

## CORRESPONDENCE OF SYLVANUS URBAN.

ORDERS AND INSTRUCTIONS DELIVERED BY HENRY PRINCE OF WALES, IN 1612, TO THE OFFICER EMPLOYED IN DISCOVERING THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE.

MR. URBAN,—Whatever relates to the life and illustrates the character of Prince Henry, the eldest son of James I., one who had given such bright promise of excellence, and whose life, to the grief of the nation, was so prematurely terminated, must always be a subject of no common interest to English readers. The attention of Prince Henry was especially directed to the navy, that great branch of national defence. Sir Charles Cornwallis, in his "Discourse of the most illustrious Prince<sup>a</sup>," dwells particularly on this marked feature in the Prince's character, which went far to justify the praise of his contemporaries and to ensure his popularity. The celebrated Phineas Pett, the ship-builder<sup>b</sup>, was his sworn servant, and used both to make him models and build vessels under his inspection. His examination of the navy at Chatham, when sent thither by his father, King James, was made with all the minute attention and accuracy of a Lord of the Admiralty.

We are told that in 1612 the Prince, then aged nineteen years, convinced of the importance of a north-west passage, formerly attempted in vain, employed for that purpose Captain Thos. Button, who had acted in 1601 at the siege of Kinsale, and was then in the Prince's service, an able seaman, and eminent in other branches of knowledge: Pett was ordered to assist that Captain in the choice of a proper ship for the undertaking. The Captain accordingly set sail in April, 1612, with two vessels, one called the "Resolution," in which he sailed himself, and the other the "Discovery," commanded by Captain Ingram. These were the names given to Captain Cook's vessels in his last voyage. The ships were victualled for eighteen months. They wintered on board, and did not return till after the Prince's death, November, 1612, which prevented Captain Button from making another voyage for the purpose of the discovery. But we are told that from the observations which he made, especially of the tides, he came home perfectly satisfied that a north-west passage might be found; and he told Mr. Briggs, the famous Professor of Geometry at Gresham College, that he had convinced King James of the truth of his opinion. Button was afterwards knighted for his services, and died of a fever in April, 1643<sup>c</sup>.

Your readers are aware that Sir Thomas Button had been preceded in expeditions to the North by several other distinguished naval officers, Frobisher in 1576, and by Davis of Sandridge in 1585: Frobisher made

<sup>a</sup> Somers's Tracts, vol. ii. p. 217.

<sup>b</sup> Heywood, an historian of the time of Charles I., speaking of Pett as "the prime workman," says that his "ancestor's father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, for the space of two hundred years and upwards, have continued, in the same name, officers and architects in the royal navy." The autobiography of Pett is given in *Archæologia*, vol. xii. p. 217.

<sup>c</sup> Birch's Life of Prince Henry, p. 264.

three voyages. In 1591 Sir James Lancaster sailed with five vessels. In 1607 Captain Henry Hudson made an unfortunate voyage, an account of which is written by one of the crew, Habakkuk Prichet: there was a mutiny; Hudson, his son, and seven others were forced into a boat amidst fields of ice, and were never heard of more. Prichet accompanied Sir Thomas Button, who passed through Hudson's Strait, saw the south point of the large island named in some of our charts Southampton Island, and gave it the name of "Cary's Swan's Nest," and steering from thence south-west made the mainland of America in  $60^{\circ} 40'$ , to which he gave the name of Hope's Check. Button wintered in Port Nelson, so called from his pilot, in latitude  $57^{\circ} 10'$  north, which is now the principal station of the Hudson's Bay Company. He reached no higher than the latitude of  $65^{\circ}$  on the east coast of Southampton island.

