

SOME NOTES ON FACTS IN THE BIOGRAPHY OF SIR  
SIMONDS D'EWES.

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It is one of the many advantages attendant upon gatherings like the present, that they furnish opportunities for directing attention to the biographies of celebrated persons connected with the districts visited. Local interest thus excited brings to light facts before unnoticed, and gives an opportunity for putting upon record floating traditions which may possibly contain some germs of truth, or may lead inquirers into new fields of investigation.

One cannot visit any part of Suffolk without coming upon the tracks of persons whose names are inscribed upon the roll of our eminent men. A glance at the Worthies of kind and pleasant Fuller<sup>2</sup> at once reminds us of the following, among many others:—St. Edmund, Cardinal Wolsey, Lord Keeper Bacon; Bishops Herbert, Losinga, Grossetête, Aungerville, Bale, Gardiner, Maude, Brownrigg, and Overall; Secretary Naunton; Lidgate and Southwell among our older poets; Cavendish, the navigator; Sir Robert Hitcham, Sir William Cordell, Lords Chief Justices Cavendish, Howard, and Brooke; Rowland, Taylor, Richard Sibbes, Samuel Ward, and many other clergymen; Sir William Drury, and, last in Fuller's enumeration, Sir Simonds D'Ewes.

Fuller left unnoticed many persons of equal celebrity with most of those he named, and additions innumerable might be made of worthies who have lived since Fuller wrote. In no respect has Suffolk degenerated. In every profession and in every walk of art, in literature, in mechanical improvements, especially those connected with agriculture, in the wide fields of military and naval enterprise, and in the less conspicuous but invaluable labours of the patient, learned

<sup>1</sup> Read in the Historical Section of the Annual Meeting at Bury St. Edmunds, July 22, 1869. By the sudden and deeply lamented death of the author of this memoir, it has not received the advantage of

his correction of the "proof." But, at his own desire, it was returned to him after having been read at Bury, and prepared by him for the press.

<sup>2</sup> Ed. 1811, ii. 324.

student, this county has ever shown itself to be a soil fertile of those qualities which contribute to national glory.

My object is to offer a few notes upon the last person mentioned by Fuller, Sir Simonds D'Ewes, who lived for some time in this town (Bury Saint Edmunds), and whose family was seated in this county and in this neighbourhood for several generations.

Sir Simonds was *par éminence* an antiquary; but let not that circumstance repel anyone. It would not be in accordance with what a well-known philosopher of the last century termed "the fitness of things," if they who come together to give attention to antiquities should leave antiquaries unnoticed.

The first traces of the name of D'Ewes in this country are shadowy and uncertain. Sir Simonds commemorates a Peter de la Duse, an Alexander del Ewe, a Robert del Ewes, and an Edward Deux, as names occurring in the Public Records between the reigns of Henry III. and Edward IV.<sup>3</sup> In those of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. there are many traces (not observed by Sir Simonds) of a Giles Dewes, a native of France, who combined in his own person a professional acquaintance with music, a power of teaching his native language, and a taste for literature which showed itself in several useful ways. The earliest traces of this Dewes describe him as attached to the household of Prince Arthur, in the capacity of the young prince's "schoolmaster for the French tongue."<sup>4</sup> When his royal pupil married, the services of Dewes were transferred to Prince Arthur's younger brother, Henry Duke of York, afterwards Henry VIII.; and as a "luter" in that duke's musical establishment, Dewes received a grant of sixteen yards of "good blakke chamlet" to make him a gown against the marriage of Prince Arthur.<sup>5</sup> We next find him mentioned as "sometyme instructour" to his royal master "in this selfe tongue" of France;<sup>6</sup> and in due time, when Henry had thoroughly emancipated himself from all tutors and governors, Dewes was appointed to exercise his teaching faculty towards the Princess Mary, the future queen; but before that duty fell upon him, he had been appointed keeper of the royal library

<sup>3</sup> Harl. MS. 381, fos. 51—56.

<sup>4</sup> Weever's Fun. Mon., p. 185, ed. 1767.

<sup>5</sup> Warrant to the Keeper of the Ward-

robe (Pub. Records), 17 Hen. VIII., 2 Nov.

