



Swallowfield and its Owners.

By Lady Russell.

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1685. In February, 1685, on the accession of James II., Henry, Earl of Clarendon, was made Lord Privy Seal, and his brother Lord Rochester, Lord Treasurer. Lady Clarendon continued Lady of the Bedchamber to Catherine, the Queen Dowager, who removed from Whitehall to Somerset House, where she held her Dowager-Court with considerable splendour.

In March of this year Lady Clarendon was much distressed at the death of Mary, the daughter of John Evelyn, who died of small-pox. Lady Clarendon had wished the Queen to make her a Maid of Honour, but the young lady, who seems to have been a paragon of virtue and accomplishments, shewed no eagerness to join the Court. Her father was not, however, above mentioning in his diary, with pride, the "Divers noble persons" who sent their coaches with six horses to honour her funeral at Deptford, amongst whom was the Earl of Clarendon, whilst Lady Clarendon was the recipient of one of the sixty memorial rings distributed on this occasion.

On the 21st May, Lord Clarendon had Evelyn to dine with him to meet Sir William Dugdale, Garter King at Arms, author of the *Monasticon*, who was then 82 years of age, and the latter shewed them "a draught of the exact shape and dimensions of the crowne the Queene had been crowned withal, together with the jewells and pearles; their weight and value, which amounted to £100,658 sterling." The next day, the Lord Privy Seal (Lord Clarendon) took Evelyn and "a French gentleman" to the House of Lords, and placed them "next the Bar, just below the bishops, very commodiously, both for hearing and seeing."

On the 9th July we find that Lady Clarendon supped at Lambeth with Elias Ashmole, and met Evelyn, the Bishop of St. Asaph, and Dr. Tenison, and that they were treated "at a greate feaste."

On the 12th July, Lord Clarendon accompanied the Duchess of Monmouth to the Tower to see her husband, who was to suffer death in two days. The Duke received her very coldly, and spoke chiefly to Lord Clarendon, whose intercession he earnestly implored.

In August of this year, Lord Clarendon was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and he nominated Evelyn one of the Commissioners to act as Deputy Lord Privy Seal during his absence; in consequence of which we find that on the 3rd of September Lord Clarendon took Evelyn to Windsor to give thanks to his Majesty "for this greate honour," dining, by the way, at Sir Henry Capel's, at Kew.

In this month, Lord Clarendon pleaded with the King the cause of Alice, Lady Lisle, who was condemned by Judge Jefferies in his "Bloody Assize" to be burnt alive for having harboured for one night at her house, Moyles Court, Hants, two dissenters, fugitives from Sedgemoor. Lady St. John and Lady Abergavenny wrote a letter to Lord Clarendon, which he read to the King, stating that, though her husband was one of the Judges of Charles I., Lady Lisle had always been a determined Royalist, and had been a favourer of the King's friends in their greatest extremities during the late Civil War, among others of these ladies themselves; and on these grounds, as well as for her general loyalty, earnestly recommended her to pardon. Her son had served in the King's army, and she had often declared that she shed more tears than any woman in England on the day of the death of Charles I., and after the attainder of her husband his estate was granted to her at the instance of Lord Chancellor Clarendon. All intercession now, however, was in vain, the only commutation being the block instead of the stake. She underwent this sentence with great courage at the age of 80, in the Market-place at Winchester, attended by her daughter Triphena.

In October (1685), shortly before their departure for Ireland, Lord and Lady Clarendon entertained Evelyn at Swallowfield, and the latter in his diary gives us the following interesting account of the place :—

"22nd October. I accompanied my Lady Clarendon to her house at Swallowfield, in Berks, dining by the way at Mr. Graham's* Lodge at Bagshot; hence we went to Swallowfield. This house is

* James Graham, Privy Purse to the King, married Dorothy Howard, Maid of Honour.

after the antient building of honourable gentlemen's houses, when they kept up antient hospitality, but the gardens and waters are as elegant as 'tis possible to make a flat, by art and industrie and no meane expence, my lady being so extraordinarily skill'd in the flowery part, and my lord in diligence of planting, so that I have hardly seen a seate which shows more tokens of it than what is to be found here, not only in the delicious and rarest fruite of a garden, but in those innumerable timber trees in the ground about the seate, to the greatest ornament and benefit of the place. There is one orchard of 1,000 golden and other cider pippins; walks and groves of elms, limes, oaks, and other trees. The garden is so beset with all manner of sweete shrubbs, that it perfumes the aire. The distribution also of the quarters, walks, and parterres is excellent. The nurseries, kitchen garden, full of the most desirable plants; two very noble orangeries, well furnished; but, above all, the canall and fishponds, the one fed with a white, the other with a black running water, fed by a quick and swift river, so well and plentifully stor'd with fish that for pike, carp, breame, and tench, I never saw anything approaching it. We had at every meal carp and pike, of size fit for the table of a prince; and what added to the delight was to see the hundreds taken by the drag, out of which, the cooke standing by, we pointed out what we had most mind to, and had carp that would have been worth at London 20s. a-piece. The waters are flagg'd about with *Calamus aromaticus*, with which my lady has hung a closet that retains the smell very perfectly. There is also a certaine sweete willow and other exotics; also a very fine bowling-green, meadow, pasture, and wood; in a word, all that can render a country seate delightful. There is, besides, a well-furnished library in the house."

