

JOHN HAMPDEN.

BY G. B. F.

THE history of the English nation contains eras which mark its progress. The most prominent is that of the 17th century. James I., by his folly and weakness, brought on the storm which darkened the close of his own reign, and broke in full fury upon the head of the unjust and treacherous Charles. Early in his reign, Charles was contending with the parliament, and that body, itself, was torn by rival factions. The political horizon looked dark and frightful. The people groaned under taxes and religious persecution, and the fires of civil war began to blaze out. During this stormy period, many champions stood forth, bravely to defend the rights and privileges of the people, but none were more worthy of admiration than Hampden. Earnestness and sincerity made him eloquent in speech, and love of freedom rendered him brave and efficient in action. In debate, and in the field, he was equally cool and decisive. His political career seems to have commenced in his uniting himself with a party, remarkable for fearlessness in detecting and punishing the crimes of those high in office, and in curbing the overbearing disposition of the king. Among Hampden's first prominent actions, was that of restoring to certain boroughs, the right of sending members to the House, which right had fallen into disuse. In the words of Clarendon, "This was the first of those measures which he had the power to contrive, to persuade, and execute in the great struggle for liberty." His previous firmness and wisdom had endeared him to the hearts, and installed him in the confidence of the people. When, therefore, the evils of arbitrary taxation were felt, there was one common desire that the combat should be decided in the person of a single champion, and the eyes of both court and people, were turned upon Hampden. And well did he stand the shock, strengthened by the struggle, and accomplishing his object, which was to rouse the popular mind to a sense of Charles' injustice.

Although, monarchy and liberty were allowed to plead at the same bar, yet the former was too old and strong, to yield anything to the latter. Still the eyes of all men were fixed upon Hampden, as the pilot who must steer the vessel of State through the tempests and rocks that threatened it. No private interest or petty jealousies seem to have marred the symmetry of his political character. Born of an ancient and ambitious family, he scorned a purchased title of nobility, and trusted to his own individual merit for

honor and celebrity. He stands with Washington upon the page of the world's few perfect characters. Love of liberty, was indeed his prime virtue, but he had it not to the exclusion of all others. Kindness of heart, and all the finer feelings of our nature stood out prominent in him.

During the last three eventful years of his life we find him constantly employed for his country's weal. Field sports, and the embellishment of his paternal estate, occupied the moments not taken up by the duties of a magistrate. His home was, indeed, one which a true lover of nature, one, who, like himself, "delighted to hold communion with her visible forms," would have chosen. The mansion embowered in lofty and magnificent trees, the growth of centuries, and surrounded by knoll and dell, invited its owner to rural retirement, rather than to the stirring scenes going on in the outward world. Strong, indeed, then, must have been that love of country, which drove him forth to be tossed about on the waves of civil dissention. Then it was that the character of Hampden, marked before by modesty and mildness, became fierce, and "he threw away the scabbard, when he drew the sword." Martial exercises engaged all his faculties, and those traits which made him foremost in debate, made him irresistible in action. In the words of Macauley: "In Hampden, and in Hampden alone, were united all the qualities which, at such a crisis, were necessary to save the State—the valor and energy of Cromwell, the discernment and eloquence of Vane, the humanity and moderation of Manchester, the stern integrity of Hale, the ardent public spirit of Sydney." A death, glorious indeed, but mournfully untimely, overtook him, and with a prayer for his country lingering on his lips, he was gathered to his fathers. He was cut down when his powers were in their fullest vigor, and his military talents were ripening under the experience of war. Generations yet to come, will look with reverence and esteem on him, who, united the unswerving statesman and patriot, the fearless and efficient warrior, and the perfect character, in the person of John Hampden.

FASHIONABLE BOARDING SCHOOLS.

THEY sent her to a stylish school;

'Twas in her thirteenth June;

And with her, as the rules required,

"Two towels and a spoon."

They braced her back against a board,

To make her straight and tall.

They laced her up, and starved her down,

To make her light and small;

They pinched her feet, they singed her hair,

They screwed it up with pins—

Oh never mortal suffered more

In penance for her sins!