<sup>6</sup> Herbert's Ames, i. 470.

at the palace of Richmond, which secured him a salary of 10*l.* per annum, and various other benefits.<sup>7</sup> It was whilst teacher of French for the Princess Mary that he compiled for her use a curious little book, among the earliest, if not the very first, of its kind in our language:—"An Introductione for to lerne to rede, to pronounce, and to speake French trewly." There were many editions of this work published by different printers in the reign of Henry VIII., but it is now a book of considerable rarity. A copy, printed by Thomas Godfray, is mentioned by Dibdin<sup>8</sup> as being in the library of Mr. Douce; two copies, one printed by John Waley and the other "by Nicolas Bourman for John Reyne." are in the Grenville Library; and it was reprinted at Paris in 1852 in the edition of *Palsgrave's Eclaircissement* included among the French "*Documens Inedits*." A work so frequently reproduced must at any event have had the merit of applicability to the period of its publication, and ought alone to save the name of "the singular clerk, Master Gilet Dewes," from oblivion. His earthly remains found a resting place in the church of St. Olave's Jewry. An inscription which formerly stood there to his memory,<sup>9</sup> disappeared in the Great Fire, if not before.

Sir Simonds D'Ewes, so far from acknowledging any genealogical connection with Giles Dewes, maintains a remarkable silence in reference to him. Among the worthy knight's multifarious genealogical memoranda, I have not observed any notice or allusion to him whatsoever.

All Sir Simonds's researches at that particular period are directed towards an Adrian Dewes, who was unquestionably his great-grandfather. He came into England from Guelderland early in the reign of Henry VIII., and practised some trade in the city of London, perhaps connected with the manufacture or sale of cloth, for he lived in the parish of St. Michael Bassishaw, near Basing Hall, the great cloth mart. All our knowledge of him is comprised in a single glance at his death-bed. In 1551 he was attacked with the sweating sickness. In all haste he made his will, directed that he should be buried "in the churchyard of St. Michael," left to his four sons, Garret, James, Peter, and Andrew, a portion of 20*l.* apiece, and appointed his wife, Alice, sole

<sup>7</sup> Brewer's Cal. Henry VIII., i. 75, 294, 339.

<sup>8</sup> Dibdin's Ames, iii. 68.

<sup>9</sup> Weever's Fun. Mon., p. 185.

executrix of all his goods, "moveable and immoveable." His will bore date on the 15th July, 1551, and the testator was buried on the following day.<sup>1</sup>

Adrian's widow was unfortunate. She married again, and her second husband was a spendthrift. With a view to the welfare of her children, she strove to keep out of his clutches some portion of the produce of Adrian Dewes's estate. She hoarded the money, and hid it away in a secret place. Her husband suspected the fact, and remarked that whilst sitting in the chimney-corner she continually cast furtive glances towards a particular spot. He searched, and up the chimney, in a soot-covered nook, he discovered a concealed cupboard, containing a deposit said to have amounted to a thousand marks in gold.<sup>2</sup>

But Garret Dewes, Adrian's eldest son, was one of those men whose welfare in the world does not depend upon any inheritance. He was a printer, regularly apprenticed and brought up to the trade in the city of London,<sup>3</sup> and kept shop at the sign of the Swan in St. Paul's Churchyard. Many of the books printed by him are of a grave and serious character, but he himself was a humourist. With tradesman-like desire of attracting attention to his shop, his press, and his name, he adopted a printer's mark, which is placed by Camden<sup>4</sup> among the most memorable of "the witty inventions of Londoners." It represents the gable end and part of one side of a house. On the topmost or *garret* floor there is a window open. Within we catch sight of two persons playing with dice. One has just thrown, and we are to understand that the throw is a *deuce*! In our days the most inveterate lover of a pun would probably regard such a mode of indicating "Garret Dewes" as partaking more of vulgarity than of wit, but as a specimen of the humour which was acceptable to our ancestors it has its curiosity, and as a fact it will be found to be of some importance in connection with Sir Simonds D'Ewes.

As an advertisement it was probably successful. Garret D'Ewes became a thriving citizen. He made money; he purchased the manor of Gains, with a gentlemanly residence,

<sup>1</sup> The will was proved in the Archdeaconry Court of London. An office copy exists in Harl. MS., 381.

