

An Aristocratic Squabble.

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THE latter half of the sixteenth century was remarkable for the strong feminine ascendancy which prevailed in Great Britain. Elizabeth of England and Mary of Scotland divided the thoughts and aspirations of its inhabitants. On a lesser scale, and in a minor theatre, Elizabeth Hardwick ruled over a great part of Derbyshire with a pride and power equal to that of Elizabeth Tudor herself.

Bess of Hardwick, as she was familiarly called, was a daughter of the ancient house of that ilk, and was married whilst yet a child to Robert Barley, of Barley.¹

In a short time she was a youthful widow, and on the 20th August, 1547, at 2 o'clock in the morning, she became the wife of William Cavendish.² Her choice of a new husband was as successful as she anticipated. Cavendish, who himself had

¹ Glover states that Robert Barley married Elizabeth Hardwick about 1530-1. On a tomb in Barlow Church Robert Barley is said to have died 2nd February, 1532, and Mr. Thomas Norris Ince gives the date of his death as February 2nd, 1533 (see *Reliquary*, vol. vii., p. 210). Elizabeth was a daughter of John Hardwick, of Hardwick, by his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Leeke, of Hasland.

² There is much difficulty with regard to the Countess of Shrewsbury's age. On her monument in All Saints' Church, Derby, it is stated that she died in 1607, æt. 86, in which case she would be born in 1521, so when she was married to Barley she must have been nine or ten years old. Lysons says the Countess was ninety years old when she died, and the *Dictionary of National Biography* gives her birth as taking place in 1518. If the latter date be correct, she was married at fourteen (as tradition asserts) to Barley in 1532, and he died a few months afterwards; and when she wedded Sir William Cavendish she would be 29. The inscription in All Saints' must have been inserted about sixty years after the death of the Countess, so a mistake could easily be made.

been twice before married, had been Treasurer of the Chamber to King Henry VIII. and King Edward VI., and also to Queen Mary, who made him a Privy Councillor. In these positions he had amassed a considerable fortune. By him Bess had three sons—Henry, William and Charles—and three daughters, who all made distinguished marriages. Sir William Cavendish died in 1557, and the prudent lady, finding herself still youthful and attractive, married a rich man much older than herself—Sir William St. Loo, of Tormanton, Gloucestershire, Captain of the Guard to Queen Elizabeth, who endowed her with his wealth to the exclusion of his natural heirs.

Sir William did not enjoy his felicity long, and Bess again appears as a merry widow, a rôle she was well experienced to fill; in fact, at this time, she seems to have been somewhat too gay, if we may believe what her last husband, Lord Shrewsbury, in one of his candid letters writes to her—"for when you were defamed and to the world a by-word, and when you were St. Loo's widow, I covered these imperfections by my inter-marriage with you." Howbeit her wealth and still youthful charms won her a fourth husband in 1568, no less a personage than George, Earl of Shrewsbury, Lord High Constable of England, a direct descendant of that great warrior Talbot, the scourge of France, whom Shakespeare calls "the great Alcides of the field."

Before she consented to marry the Earl, the widow of St. Loo covenanted with him that Gilbert, his second son, but afterwards his heir, should marry her daughter Mary, and that Henry, her eldest son, should marry Lady Grace Talbot, the Earl's youngest daughter, besides arranging for the settlement upon herself of a large jointure in land. Bess of Hardwick was at the time of her fourth marriage a very rich woman. She had purchased the manor of Hardwick from her nephew, she had all Sir William Cavendish's money and the estates of Sir William St. Loo. The Earl of Shrewsbury, though not rich for his position, was well endowed with this world's goods, so the wedding of high birth with wealth and beauty gave promise of much earthly felicity; but this was not to be.

The Earl of Shrewsbury was high in favour with Queen Elizabeth; she trusted him as she trusted few: as she expresses it in a letter to him in 1569: "Ere it were long he should well perceive that she did so trust him as she did few." The form of this special trust soon appeared; he was appointed guardian and keeper of the fascinating Queen of Scotland, who had been detained in England by order of Queen Elizabeth. In the custody of Shrewsbury and his Countess the unhappy Queen Mary remained until 1584, when, at the Earl's urgent request, he was relieved from his odious task. From Wingfield to Tutbury, back again to Wingfield, to Chatsworth and Sheffield, varied by several excursions to Buxton, the captive Queen was conveyed under the Earl's guardianship.

