

PRINCE CHARLES
AND
THE SPANISH MARRIAGE.

1617—1623.

VOL. I.

In 2 vols. 8vo, 30s., bound.

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

FROM THE ACCESSION OF JAMES I. TO THE DISGRACE
OF CHIEF JUSTICE COKE.

By SAMUEL RAWSON GARDINER,

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A CHAPTER OF ENGLISH HISTORY,

FOUNDED PRINCIPALLY UPON UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS
IN THIS COUNTRY, AND IN THE ARCHIVES OF
SIMANCAS, VENICE, AND BRUSSELS.

BY

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AUTHOR OF THE "HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM THE ACCESSION OF JAMES I. TO THE DISGRACE OF
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PREFACE.

THE wooing of princes is not in itself more worthy of a place in history than the wooing of ordinary men ; and there is certainly nothing in Charles's own character which would lead us to make any exception in his favour. But the Spanish alliance, of which the hand of the Infanta was to have been the symbol and the pledge, was a great event in our history, though chiefly on account of the consequences which resulted from it indirectly. When the marriage was first agitated, the leading minds of the age were tending in a direction adverse to Puritanism, and were casting about in search of some system of belief which should soften down the asperities which were the sad legacy of the last generation. When it was finally broken off, the leading minds of the age were tending in a precisely opposite direction, and that period of our history commenced which led up to the anti-episcopalian fervour of the Long Parliament, to the Puritan monarchy of Cromwell, and in general to the re-invigoration of that which Mr. Matthew Arnold has called the Hebrew element in our civilisation.

If, therefore, the causes of moral changes form the most interesting subject of historical investigation, the events of these seven years can yield in interest to but few periods of our history. In the miserable catalogue of errors and of crimes it is easy to detect the origin of that repulsion which moulded the intellectual conceptions, as well as the political action, of the rising gene-