Evelyn stayed at Swallowfield three nights. He writes on the 26th October as follows: "We return'd to London, having been treated with all sorts of cheere and noble freedom by that most religious and virtuous lady. She was now preparing to go for Ireland with her husband, made Lord Deputy, and went to this country house and antient seate of her father and family, to set things in order during her absence; but never were good people and neighbours more concern'd than all the country (the poor especially) for the departure of this charitable woman; every one was in teares, and she as unwilling to part from them. There was amongst them a maiden of primitive life, the daughter of a poore labouring man, who had sustained her parents by her labour, and has for many

years refus'd marriage, or to receive any assistance from the parish besides the little hermitage my lady gives her rent free; she lives on foure pence a day, which she gets by spinning; says she abounds, and can give alms to others, living in greate humility and contente, without any apparent affectation or singularity; she is continually working, praying, or reading; visites the sick; is not in the least given to talke; very modest, of a simple, not unseemly, manner; of a comely countenance, clad very plaine, but cleane and tight. In sure she appears a saint of an extraordinary sort, in so religious a life as is seldom met with in villages now-a-daies."

Lord Clarendon began his journey to Chester *en route* for Ireland on December 16th, 1685. Evelyn writes on that day: "I accompanied my Lord Lieutenant as far as St. Albans, there going out of towne with him neere 200 coaches of all the great officers and nobilitie. The next morning on taking leave I returned to London."

1686. Lord Clarendon arrived in Dublin the first week in January. The following (hitherto unpublished) letter written by Geo. Trumball to his brother, Sir William Trumball, gives an account of his arrival. It is addressed to "His Maj., envoyé extra'nie at Paris," and is dated from Dublin, 12th January, 168⁵/₆, and reads as follows: "My Lord Lieutenant Satterday last landed 6 miles from this place about 5 in ye morning which was soe early that people could not putt themselves into so good a posture as they would to receive him, however never was man in this world more welcome anywhere than he was to ye Protestants who received him with open hearts. He was conducted to towne with ye accustomed ceremonies (his lady who had been mightily indisposed at sea tho' had a short passage of 12 hours, coming privately before) and went presently to ye councell, where his commission being read and himselfe sworne, the Lord Chancellor on delivering up the sword made him a short but pithy speech which my lord answered as briefly, but extremely to ye satisfaction of all ye English, declaring that he had particular order from his Majesty to assure them that ye Irish Act of Settlement should not be altered &c."

The account of Lord Clarendon's proceedings in Ireland may be read in his letters to the Ministry at London, which contain a complete history of his government there from the day he entered Ireland, to the moment he embarked again for England, upon his being recalled, and the chain of his correspondence is never broken by the absence of so much as one link.

1686. On the 8th of the following February, Lady Clarendon addressed the following letter to Evelyn from Dublin : " Sir, I was not pleased to see your letter, because I was just writing to you ; so that now my letter must pass for a forced answer, which was intended for a great complaint that I am come into a country that you have not cultivated, not a tree nor a shrub is here ! though the place is fertile ; the sun is kind enough to it ; and you are famous here. I must not rail at so new and kind an acquaintance, though I have little hopes of its amendment, but sure I may justly be angry with my own country folks, who will have it that the garden of Chapel-Izod is like Swallowfield, a close walk of ashes and box hedges preferred to one of your best and dearest children ! But what can anger do, when I have no hopes in anything but your prayers for my return into the garden of Eden ? But I hope I shall have them for a more lasting Paradise, as you shall be sure of mine ; but first I should be glad to meet you and my Lady Silvius at Deptford, as she returns from Denmark, for though she will be my near neighbour here, I do not find I am like to have her correspondence. All your children may be in Denmark for any good they do me ; I have not had one word from any one of them. Now our meeting at the Cock-pit is gone, you must find some other place to discipline them in. I fear else you will lose your power with them as I shall your good opinion if I detain you longer, but after all I must beg you to believe me, sir, your most affectionate, humble servant, F. CLARENDON."

1686. In May, 1686, Lord Clarendon writes to Evelyn, " You may go as freely to Swallowfield without my Lord Cornbury as with him ; though you will find little else, you may have what fruit and fish you have a mind to, and very good things out of the potagere."

(To be continued.)