<sup>2</sup> Autobiography of Sir Simonds

D'Ewes, i. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Dibdin's Ames, iv. 940.

<sup>4</sup> Remaines, ed. 1637, p. 166.

near the pleasant village of Upminster in Essex. He retired from his business, and died at Upminster on the 12th April, 1591.

Garret D'Ewes had an only son named Paul, a name which his son assures us that he came by somewhat oddly. When the godfathers, in the course of the baptismal service, were called upon to name the child, an "unseasonable strife," it is said, arose between them as to the answer. They neither agreed between themselves, nor with the child's father. In the midst of the squabble the clergyman, learning that the child was born on the 25th January, "the day allotted for the Apostle Paul's conversion," terminated all dispute by giving the child the name of the Apostle. Paul D'Ewes was entered of the Middle Temple, and was called to the bar; but preferring the safe to his chance of the brilliant, he invested 5000*l.* of his share in his father's accumulations in the purchase of one of the six clerkships of the Court of Chancery, an office which brought him in the very handsome return of about 1650*l.* per annum. This income, with the residue of his inherited property, all nursed with the most anxious care by the thrifty Paul, was increased by a marriage with the youthful heiress of a barrister named Richard Simonds, brother of the Thomas Simonds who built the chambers in Chancery Lane, still known by the name of Simonds Inn. The property at Upminster having gone to the Lathums with Alice Dewes, Paul's only sister, he purchased the residence and estate of Wells Hall, Milding, near Lavenham, in this county of Suffolk. His office required his attendance in London only during term. Between term and term he resided at Wells Hall, and when in London occupied apartments in connection with his office in Chancery Lane. In 1602, the year of Sir Simonds's birth, his father's ordinary way of life chanced to be departed from, and Simonds was born at Coxden, near Chardstock, in Dorsetshire, the residence of his maternal grandfather, from whom he derived his Christian name, and acquired considerable property.

Sir Simonds has given, in his Autobiography, minute particulars of his youthful years. Two schools in Suffolk are commemorated by him with praise derived from personal experience; one at Lavenham, where he had for school-fellows Cloptons and Barnardistons, members of the leading families in that part of the county; and the other at Bury

on which account they call the flower *amuletum*.”<sup>1</sup> Afterwards the name of the flower came to be applied to other natural objects possessing the like virtue ; for Pliny, speaking of amber, observes “*infantibus alligari amuleti modo prodest.*” It may here be remarked that the only *amuletum* provided by nature that preserves its ancient reputation in our own day is the “child’s caul,” still to be seen advertised at the regular price of five guineas, and readily saleable to sea-faring folks as a sure protection from all danger of drowning. But with the Romans, as Lampridius tells us (*Diadumenian. III.*), its efficacy was of a different kind, and in fact only affected that profession held of all others in the greatest detestation by sailors ; for the Roman midwives used to sell the membrane stripped off the fortunate infant’s head “to credulous lawyers, who believed that they prospered through possessing it.”

Many other things, both animal and vegetable, the stranger in shape the more efficacious, had the power of counteracting the ever-dreaded Evil Eye ; amongst which stands pre-eminent the Greek *phallus*, the Latin *fascinum*, either represented in its actual form or by the fist with the fingers so closed as to suggest the same obscene idea. The first stroke only of the fearful influence was fatal, hence whatever diverted it from the person, in so doing destroyed its force. For such a purpose what could serve better than anything odd, strange, indecent, and thereby unlikely to be exposed to view ? The *phallus* was, of course, the first to suggest itself, and was followed, more decorously, by numerous other articles bearing some supposed analogy to the idea it conveyed. With this meaning a locust, or rather mole-cricket, of bronze was set up by Pisistratus, says Hesychius, in the Acropolis as a *καταχρησι* (literally “a thing to stare at”), or charm against the Evil Eye ;<sup>2</sup> and the insect itself is perpetually repeated on gems with a similar intention. The skull of an ass stuck upon a pole in the middle of a vineyard was accounted the best preservative against blight ; and this usage long held its ground in Tuscany, for Boccaccio makes an amusing use

<sup>1</sup> “*A nostris Tuber Terræ vocatur, in omnibus serenda domibus si verum est ubi sata est nihil nocere mala medicamenta : amuletum vocant : narrantque et ebrietatem representari addita in vinum.*”

<sup>2</sup> With the same view “certain laughable objects” were set up in front of potters’ furnaces, to avert the mischances to which their manufacture is so peculiarly liable. Pollax.

