

WHEATLEY

HENRY

BENJAMIN

SAMUEL PEPYS AND THE
WORLD HE LIVED IN

Henry Wheatley

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Henry B. Wheatley

Samuel Pepys and the World He Lived In

“His Diary is like a good sirloin, which requires only to be basted with its own drippings.”—Athenæum, 1848, page 551.

PREFACE

THIS little book does not need any long Preface, as the title sufficiently explains the object aimed at. Although the various subjects referred to in the “Diary” are annotated in the different editions, there is in none of these any complete analysis of the entire work or of the incidents of Pepys’s life.

I have endeavoured in the following pages to draw together some of the most interesting incidents of the “Diary” relating both to Pepys’s life and to the manners of his time, and also to illustrate them from other sources. I have used the best edition of the “Diary,” by the Rev. Mynors Bright; but in order that this book may form a companion to all editions I have referred to the date of the entries rather than to the volume and page. It must therefore be understood that the passages referred to when not met with in the other editions will be found among the hitherto unpublished matter of that of Mr. Bright. It has been my endeavour to illustrate the contents of this entertaining work more completely than has previously been attempted, and several of the circumstances of Pepys’s life are here brought prominently forward for the first time. I may add that the whole of the present volume was printed off before the appearance of the excellent article in the July number of the “Edinburgh Review” (1880), as otherwise it might be supposed that certain points had been suggested by that article. I have, however, availed myself of its pages to make a correction of a small matter in the Index.

Mr. T. C. Noble has kindly sent me, since the completion of this book, a copy of Pepys’s original marriage certificate from the Registers of St. Margaret’s Church, Westminster, and I therefore insert it here to complete the [account in Chapter I](#). “Samuell Peps of this parish Gent & Elizabeth De S^{nt} Michell of Martins in the ffeilds Spinster. Published October 19th, 22nd, 29th [1655] and were married by Richard Sherwyn Esq^r one of the Justices of the Peace of the Cittie and Lyberties of Westm^r December 1st. (Signed) Ri. Sherwyn.”

The pronunciation of Pepys’s name has long been a disputed point, but although the most usual form at the present day is *Peps*, there can be little doubt that in his own time the name was pronounced as if written *Peeps*. The reasons for this opinion are: (1) that the name was sometimes so spelt phonetically by some of his contemporaries, as in the Coffee-house paper quoted in the “Diary” (ed. Mynors Bright, vol. vi. p. 292): “On Tuesday last Mr. Peeps went to Windsor,” &c.; (2) that this pronunciation is still the received one at Magdalene College, Cambridge; and (3) that the present bearers of the name so pronounce it.

In conclusion, it is my pleasing duty to express here my best thanks to those friends who have kindly assisted me in my work. Chief among these are Professor Newton, F.R.S., who, as Fellow of Magdalene College, facilitated my inquiries respecting the Pepysian Library, Mr. Pattrick, Senior Fellow and President of the College, Mr. Pepys Cockerell, Mr. George Scharf, F.S.A., Mr. Richard B. Prosser, of the Patent Office, who communicated the documents relating to Mrs. Pepys’s father, and Colonel Pasley, whose List of the Secretaries of the Admiralty, &c., in the [Appendix](#) will be found of great value, not merely in illustrating Pepys’s life, but as a real addition to our information respecting the history of the Navy.

H. B. W.

5, Minford Gardens, W.,
September, 1880.

P.S. Since the first publication of this book I have received an interesting letter from Mr. Walter Courtenay Pepys, a member of the Cottenham branch of the Pepys family, who, while agreeing with the statement above as to the Diarist’s pronunciation, reminds me that his branch have pronounced

the name as “Pep-pis” for at least one hundred years. In favour of this pronunciation Mr. Pepys adds that the French branch, which is now settled at La Rochelle, but came from Languedoc and originally from Italy (where the name exists as “Peppi”), now spell the name “Pepy.”

CHAPTER I. PEPYS BEFORE THE DIARY

“He was a pollard man, without the top (i. e. the reason as the source of ideas, or immediate yet not sensuous truths, having their evidence in themselves; or the imagination or idealizing power, by symbols mediating between the reason and the understanding), but on this account more broadly and luxuriantly branching out from the upper trunk.”—Coleridge’s MS. note in his copy of the “Diary” (Notes and Queries, 1st S. vol. vi. p. 215).

SAMUEL PEPYS was the first of a well-established stock to make a name in the outer world, but since his time the family can boast of having had amongst its members a Court physician, a bishop, and a lord chancellor.

The earliest recorded Pepys was named Thomas, and appears, on the authority of the Court Rolls of the manor of Pelhams, in Cottenham, to have been bailiff of the Abbot of Crowland’s lands in Cambridgeshire, in the early part of the reign of Henry VI.¹ From that time the family flourished, and there seems to be some reason for believing that certain members enriched themselves with the spoils of the abbey lands in the time of Henry VIII.

Before the Diarist became known, one of the most distinguished members of the family was Richard Pepys, created Lord Chief Justice of Ireland by Charles I. When the King was executed, Richard resigned his office; but he enjoyed the favour of Cromwell, and resumed the place. As he did not die until 1678, it is strange that there should be no allusion to him in the “Diary.”

The branch from which Samuel was descended had not much money; and his father, being a younger son, came to London and became a tailor. This descent in the social scale has caused much misapprehension, and his enemies did not forget to taunt him on his connection with tailoring; but it is a well-accredited axiom that trade does not injure gentry. Some remarks of Pepys himself upon his family have been greatly misunderstood. Referring to the non-appearance of any account of the Pepyses in Fuller’s “Worthies,” he writes:—“But I believe, indeed, our family were never considerable.”² Dr. Doran paraphrased this into: “Let others say of his family what they might: he, for his own part, did not believe that it was of anything like gentle descent.”³ This is a pure blunder, for Pepys merely meant that none of the family had made much mark; and he would have been very indignant had any one told him that they were not gentle.

Samuel, the fifth child of John and Margaret Pepys, was born on February 23rd, 1632, either at Brampton, a village near Huntingdon, or in London. There is something to be said in favour of each supposition, but, as the registers of Brampton church do not commence until the year 1654,⁴ the question cannot now be definitely settled. We have Pepys’s own authority for the statement that his father and mother were married at Newington, in Surrey, on October 15th, 1626.⁵ The register of marriages of St. Mary, Newington, has been searched, but the name of Pepys occurs neither in the years 1625, 1626, nor in 1627,⁶ and Mrs. John Pepys’s maiden name is still unknown. In early youth, Samuel went to a school at Huntingdon, as appears by a passage in the “Diary” (March 15th, 1659–60), where he writes: “I met Tom Alcock, one that went to school with me at Huntingdon, but

¹ “Diary,” ed. Mynors Bright, vol. iv. p. 366; vol. vi. p. 306.

² “Diary,” Feb. 10, 1661–62.

³ “Habits and Men,” p. 300.

⁴ I am indebted to the kindness of the Rev. Herbert Bree, Rector of Brampton, for this information.

⁵ “Diary,” Dec. 31, 1664.

⁶ “Notes and Queries,” 1st S. vol. xii. p. 102.

I had not seen him this sixteen years.” He seems to have spent his youth pretty equally between town and country, for on one occasion, when he was walking over the fields to Kingsland, he remembered the time when, as a boy, he lived there, and “used to shoot with my bow and arrow in these fields.”⁷ When he left Huntingdon he entered St. Paul’s School, and remained there until he had reached the age of seventeen. In after life, on the occasion of an official visit to Mercers’ Hall, he remembered the time when he was a petitioner for his exhibition.⁸ He was a stout Roundhead in his boyish days, and this fact was remarked upon, to his great chagrin, in after years, by his friend and schoolfellow Mr. Christmas. He went to see the execution of Charles I. at Whitehall, and made himself conspicuous by saying on his return that, were he to preach upon the event of the day, he should select as his text the verse: “The memory of the wicked shall rot.” He was in some fear that Mr. Christmas might remember this also, but he was happy to find that that gentleman had left school before the incident occurred.⁹ Pepys always took a lively interest in the welfare of his school, to which references are frequently made in the “Diary.”

In 1650, his name occurs as a sizar on the boards of Trinity College, Cambridge; but before going to reside at the University, on March 5, 1650–51,¹⁰ he was entered at Magdalene College, having probably been led to make the change by the greater inducements held out to him by the latter college. Here he was elected into one of Mr. Spendluffe’s scholarships in the following month; and two years later, on October 14, 1653, he was preferred to one on Dr. John Smith’s foundation. His father was at this time described as a citizen of London.

Little is known of Samuel’s academic career, during which he does not appear to have gained much distinction; and remarks in various parts of the “Diary” show that his conduct was not such as became a Puritan. The College books can be brought as a witness against him, for we learn from that source that, on October 21st, 1653, “Peapys and Hind were solemnly admonished ... for having been scandalously over-served with drink the night before.” Still, we must not jump to the conclusion that his time was entirely wasted, for he evidently carried into his busy life a good stock of classical learning. It was while he was at the University that he made the acquaintance of the learned Selden, from whom he borrowed the collection of ballads which formed the basis of the famous Pepysian collection. He relates that, while at Cambridge, he wrote a romance entitled, “Love a Cheate,” which he tore up on the 30th of January, 1663–64. This work of destruction must have been performed with some feelings of regret, for he tells us that he rather liked the tale, and wondered that he had ever been able to write so well. His previous literary performances had consisted in the concocting of some anagrams upon Mrs. Elizabeth Whittle, afterwards the wife of Sir Stephen Fox.¹¹ It is not recorded at what time Pepys left college, but it must have been either in 1654 or 1655. He was made Master of Arts by proxy, in June, 1660, the grace being passed on the 26th of that month.

On the 1st of December, 1655,¹² when he was still without any settled means of support, Pepys married Elizabeth St. Michel, a beautiful and portionless girl of fifteen. Although there is extant a letter from Balthasar St. Michel to Pepys (dated from Deal, February 8th, 1673–74), in which the history of Mrs. Pepys’s family is set forth, Lord Braybrooke was contented with the information on her monument, and merely added that she was educated in a convent, which in point of fact she was not. The letter alluded to was printed as far back as the year 1841,¹³ and yet I cannot find that the history contained in it has ever been used by the biographers of Pepys. What is even more remarkable than Lord Braybrooke’s silence respecting it, is the fact that the Rev. John Smith, who published

⁷ “Diary,” May 12, 1667.

⁸ Jan. 22, 1660–61.

⁹ Nov. 1, 1660.

¹⁰ “Did put on my gown first, March 5, 1650–51,” Dec. 31, 1664 (note).

¹¹ “Diary,” Nov. 11, 1660.

¹² Lord Braybrooke says October, but the “Athenæum” (1848, p. 551) says December 1st.