The original MS. of the instructions which follow was formerly in the possession of Mr. Hanrott, whose very valuable library was dispersed in the year 1833. Mr. Hanrott caused a facsimile to be made of it, one of which he gave to me. I am not aware that these Instructions have ever appeared in a printed form:—

"HENRY P.—*Certain Orders and Instructions set down by the Most Noble Prince Henry, Prince of Wales, &c., this 5th of April, 1612, under His Highness' signature and sign manuell, and delivered unto his sercant Captain Thomas Button, General of the Company now employed about the full and perfect Discovery of the North-west Passage, for the better government as well of the Ships committed to his charge as of the Persons in them employed upon all occasions whatsoever.*

"First, therefore,—

"1. That it may please Almighty God to preserve you and your charge from danger, and if it shall seem good unto His wisdom, to give a blessing of success unto this hopeful and important enterprise. Let there be a religious care daily throughout your ships to offer unto His Divine Majesty the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for His fatherly goodness and protection. Especially provide that the blessed days which He hath sanctified unto His service be Christian-like observed with godly meditation.

"2. Let no quarreling, or profane speeches, no swearing or blasphemy of His holy Name, no drunkenness or lewd behaviour pass unpunished, for fear of His most heavy indignation.

"3. Let there be a particular note taken of all such as shall shew themselves most willingly obedient unto you, most diligent and industrious in their charges, most resolute and constant in the prosecution of this action, that thereby we being informed at your return may esteem accordingly of their deservings.

"4. Let there be faithful and true registering every day all the memorable accidents of the voyage, and that by as many as shall be willing, especially by the most skillful and discreet persons, whom we would have once every ten or twelve days to confer their notes for the better perfecting a journal which we shall expect at your return.

"5. More particularly when you shall be clear of the Land's-end, be careful to have kept a true account of your way to Groinland and from thence to the Straights' mouth, and to observe in what latitude it lieth, what face the coast beareth, what sea setteth into it; and when you are within it how the coast doth tend, the continuance and course of the ebb and flood, what height it riseth, from whence it cometh, and with what moon, what current, eddy, or overfall you find; what islands or rocks, and how bearing; and last of all your soundings, which you must try with good store of faddome once, at least, every fourth glass, and oftener amongst broken lands, rocks, shoale, and white waters. Yet remembering that the way is already beaten to Digg's Island, rather than lose time we would have you hasten thither, and leave the perfect observation of these things to the 'Pinnace' in the return.

"6. As often as occasion offers itself, especially when you shall be forced to send on land—for we would not that you yourself should quit your ship—let some skillful man with good instruments observe the *elevation*, the *declination*, the *variation* of the compass, and if you arrive time enough, the beginning and ending of the eclipse that

will happen on the 20th of May next; especially if you should winter, let there be careful and painful watching to observe the instant of the conjunctions of any of the planets, or the distance of the moon from any fixed star or stars of note; all which we would have entered into a book and presented me at your return.

"7. Let there be care by your order and direction for keeping of your ships in consort all your course, wherein we wish you to make all the haste you can to the Straits' mouth; but we think your surest way will be to stand up to Iceland, and so over to Groinland in the height of 61, so to fall down with the current to the most southerly cape of that land lying in about 59, called Cape Farewell, which point, as the ice will give you leave, you must double; and from thence, or rather from some 20 or 30 L. to the northward of it, if you should fall over Davis his Straits to the western main in the height of 62 degrees or thereabout, you shall find Hudson's Straits, which you may know by the furious course of the sea and ice into it, and by certain islands in the northern side thereof, as your card shews.

"8. Being in, we hold it best for you to keep the northern side, as most free from pester of ice, at least till you be past Cape Henry, from thence follow the leading ice between King James and Queen Anne's Forelands, the distance of which two capes observe if you can, and what harbour or road is near them; but yet make all the haste you may to Salisbury his Island, between which and the northern continent you are like to meet a great and hollow billow from an opening and flowing sea from thence. Therefore, remembering that your end is west, we would have you stand over to the opposite maine in the latitude of some 58 degrees, where riding at some headland, observe well the flood if it come in south-west, then you may be sure that the passage is that way. If from the north or north-west, your course must be to stand up into it, taking heed of following any flood for fear of entering into bays, inlets, or sands, which is but loss of time to no purpose.

"9. By the way, if your ships within the Straits should sever, we think Digg's Island, for the good road and plenty of refreshing that is there, will be your fittest rade-vous. And if it should fall out that the winter grow upon you before your finding a thoroughfare into the South Sea, we think your safest way will be to seek southward for some place to winter in; for we assure ourself, by God's grace, you will not return without either the good news of a passage or sufficient assurance of an impossibility.