St. Edmunds, under the mastership of John Dickenson, whose high merits he records with gratitude.

From Bury Simonds went to St. John's, Cambridge, where he was entered a Fellow Commoner on the 20th May, 1618. He spent but two years at Cambridge, being then withdrawn by his father, of course without a degree, and transferred to the Middle Temple, where, by a bad custom then permitted, he had been entered as a student many years before. This Cambridge portion of his life has been made the subject of a separate publication, written by I know not whom,<sup>5</sup> but full of interest and information. It gives, indeed, the best account we have of the state of the University of Cambridge at that time.

Shortly after Simonds D'Ewes went to Cambridge, he lost his mother by death. Left altogether in the hard hand of a penurious and choleric father, he bitterly bewails the insufficiency of his allowance, which, when at Cambridge, had been but 50*l.* per annum (he would have been satisfied with 60*l.*), and whilst a student at the Temple was but 60*l.*, until he was called to the bar in 1623. His father's parsimony had for a time found an excuse in a circumstance connected with Wells Hall. Lawyer as he was, he had bought that place with a bad or incomplete title, and was ejected from it by a widow, who established a right to it for her life, and lived on until 1632. But this mishap was quickly followed by a considerable accession of wealth on the death of his wife's father. Ejected from Wells Hall, Paul D'Ewes occupied Lavenham Hall, which also belonged to him, for a brief period, and then purchased, from Sir Robert Ashfield, what Sir Simonds calls "the goodly and pleasant" Stow Hall in Stowlangtoft, which thenceforth became the principal residence of the family.

Sir Simonds records the increase of his allowance, on his being called to the bar, in terms which sufficiently indicate his gratitude. "My father, immediately on my said call to the bar, enlarged my former allowance with 40*l.* more yearly; so as, after this plentiful annuity of 100*l.* was duly and quarterly paid me by him, I found myself eased of so many cares and discontents as I may well account that the 27th day of June foregoing (the day of his call) was the

<sup>5</sup> College Life in the time of James the First, as illustrated by an unpublished

Diary of Sir Simonds D'Ewes. Lond. 8vo. 1841.

first day of my outward happiness since the decease of my dearest mother. For by this means, I even began already to gather for a library . . . spending upon books what I could spare from my more urgent and necessary expences.”<sup>6</sup>

D'Ewes never seems to have contemplated actual practice at the bar, but his legal education led to the exercise of his mind in what was its real bent—the acquisition of information upon subjects of genealogical and historical interest. He formed schemes for various great literary works. He prosecuted them for a time with ardour. But he permitted his literary ambition to be interrupted by more pressing business, and finally abandoned his contemplated publications as inapplicable to the times or to his leisure. The shore of the wide sea of antiquarian research is strewn with such wrecks. The lives of many other men besides Sir Simonds D'Ewes have been made up of them. In his case only one of his many contemplated works attained sufficient completeness to allow of its being published after his death. I allude, of course, to his Journals of all the Parliaments during the reign of Queen Elizabeth.<sup>7</sup> As an historical authority this is a work of the highest value. At the present day it would have been put together upon what we esteem to be better principles of antiquarian workmanship, but, such as it is, it occupies a most important position in our historical literature, and will probably bear the name of Sir Simonds D'Ewes down with credit to the very latest posterity.

Throughout life nothing delighted him more than what he termed his “sweet and satisfying studies,” but what many other people would deem mere antiquarian drudgery. To transcribe an early manuscript of Fleta, to collate a plea roll of the time of Edward I., or to cull notes from the *Nigrum Registrum* of the Abbey of Bury St. Edmunds—these were the occupations to which he flew even for consolation in times of trouble. When he travelled in his coach alone, he tells us that it was his “usual course” to devote himself to some cartulary, leiger-book, or manuscript chronicle, and “many times also I read English books to others that travelled with me.”

But D'Ewes had other thoughts, more nearly allied to the pursuits of this every-day world, than those which he

<sup>6</sup> Autobiog. i. 232.