During Queen Mary's sojourn at Chatsworth, the Earl and Countess of Shrewsbury entertained Queen Elizabeth's favourite, the Earl of Leicester. Amongst the State Papers may be found an amusing letter from Queen Elizabeth to the Earl of Shrewsbury, dated May 9th, 1577, in which she returns thanks for his courteous entertainment of the Earl of Leicester at Chatsworth—"As to the large allowance of diet they gave him must remain their debtor, but advises in future that he should not be allowed by the day more than two ounces of flesh, the twentieth part of a pint of wine to comfort his stomach, but as much of St. Anne's water as he listeth; on festival days to have for his dinner the shoulder of a wren, and for his supper the leg of the same. Her brother of Warwick, whose body is more replete than his brother's, is to have the same proportion bating the wren's leg."

Mary of Scotland was, as Maurice Hewlett says, "a Huntress of Love"; love she must have. Every man, yea, every woman with whom she came in contact must be made to love her. "She could wheedle the soul out of a saint, and then fling it back to him as worthless because it had been so easily won." So she exercised her fascinations on her guardians. The Countess of Shrewsbury was proof against her wiles, but there is little doubt that her flirtation with the Earl was more successful. Not that he ever swerved for an instant from his loyalty to

Queen Elizabeth, nor abetted his royal captive in her treasonable designs; but his evident partiality for her aroused in his wife a keen jealousy which was the beginning of the rupture between them.

It is impossible to believe the reports which were spread and believed by many at that time. It was currently stated that the Earl had been too intimate with his royal prisoner. These reports were traced to the Countess and her sons William and Charles Cavendish. Mary was furious at their insinuations, and by a passionate appeal to the Queen she brought the Countess to book, who was compelled to acknowledge on her knees that as far as she knew there was no truth in these reports. Stung to the quick by these innuendoes, Mary wrote another letter to the Queen, in which she recited the accusations which the Countess had made against the Queen herself, denouncing her intimacy with the Earl of Leicester, Hatton, and others. Queen Elizabeth could never have received this letter; it was probably seized with Mary's other letters and papers at Chartley in 1586 by order of Lord Burghley, as it was found amongst the papers at Hatfield House.¹

Another cause for the disagreement was the devotion of the Countess to her children, to the detriment of her husband. Although she had espoused four husbands, Bess had children only by Sir William Cavendish—three sons and three daughters. Of these children, Henry, the eldest, was engaged in the wars in Flanders, as appears by a letter written by Dudley, Earl of Leicester, to William Davidson, our Ambassador to the Low Countries, in which he says: "the bearer, Henry Cavendish, son and heir of the Countess of Shrewsbury, and my very dear friend, desiring to serve in these wars of the Low Countries, comes over with the offer of five hundred Englishmen and more, most of them are of his own country in the north where he dwells, who are desirous of being under his leading. I have written to the Prince of Orange in his favour, referring the Prince to the Marquis of Haverie, who knows him and will

¹ See Lingard's *History of England*, vol. vi., Appendix R.R.

report of him. Pray have special care of him and befriend him to the States and Prince. You know him to be of a very good and ancient house, and how he is allied both by his marriage and his mother's. He is of great living and of very good credit in his country, and though young and not trained, not much experienced in wars, yet to be esteemed for his earnest desire to serve and to learn skill; and by his credit with his country he is able to carry many with him. Those he brings are not of the worst sort,¹ and some he has trained on purpose as expert soldiers, who by their skill are able to supply anything wanting in himself. I shall think myself beholden for any pleasure you shall do him. Pray have a care that the leading of his men is not given to any other." Henry Cavendish was, as we have seen, married to a daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, and died without issue. Charles, the third son, was father to the celebrated Marquess of Newcastle, the Cavalier leader. William, the second son, was ancestor of the Earls and Dukes of Devonshire.

Of the three daughters one married, in 1574, Charles Stuart, Earl of Lennox, brother of Mary's unlucky husband, and was the mother of the Lady Arabella Stuart. This match, which was made up by the Countess after a five days' courtship, so enraged Queen Elizabeth that she sent for the old Countess of Lennox, Charles' mother, and committed her to the Tower, where she cooled her heels and meditated upon her position for three months, after which the Queen relented and released her. Amongst the Spanish State Papers is a letter from Antonio de Guaras, dated December, 1574, in which he says: "In consequence of the marriage which has been effected by Madame Lennox, mother of the late King of Scotland, of her son with the daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, who guards the Queen of Scotland, which marriage was celebrated in the house where the said Queen is, the Queen of England had summoned and detained Lady Lennox, and the newly-married couple are separated." Charles Lennox died in

¹ Not likely, being most probably Derbyshire men recruited from his mother's and Lord Shrewsbury's estates.