¹³ “Life, Journals, and Correspondence of S. Pepys,” vol. i. p. 146.

the letter, overlooked it when he wrote his introduction. Mons. St. Michel was of a good family in Anjou, but having turned Huguenot at the age of twenty-one, when in the German service, his father disinherited him, and he was left penniless. He came over to England in the retinue of Henrietta Maria, on her marriage with Charles I., as one of her Majesty's gentleman carvers; but the Queen dismissed him on finding out that he was a Protestant, and did not go to mass. Being a handsome man with courtly manners, he gained the affections of the daughter of Sir Francis Kingsmall (lately left a widow by an Irish squire), who married him against the wishes of her family, and, with £1,500 which they raised, the newly-married couple started for France, in the hope of recovering, if possible, some part of the family estates. Unhappily, they were taken prisoners at sea, with all their goods, by the Dunkirkers, and when released they settled at Bideford, in Devonshire. Here, or near by, Elizabeth and Balthasar and the rest of the family were born.

In course of time they all went to France, and the father, in command of a company of foot, assisted at the taking of Dunkirk. He occupied his time with propositions of perpetual motion and other visionary schemes, and consequently brought himself and all dependent upon him to the brink of poverty. While he was away from Paris, some devout Roman Catholics persuaded Madame St. Michel to place her daughter in the nunnery of the Ursulines. The father was enraged at this action, but managed to get Elizabeth out of the nunnery after she had been there twelve days. Thinking that France was a dangerous place to live in, he hurried his family back to England, and shortly afterwards Elizabeth married Pepys. Her father was greatly pleased that she had become the wife of a true Protestant; and she herself said to him, kissing his eyes, "Dear father, though in my tender years I was by my low fortune in this world deluded to popery by the fond dictates thereof, I have now (joined with my riper years, which give me more understanding) a man to my husband too wise, and one too religious in the Protestant religion, to suffer my thoughts to bend that way any more."

There are several references in the "Diary" to Mrs. Pepys's father and mother, who seem never to have risen out of the state of poverty into which they had sunk. On May 2, 1662, Mons. St. Michel took out a patent, in concert with Sir John Collidon and Sir Edward Ford,¹⁴ for the purpose of curing smoky chimneys; but this scheme could not have been very successful, as a few months afterwards he was preparing to go to Germany in order to fight against the Turks.¹⁵ Pepys gave him some work to do in 1666, and Mrs. Pepys carried the account-books that he was to rule; but such jobs as these must have given him but a sorry living, and in the following year he again proposed to go abroad. Pepys sent him three jacobuses in gold to help him on his journey.¹⁶ We hear nothing more of either father or mother, with the exception of an allusion to their pleasure at seeing the prosperous state of their daughter¹⁷—a prosperity in which they certainly did not share.

This account of Mrs. Pepys's parentage has led us away from the early days of Pepys, when, with improvident passion, he married his young wife; and we will therefore return to the year 1655. Early marriages were then far from uncommon, and Mrs. Pepys's beauty was considered as forming a very valid excuse for the improvidence of the match. There seems to be some reason for believing that she was of a dark complexion, for her husband on one occasion was mad with her for dressing herself according to the fashion in fair hair.¹⁸ Sir Edward Montagu, who was Pepys's first cousin one remove (Samuel's grandfather and Sir Edward's mother being brother and sister), gave a helping hand to the imprudent couple, and allowed them to live in his house. The Diarist alludes to this time, when,

¹⁴ "Diary," Sept. 22, 1663. In the original patent (No. 138) St. Michel's name appears as Alexander Merchant of St. Michael. (See Appendix.)

¹⁵ Jan. 4, 1663–64.

¹⁶ June 21, 1667.

¹⁷ Dec. 28, 1668.

¹⁸ "Diary," May 11, 1667.

some years afterwards, he writes of how his wife “used to make coal fires, and wash” his “foul clothes with her own hand,” in their little room at Lord Sandwich’s.¹⁹

Samuel does not appear to have lived with his father after he had grown up, and as old John Pepys was not a very thriving tradesman, it seems likely that Montagu had previously assisted his young kinsman. Indeed, it was probably under his patronage that Samuel went to the University.

The Diarist seems to have held some official position in the year 1656, because on Thursday, August 7th, a pass was granted “to John Pepys and his man with necessaries for Holland, being on the desire of Mr. Sam^{ll}. Pepys.”²⁰ John Pepys had probably long been in the habit of going backwards and forwards to Holland, for Samuel writes (January 24th, 1665–66): “We went through Horslydowne, where I never was since a little boy, that I went to enquire after my father, whom we did give over for lost coming from Holland.” Whether these journeys were undertaken in the way of business, or whether they had any connection with Montagu’s affairs, we cannot now tell. That Samuel acted as a sort of agent for Montagu, we have evidence; and among the Rawlinson Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library is a memorandum of the payment to him on General Montagu’s part for the ransom of the Marquis of Baydez (22nd January, 1656–57).

On March 26th, 1658, he underwent an operation for the stone, a disease that seems to have been inherited. The operation was successfully performed, and ever after he made a practice of celebrating the anniversary of this important event in his life with thanksgiving.

In 1659 he accompanied Sir Edward Montagu in the “Naseby,” when that admiral made his expedition to the Sound; and he was very surprised to learn afterwards how negotiations had been carried on of which at the time he was quite ignorant. This is not the place for a history of the various stages that led to the Restoration, but a passing allusion to one of these may be allowed here, as the particulars are given in the “Diary.” When Sir Edward Montagu left England for the Sound, he said to the Protector Richard, on parting with him, that “he should rejoice more to see him in his grave at his return home, than that he should give way to such things as were then in hatching, and afterwards did ruin him.”²¹ Finding the condition of affairs in England hopeless, Montagu took advantage of this expedition to correspond with Charles II.; but he had to be careful and secret, for his fellow-plenipotentiary, Algernon Sidney, who suspected him, was an enemy.²² Pepys’s remark on finding out what had been going on under his nose was, “I do from this raise an opinion of him, to be one of the most secret men in the world, which I was not so convinced of before.”²³

On Pepys’s return to England he was employed in the office of Mr., afterwards Sir George, Downing, as a clerk of the Exchequer connected with the pay of the army, and soon afterwards commenced to keep the “Diary” which we now possess.

The account of the incidents of Pepys’s early life must be more or less fragmentary, as they can be obtained merely from occasional allusions; and it is only in the [next chapter](#), in which we see Pepys in the “Diary,” that we can obtain any full idea of the man as painted by himself. Before passing on to this part of our subject, it will be well to set down a few notes on the “Diary” as a book. The book has thrown such a flood of light upon the history and manners of the middle of the seventeenth century, that we are apt to forget the fact that before the year 1825 the world knew nothing of this man of gossip. Yet so ungrateful are we to our benefactors, that the publication of the “Diary” did an immense injury to the writer’s reputation. Previously he was known as a staid, trustworthy, and conscientious man of business; as a patron of science and literature, and as a President of the Royal Society. Jeremy

¹⁹ Feb. 25, 1666–67.

²⁰ Entry-Book No. 105 of the Protector’s Council of State, p. 327 (*quoted*, “Notes and Queries,” 5th S. vol. v. p. 508).

²¹ “Diary,” June 21, 1660.

²² March 8, 1664–65.

²³ Nov. 7, 1660.

Collier says, he was “a philosopher of the severest morality.” Since 1825 we have been too apt to forget the excellence of his official life, and to think of him only as a busybody and a *quidnunc*.

When Pepys’s library was presented to Magdalene College, Cambridge, by his nephew, John Jackson, in 1724, there were, among the other treasures, six small volumes of closely-written MS. in shorthand (upwards of three thousand pages in all), which attracted little or no notice until after the publication of Evelyn’s “Diary.” Then it was that the Hon. and Rev. George Neville, Master of the College, drew them out of their obscurity, and submitted them to his kinsman, the well-known statesman, Lord Grenville, who had as a law student practised shorthand. Lord Grenville deciphered a few of the pages, and drew up an alphabet and list of arbitrary signs. These were handed to John Smith, an undergraduate of St. John’s College, who undertook to decipher the whole. He commenced his labours in the spring of 1819, and completed them in April, 1822—having thus worked for nearly three years, usually for twelve and fourteen hours a day.²⁴ What was remarkable in all this was, that in the Pepysian library there rested a little volume which contained the account of Charles II.’s escape after the battle of Worcester, taken down in shorthand by Pepys from the King’s dictation, and written out by himself in long-hand. Here, therefore, was the key that would have unlocked the “Diary” quite overlooked. Lord Braybrooke made the statement that the cipher used by Pepys “greatly resembled that known by the name of Rich’s system;” but this was misleading, as the system really adopted was the earlier one of Thomas Shelton. Mr. J. E. Bailey, F.S.A., communicated a very valuable paper, “On the Cipher of Pepys’s Diary,” to the Manchester Literary Club in 1876, in which he gave particulars of the various old systems of shorthand, and expressed the opinion that Pepys made himself familiar with Shelton’s “Tachygraphy”²⁵ while a student at Cambridge. The earliest edition of Rich’s “Pen’s Dexterity” was published in 1654, while in 1642 Shelton could refer to twenty years’ experience as a shorthand-writer. When the Rev. Mynors Bright was about to decipher the “Diary” afresh, he consulted Shelton’s book, a copy of which, with other works on shorthand, is preserved in the Pepysian Library. Mr. Bright informs us that, “When Pepys wished to keep anything *particularly concealed*, he wrote his cipher generally in French, sometimes in Latin, or Greek, or Spanish. This gave me a great deal of trouble. Afterwards he changed his plan and put in *dummy* letters. I was quite puzzled at this, and was nearly giving up in despair the hope of finding out his device, but at last, by rejecting every other letter, I made out the words. It would have been better for Pepys’s credit if these passages could not have been deciphered, as all of them are quite unfit for publication.”

Pepys was a great lover of shorthand, and he was always ready to invent a character, as it was then called, for a friend. He used the art in drafting his public and private letters; and although he was forced to discontinue his “Diary” in 1669, on account of the weakness of his eyesight, he continued its use throughout his life.

We learn from the “Diary” itself some particulars of how it was written. The incidents of each day were dotted down in short, and then the writer shut himself up in his office to fill up all the details. Sometimes he was in arrear: thus we read, on January 1st, 1662–63, “So to my office to set down these two or three days’ journal;” on September 24th, 1665, “Then I in the cabin to writing down my journal for these last seven days to my great content;” and on November 10th, 1665, “Up and entered all my journal since the 28th of October, having every day’s passage well in my head, though it troubles me to remember it.”

²⁴ Smith afterwards took orders, and was presented to the rectory of Baldock in Hertfordshire by Lord Brougham in 1832, at the instigation of Harriet Martineau. In 1841 he published two octavo volumes, entitled, “The Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Samuel Pepys, Esq., F.R.S.” This wretchedly edited book contains the Tangier “Diary” and much valuable information; but I cannot find that the information has been used by the successive editors of the “Diary.” He died in 1870.

²⁵ “Tachygraphy. The most exact and compendious methode of short and swift writing that hath ever yet beene published by any. Composed by Thomas Shelton, author and professor of the said art. Approued by both Unyuersities. Ps. 45, 1, My tongue is as the pen of a swift writer.” 1641.

