

BUCKINGHAM AND PATRONAGE, 1621 - 1628

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by

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ABSTRACT

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The patronage of the crown from 1621 to 1628 was dispensed by George Villiers, first duke of Buckingham. By distributing this patronage among his family, associates, and the relatives and friends of his acquaintances, Buckingham built up an elaborate connexion spreading throughout the royal administration. His influence permeated every sphere: by concerning himself primarily with the major offices, he controlled appointments to offices in the middle-ranks through the fear the major office-holders had of giving him offence. Yet, Buckingham realized that his influence was paramount because, as favourite, he enjoyed the easiest and most frequent access to the king. The loss of the favour of the king meant the end of his power and influence. Buckingham did not ruin men whimsically; he did it to preserve his position. Nor did he attempt to establish a 'party', for in the favour of the king alone did his power rest.

PREFACE

This thesis sets out to investigate the nature and extent of the patronage distributed by George Villiers, first duke of Buckingham, from 1621 until his assassination in 1628. The topic is of vital importance for comprehending the career of Buckingham. When the house of commons attempted to impeach him in 1626, the majority of the charges concerned his patronage. The house also gave expression to the popular belief that Buckingham had created a 'Villiers connexion' not only in the sense of family, but also in the sense of a group of associates upon whom he could rely for support against the king in a time of crisis. This serious accusation will be scrutinized in light of the patronage he dispensed in the central administration, in his influence on the appointment of higher ecclesiastics, and in his tenure as lord admiral. It will be necessary to ascertain, especially in this latter area, whether it was his patronage or his policy which accounts for the agitation against his influence on the king.

The sale of honours will not be dealt with specifically in this thesis because this aspect of the patronage of Buckingham has been well documented by

Professor Charles R. Mayes in his two articles 'The sale of peerages in early Stuart England' and 'The early Stuarts and the Irish peerage'. Though it had been originally intended to include a chapter on the parliamentary patronage of Buckingham, the evidence available from printed sources proved inadequate. A study of the members of parliament in the reigns of James I and Charles I would first be necessary.

Professor David Harris Willson, the noted historian of the early Stuart period, included an excellent study of the attitude of Buckingham to parliament in a chapter entitled 'The duke of Buckingham and the management of parliament' in his book The privy councillors and the house of commons, 1604-1629. Professor Willson also offers interesting observations on the patronage of Buckingham in the house of commons.

The extent of the patronage dispensed by Buckingham will become evident in the discussion of the favours which his family, associates, and the relatives and friends of his acquaintances obtained. An examination of his rise from courtier to favourite to chief minister, and the manner in which he maintained all three relationships with James and Charles, will help explain the nature of his patronage. An introductory chapter on patronage will place in

perspective the role of Buckingham as dispenser of the patronage of the crown. Finally, it will be necessary to assess the effect of Buckingham's monopoly of crown patronage on the political situation in the crucial decade preceding the eleven years of 'personal rule' by Charles which was followed by civil war.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<u>BIHR</u>	<u>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</u>
Birch, <u>Charles</u>	Birch (Thomas). <u>The court and times of Charles the first . . .</u>
Birch, <u>James</u>	Birch (Thomas). <u>The court and times of James the first . . .</u>
<u>Cabala</u>	<u>Cabala sive scrinia sacra: mysteries of state and government in letters of great ministers of state . . .</u>
<u>Chamberlain</u>	Chamberlain (John). <u>The letters of John Chamberlain.</u> Edited by N. E. McClure.
<u>CSP Col., East Indies</u>	<u>Calendar of state papers, colonial series, East Indies . . .</u>
<u>CSPD</u>	<u>Calendar of state papers, domestic series . . .</u>
<u>CSPD, Add.</u>	<u>Calendar of state papers, domestic series, of the reign of Charles I, addenda: 1625-49 . . .</u>
<u>CSP Ireland</u>	<u>Calendar of state papers relating to Ireland . . .</u>
<u>CSP Venetian</u>	<u>Calendar of state papers and manuscripts relating to English affairs, preserved in the archives of Venice and in other libraries in northern Italy.</u>
<u>DNB</u>	<u>Dictionary of national biography.</u>
<u>EHR</u>	<u>English Historical Review</u>
<u>Foedera</u>	<u>Foedera . . .</u> Edited by Thomas Rymer.

Gardiner

Gardiner (S. R.). History of England from the accession of James I to the outbreak of the civil war, 1603-1642. 10 vols.

G.E.C., Peerage

Cokayne (G. E.). The complete peerage of England . . . 12 vols.

HMC

Historical Manuscripts Commission

JMH

Journal of Modern History

Spedding

Bacon (Sir Francis). The letters and life of Francis Bacon.
Edited by James Spedding.

NOTES

Dates are given according to the Old Style so far as the day and month are concerned, but the year is taken to begin on January 1.

The citation of authorities follows the method demanded of contributors to the quarterly Irish Historical Studies, and recommended by the director of this thesis.

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CHAPTER I

PATRONAGE

Buckingham was the grand dispenser of royal patronage from 1618 until his assassination in 1628. His influence extended into every branch of the royal administration. In the early Stuart period the crown nominated all the major office-holders, as well as many of those in the middle ranks; all the important ecclesiastical preferments were in the gift of the king; only the king could advance men to the ranks, or within the ranks, of the nobility. The extent of crown patronage was further enlarged by the practice of granting reversions to offices. The king, thus, was personally responsible for filling a large and diverse number of positions, yet it was impossible for him to supply with an incumbent all, or even most, of the offices using only his personal information about the qualifications of the aspirants. He came to rely upon the personal recommendation of trusted friends and officials. In this way the king's patronage was shared in varying degree with those whom he trusted; they became dispensers of patronage to others. Under James,

and then his son, Charles, this pattern remained unaltered, but Buckingham's paramount role in obtaining preferment for his clients was recognized.

Administrative patronage arose from the absence of institutionalized methods of advancing men to office and honour; it was a personal method of recruiting and preferring personnel. It was not, therefore, necessarily a corruption of government, but simply a method for staffing the administration. Its usefulness arose from the nature of personal monarchy in England where the majority of office-holders were still direct crown nominees. Patronage was not a transitory bond, but one characterized by some degree of permanency. This distinguishes it from favour which was a more casual relationship, though an extended sequence of favour might become patronage. Patronage existed in an atmosphere where dependency was a necessity; no social or moral stigma was associated with it. Indeed, success in obtaining preferments often enhanced or confirmed the social status of a client.

The most prominent characteristic of the connection between patron and client was loyalty. In the early seventeenth century remnants of the late medieval concept of loyalty based on livery and maintenance can still be distinguished. There was also

the idea of loyalty which sprang from the Italian Renaissance, expressed by ostentatious generosity on the part of the patron and intense gratitude on the part of the client. The Elizabethan notion of understated loyalty, based on the conception of patronage as essentially sensible and practical, 'creditable to the donor and useful to the recipient', was also evident,¹ Personality was the decisive factor in which one or a combination of these strains was expected by the patron and given by the client.

Buckingham preferred, depending on the status of the client, either the fierce, feudal loyalty or the ornate, Italian variety. His clients usually responded as desired. Edward Conway, who rose from obscure origins to a secretaryship of state and a viscountcy through the patronage of Buckingham, illustrates the first, quasi-feudal kind. Buckingham was told: 'Mr Secretary Conway is yours body and soul; I never heard the like of him, for he flies at all men that be not yours.'² Reverend Joseph Mead reported: 'My Lord Conway, Secretary Coke, Bishop Laud, the duke's agents, more eagerly persecuting his enemies than he himself

¹David Mathew, The social structure of Caroline England, p. 5.

²Sir John Hippisley to Buckingham, n.d. (Cabala, p. 231).

did at home.'¹ It was this loyalty which compelled Sir John Suckling to agree that Lord Keeper Williams suffered 'a due disgrace' because he had been 'unthankful and unfaithful'. Suckling, who obtained the office of comptroller of the queen's household through the patronage of Buckingham, also expressed the hope that 'the like misfortune befall all such as shall tread in the hateful path, and presume to lift their heel against their maker'.²

Prelates seemed to specialize in the ornate flattery that Buckingham loved. Theophilus Field, who won through Buckingham the bishoprics of Llandaff and St David's, wrote in praise: 'None that ever looked toward your grace did ever go empty away. I need go no further than myself (a gum of the earth) who some eight years ago you raised out of the dust for raising but a thought so high as to serve your highness.'³ George Montaigne, who was to pry the archbishopric of York from Buckingham, having heard that the favourite planned to return a gift which he had sent, protested that to refuse his offering would 'break his heart' for

¹Rev. Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, 21 July 1627 (Birch, Charles, i. 253).

²Sir John Suckling to Buckingham, 24 Oct. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 133).

³Theophilus Field to same, n.d. (Cabala, p. 111).

'when God returns back a man's sacrifice, it is because he is offended with him' and he assured the duke that he could not live if the gift was returned.¹

Before dismissing the clients as insufferably sycophantic and Buckingham as intolerably vain, it is well to remember that they were bound by the conventions of the times. The extravagance of baroque style is a commonplace. Further, the social conventions of patronage tended to be exaggerated by the value which the seventeenth century accorded to the personal. Elevating the patron to a near-dietty made the client favoured by a god. Still, it is unquestionable that the Elizabethan variety of loyalty, the practical, undramatic kind, characterized by the dependents of Burghley or Walsingham and in contrast to those of Essex, was not attractive to Buckingham. Walter Balcanquhall, dean of Rochester, tried this approach, unsuccessfully, when aiming for the bishopric of Rochester. He claimed that his attendance at the Synod of Dort, his friendship with the puritans and his earnestness for the recent loan made him the most suitable for the post as he was in a position to serve

¹George Montaigne to same, March ? 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 119).

Buckingham well.¹ This was essentially an appeal for patronage on the grounds of good policy, but it failed to sway Buckingham.

Loyalty, whatever the variety, was recognized by all to be a fundamental part of the patron-client relationship. Buckingham's clients, perhaps because he was notoriously sensitive about their loyalty, took it very seriously when a real or imagined shadow passed over his face. They realized, perhaps, as Hacket observed: 'Favour is a fine thread, which will scarce hold one tug of a crafty tale-bearer.'² Sir Edward Zouche wrote Edward Nicholas, then secretary to Buckingham, wishing him to reassure Buckingham of his loyalty. Zouche was worried that he had somehow lost Buckingham's favour, for in the recent appointments to commands in preparation for the expedition to the isle of Rhé he had been passed over.³ Captain John Pennington, troubled that Buckingham had not written to him in a long time, demanded to be 'turned off as a villain' if he had given any offence, but expressed

¹Walter Balcanquhall to Sec. Conway, 15 Jan. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 19).

²John Hacket, Scrinia reserata: a memorial offer'd to the great deservings of John Williams . . . (1693), i. 48.

³Sir Edward Zouche to Edward Nicholas, 18 May 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 183).

the desire to remain in favour.¹ Sir John Maynard wrote in anguish that he had learned that Buckingham distrusted him because he had dealt with the opponents of Buckingham in the parliament of 1628. Maynard reminded Buckingham of the permission he had given him to negotiate with the parliamentary opposition, and added that he was greatly surprised that Buckingham thought he had behaved treacherously and maliciously.²

At least occasionally protestations of loyalty were merely conventional. In 1627, Sir George Goring, addressing Buckingham as 'ever and above all most honoured lord', wrote to profess his entire devotion to him and to assure him that the queen, Henrietta Maria, was well disposed towards him.³ A year later, with an intuition perhaps that Buckingham was near his crisis, Goring was writing the earl of Carlisle, whom he assumed to be the heir to Buckingham's power, of his great admiration. He also assured Carlisle of the queen's favour: 'The blessed sweet queen, my mistress, is hugely yours.'⁴ He,

¹Capt. John Pennington to Buckingham, 6 April 1627 (ibid., p. 129).

²Sir John Maynard to same, June 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 186).

³Sir George Goring to same, 25 June 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, pp. 228-9).

⁴Same to earl of Carlisle, 19 June 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 169).

nevertheless, continued to protest his loyalty to Buckingham. The shrewd courtier had to constantly evaluate his position vis-à-vis his patron and to act accordingly. The eclipse of the patron could result in the ruin of his clients unless they had been prudent enough to seek support from another quarter. When Lord Keeper Williams sensed his approaching fall, he warned his clients 'who were in best account with him' to seek a new patron 'for his service before long would not be worthy of them'.¹ Yet, this manoeuvring had to be done discreetly. Buckingham was greatly displeased when he learned that Bacon had sought the favour of someone other than himself. He informed Bacon of his displeasure:

If your man had been addressed only to me, I should have been careful to have procured him a more speedy dispatch; but now you have found another way of address, I am excused: and since you are grown weary of employing me, I can be no otherwise in being employed.²

The wrath of a patron could terminate a career for the client who did not take the precaution of remaining on good terms with his patron. It was always at least necessary to appear loyal.

¹Hacket, ii. 5.

²Buckingham to Sir Francis Bacon, end of July 1627 (printed in H. R. Williamson, George Villiers, first duke of Buckingham: a study for a biography, appendix, p. 236).

Loyalty went both ways. The earl of Exeter, a supporter of Buckingham, wrote Conway asking him to obtain the royal permission for his absence from the coming parliament. Confident that Buckingham would see to it as a matter of course, Exeter sent Buckingham his proxy in the house of lords at the same time.¹

Similarly, when the earl of Arundel, in his capacity as earl marshal, ordered Henry St George, Richmond herald, out of the quarters allocated to him in Derby house because he had brought his wife to live there with him in contravention of the rules, St George petitioned the king to be restored. Buckingham, away at Rhé, indorsed the petition, claiming St George as one of his dependents. He hoped Arundel would not wrong St George out of malice to himself, and that on his return he would find St George 'as he left him'.² Buckingham even made his threats under the guise of a loyal well-wisher. When in 1627 he learned that the earl of Northumberland was considering not paying the loan requested by the king, he urged Northumberland to reconsider for this action would greatly prejudice the

¹William, earl of Exeter to Sec. Conway, same to Buckingham, both 22 Jan. 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 230).

²Application of Henry St George to the king, indorsed by Buckingham, 27 June 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, pp. 230-1).

earl before Charles and could well prove a stumbling block to anything Buckingham might want to do for him and his children.¹

Loyalty between patron and client was a fundamental bond of the patron-client relationship, but so was devotion to the ideal: service to king and country. A recurring theme of letters to Buckingham is the desire of the client to serve so well in the royal administration that Buckingham will be proud to acknowledge the client as his own. Typical of these is the letter which Middlesex wrote: 'I have been so ambitious as to desire to extend my gratitude so far, as that the king may have cause to thank you for preferring me, and that your lordship may bless the time you did it.'²

Patronage, then, was characterized by a degree of permanency, acknowledgement of dependence, some varying notion of loyalty between patron and client, and the shared sentiment that the relationship served to advance the cause to which both patron and client were committed. This cause, so far as Buckingham was concerned, was service to king and country. He himself

¹Buckingham to earl of Northumberland, 1 Feb. 1627 (ibid., p. 43).

²Earl of Middlesex to Buckingham, n.d. (Cabala, p. 301).

expressed this sentiment simply, yet eloquently, in his reply to a letter from his mother rebuking him for having entangled the Christian world in a war. He wrote: ' . . . my intentions are not guided by spleen nor malice but by an ambition to serve faithfully with my king and country. . . .'¹ This was the way he viewed his paramount position in the state. It was not personal honour alone that he sought. This was incidental to the service he rendered the king and in full agreement with a philosophy that sees service to the crown as the highest service to the state. Buckingham was moved by a genuine patriotism.

The consideration so far has been of the ideas which made patronage a respectable relationship. It was a respectable relationship, and it is necessary to bear this in mind when considering the administrative and political functions of the system; otherwise it appears to have been merely the grossest kind of political jobbery, characterized by corruption and cynicism. The idealism which patronage, even in its administrative and political aspects, possessed in the abstract, tempers the flagrant self-aggrandizement which it frequently possessed in reality.

¹ Buckingham to countess of Buckingham, 1628? (HMC, Fourth report: The manuscripts of the earl of Denbigh, p. 256 [hereafter cited as Denbigh MSS]).

Patronage served a useful function in an age lacking an institutional method for attaining office. Professor Tawney maintained that the principal paths to an official career in early Stuart England were 'patronage, patrimony or purchase'.¹ Professor Aylmer, in a more recent and more exhaustive study, agrees with this but stresses that these three factors worked better in combination than separately, and that though the 'three P's' of patronage, patrimony and purchase brought most men to their places, merit did take some men far.² Patronage and purchase were not mutually exclusive methods, and patrimony was merely patronage exercised in the interest of family. There were few offices, at least in the central administration, which were directly transferable within the family without royal consent. Reversions were a way of passing office in the family, but they were acquired by either patronage or purchase, or both. Strictly, patrimony would be the office of the father passed on to the son; common seventeenth century usage, however, had the

¹R. H. Tawney, Business and politics under James I: Lionel Cranfield as merchant and minister, p. 123.

²G. E. Aylmer, The king's servants: the civil service of Charles I, 1625-42, pp. 76, 89, passim; pp. 69-96; cf. G. E. Aylmer, 'Office holding as a factor in English history, 1625-42', History, xliv. 230-1 (1959).

wider sense of family, including at least nephews and cousins, and often relatives by marriage.

The operative agent in administrative patronage, standing between the aspirants for office and honour and the king who had them to give, were the royal courtiers and officials. The two were not mutually exclusive; in the early Stuart period, as far as patronage is concerned, they tended to be synonymous. Simple altruism was one reason courtiers were willing to act as patrons. They often took pride in being the agent of the advance of some worthy person. Further, it was their duty, especially if they were privy councillors, to advise the king about personnel as well as policy. Finally, royal courtiers sought to advance men who were devoted to the service of the king, or of men who would become loyal supporters once having gained office.