1576, so the young Countess was soon left a widow. She did not long survive her husband. In a letter from the Earl of Shrewsbury to Walsingham, dated January 21st, 1582, he notifies the death of his daughter-in-law Elizabeth, Countess of Lennox, and requests him to signify it to Her Majesty, and to commend to her Royal favour her infant and orphan daughter the Lady Arabella Stuart, who now is left altogether destitute. "The poor mother," he says, "taketh her daughter's death so grievously, and so sorroweth and lamenteth, that she can't think of ought but tears."

Her grief having to some degree abated, the Countess of Shrewsbury bestirred herself on behalf of her orphan grandchild, as she writes to Walsingham on May 6th, 1582, requesting him to obtain a pension of £400 a year for Arabella, "who was now seven years old and of great towardness." In July of the same year she received a letter from Mary of Scotland, who "is glad to hear of her little niece Arbella; would in this case, full of compassion, do all the good she might."

Her experience of married life, which was extensive, should have instructed the Countess how to avoid a rupture with her husband, but her jealousy of the Queen of Scots, and her inordinate partiality for her sons, brought about a breach with the Earl which was never healed. Queen Mary had been entrusted to the custody of the Earl of Shrewsbury in 1569, and remained in his charge until 1584. He was doubtless selected for this onerous and confidential post owing to the Queen's entire trust in his loyalty, and also because his estates and residences were in the centre of England, and so removed from any fear of a coup-de-main on the part of either Scotch or French partisans. As far as can be gathered from the public records, the feud between the Earl and his wife began towards the end of his great responsibility. The dispute raged so fiercely, and reached such a pass, that it came to the ears of the Queen, who was also importuned by both parties, each blaming the other. In fact the whole matter became a public scandal, and excited the interest of all the leading men in England.

On the 6th April, 1584, the Countess writes to Sir Francis Walsingham in a morbid strain, unfolding her "strange miseries"; requests that her sons may have licences to seek their livings in some other country; for herself she hopes to find some friend for meat and drink, and so to end her life. In a similar strain she writes to Lord Burghley in August of the same year, complaining of the hard usage of her husband to her; requests him to write to the Earl, as his letters would do more with him now than any other person else living. The Earl seeks to take Chatsworth from her, and he has induced her son Henry Cavendish to deal most unnaturally with her.

In the meanwhile the Earl had been living apart from his wife at Sheffield Castle. On June 7th, 1584, he writes to his brother-in-law, John Manners: "My Lord of Leicester's man brought me a letter from him how glad he wold be to meet me, and so I have wrytten to his Lordship agen that I mynd about Fryday next to come to Buxtons, and for that I mynd to see hym thow I be in my litter if I be not well. I mynd to be with you of Thursday at nyght next. In att Chattesworth I will not come nether any frend I can let therefor being I have made your exquse, so as yffe it please you to mete me at the forest of the Peak we will goo both together to the Erle, and yffe you will send a bedde theder to I shall kep it for you and me, both will lye in one chamber, and yffe I can not better provide for you." The Countess was evidently at Chatsworth, so the Earl would not meet Manners there. In what part of the Forest of the Peak they were to sleep together we can only conjecture; the castle was in ruins; perhaps at the hunting lodge known as the Chamber in the Forest.

After his meeting with the reigning favourite, the Earl of Leicester, and probably by his advice, the Earl of Shrewsbury determined to submit his case personally to the Queen herself; so he rode up to London with his retinue, and in the beginning of September presented himself before his sovereign, who was then holding her Court at Oatlands.

Roger Manners, who was Esquire of the Body to Queen Elizabeth, writes to the Earl of Rutland (September 15th,

1584): "Concerning the great Erle he hath been honorable used. He came hither to the Court with his owne company myself excepted. He allyated at the Court gate; my Lord of Leicester met him in the great Court and carrying him forthwith to Her Majesty into her privie gallery, where he tarried about toe hours. Her Majesty hath delt with him earnestly to take agayne his Lady while he oterly refuseth, but for all causes of law I think he will not stratly refuse to be ordered by frends."