Lord Braybrooke, who first introduced the “Diary” to the public, had no very accurate notions of the duties of an editor; and he treated his manuscript in a very unsatisfactory manner. Large portions were omitted without explanation, and apparently without reason; and although much was added to succeeding editions, still the reader might well say—

“That cruel something unpossess’d
Corrodes and leavens all the rest.”

The third edition, published in 1848, contained a large mass of restored passages, amounting, it is said, to not less than one-fourth of the entire work. Some fresh notes were added to the fourth edition, published in 1854; but no alteration of the text was made beyond “the correction of a few verbal errors and corrupt passages hitherto overlooked.” Subsequent editions have been mere reprints of these. In 1875 appeared the first volume of the Rev. Mynors Bright’s entirely new edition, with about one-third of matter never yet published, all of which was of the true Pepysian flavour. Here was a treat for the lovers of the “Diary” which they little expected.

Having traced the particulars of Pepys’s life to the year 1659, and described the way in which the “Diary” was written, and the means by which it first saw the light, I will now pass on to notice, in the [next chapter](#), the chief personal incidents recorded in the book itself.

CHAPTER II. PEPYS IN THE “DIARY.”

“An exact Diary is a window into his heart that maketh it: and therefore pity it is that any should look therein but either the friends of the party or such ingenuous foes as will not, especially in things doubtful, make conjectural comments to his disgrace.”—Prynne’s Remarks on Abp. Laud.

ON the 1st of January, 1659–60, Samuel Pepys (then in his twenty-seventh year) commenced to write his famous “Diary.” If, as seems more than probable, he had previously kept a journal of some kind, all traces of it are now lost; and our earliest glimpses of the circumstances of his life are to be obtained only from the “Diary,” which is by far the most remarkable book of its kind in existence. Other men have written diaries and confessions, but they have been intended either for the public or at least for a small circle of friends to see. This “Diary” was only intended for the writer’s eye. He wrote it in secret, and when he unguardedly told Sir William Coventry in the Tower that he kept a diary, he was sorry for his indiscretion immediately afterwards. Pepys has been likened to the barber of King Midas, who relieved his mind by communicating to a bundle of reeds the fact that his master had the ears of an ass; and assuredly no other writer has so unreservedly stripped his soul bare. It is, therefore, only fair to bear in mind what is said in the motto at the head of this chapter, and not to forget that very few could bear the accusing witness of such a truthful record of thoughts as well as actions as is here. The “Diary” extends over nearly ten eventful years in the history of England, and contains a voluminous record of both public and private events. The fascination of Pepys’s garrulity is so great, that most of those who have written about him have found it difficult to restrain their praise within bounds. A writer in the “Athenæum” (apparently the late Peter Cunningham) was quite carried away by his subject when he wrote—“He has the minuteness of Dee and Ashmole without their tediousness, the playfulness of Swift in his best moments without his prejudice and his party feelings, and a charm over Byron and Scott, and, indeed, above all other memorialists that we can call to mind, in that his Diary was kept without the slightest view to publication.”²⁶

I will now first note some of the chief circumstances of Pepys’s life during the period covered by the “Diary,” and then say something about his character as it is painted by himself.

When we are first introduced to Pepys he is living in Axe Yard, Westminster, with very small means of support, but making so good a show that he is esteemed rich. His family consists of himself, his wife, and servant Jane. During the frosty weather they have not a coal in the house, and he is forced to dine at his father’s, or make himself as comfortable as he can up in the garret. That the larder is not very plentifully supplied is seen by the fact that, on the 1st of February, he and his wife dine on pease pudding, and on nothing else. At one time he has not money enough in the house to pay the rent, but soon afterwards he finds himself worth £40 which he did not expect, and is therefore afraid that he must have forgotten something. On the 16th of January, Mr. Downing (in whose office he then was) asked our Diarist, in a half-hearted way, whether he would go to Holland, and gave him the impression that his services could be dispensed with. At this time political affairs were in the greatest confusion, and no one knew what opinions to hold with profit to himself. Thus, William Symons said that “he had made shift to keep in, in good esteem and employment through eight governments in one year, and then failed unhappy in the ninth, viz., that of the King’s coming in.”²⁷

As in times of anarchy every one wishes to talk, the Rota, or Coffee Club founded by James Harrington, the author of “Oceana,” was found to be a congenial resort by those who wished to express

²⁶ “Athenæum,” 1848, p. 669.

²⁷ “Diary,” Jan. 8, 1663–64.

their opinions on passing events. The principle of the club was political, and the plan formed there for the government of the country was, that every official should be chosen by ballot. Every year a third part of the House of Commons were to “rote out by ballot,” and no magistrate was to continue in his position more than three years. Other than politicians attended the meetings, and many distinguished men, such as Dr. Petty, Dr. Croon, Sir William Poultney, and Cyriack Skinner, were to be found in the evening at the Turk’s Head, in the New Palace Yard. The room was usually as full as it would hold, and Aubrey gives it as his opinion that the arguments heard in Parliament were flat as compared with those delivered at the Rota Club. The object of worship was the ballot-box, and the company sat round an oval table, which had a passage in the middle for Miles, the landlord, to deliver his coffee. Pepys paid his eighteen-pence on becoming a member of the club, on the 9th of January, 1659–60, and he frequently attended after this. If the following can be considered as a good illustration of proceedings, there must have been considerable divergence in the opinions of the members:—“I went to the Coffee Club and heard very good discourse; it was in answer to Mr. Harrington’s answer, who said that the state of the Roman government was not a settled government, and so it was no wonder that the balance of property was in one hand, and the command in another, it being therefore always in a posture of war; but it was carried by ballot, that it was a steady government; so to-morrow it is to be proved by the opponents that the balance lay in one hand and the government in another.”²⁸ On the 20th of February, Pepys writes: “After a small debate upon the question whether learned or unlearned subjects are best, the club broke up very poorly, and I do not think they will meet any more.” After the Restoration Harrington was put in the Tower, and then removed to Portsea Castle. His imprisonment turned him mad, so that he fancied his perspiration turned sometimes to flies and sometimes to bees, but all his hallucinations were inoffensive. One of the first steps taken by Monk towards obtaining a free Parliament was the admission of the secluded members who had been previously purged out. Pepys describes the marching-in of these men on the 21st of February, and specially notices Prynne’s “old basket-hilt sword.” The editors of the “Diary” might have illustrated this by an amusing passage from Aubrey’s “Lives.” It appears that as the members were going to the House, Prynne’s long rusty sword “ran between Sir William Waller’s short legs, and threw him down;” which caused laughter, as Aubrey takes care to add. About this time Pepys seems to have discerned the signs of the times, for we find him, on a visit to Audley End, drinking the health of the King down in a cellar.²⁹ Sir Edward Montagu now comes to the front, and is intent upon benefiting his kinsman. Pepys hopes to be made Clerk of the Peace for Westminster, but finds the place already promised to another. Montagu offers him the post of Secretary to the Generals at Sea, which he joyfully accepts; and he receives his warrant on the 22nd of March. The following day sees the party on board the “Swiftsure” at Longreach, where Pepys receives a letter directed to “S. P., Esq.,” and this superscription seems to have delighted him greatly, for he says, “of which God knows I was not a little proud.” On the 30th inst. Montagu and his people went on board the “Naseby,” which was the ship in which he had gone to the Sound in the previous year. They remain for a time in the neighbourhood of Deal, and on the 3rd of May the King’s declaration and letter to the two generals is received by Montagu, who dictates to Pepys the words in which he wishes the vote in favour of the King to be couched. The captains all came on board the “Naseby,” and Pepys read the letter and declaration to them; and while they were discoursing on the subject he pretended to be drawing up the form of vote, which Montagu had already settled. When the resolution was read, it passed at once; and the seamen all cried out, “God bless King Charles!” a cry that was echoed by the whole fleet. A little piece of Pepys’s vanity (and perhaps shrewdness also) here peeps out, for he tells us that he signed all the copies of the vote of the Council of War, so that if it should by chance get into print his name might be attached to it.³⁰

²⁸ “Diary,” Jan. 17, 1659–60.

²⁹ Feb. 27, 1659–60.

³⁰ “Diary,” May 4, 1660.

The English fleet lies off the Dutch coast about the middle of May, and our Diarist avails himself of the opportunity to visit the Hague and some of the chief towns of Holland. The Dukes of York and Gloucester came on board the “Naseby” on the 22nd inst., and the King followed them on the following day, when the opportunity of his visit was taken to change the objectionable names of the ships. The “Naseby” became the “Charles,” the “Richard” the “James,” the “Speaker” the “Mary,” and the “Lambert” the “Henrietta.”

“The Naseby now no longer England’s shame,
But better to be lost in Charles his name.”³¹

Pepys takes the opportunity, when the Duke of York is on board, to bespeak his favour; and is overjoyed at the Duke calling him Pepys. On the 25th the King lands at Dover, and is received by Monk. Pepys tells how the mayor presented the King with a handsome Bible, which he received, and told the people that “it was the thing he loved above all things in the world!”

The 5th of June was Pepys’s last day on board, and he was awoke about three o’clock in the morning by the pouring into his mouth of the water with which the people above were washing the deck; and he was forced to rise and sleep leaning on the table. He returned to shore better off than he had originally left it, as he took care to make use of his opportunities by getting men made captains, and by obtaining gratuities for the favours. Fortune continued to smile upon him, for he had not been many days back in London when Sir Edward Montagu, now a Knight of the Garter, and in high favour with the King, obtained for him the promise of the place of Clerk of the Acts. On the 28th of June he clears himself of his old office under Sir George Downing, and is glad to part from this stingy fellow, as he calls him. On the following day he gets his warrant, but is much cast down when he learns that his predecessor, Mr. Barlow, is still alive, and coming up to town to look after the place. General Monk’s wife wishes the clerkship to be given to Mr. Turner, of the Navy Office; but Montagu’s influence secures it for Pepys. Turner then offers to give Pepys £150 to be joined with him in the patent, but this is refused. Pepys is kept in a great state of excitement respecting Barlow for a time. He hears that he is a sickly man, and on July 17th he agrees to give him £100 a year out of his raised salary. This payment continued until February, 1664–65, when Barlow died. Pepys’s remarks on the death are particularly characteristic: “For which God knows my heart, I could be as sorry as is possible for one to be for a stranger, by whose death he gets £100 per annum, he being a worthy honest man; but when I come to consider the providence of God by this means unexpectedly to give me £100 a year more in my estate, I have cause to bless God, and do it from the bottom of my heart.”³²

Now, our Diarist has become a man of importance, as one of the principal Officers of the Navy, and Montagu consequently asks him to dinner for the first time.³³ Yet he has not much faith in his power to keep the place; and when a Mr. Man offers him £1,000 for it, his mouth waters, and he would gladly take the money if his patron would agree.³⁴ On the 23rd of July he takes the oaths as a Clerk of the Privy Seal, which he does not expect to be a very profitable office; but he soon finds himself making about £3 a day,³⁵ in addition to his regular salary at the Navy Office. Being settled at his house in Seething Lane, attached to the office, he is glad to get his little house in Axe Yard off

³¹ Dryden, “Astræa Redux,” ll. 230–31.

