

Poetry.

REMORSE AND PUNISHMENT.

From Pollok's "Course of Time."

Suddenly before my eye
A wall of fiery adamant sprung up—
Wall mountainous, tremendous, flaming high
Above all flight of hope. I paused, and looked;

Fast by the side of this unsightly thing
Another was portrayed, more hideous still;
Who sees it once shall wish to see't no more.
For ever undescribed let it remain!

HAMPDEN.

The circumstance of the recent disinterment of the bones of the patriot, by my Lord Nugent, may perhaps give to the following an interest which it would not otherwise possess.

"Hampden passed his early years in the lighter dissipations of society. He had taken no degree at the University, but he studied the municipal law at the Inns of Court."
He appears to have retired to a more reserved and melancholy society; thus Lord Clarendon describes a more select and more studious class of minds, without, however, losing his natural vivacity and "flowing courtesy to all men."

"Hampden lives in the unfading colours of the most forcible of portrait-painters, the majestic Clarendon. Who will deny that he possessed that greatness of mind and character, and which suffered no diminution from an early death, capable of inspiring the most elevated patriotism?"

"In must be confessed, that though England has had no

Plutarch to interest us by the charm of his details, our country does not want for subjects, particularly in the revolutionary age which now engages our attention. But the literary genius of these times had not reached to the philosophy of biography; heroes were not wanting, but the immortalising pen. The great character before us, found no friend in that day to send down to us the slightest memorial of the man, and curious collectors in physiognomy or in politics, cannot even show us his portrait.

"The only anecdote we find to record of Hampden, is the peculiar manner which he observed in speaking in Parliament. He considered that to speak last, in an able debater, was an advantage almost equal to a victory. Hampden invited his opponents to exhaust their arguments in the first opening of the debate: and if he found those of his own side worsted, his dextrous sagacity brought down less controvertible ones. The single opinion of Hampden had that weight in parliament, that however the majority inclined, they suspected, if he were not in their number, the force of their own reasonings, and would not trust to their own conviction; they either adopted his opinions, or adjourned the debate."
And at the next meeting, the artful orator, or the active partisan, had mustered new forces, and thus by "perplexing the weaker, and tiring out the acuter judgments, Hampden rarely failed to attain his ends."
He excelled in the most subtle arts of debate. An admirable scholar, skilful not only in the choice and weight of his own significant expressions, but dextrous when a question was about to be put contrary to his purpose in neutralizing its object, by slipping in some qualifying term or equivocal word.

"How often has the inquiry been agitated, whether a terrible ambition was not concealed under the public virtues and powerful faculties of the patriot Hampden? 'It belongs not to an historian of this age, scarcely even to an intimate friend, positively to determine,' said our inimitable philosophic Rame; but Rame has himself determined it, by his acute penetration in the note to his text, which like the postscript of a mistress, contains the real purport of the letter.