To be near the Court and not to allow the Countess to get the better of him, the stout old Earl sojourned in his house at Chelsea. He knew his wife's obstinate character, and the length of her purse. He writes to John Manners from Chelsea on the 7th February, 168 $\frac{1}{2}$: "My wife, with the help of the Master of the Rolls and of her purse, has many friends; and I know not how the matter will turn out. All may be for the best, and tho' I get little I shall be rid of my mortal enemy. All I desire is the return of my health." Although somewhat obscure, we will hope that the "mortal enemy" he suffered from was the gout, which always troubled him, and of which he eventually died, and not his wife.

The feud at this time became very bitter; the Queen, as became her sex, had taken the lady's part. In great wrath the Earl writes to the Earl of Leicester on 20th April, 1685: "Sith that Her Majesty hath sett downe the hard sentence agaynst me to my perpetual infamy and dishonour, to be ruled and everanne by my wife, so bad and wicked a woman; yet Her Majesty shall see that I obey her commandmente, thoughe no curse nor plage in the earthe cold be more grevous to me. These offers of my wiefes inclosed in y^r lettres I think them verey unftyt to be offered to me. It is muche to make me my wiefe's pencyoner, and sett me downe the deameanes of Chattesworth, without the house and other lands leased which is but a pencon in money.¹ I thinke it standeth with reason that I shuld chuse the v. c. l. by yeare ordered by Her Majesty where I like best accordinge to the rate William Candishe delivered to my Lord Chancellor."

¹ Probably the £500 which the Queen suggested should be paid.

Even the bishops took part in the controversy. His Lordship of Lichfield and Coventry, thinking to bring about a reconciliation, writes to the Earl: "Some will say in your L^dships behalfe tho' the Countess is a sharpe and bitter shrewe, and therefore like enough to shorten y^r life if she should keipe your company; indeed my good Lord I have heard some say so: but if shrewdnesse and sharpnesse may be a just cause of sep[']acon between a man and wiefe, I thinke fewe men in England woulde keepe their wives longe: for it is common jeste yet trewe in some sense that there is but one shrewe in all the worlde, and every man hath her; and so every man might be ridd of his wiefe that wold be ridd of a shrewe." What sentiments from the Episcopal bench, and what a libel upon English wives! Surely the bishop's wife, if he had one, must have been the prototype of Mrs. Proudie. As the Earl did not wish to shorten his life, the prelate's words were disregarded. The separation was complete.

The Queen had suggested that the Earl should receive £500 per annum from the estates of the Countess, and no more. It was this that had enraged him, and he bitterly declaims at being his wife's pensioner. He refused to accept this as a final settlement, which drew from his royal mistress a gentle rebuke. Writing to him from Richmond on the 9th October, 1585, the Queen expresses a hope that he would not infringe the order made between him and the Countess and her sons. "The Countess has a great desire for a good and Xtian reconciliation, and to live together as the bond and knot of matrimoney requireth." Finding the Earl still stubborn, and her monitions disregarded, the Queen issued a Commission to John Manners and Sir Francis Walsingham to examine certain matters in controversy between the Earl of Shrewsbury and the Countess and her younger sons, William and Charles Cavendish. This Commission met at Ashford-in-the-Water to consider the whole matter, and report to the Queen. In the meanwhile Her Majesty wrote an autograph letter (dated 12th May, 1586) to the Earl from Greenwich, in which she expresses her earnest desire that all controversies between him and the Countess and

her younger sons should cease, and by her mediation be brought to some good end and accord; his years requiring repose, especially of the mind. She had consulted with the Lord Chancellor, Burghley, and Walsingham, and pronounced an order which she much desired should be observed. Although siding with the Countess in this strife, the Queen throughout showed the greatest consideration for the Earl, whom she especially respected and trusted, and, considering her imperious temper, her behaviour to him was singularly kind and conciliatory.

On the receipt of this letter the Earl writes to Lord Burghley from Sheffield on the 20th May, 1586, saying that he perceives by the reading of Her Majesty's letter that it is thought the variance between him and his wife and her younger sons doth greatly trouble and disgust his old years, and that the Queen doth desire his quietness, for which he renders Her Majesty most humble and hearty thanks. He then details his position, and complains that Mr. Secretary is so devoted to his wife that he is fitter to be a witness than a judge; denounces Beresford as a traitor, "which detestable and most horrible speeches and injuries wrought unto me by my wife, her sons and servants, I hope all reasonable men will think most odious. But what desireth my good wife that can labour so earnestly to Her Majesty for such a companion to free him of both doth she not show herself; may not the world see that she rather wisheth the overthrow of me and my house than that the traitor Beresford should be punished according to his deserts."