³² “Diary,” Feb. 9, 1664–65. Thomas Barlow was appointed in 1638 Clerk of the Acts, jointly with Dennis Fleming, who had held the office for several years previously. Lord Braybrooke says in a note, that “Barlow had previously been Secretary to Algernon, Earl of Northumberland, when High Admiral;” but Colonel Pasley tells me this is a mistake, for Barlow had been appointed Clerk of the Acts two months before the Earl became Lord High Admiral. Barlow had, however, been in his service at an earlier date, and the Earl had appointed him Muster Master of the Fleet under his command in 1636.

³³ “Diary,” July 2, 1660.

³⁴ Aug. 6, 10, 1660.

³⁵ Aug. 10, 1660.

his hands, which he does on the 17th of September, receiving £41 for his interest in it. About this time he is sworn as a justice of the peace, and he is “mightily pleased” at the honour, although he confesses that he is wholly ignorant of the duties.³⁶

There were great doings at the coronation of Charles II. in the following year, and the “Diary” is full of particulars respecting it. Pepys and a party went to a shop in Cornhill to see the procession when the King passed from the Tower to Whitehall, and while they waited they partook of “wine and good cake.”³⁷

On the next day Pepys gets into Westminster Abbey to see the coronation, and sits patiently in a scaffold from a little after four until eleven. Afterwards he goes into Westminster Hall, sees the banquet, and returns home to bed with the feeling that he will “never see the like again in this world.” Next morning he wakes with his “head in a sad taking through the last night’s drink.”³⁸

Sometimes the Clerk of the Acts has a great deal of business to get through, and he always sticks to his work manfully. By going to the office early and staying late he was often able to spare the afternoons for the theatre. Day after day he gets up and is at his desk at four o’clock in the morning;³⁹ but this hard work is varied by some idle days. On June the 5th the Officers of the Navy play at bowls and drink and talk. Pepys takes his flageolet, and plays upon the leads. Sir William Penn comes out in his shirt-sleeves, and there is more drinking and talking, the result of which is, that Pepys goes to bed nearly fuddled, and wakes up the next morning with an aching head.

A very important event in the life of the Diarist occurred in the following month. His uncle, Robert Pepys, dies, and a small property at Brampton, worth about £80 per annum,⁴⁰ comes into the possession of old John Pepys, not, however, without some litigation on the part of some members of the family. As his father has no money, Samuel takes all the business affairs into his own hands, and seems to consider the property as his own. When he learns the news, on the 6th of July, 1661, he posts down to Brampton, leaving London between eleven and twelve o’clock in the morning, and arriving there about nine o’clock at night. When he gets to his uncle’s house he is very uncomfortable, from the badness of the food and drink, and the biting of the gnats; but although he is nearly out of his wits, he appears contented, so as not to trouble his father. He has much work of arrangement to get through, and he remains nearly sixteen days away from London. When he returns he gives out among his most distinguished friends and acquaintances that he has had an estate of £200 a year in land left him, beside money, “because he would put an esteem upon himself.”⁴¹

Pepys acknowledged to two weaknesses, of which he tried to cure himself by means of vows—not, however, with a very successful result. The first weakness was a too great addiction to the bottle, and the second a too frequent attendance at theatres. On July 26th, 1661, we find him making this confession: “Having the beginning of this week made a vow to myself to drink no wine this week (finding it unfit me to look after business), and this day breaking of it against my will, I am much troubled for it; but I hope God will forgive me!” On Michaelmas Day, 1661, he took so much wine that he “was even almost foxed,” so that he “durst not read prayers for fear of being perceived by my servants in what case I was.” Next year, on the same day, he finds that his “oaths for drinking of wine and going to plays are out,” and so he resolves to take some liberty, “and then fall to them again.” On December 30th, 1662, we find him writing: “After dinner drinking five or six glasses of wine, which liberty I now take till I begin my oathe again.”⁴²

³⁶ Sept. 23, 1660.

³⁷ April 22, 1661.

³⁸ “Diary,” April 23, 1661.

³⁹ July 3, 1662; June 17, 1663.

⁴⁰ June 17, 1666.

⁴¹ “Diary,” July 24, 1661.

⁴² There are some amusing passages relating to the vow on theatre-going under date of Feb. 23, 1662–63; Jan. 2, 1663–64.

On October 29th, 1663, he drinks some hippocras, which consists of wine mixed with sugar and spices, under the belief that he is not breaking his vow, because it is “only a mixed compound drink, and not any wine.” Sir Walter Scott likened this piece of casuistry to that of Fielding’s Newgate chaplain, who preferred punch to wine because the former was a liquor nowhere spoken against in Scripture.

It is necessary now to return to the date at which we broke off to follow our hero’s vows. He sums up his blessings on February 23rd, 1661–62, in these words: “I am 29 years of age, and in very good health, and like to live and get an estate; and if I have a heart to be contented, I think I may reckon myself as happy a man as any is in the world, for which God be praised.” Yet, on the next day, he is troubled to part with £5 for five weeks’ music-lessons; and soon afterwards he complains at his father spending £100 a year.⁴³ Although he was of a saving turn, he could clearly see that it was wise to spend money while he could enjoy the results of his spending, and alludes to this on two separate occasions. On May 20th, 1662, he writes: “But though I am much against too much spending, yet I do think it best to enjoy some degree of pleasure now that we have health, money, and opportunity, rather than to leave pleasures to old age or poverty when we cannot have them so properly.” Four years after this we find the same idea in other words: “The truth is I do indulge myself a little the more in pleasure, knowing that this is the proper age of my life to do it; and out of my observation that most men that do thrive in the world do forget to take pleasure during the time that they are getting their estate, but reserve that till they have got one, and then it is too late for them to enjoy it with any pleasure.”⁴⁴

About this time Pepys is sworn a younger brother of the Trinity House, is made a Burgess of Portsmouth, is troubled with a lawsuit by one Field, signs warrants as a justice of the peace, and is appointed one of the Commissioners for the Affairs of Tangier. This business with Field, which was connected with the office, gives him much annoyance. At one time he is in fear of being taken by the bailiffs,⁴⁵ and at another he is in such terror that the falling of something behind a door makes him start with fright.⁴⁶

About the middle of the year 1662 he engages the services of Mr. Cooper, mate of the “Royal George,” of whom he intends to learn mathematics; but his early attempts do not appear to have been very ambitious, for he begins by learning the multiplication-table. In the following year, he and Mrs. Pepys learn to dance, and he thinks he shall be able to manage the coranto well enough. He grudges the cost, however, particularly as he is forced by his oath to give half as much more to the poor.⁴⁷

The mixture of extravagance and frugality that is constantly exhibited in the “Diary” is most amusing, particularly in the case of clothes. Thus, when he hears that the Queen is ill, he stops the making of his velvet cloak until he sees whether she lives or dies.⁴⁸ In spite of this forethought, he finds, on casting up his accounts, that he spent £55 on his own clothes, although, as a set-off against this large sum, Mrs. Pepys’s clothes only cost £12. This love of fine clothes is continually peeping out, and it has been suggested that he inherited it with the tailor blood of his father. A better reason, however, may be found in the fact that at one time he was very poor, and “forced to sneak like a beggar” for want of clothes; so that, now he is in funds, he tries to make up for his former deficiency, and resolves to dress himself handsomely.⁴⁹

⁴³ “Diary,” April 23, 1663.

⁴⁴ “Diary,” March 10, 1666.

⁴⁵ Feb. 21, 1662–63.

⁴⁶ Feb. 23, 1662–63.

⁴⁷ “Diary,” May 4, 1663.

⁴⁸ Oct. 22, 1663.

⁴⁹ Oct. 31, 1663.

A few years after this he expresses himself as ashamed of the shabbiness of his clothes, when he wished to speak to the King but did not like to do so, because his linen was dirty and his clothes mean.⁵⁰

At the end of the year 1663, Pepys performed a duty in a way that did him great credit. Sir Edward Montagu, now Earl of Sandwich, is taken ill, and, on his recovery, he goes for change of air to Chelsea. After a time it gets abroad that he dotes upon one of the daughters of his landlady, and neglects his duties. On the 9th of September, 1663, Mr. Pickering tells Pepys of all this, and we therefore read in the "Diary:" "I am ashamed to see my lord so grossly play the fool, to the flinging-off of all honour, friends, servants, and everything and person that is good, with his carrying her abroad and playing on his lute under her window, and forty other poor sordid things, which I am grieved to hear." Pepys determines to be silent, as he learns that the Earl will not bear any allusion to his doings. Still his mind continually reverts to the matter, and in the end he decides to write a letter of counsel to his patron.⁵¹ When this is sent, he continues for some time to be anxious as to the manner in which the Earl is likely to receive it. Nothing is, of course, said when the two meet, and there is for a time a coldness between them; but at last they return to their old relations with each other, and Lord Sandwich, having left Chelsea, is seen in the world again.

Pepys's habit of sitting up late, reading and writing by candlelight, begins to tell upon his eyesight; and in January, 1663–64, he finds it fail him for the first time. In October, 1664, he consults the celebrated Mr. Cocker as to the best glass to save his eyes at night; but they continue to trouble him, and he proposes to get some green spectacles.⁵² How the eyesight got weaker, so that the "Diary" had to be discontinued, we all know to our great loss.

On one occasion Mr. Coventry talks with Pepys on the need for a history of the navy of England, and then suggests that he should write a history of the late Dutch war. Pepys likes the idea, as he thinks it agrees with his genius, and would recommend him much to the authorities;⁵³ but he succeeded in doing this without writing the history. On the 10th of March, 1663–64, he was appointed one of the assistants of the Corporation of the Royal Fishery, of which the Duke of York was the Governor; his commission as Treasurer of the Tangier Committee is signed on the 18th of April, 1665; and in October of the same year he obtains the appointment of Surveyor-General of the Victualling Office. Besides these tangible proofs of his success in life were the expressions of esteem made use of in respect to him by men in authority. The Duke of York told him that he highly valued his services,⁵⁴ and the Duke of Albemarle said that he was the right hand of the navy.⁵⁵

Pepys quite deserved these words of praise, and moreover continued to deserve them, for during the whole period of the Dutch war he did his best to provide what was required for the navy, and while the plague was devastating London he alone remained at his post. His straightforward common-sense shows out strongly during the course of the Great Fire. From the 2nd of September, 1666—when the servants wake him to tell of the burning which they saw in the city—to the 7th, when he visits the ruins, we have a lively picture of the whole scene in the pages of the "Diary." On the Sunday Pepys goes to Whitehall, and tells the King and the Duke of York of what he had seen. He says that unless his Majesty will command houses to be pulled down, nothing can stop the fire. On hearing which, the King instructs him to go to the Lord Mayor, and command him to pull down houses in every direction. Sir Thomas Bludworth, the Lord Mayor, seems to have been but a poor creature; and when he heard the King's message, "he cried like a fainting woman, 'Lord! what can I do? I

⁵⁰ March 20, 1667.

⁵¹ This letter is printed in the "Diary," under date Nov. 18, 1663.

