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## Discourses on Davila.

No. XXIII.—CONTINUED.

Utrumque regem, sua multitudo contulaverat.

IN the beginning of the year 1561, the Queen-mother and the King of Navarre dismissed the States General, lest the *Guises* should excite some fermentation there. The formation of a constitution and the settlement of religion, were never the real objects for which they had been called. It appears not that they were even asked to ratify the regency in the Queen-mother. So loose and uncertain was the sovereignty of that great nation, that a confused agreement of the chiefs of two factions, was thought sufficient for its government, without any forms or legal solemnities. The stability of the government, and the security of the lives, liberties and properties of the people was proportionate to such a system. The court was still agitated with divisions and dissensions.

The *Guises*, who had obtained but a small part of their pretensions; that is to say, much in appearance and little in reality; accustomed to rule, and very discontented with the government and with the Queen, who failed to perform the promises she had made to them, watched all opportunities to regain their first advantages. The Prince of *Conde*, more irritated than ever, kept in view his ancient projects, and burned with an implacable desire of vengeance. The *Colignies* were obstinate to protect the Hugonots. The two parties labored to gain the Constable, but he declared that he would remain neuter, and attach himself only to the King and the Queen. He was confirmed in this resolution by the conduct of the King of Navarre, who, satisfied with the present arrangement, lived in good intelligence with the regent, and thought of nothing but peace. The Admiral, his brothers, and the Prince of *Conde*, flattered themselves that the connection of blood would draw the Constable, ultimately to their party. The *Guises*, who knew his attachment to the Catholic faith, and his aversion to Calvinism, which he had cruelly persecuted under Henry II, despised not to gain him, under the pretext of defending religion, and exterminating the Hugonots. The vivacity of the King of Navarre, in urging the Queen to accomplish the promises she had made him in favor of the Hugonots, contributed not a little to keep up this fermentation. This Princess, satisfied with having established a kind of equilibrium, which secured her power and that of her children, dreaded to intercept it, and avoided all occasions of displeasing the King of Navarre.

She made use of delays and pretexts, in hopes that the King of Navarre would relax; but that Prince, excited and transported beyond the bounds of his character, by the continued instigations of his brother, and the Admiral, and by the urgent solicitations of the Queen his consort, became the more ardent in demanding what had been promised him. The Chancellor *De L'Hopital*, whether he judged a liberty of conscience necessary to the good of the state, or whether he had an inclination to Calvinism, favored, under hand, the solicitations of the King of Navarre. He restrained with all his authority, the severity of the other magistrates, and exhorted the Queen to be sparing of blood, to leave consciences in tranquility, and to avoid every thing which might interrupt a peace, which had cost so much pains to establish. Several of those who composed the council, supported these instances of the King of Navarre, and protested that they ought to be weary of imbruing their hands in the blood of Frenchmen: and that it was time to put an end to punishments, the fear of which forced so many good subjects to abandon their houses, families and country. The Hugonots themselves, among whom were many persons of sense and merit, neglected no cares nor means proper to favor their cause: and sometimes by writing composed with art, and skilfully propagated; sometimes by petitions presented in proper seasons; and sometimes by persuasive discourses of their partizans, endeavored to impress the great in their favor, by pathetic paintings of the misfortunes with which they were oppressed. The Queen was, at length, obliged to give way to the sentiments and authority of so many persons. Perhaps she was convinced of the wisdom of relaxing a severity, which she was in no condition to maintain; and of abandoning laws, which they could no longer

execute with rigour. She consented therefore to an Edict, rendered by the council on the 28th of January. This Edict enjoined all magistrates to release all the prisoners arrested, on account of religion: to stop all prosecutions commenced for this cause; to hinder disputes upon matters of faith: forbidding individuals to give each other the odious appellations of Heretics or Papists: finally, to prevent unlawful assemblies, commotions, seditions, and maintain concord and peace in all their departments. Thus, with the design of putting an end to punishments and the effusion of blood, a motive dictated by religion and humanity, Calvinism was, if not permitted, at least tolerated, and indirectly authorized.

More lively contestations were expected concerning the promise which respected the *Guises*. The King of Navarre, recalling to the Queen the secret promises which she had made to him, pretended, that in his quality of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, they ought to deliver to him the keys of the palace which the Duke of *Guise* kept, as grand master of the King's house-hold.

