

The following letter, from the PROVINCIAL SECRETARY to the late Chief Railway Commissioner, approves the route recommended by Mr. SANFORD FLEMMING, for the 'Pictou line':—

SIR,—I am directed by His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor to inform you that Mr. Flemming's report on the route of the Pictou Railway, has been considered, and that the line No. 8, terminating at Fisher's Grant, and recommended by the Chief Engineer as the best, has been adopted and confirmed by His Excellency in Council; and you are hereby instructed to proceed with the location of that route as rapidly as possible, in order that the work may be contracted for at the time specified in your advertisement.

Yours, &c.,  
(Signed)

C. TUPPER.

We are glad to find that the "Halifax Young Men's Christian Association" is prospering. "The Finance Committee have been enabled to present the claims of the Association to the public in such a manner as has secured a permanent annual subscription quite adequate to make it self-sustaining." We notice that "after the election of office bearers for the present year, it is contemplated to make a considerable addition to the books on the shelves." Having in a former number noticed the many advantages which the Association holds out to young men, we need now do no more than congratulate those who have aided in giving the Association what it so much needed—a fresh start.

The *Tablet*, very properly condemns the policy which would bind the R. Catholic electors of England to vote all one way at the impending general election. Speaking in the name of the English R. Catholics, the *Tablet* says:—"The greatest evil of our political condition, for it was an insufferable barrier to any effective political action, was the notion, now happily exploded, that 'Catholics were bound to support the Whig Liberal party, however much they might dislike their politics or condemn their acts.'" This looks hopeful for the Conservative party.

### Extracts.

#### THE THIRTIETH OF JANUARY.

GIOVANNI LORENZO BERNINI—most florid and meretricious of sculptors, who seemed to be able to mould his marble as though it were of a material as plastic as putty, to twist and curve it in the air, and leave it fluttering there as though it were so much gauze—had been commissioned to execute a bust of King Charles the First. Bernini's fame was European. He was one of the most successful and best-paid artists of his day. The well known portrait by Vandyck, representing on one canvass the full front, three-quarter, and profile views of the king, was sent to the sculptor at Rome to enable him to complete the bust. For his work he received a thousand Roman crowns, and the king ordered a companion bust of Queen Henrietta. The civil wars, however, interfered, and prevented the completion of this commission.

There must have been something ominous about Charles' look. Bernini said, as he contemplated the Vandyck portrait, that he "had never seen any face which showed so much greatness, and withal such marks of sadness and misfortune." Years before, Ben Johnson, in his masque of the "Gypsies Metamorphosed," had made one of the gypsy say of King Charles:—

How right he doth confess him in his face,  
His brow, his eye, and every mark of state;  
As if he were the issue of each grace,  
And bore about him both his *form* and *fate*.

The words have a prophetic ring about them. Doubtless Charles' regular features, grave expression, and noble but melancholy air, impressed while they attracted the men about him. Indeed Macaulay has attributed to the king's "Vandyck dress, his handsome face, and his peaked beard," joined to consideration for his many domestic virtues, the sympathy and loyalty with which so many generations have regarded his memory.

Bernini's bust arriving in this country, seems to have brought with it a prognosis of evil. The story is to be found both in "Sir Richard Bulstrode's Memoirs," and in "Aubrey's Miscellanies." The bust had been conveyed up the Thames in an open boat, to be landed at Greenwich. In the carriage of it, the face being upwards, "a strange bird, the like whereof the bargemen had never seen," (Sir Richard is content to describe it as "a swallow, or some other bird,") "dropped a drop of blood, or blood-like, upon the statue." And although this was immediately wiped off by the bargemen, still, notwithstanding all endeavours, the blood-stain "could never be gotten off."

The ultimate fate of the bust seems to be a matter of some mystery. A notion prevailed that it had been destroyed in the burning of Whitehall in 1697. It seems curious, however, that such a work should have survived the iconoclastic days of the Commonwealth. The Lord Protector was not likely to be very careful about preserving the bust of his predecessor as an ornament of the palace. All Charles' art-treasures had been mercilessly brought to the hammer. The pictures, jewels, plate, and furniture of nineteen palaces were hurriedly sold by auction, and produced only 118,000*l.* Le Sueur's equestrian statue of the king (set up at Charing Cross in 1678), was sold by the Parliament to John Rivet, "a brazier living at the dial, near Holborn conduit," with strict orders to break it in pieces. The man, however, produced some fragments of old metal, and buried the statue underground until the Restoration made it safe to dig it up again.

