambassadors and consuls ; also the Colonial and East Indian, as before.

<sup>1</sup> These records, like those of the Committee of Both Kingdoms, are calendared in the regular series of Domestic State Papers.

The second and third sources to which we look for State Papers, viz. family collections and made collections, may be taken together.

To begin with the British Museum (where, of course, the documents are now in official custody, but not in the same sense as those at the Public Record Office, everything having been acquired either by gift or purchase), scattered throughout the great collections there—Cotton, Harley, Sloane, Lansdowne, and the rest, and in the immense miscellaneous series known as Additional Manuscripts—there is a wealth of documents relating to the Stuart period, easily found by reference to the excellent catalogues. The Stowe, Barrington, Fairfax, and Nicholas papers are particularly valuable, as is also the correspondence of Prince Rupert. Of these the Stowe and Barrington papers have been reported on by the Hist. MSS. Commission (while they were still in private hands); the Fairfax papers are partly printed in the 'Fairfax Correspondence,' and the Nicholas papers have been edited, as far as 1656, by Mr. Warner, for the Camden Society. Sir Symond d'Ewes's notes and diaries are most important, but abominably written. Large portions of them, however, have, happily, been transcribed. For the Protectorate times the Pell papers are very useful, and many of them have been printed in Robert Vaughan's 'History of the Protectorate.'

At the Bodleian also there is great store of treasure, especially in the Carte and Clarendon collections. The Carte papers—originally part of the great collection of the Duke of Ormonde at Kilkenny—were carried off (with the second Duke's permission) by Thomas Carte, in order to assist him in writing the Life of the first Duke, and were never returned. Many of the most important were printed by Carte in the Life and the two volumes of 'Letters' published by him; and they have been partially reported on and calendared by Messrs. Russell and Prendergast.

The Clarendon State Papers are many of them printed in the three published volumes known by that name, and the whole collection has been calendared up to the end of the

year 1657.<sup>1</sup> There are also great numbers of valuable papers relating to the Stuart period in the Tanner and Rawlinson collections, Thurloe's MSS. being included in the latter.

At Worcester College, Oxford, is the great collection formed by William (afterwards Sir William) Clarke, secretary to the Council of the Army, 1647-1649, and to General Monck and the commanders of the army in Scotland, 1651-1660. This was presented to Worcester College by Dr. George Clarke, son of Sir William, and is of extreme importance for the Civil War and Interregnum. Especially valuable are the accounts of the doings and deliberations of the army at Saffron Walden and during their march towards London in 1647, and the debates of the council of officers, 1648-1649. There are also some very curious papers relating to the little band of communists who, under the name of 'diggers,' tried to put their principles into practice on St. George's Hill, in Surrey. Later in date are a great number of newsletters, sent from the headquarters of the army in England or from persons connected with the army to the headquarters of the army in Scotland. Attention was first called to the Clarke papers by Mr. Pottinger, the librarian of Worcester College. Four volumes of selections from them have been edited by Mr. Firth in the Camden series of the Royal Historical Society, and he has also edited two volumes of documents relating to Scotland for the Scottish Historical Society. A portion of Clarke's papers were not given to Worcester College, but remained in the hands of his relatives, and eventually came into the possession of the Leyburne-Popham family, of Littlecote, in Wiltshire. They mostly consist of papers and letters relating to the troubled times just before the Restoration, and throw much light on Monck's proceedings, the views of the people, and the feeling in the army. They are calendared in the Hist. MSS. Commissioners' Report on Mr. Leyburne-Popham's papers. Yet a

<sup>1</sup> The Calendar for the years 1655-1657 was issued in 1876. It is most earnestly to be hoped that so important a work will not be allowed to fall to the ground.

third detachment of the Clarke manuscripts is at the British Museum, chiefly holograph letters of distinguished persons but these are really a part of the Littlecote collection, purchased by the Museum. The Carew Papers at Lambeth are mostly of earlier date, but there are sufficient of the reign of James I. to occupy the last volume of Mr. Brewer's Calendar.

Other valuable sources for State Papers not in government keeping are the Records of the Common Council at the Guildhall and the Register House and Advocates' Library at Edinburgh.