There were persuasive reasons which were not altruistic; one such was the desire for power. For a great courtier such as Buckingham, it was of the first importance that the king be surrounded by officers and servants who would be loyal to him, support his policies, echo his advice, help advance his friends, and report the activities of rival courtiers and their clients. To put it tersely, the great courtiers sought

to control the administration in order to control the king. To maintain and augment his power, it was in the interest of the courtier that all know he was the most effective patron. This attracted new clients, which gave him yet more control, and discouraged rivals, since they lost clients to him. In this respect, Lord Keeper Williams gave good advice when he wrote Buckingham regarding Cranfield's appointment as lord treasurer:

Let him hold [the office], but by your lordship's favour; not his own power or willfulness. And this must be apparent and visible: Let all our greatness depend (as it ought) upon yours, the true original. Let the king be Pharaoh, yourself Joseph, and let us come after as your half-brethren.¹

Sir Thomas Wentworth recognized the need for Buckingham to either support or acquiesce to the preferment of major office-holders. Having heard of the intention of Lord Scroop, lord president of the council in the North, to resign, Wentworth informed Secretary Conway of his desire to obtain the office. But Wentworth added that he would not actively seek the place

till I know also how this may please my lord of Buckingham, seeing, indeed, such a seal of his gracious good opinion would comfort me much, make the place more acceptable; and that I am fully

¹Lord Keeper Williams to Buckingham, Sept. 1621 (Cabala, pp. 262-3).

resolved not to ascend one step in this kind except I may take along with me by the way a special obligation to my lord duke from whose bounty I do not only acknowledge much already, but, justified in the truth of mine own heart, do still repose and rest under the shadow and protection of his favour.¹

Wentworth realized that it would not be good politics for anyone who did not have independent power to seek and obtain an office without the approval of the prime favourite.

All courtiers, whether great or small, used patronage as a source of income. The great courtiers needed money to support themselves in the extravagant manner of the Stuart courts; they required money to cover the expenses of their offices which usually carried only nominal salaries. For the lesser courtiers, holding a small office or no office, being a courtier was simply a business venture, an occupation. Once themselves established at court, often at great cost to themselves, they sought positions for clients of their own in return for payment.² Almost everyone connected with the royal administration expected

¹Sir Thomas Wentworth to Sec. Conway, 20 Jan. 1626 (quoted in Mrs Thomson, The life and times of George Villiers, first duke of Buckingham, iii. 83-4; (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 228).

²Strictly speaking, patronage given solely in return for money ought to be termed brokerage.

to augment his income by obtaining occasional presents, gratuities or bribes.

It has become a commonplace to state of the early Stuart period that crown income tended to be fixed, while prices were rising. Salaries had also become fixed so that their real value was often minute. The crown was in no position to afford an increase in salaries. Only fees and offices increased. It must not be concluded from the multiplication of offices and fees that this was the result of any mysterious moral decline in the early Stuart period. As Professor Aylmer has indicated, it was in part the 'fumbling response' of official society to the 'price revolution'.¹ Seldom did strictly lawful income approximate the cost of living at court. The temptation to supplement income by recommending persons to office or honour, or to indulge in some other speculation, was very great; the king was forced to wink at the practice because he recognized its necessity.

When a great courtier acquired revenue from his patronage, it followed that his entourage derived income also. The patronage of a successful courtier could become a major financial enterprise, involving large numbers of subordinates, who shared in his rewards.

¹Aylmer, 'Office holding', pp. 228-40.

Edward Conway, who was entirely devoted to Buckingham, and closely allied with him in his patronage system, made his fortune as the most important avenue of approach to Buckingham. Even the duke's own clients, as well as those outside his patronage network, made gifts to him. John Pennington, who was firmly in the duke's favour, nonetheless sent Conway £20 'as an earnest of his love', and thoughtfully added that he had told the bearer it was borrowed.¹ This was small beer to Conway. A member of the English gentry in Ireland, trying to recover his father's estate, offered Conway £1,000 for his assistance, with a promise of an additional £2,000 if he recovered the entire estate.² In a similar circumstance in England, Conway was offered half the estate.³ Thus, the influence was good for more than merely finding offices for clients. At a yet lower level, Edward Nicholas, who in 1624 became Buckingham's personal secretary and handled most of the patronage which Buckingham dispensed as lord admiral, was continually offered

¹John Pennington to Sir Edward Conway, 1 Sept. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 95).

²John Cusack to Sec. Conway, 17 Nov. 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 476).

³Robert Willoughby to same, 30 Nov. 1625 (ibid., p. 164).

gratuities for commands of ships, purserships, gunners posts, and commands of the castles in the Cinque Ports.¹ Surely the most revealing letter, however, came from the sheriffs of Bristol, who were trying to avoid litigation over a prize ship which both the sheriffs and the lord admiral claimed. They wrote Nicholas of their unwillingness to contest the claim in court and offered him one-third the value of the prize, which they assessed at £1,400, if Nicholas persuaded Buckingham not to oppose their claim.² The sheriffs, in effect, offered a bribe.

In the early seventeenth century some very fine distinctions between the various forms of payments were drawn. If after having received a favour or service, the suitor sent money to the person who performed the favour, it was a gratuity, no matter how excessive the payment might seem, so long as the official did not know before he performed the action that the gratuity would be forthcoming, or so long as he accepted the gratuity without knowledge that it was

¹ Captain William Jewel to Edward Nicholas, 12 Aug. 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 253); Thomas Benson to same, 16 April, 4 July 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, pp. 10, 53); Richard Wyan to same, 12 Jan. 1626 (ibid., p. 218).

² Sheriffs of Bristol to same, 19 Jan. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 10).

intended to influence the action. Gratuities were considered both lawful and ethical. If, on the other hand, an official was offered money, or even goods, explicitly or implicitly to persuade him to an action, and he took the money knowing the purpose, this was a bribe, which was both unlawful and unethical. Separate from both these categories was the present, which, however large, was usually given without association to a particular service. In this category are the New Year's gifts expected by many of the courtiers. Also, during the year, a person who saw some possible further use in an official, or who wished to keep the door open in case of future need, might well send the official a present, and it was lawful and ethical to accept. In effect, the seventeenth century official could accept gratuities and presents so long as these did not affect his judgement in a particular case. The distinctions may seem arbitrary, or even specious, but in the early seventeenth century they were regarded as valid.¹

Patronage brought power and income to the courtier and his entourage. To the king patronage served as a useful method of acquiring personnel for the government. To the client patronage did present

¹Cf. Aylmer, The king's servants, pp. 176-83, passim.

difficulty, since he alone had no effective part in the deliberations which decided his fortune. The great poet Edmund Spencer had lamented:

Full little knowest thou that has not tried,
 What Hell it is in suing long to bide;
 To lose good days that might be better spent;
 To waste long nights in pensive discontent;
 To speed today, to be put back tomorrow;
 To feed on hope, to pine with fear and sorrow;
 To have thy Prince's grace, yet want her Peer's;
 To have thy asking, yet wait many years;
 To fret thy soul with crosses and with cares;
 To eat thy heart through comfortless despairs;
 To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,
 To spend, to give, to want, to be undone.¹

Though Spencer wrote in the reign of Elizabeth, most suitors then and in the early Stuart period would have considered this an exaggeration, but would have agreed that the life of a client was hard.

Something of the pathos which was always present in so personal a system as patronage, and which was particularly present in the lesser offices, where the client had only begun his climb, is shown in the touching letter of Sir Robert Killigrew. Sir Dudley Carleton had been instrumental in obtaining a minor post in the household of Prince Charles for a son of his. Obviously bitter, Killigrew wrote Carleton that he had heard of Charles' dislike for his son because of

¹From Edmund Spencer, 'Mother Hubbard's Tale', ll. 895 ff.

his crooked legs and offered to withdraw him from the service of the prince.¹ This also underlines how much depended upon the predisposition of the king or of the courtiers, and how much less upon the notion of tenure in the office. Patronage was a more pleasant relationship for the patron than for the client.

It will be obvious by now that if the king retained control of his administration, he could do so only by controlling patronage in such a way that no one courtier could 'pack' the administration with his followers. He had also to take precautions to see that the immense opportunities for graft and corruption inherent in a system of patronage were restrained, or at least used as far as possible in the royal interest, not in the interest of the courtier. An instructive comparison can be made between Elizabeth and James in this respect.²

Elizabeth followed a policy which recognized that factionalism among the courtiers could be useful

¹Sir Robert Killigrew to Sir Dudley Carleton, 24 March 1625 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 508).

²For the following on Elizabeth's reign see Sir John Neale, 'The Elizabethan political scene', Proceedings of the British Academy, xxxiv. 97-117 (1948); also W. T. MacCaffrey, 'Place and patronage in Elizabethan politics', in Elizabethan government and society, ed. S. T. Bindoff, J. Hurstfield, and C. H. Williams, pp. 95-126.

to her if she could achieve a rough equilibrium between factions. This ensured that she heard both sides of an issue or an appointment and also preserved her freedom of action, since the final decision was always hers. By playing the factions off against one another, and not settling in one camp, she kept all factions reasonably content, since all shared to some degree in the spoils of patronage. In the reign of Elizabeth there was no large group of courtiers and nobles who saw themselves excluded from the political and financial benefits of the royal bounty.

Until the last years of her reign, Elizabeth was aided in her patronage policy by William Cecil, Lord Burghley. A true statesman, Burghley skillfully supported and encouraged the policy of the queen, offering valuable advice about appointments. The death of Burghley in the last decade of the reign coincided with a sharp decline in public morality. For the successor of Elizabeth, as far as patronage was concerned, this meant that to maintain control James would have to exercise even greater effort to restrain the abuses of the system.

But James did not understand the uses of patronage. Patronage as a system of providing government with its bureaucracy became increasingly corrupt

and venal. By 1616 Edward Sherburne, betraying his own prejudice, could write that Lionel Cranfield, 'a mere merchant', had been made a master of requests, and after commenting adversely on Cranfield's business, ended, 'but the times allow anything to be done for money'.¹ John Chamberlain wrote in 1618: 'The world . . . talks somewhat freely that offices of that nature [treasurer of the household], and especially councillorships should pass as it were by bargain and sale. . . .'² He could also complain that many ill-qualified persons sought offices and honours 'for now the market is open every man thinks his penny good silver'.³ By 1625 Chamberlain was writing that it was 'the true golden age; no penny, no paternoster'.⁴ Sir John Oglander claimed that Sir George More did not receive preferment because 'he lived in a time that money bore down all merit, and a dunce with money was better esteemed than the best, ablest, and deserving man living'.⁵

¹Edward Sherburne to Sir Dudley Carleton, 18 Nov. 1616 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 406).

²John Chamberlain to same, 3 Jan. 1618 (Chamberlain, ii. 125).

³Same to same, 31 Jan. 1618 (*ibid.*, ii. 133).

⁴Same to same, 12 Feb. 1625 (*ibid.*, ii. 600).

⁵Sir John Oglander, The Oglander memoirs, ed. W. H. Long, pp. 140-1.

Much of the money did not go to the king directly, though some of it did; his courtiers and officers were the major beneficiaries. James was entirely complacent in the venality of others.

Girolamo Lando, the Venetian ambassador, reported to the doge that the English ministers were 'birds with large maws'.¹ Lando's colleague, Marioni, reported to the doge that when James heard of the proceedings which were underway against a former Venetian ambassador to his court, he exclaimed 'that if he punished his subjects like your serenity for appropriating money to themselves, he would have none left'.²

Given such a state of affairs where the king was aware of the abuses in his administration but did nothing to correct them, it is no wonder that Gardiner concluded: 'That all things were venal at the court of James was soon accepted as a truism from the Land's End to the Cheviots.'³ Professor Tawney stated it more tersely: 'The characteristic vice of the age was venality.'⁴

¹Girolamo Lando to the doge, 20 Dec. 1619 (CSP Venetian, 1619-21, p. 82).

²Marioni to same, 2 Aug. 1619 (CSP Venetian, 1617-19, p. 585).

³Gardiner, iii. 212.

⁴Tawney, Business and politics, p. 167.

Professor Trevor-Roper agrees, adding specifically about the offices: 'By the time of James I, almost every office was bought, either from the crown, or from the favourites, who made a market of the crown's patronage, or from the previous holder. . . .'¹ Professor Stone accuses Buckingham of elevating 'corruption to the status of a system',² but his wrath is misplaced. Buckingham was merely caught up in a system that had begun to deteriorate since the last decade of the reign of Elizabeth and which had grown worse in its abuses under the weak rule of James. Buckingham was not a statesman, merely an opportunist. He accepted the system as he found it and was not in the least motivated to change it. No alternative ever presented itself to him. The corruption and venality was already there when he came to power and it had arisen as a result of the misunderstanding by James of the usefulness of distributing the patronage of the crown among various factions. It had also arisen from the very character of the king.

James had inherited from Elizabeth a system of patronage based upon equilibrium between factions.

¹H. R. Trevor-Roper, 'The gentry, 1540-1640', Economic History Review, supplement 1, p. 28 (1953).

²Lawrence Stone, The crisis of the aristocracy, 1558-1641, p. 493.

To the Scottish monarch, who had been a pawn of the factions in Scotland for so long, and who had only barely succeeded in gaining some kind of control over them when he came to the English throne, the thought of having to use the English factions for a positive good was inconceivable. Further, his amiable nature was upset by the importunities of the vying factions; he once burst out to a pressing courtier: 'You will never let me alone. I would to God you had first my doublet, and then my shift, and when I were naked I think you would give me leave to be quiet.'¹ This trait may at least partially explain why, after the death of Robert Cecil, earl of Salisbury, in 1612 -- who had acted as a kind of chief minister, shielding James from some of the pressure, and exerting pressure himself to preserve the royal bounty from the tender mercies of the courtiers -- James increasingly gave his favourites control of patronage.

His experience in Scotland had not prepared James to manipulate the English factions; he believed that this would be unnecessary in England. His personality reinforced this predisposition. On the

¹ Sir Tobie Matthew to Buckingham, 29 March 1623 (Godfrey Goodman, The court of King James the first (1839), ed. J. S. Brewer, ii. 267).

one hand, his amiable nature made him dislike being pressed with requests; on the other hand, it made it easy for his courtiers to request favours. Thus, he tolerated the English factions, but he did not use them, failing to understand that it was in his interest to do so, and from the point of view of patronage at least, fatal not to do so.

Coupled with an indifference to the value of faction was his almost total commitment to his favourites. The deep personal attachment which James had to those who could make him happy was unfortunate in both a personal and in a political sense. Personally, James was not a man who enjoyed being dominated; politically, he should not have restricted his freedom. Elizabeth had told Leicester that she would have 'but one mistress, and no master' in her house; she had sent Essex to his execution with tears.¹ James was not cast in the heroic mold; he found it more pleasant to float with the current of his predilections than to try to stem the tide. The result of this was that patronage centred around the favourite of the moment, whomever he might be. This was a policy bound to create resentment among many of the most powerful subjects in

¹Sir Robert Naunton, Fragments regalia, ed. Edward Arber (1895), p. 17.

the realm.

Such was the system, and such the monarch,
when Buckingham came to court.

CHAPTER II

COURTIER, FAVOURITE, CHIEF MINISTER

Buckingham was the king's man or nothing; nor can it be denied that he fulfilled his post loyally and bravely. Buckingham quickly learned what it meant to be the favourite. Clarendon wrote: 'He understood the arts and artifices of a court, and all the learning that is professed there, exactly well', adding that he had natural endowments which 'made him very capable of being a great favourite to a great king'.¹ It is precisely because he was the archetype of a great favourite that he succeeded so well.

Buckingham² was born in 1592, the fourth son of Sir George Villiers of Brookesby, Leicestershire. He received a mediocre education: he was taught at home until the age of ten, and then sent to Billesden school in Leicestershire, 'where he was taught the principles of music, and other slight literature', until the age

¹Edward, earl of Clarendon, The history of the rebellion and civil war in England (1839), i. 50.

²George Villiers, first duke of Buckingham, will be referred to as 'Buckingham' throughout this thesis. A list of his titles and dates of creation are given on p. 62 below.

of thirteen, when his father died.¹ When he returned home, his mother, 'finding him . . . by nature little studious and contemplative . . . chose rather to endue him with conservative qualities and ornaments of youth, as dancing, fencing, and the like'.² Comparing Buckingham to Elizabeth's favourite, Essex, Wotton bluntly said, 'The duke was illiterate', and Essex learned, but added, 'as the less he [Buckingham] was favoured by the Muses, he was the more by the Graces'.³ At the age of eighteen Buckingham journeyed to France, where he spent three years learning the courtly graces which were later to be so useful.⁴ Upon his return to England, he spent a year at home with his family. Apparently his mother had decided to aim him for a courtier's life, for in 1614 he came to London, and began to frequent the court.⁵

¹ Sir Henry Wotton, A short view of the life and death of George Villiers, duke of Buckingham (1642), p. 2 (hereafter cited as Wotton, Buckingham).

² Ibid., p. 3.

³ Sir Henry Wotton, Of Robert Devereux, earl of Essex; and George Villiers, duke of Buckingham: some observations by way of parallel in the time of their estates of favour (1641), p. 10 (hereafter cited as Wotton, Parallel).

⁴ Wotton, Buckingham, p. 3; Clarendon, i. 14.

⁵ Wotton, Buckingham, p. 3.

Of Buckingham's personal characteristics the most prominent was his beauty. Clarendon stated that all saw in him 'a man in the delicacy and beauty of his colour, decency, and grace of his motion, the most rarely accomplished they had ever beheld'.¹ All spoke of his lovely complexion, his athletic grace, his skill at dancing, his sweetness of expression.² He was the perfect courtier, young, lithe, lighthearted, skilled at the courtly occupations for whiling away time.

In essence, courtiers were merely ornaments to the king, surrounding him, his court and his reign with a flattering glow. They were not the agents of royal business, but of royal pleasure. To them the king fled from the demands of personal rule, to find for a while the relaxation and entertainment which his public role denied him. Hence there was always a certain tension between the role of a royal official and that of a royal courtier, since the former tended to treat the ruler as an institution, while the latter

¹Edward, earl of Clarendon, 'The difference and disparity between George, duke of Buckingham, and Robert, earl of Essex', in Reliquiae Wottonianae (4th edn., 1685), p. 194.

²Sir John Oglander, A royalist's notebook: the commonplace book of Sir John Oglander, ed. Francis Bamford, p. 41; Goodman, i. 255; Hacket, i. 120; CSP Venetian, 1617-19, p. 114.

tended to treat him as a private man. No monarch ever compartmentalized his associations so that there was no overlap between the courtiers and officials, but it was James' error to eliminate the division entirely, with the result that courtiers became officials, and officials to remain so, became courtiers.