"Hampden has been described by our last authority, Dr. Lingard, as by preceding writers, to have been, 'quiet, courteous, and submissive.' At first he was one of the party who had prepared themselves for voluntary banishment; but whether this great man bore his faculties so meekly, may be a subject of future inquiry. I have been informed of papers, in the possession of a family of the highest respectability, which will show that Hampden had long lived in a state of civil warfare with his neighbour, the Sheriff of the County; they mutually harassed each other. It is probable that these papers may relate to quarrels about levying the sixpence in the pound on Hampden's estate for which he was 'cessed.' It is from the jealousy of truth that we are anxious to learn, whether the sixpence was refused out of pique to his old enemy and neighbour the sheriff, or from the purest unmixed patriotism? I must own too, that it is with difficulty that we can form a notion of Dr. Lingard's 'quiet, courteous, and submissive' gentleman, in him, who, in the breaking out of the civil war with Charles the First, made Davila's history of the civil wars in France his manual. Hampden, at least, meditated on what he had resolved should happen. And never was there a man of the 'quiet' temper and 'submissive' disposition of Hampden, who was a more intrepid hero, when he drew his sword to shed the blood of half the nation! Clarendon has declared, that 'no one was less the man he seemed to be, which shortly afterwards appeared, when he dared less to keep on the mask. The truth is, as we ourselves have witnessed in Revolutionary France, and as may be observed in the same characters which have appeared in the same scenes in the yet unwritten history of the terrible revolution in South America, that men naturally of calm tempers, and even of polished manners, change their characters as if by magic, in the madness of their political passions. And this striking fact in the history of man, was noticed even by Lord Clarendon himself; who, though he was severe upon the individual Hampden, was perfectly just in his deep knowledge of human nature. Alluding to the first meeting of the Long Parliament, which elected many of the members, he tells us, that 'the same men who, six months before, we observed to be of very moderate tempers, and to wish that gentle remedies might be applied, talked now in another dialect of things and persons. They must now not only sweep the house clean below, but must pull down all the cobwebs which hung in the top and corners, that they might not breed dust, and so make a foul house hereafter; and to remove all grievances, were for pulling up the excesses of them by the roots.' And we must add 'the branches'—they naturally began to lop 'the branches'; for such was the radical spirit of Hampden, that he joined a party who were distinguished by the popular political designation of 'Root-and-branch Men.'

"The integrity of Hampden's principles, and his self-devotion in the public cause, to say the least, lost something of their purity in their progress. Whatever might have been the integrity of the patriot, it was involved in dark intrigues, and degraded by an ambition which often betrayed the partisan and the demagogue. When we view Hampden at the head of his Buckinghamshire men, inciting several thousands to present petitions, we may doubt whether this instigation were patriotism or insurrection. His repeated journeys to Scotland, his secret conferences at home, indicated the active plotter. Once, when it was observed to him, that men had grown weary of such perpetual renewals of alarm, concerning the state of religion, while the civil grievances appeared much less to occupy their attention, the subtle intriguer replied, that 'if it were not for this reiterated cry about religion, they could never be certain of keeping the people on their side.' Was this a lesson which he had learnt in Davila? It was not unworthy of 'the prince' whom Machiavel has painted.

"In that projected coalition of the patriots with the King's friends, which was frustrated by the sudden death of the Earl of Bedford, we can view only a scheme of political ambition. The men of the people hastened to take possession of their

seats in the cabinet, driving away the ministry of Charles, some by flight, some by intimidation, some by compounding. Hampden here acted a remarkable part.—The patriot demanded to be instituted the governor of the prince. I would not infer, notwithstanding this egotistical complacency, that the great mind of Hampden would not have sown the seeds of patriotism in a patriot King. He might have taught 'the Prince' the business of life as well as its pleasures; even Lord Bolingbroke would have promised this; but as in one case the tutor might have brought in a Stewart, so in the other he might have educated a root-and-branch reformer.

The attempt at the governorship of the Prince is said to have been intended as a means to keep the son as a hostage for the father.—Thus the monarch was to be the only person in the kingdom bound up hand and foot on a throneless throne. He was to be a phantom of state, whose title was to hold the people in subjection to the sole will and absolute power of the great and ambitious mind, which frames a new government,—or to use Hampden's own express words, the monarch was "to commit himself and all that is his" to the care of Hampden and his friends. The future monarch was to become a royal Hampden: the English nation was to have been Hampdenised; and the British Constitution was to terminate in some political empirism. Is it possible that Hampden resembled the Abbey Sieyes in his facility of drawing up constitutions? Were the English people to be the victims of forms of government mutable as the passions of party would dictate, or puppets of the Commonwealth of Utopia?"—London paper.

"I discovered this Trait in the parliamentary character of Hampden, in Francis Osborne's works on "government," sect. 31. It is curious to observe, that Lord Clarendon has not omitted some notice of it in his character of this patriot. Either his lordship borrowed it from Osborne, or this peculiarity of Hampden's must have been notorious in his day. The other is furnished by Sir Philip Warwick.
"†Clarendon, i. 298."

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Fredericton, April 22, 1828. JEDEDIAH SLASON.

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