As an instance of the differing 'life histories' of our State Papers we may take those of three Secretaries of James I.—Sir Robert Cecil, Sir Ralph Winwood, and Sir Edward Conway. There are great numbers of documents belonging to each one of these amongst the State Papers at the Public Record Office, but in addition we have—

*Sir Robert Cecil's* papers in the great collection at Hatfield, and also certain papers in the Marquis of Bath's collection, contained in what is known as the Duchess of Portland's chest.

*Sir Ralph Winwood's* papers—such as remained in his widow's hands—which came to the Montagu family by the marriage of Sir Ralph's only daughter with the second Lord Montagu of Boughton. They are now in the collection of the Duke of Buccleuch, and have been partly printed by Sawyer in the Winwood Memorials.

*Sir Edward Conway's* papers, which for some time remained in possession of the family, but eventually came to John Wilson Croker, by whom they were presented to the Public Record Office in the middle of the last century.

The private collections of England are being gradually opened to the student by the kindness of their owners and the work of the Hist. MSS. Commissioners, who have also reported on the records of many corporate bodies.

One of the first collections to be taken in hand by them was that of the House of Lords. The Calendar for James I.'s reign will be found in the Third Report, that for Charles I. in Reports Four to Seven. As the House was abolished after



the King's death, there are naturally no papers of the Commonwealth or Protectorate. These collections include a most important series of petitions, appeals, letters, reports, &c., which are not printed in the journals.

The MSS. of the Marquis of Salisbury are of great importance for the earlier part of James I.'s reign, up to the death of Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury, but the Calendar is only now approaching the reign of James. Mr. Gardiner had access to the MSS., and his references to them have given us a foretaste of the good things to come.

But first in importance for the Stuart period we may probably place the Duke of Portland's MSS.

The 1st volume of the Portland Calendar contains the Nalson papers, a collection formed by the Rev. John Nalson, LL.D., rector of Doddington and Canon of Ely. The chief source from which he obtained his material was the office of the Clerk of the Parliament, from which apparently he took whatever he pleased. He also had access to the Paper Office, but only to take copies, and the Duke of Ormonde allowed him to see and copy what he liked from the Ormonde papers now forming the Carte collection. From these materials he printed two volumes of papers extending in date from 1639 to January 1641-2, and intended to have gone further, but died. After his death a considerable part of his collection fell into Dr. Tanner's hands. Many papers were printed by Peck in his 'Desiderata Curiosa' and by Zachary Grey in his 'Examination of the Third and Fourth Volumes of Neal's History of the Puritans.'<sup>1</sup> How they got to Welbeck is, I believe, not known. The Report on the Portland MSS. has excellent abstracts of such as have not already been printed elsewhere. Very valuable for the time of the Civil War are the military despatches, reported on here, printed in Cary's 'Memorials' or calendared in the House of Lords MSS.

In the second volume of the Portland Calendar are some Vere and Holles papers of 1624 and 1625, and some good

<sup>1</sup> See Introduction to vol. i. of the Hist. MSS. Commissioners' Report on the MSS. of the Duke of Portland.

papers relating to the navy, principally letters to Gen. William Penn. There are also some letters of the early Stuart period in the third volume—that is, vol. i. of the Harley papers.

The *Duke of Rutland's MSS.* are also interesting for this period. In the 1st volume of the Report are calendared the papers of the Manners family, from 1603 to 1641; in the 2nd, those from 1642 until the end of the Stuart period and beyond. The Earl of Rutland was lord-lieutenant of the county of Lincoln in James I.'s reign, and there are many documents in relation to this county and those adjoining it. One of particular importance may be mentioned, giving the rates of wages fixed in Lincolnshire in 1621.<sup>1</sup>

The *Duke of Buccleuch's MSS.* at Montagu House include, as has been already said, the papers of Sir Ralph Winwood, ambassador to Holland and afterwards Secretary of State in the reign of James I. Those belonging to the period of his secretaryship (1614–1617) are most of them purely State Papers, which eluded the efforts of Sir Thomas Wilson when he tried to regain Winwood's official papers. A selection of Winwood's papers was printed by Sawyer in his 'Memorials,' but none of later date than 1614. The Buccleuch Report also calendars the Montagu papers proper. During the reigns of James I. and Charles I. the Montagu family played a very considerable part. Sir Edward, afterwards first Baron Montagu of Boughton, occupied various offices in the county of Northampton; one of his brothers, James, was successively Dean of the Chapel Royal, Bishop of Bath and Wells, and Bishop of Winchester; another, Sir Henry, attained to high legal honours and was created Earl of Manchester. The papers give much information concerning the condition of Northamptonshire, and contain many good letters and news-letters and much parliamentary intelligence.