⁵² "Diary," Dec. 13, 1666.

⁵³ June 13, 1664.

⁵⁴ March 22, 1664–65.

⁵⁵ April 24, 1665.

am spent: people will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses, but the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it.” On the 4th inst. there seemed to be little hope of saving the Navy Office, unless some extraordinary means were taken with that object. Pepys therefore suggested that the workmen from Woolwich and Deptford Dockyards should be sent for to pull down the houses round them. Sir William Penn went to see after the men, and Pepys wrote to Sir William Coventry for the Duke of York’s permission. In the letter he remarks that the fire is very near them, both on the Tower Street and Fenchurch sides; and that unless houses are pulled down, there are little hopes of their escape. The next day Penn sends up the men, who help greatly in the blowing-up of houses; and to this action Pepys mainly attributes the stoppage of the fire. He then goes up to the top of Barking church, and there he saw “the saddest sight of desolation”—“everywhere great fires, oil-cellars, and brimstone and other things burning.” He then walks through the town, the hot ground almost burning his feet, till he comes to Moorfields, which he finds full of people, “the poor wretches carrying their goods there, and everybody keeping his goods together by themselves.”

During the period of fright, when he expected the office to be destroyed, he sent off his money, plate, and best things to Sir W. Rider, at Bethnal Green, and then he and Penn dug a hole in the garden, in which they put their wine and Parmezan cheese. On the 10th of September, Sir W. Rider lets it be known that, as the town is full of the report respecting the wealth in his house, he will be glad if his friends will provide for the safety of their property elsewhere.

About the time of the Great Fire, Pepys had saved a large sum of money, and was making a good income; so we find his thoughts running on the advantage of keeping a private coach, as he is ashamed to be seen in a hackney coach.⁵⁶ It was not, however, until more than a year after this that he actually bought his carriage, and we find that he spent £53 on the coach,⁵⁷ and £50 on a fine pair of black horses.⁵⁸ He was very proud of the appearance of his carriage, but his enemies made some capital out of the proceeding, and protested that he thrived on the distresses of others.

In these days of banks and other means for the deposit of money, it is not easy to realize the difficulties of men who possessed money in the seventeenth century. Pepys sent some down to Brampton to be buried, but his wife and father did the business entrusted to them so badly that he was quite wild and uneasy with fears that it might be found by others.⁵⁹ Therefore, at the first opportunity, he goes down himself to see after his treasure; and the description of the hunt after it is certainly one of the most entertaining passages in the “Diary.”⁶⁰ He and his father and wife go out into the garden with a dark lantern, and grope about a long time before they come on the trace. Then they find that the bags are rotten, and gold and notes are all spread about and covered with dirt, the latter being scarcely distinguishable. Then there is a gathering of it up to be washed, and in the end not much is lost, although throughout the proceedings Pepys is in dread that the neighbours will see and hear what is going on.

We now come to the consideration of one of the most important incidents in the life of the Diarist—that is, his great speech at the Bar of the House of Commons. When peace was concluded with the Dutch, and the people had time to think over the disgrace which this country had suffered by the presence of De Ruyter’s fleet in the Medway, they naturally looked round for someone to punish. It was the same feeling, only in a much intensified degree, which found expression at the time of the Crimean war in the cry, “Whom shall we hang?” A Parliamentary Committee was appointed in October, 1667, to inquire into everything relating to this business, at Chatham. Pepys is warned to prepare himself, as there is a desire to lay the blame upon the Commissioners of the

⁵⁶ “Diary,” April 21, 1667.

⁵⁷ Oct. 24, 1668.

⁵⁸ Dec. 11, 1668.

⁵⁹ “Diary,” June 19, 1667.

⁶⁰ Oct. 10, 1667.

Navy, and a resolution “to lay the fault heavy somewhere, and to punish it.”⁶¹ He therefore gives as clear a statement as possible, and satisfies the Committee for a time; but for months afterwards he is continually being summoned to answer some charge, so that he is mad to “become the hackney of this Office in perpetual trouble and vexation, that need it least.”⁶² Then breaks out a storm in the House of Commons against the Principal Officers of the Navy, and some members demand that they be put out of their places. The result is, that they are ordered to be heard in their own defence at the Bar of the House. The whole labour of defence falls upon Pepys, and he sets to work with a will to collect his evidence, and to display it in the most satisfactory manner. He is somewhat annoyed that the other officers can do little to help him; but he is proud that they, in spite of themselves, must rely upon him. The eventful day (5th March, 1667–68) at last arrives, and, having first fortified himself with half a pint of mulled sack and a dram of brandy, our Diarist stands at the Bar with his fellow-officers. But here we must use his own words, for it would be presumptuous to paraphrase the vivid account he himself gives:—“After the Speaker had told us the dissatisfaction of the House, and read the Report of the Committee, I began our defence most acceptably and smoothly, and continued at it without any hesitation or loss, but with full scope, and all my reason free about me, as if it had been at my own table, from that time (about twelve o’clock) till past three in the afternoon; and so ended without any interruption from the Speaker; but we withdrew. And there all my Fellow-officers and all the world that was within hearing, did congratulate me, and cry up my speech as the best thing they ever heard; and my Fellow-officers were overjoyed in it.” The orator was congratulated on every side, and the flattery he received is set down in the “Diary” in all good faith. Sir William Coventry addresses him the next day with the words, “Good morrow, Mr. Pepys, that must be Speaker of the Parliament-house;” and the Solicitor-General protests that he spoke the best of any man in England. One man says that he would go twenty miles to hear such another speech; and another, although he had sat six-and-twenty years in Parliament, had never heard anything like it before; and there is much more to the same effect.

I do not find that Pepys ever distinguished himself by another speech, although he sat for several years in the House of Commons; and there is therefore reason to doubt his oratorical powers. In fact, it is easy to explain the secret of his success, for he was speaking on a subject that he thoroughly understood to an audience that understood it but imperfectly. Still we must give Pepys due credit for his achievement. He had a bad case, and yet he seems to have converted his audience. It was here that his clear-headedness and remarkable powers of arrangement were brought into play, and having at the same time his whole soul in the matter, he easily carried his hearers with him.

The praises he received raised up a strong desire in his breast to become a Parliament-man. He hints at this design on the 5th of December, 1668, and again, on the 19th of February, 1668–69, he opens the matter to his friend, Sir William Coventry, who likes the idea mightily, and promises to speak about it to the Duke of York. A few more months, and his eyes—which already, as we have seen, had given him trouble—become so much worse that he begins to think seriously of taking rest. On the 16th of May, 1669, he draws up a rough copy of a petition to the Duke of York for leave of absence for three or four months. A few days after, the Duke takes him to the King, who expresses his great concern at the state of his eyes, and gives him the leave he desires.⁶³ On the 31st of May, 1669, the pen that has written so much to amuse us is put to the paper for the last time; and the “Diary” ends with these words of deep but subdued feeling:—“And thus ends all that I doubt I shall

⁶¹ “Diary,” Oct. 21, 1667.

⁶² Feb. 11, 1667–68.

⁶³ “Diary,” May 24, 1669. “To Whitehall where I attended the Duke of York and was by him led to the King.” To this passage Lord Braybrooke added this note: “It seems doubtful whether the expression of being led to the King has any reference to the defective state of Pepys’s vision. Perhaps he might wish to make the most of this infirmity, in the hope of strengthening his claim for leave of absence.” It is rather too absurd to think that the Duke of York would lead Pepys by the hand through the corridors of the palace. If a guide had been needed, the services of a less august personage could surely have been obtained.

ever be able to do with my own eyes in the keeping of my Journal, I being not able to do it any longer, having done now so long as to undo my eyes almost every time that I take a pen in my hand; and therefore whatever comes of it I must forbear; and therefore resolve, from this time forward to have it kept by my people in longhand, and must be contented to set down no more than is fit for them and all the world to know; or if there be any thing, which cannot be much, now my amours are past, and my eyes hindering me in almost all other pleasures, I must endeavour to keep a margin in my book open, to add here and there, a note in short-hand with my own hand. And so I betake myself to that course, which is almost as much as to see myself go in to my grave: for which and all the discomforts that will accompany my being blind, the good God prepare me!" The "Diary" is one of the most curious of psychological studies, and surely no other man has so relentlessly laid bare his secret motives. When he does a good action from a good motive, he cannot forbear to add a dirty little motive as well. There is no posing for effect, such as the writers of confessions adopt, and herein consists the chief charm of the book.

I cannot pretend to draw the character of the Diarist, for he has done that himself in his own vivid manner; but a few of his leading characteristics may be set down here. Two of the most prominent of these characteristics are his money-grubbing and his love of women.

1. *Money-grubbing.* His paramount anxiety is to get money, and we find him constantly making up his accounts in order to see how much better off he is this month than he was in the last. He takes care that no opportunity of money-getting shall be allowed to slip, and he certainly succeeds in his endeavours; for whereas, at the opening of the "Diary," he is only worth about £40, he makes £3,560 in the year 1665, while his salary as Clerk of the Acts remains at £350. In the following year he only made £2,986.⁶⁴

The same prudent habits that made Pepys so careful in casting up his accounts induced him to make a new will as changes were required. On the 17th of March, 1659–60, he bequeathed all that he possessed (but this was not very much at that time) to his wife, with his French books, the other books being left to his brother John. Another will was made on August 10th, 1665, because the town was so unhealthy "that a man cannot depend upon living two days." We have fuller particulars of the will of May 27th, 1666, by which Pall Pepys, the Diarist's sister, was to have £500, his father £2,000, and his wife the rest of his estate—"but to have £2,500 secured to her though by deducting out of what I have given my father and sister." Another will was prepared in the following year, by which Pepys left all he possessed to be equally divided between his wife and father.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ The particulars of his accounts, as given in the "Diary," are very curious, and it may be worth while here to tabulate some of

On	June 3, 1660,	he was worth nearly	£100
"	Dec. 31, 1660,	"	£300
"	May 24, 1661,	"	£500
"	Aug. 31, 1662,	"	£686 19s. 2½d.

them.

he appears to have made but little extra money, for his monthly balances vary only a few pounds, sometimes more and sometimes

About this time

Dec. 31, 1663	£800
(Of which £700 was in Lord Sandwich's hands).	
March 31, 1664	£900
July 31, 1664	£1,014
Feb. 28, 1664–65	£1,270
Aug. 13, 1665	£2,164

less:—

made money by prizes and fees for victualling, so that by Dec. 31 he had raised

This year he

his estate to

April 30, 1666	£5,200
Dec. 31, 1666	£6,200

£4,400.

After this he

did not pay so much attention to these details, and on Jan. 23, 1668–69, he says that he is two years behindhand.

⁶⁵ "Diary," June 13, 1667.