James compounded this error by having favourites; not only did courtiers as a group intrude excessively into the operations of the government, but also some one among them exercised predominant sway. Unfortunate results followed. The factions opposing the favourite had to look for someone who could replace him in James' affection, yet there was little guarantee that a candidate with the necessary qualifications would be an improvement. They assumed he would be naive; they could only hope that he would be grateful for their support and malleable to their interests. Buckingham's early career illustrates the process.

James first saw him at Apethorpe on August 7, 1614.¹ At this time the future favourite had an income of no more than £50 a year; Sir Simonds D'Ewes related the anecdote of Buckingham at a horse race in

¹Wotton, Buckingham, p. 3; John Nichols, The progresses, processions, and magnificent festivities of King James the first, his royal consort, family, and court (1828), III. 10-26.

Cambridgeshire, 'in an old black suit, broken out in divers places . . . and . . . glad to lie in a trundle-bed in a gentleman's chamber. . . .'¹ Clearly, James could only have been taken by his personal qualities; yet taken he was, for he sent Sir John Graham, a gentleman of his bed-chamber, whom he knew to be a friend of his, to give him advice about a career at court.²

Robert Carr, earl of Somerset, was the reigning favourite when he came to court. Allied by marriage to the catholic Howard family, Somerset was, with the Howards, the leader of the pro-Spanish faction in the privy council. Opposed to them, but in eclipse at the time, was the anti-Spanish faction led by the earl of Pembroke, George Abbot, archbishop of Canterbury, and Sir Ralph Winwood, the secretary of state. When they perceived that Buckingham had possibilities as a weapon against Somerset, they quickly threw their support behind him.³ From this point on a

¹Arthur Wilson, The history of Great Britain, being the life and reign of James the first (1653), p. 79; Sir Simonds D'Ewes, The autobiography and correspondence of Sir Simonds D'Ewes (1845), ed. J. O. Halliwell, i. 86 (hereafter cited as D'Ewes, Autobiography).

²Wotton, Buckingham, pp. 3-4.

³D'Ewes, Autobiography, i. 86; Rushworth, i. 456-7; [Sir William Sanderson], 'Aulicus Coquinariae, or, a vindication in answer to a pamphlet entitled, "The court and character of King James", pretended to be penned by Sir A[nthony] W[eldon] and published since his death', in The secret history of the court of King James the first, ed. Walter Scott (1811), ii. 261.

tense struggle developed between the two factions, polarized around Somerset and Buckingham. In November of 1614 the anti-Spanish faction tried to obtain for Buckingham a vacant post as gentlemen of the bedchamber, but James gave it to a 'bastard kinsman' of Somerset.¹ Buckingham had to be content with the post of cup-bearer to the king, which one of his supporters, possibly the earl of Pembroke, obtained for him.² If Somerset had not misplayed his cards, he might well have weathered the storm.

James was not disposed to jettison Somerset. But instead of endearing himself to the king, Somerset berated him for abandoning him. Early in 1615 James wrote Somerset a blunt letter, affirming his affection, but also warning:

If ever I find that you think to retain me by one sparkle of fear, all the violence of my love will in that instant be turned into as violent a hatred.
 . . . Hold me thus by the heart; you may build upon my favour as upon a rock that shall never fail you.

To Somerset's complaint that a faction was raised against him, James responded, with perhaps some insincerity, that he did not know of such a faction, and if he had, 'I protest to God, I would have run upon it

¹ John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 24 Nov. 1624 (Chamberlain, i. 559).

² D'Ewes, Autobiography, i. 86.

with my feet, as upon fire, to have extinguished it.

. . .¹ He continued

Do not all courtesies and places come through your office as chamberlain, and rewards through your father-in-law [Suffolk] as treasurer? Do not you two (as it were) hedge in all the court with a manner of necessity to depend upon you?

James went on to promise that, so long as Somerset treated him with respect and love, none should rise in his favour except through Somerset, 'not that any living shall come to the twentieth degree of your favour'.¹ What the exact intentions of James were for Buckingham at this time is difficult to state. He perhaps wanted him to become a junior favourite under Somerset's guidance. Sir Anthony Weldon, least reliable of all the court gossips, and most hostile to the court, related that in the middle of 1615, James urged Somerset to take Buckingham into his favour. He sent Buckingham to request Somerset to take him into his service and grant him his favour. Somerset is supposed to have replied: 'I will none of your service and you shall none of my favour. I will, if I can, break your neck, and of that be confident.'² Whether the event

¹King James to earl of Somerset, Jan. or Feb. 1615 (Letters of the kings of England [1848], ed. J. O. Halliwell, ii. 126-33 [hereafter cited as Halliwell, Royal letters]). Gardiner calls this letter 'perhaps the strangest which was ever addressed to a subject by a sovereign' (ii. 320).

²Sir Anthony Weldon, 'Court and character of King James', in Secret history, i. 406-7.

really transpired in this manner is dubious, but there is little reason to doubt that James was anxious to effect some kind of modus vivendi between the two men.

This was impossible, partly because of the personality of Somerset, which balked at the idea of sharing James' favour, and partly because the faction behind Buckingham was not interested in Buckingham's rise except as the necessary means to the fall of Somerset. Compromise was therefore unavailing. The year 1615 was the crucial period; it saw a pitched struggle between the two factions.

In April, at the behest of Archbishop Abbot, Anne of Denmark interceded with James to have Buckingham knighted and made a gentleman of the bed-chamber. Somerset had begged James to give Buckingham only the inferior place of a groom of the bedchamber.¹ From this point on, observers regarded Buckingham as a serious threat to the reigning favourite.

Somerset met two serious setbacks in July of 1615. The death of the earl of Northampton in 1614 had left vacant the office of lord privy seal and the office of warden of the Cinque Ports. Somerset wanted the wardenship for himself, and the office of lord

¹John Rushworth, Historical collections . . . (1721-2), i. 406-7.

privy seal for Thomas Bilson, bishop of Winchester.¹
 Instead, the wardenship went on July 13 to Edward Lord
 Zouche; Chamberlain commented that it was 'a place he
 [Zouche] never sought for nor pretended'.² There could
 hardly be a more pointed way of showing Somerset's
 waning influence. James delayed on the appointment of
 a lord privy seal, and wrote Somerset an indignant
 letter about his importuning for Bilson after he had
 made it clear that Bilson would not receive the office.³

It is difficult to explain why Somerset could
 neither obtain a place for himself, nor one for his
 client. Somerset had continued to annoy and importune
 James, ignoring the king's warning early in 1615.
 Also, James had had the attendance of Buckingham in the
 bedchamber since April, and perhaps was overwhelmed by
 the charms of his new young attendant. Gardiner
 believed that at this time James was losing interest in
 the Spanish match, to which Somerset was committed.⁴
 If this was so, then there were political as well as

¹John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 20 May 1615
 (Chamberlain, i. 597).

²Same to same, 20 July 1615 (*ibid.*, i. 609).

³James to [earl of Somerset], n.d., but 1615 (Halliwel,
Royal letters, ii. 133-4).

⁴Gardiner, ii. 321, 324-7.

personal reasons for the disenchantment of James with Somerset. It was about this time that James is supposed to have urged Somerset to take Buckingham into his protection. Perhaps this was the last effort by James to save some place for the old favourite; when Somerset refused the compromise, James may have drifted inevitably toward a new favourite.

The loss of control of the two offices was a sharp blow to Somerset; worse was to come. In July of 1615 he sought with the support of James to have a general pardon drawn up for himself. The pardon passed the privy seal by order of James, but Lord Chancellor Ellesmere, keeper of the great seal, held it up arguing that it was too broadly drawn.¹ Chamberlain reported to Carleton that Ellesmere had said that he dared not let the pardon pass the great seal, unless he had a pardon himself for passing it.² The pardon became the subject of a debate in the privy council, where James supported Somerset, telling Ellesmere to seal the pardon. When Ellesmere begged the king to reconsider, James repeated his order, and left the council chamber.

¹Cf. Wilson, History of Great Britain, p. 80; Gardiner, ii. 329.

²John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 20 July 1615 (Chamberlain, i. 609).

But the queen and other supporters of Buckingham urged Ellesmere's case to him, and James left London for one of his progresses without pressing the matter any further.¹ Somerset's course was rapidly coming to its end, for the faction supporting Buckingham could never have pressed so boldly against a favourite in the height of his power.

In September of 1615 the scandal over the death of Sir Thomas Overbury began to come to light. Somerset and his wife were implicated; they were tried in May of 1616, found guilty, sentenced to death, pardoned by the king, confined in the Tower of London, and eventually released to the countryside, where they remained in obscurity.² Although it was not until May, 1616, that Somerset was in complete disgrace, after his arrest the previous October the field was clear for Buckingham. Certainly by the beginning of 1616 Buckingham had triumphed. He was the favourite.

The term 'favourite' in the early seventeenth century had an ambiguous meaning. Elizabeth had had favourites. Leicester was a favourite who participated in affairs of state, and whose personal

¹Gardiner, ii. 329-30; David Harris Willson, King James VI and I, p. 352.

²Gardiner, ii. 331-63.

qualities were of high enough order to make his participation useful. Essex was a favourite whose personal qualities were not of the same order. Toward the end of her reign Elizabeth admired and valued Burghley above all other men; yet he was not a favourite. What Leicester and Essex had in common, in contrast to Burghley, was that Elizabeth loved them as a woman, while she loved Burghley as a queen.

This distinction between the personal and the public aspect of monarchy should remind us that the favourite, like the courtiers from whom he usually sprung, was intended to fulfill a personal service for the ruler, not a public one. But it was extremely hard for all concerned to keep the private and the public neatly separated. Elizabeth erred in allowing Essex a public function; James made the same error, first with Somerset, then with Buckingham.

The division between the bedchamber and the council table is immediately destroyed when a favourite of a king holds office. A mistress might be the power behind the throne, but in her inability to hold office she complicates the operations of the government less; a favourite in office breaks all the rules. It must not go unrecognized that much of the power exercised by Buckingham was due to the personal affection James held

for him. Himself growing old, his physical powers deteriorating, and frequently ill, James was attracted by the good looks and facile manner of Buckingham. Not natural ability, but charm, wit, and beauty account for the rise of Buckingham to office. The result, from the point of view of patronage, was that the favourite was better able to control the government because through his own office-holding he had more direct access to the other office-holders in the royal administration and also because he had the king's ear like no other office-holder. In 1619 Buckingham was appointed lord admiral. Even if he had not been the favourite, he would have had some control over patronage by virtue of his office in the navy. But the power and influence he would normally have wielded as lord admiral was greatly increased because of his relationship with James. The favourite as an office-holder had more power than he would have had as a mere courtier, even a well-favoured courtier.

By the very nature of the institution of 'favourite' a conflict of interest arises. A favourite will seek to gain complete power, show this authority to the world, and use it to drive away counsellors who threaten his position. A king, on the other hand, will seek to diffuse the power among his subjects,

thus ensuring that dominion resides ultimately in him; he will then take counsel from his subjects on the basis of their virtues. Both James and Buckingham attempted to be true to their conflicting roles. James originally planned a personal role for his favourite; he was to be a private secretary and companion. It is significant that Buckingham's first appointment was to the royal household, as master of the horse, not to the royal administration.¹ As it developed, James was unable to maintain his intentions, and gradually the royal administration fell into Buckingham's hands.

Behind all the questions of personality and policy which explain the rise or fall of individuals during Buckingham's reign as favourite, there lies the central factor of his desire to maintain and augment his position as the favourite, all the while serving his king. His desire to remain in power gives a certain consistency to his patronage policy.

Buckingham realized how tenuous the position of favourite was. He must hardly have taken comfort in the memory of his own rise. He had been the pawn in a power struggle between the Howards and the anti-Spanish, anti-Howard factions. The earl of Pembroke, Archbishop Abbot and Sir Ralph Winwood had supported

¹Ibid., iii. 27; Willson, James, p. 386.

his rise in the hope that he would replace Robert Carr, earl of Somerset, as royal favourite, which in turn would bring about the downfall of the powerful Howards and their partisans. By 1616 Somerset had been eliminated but the Howards remained in office for a further two years.

In the latter part of 1617 James instituted one of his periodic economic reforms, and the time seemed ripe to strike at the Howards in this conjunction. Buckingham's instrument was Sir Lionel Cranfield, a merchant of London, who was known to James as a dependable adviser on fiscal matters.¹ Cranfield had no love for Lord Treasurer Suffolk. He had aimed in 1616 for the post of under-treasurer, but Suffolk was adamant in his refusal informing the king that he would resign 'rather than be matched and yoked with a prentice of London'.² Cranfield suggested areas where retrenchment might be made, one of which was the exchequer, Suffolk's province, and another area was the navy, the bailiwick of another Howard, the earl of Nottingham, the lord admiral.³

¹Tawney, Business and politics, pp. 125, passim; M. Prestwich, Cranfield: politics and profit under the early Stuarts, pp. 205 ff.

²John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 23 Nov. 1616 (Chamberlain, ii. 39).

³Frederick C. Dietz, English public finance, 1558-1641, p. 168.

Commissions were set up to inquire into the operations of these departments early in 1618, and from this point on the battle was joined. The Howard faction responded in a conventional way; they sought a personable young man who could replace Buckingham in the affection of James. In January their candidate, William Monson, appeared at court. Not relying solely upon Monson, they introduced other young men to court, a process Chamberlain drily called the 'mustering of minions'.¹ Within a month of his appearance at court, James commanded the new lord chamberlain, William, earl of Pembroke, to order the departure of Monson. Chamberlain remarked: 'this was a shrewd reprimand and cross-blow to some who (they say) made account to raise and recover their fortunes by setting up this new idol.'²

Then, in June or early July, James learned that the wife of Suffolk had accepted bribes from suitors in the treasury department; in July Suffolk himself was accused of speculation. With the fall of Suffolk, the first of the great Howard officers was eliminated. Although he was dismissed from office on

¹ John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 21 Feb. 1618 (Chamberlain, ii. 142).

² Same to same, 28 Feb. 1616 (*ibid.*, ii. 144).

charges of bribery, Arthur Wilson had the story more correct when he said the lord treasurer's staff was broken by the fall of Somerset.¹

One by one the leading Howard office-holders were replaced. Viscount Wallingford was relieved of his post as master of the court of wards and liveries; Sir Thomas Lake, the principal secretary, was replaced. Finally, the aged earl of Nottingham, the lord admiral, was persuaded to retire with honour and accept a pension for his life and that of his wife and son.² Buckingham's position was assured by the destruction of the power of the Howards. Those who had helped him to displace Somerset had enjoyed some of the spoils, but Buckingham did not become their minion. He had so endeared himself to James that the Venetian ambassador could report early in 1619: the king's favour renders him the chief authority in everything, and the entire court obey his will. All requests pass through him and without his favour it is most difficult to obtain anything or to reach the king's ear.³

Buckingham always remembered that as he had worked with others to undermine Somerset in his affection with the

¹Wilson, History of Great Britain, p. 97.

²See below, pp. 183-5, 213-14.

³Donato to the Doge, 14 Feb. 1619 (CSP Venetian, 1617-19, p. 468).

king, so others would attempt to have him replaced through similar means.

The period 1618-9, when the Howards fell, to 1623, when Buckingham began to take an interest in the policy of the government, was essentially a time of transition at court, a time of resettling of factions and interests, largely caused by the dissolution of the core of the pro-Spanish Howard faction and by the introduction of new personalities into the government under the patronage of Buckingham. The period was one of flux, and Buckingham faced no major threat to his position during these years. Even his marriage to Lady Catherine Manners in 1620 did not lose him the affection of James who quickly grew fond of Catherine and 'took her to his heart, loving her as a daughter'.¹

In 1622 a more serious crisis arose. James grew overly fond of Arthur Brett, who was related to both Cranfield and Buckingham, and who had obtained a position in the bedchamber through their patronage.² Early in September of 1622 the earl of Kellie reported the Brett affair to the earl of Mar, but scoffed at it as the product of some 'busy brain, that must do ill

¹Willson, James, p. 406.

²John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 22 June 1622 (Chamberlain, ii. 442).

and idle things rather than not to be doing or saying something. . . . I think I may swear that it was neither in the king's mind nor in the young man's conceit.'¹ But by the end of October Kellie was no longer as certain. He informed Mar that there was something in the rumour, but added, 'for myself I cannot understand it, neither do I think that it shall prove as many men think it will do because they would have it so'.² In December Kellie reported that the rumour was widespread, reverted again to the position that it was untrue, but added that if it were true, Buckingham would be wise not to resist. 'I think the experience he had of the last business[probably a reference to the fall of Somerset] may teach him so much, that if his majesty have a mind to it, there is no resisting of it.'³

Buckingham was very fortunate that the fluidity of the court in 1622 was such that there was no united opposition to press Brett's cause; otherwise the matter could have become very serious. In any

¹Earl of Kellie to earl of Mar, 4 Sept. 1622 (HMC, The manuscripts of the earl of Mar and Kellie, supplementary report, p. 133 [hereafter cited as Mar and Kellie suppl.]).

²Same to same, 30 Oct. 1622 (ibid., p. 140).

³Same to same, Dec. 1622 (ibid., p. 145).

case, Buckingham took the precaution of sending Brett, as well as Monson, outside the country while he left with Charles for Spain.¹

The trip to Spain with Charles during the better part of 1623 marks the debut of Buckingham as a figure in the policy of the royal government. Prior to this he had merely been a favourite; after this he was to be still a favourite, but also the chief architect of government policy. He was to be the king's favourite and the king's chief minister. Of the two major battles which he waged in 1624, the first was an attempt to consolidate both these roles, while the second was fought to maintain them.

Buckingham suspected that Lionel Cranfield, earl of Middlesex, was taking advantage of his absence in Spain to consolidate his position with James, independent of his patronage. When Charles and Buckingham returned from Spain demanding an end to the Spanish marriage negotiations and war against Spain, Middlesex opposed them. As lord treasurer he realized that England could not afford a war and that the dowry the infanta would bring would go far to

¹Same to same, 20 Feb. 1623 (*ibid.*, p. 151); John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 22 Feb. 1623 (*Chamberlain*, ii. 479).

alleviate the crown's chronic need for money. Both James and Cranfield realized that a war would place the crown financially at the mercy of parliament.¹ There were other matters between Cranfield and Buckingham as his two biographers in the past decade have shown.² Further, the very success of Cranfield in effecting the retrenchments which Buckingham had brought him in to effect had not won him much support among other courtiers.