The *MSS. of Lord Montagu of Beaulieu* originally formed part of the preceding collection, and, like it, are valuable for the time of the Civil War and Long Parliament. Here also we find much information concerning

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. 460.

Northamptonshire. There is one particularly interesting paper concerning the state of agriculture, uses of the land, &c., in the county, and there is a fine document giving the offices and fees in 1610, which should be studied in connexion with that of Queen Elizabeth's time printed in Peck's 'Desiderata Curiosa' and elsewhere.

The *Coke or Cowper MSS.*, in the possession of Lord Cowper at Melbourne Hall, are mostly the correspondence of Sir John Coke, who, after having been a commissioner of the navy in the reign of James I., was Secretary of State to Charles I. from 1625 to the end of 1639. It has already been mentioned that Sir John professed to surrender all his official papers on giving up his post, but there are some here that bear a suspicious resemblance to State Papers (especially amongst the addenda papers in vol. iii.) and very many letters and reports which, although addressed to Coke individually, were written to him in his official rather than in his private capacity. There are also many early letters relating to the navy, and the private letters are very good, for the reigns of James I. and Charles I. They go on steadily to the end of 1643 (Coke died in 1644), after which there is a break in the collection, the rest of the papers being of considerably later date.

The *Duke of Manchester's MSS.* are noticed only briefly in one of the earlier Reports (VIII., appendix 2), but one very important set of papers, in relation to the quarrel between the second Earl of Manchester and Cromwell, has been edited by Mr. Bruce and Professor Masson for the Camden Society.

For Ireland the most important collection is that of the *Marquis of Ormonde* at Kilkenny Castle, now in process of calendaring.

The *Earl of Egmont's MSS.* contain the papers of Sir Philip Percival, and give much information in relation to the Rebellion of 1641; also concerning proceedings with the King, and English political news, chiefly from the standpoint of the Presbyterian party.

The above-mentioned are only a few of the very great number of private collections containing useful material

for the Stuart period, and there is also more or less information to be found in most of the reports on the archives of corporations.<sup>1</sup>

Last, but by no means least, there are the printed texts, which are not very numerous for the reign of James I., but in which the times of Charles I. and the Commonwealth and Protectorate are extraordinarily rich. It must be remembered that many of these State Paper texts have existed from the seventeenth century in the form of printed versions, still referred to in place of the originals, and of which, indeed, the originals in some cases no longer exist.

First amongst the printed sources for the reign of James I. may be mentioned the splendid series of Lords and Commons Journals; also the Reports of the two Houses, and the speeches, &c., printed in the 'Old Parliamentary History,' and in Cobbett.

Winwood's 'Memorials,' edited by Sawyer, have been already referred to. There are a few papers in Rymer's 'Fœdera' and in the curious and miscellaneous collection called 'Cabala,' published in 1654.

'Rushworth's Historical Collections' begin with the year 1618. He had originally intended to start with the Long Parliament, but found, as he states, that in order to show how things arose he must give the life as well as the death of Charles I., and so began with the Spanish marriage and the grounds of the war in the Palatinate.

Dalrymple's 'Memorials and Letters,' the 'Hardwicke State Papers,' Somers's 'Tracts,' Ellis's 'Original Letters,' the 'Sydney Papers,' Lord Bacon's letters, edited by Spedding, all contain stores of useful material; and of extreme value to the student are the 'Statutes and Constitutional Documents of the Reign of James I.,' edited by Dr. Prothero, and the 'Documents relating to the Thirty Years' War,' edited by Mr. Gardiner.

The printed texts for the times of Charles I., the Commonwealth, and the Protectorate are, as before said, very numerous and very valuable.

<sup>1</sup> For a list of some other collections containing papers of this period, see Appendix.