"10. You must be careful to prevent all mutiny amongst your people, and to preserve them as much as may be from the treachery and villany of the salvages and other easterne people. Whenever you arrive have, therefore, as little to do with them as may be, only if the Straits itself afford no sufficient strength, you shall be happy in finding out some convenient part on the back of America, or some island in the South Sea, for a haven or station for our ships and merchandizes hereafter; but yet spend as little time as may be in this or any other search, saving of the passage, till you have despatched the Pinnaces with advertisement of your entry into the South Sea, which must be done as soon as you shall be thereof assured.

"11. Last of all, see that you and all under your charge do faithfully observe and follow all such further directions and instructions as shall be given by the adventurers. And to the end it may appear what care we have of this action, and how acceptable every man's good endeavour and service therein will be to us, let this be particularly read once every month, if it can be, to your whole company."

In the relation of Prince Henry to his father, we are struck with that superiority which a strong mind must ever exercise over a weak one. A young man possessing the Prince's good principles, must have been shocked by the disgraceful scenes of profligacy which were exhibited in the court of James I., far exceeding, in many respects, anything witnessed in that of Charles II.<sup>d</sup>

We may fear that the young Prince did not always pay sufficient respect to the fifth commandment; and as he had not taken pains to disguise his contempt for his father, James shewed very little regret for his loss. The following anecdote may be quoted as characteristic both of father and son<sup>e</sup>. Sir Walter Raleigh had obtained by gift from Queen Elizabeth

<sup>d</sup> See Hallam's Const. Hist., i. 448, notes.

<sup>e</sup> Lord Somers's Tracts, vol. ii. p. 451.

“a noble estate, the manor and castle of Sherborne in Dorsetshire. At one time Raleigh designed to rebuild the castle, of which some remains still exist, but altering his purpose, he built in a park adjoining to it, out of the ground, a most fine house, which he beautified with orchards, gardens, and groves of much variety and great delight, so that,” (as the writer continues,) “whether that you consider the pleasantness of the seat, the goodness of the soil, or the other delicacies belonging unto it, it rests unparalleled by any in these parts.”

This estate was seized, upon Raleigh's condemnation, with all his lands and offices, but Sherborne being entailed on his children, the forfeiture extended only to Raleigh's life. The estate being intended by James as a gift for the worthless Car, afterwards Earl of Somerset, the conveyance of the estate to Raleigh was pronounced invalid, and Sherborne was forfeited to the Crown. On its being given to Car, Prince Henry came with some anger to his father, desiring he would bestow Sherborne upon himself, alleging that it was a place of great strength and beauty which he much liked, but, indeed, with an intention to give it back to Sir Walter Raleigh, whom he much esteemed. His remark on Raleigh when in the Tower will not be forgotten,—“Surely no king but my father would keep such a bird in a cage.” “The king,” we are told, “was unwilling to refuse any of the Prince's desires,—indeed, they were most commonly delivered in such language as sounded rather like a demand than an entreaty,—granted his request, and to satisfy Car gave him 12,000, or, as some say, £25,000 in ready money. Within a few months afterwards the Prince was taken away, how and by what means (the writer says) “is suspected by all, and I fear too well known by many<sup>f</sup>.” After the Prince's death the King gave it again to Car; on his condemnation it passed into the family of Digby, its present possessors.

In one respect the Prince trod in his father's steps. We know the extraordinary expenditure of James's court; the Commons loudly complained of the King's prodigality and his love for the Scots. Rapin tells us that it was said “the whole wealth of England would not satisfy the avidity of the Scots, that gold and silver were as common in Edinburgh as stones in the streets, and that all the riches of England flowed thither.”

James's indulgence to his son, Hume observes, was imprudent, giving him a large independence in early youth. The estimate for the first year of the King's expenses was £77,000, that for the Prince was £16,000. The Prince in 1603 had seventy servants; in 1610, 426 servants, “besides various workmen, among whom was Inigo Jones, as the surveyor of the works<sup>g</sup>.” Cornwallis, who was treasurer of his household, tells us that “his family was ample, it consisted of few less than 500, many of them young gentlemen born to great fortunes. Plenty and magnificence in his house were the things he especially affected.”