<sup>7</sup> Lond., fol. 1682.

devoted to records. His father anxiously desired to find a second wife, and the young lawyer's mind dwelt with sorrowful apprehension upon the possibility of another family arising to share with him his contemplated inheritance. This question affected also his own prospects in marriage; for, until his position in relation to his future share of his father's estate was definitely settled, no lady's friends would deem him in a condition to enter into a satisfactory treaty. He relates in his Autobiography, with amusing candour, the troubles which he met with on this account. At length he succeeded. He cast about in various directions to find some "good and ancient widow every way fit for his father to marry," and ultimately discovered such a lady in the person of Dame Elizabeth Denton, the childless survivor of Sir Anthony Denton of Kent. With much ado he managed to fix his wavering father, "whose fancy tended towards a younger helpmate," and "on a wet and gusty morning in March the young Templar, dressed out in all his summer braveries, descended with the ancient couple to the old crypt church of St. Faith's, under St. Paul's, where, to D'Ewes's great joy and comfort, the marriage was duly solemnized."<sup>8</sup>

Nor was D'Ewes less successful in his own marriage. The particulars are too minute for relation on the present occasion, but the results are important in reference to his connexion with the county of Suffolk. Many offers were made to him, and all were investigated with the business-like particularity which was then customary. At length a lady was found who was in all respects unobjectionable. She had wealth, both present and in reversion. She had pedigree—she was the sole heiress of the Cloptons of Kentwell, an ancient Suffolk family, whose descent was traceable from a person named in Domesday. She had youth and beauty, and especially the aristocratical token of a hand of consummate delicacy and whiteness. Still further, she was nearly related to Sir Thomas Barnardiston, the head of a family which at that time was all-powerful in the county. It was a family, too, no less conspicuous for good looks than for local influence. It was the handsome *round head* of a Barnardiston, and Queen Henrietta Maria's inquiry—who was

<sup>8</sup> Edinb. Rev., No. 169, p. 81.

its owner?—that is said to have given origin to the *cognomen* of the Puritan party.

Of all the lady's qualifications, next to her wealth, her long pedigree was one of the most acceptable to D'Ewes. Pride of ancestry was his ruling passion; his strongest feeling, a longing to take rank among the old territorial gentry. For a man of such tastes his own pedigree was most annoying. As we have told the tale, it simply indicates, that a poor Dutchman emigrated into England early in the sixteenth century, and that his son, by successful labour in trade, acquired considerable wealth. But this was a version which Sir Simonds would by no means allow. According to him, Adrian Dewes was a lord in disguise; and his ancestral stock one of great eminence in their native Guelderland—lords, or, as he terms them, “dynasts” of the “dition” of Kessel; that Adrian came to England, not as a poor emigrant, but as a political exile; and that, on the restoration of peace, he intended to return and demand the restitution of his hereditary “castle, town, and dition.” By perpetual reiteration, for it is a string upon which he was constantly harping, D'Ewes himself and his father probably came to believe this pretty tale. The evidence for it was twofold: 1. A parchment, authenticated by the signature of the principal herald of the Duke of Cleves, with the seal of his office in red wax suspended thereto by a label of silk; and, 2. A little silver seal of arms, set in a handle of ivory. But unfortunately the parchment perished in a fire which happened at the Six Clerks' Office on the 20th December, 1621; and as to the little seal, which had been as it were miraculously preserved in a fire which had melted some thousands of 20s. pieces of gold, all that Sir Simonds could say about it was, that he had it “by tradition,” and “as was conceived,” that his great-grandfather had brought it over with him from Guelderland.

In such matters a little evidence goes a long way. The silver seal, and somebody's recollection of what was written on the burnt parchment, were perfectly satisfactory to D'Ewes. Upon the strength of these evidences he inserted an apostrophe between the “D” and the first “e” in his surname, which gave it something approaching to dignity; and he converted his grandfather's Christian name “Garret,” which pointed so directly to the trade-mark, into “Geerardt,”

which, as we are told, was stated in the invaluable parchment to have been the common form of that name in the noble family of D'Ewes.