*Rushworth's Collections* continue, giving us secrets of State, matters of law, transactions in Parliament, debates, consultations, conferences, and many other things. The first part ends in 1630. The second part takes in the years 1630–1640, that is, the eleven years' interval between the early Parliaments and those of 1640, giving us, *inter alia*, proceedings in the Star Chamber and Exchequer Chamber, and at the Council table, documents concerning the expedition against the Scots, the Council at York, and the Scots Commissioners in London. The last part begins with the Long Parliament, and takes us up to the death of the King, the trial of Strafford forming a separate volume. Rushworth himself published only parts 1 and 2, but the others were left nearly ready for press, and appeared in 1691 and 1701.

*Thurloe's State Papers* practically begin about three years after Rushworth fails us, *i.e.* in the spring of 1652, when he was made secretary to the Council of State on Walter Frost's death. When Oliver Cromwell became Protector, he took over also the Intelligence Department, and, in 1655, the control of the posts. He fulfilled all these duties with the utmost zeal, and, considering that the last-mentioned included the inspection of all suspicious correspondence, he intercepted letters on all hands. Of these intercepted letters his collection contains a very great number. After the Restoration, as already mentioned, he destroyed many of the papers, and would appear to have hidden the rest in a false ceiling of his chambers in Lincoln's Inn, where the vast store was discovered by the then occupant of the chambers in the reign of William and Mary. It changed hands several times, but was finally bequeathed to the Bodleian by Rawlinson in 1755. Birch had printed the seven great volumes a few years earlier, adding some papers from the MSS. of Lords Shelburne, Hardwick, and others. To the student who looks on this colossal work with admiration and awe, and owes more to it than it is possible to say, it seems almost incredible to conceive that Carlyle could speak of Birch as an 'idle, ineffectual editor.'

Thurloe's letters to agents in Switzerland are printed in Vaughan's 'Protectorate.'

*Nalson's Collection of Affairs of State* has been already mentioned in connexion with the Duke of Portland's MSS.

Besides the various 'Collections,' there are memorials, tracts, and letters, printed in immense numbers. But, above all, there is the great collection at the British Museum, known as *Thomason's Tracts*, from their collector, or the *King's Pamphlets*, from their donor, George IV. This magnificent collection, comprising upwards of 30,000 pamphlets, was made by Thomason from day to day. For the most part they are dated by himself, whether with the date of issue or of purchase is uncertain, but probably the two often coincided. They include speeches, letters, sermons, treatises, plays—every imaginable sort of tract on every variety of subject—and also an immense collection of the little quarto newspapers of the time. These newspapers were almost all weekly, and were issued in great numbers, giving news (foreign and home), letters from the seat of war, and various miscellaneous matters. There were more than a hundred of them during the civil wars alone, amongst the most important being the 'Perfect Diurnal,' 'Mercurius Aulicus,' 'Mercurius Civicus,' 'Scottish Dove,' 'Parliamentary Scout,' 'Kingdom's Weekly Intelligencer,' 'Perfect Occurrences,' 'Moderate Intelligencer,' 'Mercurius Politicus,' 'Several Proceedings in Parliament,' and the 'Public Intelligencer;' while on the Royalist side were 'Mercurius Pragmaticus,' 'Mercurius Melancholicus,' 'Mercurius Elencticus,' and others. The collection called 'Cromwelliana' is a very useful series of extracts from these newspapers of passages relating to Oliver Cromwell.

Many of the texts mentioned for the reign of James I. are equally valuable for the later period, as the Journals and Reports of Parliament, the Parliamentary Histories, Somers's Tracts, &c. Mr. Gardiner has edited the constitutional documents of Charles I., and Whitelocke's 'Memorials' contain a certain number of documents, besides the substance of many letters and speeches which are not printed *in extenso*. The

collections of letters are too numerous to mention. Ellis's *Original Letters* still go on, Strafford's 'Letters and Despatches' were printed in 1739, and amongst the most valuable of those edited in modern times are Cromwell's letters and speeches (Carlyle), the letters of Charles I. to his wife (Bruce), and those of Henrietta Maria to her husband (Mrs. Everett Green).