Beyond all this was the question of Arthur Brett. Many had suspected Cranfield of introducing Brett to the court in 1622 to overthrow Buckingham. Now, in March of 1624, Brett was back in London, 'without the duke of Buckingham's consent'.³ Granted all the other reasons explaining Buckingham's displeasure with Cranfield, contemporaries saw in Brett's return the catalytic agent in Cranfield's fall. Kellie, Chamberlain, the younger Dudley Carleton, and the Venetian ambassador all reported that this Brett affair had finally turned Buckingham against Cranfield.⁴

¹Clifford B. Anderson, 'Ministerial responsibility in the 1620's', JMH, xxxiv. 382 (1962).

²Tawney, Business and politics (1958); Prestwich, Cranfield (1966).

³Earl of Kellie to earl of Mar, 24 March 1624 (Mar and Kellie suppl., p. 197).

⁴Same to same, 6 April 1624 (*ibid.*, p. 198); John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 10 April 1624 (Chamberlain, ii. 553); Dudley Carleton to same, 4, 14 April 1624 (CSPD, 1623-5, pp. 207, 214); D'Ewes, Autobiography, i. 246; Valaresso to the doge, 12 April 1624 (CSP Venetian, 1623-5, p. 268); Gardiner, v. 230.

James, significantly, did not participate in the attack on Cranfield.¹ He warned Buckingham: 'By God, Steenie, you are a fool, and will shortly repent this folly, and will find that in this fit of popularity you are making a rod with which you will be scourged yourself.' He told Charles 'that he would live to have his bellyful of parliaments'.² Undeterred, the two young men took advantage of their popularity as supporters of a war against Spain with the house of commons to have impeachment procedures started against Middlesex in April.³ In May he was found guilty by the house of lords, and his downfall was complete. Brett suffered along with his alleged master. In July he was sent to the Fleet prison 'without any cause expressed', and after a few weeks, was released with the command not to come within ten miles of the court.⁴ With the fall of Middlesex and Brett, Buckingham had consolidated his position. Brett was not to be the favourite, nor Middlesex the chief minister.

¹Tawney, Business and politics, pp. 268-9.

²Clarendon, i. 37.

³Tawney, Business and politics, chapter viii; Prestwick, chapter x; R. E. Ruigh, The parliament of 1624; prerogative, politics and foreign policy, chapter vii.

⁴John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 24 July, 4 Sept. 1624 (Chamberlain, ii. 571, 580).

In the midst of the attack on Middlesex, Buckingham found it necessary to protect himself from another very real threat which also sprang from the trip to Spain and the question of the Spanish marriage. This was the return in March of 1624 of John Digby, earl of Bristol, the English ambassador to the Spanish court. Buckingham and Bristol fell foul of each other in Spain and Buckingham, on his return, had determined to ruin him. In December 1623 he persuaded James to recall Bristol. He soon came to realize that Bristol's presence in England and his consistent support of the Spanish marriage jeopardized his position even more. Bristol could very well undermine his anti-Spanish policy if he were allowed to remain near the king. Bristol's ruin was a necessity if his own position was to remain unchallenged. Buckingham persuaded James not to grant Bristol an audience when he returned and ordered him confined to his house. Buckingham was anxious that Bristol not be available to corroborate the story of the Spanish ambassadors regarding his improprieties at the Spanish court. He succeeded in isolating Bristol until that danger was past, but the quarrel between the two men smoldered on. The quarrel only flared into the open in 1626 when each accused the other of high treason in the house of

lords.¹

With the ruin of Middlesex and the eclipse of Bristol, Buckingham felt secure for a time. The greatest threat now came from the king himself. James had been ill throughout 1624. Since Buckingham's position depended entirely on the favour of the king, the imminent death of James vitally concerned his future. Lord Keeper Williams had this in mind when he wrote Buckingham regarding a successor to the office of lord steward, vacant since the death of the duke of Lennox. Williams advised Buckingham to either fill this post himself or to eliminate it for the time being. Among the reasons he gave for this advice, these two are the most telling:

It keeps you, in all charges and alterations of years, near the king; and gives unto you all the opportunities of access, without envy of a favourite. . . . It gives you opportunities to gratify all the court, great and small, virtute officii, in right of your place: which is a thing better accepted of, and interpreted, than a courtesy from a favourite; because in this you are a dispenser of your own, but in the other (say many envious men) of the king's goodness, which would flow fast enough of it self, but that it is restrained to this pipe and channel only.²

¹Gardiner, vi. 92-8, 112, 114, 118-21.

²Lord Keeper Williams to Buckingham, 2 March 1625 (Cabala, pp. 280-1; Original letters illustrative of English history (1846), ed. Sir Henry Ellis, series 3, iv. 191-5 [hereafter cited as Original letters]).

Williams wrote this sound piece of advice in the very month of the death of James. Buckingham had received a timely reminder that, as his position was entirely dependent on James, the king's death could end his career.

Indeed, with the death of James, there were some who hoped that Charles would dismiss Buckingham from favour. It was reasonable to expect this. Seldom did a favourite negotiate the chasm between the father's reign and the son's. In the particular case, there were overt reasons for hoping Buckingham would fall, for at first Charles had disliked him. Charles resented that his father paid more attention to his favourite than he did to his son. His animosity had led him to play several pranks on the favourite, with subsequent quarrels in which James chastised his son and sided with his favourite.¹ In 1618 after a bitter quarrel between Charles and Buckingham, James decided to end the bickering once and for all, by calling them both into his presence and forcing a reconciliation, commanding them to befriend one another.² From this

¹Willson, James, p. 407.

²Earl of Kellie to earl of Mar, 3 June, 18 July 1618 (Mar and Kellie suppl., pp. 84, 85); Willson, James, p. 407.

time on, Buckingham and Charles affected to be great friends, though in 1622 the Venetian ambassador reported that an angry dispute took place between them which was quickly quenched; later that year the ambassador remarked:

[Charles] hates [Buckingham] and he has shown his teeth several times. Generally to please his majesty, he caresses him like a brother, or rather behaves as if the favourite were prince and himself less than a favourite.¹

Many believed that when Charles became king, his true feelings would come out against Buckingham. By 1625 there was no basis for the belief; much had taken place since 1622. Charles and Buckingham had been companions on their romantic trip to Madrid, had returned with a commitment to the same policy, and had been inevitably drawn together in order to protect that policy from James. What had started as a surface attachment to please James had ended as a real affection from which the king was somewhat excluded.

Buckingham made the transition between reigns with his power augmented, not decreased.² Some

¹Lando to the Doge, 11 March 1622 (CSP Venetian, 1621-3, p. 261).

²Earl of Kellie to earl of Mar, 7, 8 April, 22 Oct., 7 Nov. 1625 (Mar and Kellie suppl., pp. 227, 228, 235, 236); Sir George Goring to Sir D. Carleton, 8 Sept. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 100); Sir Tobie Matthew to same, 17 April 1625 (ibid., p. 10); Salvetti to the duke of Tuscany, 11 April 1625 (HMC, Eleventh report, appendix, part 1: The manuscripts of Henry Duncan Skrine: Salvetti correspondence, p. 3 [hereafter cited as Skrine MSS]).

few months after the accession of Charles, Sir John North observed to the earl of Leicester: 'My lord duke's creatures are the men that rise, the king's servants having little hope of preferment.'¹ Sir Arthur Ingram echoed these words when he observed,

The duke's power with the king for certain is exceeding great; and who he will advance, shall be advanced; and who he does but frown upon, must be thrown down. All the great officers of the kingdom be now his creatures, and at his command.²

In the new reign Buckingham was the dominant figure in shaping policy and controlling patronage.

But Buckingham had first to render Charles' French wife, Henrietta Maria, harmless. She arrived in England in June of 1625, and already by July she and Buckingham were quarrelling. The earl of Kellie informed the earl of Mar that the rumour was out that 'all the queen's side, both French and the English, are strongly set against the duke'.³ There were several issues between the queen and the favourite. Both were forceful personalities; it was inevitable that each

¹ Sir John North to earl of Leicester, 4 Nov. 1625 (HMC, The manuscripts of the Rt. Hon. Viscount De L'Isle: Sidney papers, 1611-26, v. 411 [hereafter cited as De L'Isle MSS]).

² Sir Arthur Ingram to Sir Thomas Wentworth, 7 Nov. 1625 (The earl of Strafforde's letters and dispatches (1714), ed. William Knowler, i. 28).

³ Earl of Kellie to earl of Mar, 25 July 1625 (Mar and Kellie suppl., p. 230).

should see the other as an obstacle to the complete engrossment of the king's favour. From the very beginning, Charles resented the French household of the queen, which he saw as the cause of his troubles with his bride. Henrietta Maria, on the other hand, saw Buckingham as the cause of their troubles, and felt that he stirred Charles against the French attendants in order to control her and forment quarrels between Charles and herself.¹

Henrietta Maria became the obvious focal point for schemes against the duke. In August of 1625 Buckingham and Pembroke had a falling out because one of the queen's household told the story 'that the queen was resolved to take Pembroke by the hand and make a party against Buckingham, which was false indeed'.² False indeed it was, but it might well have been true. This great peer, the richest in the realm, had had a long series of quarrels with Buckingham, some minor, some more serious. One of the early quarrels illustrates how patronage worked. Pembroke, as lord

¹Madame de Motteville, 'Memoirs', in Memoirs pour servir à l'histoire de France (1838), series 2, x. 20.

²Earl of Kellie to earl of Mar, 15 Aug. 1625 (Mar and Kellie suppl., p. 233).

chamberlain, had the gift of the offices in the king's household. In 1619 he and Buckingham disputed the appointment of Sir Clement Cotterell to a position in the household, but

the king cut off the difference about the groom-portership by telling the lord chamberlain that what right soever he had, he should bestow it upon him [the king], so that . . . a creature of the lord of Buckingham's placed in it by him continues the possession without interruption. . . .¹

Thus, the king usurped the right of his officer by telling him to bestow the right upon himself, then using it in the interests of his favourite. Pembroke had ample reason to dislike Buckingham, and if he had joined forces with the queen, things might well have gone hard for Buckingham. But Henrietta Maria was for toleration of catholicism and peace, while Pembroke was a staunch protestant and favoured vigorous action against Spain.

As it happened, Buckingham was able to render the queen powerless; after Charles expelled the French household in 1626, the favourite surrounded the queen with the ladies of his family and of his supporters.²

¹ John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 20 Nov. 1619 (Chamberlain, ii. 275); cf. Earl of Leicester to countess of Leicester, 3 Oct. 1619 (De L'Isle MSS., v. 419); 10 July 1620 (Feodera, xvii. 236-8).

² The Venetian ambassador thought that Buckingham was behind the expulsion (rough notes by Contarini of an intended 'relation' of England, CSP Venetian, 1626-8, p. 614). It is clear, however, that it was Charles, not Buckingham, who initially wished the French expelled (Charles to Buckingham, two letters both dated 20 Nov. 1625 [Miscellaneous state papers from 1501 to 1726, ed. Philip, earl of Hardwicke, ii. 2, 3]).

The queen was the last possible threat to his power within the court.¹ The threat had been quite real. One month after Buckingham's death the Venetian ambassador wrote 'every day she [the queen] concentrates in herself the favour and love that were previously divided between her and the duke'.² By 1627 Buckingham's control was unchallenged, and Contarini could write that 'without Buckingham nothing of importance will be decided'.³ It was at this time that Buckingham began to be addressed in petitions as 'high and mighty prince, George, duke of Buckingham', 'right glorious prince George, duke of Buckingham', or 'illustrious prince, the duke of Buckingham'.⁴

Seen in retrospect, the career of Buckingham has an aura of inevitability about it. Surely he was destined to attain more and more power, engross more and more of the government into his hands. Yet this retrospective view is false, and hinders an understanding

¹Cf. David Harris Wilson, The privy councillors in the house of commons, 1604-29, chapter vi: 'The duke of Buckingham and the management of parliament'; see below, pp. 286 ff., for possible threat from parliament.

²Contarini to Zorzi, 26 Sept. 1628 (CSP Venetian, 1628-9, pp. 310-11).

³Same to the doge, 25 Oct. 1627 (CSP Venetian, 1626-8, p. 432).

⁴CSPD, 1627-8, pp. 27, 43, passim.

of his actions in his various roles as courtier, favourite, and chief minister. It was quite fortuitous that he became the favourite of James; had Somerset played his role wisely, Buckingham might never have achieved eminence. If the anti-Spanish faction had not helped overthrow the Howards, Buckingham might never have controlled the administration. Arthur Brett had been a danger. So also had been Middlesex; had Charles not been at his side in this encounter, Middlesex might well have triumphed. Above all, with Henrietta Maria there was a real threat. Reflection on the role she played in the latter years of the reign of Charles underlines the possibility of her having assumed that role from the start, and that undoubtedly she would have liked to do so.

It follows therefore that Buckingham's actions ought to be seen as very natural ones for a reigning favourite who wished to preserve his power and influence. The duke did not ruin men whimsically. Buckingham merely did what every other favourite had done in similar circumstances. 'Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown'; how much more so the head of a favourite whose position was sanctioned by neither legal nor moral authority, but was maintained solely by winning against all those who would succeed him.

Understandably, yet unfortunately, Buckingham was never able to distinguish between his role as favourite and his role as chief minister, and it is this lack of differentiation which gives his handling of patronage its characteristic flavour.

CHAPTER III

PATRIMONY: THE VILLIERS CONNEXION

The first efforts of King James for the Villiers family were directed at Buckingham himself. He was knighted in 1615, created Baron Whaddon and Viscount Villiers in 1616, earl of Buckingham in 1617, marquis of Buckingham in 1618, and duke of Buckingham in 1623.¹ Of this last title the Venetian ambassador noted: 'It should be an inauspicious honour, for they recall that the last bearer of this title was beheaded.'² To titles of honour, offices were added: in 1616 the household office of master of the horse, in 1619 the office of lord high admiral, and in 1624 the office of lord warden of the Cinque Ports. There were also several more minor posts held by Buckingham. By early 1619 the friendship of James had brought Buckingham an income of over £13,500 a year: some £5,000 yearly in land, over £8,500 in various crown

¹G.E.C., Peerage, ii. 391-4.

²Valaresso to the doge, 2 Nov. 1623 (CSP Venetian, 1623-5, p. 28).

grants such as customs revenues and pensions.¹

Contemporaries were to accuse Buckingham of engrossing all honours to himself; a listing of his style in the reign of Charles may give flavour to the complaint:

George, Duke, Marquis, and Earl of Buckingham, Earl of Coventry, Viscount Villiers, Baron of Whaddon, Great Admiral of the Kingdoms of England and Ireland, and of the Principality of Wales, and of the Dominions and Islands of the same, of the town of Calais, and of the Marches of the same, and of Normandy, Gascoigne, and Guienne, General, Governour of the Seas and Ships of the said Kingdom, Lieutenant-General Admiral, Captain-General and Governor of his Majesty's Royal Fleet and Army lately sent forth, Master of the Horse of our Sovereign Lord the King, Lord Warden, Chancellor, and Admiral of the Cinque-Ports, and of the members thereof, Constable of Dover Castle, Justice in Eyre of the Forests and Chases on this side the River Trent, Constable of the Castle of Windsor, Gentleman of his Majesty's Bed-Chamber, one of his Majesty's Most Honourable Privy-Council in his Realms both in England, Scotland, and Ireland, and Knight of the most Honourable Order of the Garter; Lord President of the Council of War, Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, Steward of the City and College of Westminster.²

Clarendon offered an explanation for this great collection of titles:

¹Note by Sir John Coke, 5 Feb. 1619 (HMC, Twelfth report, appendix, part i: The manuscripts of the earl of Cowper, i. 103-4 [hereafter cited as Cowper MSS]). To this must be added: £12,000 out of the jointure of Queen Anne (CSPD, 1619-23; pp. 48, 49); a patent of monopoly on salt-petre valued at £7,000 yearly (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 163); gifts of money: £20,000 and £30,000 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 453; CSPD, 1625-6, p. 549); various minor grants (CSPD, 1623-5, pp. 439, 453; CSPD, 1625-6, p. 536), a monopoly on sea coals valued at £8,000 (HMC, Fourth report, appendix: The manuscripts of the Rt. Hon. the earl De La Warr, p. 284 [hereafter cited as Knole MSS]). This does not include revenue from gifts, gratuities and presents which his patronage and favour brought him.

²Rushworth, i. 303.

If he had an immoderate ambition, with which he was charged, and is a weed (if it be a weed) apt to grow in the best soils, it does not appear that it was in his nature, or that he brought it with him to court, but rather found it there, and was a garment necessary for that air. Nor was it more in his power to be without promotion and titles and wealth, than for a healthy man to sit in the sun in the brightest dog-days and remain without any warmth. He needed no ambition,¹ who was so seated in the hearts of two such masters.

James had declared as much at a banquet given by Buckingham to mark a reconciliation between himself and Prince Charles. Throughout the dinner, James drank healths to several of the Villiers family present. At the end of the dinner he rose and drank 'a common health' to the family in which he assured them that it was his intention to advance them 'before all others' and even promised them this 'in his posterity's name'.² The royal will had been made clear. The Villiers family was to prosper under the aegis of the crown. And Buckingham, entirely devoted to his family, did all in his power to satisfy its social and financial ambitions.

The guiding spirit of the rise of Buckingham had been his mother, Mary Beaumont, the second wife of

¹Clarendon, i. 57.

²Rev. Thomas Lorkin to Sir Thomas Puckering, 30 June 1618 (Birch, James, ii. 78, 79).

Sir George Villiers. She was now to share in his success and oversee the advancement of the family. She was truly a meddling woman. Although an assessment of her can be balanced by stating that she was entirely devoted to her family, loving them all, even to second and third cousins, exuberantly and excessively, she was nevertheless completely unscrupulous, and her insatiable greed was matched only by her desire for influence.

As Buckingham rose to power, royal officials courted her favour, aspirants for office waited upon her dutifully, and Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, is said to have jested that he had great hopes for the conversion of England, since more prayers and oblations were offered to the mother than to the son.¹ James was willing to tolerate her for a while, but he quickly tired of her busy interference. In November of 1616 Chamberlain reported that she was no longer in London, 'sore against her will, but the reason is said to be . . . that her intermeddling is not so well taken'.² It was impossible, however, to keep her away from court, and in the middle of 1617 she was back. In 1618 she was created countess of Buckingham for life in her own right,³

¹Wilson, The history of Great Britain, p. 149; J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 26 Oct. 1616 (Chamberlain, ii. 30).

