

Speech 14 was to the Conference with the Committee of Ninety-nine in regard to the Title of King on 11th April 1657
Difficulty as to how they shall proceed in this matter of Conferring.

LORD WHITLOCKE. "Understands that the Committee is here only to receive what his Highness has to offer; such the letter and purport of our Instructions; which I now read. (Reads it.) Your Highness mentions 'the Government that now is,' seems to hint thereby: The Government being well now, why change it? If that be your Highness's general objection, the Committee will give you satisfaction."

THE LORD PROTECTOR. Sir, I think both parties of us meet here with a very good heart to come to some issue in this great business; and truly that is what I have all the reason in the world to move me to. And I am exceeding ready to be ordered by you as to the manner of proceeding. Only I confess, according to the thoughts I have, -in preparing my thoughts for so great a work, I formed this notion to myself:-That the Parliament having already done me the honour of Two Conferences; and now sent you again, their kind intention to me evidently is no other than this, That I should receive satisfaction. They might have been positive in the thing; might have declared their Address itself to be enough, and insisted upon Yes or No to that. But I perceive that it is really and sincerely the satisfaction of my doubts that they aim at; and there is one clause in the Paper itself, 'quoted by my Lord Whitlocke,' which doth a little warrant that: "To offer such reasons for his satisfaction," &c.-Now, Sir, it's certain the occasion of all this 'Conference' is the Answer I already made; that's the occasion of your having to come hither again. And truly, Sir, I doubt whether by your plan--If you will draw out my reasons from me, I will offer them to you: but on my own part, I doubt, if you should proceed that other way, it would a little put me out of the method of my own thoughts. And it being mutual satisfaction that is endeavoured, if you will do me the favour-("To go by my method," his Highness means; "to offer me YOUR Reasons, and DRAW me out, rather than oblige me to COME out") I shall take it as a favour if it please you! I will leave you together to consider your own thoughts of it. (Motioning to go.)

LORD WHITLOCKE. "This Committee, being sent to wait upon your Highness, I do suppose cannot undertake to give the Parliament's reasons for what the Parliament hath done. But any gentleman here may give for your Highness's satisfaction his own particular apprehension of them. And if you will be pleased to go in the way you have propounded, and on any point require a satisfaction from the Committee, I suppose we shall be ready to do the best we can to give you satisfaction." (Bar Practice! Is not yet what his Highness wants.)

THE LORD PROTECTOR. If this be so, then I suppose nothing can be said by you but what the Parliament hath dictated to you?-However, I think it is clearly expressed that the Parliament intends satisfaction. Then it is as clear that there must be reasons and arguments which have light and conviction in them, in order to satisfaction! I speak for myself in this; I hope you will not

take it otherwise. I say it doth appear to me you have the liberty of giving your own reasons. If I should write down any of them, I could not call that "the reason of Parliament." (Whitlocke, in a heavy manner, smiles respectful assent.) But in Parliamentary and other such conclusions the efficient "reason" is diffused over the general body, and every man hath his particular share of it; yet when they have determined such and such a thing, certainly it was reason that led them up into it. And if you shall be pleased to make me partaker of some of that "reason"-!-I do very respectfully represent to you that I have a general dissatisfaction at the thing (Glancing at the Engrossed Vellum; but meaning the Kingship); and do desire to be informed of the grounds that lead you, whom I presume to be all satisfied with it and with every part of it. And if you will be pleased, if you so think fit,-I will not urge it farther upon you,-to proceed in that way, it will be a favour to me. Otherwise, I deal plainly with you, it doth put me out of the method of my own conceptions: and in that case I shall beg that we may have an hour's deliberation, and meet again in the afternoon.

LORD CHIEF-JUSTICE GLYN,-one of the old expelled Eleven, whom we saw in great straits in 1647; a busy man from the beginning, and now again busy; begs to say in brief: "The Parliament has sent us to give all the satisfaction which it is in our understandings to give. Certainly we will try to proceed according to what method your Highness finds best for that end. The Paper of Vellum Instruments, however, is general, consisting of many heads; and we can give but general satisfaction."

