

his taste did not correspond with his education ; and, declining to assume a function, which, in New England, was divested of all temporal pomp and splendor, he applied a vigorous understanding, and a genius more comprehensive than elevated, to civil and political pursuits. It is difficult to form a satisfactory estimate of the character of an individual, however illustrated by conspicuous station and vicissitudes of fortune, of whom it has been justly remarked, that few men were ever pursued by their enemies with fiercer virulence, or supported by their friends with fonder zeal. He extorted even from his opponents the praise of indefatigable application, sagacity, and ability, in the conduct of public affairs ; and endeared himself to his partisans by the charm of agreeable manners, and the genuine grace of as many virtues as could consist with an over-weening desire of power and distinction.

At that interesting period when Charles the Second made his final attempt to subvert the liberties of Massachusetts, Dudley had attained a consideration in the eyes of his countrymen that recommended him to the arduous and delicate office of envoy, to represent the province and defend its interests at the English court. Here his native thirst for grandeur and authority was inflamed by the dazzling display of regal and aristocratical state ; and despairing of the cause of his country, which had been intrusted to him, he was seduced into a partial desertion of it. His acceptance of the temporary commission of government, which was tendered to him by King James, completely extinguished his popularity, notwithstanding the moderate strain of his administration, and the liberal measures which he recommended to the king ; and his subsequent association with the tyranny of Andros, in whose grand council he occupied a place, not only loaded him with additional obloquy and aversion, but entailed, as we have already seen, the shipwreck of his political fortunes. Driven from his office by the revolutionary explosion in Massachusetts, and conveyed a prisoner to England, he was not only absolved from blame, or at least screened from punishment, by King William, but, through the interest of powerful connections at court, was appointed to the office of chief-justice of New York, — where he increased the odium that already attached to him, by presiding on the trial and pronounc-