²Same to same, 14 Nov. 1616 (*ibid.*, ii. 35).

³G.E.C., Peerage, ii. 393.

her husband, Sir Thomas Compton, remaining a simple baronet. Her absence from the court for the remainder of that year led Chamberlain to suspect that that had been the price for the title.¹ If so, she reneged on delivery, for early in 1619 she was back again and stayed except for short absences.²

Perhaps the reason the countess was absent in the last months of 1618 and early months of 1619 is found in her blatant effort to sell an office. Two suitors each offered £4,000 for her support. She told one he could have it for £5,000, 'all this passing without the knowledge of his Majesty'. James inquired of Buckingham how his mother dared offer to sell the office without the king's knowledge, then commanded that neither he nor his mother support anyone for that place.³ James objected to the attempted sale without his knowledge; the sale itself was apparently unobjectionable. The morality of the times would have

¹J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 19 July 1617, 8 Aug. 1618, 6 Feb. 1619 (Chamberlain, ii. 88-9, 163, 211).

²Same to same, 13 Feb. 1619 (*ibid.*, ii. 212).

³Sir Francis Coke to Lord Willoughby, Nov. or Dec. 1618 (HMC, The manuscripts of the earl of Ancaster, p. 393); cf. for date letter from St. John to Buckingham, 24 Nov. 1618 (The Fortescue papers, ed. S. R. Gardiner, pp. 66-7).

regarded sale without the knowledge of the king as an invalid contract. With the king's knowledge sale had a quasi-legal, pseudo-ethical aura.

Again in 1618 the countess extorted a present from a suitor. The countess supported Sir Humphrey May in his bitter, though successful, attempt to become chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster; she received the lease and possession of the duchy's London property, Savoy house.¹ The rest of her patronage was minor: small offices, lesser ecclesiastical posts, an occasional baronetcy for a friend. The major efforts of the countess were spent in overseeing the rise of her numerous family. This entailed procuring peerages, offices, grants of land and money, and marriageable heiresses for Buckingham's brothers, while finding promising husbands who could be given all these in return for marrying his sisters, nieces, and other female kin.

John, the elder full brother of Buckingham, was knighted and made a groom of the bedchamber of Prince Charles in 1616.² In 1617 his mother cast

¹J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 16 March 1618 (Chamberlain, ii. 149).

²Same to same, 9 Nov. 1616 (*ibid.*, ii. 32-3).

about for a wife, and settled upon Frances Coke, the beautiful daughter of Sir Edward Coke and his wife, Lady Elizabeth Hatton. Thomas Coke wrote his brother, John Coke, that the choice was a good one, but added, 'the strains in the handling breed storms'.¹ John Villiers was 'weak in mind and body';² Frances, a beautiful heiress. The struggle waged by Lady Hatton against the countess of Buckingham and her own husband to prevent this marriage does not belong here.³ It is enough to note that Sir Edward Coke had recently been removed from his chief justiceship and saw this marriage of his daughter to the brother of the favourite as a certain means of regaining office. Though the countess demanded an exorbitant dowry, Coke reluctantly agreed to the terms.⁴ The marriage took place in September of 1617 with James in attendance. Lady Hatton was prostrate; she lay in bed 'crazy in body and sick in mind'.⁵ It proved a barren triumph

¹Thomas Coke to John Coke, 1 March 1617 (Cowper MSS, i. 94).

²Gardiner, iii. 87.

³Ibid., iii. 87-99; Spedding, vi. 217-57.

⁴J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 19 July 1617 (Chamberlain, ii. 88-9).

⁵Same to same, 11 Oct. 1617 (ibid., ii. 100-1).

for Coke. The day prior to the wedding he was allowed to resume his seat in the privy council, but he never regained his office of chief justice.

This transaction was sordid enough, but there was more to come. Having mulcted Coke, the countess of Buckingham started on Lady Hatton, who had recovered her senses well enough to put a good face on the matter. Lady Hatton was wined and dined; James was persuaded to put pressure on her, and Chamberlain reported:

If the Lady Hatton will give present possession of the isle of Purbeck to her son[in-law] John Villiers and assure the rest that they demand, she shall be made countess of Purbeck and he [John] viscount; if not, Sir Edward Coke, her husband, is to be made a baron to spite her.¹

The rumour was prevalent that she was to be created a countess² but 'she would not come up to the price'.³

Lady Hatton refused to part with Purbeck; she never became a countess. John, nevertheless, was created Viscount Purbeck in June of 1619; presumably he was given the title Purbeck in the belief that the island would come to Frances, and thus to him, on the death of Lady Hatton. He really did not need the land anyway,

¹ Same to same, 31 May 1619 (ibid., ii. 239-41).

² Rev. T. Lorkin to Sir Thomas Fockerling, 16 Feb. 1619 (Goodman, ii. 182).

³ Thomson, i. 183.

for in the same month as his creation as viscount, he was given the keeping of Denmark house, vacant by the recent death of Anne of Denmark.¹ Further, when Buckingham received his earldom early in January of 1617, a patent was drawn up within two months granting the reversion of the barony of Whaddon, the viscountcy of Villiers, and the earldom of Buckingham, to John and his heirs male, with remainder to Christopher, the younger full brother, in the event that Buckingham should die without male issue.²

In January 1620, Purbeck became master of the horse to Prince Charles;³ but a great tragedy terminated any further advancement for him. Later that year he began to have fits of madness, recurring more and more frequently for longer and longer periods. From 1620 to 1627 he spent most of the time in the country to avoid scandal, coming to court only in his lucid intervals. This was tragedy enough, but more followed. Purbeck's condition did not make for marital bliss, and Lady

¹ John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 26 June 1619 (Chamberlain, ii. 248-9).

² 'List of creations of peers and baronets, compiled from the Public Record Office: Richard III to Charles I to 1646', in 47th annual report of the deputy keeper of the public records (1886), p. 104 (hereafter cited as 'List of creations'); CSPD, 1611-18, p. 446.

³ Sir Francis Nethersole to Sir D. Carleton, 18 Jan. 1620 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 114).

Purbeck, still young and beautiful, fell in love with Sir Robert Howard, the son of the unpopular and discredited earl of Suffolk.¹ John seems to have loved Frances dearly; in December of 1624, she was ill of small-pox, and John sat at the foot of her bed refusing to leave.² When the scandal of her child broke, John either out of vanity or love, claimed it as his own. It availed nothing; Buckingham had Purbeck placed under close guard for 'Sir Robert and Lady Purbeck, by their crafty insinuations, will draw from him speeches to their advantage'.³ Allied to the charge of adultery brought against Lady Purbeck by Buckingham were horrible additional accusations that she had conspired to kill Buckingham and drive Purbeck mad by witchcraft; the rumour had it that a wax figure of the favourite had been found in her chambers.⁴ This was unfortunate, but Buckingham had a genuine concern for his brother.

¹J. Chamberlain to same, 12 Feb. 1625 (Chamberlain, ii. 599); Earl of Kellie to earl of Mar, 26 Jan. 1625 (Mar and Kellie suppl., p. 220).

²J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 12 Feb. 1625 (Chamberlain, ii. 599).

³Buckingham to Chief Justice Sir Randall Crew, 11 Feb. 1625 (CSPD, 1623-5, pp. 471-2).

⁴J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 26 Feb. 1625 (Chamberlain, ii. 601); Earl of Kellie to earl of Mar, 26 Jan. 1625 (Mar and Kellie suppl., p. 220).

Buckingham had written Bishop Laud concerning a man who claimed to be able to heal Purbeck: Laud informed him that the man, who remained anonymous, could not cure Purbeck.¹ His concern for his brother was also evident when the scandal broke in February of 1625, at a time when he was extremely busy preparing to leave for France to bring over Henrietta Maria, the wife of Charles. But he informed James of his brother's distraught condition and that he would remain longer with him than he had expected. With genuine fraternal concern, he told James that ' . . . by leaving him in the midst of his troubles, I should give him too just cause to think, I cared no more for him than to serve my turns of him'.²

The youngest of the Villiers brothers was Christopher. Though he was stupid and homely,³ his mother also sought an heiress for him. She was to be singularly unlucky. Her first choice, the widow of Sir Henry Howard, 'a great heiress', escaped by marrying Sir William Cavendish;⁴ her third choice had

¹William Laud, The works of . . . William Laud, eds. William Scott and James Bliss, vii. 623 (hereafter cited as Laud, Works).

²Buckingham to James, probably Feb. 1625 (printed in Williamson, appendix i, pp. 268-9).

³Willson, James, p. 387.

⁴J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 24 Oct. 1618 (Chamberlain, ii. 174).

been Lady Elizabeth Norris, daughter and heir of the earl of Berkshire. No doubt with the prospective marriage of Christopher in mind, Lord Norris had been raised in the peerage to Viscount Thame and earl of Berkshire in 1621.¹ When Berkshire committed suicide early in 1622, Chamberlain reported that the coroner had been ordered to suppress 'the manner of the earl of Berkshire's death' because Christopher Villiers was to marry his daughter.² Lady Elizabeth was placed under the care of Philip, earl of Montgomery. Lady Elizabeth fled to the home of the earl of Oxford and married Edward Wray, the son of Sir William Wray, a gentleman of the bedchamber. Sir William, who owed his place to Buckingham,³ felt the Villiers vengeance: he was dismissed from his post. Chamberlain commented on the elopement: 'The gentlewoman carried herself very cunningly and resolutely, not so much (as is thought) for the love of the one as to be rid of the other.'⁴

It is the story of the efforts to snare the second victim which permits an estimate of just how far

¹'List of creations', p. 106.

²J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 16 Feb. 1622 (Chamberlain), ii. 423).

³Same to same, 5 May 1618 (*ibid.*, ii. 161).

⁴Same to same, 30 March 1622 (*ibid.*, ii. 429).

James was willing to go to gratify the Villiers. In May of 1619 the family settled on the daughter of the lord mayor of London, Sir Sebastian Harvey, a wealthy merchant. Sir Gerard Herbert in reporting the wooing of the daughter by Christopher intimated that Christopher was to be made a baron,¹ no doubt in the hope of making him more socially attractive. In that same month Chamberlain reported that Harvey was very sick,

. . . surfeited upon messages sent him by the king about his only daughter, whom the countess of Buckingham will have for her son Christopher, and the mayor being a willful and dogged man, will not yield by any means fair nor foul as yet, and wishes himself and his daughter both dead rather than to be compelled.²

The absolute refusal by Harvey ended the matter for the moment, but only for the moment. James was again pressing the lord mayor in October, sending messages accusing him of being rude to Christopher, asking questions about a judicial error Harvey had made years ago, demanding that he be notified before Harvey matched his daughter with anyone, and assuring him that though Christopher was a younger son, he, James, would make

¹Sir Gerard Herbert to Sir D. Carleton, 24 May 1619 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 47).

²J. Chamberlain to same, 31 May 1619 (Chamberlain, ii. 241).

him a 'fit and competent match' for his daughter, if the lord mayor would inform him of what he demanded.¹

Harvey replied protesting that he and his family had treated 'Mr Villiers with all good respect we could, and that my daughter (by my wife's leave) did spend an hour at least with him before dinner before my coming home'. He added that he would favour the match 'if liking might grow on both parties, wherein my furtherance has not been wanting'; that Christopher has always been welcome 'though it has pleased him to conceive otherwise'. As for the judicial error, he excused himself on the grounds that the error was not his alone, and humbly added that 'our breeding has not been such but that we may sometimes unwillingly transgress, which I hope his Highness will graciously consider and pardon'. Harvey reiterated his promise not to match his daughter with anyone without first informing the king, but refused to state what James would have to do to make the match with Christopher more suitable, on the grounds that the word of the king was good enough for him. He concluded by stating he did not see the need to enter into terms 'before it be known whether Mr Villiers and my daughter shall like

¹Statement of Sir Sebastian Harvey, 2 Oct. 1619 (Fortescue papers, pp. 84-5); Sir S. Harvey to Sir Robert Heath, Oct. 1619 (*ibid.*, pp. 86-8).

each other or not'.¹

This was not a satisfactory reply, but Harvey held out. Finally, in May of 1620, obviously for his rejection of Christopher, Harvey was fined £2,000 in Star Chamber '. . . for some error committed by him or his under-sheriff in his shrievalty ten years since. If his daughter could be induced to affect Christopher Villiers, it is generally thought it had not been called in question.'² As for Christopher, in his disappointment he seems to have found solace in the favours of his distant cousin, Anne Sheldon. In June of 1622 Chamberlain reported that Christopher Villiers had given her 'such earnest that he cannot well forsake the bargain', adding in a later letter that Christopher was to be made an earl 'if he can be taken off his wench'.³ He could not 'be taken off his wench'; he married her, and, perhaps as a result, his earldom came in 1623 rather than 1622.⁴

The only misfortunes Christopher suffered were these marriage rejections. In 1617 he became a

¹Ibid.

²J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 27 May 1620 (Chamberlain, ii. 306).

³Same to same, 8, 22 June 1622 (ibid., ii. 439, 441).

⁴Same to same, 19 April 1623 (ibid., ii. 490).

groom of the bedchamber, in 1620 master of the wardrobe to Prince Charles, in 1622 a gentleman of the bed-chamber, and in 1623 Baron Daventry and earl of Anglesey.¹ To these honours were added pensions totalling £1,200 annually, lands to the value of £400 annually, gifts in cash totalling over £2,000 and miscellaneous grants of land or money of unspecified amounts.² All these he acquired before the death of James. In the first three years of the reign of Charles another pension of £1,000 was added, the grant of a royal manor near his other lands, gifts of cash to the total of £6,000, plus other minor grants.³ The two pensions and the £400 in land made his yearly income £2,600; certainly the other grants brought it up to at least £3,000; the outright gifts of cash would average out to about £700 a year. Yet in 1627 he complained to his brother about the lack of preferment which he attributed to 'his unworthiness' rather than 'unwillingness' on the part of his brother.⁴ But

¹CSPD, 1611-18, p. 432; CSPD, 1619-23, pp. 114, 555; J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 1 July 1622, 19 April 1623 (Chamberlain, ii. 443, 490).

²CSPD, 1611-18, p. 440; CSPD, 1619-23, pp. 447, 497, 524, 573; CSPD, 1623-5, pp. 111, 443, 507.

³CSPD, 1625-6, pp. 12, 163, 539; CSPD, 1628-9, p. 209, 223; 4 June, Dec. 1625 (Foedera, xviii. 113, 233-6).

⁴Christopher, earl of Anglesey to Buckingham, 1 Sept. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 327).

Christopher had some weaknesses also. Reverend Joseph Mead reported that within a month of the accession of Charles, Christopher was ordered from court because of his drunken habits.¹ It is doubtful that Christopher would have come to honour and wealth had not he been the brother of Buckingham. But then, this was true of the whole family.

The career of Buckingham's half-brother, Edward, illustrates the shifting of office which was characteristic of much of the patronage of Buckingham. Edward was knighted in September of 1617, and in October was made master of the mint, an office estimated by contemporaries to be worth between £1,500 and £2,000 a year.² In 1623, other sources of income having been found for him, his place at the mint was given to Sir Randall Cranfield, brother of Lord Treasurer Middlesex. Sir Edward was satisfied with an annuity of £1,000 yearly.³ In 1624 Middlesex fell from favour, and with him fell his brother; Edward was again

¹Rev. Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, 23 April 1625 (Birch, Charles, i. 12).

²CSPD, 1611-18, pp. 426, 490; John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 18 Oct. 1617 (Chamberlain, ii. 105); Lord Carew to Sir Thomas Roe, Dec. 1617 (cited in gazette dated 18 Jan. 1618, CSPD, 1611-18, p. 516).

³CSPD, 1623-5, pp. 273, 300; John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 26 July 1623 (Chamberlain, ii. 511).

appointed master of the mint, less than a year after he had left it.¹ Two months before the death of James, Sir Edward was appointed lord president of Munster, succeeding the late earl of Thomond.² He once more relinquished the office at the mint, only to be re-appointed later that same year, but retaining the lord presidency.³ Thus, he was in and out of the same office three times in as many years. Sir Edward and Sir Randall Cranfield were rumoured to have made from £5,000 to £6,000 a year from their office in the mint. When Sir Robert Harley, the son-in-law of Sir Edward Conway, became master, the king assigned definite rates and a salary of £500 a year, keeping the revenue for himself.⁴

There were other gifts as well: a pension of £500 in 1624, bringing his yearly income from royal funds alone to £1,500; some lands of the duchy of Lancaster; and some 'woody grounds' in the royal forest of Dean with the right to cut timber in spite of statutes prohibiting this. He immediately relinquished

¹ CSPD, 1623-5, pp. 273, 287; John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 3 July 1624 (Chamberlain, ii. 569).

² CSPD, 1623-5, p. 450.

³ CSPD, 1625-6, p. 55.

⁴ Sir John Craig, The mint, pp. 143-4.

this grant for £3,000 cash out of royal funds.¹ Sir Edward was involved in a variety of sales of pardons and peerages and held monopolies; the most notorious was the gold and silver thread monopoly in which Sir Edward had invested £4,000.² His death in 1626 ended his profiteering on the good fortune of his step-brother.

Surely the most enigmatic of the Villiers was Buckingham's half-brother, William. He gained little from the success of his young step-brother. The eldest son of the family, he never came to court. He does not

¹Notes by Sir J. Coke of an audience with the king, 6 Feb. 1624 (Cowper MSS, i. 159); CSPD, 1628-9, p. 148; T. Locke to Sir D. Carleton, 28 May 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, pp. 30, 538).