Notwithstanding his remarks to Burghley about the partisanship of Mr. Secretary Walsingham, we find the Earl writing to him on the 15th June, 1586, desiring him to favour his suit to Her Majesty against the Countess, "that she may be banished from the Court now that she hath so openly manifested her devilish disposition in maintaining and defending her wicked servant Beresford in his defamation of his honour and name." Is ashamed to think of his choice of such a creature. Begs Walsingham to influence his son Gilbert Talbot to leave that wicked woman's company. He details reasons why he

should not cohabit with the Countess, she having, as he says, departed from him and now offereth to come home again. It appeareth by her words and deeds that she doth deadly hate him, and hath called him knave, fool, and beast to his face, and hath mocked and mowed at him.

Roger Manners, who had met the Earl in London, writes to his brother John on the 17th June, 1586: "Your great Erle is very well, sayth that he is more stoute agaynst his lady than ever he was, and will in no way be reconcyled." By this time the Queen's patience was coming to an end. She sent for the Earl and the Countess, and insisted that a reconciliation should take place in her presence. At any rate a hollow truce was concluded between them. Thomas Screven, who was factor to the Earl of Rutland, writes an amusing description to his master from London (dated July 18th, 1586): "It is given out that Her Majesty hath reconciled the great Erle and his wief, which was solemperly don in Her Highness presence, when the Lord Treasurer used some longe speech in commendacon of that most gracious and Xtian acte. And so wee now say the Erle and she lovingly together will shortely into the country and make it appeare to the worlde that all unkindnesses are appeased. Thus may your Lordship see that things desperate are oftentimes recovered, and no man's hart so strong which a woman cannot make soft. It cannot but be a presage to a generall peace throughout Xtendom; for in common opinion more likely were the warres in the Low Country to take end than these civill discords between him and her. But God be thanked for all, and send them much joye in their new marriage." The ironical humour of this letter is delightful; so unexpected was the reconciliation between such stubborn foes that men might now reasonably expect an era of universal peace throughout Christendom. But alas! all these hopeful promises came to nothing. Hardly had the remarried couple left the Queen's presence when difficulties arose. The Queen had kept them near her, so as to be under her eyes, but the Earl was chafing to be away in the country, as Roger Manners writes from the Court at Windsor (August 21st, 1586): "The

Erle of Shrewsbury wold fayne be in the country. He sayth he will rule my lady, but she sayth litl and yet playnely thinketh to govern him."

At first the Earl seemed disposed to carry out the Queen's commands. He writes to Lord Burghley on the 27th July, 1586: "I was contented at Her Majesty's motion to send her (his wife) down to Wingfield, and so to Chatsworth, and take a probation of her obedience for half a year, which your Lordship moved, and the Queen a whole year; and if I found her forgetful of her duty then I to leave her and her living assigned to her according to Her Majesty's order, to herself and her own government. Also that I should use her honourably and bear her charges down, but neither bed with her nor board with her. I would not agree to take her without I might have her living to defray her charges, which was thought fit by Her Majesty and your Lordship. Further I was not contented that her children should come at her, which Her Majesty disliked not, saying she desired that Charles Cavendish might repair to me, which request I denied Her Majesty. Lastly it was always thought reasonable both by the Queen, the Lord Chancellor, and the Earl of Leicester and your Lordship, that if I would take and receive her at any time I should leave her and her living, and to that effect books are drawn and in that point were agreed upon."

It seems strange that in such a critical period for England, when the Queen's life was threatened, when the trial and execution of Mary of Scotland were being considered, all the leading statesmen, as well as Her Majesty, should have interested themselves to such an extent in the domestic squabbles of the Shrewsburys, and with so little effect. The breach which they hoped had been healed broke out afresh; the Countess was determined to assert all her rights, and to grasp all the goods and chattels upon which she could lay her hands. This exasperated the Earl, who writes to her in a manner neither affectionate nor conciliatory. "Wife," he writes on August 8th, 1586, "in the first three lines of your last letter, dated August 4th, you had yourself importunate for demanding

