to the 14th of June 1711. During that period he attacked his opponents with the utmost fury, using against them all the arms of wit, sharpened by the first fervours of new-born zeal.

Immersed as he was in general politics, Swift did not neglect the object of his mission ; and his interest with the ministry speedily obtained the boon that had so long been desired. But when he expected to be overwhelmed with the grateful acknowledgments of his brethren in Ireland, he received the astounding intelligence that the bishops had resolved to dispense with his services, and to put their trust in the duke of Ormond. The motive for recalling a com­mission, the object of which they were not aware had been already obtained, was an apprehension that Swift had for­merly been too much caressed by the Whigs to have any influence with the party in power. When apprized of his triumph, Archbishop King apologized to the exasperated nuncio in a clumsy manner. In 1712 Swift published “ The Conduct of the Allies,” and no political pamphlet ever produced more powerful effects. He proved that a prodigal expenditure of blood and treasure had secured to the English nation nothing but a few sprigs of laurel to de­corate the empty heads of those chivalrous simpletons who fought the battles of ungrateful knaves, without any pros­pect of benefit to themselves. To state facts so strong as these requires little force of eloquence ; nor does Swift’s pamphlet strike the reader of the present day as a very masterly specimen of writing. But when the blow is aimed at a vital part, it is unnecessary that the assailant should put forth all his strength. In thc space of one week four editions were sold ; the ministerial members quoted it in the House of Commons, and the other party talked of bringing the author to the bar of the House of Lords. The same year produced “ A Proposal for correcting, improv­ing, and ascertaining the English Tongue,” a publication which added nothing to his reputation ; and “ Reflections on thc Barrier Treaty,” which are a sequel to the Conduct of the Allies.

In the character of a patron, Swift appears to great ad­vantage. If he sometimes neglected the forms of polite­ness, he was never slow in conferring substantial benefits on meritorious persons. He was never more in his element than when he was distributing preferment, and few have made a more commendable use of their power. Lord Bacon has said that “ prosperity doth best discover vice, but ad­versity doth best discover virtue.” In order to apply to Swift, this apophthegm must be reversed. In his prosperous days, he exerted his influence to retain the most deserving of his political opponents in their places, and performed many other generous actions ; but when he awoke from the flat­tering dream of ambition, his heart, thus ennobled by good fortune, became the chosen residence of some of the worst passions of our nature.

Although his recommendation in favour of others was seldom neglected by his great friends, they seemed in no haste to provide for Swift himself. This, however, was no fault of theirs, but of the duchess of Somerset, whom he had lampooned. He held her up to public detestation, as being accessary to the murder of her husband, a calumny which she might have forgiven ; but he also laughed at her red hair, and she vowed revenge. An opportunity soon after­wards occurred of presenting Swift to the see of Hereford ; but the freckled favourite threw herself at the feet of her royal mistress, and with streaming eyes begged that her inhuman satirist should be refused the vacant mitre. The entreaties of the ministers were drowned in her clamours for revenge ; and Swift, instead of obtaining an English bishopric, was rewarded for his services by an Irish deanery. This was the effect produced by the Windsor Prophecy ; and the tears of one favourite marred the fortunes of Swift, the pertinacity of another, Mrs Masham, having, not long bcfore, deprived Marlborough of all his employments, and occasioned the downfall of the Whig ministry. From such despicable sources do important events sometimes take their rise.

Soon after Swift went to take possession of his deanery of St Patrick’s, Dublin, he was summoned to reconcile Ox­ford and Bolingbroke, whose increasing animosity to each other threatened destruction to the Tory interest. Swift hastened to England, but his journey was fruitless ; for he found that it was no temporary misunderstanding, from which they might be extricated by his wit and pleasantries, but that a rooted hatred had sprung up between them, which defied the most dexterous mediation.

“ The Public Spirit of the Whigs” appeared in 1714. It is a virulent reply to Sir Richard Steele’s Crisis, the pamphlet that procured his expulsion from the House of Commons. At the intercession of Swift, Steele had been permitted to retain his post of commissioner of stamp-duties ; but, blinded by ignorance or the rage of party, he denied the obligation and reviled his benefactor. It is intolerable to be upbraided with favours which one is not conscious of having received, and the careless Steele perhaps took little trouble to inquire who had been his friend ; but he was not a man to be guilty of deliberate ingratitude.@@1 In this pamph­let Steele was attacked without mercy ; and the Scotish na­tion was there treated with such insolence and rancour, that thc duke of Argyle, accompanied by other northern peers, went to court to demand the punishment of the author. A reward of three hundred pounds was offered for his dis­covery ; and Morphew the bookseller, and Barber the prin­ter of the obnoxious pamphlet, were ordered into the cus­tody of the black rod ; but the ministers, by directing a pro­secution against these men, for the expenses of which they were privately idemnified by a sum given to Swift for that purpose, disappointed the vengeance of the Scotish nobles. Nor is this much to be regretted ; for he must be a very facetious person whose gibes can obscure the lustre of na­tional renown ; and to give importance to a libel by perse­cuting the author, is more patriotic than dignified.

Dr Swift’s political importance was now drawing near its close. In June 1714 he retired to a friend’s house in Berk­shire, where he wrote “ Free Thoughts on the present State of Public Affairs a tract which was then suppressed. At this period occurred the death of the queen, which restored his enemies to power, and drove him into Ireland to avoid the spectacle of their triumph. This event also deprived him of a thousand pounds, for which he had an order upon thc exchequer.

During his residence in England, Swift formed another anomalous and tender connexion, which was followed by very tragical consequences. Miss Esther Vanhomrigh was the daughter of a widow lady of considerable fortune. At the house of Mrs Vanhomrigh he was a frequent visitor ; and being struck with the contempt which the young lady displayed for the fopperies of the age, he took upon himself the dangerous task of directing her studies. The result was, that she conceived a passion for her instructor as im­petuous as that which swelled the breast of Eloisa. Throw­ing aside maidenly reserve, she confessed her flame ; and Swift had not sufficient fortitude to deprive himself of her society by owning his engagement with Stella. He ottered

@@@, In a petulant letter to Swift relative to this affair, Steele says, “ They laugh at you, if they make you believe your interposition has kept roe thus long in my office.” To which Swift replies with unanswerable force of reason, “ Suppose they did laugh at me, I ask whether my inclinations to serve you merit to be rewarded by the vilest treatment, whether they succeeded or not ? If your interpretation were true, I was laughed at only for your sake ; which, I think, is going pretty far to serve a friend.”