THE LORD PROTECTOR. If you will please to give me leave. (Clearing his throat to get under way.) I do agree, truly, the thing is a general; for it either falls under the notice of Settlement, which is a general consisting of many particulars; or if you call it by the name it bears in the Paper, "Petition and Advice," that again is a general; it is advice, desires and advice. What in it I have objected to is as yet, to say truth, but one thing. Only, the last time I had the honour to meet the Parliament, I did offer to them that they might put me in the way of getting satisfaction as to particulars, 'any or all particulars.' Now, no question I might easily offer something particular for debate, if I thought that would answer the end. (What curious pickeering, flourishing, and fencing backwards and forwards, before the parties will come to close action. As in other affairs of courtship.) For truly I know my end and yours is the same: To bring things to an issue one way or the other, that we may know where we are,-that we may attain the general end, which is Settlement. (Safe ground here, your Highness!) The end is in us both! And I durst contend with any one person in the world that it is not more in his heart than in mine!--I would go into some particulars (Especially one particular, the Kingship.) to ask a question, to ask a reason of the alteration 'made;' which might well enough let you into the business,-that it might. Yet, I say, it doth not answer me. (I had counted on being drawn out, not on COMING out: I understood I was the young lady, and YOU the wooer!) I confess I did not so strictly examine the terms of your Order from the Parliament, 'which my Lord Whitlocke cities;' whether I even read it or no I cannot tell.-(Pause.)-if you will have it that way, I shall, as well as I can, make such an objection as may occasion some

answer, 'and so let us into the business;'-though perhaps I shall object weakly enough! I shall very freely submit to you.

GLYN (with official solemnity). "The Parliament hath sent us for that end, to give your Highness satisfaction."

LORD COMMISSIONER FIENNES,-Nathaniel Fiennes, alias Fines alias Fenys, as he was once called when condemned to be shot for surrendering Bristol; second son of "Old Subtlety" Say and Sele: and now again a busy man, and Lord Keeper-opens his broad jaw, and short snub face full of hard sagacity, to say: "Looking upon the Order, I find that we may offer your Highness our reasons, if your Highness's dissatisfaction be to the alteration of the Government whether in general or in particular."-So that His Highness may have it his own way after all? Let us hope the preliminary flourishing is now near complete! His Highness would like well to have it his own way.

THE LORD PROTECTOR. I am very ready to say, I have no dissatisfaction that it hath pleased the Parliament to find out a way, though it be of alteration, for bringing these Nations into a good Settlement. Perhaps you may have judged the Settlement we hitherto had was not so favourable to the great end of Government,-the Liberty and Good of the Nations, and the preservation of all honest Interests that have been engaged in this Cause. I say I have no objection to the general 'fact,' That the Parliament hath thought fit to take consideration of a new Settlement or Government. But you having done it in such way, and rendered me so far an interested party in it by making such an Overture to me (As this of the Kingship, which modesty forbids me to mention),-I shall be very glad 'to learn,' if you please to let me know it, besides the pleasure of the Parliament, somewhat of the reason they had for interesting me in this thing, by such an Overture.

Truly I think I shall, as to the other particulars, have less to object. I shall be very ready to specify objections, in order to clear for you whatsoever it may be better to clear; 'in order' at least to help myself towards a clearer understanding of these things;-for better advantage 'to us all,' for that, I know, is in your hearts as well as mine. Though I cannot presume that I have anything to offer calculated to convince you; yet, if you will take it in good part, I shall offer somewhat to every particular.

'And now,' if you please,-As to the first of the things (Kingship), I am clear as to the ground of the thing, being so put to me as it hath been put. And I think that some of the reasons which moved the Parliament to do it, would, 'if they were now stated to me,' lead us into such objections or doubts as I may offer; and would be a very great help to me in that. And if you will have me offer this or that or the other doubt which may arise methodically, I shall do it.