Amongst the many printed documents bearing on special subjects or periods the following are perhaps some of the most useful:—

For the Long Parliament, Scobell's 'Collection of Acts and Ordinances' and Husband's 'Speeches and Passages' and 'Diurnal Occurrences'; for the Civil War, the original documents printed in the 'Hamilton Papers,' Cary's 'Memorials of the Civil War;' Sanford's 'Illustrations of the Great Rebellion;' the Chetham Society's 'Civil War in Lancashire;' Kingston's 'East Anglia and the Civil War;' Roland Phillips's 'Civil War in Wales;' Webb's 'Civil War in Herefordshire;' Sprigge's 'Anglia Rediviva;' for the Commonwealth and Protectorate, Milton's 'Letters and Papers of State' (Nickolls); Burton's 'Diary;' Vaughan's 'Protectorate.'

For Ireland, the appendices in Gilbert's editions of the 'Contemporary History' and 'History of the Confederation,' and the documents printed in Borlase's 'History of the Rebellion,' Cox's 'Hibernia Anglicana,' and the 'Clanricarde Memoirs;' for Scotland, the Melros State Papers; Baillie's 'Letters and Journals;' the Bannatyne Club publications; Spalding's 'History of the Troubles,' and Mr. Firth's 'Scotland and the Commonwealth' and 'Scotland and the Protectorate;' for the Royalists abroad, the 'Ormonde Letters,' the 'Clarendon State Papers,' and (as already mentioned) the Calendar of the unpublished Clarendon papers, the Nicholas Papers, and the intercepted letters in Thurloe.

Very large numbers of Stuart papers will also be found scattered in the volumes of the Camden and Royal Historical Societies and the various archæological journals.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The question of foreign texts does not, of course, fall within the scope of his paper, but it may be mentioned that there are two printed 'sources' from

It seems hardly possible to speak of the State Papers without mentioning the Calendars which have done so much towards making these papers available for us. Those for the reign of James I. and for the Interregnum were compiled by Mrs. Everett Green; those for the reign of Charles I. by Mr. John Bruce, and after his death by Mr. W. D. Hamilton.

No one searching through these can fail to be struck by the discrepancy between the earlier and later volumes for the reigns of James I. and Charles I., the documents of the early years being extremely condensed, while those of the later years are treated at much greater length.

When these editors began their labours the idea was to go on as quickly as possible, and to clear the whole ground in a few years. Thus the volumes were little more—were allowed to be little more—than a catalogue of the documents.<sup>1</sup> As the work went on this very brief enumeration was found unsatisfactory. Even to students in town it gave a great deal of trouble; to those in the country it made the Calendars almost useless. Then the Master of the Rolls issued his notable ‘Instructions to Editors,’ directing them to calendar the papers with sufficient minuteness to show not only what they do, but ‘what they do not contain.’ This plan of fuller abstracts, while retarding the completion of the Calendars, has immensely increased their value, and the English series (if we except certain of the Commonwealth committees) is now complete as far as the middle of the reign of Charles II. The great mass of the State Papers is arranged chronologically, and either bound up in volumes or kept in paper packets, ready to be made up into volumes as the Calendars are issued. For the most part these packets or

the French archives which are exceedingly useful in identifying foreign names and verifying dates, viz. the correspondence of Richelieu and Mazarin and the administrative correspondence of Louis XIV., &c., in *Documents Inédits sur l’Histoire de France*, and also the work, still in progress, of the *Recueil des Instructions données aux Ambassadeurs et Ministres de France*, with its admirable notes.

<sup>1</sup> The same remark applies to Mr. Lemon’s Calendars of the reign of Elizabeth. Mr. Brewer alone—with the Henry VIII. papers—calmly pursued his own way, made his abstracts as full as he liked, and wrote prefaces as long as a volume.



volumes are noted as consisting of 'letters and papers,' a somewhat vague description, but not more so than is necessary, for, as has already been shown, their contents are miscellaneous to the last degree. Primarily, however, they consist of documents which have been in the office of the Secretary of State. Many of them are drafts or memoranda of the successive Secretaries, which makes their handwriting a matter of some importance to the student. And it must be confessed that as a rule they wrote very ill.

It is said that when Buckingham proposed Conway to King James, his Majesty replied that it seemed an odd thing to make a man Secretary who could not write ; and Laud boldly proclaimed a certain document a forgery because it appeared to be in Secretary Conway's hand and yet was quite legible. Happily Conway was quite conscious of his own deficiencies and appears to have dictated nearly everything.

Nicholas and Williamson wrote neat clear hands when they took pains, but their private drafts are often very difficult, and Nicholas made matters worse by interspersing bits of shorthand, using Shelton's system, as did William Clarke and Pepys.