The Queen, in truth, no longer doubted the attachment of the King of Navarre, and of the Constable; but she was not ignorant of the increasing coldness of the *Guises*, and delayed with all her artifice the moment of offending them. She wished, on one hand, to manage the Hugonots, protected by the Admiral and the Prince of *Conde*; and on the other, the Catholics, united under the Duke of *Guise* and the Cardinal of *Lorraine*. These two factions, were like two powerful dikes, under the shelter of which she enjoyed a calm. By weakening the Catholics, she was afraid of putting the Hugonots in a condition to give her the law. Sometimes by temporizing, therefore, and sometimes by granting other favors to the King of Navarre, she endeavored to divert him from this pretension. But the more she endeavored to make him lose sight of this object, the more the Prince pursued it with warmth.

Finally, the Queen, that she might not destroy the harmony she had taken so much pains to establish, commanded the captains of the guards, no longer to carry the keys of the palace to the grand master of the King's house-hold, but to the lieutenant-general of the kingdom, to whom this prerogative belonged of right. This proceeding irritated the Duke of *Guise*, but infinitely more the Cardinal of *Lorraine*, his brother, less because they considered it as an affront, from which the regulation of the council of regency would have screened them, than because they saw clearly, that with the consent of the Queen, the King of Navarre aspired to distress and destroy them. They knew very well that they were accused of listening to nothing but their interest and ambition, and seeing themselves no longer able to prevail in this private quarrel with the Princes of the blood, who disposed of all the forces, as well as of the royal authority, they dissembled their resentments, and complained of nothing but the liberty of conscience, which had been tacitly granted to the Hugonots, covering thus with the specious veil, and the pretext of religion, their passions and personal interests. Thus the discords of the great confounded themselves insensibly with the differences of religion, and the factions of the Princes, quitting the name of malcontents and *Guiseards*, to assume the more imposing titles of Catholics and Hugonots, they exerted themselves with the greater fury, as they disguised it under the names of zeal and of piety.

(To be continued.)

### THE UN-NATURAL SON.

PHILIP THICKNESSE, Esq. late Governor of Landguard Fort, and author of the celebrated travels through France and Spain, and other sentimental works of merit, has the misfortune to have a natural son (in other respects very unnatural) who affects to slight and be ashamed of his father. This son, who, in the maternal right, has assumed the name and title of *GEORGE TOUCHET*, Baron Audley, and enjoys a very considerable estate in England, has, upon all occasions, manifested the greatest contempt of his father, and frequently passes him in the street, mounted in his carriage, without paying the least compliment or attention to the old gentleman on foot. The last time Mr. *Thicknesse* returned from Spain, being, as usual, quite out of cash, and in great necessity, he applied to the son for relief, which was peremptorily and brutally refused. In this emergency he instantly hired a little stall in one

of the most public streets of London, and put up a sign over the door with a boot and shoe painted thereon, and the following words in large gilt letters: **BOOTS AND SHOES MENDED HERE BY PHILIP THICKNESSE, FATHER TO LORD AUDLEY.** It had not hung there twelve hours before a billet was sent, inclosing a bank note for a hundred guineas, requesting, that in consideration thereof, the sign might be instantly taken down and burnt.—*A sense of shame will operate upon the feelings of a bad man when he is become entirely callous to those of nature.*

From WEBSTER'S DISSERTATIONS on the ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

### Of MODERN CORRUPTIONS in the ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION.

(CONTINUED.)

THIS however is but a small part of the inconsistency. In two other particulars the absurdity is still more glaring.

1. The modern refiners of our language distinguish two sounds of *u* long; that of *yu* and *oo*; and use both without any regard to Latin or Saxon derivation. The distinction they make is founded on a certain principle; and yet I question whether one of a thousand of them ever attended to it. After most of the consonants, they give *u* the diphthongal sound of *eu*; as in *blue, cube, due, mute*; but after *r* they almost invariably pronounce it *oo*; as *rule, truth, rue, rude, fruit*. Why this distinction? If they contend for the Saxon sound of *u*, why do they not preserve that found in *true, rue, truth*, which are Saxon original; and uniformly give *u* its Roman sound, which is acknowledged on all hands to have been *oo*, in all words of Latin original, as *rule, mute, cube*? The fact is, they mistake the principle on which the distinction is made; and which is merely accidental, or arises from the ease of speaking.