²Cf. CSPD, 1623-5, p. 359; CSPD, 1625-6, pp. 302, 323; CSPD, 1627-8, p. 498; The Lismore papers, ed. A. B. Grosart, i. 249, 266, 269; ii. 2; The commons debates 1621, eds. Wallace Notestein, F. H. Relf and H. Simpson, vii, 365; ii-vi, *passim*. For grants of patents and monopolies procured by Buckingham for his family and clients in the period prior to 1621 cf. Commons debates 1621, vii. 312, 367, 379, 391-2, 415-17, 461, 469-70. For his procuring of the enrollment of grants cf. *ibid.*, vii. 311, 332, 340, 345, 348-9, 370, 379, 386-7, 390, 416-17, 429, 443, 458, 470. For the significance of the attacks on the patents in relation to Buckingham cf. Gardiner, iv. 45, 51-4, 85. See also E. R. Foster, 'The procedure of the House of Commons against patents and monopolies, 1621-1624', in Conflict in Stuart England, eds. W. A. Aiken and B. D. Henning, pp. 57-86. For a general discussion of the whole system see W. H. Price, The English patents of monopolies.

seem to have solicited any favour from Buckingham. Perhaps all he owed Buckingham was his baronetcy which he obtained in July of 1619.¹ Wotton's only comment on William was that he 'abstained from court, enjoying perhaps the greater greatness of self-fruition.'²

Buckingham did not neglect to advance the social and financial ambitions of the distaff side of the family. Petitioners to royal officials for favours would sometimes promise the officer that he would receive 'extraordinary thanks from all three great ladies of my duke of Buckingham's family'.³ The countess of Buckingham has already been introduced;⁴ the other two 'great ladies' were Catherine, daughter of the earl of Rutland and wife of the duke, and Susan, his sister.

Catherine was a much more pleasant person than her mother-in-law. The duchess was a sweet, loving wife, who seems to have borne as well as she could her philandering, untrustworthy husband. She

¹'List of creations', p. 128.

²Wotton, *Reliquiae Wottonianae*, p. 237. Indeed it would be quite possible to forget the existence of William, and the author of the article on 'George Villiers' in the *DNB* (lviii, 327 ff.) has done so. William is mentioned, though, in the article on 'Edward Villiers' (*DNB*, lviii. 324).

³Cf. Elizabeth Carey to Sec. Conway, 18 May 1627 (*CSPD*, 1627-8, p. 182); John Hope to _____, 20 April 1628 (*CSPD*, 1628-9, p. 81).

⁴See above, pp. 63 ff.

wrote him touching letters, but she seems to have disliked the life he lead. The letters are a curious juxtaposition of family news and loving comments, complaints about his absence, and requests for friends and relatives.

While Buckingham was preparing to leave for the isle of Rhé, his half-sister, Anne, wife of Sir William Washington, wrote the duke asking for the creation of two baronets, explaining that they had obtained only momentary relief from the creation of a knight.¹ On June 15, Catherine wrote supporting her sister-in-law's request, reminding her husband of his promise to his sister and requesting that he see to the matter at once.² The next day she wrote for money, complaining that she needed £400 or £500 to pay the tradesmen who 'haunt her so that she cannot stir for them'.³ Catherine had not forgotten her sister-in-law's needs and wrote once more reminding her husband of his sister's suit.⁴ Later that week she discovered

¹Anne Washington to Buckingham, n.d., but 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 217).

²Catherine duchess of Buckingham to Buckingham, 15 June 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 217).

³Same to same, 16 June 1627 (*ibid.*, p. 218).

⁴Same to same, 19 June 1627 (*ibid.*, p. 223).

that Buckingham intended to go directly to Portsmouth, although he had promised to see her before he sailed. On June 23 she wrote expressing how hurt she felt by this, but again taking occasion to recommend two of his cousins who wanted to join his service.¹ When she learned that he was definitely not going to see her before he set sail she wrote him a stinging letter, full of reproach. She accused him of deceiving her and promised never to trust him again. She realized his position was demanding on both his person and his time, yet she could not help but grieve at her condition for she saw him so seldom. The life of a courtier did not allow them to share much together and she wished he would be able to terminate his attendance at court.²

Wish though she might that her husband would give up this life of a courtier and keep at home, Catherine benefitted materially from her husband's career at court. James pressed her with gifts, 'persuaded' the East India merchants to give her £1,200 in gold, fondled her children.³ Charles was to show a

¹Same to same, 23 June 1627 (ibid., pp. 227-8).

²Same to same, 26 June 1627 (ibid., pp. 229-30).

³Sec. Conway to Mr. Fotherby, same to duchess of Buckingham, same to Governor of East India Company, 30 July 1623 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 38).

solicitous concern for her and her family after the death of Buckingham; indeed, the creation of the first Admiralty Board, a landmark in the development of the British navy and its administration, was the direct result of the desire of Charles to leave vacant the office of lord admiral so that Catherine could receive the revenues of the office to pay the debts of her deceased husband.¹

The duchess was able to use her influence to benefit her own clients. She obtained the grant of the receivership of recusant fines for 'her servant' George Feilding, a distant relative by marriage to the duke. But late in 1627, when the need of the navy was great, all revenues from the levying of fines on recusants were ordered to be sent directly into the exchequer to be employed in payment of mariners' wages and victuals. Lord Treasurer Marlborough stayed the grant to Feilding. The duchess wrote to Secretary Conway asking him to intercede with the lord treasurer on behalf of Feilding. It took six months for a compromise to be worked out. Feilding was joined with Robert Long, the personal secretary of Lord Treasurer Marlborough, in the

¹Sir Oswyn A. R. Murray, 'The admiralty: part ii', Mariner's Mirror, xxiii. 143 (1937).

receivership.¹ It was perhaps through the favour of the duchess that he was soon after appointed one of the collectors of the duke's tenths for the port of London.² Even the more distant relatives had to be taken under the wing of the duke.

The third great Buckingham lady was Susan, his sister. Susan was not as prominent as her mother or sister-in-law, but her closeness to her brother gave her a role in the distribution of patronage. Suitors quickly learned that Susan had a marked influence on him. She took advantage of her connexions at court, such as her nephew, Endymion Porter, who enjoyed the patronage of both Charles and Buckingham, to relay suits to the king.³ She interceded with Charles on behalf of Henrietta Maria when he refused to allow her to retain her French nurse following the expulsion of all her French attendants in July 1626.⁴ But for the most part she only became the transmitter

¹ Duchess of Buckingham to Sec. Conway, 29 July 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 277); 6 Feb. 1628 (Feodera, xviii. 988-9); Aylmer, The king's servants, p. 139.

² Buckingham to George Feilding, Richard Dike and Richard Kerry, 16 March 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 20).

³ Susan, countess of Denbigh, to Endymion Porter, 22 June 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 227).

⁴ Same to Buckingham, undated, but written after July 1626 (HMC, Report on various collections, vol. v: The manuscripts of Sir Archibald Edmonstone, pp. 125-6 [hereafter cited as Edmonstone MSS]).

of minor suits to her brother and to the king.¹ Susan married Sir William Feilding. In 1620 he was created baron of Newnham Paddockes and Viscount Feilding. Two years later he was raised in the peerage as earl of Denbigh.² In 1621 he became master of the wardrobe, thus adding office to honours.³ The elevation of the men who married Villiers ladies became a characteristic of Buckingham's patronage.⁴

In addition to Susan, Buckingham had three half-sisters: Frances, who never married; Anne, who married Sir William Washington; and Elizabeth, who married Sir John Boteler. Anne apparently was not much

¹Sir Lawrence Hyde to same, 26 Aug. 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 411); Dr Samuel Clerke to Sec. Conway, 18 Dec. 1626 (*ibid.*, p. 499).

²30 Dec. 1620, 14 Sept. 1622 ('List of creations', pp. 106, 108).

³John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 13 Oct. 1621 (Chamberlain, ii. 400).

⁴This form of Buckingham's patronage, as well as his role in the widespread distribution of honours through outright sale, has been seriously studied in the works of Charles R. Mayes ('The sale of peerages in early Stuart England', JMH, xxix. 21-37 [1957]; 'The early Stuarts and the Irish peerage, EHR, lxxiii. 227-51 [1958]) and by Lawrence Stone, first in his article 'The inflation of honours, 1558-1640', (Past and Present, xiv. 45-70 [1958]) and more recently in his lengthy book The crisis of the aristocracy, 1558-1641.

at court and save for the instance where she sought financial relief in the sale of baronetcies, seems not to have sought any favour from Buckingham. The family of Elizabeth was especially prominent in the patronage which Buckingham distributed through the family connection. Sir John Boteler, who married Elizabeth in 1609, was made a baronet in 1620 and was raised to the peerage as Baron Boteler of Brantfield in 1628.¹

Elizabeth gave Buckingham six nieces and two nephews. He was particularly unfortunate in these nephews. Henry, the elder, was a dissolute young man who died in 1617, while William was born an idiot.² Four of the nieces married men who were subsequently ennobled or raised in the peerage. Audrey, the eldest, married Sir Francis Leigh. She had been previously married to Sir Francis Anderson, the son of Sir Edmund Anderson, chief justice of the common pleas in the reign of Elizabeth. When Leigh was created a peer as Baron Dunsmore in 1628, the title was limited to heirs male of his body with remainder to Sir John Anderson, Audrey's eldest son by her first husband.³

¹'List of creations', pp. 116, 128.

²G.E.C., Peerage, ii. 229.

³Ibid., pp. 193-4; 'List of creations', p. 116.

Jane Boteler, only seventeen, married the aged Sir James Ley, the chief justice. In 1624 he was created Baron Ley and was appointed to succeed Middlesex as lord treasurer. At the coronation of Charles he was raised in the peerage as earl of Marlborough. The title was limited to his heirs males by his third wife, Jane Boteler, with remainder to his heirs male by his previous marriages.¹

In 1623 Sir Edward Howard married Mary Boteler. Sir Edward was the seventh son of the discredited former lord treasurer, the earl of Suffolk. The marriage was celebrated at Buckingham's mansion, York house. At the wedding Buckingham promised that he would 'not only be an uncle but a father unto them'. It had been the hope that this union would return Suffolk to the council table, but he never regained favour. Sir Edward was himself raised to the peerage as Baron Howard of Escrick in 1628.²

In 1627 Anne Boteler married Mountjoy Blount who had been created Baron Mountjoy in the Irish

¹G.E.C., Peerage, viii. 488-9; 'List of creations', p. 110; J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 3 Feb. 1621 (Chamberlain, ii. 338).

²G.E.C., Peerage, vi. 586; J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 20 Dec. 1623 (Chamberlain, ii. 533); T. Locke to same, 26 Dec. 1623 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 134).

peerage in 1618. Shortly after his marriage he was created Baron Mountjoy of Thurveston in the English peerage. He served with Buckingham in his escapade against Rochelle, and just a few weeks before the assassination of Buckingham was further raised in the peerage as earl of Newport. Blount was the son of Charles, first earl of Devonshire, by Penelope, wife of Robert, third Lord Rich. He was a bastard brother of the earl of Warwick and apparently married Anne without consulting his brother who was not on good terms with the duke.¹

Only two of the nieces married men who were not ennobled. Olivia married Endymion Porter, who was a great favourite of both James and Charles and was well rewarded for his services. Helen married Sir John Drake, and from this apparently ignoble marriage the famous John Churchill, duke of Marlborough, was descendant. The Drakes were a prominent Cornish family who collected the duke's tenths in the counties of Devon and Somerset.²

¹J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 20 Dec. 1617 (Chamberlain, ii. 122, 122n. 14); G.E.C., Peerage, ix. 549-52; 'List of creations', pp. 113, 116; Rev. Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, 19 Feb. 1627 (Birch, Charles, i. 192).

²G.E.C., Peerage, viii. 491; Buckingham to John Drake and Sir John Drake, his son, 4, 31 Oct. 1625 (CSPD, 1628-9), p. 282).

Endymion Porter was never ennobled, but if his marriage to Olivia did not bring him increased social status, it did bring him material benefits. He served Buckingham as his master of the horse and personal secretary until 1622 when he transferred to the service of Charles, all the while remaining loyal to Buckingham. Porter enjoyed the patronage of both Buckingham and Charles. He was appointed one of the grooms of the bedchamber, given the lease of several manors of the duchy of Cornwall, plus the farm of one of the duchy taxes, and a pension of £500 yearly.¹ And there was more. He was also granted the office of receiver of fines in Star Chamber, worth about £750 a year, an annuity of £500 to replace his pension, metal mining rights in all of Ireland, except Munster, and the occasional gifts of cash from the crown.² His biographer estimates his income at nearly £3,000 yearly, and this does not include perhaps the most lucrative employment, the bribes he received for bringing matters to the attention of the duke.³

¹ CSPD, 1625-6, pp. 23, 210, 255, 538; Feodera, xviii. 629.

² CSPD, 1625-6, p. 581; CSPD, 1628-9, pp. 199, 219; CSP Ireland, 1625-32, pp. 255, 377.

³ Gervas Huxley, Endymion Porter, p. 157; cf. an example of a bribe offered Porter: Sir William St. Leger, President of Munster, to E. Porter, 18 Dec. 1627 (CSP Ireland, 1625-32, p. 294).

Buckingham assumed responsibility for the family of his brother Edward, who died in 1626. Sir Edward Villiers and his wife Barbara, née St John, gave Buckingham a niece and a nephew. He provided for his niece, Elizabeth, by marrying her to Robert Douglas, heir to the Scottish earl of Morton. The marriage was performed before the final marriage contract was drawn up, but, in a memorandum, Buckingham promised to pay the earl £5,000 'as soon as conveniently I may', while the earl agreed to give his son land providing a yearly revenue of £3,000, £1,000 yearly towards the jointure of Elizabeth, and £1,000 'for their present maintenance'.¹ As for his nephew William, he inherited the remainder to the title of Viscount Grandison in the Irish peerage which had been given his uncle Sir Oliver St John in 1621 with remainder to his brother-in-law, Sir Edward Villiers and his heirs male.² Buckingham also provided a pension of £500 a year for both William and his mother, the Lady Barbara Villiers.³

¹Memorandum signed by Buckingham, 28 April 1627 (Edmonstone MSS, p. 125).

²3 Jan. 1621 ('List of creations', p. 106); G.E.C., Peerage, ix. 296, vi. 74-5.

³'Calendar of privy seals, signed bills, etc. for the reign of Charles I', in 43rd annual report of the deputy keeper of the public records (1882), pp. 53, 54 (hereafter cited as 'Calendar of privy seals: Charles I').

Susan, countess of Denbigh, and her husband provided Buckingham with a niece and two nephews. In 1620 he contracted his niece Mary, age seven, to marry James Hamilton, age fourteen, heir of the marquis of Hamilton, an influential Scottish peer at the court of James.¹ This was not a happy marriage. In November 1626, Salvetti reported that the new marquis of Hamilton had returned to Scotland: 'The vulgar say that he is disgusted with his wife, that he will have nothing more to do with her, and will not return to court.'² Mead had received a letter which explained the situation in part. Hamilton left because he had been suspended from the exercise of his office and his pensions stopped,

all which are thought to have been at the first but suspensions to make him the more willing to be persuaded to bed his wife, the duke's niece, which he refused to do, though the duke they say, brought her to him to that end.³

But as late as October 1628, the Venetian ambassador reported that Charles had sent stiff letters to Hamilton to return from Scotland and live with his wife 'whom [he] detests'.⁴

¹G.E.C., Peerage, vi. 261.

²Salvetti to the duke of Tuscany, 6 Nov. 1626 (Skrine MSS, p. 91).

³Extract of a letter from London to Rev. J. Mead, 4 Nov. 1626 (Birch, Charles, i. 166).

⁴Contarini to the doge, 23 Oct. 1628 (CSP Venetian, 1628-9, p. 358).

Susan's eldest child was to succeed to the earldom of Denbigh. Surely the strangest case of Buckingham's provision was for Susan's younger son, George. Richard Preston, Lord Dingwall in the Scottish peerage, had one child, a daughter. Buckingham intended the lady for George. No doubt anticipating the marriage, Buckingham had Preston created earl of Desmond in the Irish peerage in 1619. In 1622, when only eight, George was created Baron Feilding and Viscount Callan in the Irish peerage, but, more important here, he was also granted the reversion to the earldom of Desmond on the death of Preston who had no heirs male. The reversion had been granted to George in view of his prospective marriage to Lady Elizabeth, the daughter of the earl.¹ But the marriage never took place; yet, upon the death of Preston in 1628, George became earl of Desmond.² Reversions to honours were not common, but when they were granted it was usually to members of the family either by blood or marriage.³ Here there were no family connections whatsoever.

¹'List of creations', p. 108.

²G.E.C., Peerage, iv. 257-8.

³'List of creations', pp. 97, 101, 102, 104, 107, 108, 114, 115.

In his own family Buckingham was only able to provide for his daughter Mary, the 'little Moll' of his letters. Just a year prior to his assassination, Mary was created duchess of Buckingham in her own right for life. In the event of the death of her father without a male heir, the title would continue through her heirs male.¹ Mary was contracted to marry the son and heir of the earl of Montgomery in 1626 in the hope of cementing a political alliance with the powerful Herbert brothers, the earls of Pembroke and Montgomery.² Buckingham was unfortunate in not having had the time to know his sons. His first born son, Charles, had died an infant and had precipitated his action to confer his title in his daughter and her heirs male so as to assure that the dignity would not die with him. But just a few months before his assassination his wife bore him a son, George, who inherited the title and lived to be the noted rake of the Restoration court. Another son, Francis, was a posthumous child.³

If Buckingham had taken care of no more than three brothers, three sisters, eight nieces and their

¹Ibid., p. 113.

²See below, pp. 203-4.

³'George Villiers', DNB, lviii. 337.

husbands if they required care, five nephews, a mother, a wife, and a daughter, he would still have created one of the largest family combines in English history; but there was more. Sir Allen Apsley became lieutenant of the Tower of London through his marriage to Lucy St John, the sister-in-law of Sir Edward Villiers. Apsley was later appointed to the lucrative post of surveyor of victuals for the navy.¹ Sir Christopher Perkins, the ex-Jesuit dean of Carlisle, became a master of requests after having 'at three score and seventeen years' negotiated 'to marry a widow sister to the Lady Compton and aunt to the earl of Buckingham'.² Sir Ralph Freeman was joined with Perkins in the mastership after he had married Katherine Brett, a cousin to the duke.³ Lionel Cranfield and James Ley also married into the family, but their advance was not primarily the result of their marriages, though it was one of the conditions for promotion. Of course, it cannot be denied that many welcomed the marriage alliance with

¹ John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 18 Jan., 8 March 1617 (Chamberlain, ii. 50, 58); CSPD, 1628-9, p. 499.

² John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 18 Oct. 1617 (Chamberlain, ii. 105); G. I. Soden, Godfrey Goodman, bishop of Gloucester, p. 114.

