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HISTORY OF ENGLAND

1603-1642

VOL. IV.

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HISTORY OF ENGLAND

FROM THE
ACCESSION OF JAMES I.
TO
THE OUTBREAK OF THE CIVIL WAR

1603-1642

BY
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THE ROYAL BOHEMIAN SOCIETY OF SCIENCES

IN TEN VOLUMES

Mr
to Mr
VOL. IV.
1621-1628

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PREFACE

TO

THE FOURTH VOLUME



IN telling the story of the important Parliament of 1621, I have been able to make use of the notes of Henry Elsing, which allow us a glimpse into the interior of the House of Lords during the last two Parliaments of James, and the second and third Parliaments of Charles. With the exception of those relating to the Parliament of 1628, these have been edited by me for the Camden Society. I have also made considerable use of the unpublished papers of the House of Lords. For the House of Commons we have the well-known report of the debates of the Lower House, printed at Oxford in 1766, which is proved, by comparison with a fragment amongst the State Papers (Dom. cxxv.), to have come from the pen of Edward Nicholas. As, however, this fact is not generally known, I have referred to the volumes simply as *Proceedings and Debates*.

An application to Mr. DIGBY of Sherborne Castle for leave to examine any papers which might have come down to him from the first Earl of Bristol, was most generously acceded to. Not only was I permitted to see and copy whatever I pleased, but I was allowed to bring the documents with me to London,

where they were lent to the Master of the Rolls, in order that copies might be taken of them, to be placed in the Public Record Office. The thanks of all students of history are justly due to Mr. DIGBY for setting so admirable an example, which, it may be hoped, will be followed by other possessors of important historical MSS.

The papers thus laid open are perhaps not so numerous as I had hoped for, but some of them are of considerable interest for this and the succeeding volume, especially the instructions relating to the Netherlands in 1623, the account, by Bristol himself, of his last interview with Olivares, and the interrogatories administered by him to Endymion Porter after his return.

My account of the affairs of the East Indies is mainly founded on the books formerly the property of the East India Company, but now in the India Office, of which full abstracts will be found in the calendar prepared by Mr. SAINSBURY since my narrative was first in type.

Of papers in foreign countries, those contained in the Belgian Archives at Brussels now assume considerable importance, and fill up gaps amongst the *Simancas MSS.*

In the preface to my former work, I spoke of the untrustworthy character of such writers as Weldon. It happens that twice in the following pages,—in the case of the story of the quarrel between Arundel and Spencer (p. 114), and in the case of the well-known story of “Here be twal’ kings coming” (p. 252),—I have been able to restore the narrative to its original form, and thus to demonstrate the fictitious nature of the anecdote by which its place has been usurped in our histories. To the list of writers whom it is impossible to use with confidence, must, I am afraid, be added that agreeable letter-writer, Howell. But there can be no doubt that many of his letters are mere products of the bookmaker’s skill, drawn up from memory long afterwards. Take, for instance, the letter