Vertue, whose anecdotes of painting Horace Walpole "digested and published," was of opinion that Bernini's bust certainly survived the Commonwealth, and probably also the fire. One Norrice, frame-maker to the court, who saved several pictures, had been heard to aver that at the time of the fire he was in the room where the bust used to stand over a corner chimney, and that it was removed before that chamber was destroyed. Nearly the whole of the palace, with the exception of the Banqueting House, which still remains, fell a prey to the flames. Besides the royal apartments, 120 houses, inhabited for the most part by officers of the court, were totally burnt, while some twenty more buildings were blown up with gunpowder, to arrest the progress of the fire. Lord Coates was in command of the troops, and was impatient to commence the blasting operations; yet, after he had ordered the drums to beat, half an hour elapsed before the explosion took place; time enough to save the bust if it was not—as Sir John Stanley, the deputy chamberlain, believed—already stolen. Sir John was dining in Craig Court when the fire began, at three o'clock in the afternoon. He ran to the palace, and perceived only at that time an inconsiderable smoke in a garret not in the principal building. He found Sir Christopher Wren and his workmen there, and the gates all shut. Pointing to the bust, he begged Sir Christopher to take care of *that*, and the statues. He replied, "Take care of what you are concerned in, and leave the rest to me." Sir John declared that it was not until more than five hours afterwards that the fire reached that part of the building. Norrice dug in the ruins, but could not discover the least fragment of marble. A figure of a crouching Venus, in the same chamber, was known to have been stolen, and was reclaimed by the crown after being concealed for four years. But of Bernini's bust no tidings were ever heard. Dr. Edward Brown, in his "Travels," described a white marble bust of King Charles in the Imperial Library at Vienna. But this could not have been Bernini's, presuming it to have been in Whitehall at the time of the fire. For Brown wrote in 1673, and the fire was not until 1697.

Besides the blood-stain on Bernini's bust, other omens of Charles's doom were not wanting. "Colonel Sharrington Talbot was at Nottingham," writes Aubrey, "when King Charles did set up his standard upon the top of the tower there. He told me that the first night the wind blew it so that it hung down almost horizontal, which some did take to be an ill-omen." Presently the same authority relates:—"The day that the Long Parliament began, 1641, the spectre fell out of the figure of King Charles, in wood, in Sir Thomas Trenchard's Hall at Wullich, in Dorset, as they were at dinner in the parlour."

There had been a proposition that the king should be executed in his robes, and afterwards "that a stake should be driven through his head and body, to stand as a monument upon his grave." But this brutal suggestion was negatived. The king spent the last three days of his life in St. James's Palace, and was brought thence to Whitehall very early on the fatal morning of the 30th January, 1649. Of his demeanour on the scaffold let Andrew Marvell speak:—

While round the armed bands  
Did clap their bloody hands,  
He nothing common did or mean,  
Upon that memorable scene,  
But with his keener eye  
The axe's edge did stare;  
Nor called the gods with vulgar spleen  
To vindicate his bloodless right;  
But bow'd his comely head  
Down as upon a bed.

Clarendon's description is as follows:—"The king asked the executioner if his hair was well. After which, putting off his cloak, doublet, and his George, he gave the latter to Bishop (Juxon,) saying, 'Remember.' After his head was put on his block upon his waistcoat, inquiring of the executioner if the block was fast, who answered it was. He then said, 'I wish it might have been a little higher.' But it was answered him it could not be otherwise now. The king said, 'When I put up my hands this way, then—' He prayed a few words standing, with his hands and eyes lift up towards heaven, and then, stooping down, laid his neck on the block. Soon after which the executioner putting some of his hair under his cap, the king, though he had been going to strike, bade him stay for the sign. After a little time the king stretched forth his hand, and the executioner took off his head with one stroke. When his head was held up, and the people at a distance knew the fatal stroke was over, there was nothing to be heard but shrieks, and groans, and sobs, the unmerciful soldiers beating down poor people for this little number of their affection to their prince. Thus died the worthy, generous man, the best husband, the best friend, the best husband, the best father, and the best Christian that the age in which he lived produced."

The scaffold was erected on the west front of the Banqueting Hall.

Opposite, on the sit from the roof of the cution. We read in murder, the Lady P being just over again me and servants go could see plainly who could not stand the s

Philip Henry, who instant when the bloog among the the (as it were, with one might never hear the There is doubtless exaggerate the sor to death of the king, forth the untimely fr fell into convulsions, to their graves; and could not or "suld r dead." This is big large section of the y story of a learned Fc by the king's execrat Henry, Usher, and I years of the day as a strict The first Lo of his father, Sir Ste ary, the waincoat of neal of any sort per

The loyalty of W this time. "We res says South, providly, nally infamous day, a witness that the h hour or two at most time, any expression fate, had its dangers. Hewson, (originally liament, and a colon Charing Cross to the whosoever should sa present death."

After the executi Windsor for interne not more than five h moony took place; tl tablet or inscription not," says Bishop K employed to inter th St. George's chapel place of burial, decli sey, as supposing Ki majesty would upon Henry's proceedings abbey, monasteries, Charles was said in pleased Heaven to n him upon the throne prations then held l from any episcopal s abbey or other relig Church under such i by some conscientio uprightness of the king's friends se deposited in a vault believed to be those

To quote Charend committed . . . in f such excellent healt ders caused him to present at it with gr man had ever all his seemed to be of so a would probably hav

The coffin of Kin reign of William II one of the Princess to have remained a question began to a had been deposited, the occasion of the George III. Before the coffin of King 'Dukes of Cumberland officers. The leader Henry Halford publ on opening the coffi in tolerably good e employed to preser from its covering, /

ed. The forehead a lar s instances; the e first moment of exp immediately, and th was a long oval; m been entirely diseng from to be loose, an view . . . The bac alone fresh appearan usually are when so the teck were of co