The Commonwealth men, especially Rushworth and Thurloe, wrote extremely well ; and the under-clerks, almost without exception, wrote a beautiful small clerical hand, which to any one who knows the writing of the period presents no difficulties at all.

There are one or two preliminary points which the student will do well to bear in mind when working at the papers of the Stuart period. In the first place very great care is necessary with regard to dates. It is true that we have no longer to work out the 'indications,' or even (save in the case of the letters of scholars here and there) to calculate nones and ides ; but the old and new styles, and the different times for beginning the year, offer perpetual traps to the unwary.

Our peerages, with one or two honourable exceptions, are very far from being safe guides as regards the solar *versus* the legal year. Sir Harris Nicolas, for instance, in his most useful

Historic Peerage, gives a list of the bishops, very convenient for any one who does not possess *Le Neve*, but it is no uncommon thing for a bishop to be translated to a new diocese twelve months before he leaves his old one, or to be a year on the way from one see to another. Mr. Courthope has, however, in most cases put him right. Every one will remember in this connexion Carlyle's remarks about the carrier who died in February and continued forwarding butter boxes in May.

The change of style, as is well known, was made in 1582, and was at once adopted by the Roman Catholic countries of Europe. Being introduced under the auspices of the Pope, the Protestant States at first fought a little shy of it, but in a few years all Europe had adopted it except ourselves.

For the next few years Englishmen mostly kept to their own style even when abroad, but during the Stuart period usage was so varying that we have to be constantly on the watch. As a rule, ambassadors and consuls living abroad used the new style (unless they state otherwise or give both). During the Interregnum the young King and his followers almost always used the new. There are exceptions, but they are few in number and must be tested with great care.

In Charles II.'s time, while Lord Holles at Paris and Sir Richard Fanshaw in Spain were using the Continental style, Sir George Downing at the Hague clung to the English one; and while our consul at Cadiz invariably dated by the new style, the little garrison at Tangier, on the other side of the narrow strip of water, as invariably used the old. The reason of this probably was that their chief intercourse with the world was through the British ships, and these, presumably, kept their logs by the English style all the world over.

For deciding whether a document is dated according to old or new style there are certain points which may guide us. If the writer, for instance, gives the day of the week as well as the day of the month, the difficulty is at an end. Bond's 'Handy-book of Dates,' or the tables at the beginning of the Prayer Book, will enable us to decide quite surely.

Endorsements of receipt also often help us. If a letter written on the 24th is received on the 18th, we can have no hesitation in saying that it is dated by the new style. Often also titles, either official or of nobility, settle the question. If such helps are wanting, a careful scrutiny of the contents of the document will often guide us to the true date, and if all clue is lacking we can only hope that the document is not of sufficient importance to matter much. But on the whole, at any rate after the reign of James I., the chances as regards letters written by residents (not merely visitors) abroad are in favour of the new style.

In Scotland, although the old style was adhered to as regards the day of the month, the year, from 1600 inclusive, began on January 1, not March 25.

It may be worth while to mention that although the English people invariably used the legal style for their year date, they appear to have looked upon it only as a sort of legal fiction. Carlyle iterates and reiterates the statement that March 25 was New Year's Day. But it was seldom called so. Letters dated on New Year's Day or New Year's Eve, or sending New Year's greetings, are common enough, and in almost every case the first of January is meant—the feast of the Circumcision, not of the Annunciation. And in old housekeeping books not only is January 1 marked as New Year's Day, but the length of the bill of fare testifies to the importance of the occasion.

Another matter which has to be taken into consideration is that of the regnal years. In Charles I.'s time there is one dangerous corner. The legal year began on March 25, the regnal year on March 27; and the two days, March 25 and 26, have to be treated with great caution, as mistakes were often made.

From the very slight and hasty sketch which I have given of our original sources for the study of the history of the first half of the seventeenth century, it will, I think, be evident that the student will not need to complain of any lack of material; that the mine, to go back to Mr. Bruce's

simile, is a rich one, and well worth the toil of working. Nor is the worker left without guide or sign-post; for to keep him on the right path and lead him on his way, to help him to understand the course of events, to grasp the truth and to avoid error, he has the great and abiding benefit of the life work of the great teacher who has so lately passed away; mourned by all who knew him, but sorrowed for especially by those who felt, when he left them, that their master had indeed been taken from their head that day.