To testify to other people that he put faith in his ancestral honours Sir Simonds erected, in the church of St. Michael Bassishaw, a memorial window to his great-grandfather Adrian, and his wife Alice Ravenscroft. They were represented on their knees, one on each side of an altar or praying desk, the man in armour, and both of them wearing heraldic surcoats, on which arms intended for D'Ewes and Ravenscroft were boldly emblazoned. The great fire of 1666 dealt with this memorial, as that of 1621 had before done with the indisputable parchment; but a representation of the window was contributed by Sir Simonds to Weever's *Funeral Monuments*,<sup>9</sup> with a description, in which he commemorates the glories of the family of "Des Ewes."

Sir Simonds further inserted, in the church of Upminster, a sepulchral brass to his grandfather, with a Latin inscription, in which Garret, or Geerardt, stands chronicled as sprung from the "illustrious and most ancient family of D'Ewes, the dynasty of the dition of Kessel in the duchy of Guelderland." The inscription still remains in the lately rebuilt church of Upminster, surmounted by a brass figure of the deceased. Various surrounding heraldic emblazonments have disappeared. The figure represents the printer of St. Paul's Church Yard as a mediæval warrior "clad in complete steel," and overcoming the powers of darkness, not by the enlightening influence of his publications, but by the mailed heel, as of an armed knight, trampling upon a vicious-looking nondescript animal. A plate representing this brass may be seen in Weever's *Funeral Monuments*.<sup>1</sup>

How much of this little series of manœuvres is to be attributed to the father of Sir Simonds, and how much to Sir Simonds himself, it is not easy to determine. The memorial window and the sepulchral brass may, on the score of their expense, be safely assigned to Sir Simonds, but that his father encouraged the idea of the gentle origin of their family, if he did not invent it, is clear, if the following anecdote, told by the son, may be depended upon.

"In or about 1620, when Paul D'Ewes and the other Six

<sup>9</sup> Ed. 1767, p. 441.

<sup>1</sup> Ed. 1767, p. 407.

Clerks were sent for by the Lord Chancellor Bacon, then residing at York House in the Strand, to contribute to the Germane warre for relief of the Palatinate, when the said Lord Chancellor pressing my Father to give a greater summe then hee thought to be iust and proportionable, and ther-upon excusing himselfe, the other verie insolentlie told him that hee knew well his beginning, alluding to the meane condition of his Father Geerardt D'Ewes; to which he with much boldnes presentlie replied, 'My Lord, my beginning was as noble as any man's in this Hall,' there being then present many gentlemen and others, wheereat the other made noe replie, as conscious perhaps to himselfe of his owne base and obscure extraction, his grandfather having been but one of the servants of the last Abbot of Bury St. Edmunds."<sup>2</sup>

Sir Simonds' marriage, on the 14th October, 1626, was followed, on the succeeding 6th December, by his knight-hood. His father survived until the 14th March, 1631-2. From that period, Sir Simonds' wealth gave him a leading position in Suffolk, but it was not until 1639 that he was appointed sheriff. The office came upon him at the time when the public troubles were closing around the king and the administration of Archbishop Laud. To write upon the difficulties which Sir Simonds had to encounter, would be to give a page of the history of England; but one point, which may be shortly stated, will explain some portion of the subject.

Writs were sent to Sir Simonds in the way which had now become an annual custom, directing him to levy 8000*l.* upon his county for ship-money. Like all the other sheriffs, he found the command one which it was difficult to obey. The whole country was in a state of dissatisfaction, verging in many places upon rebellion. The contributions levied in the preceding year towards the expedition against the Scots had been highly unpopular, and after the dismissal of the Short Parliament the ship-money was paid with great unwillingness. The instructions from the Council to the sheriff for the levy were extremely simple. They were essentially comprised in two words,—demand and (in case of non-payment) distrain. But in practice there was much difference

<sup>2</sup> Harl. MS. 331, p. 44.

between the sheriffs in the execution of these stringent orders. Some used their power of distress in a harsh, oppressive manner, raising the money *coûte qui coûte*, and even personally interfering themselves in the execution of the disagreeable work. Such men received thanks from headquarters, but were detested by their counties. Others, and among them Sir Simonds D'Ewes, whose own feeling was adverse to the tax, as well as to the war against the Scots, treated the excuses of the people considerately, entered into the difficulties of the collectors, and gave time for payment. Such lenity did not suit either the necessities or the practice of the government. Another expedition against the Scots was in preparation. The money was wanted instantly. Immediately after the dissolution of the Short Parliament, letters were sent by the Council to the sheriffs who had not remitted their full amounts imputing to them negligence and disloyalty, and threatening them with punishment if their balances were not immediately paid in. These letters were shortly afterwards further enforced by other letters of a similar character signed by the King. D'Ewes received these letters, and immediately upon receipt of the latter, replied to both by petitions which are extant among the State Papers, in the Public Record Office. With some of the formalities and oddities of expression which are characteristic of the writer, both papers are straight-forward, manly documents. They run as follows :—

“[6 June, 1640 ?]