Whereupon LORD WHITLOCKE, summoning into his glassy coal-black eyes and ponderous countenance what animation is possible, lifts up his learned voice, and speaks several pages;-which we abridge almost to nothing. In fact the learned pleadings of these illustrious Official Persons, which once were of boundless importance, are now literally shrunk to zero for us; it is only his

Highness's reply to them that is still something, and that not very much. Whitlocke intimates, "That perhaps the former instrument of Government having originated in the way it did, the Parliament considered it would be no worse for sanctioning by the Supreme Authority; such was their reason for taking it up. 'Their intentions I suppose were'-this and that, at some length. As for the new Title, that of Protector was not known to the Law; that of King is, and has been for many hundreds of years. If we keep the title of Protector, as I heard some argue, our Instrument has only its own footing to rest upon; but with that of King 'it will ground itself in all the ancient foundations of the Laws of England,'" &c. &c,

MASTER OF THE ROLLS,-Old Sly-face Lenthall, once Speaker of the Long Parliament; the same whom Harrison helped out of his Chair,-him also the reader will conceive speaking for the space of half an hour:

"May it please your Highness,' Hum-m-m! Drum-m-m! 'Upon due consideration you shall find that the whole body of the Law is carried upon this wheel' of the Chief Magistrate being called King. Hum-m-m! (Monotonous humming for ten minutes.) 'The title of Protector is not limited by any rule of Law that I understand;' the title of King is. Hum-m-m! King James wanted to change his Title, and that only from King of England to King of Great Britain; and the Parliament could not consent, so jealous where they of new titles bringing new unknown powers. Much depends upon a title! The long Parliament once thought of changing its Title to Representative of the People; but durst not. Hum-m-m! 'Nolumus Leges Anglia mutari.' Drum-m-m! 'Vox populi: it is the voice of the Three Nations that offers your Highness this Title.' Drum-m-m!"--Such, in abbreviated shape, is the substance of Lenthall's Speech for us. At the ending of it, a pause.

THE LORD PROTECTOR. I cannot deny but the things that have been spoken have been spoken with a great deal of weight. And it is not fit for me to ask any of you if you have a mind to speak farther of this. But if such had been your pleasure, truly then I think it would have put me into a way of more preparedness, according to the method and way I had conceived for myself, to return some answer. And if it had not been to you a trouble-Surely the business requires, from any man in the world in any case, and much more from me, that there be given to it serious and true answers! I mean such answers as are not feigned in my own thoughts; but such wherein I express the truth and honesty of my heart. (Seems a tautology, and almost an impertinence, and ground of suspicion your Highness;-but has perhaps a kind of meaning struggling half-developed in it. Many answers which call and even THINK themselves "true" are but "feigned in one's own thoughts" after all; from that to "the truth and honesty of heart" is still a great way;-witness many men in most times; witness almost all men in such times as ours.) That is what I mean by true answers.

I did hope that when I had heard you, so far as it might be your pleasure to speak on this head, I should then, having taken some short note of it as I do (Glancing at his Note-paper), have been in a condition, this afternoon (Would still fain be off!)-if it had not been a trouble to you,-to return my answer, upon

a little advisement with myself. But seeing you, have not thought it convenient to proceed that way, -truly I think I may very well say, I shall need to have a little thought about the thing before returning answer to it: Lest our Debate should end on my part with a very vain discourse, and with lightness; as it is very like to do. (A Drama COMPOSING itself as it gets ACTED, this; very different from the blank-verse Dramas.)

I say therefore, if you had found good to proceed farther in speaking of these things, I should have made my own short animadversions on the whole, this afternoon, and have made some short reply. And this would have ushered me innot only to give the best answer I could, but to make my own objections 'too.' (An interrogative look: evidently some of us must speak! Glyn steps forward.)