my plate and other things, part whereof in the same letter you confess which at your being with me you desired to have, and the residue of the plate and hangings you pass over in silence, for which I take light occasion to be displeas'd with you, by my writing as you say and demand this question of me. What new offence is committed since Her Majesty reconcil'd us? To the first part of your letter I answer that there is no creature more happy and more fortunate than you have been, for when you were defam'd and to the world a by-word, when you were St. Loo's widow, I cover'd these imperfections by my intermarriage with you, and brought you to all the honour you have, and to most of that wealth you now enjoy. Therefore you have cause to think yourself happier than others, for I know not what she is within this realm that may compare with you either in living or goods, and yet you cannot be contented." He then goes on to recite the terms of agreement come to before the Queen, and concludes: "I am sorry to spend all these words with you, but assure yourself this shall be the last time I shall write to you in this matter, or trouble myself, and likewise if you intend to come to me advise yourself in these points before remembered, that I will have you to confess that you have offend'd me, and is heartily sorry for it, in writing, and upon your knees, without either if or and. My goods you shall restore me before we come together, and if you cannot be content to do this, I protest before God I will never have you come upon me whatever shall happen." He then dilates upon her many offences, again dragging in Henry Beresford, who was his *bête noir*. Who was this man? There were many Beresfords at this time in Derbyshire, but none apparently named Henry. The Earl brought an action against Beresford at the York assizes under the statute *Scandalum Magnatum*, with what result I know not.

This letter was not calculated to bring about a better understanding. Considering herself in the right, the proud Countess was unlikely to confess her faults on her knees. In the meanwhile, by the exertions of the Queen, and by the mediation of Sir Thomas Bromley, Lord Chancellor, and Lord Burghley,

an agreement had been drawn up, to which the Earl and Countess assented, in the following terms:—

1.—The Countess may go to Chelsea to the Earl's house this present day (August 7th, 1586), and after that she may go towards Wingfield two days before the Earl; shall depart homewards with the Earl's servants to attend on her; and there to tarry at her pleasure a month at the Earl's charge. And the Earl will come to Wingfield to her there and remain five or six days; and then she may remove to Chatsworth; and towards her household charges the Earl offereth to send beforehand twenty quarters of wheat, twenty quarters of malt, twenty beeves, and forty muttuns. Further, the Earl will come sundry times to her at Chatsworth, and will be content to receive only the lands assigned to him at the rate of £500 per annum.

2.—The Countess shall hold to herself all the rest of her living. And the Earl is content that if the Countess shall behave herself well towards him as she promiseth to do, the Earl will send for her to his house upon knowledge of her desire, and remain with him a week or more at a time.

There were other articles about the goods and chattels belonging to the spouses, and also as to the Cavendishes and their claims.

“Finally the sum of these things being reported to Her Majesty by the Lord Chancellor and Lord Treasurer, Her Majesty called the Earl and his wife unto her, and in many good words showed herself very glad thereof, and thanked the Earl for that she knew he had conformed himself to this good act for her sake and at her request, adding that she took it to tend much to her honour that by her mediation they both were accorded. And with many comfortable speeches required them both to proceed and persevere in this godly act of reconciliation. And so they both showed themselves very well content with Her Majesty's speech, and in good sort departed together very comfortable to the sight of all their friends, both lords and ladies, and many others of the best sort.”

With regard to the goods and chattels mentioned in the second clause of the agreement, an interesting and amusing

list is extant with the answers of the Countess to each item claimed by the Earl, which list was submitted to the Queen's Commissioners.

LIST OF GOODS CLAIMED BY THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY.

- First.—One great basin and ewer parcell gilt with talbots.
 Item.—One plain salt with cover and talbots.
 Item.—Eight plain plates with talbots.
 Item.—Four spoons.
 Item.—One great standing pot parcell gilt.
 Item.—One half-jug.
 Item.—One white bowl with a talbot.¹
 Item.—One cup of assay gilt.
 To this claim the Countess replies: "These parcels being at Chatsworth at the time of the deed of gift passed to the Cavendishes; since gaged or sold from necessity."
- Item.—One George enamelled white set with diamonds, bought by Thomas Cornish in France, and cost the Earl £38.
 Answer.—"Lent by His Lordship to the Lady Talbot, afterwards given by the Earl to the Countess, and she from necessity laid it to gage, notwithstanding when the Earl makes payment to the Cavendishes it shall be returned."
- Item.—One cup of gold that weighed about fifty lbs. (? oz.), which was Francis, Earl of Shrewsbury.
 Answer.—"Given to the Countess at the Scottish Queen lying at Coventry at the rate of £70 in part payment of £200."
- Item.—Two chamber basins parcell gilt, now altered which was bought by the Earl who hath a third of the same sort yet.
 Answer.—"Given 18 years since to the Countess and at Chatsworth at the time of the Earl's grant. One of these his Lordship knoweth was stolen, the other broken and not worth £4."