2. *Admiration for women.* Some of the oddest passages in the “Diary” grew out of this trait in Pepys’s character; and one can only marvel that he thought it well to set down such passages on paper. When he came to Gravesend, after Charles II.’s landing, he kissed “a good handsome wench,” because she was the first he had seen for a great while;⁶⁶ and, at another time, the widow of a naval officer came to see him, apparently on business, when he had “a kiss or two of her, and a most modest woman she is.”⁶⁷ His gallantry was so great as even to cause him to kiss the mouth of Katherine of Valois, whose body was exposed at Westminster Abbey. He seems to have performed this act with great content, for he notes particularly that on his birthday, February 23rd, 1668–69 (being then thirty-six years of age), he “did first kiss a queen.” Although he was always ready to kiss the ladies he met, his admiration was often quite disinterested; this was peculiarly the case with regard to the two Court beauties, the Duchess of Richmond and the Countess of Castlemaine, to neither of whom, apparently, he ever spoke. There is an odd little entry which he made on the 9th of September, 1668, that well illustrates this feeling of his. The Duke of Richmond wanted to consult Pepys about his yacht, and sent for him to his lodgings in Whitehall. Pepys hoped to have seen the Duchess, but found that she was in the country; so he adds, “I shall make much of this acquaintance, that I may live to see his lady near.” But the Clerk of the Acts’ chief admiration was lavished upon the worthless Countess of Castlemaine. He is always delighted when he can get a glimpse of her; and he usually finds the play to be insipid if she does not grace the theatre with her presence. Even the sight of her clothes gives him pleasure, for he tells us that one day, in passing the Privy Garden at Whitehall, he saw her smocks and linen petticoats hanging out to dry, and it did him good to look upon them.⁶⁸

Pepys was a pretty regular attendant at church, and he seems to have enjoyed a good sermon; but his chief delight was to look about for pretty women: thus, on the 26th of May, 1667, he went (alone, by-the-bye) to St. Margaret’s Church, Westminster, and there, he says, “Did entertain myself with my perspective glass up and down the church, by which I had the great pleasure of seeing and gazing at a great many very fine women; and what with that, and sleeping, I passed away the time till sermon was done.”

Our hero was very fond of pretty Betty Michell, and would take some trouble to get a sight of her; and there is a most ludicrous passage in the “Diary” in which he describes a mistake he made once at church. He went again to St. Margaret’s, in hopes of seeing Betty, and stayed for an hour in the crowd, thinking she was there “by the end of a nose” that he saw; but at last, to his great disgust, the head turned towards him, and it was only her mother; he naturally adds, “which vexed me.”⁶⁹ Although he gave his wife much cause to be jealous, he was inclined, without any cause, to be jealous of her; and, from his own account, he seems often to have treated her in a very boorish manner. One would have liked to have read the lady’s account of the constant little squabbles which occurred; but Pepys was not of the same opinion, for on one occasion, when he found a paper which his wife had written on the “disagreeables” of her life, he burnt it, in spite of her remonstrances.⁷⁰

Pepys’s nature was singularly contradictory, and in summing up the chief points of his character, we can do little more than make a catalogue of his various qualities, giving the bad ones first, and then enumerating the good ones as a set-off. Thus, he was unfaithful to his wife, and a coward, yet he knew his faults, and could try to amend them. He was vain, ignorant, credulous, and superstitious; yet he had scholarly tastes, and his orderly and business habits were so marked that they alone would point to him as a man out of the common run. He was mean, and yet he was also generous. This

⁶⁶ June 8, 1660.

⁶⁷ Dec. 21, 1665.

⁶⁸ “Diary,” May 20, 1662.

⁶⁹ “Diary,” Aug. 25, 1667.

⁷⁰ Jan. 9, 1662–63.

seems a harsh verdict, but it can easily be proved to be true, and we will proceed to notice the several points *seriatim*.

As to his unfaithfulness, his own description of his conduct towards several women makes it probable; but, in the instance of Deb Willett, there can be no doubt. This episode, which occurred in October and November, 1668, is by far the most painful one in the “Diary.”⁷¹ Pepys appears to have been infatuated, and, in spite of his struggles, he fell. He repented, and prayed fervently in his chamber that he might not fall again. He resolved not to give any new occasion for his wife’s jealousy, and he found great peace in his mind by reason of this resolution.⁷²

He was a coward, for on one occasion he was so angry with the cookmaid that he kicked her. He was not sorry for doing this, but he was vexed that Sir William Penn’s footboy saw him, and would probably tell the family.⁷³

His vanity may be taken for granted, as every line of the “Diary” shows it. He was ignorant of history, for he expected to find an account of England’s dominion on the sea in “Domesday Book.”⁷⁴ As to his credulity, he appears to have believed everything that was told him, however absurd. His superstition is shown in his belief in charms and in most of the popular delusions of his time; and also by his subterfuges, as when he opens a letter, and does not look at it until the money has fallen out, so that he may be able to say that he saw no money in the paper, if he should be questioned about it.⁷⁵

He was mean, for he grudges money for his wife, while he spends liberally on himself; he is stingy to his father, and dislikes lending money to the benefactor from whom all his prosperity originally came. Yet he could be singularly generous at times. He gave £600 to his sister Paulina as her marriage portion;⁷⁶ and, after quarrelling with his wife because she had spent twenty-five shillings on a pair of earrings without his leave,⁷⁷ he pays £80 for a necklace which he presents her with.⁷⁸ Of his scholarly tastes and business habits we shall have an opportunity of saying somewhat further on.

Perhaps, on the whole, the most remarkable characteristic of the man was his total want of the imaginative faculty. Here was one who had been well educated, and had kept up his learning through life; who had an artistic taste, and was a thorough musician; who could not so much as understand true wit or the higher poetry. “*Midsummer Night’s Dream*” was insipid and ridiculous to him,⁷⁹ and he found “*Hudibras*” so silly that he was ashamed of it.⁸⁰

I must leave my readers to answer the question why it is that, in spite of all that has been said, Pepys can stand the ordeal through which we have passed him; and why it is that, with all his faults, we cannot put his book down without some sort of affection for the man?

⁷¹ See particularly “Diary,” Oct. 15, 1667; Oct. 25, Nov. 3, 13, 19, 20, 29, 1668.

⁷² Dec. 5, 18, 1668.

⁷³ April 12, 1667.

⁷⁴ “Diary,” Dec. 21, 1661. Each count in the above indictment is founded on many instances, but one will frequently be sufficient to give. The reader will easily find others for himself.

⁷⁵ April 3, 1663. On July 19, 1662, he makes the following odd remark: “Methought it lessened my esteem of a king, that he should not be able to command the rain.”

⁷⁶ Feb. 10, 1667–68.

⁷⁷ July 4, 1664.

⁷⁸ April 30, 1666.

⁷⁹ “Diary,” Sept 29, 1662.

⁸⁰ Dec. 26, 1662.

CHAPTER III. PEPYS AFTER THE “DIARY.”

“Truly may it be said that this was a greater and more grievous loss to the mind’s eye of his posterity, than to the bodily organs of Pepys himself. It makes me restless and discontented to think what a Diary, equal in minuteness and truth of portraiture to the preceding, from 1669 to 1688 or 1690, would have been for the true causes, process, and character of the Revolution.”—Coleridge’s MS. note in his copy of the “Diary” (“Notes and Queries,” 1st S. vol. vi. p. 215).

WE have seen in the previous chapter how Pepys wrote the last line of his “*Diary*” on the 31st of May, 1669; and how, by the physical defect which had then increased to alarming proportions, we have suffered what Coleridge calls “this grievous loss.” In treating of Pepys’s life after the “*Diary*,” we at once find the difference between dealing with a few isolated facts and condensing from the living record of the man’s own life. Moreover, Pepys as painted by his friends and as painted by himself, appears like two different men. The question is—would the highly-respected Secretary of the Admiralty and the dignified President of the Royal Society have proved himself of the same nature as was the officious Clerk of the Acts if the “*Diary*” had been continued for some twenty or more years? or did time and domestic affliction mellow and settle the somewhat turbulent affections of the Diarist? There seems to be some reason for taking the latter view, and it is probable that, when he attained a more mature age, the dross of meanness was refined away, leaving the native ore of generosity pure and undefiled. When Pepys had obtained his leave of absence, he set out on a tour through France and Holland, accompanied by his wife. He carried with him on his journey the love which he always evinced for the occupation of his life, and he attempted to improve his knowledge of nautical affairs, making at the time collections respecting the French and Dutch navies. Some months after his return he spoke of his journey as having been “full of health and content,” but no sooner had they returned to London than his wife became seriously ill with a fever. The disease took a fatal turn, and on the 10th of November, 1669, Elizabeth Pepys died, at the early age of twenty-nine years, to the great grief of her husband. She died at their house in Crutched Friars, and was buried in St. Olave’s Church, where Pepys erected a tablet to her memory.

Mrs. Pepys occupies so prominent a position in the “*Diary*,” and her husband, in spite of his faults, was so truly fond of her, that we must believe her death gave him a shock from which he would be long in recovering. He had no child nor near connection to be with him, and therefore, after this sad event, the whole current of his home life must have been changed.

In this same year, 1669, Sir Robert Brooke, member of Parliament for the borough of Aldborough, in Suffolk, died, and Pepys came forward as a candidate to fill his place. The Duke of York was favourable, and used all his influence to obtain the return of the Clerk of the Acts, but without success. When the election came on, Pepys was in distress, and his loss prevented him from taking part in the proceedings; so that, in spite of all that friends could do for him, he was defeated, and John Bence was elected on the 9th of November. In the following year he quarrelled with Sir James Barkman Leyenburg, the Swedish Resident in this country, and a duel between them was only prevented by an order from the King, given in a letter from Matthew Wren to Pepys, commanding him not to send or receive a challenge. This incident is not easy to be understood, as from what we know of Pepys he was not a man who would be very wishful to rush into a hostile encounter. Lord Braybrooke suggests that, as Leyenburg married the widow of Sir William Batten, the quarrel may have related to some money which was owed to Pepys by Batten, and for which the widow was liable; but this suggestion can only be taken for what it is worth.

We do not know the exact date of Pepys's appointment to the Secretaryship of the Admiralty, but in a document found among his manuscripts, and dated November 3, 1672, he is described as holding that office.⁸¹ When he was thus raised in his official position he was able to obtain his old place of Clerk of the Acts for his own clerk, Thomas Hayter, and his brother, John Pepys, who held it jointly. The latter does not appear to have done much credit to Samuel. He took holy orders in 1666,⁸² and was appointed clerk to the Trinity House in 1670. When he died, in 1677, he was in debt £300 to the corporation, which Samuel had to pay.