LORD CHIEF-JUSTICE GLYN steps forward, speaks largely; then SIR CHARLES WOLSELEY steps forward; and NATHANIEL FIENNES steps forward; and LORD BROGHIL (Earl of Orrery that is to be) steps forward; and all speak largely: whom, not to treat with the indignity poor Lenthall got from us, we shall abridge down to absolute nothing. Good speaking too; but without interest for us. In fact it is but repetition, under new forms, of the old considerations offered by heavy Bulstrode and the Master of the Rolls. The only idea of the slightest novelty is this brought forward by Lord Broghil in the rear of all:

LORD BROGHIL. "By an Act already existing (the 11th of Henry VII.), all persons that obey a 'King de facto' are to be held guiltless; not so if they serve a Protector de facto. Think of this.-And then 'in the 7th and last place,' I observe: The Imperial Crown of this country and the Pretended King are indeed divorced; nevertheless persons divorced may come together again; but if the person divorced be married to another, there is no chance left of that!"--

Having listened attentively to perhaps some three hours of this, his Highness, giving up the present afternoon as now hopeless, makes brief answer.

THE LORD PROTECTOR. I have very little to say to you at this time. I confess I shall never be willing to deny or defer those things that come from the Parliament to the Supreme Magistrate, (He accepts then?) if they come in the bare and naked authority of such an Assembly as is known by that name, and is the Representative of so many people as a Parliament of England, Scotland, and Ireland is. I say this ought to have its weight; and it hath so, and ever will have with me.

In all things a man is free to grant desires coming from Parliament. I may say, inasmuch as the Parliament hath condescended so far as to do me this honour (a very great one added to the rest) of giving me the privilege of counsel from so many members of theirs, so able, so intelligent of the grounds of things-(Sentence breaks down)-This is, I say, a very singular honour and favour to me; and I wish I may do, and I hope I shall do, what becomes an honest man in giving and answer to these things,-according to

such insight either as I have, or as God shall give me, or as I may be helped into by reasoning with you. But indeed I did not in vain allege conscience in the first answer I gave you. (Well!) For I must say, I should be a person very unworthy of such favour if I should prevaricate in saying things did stick upon my conscience. Which I must still say they do! Only, I must 'also' say, I am in the best way I could be 'in' for information; and I shall gladly receive it.

Here have been divers things spoken by you to-day, with a great deal of judgment and ability and knowledge. I think the arguments and reasoning that have been used were upon these three heads: First, Speaking to the thing simply, to the abstract notion of the Title, and to the positive reasons upon which it stands. Then 'secondly, Speaking' comparatively of it, and of the foundation of it; in order to shew the goodness of it comparatively, 'in comparison with our present title and foundation.' It is alleged to be so much better than what we now have; and that it will do the work which this other fails in. And thirdly, Some things have been said by way of precaution; which are not arguments from the thing itself, but are considerations drawn from the temper of the English People, what will gratify them, 'and so on;'-which is surely considerable. As also 'some things were said' by way of anticipation of me in my answer; speaking to some objections which others have made against this proposal. These are things, in themselves, each of them considerable. (The "objections?" or the "Three heads" in general? Uncertain; nay it is perhaps uncertain to Oliver himself! He mainly means the objections, but the other also is hovering in his head,-as is sometimes the way with him.)

To answer objections, I know is a very weighty business; and to make objections is very easy; and that will fall to my part. And I am sure I shall make them to men who know somewhat how to answer them,-'to whom they are not strange,' having already in part been suggested to them by the Debates already had.

But upon the whole matter, I having as well as I could taken those things (Looking at his Notes) that have been spoken,-which truly are to be acknowledged as very learnedly spoken,-I hope you will give me a little time to consider of them. As to when it may be the best time for me to return hither and meet you again, I shall leave that to your consideration.

LORD WHITLOCKE. "Your Highness will be pleased to appoint your own time."

THE LORD PROTECTOR. On Monday at nine of the clock I will be ready to wait upon you.