

CHARLES, COMMONLY CALLED THE MARTYR.

Charles was arraigned on charges of treason, tyranny, and murder. He refused to plead to the indictment on the ground that the court was not competent to try him. The mock trial occupied seven days. Thirty-two witnesses were examined and he was condemned to be beheaded. The warrant for his execution, signed by fifty-nine members of the court led by Bradshaw, Grey, and Oliver Cromwell, is still preserved in the House of Lords. Charles was justly accused of insincerity and double dealing; but Churchmen ought not to forget that almost to the last moment he might have saved his life, and regained some measure of his former dignity and influence if he would have consented to the abolition of the ancient Church of England. He never would consent to place the National Church on a level with sectarianism. He said: "I am firm to Primitive Episcopacy, not to have it extirpated if I can hinder it." With reference to the

appeals of the Puritans, he writes, "I have done what I could to bring my conscience to a compliance with their proposals, and cannot; and I will not lose my conscience to save my life." He bore his sentence calmly, and spent his remaining hours devotionally in the company of William Juxon, Bishop of London. On the 30 Jan. 1649, he was put to death. He had been taking a tender farewell of his two children—Princess Elizabeth, aged thirteen, and Prince Henry, aged eight (his elder children with the Queen in France)—when Bishop Juxon came to say "Sire,

there is but one stage more, a troublesome but a short one." On stepping forth from the window of Whitehall Palace on to the scaffold prepared for the last scene in his earthly life, he addressed a few words to the multitude that had assembled; explaining that the guilt of the civil war did not rest with him, since Parliament had been the first to take up arms; but he confessed that he deserved to die for having consented to the death of Strafford. As he knelt down and laid his head upon the block, he exclaimed "I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown."

They buried him in St. George's Chapel, Windsor. The judicial execution of a king was never heard of before, and the majority of his subjects felt that he had been illegally condemned, and that the Constitution was at the mercy of the army. Until recently a service of humiliation was appended to the Book of Common Prayer, for use on the anniversary of death, which spoke of him as "King Charles the Martyr." It was removed in 1859.—*Lane's Notes.*



CHARLES I. PARTING WITH HIS CHILDREN.



*Prayer Book Distribution*

As an example of the value of Prayer Book distribution, we quote the following:

An eminent judge called upon the rector of a parish in Pennsylvania, much to that rector's surprise, who had known his visitor only as an honored jurist, who had been identified with another church. The judge came to express his desire to be confirmed, and when the clergyman asked him what brought him to this mind, he said that it was solely from his study of a Prayer Book which had come into his possession.