³ John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 3 Jan. 1618 (Chamberlain, ii. 124).

the Villiers family for it brought them closer to the source of the patronage of the crown. They looked upon the marriage alliance as a certain avenue of preferment. Viewing all this effort on behalf of the family, Chamberlain sarcastically commented:

In truth she [the countess of Buckingham] is to be commended for having such a care to prefer her poor kindred and friends, and a special work of charity it is to provide for young maids, whereof there be six or seven more, (they say) come lately to town for the same purpose.¹

In all, at least twenty-five members of the Villiers family were advanced to office, or title, or both; and a case could be made for a somewhat larger number. It is not surprising that Sir John Eliot should thunder in his speech against Buckingham in the parliament of 1626,

. . . He raised, and preferred to honours and commands, those of his own alliance, the creatures of his kindred and affection, how mean soever; whilst others, that most deserving, nay all, that were not in this compass, he crossed and opposed.²

Wotton stated with approbation:

In short . . . he left all his female kindred, of the entire or half-blood . . . within any near degree, either matched with peers of the realm actually, or hopefully with earls' sons and heirs, or at least with knights or doctors of divinity, and of plentiful condition.³

¹John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 3 Feb. 1621 (Chamberlain, ii. 338).

²Sir John Eliot to the House of Commons, 10 May 1626 (quoted in John Forster, Sir John Eliot: a biography [1865], i. 547).

³Wotton, Buckingham, p. 27.

Clarendon made a more sober assessment:

[He] exalted all of his own numerous family and dependents, who had no other virtue or merit than their alliance to him, which equally offended the old nobility and the people of all conditions, who saw the flowers of the crown every day fading and withered; whilst the desmesnes and revenues thereof was sacrificed to the enriching a private family, (how well soever originally extracted,) not heard of before ever to the nation.¹

Clarendon expressed the wiser view. The advancement of his family meant that the positions that they received deprived others who then felt cheated. The old nobility was offended at the numerous creations of members of the Villiers family through his good offices. The pressure exerted by his mother, with his aid and the active support of James, upon marriageable heirs and heiresses, made the crown look ludicrous. And when James was willing to subvert justice in the interest of the relatives of his favourite, as in the case of Sir Sebastian Harvey, the crown appeared depraved.

¹Clarendon, i. 16.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHURCH

Patronage in the church was very diffuse; and perhaps the greater portion of the church's livings were in the gift of nobles and lay gentry. The important livings, those which gave the church her policy, administration, and doctrine were those of the cathedral clergy: bishops, deans, and chapters; and these were in the nomination of the king. 'No bishop, no king', James had angrily shouted in 1604, emphasizing a relationship which was to have increasing importance as his and Charles' reigns developed.

The close association of the cathedral clergy with the monarchy did indeed mean that they would stand or fall together. Bishops formed a solid bloc of royal supporters in the house of lords; they had nearly a majority of the votes in the early part of Elizabeth's reign, never less than a quarter under James.¹ Their political association with the crown made them

¹ Christopher Hill, Economic problems of the church from Archbishop Whitgift to the Long Parliament, p. x.

vulnerable to opponents of crown policy who regarded them as one of its major supports. Their wealth and corruption made them odious to that segment of the clergy and laity loosely termed 'puritan', who already had doctrinal objections to the institution of episcopacy itself. Buckingham's handling of the ecclesiastical patronage of the king, especially during the first years of the reign of Charles, was to exacerbate the friction between the episcopate and the people, and seriously weaken the church in its crucial hour.

Buckingham gave little attention to ecclesiastical patronage until the death of James, for James himself took an intense interest in this patronage.¹ Because of James' aversion of the puritan element in the church, he closely watched appointments. James believed that in virtue of his kingly office he was a Cleric among clerics. His love of theological disputation and his coterie of favoured members of the clergy who travelled with him, meant that on the one hand he was well-informed about the religious views of suitors for preferment without the help of Buckingham, and on the other hand that a clique of divines had

¹H. R. Trevor-Roper, 'James I and his bishops', in Historical essays, p. 130 ff.

ample opportunity to advance themselves and their friends without the intercession of the favourite. Consequently, Buckingham was not a major influence in effecting church promotions until after James' death, when he virtually exploded in the now-ripe field. Nevertheless, he had taken at least a casual interest prior to 1625 and was responsible for some appointments.

When Buckingham was just beginning to taste the fruits of his master's favour, he helped secure the bishopric of Carlisle for Robert Snowden in 1616.¹ Chamberlain implies that Buckingham had a part in the preferment of Lewis Bayly to the Welsh bishopric of Bangor in the same year, but his mention of it is too cloudy to attribute Bayly's promotion to the rising favourite.² There was little opportunity for the favourite to profit materially or politically from the appointments at this time. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it seems that in the case of Snowden's

¹Nathaniel Brent to Sir Dudley Carleton, 19 Nov. 1616 (CSPD, 1611-18, pp. 406-7).

²John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 4 Jan. 1617 (Chamberlain, ii. 48).

appointment, Snowden had a friend who was able to persuade the young favourite to use his influence with James to make the appointment. Moreover, when Snowden died in 1621, his widow was granted the first fruits of the see by the king. But lord treasurer Middlesex refused to honour the grant on the grounds that the king could not give away the first fruits. Abigail Snowden petitioned Buckingham to intercede with Middlesex on her behalf. Buckingham wrote to Middlesex advising him to support the grant because Bishop Snowden had been 'an old acquaintance' of his.¹ It is difficult to ascertain his connection with Lewis Bayly, the bishop of Bangor, but in 1626 Bayly wrote his father-in-law expressing his joy that he had 'grown again in extraordinary favour with the duke of Buckingham'.²

Buckingham's influence was definitely effective in the translation of George Carleton from the poor Welsh bishopric of Llandaff to that of Chichester in 1619. Llandaff was in turn conferred upon Theophilus

¹Abigail Snowden to Buckingham, n.d. (Knole MSS, p. 303); Buckingham to Middlesex, 13 Nov. 1621 (*ibid.*, p. 286).

²Bishop of Bangor to Sir Sackville Trevor, 7 Feb. 1626 (*HMC, Fifth report, appendix: The manuscripts of Miss Conway Griffith, p. 411*).

Field also through Buckingham's influence.¹ The relatively minor role that Buckingham played in church patronage at this time is shown when it is considered that only these two preferments were linked to him, yet eight bishoprics changed hands that year, and the six the favourite did not effect were more prestigious than the ones he did.²

John Overall, bishop of Norwich, died in May of 1619. To fill this vacancy Samuel Harsnett was translated from Chichester to Norwich probably through the good offices of the earl of Arundel with whom he had an association dating back to at least 1608 when both served as lord lieutenants of Sussex.³ This allowed Carleton's promotion to Chichester. When Bishop Overall died, Dr John Bowle wrote to Buckingham soliciting a post among 'that number whom your honour will advance by this alteration'. He asked especially for the deanery of Westminster.⁴ But Westminster went

¹George Carleton to Dudley Carleton, 30 May 1619 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 49).

²The six were Bristol, Chester, Coventry, Ely, Norwich and Winchester.

³M. F. S. Hervey, The life, correspondence, and collections of Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel, p. 119.

⁴Dr John Bowle to Buckingham, 18 May 1620 (HMC, Second report: The manuscripts of the Hon. G. M. Fortescue, p. 57 [hereafter cited as Fortescue MSS]; Fortescue papers, p. 128). The reference by Bowle to the recent death of Bishop Overall of Norwich suggests that the letter was written in 1619 and not 1620.

to John Williams, the future lord keeper. Bowle was later given the deanery of Salisbury, a position that John Donne, the poet, had solicited of Buckingham, and which he felt he would get.¹ Donne was promoted to the deanery of St Paul's when Valentine Carey succeeded to the bishopric of Exeter on the death of Bishop Cotton in 1621.

A word might here be said about the slowness of the formal machinery for effecting episcopal appointments. The cases of Carleton and Field will serve as examples. Although George Carleton had the promise of Chichester in May of 1619, he was not formally nominated by the king for the office until September, while Theophilus Field did not have possession of Llandaff until October. The delays were partly occasioned by negotiations between the king or favourite and the appointee about financial arrangements, and partly as a result of the complicated process of transfer of power. The king had to issue a warrant to the chancery to draw up two separate instruments: a permission to the chapter to elect a new bishop, the congé d'élire, and a letter missive instructing them to elect his nominee. Then these were

¹ John Donne to Buckingham, 8 Aug. 1621 (Fortescue MSS, p. 59).

sent to the cathedral chapter, who elected the nominee and notified the king of 'their choice'; the king then issued a formal assent to the election, after which consecration might take place.¹

In 1621 Buckingham effected two appointments which were to have important results. John Williams, who in 1620 received the deanery of Westminster through the favourite,² now became bishop of Lincoln; William Laud became bishop of St David's.³ Buckingham had a hand in a third appointment in 1621, that of Valentine Carey, dean of St Paul's, to the bishopric of Exeter.⁴ Williams had written to Buckingham's secretary, John Packer, regarding Exeter, at the request of Dr John Sharpe, a Scottish theologian.⁵ But instead of recommending Sharpe for this vacancy, Williams told Packer that he hoped either Dr Richardson, the master of Trinity College, Cambridge, or Valentine Carey would be nominated.⁶ Carey was related to Sir John Coke, the

¹Cf. Handbook of British chronology, eds. Sir F. M. Powicke and E. B. Fryde, pp. 204, 217, 277.

²Hacket, i. 4.

³See below, pp. 116-24.

⁴Rev. Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, 15 Sept. 1621 (Birch, James, ii. 275).

⁵'John Sharpe', DNB, li. 407-8.

⁶Lord Keeper Williams to John Packer, 1 Sept. 1621 (Fortescue MSS, p. 59).

able navy commissioner, who also may have used his influence with Buckingham on behalf of his kinsman.

Of the three other bishops preferred in 1621, two cannot be linked with Buckingham, and one he unsuccessfully opposed. Buckingham resisted the preferment of George Montaigne, bishop of Lincoln, to the bishopric of London. Buckingham wanted London for John Williams, but Montaigne, with the help of Prince Charles, obtained London and Williams had to settle for Lincoln. The promotion had been the occasion of a bitter quarrel between Charles and Buckingham, or so the Venetian ambassador reported. He wrote in cypher that 'his highness expressed himself very bitterly against the favorite and opened out on the subject very sharply to the king. . . .'¹

Theophilus Field was not satisfied with the bishopric of Llandaff to which he had but recently been preferred. He was urgently soliciting Buckingham for further advancement that year. He addressed to Buckingham one of his sonorous letters, worthy of a Shakespearean sycophant:

Besides London (which is too high for me to look after) . . . Hereford, the next seat to mine, (whither my predecessors have been oft removed) is said to be now void. Now my good lord, speak once more seasonably.

¹Girolamo Lando to the Doge, 23 July 1621 (CSP Venetian, 1621-3, p. 88).

It is a doubled, and redoubled, and infinitely multiplied benefit, which is so given. Never had I more need of the cordial his majesty gave me at my going into Wales, which was, that I should not stay long there.

Field was writing from the Tower of London where he had been committed for having acted as an agent for the receiving of bribes in the courts of justice. He asked Buckingham to 'at least procure me of my lord the king a nunc dimittis, leave to depart', and a full pardon so that he would not return to his bishopric of Llandaff in disgrace, if further preferment was impossible at this time.¹

This is a remarkable letter. First, one can gauge the degree of subservience with which Field approached his patron; in this he was not alone. Second, the bishopric of Hereford was not vacant at that time; but Field and other suitors could seldom afford to verify their rumours, for by the time they did at least a dozen others would have begged for the preferment -- and what if the rumour was true? Rumours of the death of high ecclesiastics were always current; even the more reliable John Chamberlain reported in 1624 the death of three bishops, two of whom were so far from dead that one lived until 1636, the other

¹T. Field to Buckingham, n.d. (Cabala, 109-110). The references to Field's troubles in Parliament suggest that the letter was written after the Parliament of 1621.

until 1641.¹ Tobias Matthew, archbishop of York, was said to have spread rumours of his own death in order to enjoy the scramble of suitors for his place, leading Thomas Fuller to comment that Matthew 'died yearly in report'.² Matthew died gracefully only in report; when he heard that, on his demise, the archbishopric had been promised to John Williams, bishop of Lincoln, he wrote jovially to him: 'I love your lordship well, but I will keep you out of this seat as long as I can.'³

The years 1622 and 1623 were lean ones for suitors; only two bishoprics fell vacant, Bristol and St Asaph, though the latter, falling vacant in 1623, was filled only early in 1624. When Richard Parry, bishop of St Asaph, died, Williams tried to obtain the see for his kinsman, Theodore Price, who had been acting as sub-dean of Westminster chapel through his favour. Williams had repeatedly advanced the candidacy of Price for preferment to a bishopric, but had been unsuccessful in obtaining a promotion for him. Indeed, his continual pressing on Price's behalf antagonized Buckingham, and Price eventually came to believe that

¹J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 3 July 1624 (Chamberlain, ii. 569).

²Thomas Fuller, The church history of Britain (1655), v. 314.

³Hacket, i. 168.

the support of Williams had done him more harm than good.¹ Price did not obtain the Welsh bishopric of St Asaph, which was disposed of by Prince Charles to Dr John Hammer. Charles had argued that in his capacity as Prince of Wales he enjoyed the right of nomination to all Welsh bishoprics, and he exercised that right by nominating Hammer 'to the remote and poor Welsh bishopric'.² As for the bishopric of Bristol, the only vacancy filled in the years 1622 and 1623, it was a 'place held so poor that we hear not yet of any suitors or pretendents for it'.³ The see was assigned to Richard Wright. Buckingham does not seem to have had any definite connection with the appointment, though Sir George Calvert, a secretary of state, having heard one of the periodic rumours of the death of the archbishop of York, had recommended Wright to Buckingham for promotion.⁴

The following two years were not much better; in 1625 no bishoprics fell vacant, and in 1624 only

¹'Theodore Price', DNE, xlv. 339.

²Hacket, i. 207.

³J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 4 Nov. 1622 (Chamberlain, ii. 462).

⁴Sir George Calvert to Buckingham, 17 Jan. 1622 (Fortescue MSS, 61).

three, none of which was very desirable. The 'remote and poor' St Asaph's went to John Hanmer; Carlisle, which went to the Calvinist Richard Senhouse on the demise of Calvinist Richard Milbourne, was, though less poor, equally remote. Buckingham's hand cannot be seen in these appointments.¹ Richard Montague, the disputatious Arminian cleric who later became bishop of Chichester, wrote in reference to Senhouse's nomination that he was sorry to see that 'Puritani rapiunt Episcopatum, yet this is alleviated, that it is but one for another, and in remotis; whereby, I hope, we shall be rid of him'.²

The third bishopric, Gloucester, went to Godfrey Goodman, dean of Rochester,³ a former chaplain to Queen Anne. He seems to have been offered the see after two others had refused it. According to Goodman's recent biographer, Mr Soden, Gloucester was the poorest bishopric in England; he evaluated its annual income for the bishop at £315.⁴ It appears that the bishopric had been

¹Cf. Soden, Goodman, pp. 131, 132.

²Richard Montague to John Cosin, 28 July 1624 (The correspondence of John Cosin, ed. George Ornsby, i. 21 [hereafter cited as Cosin correspondence]).

³CSPD, 1623-5, p. 373.

⁴Soden, p. 133. His figure, however, is based upon evaluation of the bishopric in 1680; in 1628 the diocesan clergy, though not the bishopric, of Gloucester were thought to be able to contribute more to the royal

offered to John Preston, a leader of the Puritan party in both religion and politics. He had served as chaplain to Prince Charles and had obtained the mastership of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, through the good offices of Buckingham.¹ When Preston refused the nomination, the offer was made to Joseph Hall, also of Calvinist inclinations. Hall similarly declined.² Gloucester was then offered to Goodman, who gladly accepted. Richard Montague hoped that Goodman would not obtain the post as he was a Scot, and that the unlucky Theodore Price would receive the honour.³

It is difficult to say clearly where Buckingham's hand enters and where it leaves in the promotion to the see of Gloucester. Thomas Hall,

treasury than those of Rochester, Hereford, and Oxford, and nearly as much as those of Coventry, Worcester, and Bristol (Charles to Archbishop Abbot, 15 Feb. 1628 [CSPD, 1627-8, p. 563]). If there is a correspondence between the livings of the diocesan clergy and the living of the bishop, Gloucester was perhaps not so poor.

¹Thomas Ball, The life of the renowned Doctor Preston, written by his pupil . . . in 1628, ed. W. Harcourt, pp. 67-9, 84-5; James F. Maclear, 'Puritan relations with Buckingham', Huntingdon Library Quarterly, xxi. 114, 120 (1958).

²Soden, pp. 136-7; Irvonwy Morgan, Prince Charles' puritan chaplain, p. 123.

³Richard Montague to John Cosin, 30 Oct. 1624 (Cosin correspondence, i. 24).

Preston's pupil, friend, and biographer, said Buckingham offered the bishopric to Preston;¹ Hall said James, not Buckingham, offered him the position;² Goodman said James offered him Gloucester, and denied that Buckingham was involved, yet on the next page stated that he sent Buckingham a present of plate worth £40 or £50, which Buckingham returned.³ Preston was certainly in Buckingham's favour at this time; Hall certainly was not; consequently, their stories agree with the probabilities. Though these sources do not contradict each other, neither are they complementary. None of them may be trusted entirely, and, unfortunately, contemporary reports do not verify their accounts except by general remarks such as Preston 'still continued and increased in the favour of the king and duke'.⁴ At any event, the return of Goodman's present by Buckingham might indicate that he played no role in the offer, but this leaves the question of why Goodman sent it if he felt no

¹Ball, Preston, p. 98.

²Joseph Hall, The works of Joseph Hall, ed. J. Pratt, i. xliv.

³Goodman, i. 356-7.

⁴Fuller, The church history, vi. 13.

obligation to the favourite. Nevertheless, whether through James or through Buckingham, Goodman was the last bishop consecrated in the reign of James.