In order to frame many of the consonants, the organs are placed in such a position, that in passing from it to the aperture necessary to articulate the following vowel or diphthong, we insensibly fall into the sound of *ee*. This in particular is the case with those consonants which are formed near the seat of *e*; viz. *k* and *g*. The closing of the organs forms these mutes; and a very small opening forms the vowel *e*. In passing from that close compression occasioned by *k* and *g*, to the aperture necessary to form any vowel, the organs are necessarily placed in a situation to pronounce *ee*. From this single circumstance, have originated the most barbarous dialects or singularities in speaking English, which offend the ear, either in Great-Britain or America.

This is the origin of the New-England *keow, keoward*; and of the English *heube, ackuse, heind* and *geude*.

There is just the same propriety in one practice as the other, and both are equally harmonious.

For similar reasons, the labials, *m* and *p*, are followed by *e*: In New-England, we hear it in *meow, peower*, and in Great-Britain, in *meute, peure*. With this difference however, that in New-England, this pronunciation is generally confined to the more illiterate part of the people, and in Great-Britain it prevails among those of the first rank. But after *r* we never hear the sound of *e*: It has been before observed, that the most awkward countryman in New-England pronounces *round, ground, brown*, as correctly as men of the first education; and our fashionable speakers pronounce *u* after *r* like *oo*. The reason is the same in both cases: In pronouncing *r* the mouth is necessarily opened (or rather the glottis) to a position for articulating a broad full sound. So that the vulgar singularities in this respect, and the polite refinements of speaking, both proceed from the same cause; both proceed from an accidental or careless narrow way of articulating certain combinations of letters; both are corruptions of pure English; equally disagreeable and indefensible. Both may be easily corrected by taking more pains to open the teeth, and form full bold sounds.

2. But another inconsistency in the modern practice, is the introducing an *e* before the second found of *u* as in *tun*; or rather changing the preceding consonant; for in *nature, rapture*, and hundreds of other words, *t* is changed into *tsh*; and yet no person pretends that *u*, in these words, has a diphthongal sound. On the other hand, *Sheridan* and his copier *Scott*, have in these and similar words marked *u* for its short sound, which is universally acknowledged to be simple. I believe no person ever pretended, that this found of *u* contains the found of *e* or *y*; why then should we be directed to pronounce *nature, natyur*? Or what is equally absurd, *nashur*? On what principle is the *t* changed into a compound consonant? If there is any thing in this found of *u* to warrant this change, does it not extend to all words where this found occurs? Why do not our standard writers direct us to say *tshun* for *tun*, and *tshumble* for *tumble*? I can conceive no reason which will warrant the pronunciation in one case, that will not apply with equal force in the other. And I challenge the advocates of the practice, to produce a reason for pronouncing *nashur, rapshur, capshur* which will not extend to authorize, not only *tshun, tshurn*, for *tun, turn*, but also *fatshal* for *fatal*, and *immortshal* for *immortal*. Nay, the latter pronunciation is actually heard among some very respectable imitators of fashion; and is frequent among the illiterate, in those states where the *tshu's* are more fashionable. How can it be otherwise? People are led by imitation; and when those in high life embrace a singularity, the multitude, who are unacquainted with its principles or extent, will attempt to imitate the novelty, and probably carry it much farther than was ever intended.

When a man of little education hears a respectable gentleman change *t* into *tsh* in *nature*, he will naturally be led to change the same letter, not only in that word, but wherever it occurs. This is already done in a multitude of instances, and the practice if continued and extended, might eventually change *t*, in all cases, into *tsh*.

(To be continued.)

\* Lowth condemns such a phrase as, "the introducing an *e*" and says it should be, "the introducing of an *e*." This is but one instance of a great number, in which he has rejected good English. In this situation, introducing is a participial noun; it may take an article before it, like any other noun, and yet govern an objective, like any transitive verb. This is the idiom of the language: but in most cases, the writer may use or omit it, at pleasure.

+ I must except that reason, which is always an invincible argument with weak people, viz. "It is the practice of some great men." This common argument, which is unanswerable, will also prove the propriety of imitating all the polite and detestable vices of the great, which are now unknown to the little vulgar of this country.