“ To the Kinge's most Excellent Majestie, the humble  
Petition of the High Sheriffe of the Countie of  
Suff [olk].

“ Humbly sheweth to your Jmperiall Majestie your poore petitioner and loyall Subiecte, that hee hath with extreame greife & astonishment perused your Majestie most Roiall Letters to him directed, bearinge date at your Majesties palace of Westminster the seven and twentieth day of May last past in the sixteenth yeare of your Majesties most august raigne, which said Roiall Letters came not to your said petitioners hands vntill friday the fifth day of this instant June then next ensuinge, For your Roiall Majesties said petitioner firmlie hopeth to iustifie his owne innocencie and integritie before God & your Jmperiall Majestie, that hee

hath been noe wayes causallie guiltie by his Contempt or negligence of the not collecting and retur[n]ing of the said whole eight thousand poundes &c. that hee hath not in the least pointe swarued in that busines from his fayth and allegiance due to your Royall Majestie, or anie wayes thereby iustly incurred your Majesties high displeasure and iust indignation, moore bitter to a good and loiall Subiect then death it selfe. Nor yet hath, or euer willinglie shall incurre, by his neglect or miscarriage, any forfeitures or punishments to bee iustlie inflicted vpon him by the ancient and municipall Lawes of this Realme, but firmly trusteth in God who is the Protector of the Jnnocent that hee will encline your Majesties Roiall heart throwlie to consider the greate care and diligence of your poore petitioner in the performance of this service, and to search out the true and iust causes why the whole remainder of the said eight thousand poundes &c. cannot possiblie bee collected by your Royall Majesties said poore petitioner. And for your Royall Majestie shall humble and daylie praye &c."

"[6 June, 1640 ?]

"To the Right honourable the Lordes of his Majesties most Honourable Privie Counsell.

"The humble petition of the High Sheriffe of the Countie of Suff[olk].

"Humbly sheweth, that vpon receite of your Lordshippes Letters bearinge date at the Courte at Whitehall the 11<sup>th</sup> day of May last past 1640, your Petitioner sadd spirits weere much refreshed, findinge that your Lordshippes favourable admonitions do only denounce smarte & punishment against the default contempt and wilfull neglect of your said petitioner for not collectinge the whole shipp monie imposed on this said Countie &c., of all which your said petitioner is free and innocent, as he is readie to iustifie the same to his Jmperiall Majestie and your Lordshippes, although it cannot bee couched within the narrowe Limits & circuit of a petition. Humble therefore beseecheth your Lordshippes your said petitioner to consider, That he is noe wayes causallie guiltie of the not collectinge of the said monie; That hee hath gone as farre & further then the former Sheriffes of the said Countie of a few late passed yeares haue done when they gathered in a like Somme of monie as is nowe required; That therefore if the true grounds & reasons of the slowe

payment doe not proceed from your said petitioners neglect or contempt, ther are other causes thereof, deadnes of tradinge, low prices of all commodities raised from the plough and paille, scarcitie & want of monie, great militarie charges of the last passed Sommer &c., accompanied with innumerable groanes and sighes, are the dailie retournes your poore petitioner receives instead of payment, though often pressed & demanded. That notwithstandinge your petitioner hath received noe quickening Letters from your Lordships since those bearinge date at Whitehall the 5<sup>th</sup> day of March 1639, yet hee hath by his diligence since that tyme collected seuerall sommes of mony, made two returnes to the Treasurer of the Navie, hath more to returne if he knew how safelie, & daily expects new paimentes from the high Constables of the said Countie with whome (as in the yeares of other Sheriffs) the maine & gist of the busines is now vested: which said monies vpon receite your peticioner will at the dayes appointed vse all diligence to returne, beinge enforced to runn great hazards for want of a *non obstante*, or his Royall Majesties speciall licence for your said petitioners personall repaire to London at all seasonable tymes duringe the continuance of this publicke employment: Humbly therefore beseecheeth your Lordships favour and Justice your said peticioner, that hee may never suffer for failinge in that which hee is not possible able to accomplishe although he should hazard both his health and life in the performance thereof. And for your Lordships shall daylie and humblie pray, &c.