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## APPENDIX

In addition to those mentioned in the text, the following collections, which have been reported on by the Historical MSS. Commissioners, will be found to contain useful material for the early Stuart period and for the Interregnum:—

- G. Wingfield Digby, Esq.* Correspondence of Sir John Digby, afterwards Earl of Bristol, ambassador to Spain. Also documents relating to his trial. (Report VIII., Appendix and Report X., Appendix I.)
- C. H. Drummond-Moray, Esq.* Letters to and from Sir George Villiers, afterwards Duke of Buckingham. c. 1641–1626. (Report X., Appendix I.)
- The Duke of Roxburghe.* Correspondence. Book of Household Expenses, James I. and Charles I. (Report XIV., Appendix III.)
- Walter Rye, Esq.* The Gawdy MSS. Letters and papers relating to the Gawdy family and the County of Norfolk, 1603–1660. (Report X., Appendix II.)
- The Earl of Powis.* Letters and Papers of Sir Edward Herbert, afterwards Lord Herbert of Chirbury, 1615–1639, mostly written abroad. Also Herbert Papers, general, partly Stuart period. (Report X., Appendix IV.)
- The Earl of Muncaster.* Transcripts of Letters and Papers relating to the government of the borders, 1605–1607. Miscellaneous Papers, 1607–1642. Sir John Pennington's Journal, 1631–1636. (Ibid.)
- Captain Stewart.* Letters and Papers relating to the Civil War and Interregnum, chiefly the correspondence of Col. John Moore.<sup>1</sup> (Ibid.)
- Nevil Story-Maskelyne, Esq.* The Proger MSS., temp. Charles I. (Ibid.)

<sup>1</sup> These Civil War papers are now, most of them, in the possession of Capt. Charles Lindsay.

- The Earl of Kilmorrey.* Letters and Papers relating to Shropshire, 1617–1627, and to Chester, 1625–1660. Also family letters. (Ibid.<sup>1</sup>)
- The late *H. D. Skine, Esq.* Salvetti Correspondence, 1625–1628. Also other documents relating to Salvetti, 1607–1621. (Report XI., Appendix VII.)
- J. Eliot Hodgkin, Esq.* Documents relating to Charles I. and the Civil War, 1642–1646; and to Charles II. in exile, 1648–1659. (Report XV., Appendix II.)
- James Round, Esq.* Papers relating to the Veres, Earls of Oxford. Diary of the siege of Colchester in 1648. (Report XIV., Appendix IX.)
- Earl of Dartmouth.* Ordnance, Admiralty, and Miscellaneous Papers. Book of the revenue, 1659. (Report XI., Appendix V., and Report XV., Appendix I.)
- The Earl of Ashburnham's MSS.* are now the Stowe MSS. at the British Museum. They are briefly calendared in Report VIII., Appendix III.
- G. A. Lowndes, Esq.* The Barrington MSS., now at the British Museum. (Report VIII., Appendix.)

For Scotland :

*The Earl of Eglinton and Sir John Stirling Maxwell.* (Report X., Appendix IV.)

For Ireland :

*The Marquis of Drogheda.* Papers of the 1st Viscount Loftus. (Report IX., Appendix.)

There are many important collections reported on in the early volumes of the Commission, of which the notices are so brief that they are of comparatively little use. Such, for instance, are the MSS. of—

- The Earl of St. Germain's.* The MSS. of Sir John Eliot. (Report I., Appendix.)
- The Earl of Coventry.* The Papers of Sir Thomas, afterwards Lord Coventry, Lord Keeper, 1626–39. (Ibid.)
- W. Philips, Esq.* Letters and Papers. Documents relating to the gunpowder plot. Diary of Sir Robert Philips in Spain in attendance on Sir John Digby. (Ibid.)

The above list is by no means exhaustive, for most of the collections reported upon by the Commission contain documents relating to the Stuart and Interregnum periods.

For a general view of the printed texts of this period (not only State papers or documents allied thereto), see Mr. J. Bass Mullinger's lists in the 'Introduction to the Study of English History.'

<sup>1</sup> There are other collections in this volume which contain a certain number of documents belonging to this same period.