One of the Lansdowne Manuscripts preserves the following verses written upon this Prince's death by Hugh Hollande, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge; they have been printed by Sir H. Ellis, Original Letters,

<sup>f</sup> Though many writers obliquely hint at it, the King is not to be accused of any foul play regarding the death of his son. The distinct reports of many physicians (see Cornwallis and Birch, *ut supra*.) satisfactorily refute popular rumours, which, as Scott says, are “easily founded on the general regret of a hopeful prince, and hatred to an unworthy favourite.”

<sup>g</sup> *Archæologia*, vol. xii. p. 85.

Second Series, III. 231. Eulogy, it must be admitted, could not go further:—

“Loe where he shineth yonder  
A fixèd star in heaven,  
Whose motion here came under  
None of the planets seven;  
If that the moone should tender  
The sun her love, and marry,  
They both could not engender  
So sweet a star as Harry.”

J. H. MARKLAND.

UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

MR. URBAN,—I forward you an exact copy which I have made of Sir Isaac Newton's letter. It exhibits the great philosopher in his character of a country gentleman, and a very exact man of business—and very careful of his interest. The *pasture* to be inclosed was a large commonable pasture in Colsterworth, in which parish Woolsthorpe, the place of Sir Isaac's nativity, is situate. Henry Ingle, to whom the letter is addressed, was, it seems, his bailiff. The Ingle family still exist at Colsterworth. In the burial register there H. I. is described “Cottager.”

Yours, &c., W. HOPKINSON.

Stamford, March 12, 1857.

“HENRY INGLE,

“I read over the proposal you sent me of enclosing the pasture and stinting the commons, and approve of the same, if the cow-commons be first stinted by agreement of the freeholders under hand and seal, so that, after the pasture is enclosed, it may not be in the power of a jury or of the greater part of the parish to break the stint. I believe that the number of commons belonging to every farm and cottage, as well before the stint as by the stint, should be expressed in the writing. And since there is an old list of the cow-commons, I believe it will not be difficult to settle those commons. But some having of late years transgressed in the number of sheep-commons, and perhaps in that also of the hors-commons, I think there should be made lists of those commons by the consent of the parish before the stint be agreed upon. Mr. Proctor or who the parish thinks fit may draw up the form of a writing for stinting the commons, and before it is signed and sealed by the neighbours I desire that a copy may be sent me to peruse. The

intended enclosure of the pasture may be also mentioned therein. And as soon as the writing is signed and sealed, the enclosure may be made. I have fourteen score sheep-commons, of w<sup>ch</sup> six score belong to y<sup>e</sup> royalty; also thirteen cow-commons and an half, and seventeen hors-commons, besides two hors-commons w<sup>ch</sup> I lately bought of my cousin, William Ayscough, w<sup>th</sup> the close next the Ling close.

“I understand that the neighbours have of late years eaten the fallow Lings with great cattel between Low Sunday and All Saints, w<sup>ch</sup> is contrary to an award decreed in Chancery. I desire that they would forbear eating that piece of ground w<sup>th</sup> any other cattel then sheep in that part of the year; otherwise I shall cause their great cattle to be pounded.

“To Scarson's cottage belong two cow-commons and tenn sheep-commons; to John a Mann's the same, and to Newton's the same; to Porter's none.

“I believe there will be some difficulty in settling the sheep-commons. And if, in the writing for inclosing the pasture, the commons for neat beasts be stinted, I shall agree to it. The horse-commons may be stinted in another writing, and the sheep-commons in a third. I return my thanks to the neighbours for ordering you to give me an account of this matter, and remain,

“Yo<sup>e</sup> very loving friend,

“ISAAC NEWTON.

“London, 13 Octob. 1712.”

“I desire you to acquaint my tennant Tho. Percival, that I have given John Newton, the bearer, one of the two decayed trees on Lisk-bank in the Becks, that w<sup>ch</sup> is most decayed, and desire that he would let him cut it down this autumn.”