“ [Endorsed by Edward Nicholas.]

“ R[ecieved] 8<sup>o</sup> Iunij 1640.

“ Sheriff of Suffolkes petition ;

hath levyed more then he hath paid in.”

Such petitions were not acceptable at Westminster, where every thing was in confusion, and the Council at their wits' end. The Scots were on the Borders, and threatened an invasion of Northumberland. The king's levies were insufficient in number, unpaid, and mutinous. The Council were everywhere unsuccessful in their endeavours to procure money. Refusal, and dissatisfaction, which they esteemed to be disloyalty, met them on every side. At such a time every sheriff who made excuses and not payment was looked upon as an enemy. D'Ewes's petitions

were turned over to the attorney-general, who was ordered forthwith to proceed against him in the Star-Chamber for his great neglect and contempt in not executing the writ for the shipping business.<sup>3</sup> The attorney-general was active, and D'Ewes ran a risk of being added to the army of political martyrs; but there was help at hand. The Scots invaded, Newcastle was taken by them, the government collapsed, another parliament was called, and one of its first acts was to stay all proceedings against sheriffs, connected with the levy of ship-money.

The influence of the Barnardistons, and D'Ewes's conduct in connection with the ship-money, procured his return to this parliament as member for Sudbury. His conduct in that position, as illustrated from his own unpublished diary or note-book, was long ago made the subject of an article in the *Edinburgh Review* (No. CLXIX., published in July, 1846), to which we may refer for the facts of his political life.

It was altogether a failure. He entered the House of Commons as a reformer both in Church and State, and his *debut* as a debater was most successful. But that very success was his ruin. It raised his natural self-satisfaction to a height which soon became unbearable. His "demands upon the homage and patience of the House were excessive. . . . He became a glutton, a very horse-leech in his importunity for highly-seasoned compliments to his erudition, and humble submission to the authority of his quoted records."<sup>4</sup> The House soon got tired of him. Members began to laugh at him. "The Speaker resented his perpetual interference in trifles. Marten and Strode subjected him to their rough horse-play," and he himself became terrified at their strong measures. He sank back into the shade, lost his interest in the proceedings of the House, resumed his antiquarian studies, purchased coins, amassed MSS., and dreamt of proceeding with his contemplated historical works. He was excluded from the House by Colonel Pride and the army in December, 1648, and died on the 18th April, 1650. There are several monuments to members of his family in Stowlangtoft Church, but none to himself.<sup>5</sup> He raised

<sup>3</sup> Rushworth ii., part 2, p. 1204.

<sup>4</sup> Ed. Rev., *ibid.*, p. 90.

<sup>5</sup> A mistake upon this subject in the

early editions of Kirby's *Suffolk Traveller* has been corrected in the last edition, p. 806.

monuments to others, but no one raised a monument to him.

His MSS. were purchased by Lord Oxford, and now constitute an important part of the Harleian Collection in the British Museum. His autobiography has been published, and several writers have used his notes of the Long Parliament, but there is a great mass of valuable matter in them which still remains unpublished. More than twenty years ago the Edinburgh Reviewer to whom we have alluded made an appeal for their publication. That appeal has still to be reiterated, and may be made in the words of the Reviewer. "There is not a man of any parliamentary importance during that memorable period whose character they do not strikingly illustrate. Cromwell, Hampden, Pym, Strode, Marten—all the leaders without exception— . . . are here brought before us times out of number—in their very habits as they lived—and with a reality which we seek in vain in any of the other memorials of that period. A man of D'Ewes's character would of course chronicle many things which it would have been well to let die ; but in spite of his trifling, and his verbose semi-legal phraseology, and his prejudices, which were violent, he has written down on these blotted sheets facts and circumstances which, if published, would do more towards making known the real history of the times, and the characters and motives of the men who overturned the monarchy, than any publication yet given to the world."