

eydas Indians, now began to spread far and wide.

A new patron appeared about this time, in the Hon. Robert Boyle, between whom and Eliot a warm friendship soon subsisted; he gave considerable sums to the advancement of the cause. A yet more illustrious friend now shewed himself—Cromwell, at this time in the plenitude of his power. It is not easy to say which is the more singular, that the Protector in Whitehall, amidst the cares and joys of successful ambition, should trouble himself about the spiritual progress and condition of the poor Indians; or that Eliot, from amidst his forests and plains, or, it may be, in one of his newly raised towns, should address the usurper in a style of excellent simplicity and heavenliness, as if he was writing to a saintly man. No doubt, so far removed from the scene of action, and caring little for politics, the missionary knew little of the merits of the cause at home, but believed the savoury words of the usurper to come from his heart. But Cromwell's conscience must have been wonderfully calm, or, perhaps, it is a splendid instance of the delusions in which the heart can shroud itself, that he should write to the man of God with earnest concern and affection for the perishing heathen, while the blood of his king was scarcely washed from his hand.* This is one of Eliot's letters—

"To his Excellency, the Lord General Cromwell. Grace, mercy, and peace.

"Envy itself cannot deny that the Lord hath raised and improved you in an eminent manner. I know your soul longeth to hear tidings of God's grace poured out upon these goings-down of the sun. He hath kept your honour unstained, and also caused the lustre of those precious graces of humility, faith, love of truth, and love to the saints, to shine forth beyond all exception of those that are adversaries to your proceedings.—Now, the design of God in these days is double: first, to raise up his own kingdom, in the room of the earthly powers which He doth cast down; secondly, to make the world subject to be ruled in all things by the word of His mouth. And as He hath raised you to accomplish (so far as the work hath proceeded) these designs, so I hope he will yet further improve you, to set upon their full accomplishment, to promote scripture government and laws, so that the word

of Christ might rule all*: and for the services you have already rendered His name, I doubt not that it will be some comfort to your heart to see the kingdom of truth rising up in these western parts of the world. Let it be some encouragement to you, that that blessed kingdom shall fill all the earth. Such considerations, together with the favourable regard and kindness you have shewed to poor New England, urge me to present into your hand these confessions of that merry which the Lord hath bestowed upon these natives, begging earnestly the continuance of your prayers for the further proceeding of this gracious work. And so, committing your honour to the Lord, and all your weighty affairs to His heavenly direction, I rest,

"Yours, to serve you in the service of Christ,
"JOHN ELIOT."

There is small opportunity of knowing what effect Eliot's correspondence had on the Protector's mind; but it is in vain we figure to ourselves the stern, bold, and ambitious face of Cromwell, humbly lifted to heaven on the Indian's behalf, without a smile. It is well known that, before the breaking out of the civil war, he had serious thoughts of selling his lands, and going to the wilds of America, there to enjoy, in full perfection, his religious privileges. Perhaps the memory of these early and better feelings came back powerfully on the throne. There might be moments, even in his Proteus mind, when he would have desired to exchange with Eliot, and pictured that apostle in the midst of his devoted Indians, and wished to be like him.

Two or three towns were now raised in places were only the beasts of chase, and men yet wilder, were used to dwell. It was by no means his design, that the Indians, while he led them from their unsettled and wandering way of life, should relinquish their manly and martial usages of hunting, fishing, or even arts of war: he well knew, that if indolence and effeminacy crept upon them, they would be exposed defenceless to the inroads of the more fierce and distant tribes. Thus, while every town had a depot for furs, skins, &c., it was also surrounded by a palisado fort, well built, and of great extent. In truth, whether we regard this man as building bridges over floods, habitations of peace and comfort within walls for his people, or strong defences without; preaching and praying in the forests, or in the chapels that he had reared; and then toiling night and day to translate works of piety into the rugged Indian tongue—he alike forces our admiration of the energy and versatility of his mind. The plan he pursued, of making religious thoughts and images, as well as expressions,

* Carlyle has furnished the world with a different standard of judgment respecting Cromwell's character from that of our author. Which is the correct standard there will, we presume, be little difference of opinion. Says the great Milton: "As long as you, Cromwell, are preserved to us, he wants reliance on the providence of God who fears for the prosperity of the English nation."

* Eliot formed somewhat of a proper estimate of the magistrate's office and duty.