Pepys's kind patron and kinsman the Earl of Sandwich died heroically in the naval action in Solebay, and on June 24, 1672, his funeral was performed with some pomp. There were eleven earls among the mourners, and Pepys, as the first among "the six Bannerrolles," walked in the procession. This same year there was some talk of the elevation to the peerage of Sir Robert Paston, M. P. for Castle Rising, and the Duke of York at once thought of Pepys as a candidate for his seat. The influence of Lord Howard, who had done what he could at Aldborough, was pre-eminent at Castle Rising; and James at once spoke to him to obtain his interest. Lord Howard was, however, in somewhat of a fix, for according to a letter which Thomas Povey wrote Pepys on August 31st, 1672, "he stands engaged to the King for Sir Francis North, to the Duchess of Cleveland for Sir John Trevor, her counsel and feoffee, and to the Duke for" Pepys. Time, however, got the peer out of his dilemma. First of all, Sir Robert Stewart, a Master of Chancery and the other member for the borough, died, and Trevor was elected in his place; then North was put in for King's Lynn; and lastly, when Paston was created Viscount Yarmouth, Pepys was chosen to succeed him, on the 4th of November, 1673. Mr. Offley, his unsuccessful opponent, petitioned against the return, and the Committee of Privilege determined the election to be void; but Parliament being prorogued shortly afterwards, before any decision had been come to by the House, Pepys was permitted to retain his seat. The journals of the House⁸³ contain a full account of the proceedings, which chiefly consisted of evidence respecting a frivolous charge made against Pepys. It was reported that a person of quality (who turned out to be Lord Shaftesbury) had seen an altar with a crucifix upon it in his house. When called upon, Shaftesbury denied that he had ever seen "an altar in Mr. Pepys's house or lodgings; as to the crucifix," he said he had "some imperfect memory of seeing somewhat which he conceived to be a crucifix."⁸⁴ Pepys stood up in his place and flatly denied "that he had ever had any altar, or crucifix, or the image or picture of any saint whatsoever in his home from the top to the bottom of it."⁸⁵ He further explained what might have given cause for the aspersion. "Because he could not go much abroad, he has made his home as pleasant to himself as he could, embellishing it with painting. He has a small table in his closet, with a Bible and Common Prayer-book upon it, and 'The Whole Duty of Man,' a bason and an ewer, and his wife's picture over it, done by Lombard. This is the whole thing talked of for an altar."⁸⁶

It appears from the endorsement of a letter from Balthasar St. Michel to Pepys, to which allusion has already been made, that the latter was actually charged with having turned Mrs. Pepys from a Protestant to a Roman Catholic. Pepys therefore obtained from her brother an account of the fortunes of their family, which shows the utter absurdity of any such imputations.⁸⁷ He was always a true Protestant, although there is some reason for believing that Mrs. Pepys was a Catholic at heart.⁸⁸ On the passing of the Test Act, in 1673, the Duke of York resigned all his employments; and the

⁸¹ Smith's "Life, Journals, and Correspondence of S. Pepys," 1841, vol. i. p. 142.

⁸² "Diary," Feb. 21, 1665-66.

⁸³ Vol. ix.

⁸⁴ Vol. ix. p. 309.

⁸⁵ Vol. ix. p. 306.

⁸⁶ Grey's "Debates."

⁸⁷ Smith's "Life, &c., of Pepys," vol. i. p. 147.

⁸⁸ "Diary," Nov. 29, Dec. 6, 1668.

Admiralty being put in commission, Pepys, as secretary, was brought in immediate correspondence with Charles II.

In 1677⁸⁹ he was elected Master of the Clothworkers' Company, when he presented a richly-chased silver cup, which is still used at their dinners. He was not long allowed to remain in peace, for the charge of popery, which was first made in 1673, was frequently repeated, and in 1679 he was accused, on the depositions of Colonel John Scott, of betraying the navy, by sending secret particulars to the French Government; and also of a design to dethrone the King and extirpate the Protestant religion. He and Sir Anthony Deane were committed to the Tower under the Speaker's warrant on May 22nd, and Pepys's place at the Admiralty was filled up by the appointment of Thomas Hayter. When the two prisoners were brought to the bar of the King's Bench on the 2nd of June, the Attorney-General refused bail; but subsequently they were allowed to find security for £30,000. At length, after several months of delay, it was found that Colonel Scott refused to acknowledge to the truth of the original deposition; and the prisoners were relieved from their bail on February 12th, 1679–80. Scott turned out to be a blackguard. He is said to have cheated the States of Holland out of £7,000, in consequence of which he was hanged in effigy at the Hague, in 1672; and in 1681 he fled from England to escape from the law, as he had been found guilty of wilful murder for killing a coachman. James, a butler, previously in Pepys's service, confessed on his deathbed, in 1680, that he had trumped up the whole story relating to his former master's change of religion at the instigation of Mr. Harbord, M.P. for Launceston, a leading enemy of Pepys.⁹⁰

Evelyn visited Pepys in the Tower, and expressed his belief in the unjustness of the charge. While he was in custody Pepys kept up a correspondence with the Duke of York, who was then abroad, and he received an application from a Mr. D'Oyly for a loan of £50; but he was obliged to answer that he himself had been forced to borrow £100 from friends, to pay his fees and defray his expenses while in durance. It is impossible not to respect Pepys for his conduct towards James when the Royal Duke was in disgrace. He certainly made enemies by his action, and one of these was Andrew Marvell, who is reputed to have published a "Black Book" entitled, "A List of the principal labourers in the great design of Popery and arbitrary Power," which contains the following vituperative entry: "Castle Rising—Samuel Pepys Esquire, once a taylor, then a serving man to Lord Sandwich, now Secretary to the Admiralty, got by passes and other illegal wages £40,000." We know these assertions to be untrue, but they probably did the victim as much harm as if they had been true.

Pepys was chosen by the electors of Harwich as their member in the short Parliament that sat from March to July, 1679, his colleague being Sir Anthony Deane; but both members were superseded in the next Parliament, that met on the 17th of October, 1679.

In 1680 Pepys attended on Charles II. at Newmarket, and there he took down, from the King's own mouth, the narrative of his escape after the Battle of Worcester, which now remains in the Pepysian Library, both in shorthand and longhand.

Sir Thomas Page, the Provost of King's College, Cambridge, died in August, 1681; and S. Maryon, a Fellow of Clare, wrote at once, suggesting that Pepys was a fit and proper person for the post, and urging him to apply to the King for it. Pepys replied that he believed Colonel Legge (afterwards Lord Dartmouth) wanted to get the office for an old tutor. Although he pretended unfitness, he evidently liked the idea; and in a letter to Legge, while recommending an early application for the tutor, he expresses himself as willing to take the Provostship if the tutor cannot get it. He also promises, if he should be chosen, to give the whole profit of the first year, and at least

⁸⁹ In this year was published "The Portugal History: or a Relation of the Troubles that happened in the court of Portugal in the year 1667 and 1668. By S. P. Esq. London (Richard Tonson)," 1677, which has been attributed to Pepys. There is a copy in the Pepysian Library.

⁹⁰ Several letters relating to this affair will be found in Smith's "Life, &c., of Pepys," vol. i.

half of that of each succeeding year, to “be dedicated to the general and public use of the college.”⁹¹ In the end Dr. John Copleston was appointed to the post.

In May, 1682, Pepys accompanied the Duke of York to Scotland, and narrowly escaped shipwreck by the way. Before letters could arrive in London to tell of his safety, the news came of the wreck of the “Gloucester” (the Duke’s ship), and of the loss of many lives. His friends’ anxiety was relieved by the arrival of a letter which Pepys wrote from Edinburgh to Hewer on the 8th inst., in which he detailed the particulars of the adventure. The Duke invited him to go on board the “Gloucester,” but he preferred his own yacht, in which he had more room, and in consequence of his resolution he saved himself from the risk of drowning. On the 5th of May, about five in the morning, the frigate struck upon the sand called “The Lemon and the Oar,” about sixteen leagues from the mouth of the Humber, through the carelessness of the pilot, it was said. The Duke and his party were all asleep at the time, and after they were awoke it is supposed that they remained so long on board in the hope of saving the ship, that more men were drowned than otherwise need have been. It is said that the sinking sailors gave a loud huzza for the Duke, although they perhaps owed their deaths to an error of judgment on his part. Pepys writes that, had the said wreck occurred two hours earlier, and the accompanying yachts been at the distance they had previously been, not a soul would have escaped. Pepys on his arrival in Edinburgh was allowed by the Duke to attend one or two of the councils, and he was greatly struck with the union of absoluteness and gentleness by which James maintained his authority. He then made a tour through some of the Scottish towns with Colonel Legge, being most pleased with the “beauty and trade” of Glasgow. The people were not to his liking, for he writes to Hewer: “The truth is, there is so universal a rooted nastiness hangs about the person of every Scot (man and woman) that renders the finest show they can make nauseous, even among those of the first quality.”⁹²

The time was now coming when Pepys was to be again employed officially, and on July 30, 1683, he left London for Portsmouth, in order to join his old friend Colonel Legge (now Lord Dartmouth) in his expedition to Tangier for the purpose of demolishing that place. Pepys kept a journal of his proceedings, which is now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, and has been printed by the Rev. John Smith in his “Life, Journals, &c., of Pepys.” As the [next chapter](#) is devoted particularly to Tangier, it is not necessary to do more here than remark that, although this journal is of considerable interest, it falls very far short of the *naïveté* and charm of the original “*Diary*.” On March 29th, 1684, Lord Dartmouth and his party (including Pepys) arrived in the English Channel.

Shortly after this, Charles II. made some further alterations at the Admiralty, and appointed Pepys to his old place of Secretary, possession of which he kept until the Revolution, when friends of the banished prince were not likely to be in favour. This same year he was elected President of the Royal Society, an office which he held for two years, apparently with credit to himself and general satisfaction to the Fellows. He certainly was not a scientific man, but at that period most of the subjects discussed could be understood by an intelligent man; and Pepys had a sincere love for curious learning which made him peculiarly fitted to act the part of an imitation *Mecænas*. In 1685 Charles II. died, and James came to the throne. We have already seen how Pepys was a spectator at Charles’s coronation, now he was to take the position of an actor. We find that he marched in the procession at James’s coronation, immediately behind the King’s canopy, as one of the sixteen barons of the Cinque Ports. A Parliament was summoned to meet on the 19th of May, and Pepys was elected both by the burgesses of Harwich and by those of Sandwich. He chose to serve for Harwich, and Sir Philip Parker, Bart., was elected to fill his place at Sandwich. This Parliament was dissolved by proclamation, July 2nd, 1687, and on August 24th, the King declared in Council that another Parliament should be summoned for November 27th, 1688, the writs to bear date September 5th;

⁹¹ Smith’s “Life, &c., of S. Pepys,” vol. i. pp. 265–72.

⁹² Smith’s “Life, &c., of Pepys,” vol. i. p. 295.

but they were recalled on news being received of the Prince of Orange's design. On December 10th, James ordered those writs which had not been sent out to be burned; and the same night, on his going away from Whitehall, he threw the Great Seal into the water. The Rev. Alexander Mills, a friend of Pepys, wrote to him from Sandwich in July, 1687, after the news of the dissolution had arrived, to say that he thought that Pepys might again be chosen if he felt inclined to stand for the town. In the next few months a great change had come over public affairs, and when the Convention Parliament was called together in January and February, 1689–90, Pepys found no place in it. In 1688 he had some correspondence with the Mayor of Harwich respecting the removal of the Custom-house from Ipswich to Harwich, and his chances of election seemed good at that time; but a few months changed all that, and the corporation did not care to be represented by an official of the late King: so when the election came on, someone called out in the street, "No Tower men, no men out of the Tower!" His public career was closed soon after this, for an order was made out by the Commissioners of the Admiralty on the 9th of March, 1688–89, commanding him to give up his books, &c., to Phineas Bowles, the newly-appointed Secretary of the Admiralty. He still retained hopes of a return to public life, and on the 8th of February, 1689–90, he wrote to the proud Sir Edward Seymour for "his interest anywhere, by which I might compass an election" for the new Parliament.⁹³ What Seymour's answer was we do not know, but we do know that a few months afterwards (June, 1690) Pepys was committed to the Gate-house at Westminster, upon pretence of his being affected to King James; but he was soon permitted to return to his own home on account of ill-health. On this occasion four staunch friends—Sir Peter Palavicini, Mr. James Houblon, Mr. Blackburne, and Mr. Martin—were bail for him. Soon after, he published his "Memoirs of the Navy," to show what he had done for its improvement and government, but although he was on all sides looked up to as the greatest authority on naval affairs, he continued, even in 1692, to apprehend some fresh persecution.