¹ The dog called a talbot was the badge of the Talbots, Earls of Shrewsbury.

Item.—Two plain candlesticks.

Item.—Eight “tonne” cups plain with talbots now altered into six.

Answer.—“At Chatsworth at the deed of gift and so passed to the Cavendishes. Ther were but three little tuns of his Lordships left at Chatsworth at the time of the grant; and these six tuns his Lordship meaneth were bought of the Cavendishes and some of them lost in his service.”

Item.—One can gilt and graven bought of Mrs. Palmer the broker’s wife.

“Given to the Countess 19 years ago and passed to the Cavendishes by the grant.”

Item.—One standishe to write withal.

“Not worth 30 shillings and stolen by a pot boy. Given to the Countess by Lady Pembroke.”

Item.—One showinghorne with a chain and pincers of silver.

“Given to the Countess 19 years ago and sold by her.”

Item.—One plain podinger whereof the Countess hath the cover.

“Given to the Countess, passed by the Grant.”

Item.—Two gilt casting bottles.

“But one little one given 19 years since at Chatsworth at the time of the Earl’s grant and passed *ut supra*.”

Item.—One great salt having many little ones within it to be drawn out which Mr. Tirrel claimeth and hath sent to the Earl for it.

“Given 18 years since and passed by the Grant; since sold.”

Item.—One great bason and ewer fashioned like a ship gilt and embossed, bought by Gilbert Lord Talbot and paid for by Baldwin £100.

“Bought by the Earl of purpose for the Countess to give away which she did as his Lordship well knoweth.”

Certain New Year gifts given by the Countess to the Earl,
viz. :—

One silver posnett.

One salt of gold.

Three great candlesticks carrying 3 lights apiece.

Six candlesticks fashioned like boats.

Two pots and two cups of alabaster bound about with silver.

Two great square trenchers double gilt with either of them a salt French fashion and a place to put picktooths in and a spoon of gold with a talbot.

“ These parcels of plate the Earl a good while after her giving them (he misliking them) gave them to her again, some to give away the rest to use as she would.”

Item.—Two pairs of cambric sheets, six pairs of pillow bers and six cupboard clothes.

“ Worn out; made 17 years ago.”

Item.—One salt of gold with talbots and the Countess' arms on it.

“ But one salt of gold; named before.”

The Earl also claimed other household goods:—

First.—Hangings of green leaves six pieces which Sir Robert Constable bought.

A.—“ Given 19 years since, to save a better hanging and passed by the Grant.”

Item.—Twenty feather beds with their furniture which came from Coldherbert.

A.—“ But twelve and spoiled and worn out being common beds for servants cost 4 nobles apiece. Worn out and three times as many better; conveyed for his Lordship's use to Tutbury, Wingfield and Buxtones which never came again.”

Item.—Bedsteads, tables, cupboards, stools, &c., varnished like brass and other that Cornish and Trumpeter bought in France and cost £100 and above.

A.—“ The Earl paid himself in retaining so much money which he should have paid the Cavendishes for keep and cattle bought.”

Item.—Rich hangings eight pieces which were Sir Wm. Pickering's which cost the Earl £200.

A.—“ These hangings cost nine score pounds bought by the Countess and passed by deed.”

Certain utensils of household made in the Earl's house, which the Earl will not demand :—

First.—Rich hangings made by Thomas Lane Ambrose, William Barlow, and Henry Mr. Henry Cavendish's man, and had copes of tissue cloth of gold and other things towards the making thereof; meat and drink and wages paid to the embroiderers by the Earl during the working of them; and other hangings of green velvet, birds and fowls and needlework set upon the velvet.

A.—“The copes bought by Sir Wm. St. Loo. At Chatsworth at the time of the deed of gift. That of the hangings made at Chatsworth some of the Countess grooms women and some boys she kept wrought the most part of them. Never had but one embroiderer at one time that wrought on them. His Lordship never gave the worth of £5 towards the making of them.”