Pepys had never been a healthy man, and as years began to tell upon him he suffered much. One day, when he was at Tangier, he was frightened by the old swimming in the head coming over him, and this made him melancholy.⁹⁴ In December, 1686, he was again troubled with pain night and day, caused by the complaint for which he was successfully operated upon before the "*Diary*" commences. In a letter to his brother-in-law, St. Michel, he expresses the opinion that a general decay of his stomach and system will soon bring his life to an end; but he had several years still to live.

About this time Pepys secured the services of a Mrs. Fane as his housekeeper, and of her he wrote, in 1689: "I do not believe that a more knowing, faithful, or vigilant person, or a stricter keeper at home (which is to me a great addition)—a person more useful in sickness as well as health, than Mrs. Fane is, can anywhere be found. As such I esteem and love her with all my heart, and should ever desire to keep her acquaintance, friendship, and neighbourhood." But—and this is a very important reservation—Mrs. Fane had a very disagreeable temper, as her victim goes on to say: "She hath a height of spirit, captiousness of humour, and bitterness and noise of tongue, that of all womankind I have hitherto had to do withal, do render her conversation and comportment as a servant most insupportable."⁹⁵ He parted with her once, but Mrs. Skinner prevailed upon him to receive her again. At last, after forbearance for three years and a-half, she was obliged to leave finally. Mr. James Houblon pleaded for her, but when he heard the above explanation, he was unable to say more.

In 1700, Pepys removed from York Buildings to what his friend Evelyn calls his "Paradisian Clapham." Here he lived with his old clerk and friend, William Hewer, but his infirmities kept him constantly in the house.

The eminent Dr. John Wallis, Savilian Professor of Geometry in the University of Oxford, was highly esteemed by Pepys, who had known him for many years as one of the most distinguished

⁹³ Smith's "Life, &c., of Pepys," vol. ii. p. 246.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 452.

⁹⁵ Smith's "Life, &c., of Pepys," vol. ii. p. 219.

Fellows of the Royal Society. In 1701, therefore, the Diarist matured a scheme which did him the greatest credit. He sent Sir Godfrey Kneller down to Oxford to paint the old man's portrait; and, when it was finished, he presented the picture to the University of Oxford, and received in exchange a Latin diploma thanking him in gorgeous language for his munificence. Pepys explained to Kneller that it had long been his wish to provide from the painter's hands a means of "immortalizing the memory of the person—for his fame can never die—of that great man and my most honoured friend, Dr. Wallis, to be lodged as an humble present of mine, though a Cambridge man, to my dear aunt, the University of Oxford."

So much for the donor. The painter, on his part, was proud of his work, and assured Pepys that he had never done a better picture, if so good a one, in his life before.

In the following year all was over with both Wallis and Pepys. On the 26th of May, 1703, Samuel Pepys, after long-continued suffering, breathed his last, in the presence of the learned Dr. George Hickes, the non-juring Dean of Worcester, who writes as follows of the death-bed: "The greatness of his behaviour, in his long and sharp tryall before his death, was in every respect answerable to his great life; and I believe no man ever went out of this world with greater contempt of it, or a more lively faith in every thing that was revealed of the world to come. I administered the Holy Sacrament twice in his illness to him, and had administered it a third time but for a sudden fit of illness that happened at the appointed time of administering of it. Twice I gave him the absolution of the church, which he desired, and received with all reverence and comfort, and I never attended any sick or dying person that dyed with so much Christian greatnesse of mind, or a more lively sense of immortality, or so much fortitude and patience, in so long and sharp a tryall, or greater resignation to the Will which he most devoutly acknowledged to be the wisdom of God: and I doubt not but he is now a very blessed spirit, according to his motto, *mens cujusque is est quisque*."

It was found necessary to have a post-mortem examination of his body, when a nest of seven stones, weighing about four and a-half ounces, was found in the left kidney, which was entirely ulcerated. His constitution generally, however, appears to have been strong. The body was brought from Clapham, and buried in St. Olave's Church, Crutched Friars, on the 5th of June, at nine o'clock in the evening, in a vault close by the monument erected to Mrs. Pepys.

John Jackson, Pepys's nephew, sent a suit of mourning to Evelyn, and expressed his sorrow that distance and his correspondent's health would prevent him from assisting at the holding-up of the pall.

It appears from a list printed at the end of Pepys's correspondence, that mourning was given to forty persons, and that forty-five rings at 20s., sixty-two at 15s., and sixteen at 10s. were distributed to relations, godchildren, servants, and friends; also to representatives of the Royal Society, of the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, of the Admiralty, and of the Navy Office. The bulk of the property was bequeathed to John Jackson, the son of Mrs. Jackson, the Pall Pepys of the "Diary;" but the money which was left was much less than might have been expected. In spite of all his public services, which were universally acknowledged, he received neither pension nor remuneration of any kind after his enforced retirement at the Revolution. Public men in those days, without private property, must have starved if they had not taken fees, for the King had no idea of wasting his money by paying salaries. At the time of Pepys's death there was a balance of £28,007 2s. 1¼d. due to him from the Crown, and the original vouchers still remain an heirloom in the family.

CHAPTER IV. TANGIER

*“And with asphaltick slime broad as the gate
Deep to the roots of hell the gather’d beach
They fasten’d: and the mole immense wrought on
Over the foaming deep high-arch’d: a bridge
Of length prodigious.”—Paradise Lost, x. 298–302.*

PEPYS was so intimately connected with the government of Tangier during the twenty-two years it remained in the possession of the English, that it seems necessary, in a memoir of him, to give some account of the history of the place during that period.

Tangier is a seaport, on a small bay or inlet of the Straits of Gibraltar, which affords the only good harbour for shipping on the sea-board of Morocco, an extent of coast of about 900 miles. The town was early coveted by the Portuguese, and in 1437 their army attacked it, but were defeated beneath the walls. On this occasion Dom Fernando, the King’s brother, was left behind as a hostage. A treaty of peace was concluded, but the stipulations not being executed, the Moors threw Dom Fernando into prison, where he died. The prince’s body was treated with insult, and hung up by the heels over the city walls. A few years later this unworthy conduct was revenged, for in 1463, the Portuguese being successful in battle, Alonzo V. took the town from the Moors. For two centuries the Portuguese kept possession, but about the period of our Restoration they found the place somewhat of an encumbrance, and were anxious to obtain a desirable alliance against their enemies the Spaniards, by transferring it to another power. In November, 1660, Thomas Maynard, British Consul at Lisbon, writing to Sir Edward Nicholas, says, that the King of Portugal would part with Tangier to England on reasonable terms.⁹⁶

Shortly afterwards the Portuguese ambassador in London proposed the Infanta Katharine, daughter of that Duke of Braganza who became King of Portugal as Joam IV., as a wife for Charles II., offering at the same time a portion of half a million pounds sterling (“almost double what any King [of England] had ever received in money by any marriage”),⁹⁷ and in addition a grant of a free trade in Brazil and the East Indies, and the possession of Tangier and the Island of Bombay. The ambassador observed that these two places “might reasonably be valued above the portion in money.”⁹⁸ It was supposed that the possession of Tangier would be of infinite benefit to England and a security to her trade, and the Earl of Sandwich and Sir John Lawson were consulted respecting the proposed acquisition. Lord Sandwich said that if the town were walled and fortified with brass, it would yet repay the cost, but he only knew it from the sea. Lawson had been in it, and said that it was a place of that importance, that if it were in the hands of Hollanders they would quickly make a mole, which could easily be done. Then ships would ride securely in all weathers, and we could keep the place against the world, and give the law to the trade of the Mediterranean.⁹⁹ The Portuguese were delighted at the prospect of a marriage between the Infanta and Charles, and after a few hitches the treaty was concluded, but some murmurs were heard against the delivery of Tangier into the hands of heretics. Dom Fernando de Menezes, the Governor, entreated the Queen Regent to spare him the

⁹⁶ Lister’s “Life of Clarendon,” vol. iii. p. 113.

⁹⁷ Clarendon’s Life, 1827, vol. i. p. 495.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.* p. 491.

⁹⁹ Clarendon’s Life, 1827, vol. i. p. 494.

grief of handing over the city to the enemies of the Catholic faith. He was given to understand that, if he obeyed instructions, a marquisate would be conferred upon him, but if he continued to resist he would be dismissed. Upon this, Dom Fernando threw up his command.

Lord Sandwich was instructed to take possession of Tangier, and then convey the Infanta and her portion to England. Although the Queen Regent sent a governor whom she had chosen as one devoted to her interest, and sure to obey her commands, yet Clarendon affirms that he went to his government with a contrary resolution.¹⁰⁰ This resolution, however, was frustrated by the action of the Moors. A few days only before Lord Sandwich arrived, the Governor marched out of the town with all the horse and half the foot of the garrison, and fell into an ambush. The whole party were cut off, and the Governor and many of his chief men were killed. The town was so weak that, when Lord Sandwich arrived at this conjuncture, he was hailed as a deliverer from the Moors. He conveyed the remainder of the garrison into Portugal, and Henry, second Earl of Peterborough, with the English garrison, entered the town on the 30th of January, 1662, as the first Governor from England.

Now began a system of mismanagement worthy of the disorganized condition of public affairs. A commission was appointed for the purpose of carrying on the government of Tangier in London, and constant meetings were held. None of the commissioners knew anything of the place, and they were quite at the mercy of the governors and deputy-governors who were sent out. Pepys was placed upon the commission by the influence of Lord Sandwich, and John Creed was appointed secretary.¹⁰¹ Thomas Povey, the treasurer, got his accounts into so great a muddle, that he thought it wise to surrender his office to Pepys, on condition of receiving half the profits, which he did on March 20, 1664–65. This treasurership and the contract for victualling the garrison of Tangier were sources of considerable profit to our Diarist. At one of the earliest meetings of the committee, the project of forming a mole or breakwater was entertained. A contract for the work to be done at 13s.

¹⁰⁰ Clarendon's Life, 1827, vol. ii. p. 161.

¹⁰¹ "Diary," Dec. 1, 1662. In Lord Braybrooke's "Life of Pepys" it is incorrectly stated that Pepys was secretary.

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