Having rebutted each several claim made by the Earl upon her, the Countess makes a general statement upon the whole issue :—

“These parcels above demanded by the Earl are things of small value and mere trifles for so great and rich a nobleman to bestow on his wife in 19 years. The Countess from her small ability was willing to gratify from time to time the Earl with things needful for him, some whereof she calls to remembrance not thinking that ever she should have any occasion to remember these things. The Earl had received of her at several times pots, flagons, chafen dishes, chamber pots, podingers, warming pans, boiling pots, a charger or voider of silver, with many other things she now remembereth not. Besides better than £1,000 worth of linen consumed by him, being carried to sundry of his houses to serve his Lordship's turn. And with his often being at Chatsworth with his charge and most of the stuff then spoiled. Besides given by the Countess yearly to the Earl for a number of years together thirty or forty mattresses, twenty quilts, and one hundred fledges yearly, and sending other things not here to be remembered.”

All this had been submitted to the Commissioners, and is endorsed by Burghley, "August 4th, 1586." Notwithstanding the apparent reconciliation which had been brought about by the Queen, other causes of dispute arose between the spouses. On the 6th October, 1586, the Countess writes to Lord Burghley complaining of the Earl's conduct, who has not been down to her above three times, and has now withdrawn all his provisions, not suffering her also to have sufficient fire, contrary to the assurance he made to Her Majesty.

But she and her sons were not free from blame. When the Earl attempted to enter Chatsworth, he was withstood by William Cavendish "with halberd in his hand and pistol in his girdle." Such violence to a man of the Earl's position could not be tolerated, so upon his complaint the Privy Council committed William Cavendish to prison, "thinking it not meet that a man of his mean quality should use himself in a contemptuous sort against one of his Lordship's station and quality." Rather a high-handed proceeding, but the Earl of Shrewsbury was a great man, and little dogs must not bark at him.

So the public quarrel came to an end, but in private the feud was never healed; the spouses lived apart. The great Earl was crippled by his old enemy, the gout, which laid him by the heels. Writing to Lord Burghley on the 17th November, 1587, he states that he "has suffered much, his legs and hands are nearly become almost comfortless." The preparations to meet the Great Armada engaged the attention of the Queen and her ministers; they were busy mustering their forces in the different counties. Her gallant old constable was anxious to aid his Queen, but age and infirmity prevented him. Sadly he writes to his beloved mistress on the 9th August, 1588. After enquiries about her health he lets her know that the counties under his lieutenancy are in readiness, the gentlemen well affected and devoted to her service. In Derbyshire, where John Fitzherbert and other seminary priests have lately been apprehended, he hath induced many of the people to come to church. Offers his services to resist the invasion, though he be

old yet her quarrel shall make him young again, though lame in body yet lusty in heart to lend her greatest enemy one blow and to live and die in her service.

The Queen thoroughly appreciated her gallant old servant, so loyal and true amidst the treachery and strife which surrounded her. When the danger from the great Armada was over the Queen writes an autograph letter to "her very good old man," as she affectionately calls him, desiring to hear of his health, specially at the time of the fall of the leaf, and hopes he may not be touched with the wonted effects of his accustomed enemy the gout. Persuades him to permit his wife some time to have access to him, which she hath now of a long time wanted.

Whether in his last phase the great Earl obeyed the Queen's request, and was reconciled to his wife, allowing her to minister to him in his last illness, we know not. He became rather silly in his old age, and fell under the influence of one of his servants, Elizabeth Britton, "whose rapacity equalled anything we have ever redde of" (Hunter's *Hallamshire*).

It is an open question whether the domestic disputes which embittered the latter part of the Earl's life were caused by his wife or himself; probably there were faults on both sides. Lodge, in his *Illustrations of English History*, seems to have no doubt where the fault lay. Writing of the celebrated Countess he says: "She was a woman of masculine understanding and conduct, proud, furious, selfish and unfeeling. She was a builder, a buyer and seller of estates, a money lender, a farmer, a merchant of lead, coals and timber. When disengaged from these employments she intrigued alternately with Elizabeth and Mary, always to the terror and prejudice of her husband. She lived to a great old age, continually flattered but seldom deceived, and died immensely rich and without a friend. The Earl was withdrawn by death from these complicated plagues on the 18th November, 1590."

[This article was written and in print some months before the publication "*Bess of Hardwick*."—ED.]