Buckingham's position as favourite meant that many solicited his influence with the king on their behalf. It is difficult to assess his role in the appointments to the various deaneries that became vacant. Early in February of 1622, John Williams, bishop of Lincoln, the lord keeper, wrote to John Packer, Buckingham's secretary, seeking the promotion of Dr William Piers. Piers had served as chaplain to the late bishop of London, John King, and was now attached to Oxford University. Packer had answered Williams request by informing him that another had been preferred to the vacancy about which he had inquired. Intent on obtaining a promotion for Piers, Williams solicited the deanery of Peterborough for him. At the same time he asked Packer to keep his master in mind of a promotion for Dr Piers. A few months later, Piers was appointed dean of Peterborough; in 1630, on the death of Thomas Dove, bishop of Peterborough, Piers was elected to succeed him.¹

¹Lord Keeper Williams to John Packer, Feb. ? 1622, Packer to Williams, 13 Feb. 1622, Williams to Packer, 23 Feb. 1622 (Fortescue MSS, p. 60); 'William Piers', DNB, xlv. 272.

The last dean to be nominated in the reign of James was John Scott, who in 1624 became dean of York. Buckingham was responsible for the appointment, and, if John Williams can be believed, for the death of Scott's predecessor, Dr Meriton, as well. Williams alleged that the dean of York was struck dead when he received notice that, through the intercession of Buckingham, Scott had been appointed his coadjutor, and thus successor, in the deanery. Williams argued that Scott was unfit for the deanery which was 'the sixth or seventh place of preferment ecclesiastical within this kingdom', because of his notorious public reputation as an habitual gambler with little moral character.¹ Hacket, Williams' biographer, claimed that Scott received the appointment so as to enable him to pay off the gambling debts he owed a friend of Buckingham, adding, 'and yet, the man died in the King's Bench [prison], and was not solvent'.²

James appointed or promoted thirty-three bishops between 1616 and his death in 1625;³ twenty-three

¹Williams to Buckingham, 24 Dec. 1624, 4 Jan. 1625 (Cabala, pp. 279-80); Hacket, i. 206.

²Ibid., i. 207.

³The calculations are based on the lists of bishops provided in Handbook of British chronology, pp. 206-79.

of these preferments took place between 1616 and 1620. In this period Buckingham's influence on church appointments was negligible. He played a greater role in the period between 1621 and the death of James in March 1625, when three of the ten appointments made in those years can be linked to him. But for the whole period in which Buckingham enjoyed James' favour, from 1616 to 1625, Buckingham's hand can be seen acting certainly in only seven cases, and possibly in four or five more. Taking the larger number, eleven or twelve bishoprics, out of a possible thirty-three, a handful of deaneries, and various other minor appointments, that represents the extent of the favourite's intrusion into the patronage of the church. It seems clear, therefore, that until the death of James, Buckingham played a secondary role in dispensing the king's bounty in the church, and that James and his clerical favourites controlled the lion's share of the preferments within the church.

It is necessary to say a word about James' policy in regard to the patronage of the church, for it left Charles and Buckingham an unwelcome legacy of bishops, and also helped poison the atmosphere of the church. While James hated puritans, he did not hate Calvinists, nor was he by any means in the Arminian

camp. So long as his bishops were thoroughly Erastian, and so long as they did not stir up public controversy or meddle with the order of the church, James was willing to let them adhere to either of the contending theological viewpoints and to appoint them instead on the basis of personal affection.¹ Thus, in 1624 he had offered Gloucester to Joseph Hall, a Calvinist, and when Hall refused it, had offered it to Godfrey Goodman, an Arminian who ended his life as a catholic. As Professor Willson remarks: 'In appointments and policy he balanced one group against the other, he straddled the doctrinal points at issue, and thereby created divided counsels in the church as well as in the state.'²

Friction within the church between the two groups was intensified by the policy. 'The puritans are despoiling the episcopate ("Puritani rapiunt Episcopatum")', Montague had moaned when Senhouse got Carlisle in 1624, and when Gloucester fell vacant in the same year, he hoped that God would spare them a

¹Mark H. Curtis, 'Hampton Court Conference and its aftermath', History, xlv. 6-7 (1961).

²Willson, James, p. 199.

puritan as bishop, expressing the fear that the church was being 'swallowed up with a puritan bishopricry'.¹ In December of that year, when a treatise represented as the work of Isaac Casaubon came into his hands, he exclaimed that the perpetrator must have been a puritan: 'Had he his due his books should fire him at a stake. Before God it will never be well until we have our Inquisition.'² Early in 1625, when he failed to get a living which he had sought, he mingled sour grapes with animosity towards the puritans, commenting: 'It was within four miles of Coventry, no great thing. Coventry is a second Geneva.'³ Thomas Morton, a Calvinist, was bishop of Coventry from 1619 to 1632. Needless to say, the antipathy of the Arminians towards the Calvinists was cordially reciprocated. Thus, James left to Charles and Buckingham an episcopate divided between almost irreconcilable factions. What the new king and the old favourite would do with the church would depend more upon Buckingham than upon Charles.

¹ See above p.108; Richard Montague to John Cosin, 24 Oct. 1624 (Cosin correspondence, i. 22).

² Same to same, 12 Dec. 1624 (ibid., i. 32).

³ Same to same, 14 March 1625 (ibid., i. 66).

During the reign of James two great bishops had been rivals for the favourite's trust; each of them had sought ascendancy over the favourite's mind, not simply for personal advancement, but in order to have power over his actions and policies. These two rivals were John Williams and William Laud; the outcome of their rivalry would have profound consequences for both church and state.

Williams was named dean of Salisbury by James in 1619.¹ According to Hacket, Williams was at first reluctant to seek Buckingham's favour, both because he did not expect him to long remain in power, and because Buckingham was too ready to 'cast a cloud suddenly upon his creatures'.² James, who was genuinely fond of Williams, urged Williams to seek out the favourite and wait upon him, which Williams dutifully did. In 1620 his great opportunity came: Buckingham was being held back by James in his plan to marry Catherine Manners because she was a catholic; Williams managed to persuade Catherine to conform.³ This coup gave Williams an intimate entry into the family circle, which he

¹Hacket, i. 36.

²Ibid., i. 40.

³Ibid., i. 41-3.

reinforced by becoming chaplain to Buckingham's mother.¹ His immediate reward was the deanery of Westminster, which Hacket compared to 'the office over the king of Persia's garden at Babylon, which was stored with his most delicious fruits'.²

Williams consolidated his favour by giving Buckingham good advice in the parliament of 1621. When the storm over monopolies arose, Buckingham was deeply implicated, since he had been responsible for persuading the king to grant many of the patents to his friends and relatives. He was genuinely frightened at the attack in parliament, and feared that he would be singled out as the cause of the grievance. 'Swim with the tide, and you cannot be drowned', was the advice Williams gave him. He urged Buckingham to lead the attack on the monopolies, thus gaining credit with the parliament by showing that 'you love not your own mistakings, but are the most forward to recall them'.³ Buckingham took the advice and rewarded Williams with

¹B. Dew Roberts, Mitre and musket: John Williams, Lord Keeper, archbishop of York, p. 9; CSP Venetian, 1621-3, p. 88.

²Hacket, i. 44.

³Ibid., i. 50.

the bishopric of Lincoln and the office of lord keeper.¹

The rise of Laud was less spectacular because James disliked and distrusted him, saying that he was a man of 'restless spirit, and cannot see when matters are well, but loves to toss and change, and to bring things to a pitch of reformation floating in his own brain. . . .'² But by 1620 Laud had ingratiated himself with Buckingham, and through his patronage was able to overcome the bias of James towards Laud.³ In 1621, through the urging of both Buckingham and Williams, Laud was nominated bishop of St David's. James had been reluctant to promote Laud to the episcopate, and, after a lengthy argument with Williams about the appointment, is reported to have said angrily, 'take him to you, but on my soul you will repent it'.⁴

Hacket makes much of the generosity of Williams in supporting Laud, but this must be taken lightly. The most recent biographers of both Williams and Laud agree that Williams worked to obtain the

¹For bishopric of Lincoln see above pp.103-4 , for the lord keepership see p. 187.

²Hacket, i. 64; Gardiner, iv. 138.

³Hugh Trevor-Roper, Archbishop Laud, p. 56.

⁴Hacket, i. 64.

bishopric for Laud in order to save his deanery of Westminster.¹ Laud himself recorded in his diary that it was generally expected that he would be made dean of Westminster and not bishop of St David's; and it was even reported at that time that Laud had received the deanery.² Also, Williams received a living of £120 in Laud's diocese as payment for his efforts in Laud's behalf.³

As Williams had first entrenched himself in the family of the favourite by effecting the conforming of Buckingham's prospective wife to the Church of England, Laud entrenched himself through the favourite's mother. The countess of Buckingham was in 1622 contemplating the notion of converting to catholicism, and it seemed as though Buckingham might follow her lead. James was angry and upset. To appease him, Buckingham arranged a conference between Laud and the Jesuit Fisher. The conversion of the countess was delayed for only a while, but Buckingham was restored to his Anglicanism by Laud.⁴ From this point on Laud

¹Roberts, p. 52; Trevor-Roper, Laud, pp. 56-7.

²Laud, Works, iii, 136-7; Rev. J. Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, 23 June 1621 (Birch, James, ii. 260).

³Hacket, i. 64.

⁴Gardiner, iv. 281; Willson, James, p. 427; Trevor-Roper, Laud, p. 60.

was to enter deeper and deeper into the confidence of Buckingham. In his diary in early June of 1622, Laud made the entry that 'my lord marquis of Buckingham was pleased to enter upon a near respect to me. The particulars are not for paper.' A week later he noted: 'I became C. to my lord of Buckingham.'¹ The 'C.' is an abbreviation for either chaplain or confessor, and whichever it represents, the close personal relationship thus symbolized was to give Laud increasing influence over the favourite.² Laud remained in the relatively poor bishopric of St David's until 1626 because of the absence of suitable vacancies in the episcopate, not of any lack of favour on the part of Buckingham. There were only four vacancies between 1621 and 1626; two, St Asaph's and Gloucester, were poorer than St David's, while the other two, Carlisle and Bristol, were a little richer, but equally remote from the court.

Williams and Laud now faced one another in a direct battle for influence over the favourite. Laud had the strategic position on two counts. First, he was the personal religious adviser of the duke; second, he had

¹Laud, Works, iii. 139.

²Trevor-Roper, Laud, p. 60.

no office in the administration, and therefore was not as vulnerable to the disfavour of Buckingham as Williams.

When Charles and Buckingham were in Spain, Williams indiscreetly allowed Buckingham to know that he was dubious about the wisdom of the journey; meanwhile, Laud was writing to the duke subtly implying that Williams was undermining the favourite in his absence.¹ After Buckingham returned, Laud began to have the dreams which were to reveal so peculiarly the superstitious, guilty hatred he bore Williams. In December of 1623 he dreamt the lord keeper was dead, 'his lower lip infinitely swelled and fallen, and he rotten already'; the next day he saw Buckingham and noticed that Williams was 'dead in his affections'. In January of 1624 Laud was languishing with sadness at the 'envy and undeserved hatred borne to me by the lord keeper', but turned to the Bible and chanced upon the psalm, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear what man can do unto me', which seemed a consoling omen. In January of 1625 he noted coldly that Buckingham expressed the wish that he had 'known' the lord keeper sooner. As late as January 1627, when Williams had quite fallen from favour, Laud noted that the bishop of Lincoln desired a reconciliation with Buckingham, and the very

¹Roberts, pp. 64-5, 78.

next night he dreamt that 'the bishop of Lincoln came, I know not whither, with iron chains. But returning loose from them, leaped on horseback, went away; neither could I overtake him.' In March of 1627 one of the figures in his dreams, 'whispering in my ear, told me that I was the cause why the bishop of Lincoln was not again admitted into favour and to court'.¹ Even in 1633 Laud was still having his dreams about Williams; he dreamt that Williams came, 'and offered to sit above me at the council-table, and that Lord Holland came in, and placed him there'.²

When Laud was not dreaming about Williams, he was dreaming about Buckingham and the Villiers family. In 1625 he was very troubled in his dreams. 'My imagination ran altogether upon the duke of Buckingham, his servants, and family.' Other times he dreamt of Buckingham alone, or of Buckingham's wife.³ Laud's dreams show him in a repellant aspect. He was, however, genuinely attached to Buckingham; he sat with him when he was ill;⁴ he defended his policies as best

¹Laud, Works, iii. 144, 146, 157, 199, 204.

²Ibid., iii. 218; Hacket, ii. 85.

³Laud, Works, iii. 170, 172.

⁴Ibid., iii. 152, 153.

he could, even when he was not in accord;¹ he was deeply shocked when Buckingham was assassinated, and wrote sincerely of his grief;² he continued his friendship with Buckingham's wife, corresponding with her frequently;³ and in his will he remembered Catherine and her children.⁴

This was the man who triumphed over Williams, and who consequently controlled the patronage of the church through Buckingham. The change of reigns also pointedly marked the transfer of favour from Williams to Laud. Williams preached the funeral sermon of King James; Laud officiated at the coronation of Charles. Professor Trevor-Roper has justly observed that it was Williams, not Laud, who was the parallel of Cardinal Wolsey, Williams was the politician in orders, Laud the clergyman in politics.⁵ As Williams was above all a political realist, and active primarily in the area of state, not church, the story of his fall properly belongs in another place.⁶ Here it will suffice to

¹Ibid., vii. 631.

²Ibid., vi. 255, 259; Trevor-Roper, Laud, appendix, letter 18.

³Laud, Works, vi and vii, passim.

⁴Ibid., iv. 443.

⁵Trevor-Roper, Laud, pp. 53-4.

⁶See below, pp. 194-5.

note that Williams was a man who 'behaved throughout his career as if no differences in religious principles existed'.¹ Williams was broadly tolerant of the various views within the church, because he was sublimely unconcerned about them. If he had a leaning at all, it seems to have been towards the puritans. Had Williams been able to keep Laud from control of the church, rather than being driven by Laud out of the counsels of the state, it is possible that much of the misfortune which both church and state were to suffer could have been avoided. Buckingham had a clear choice: Williams the politique, Laud and 'thorough'. Unfortunately, Buckingham made the wrong choice.

In April of 1625, less than a month after the death of James, Buckingham asked Laud for a list of the clergy marked with the letters 'O' for orthodox and 'P' for puritan, so that Buckingham could give it to Charles.² Laud's position was recognized quickly by his contemporaries; Archbishop Abbot reported in 1627 that Laud 'is the only inward counsellor with Buckingham, sitting with him sometimes privately whole hours, and

¹Trevor-Roper, Laud, p. 54.

²Laud, Works, iii. 159. Gardiner believed that the list was requested by Charles (v. 363-4).

feeding his humour with malice and spite'.¹ Abbot had as low an opinion of Laud as James had had. In 1624 Abbot unsuccessfully attempted to keep Laud off the court of High Commission. Laud, who was on very amicable terms with Buckingham, appealed to him against the designs of the archbishop. Buckingham ordered Abbot to reinstate Laud on the commission; Abbot obeyed.²

The predominance of the leader of the Arminian faction was one of the few constants in what was otherwise a period of bewildering changes and shifts. A hint of a death and Buckingham was beset with clamorous aspirants for the vacant post; a rumour of a promotion brought scores of letters begging for preferment to any of the subsequent places which would become available. The actions of the higher clergy in their quest for bishoprics was perhaps the closest approach to mendicancy since the Reformation. The rapid shifting of ecclesiastical office can be seen as one result of the increased control by the duke of policy in the new reign. As in the state, so in the church, one had to support both the duke and his policy. To

¹Abbot's narrative in Rushworth, i. 440.

²Laud, *Works*, vi. pt i. 243-4; Laud to Buckingham, 18 Nov. 1624 (*Cabala*, p. 109); 21 Jan. 1625 (*Feodera*, xvii. 649).

this was added Laud's influence, which meant that non-Laudian clergy were not promoted.

The fall of Williams illustrates the whole process of church patronage. For a time it seemed that Williams might lose some of his ecclesiastical offices as well as his temporal ones. Consequently, in November of 1625, Dr Francis Dye, chancellor of Salisbury, tactfully reminded Secretary Conway that he owed him £500. Dye assumed that if Williams would be removed from the deanery of Westminster, either the dean of Salisbury or the dean of Rochester would be promoted. He sought one of these places or, failing this, at least 'poor Lichfield, which is hardly worth £100 per annum'.¹

Walter Balcanquhall, dean of Rochester, was thus regarded by Dye as a man likely to be promoted. Balcanquhall courted the promotion in two steps. First, he wrote Conway asking to be remembered for the deanery of Westminster 'if there be a probability of a vacancy' -- a genteel way of referring to Williams' fall from favour! Next, Balcanquhall stepped up his campaign by drawing in friends to urge his promotion. He wrote Conway again, entreating his mediation with the duke, adding that the earl of Carlisle would join in any

¹Dr Francis Dye to Sec. Conway, 13 Nov. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 149).

course which might advance his suit.¹ Finally, perhaps fittingly, came the horrible reality: Williams was to keep the deanery, but Laud was to be his deputy, thus acquiring the spoils which Dye and Balcanquall hoped to enjoy.²

The confusion which surrounded the vacancy of a bishopric was augmented by the slowness of the appointment of a replacement. Six bishoprics fell vacant in 1626, five through death, one through translation. Only the two richest were vacant for more than four months; indeed, they remained vacant for over a year.³ The revenue of the see went to the king during the vacancy, which was one good reason for a leisurely course.

Writing to his friend Sir Martin Stuteville, Reverend Joseph Mead exclaimed, 'What a company of bishops have died in a small time!' and added: 'To have power of disposing so many chief bishoprics together, is a matter of moment, either to build or pull down that faction in the church, which the present state or chief

¹Walter Balcanquall to same, 4, 7 Nov. 1625 (ibid., pp. 143, 145).

²J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 19 Jan. 1626 (Chamberlain, ii. 627).

³Cf. Handbook of British chronology (pp. 206-79) under Bath and Wells, Carlisle, Ely, Exeter, St David's and Winchester.

statesman like not.¹ Mead was correct; of the six bishoprics vacant in 1626, five went to prominent Laudian clergy, one to a moderate Calvinist, the latter being the only non-Laudian preferred to a bishopric between the accession of Charles and the death of Buckingham in 1628. Bath and Wells went to Laud himself, Buckingham having personally signified the king's pleasure to the dean and chapter; Carlisle went to Francis White; St David's to Theophilus Field; only Exeter went to a Calvinist -- Joseph Hall, a moderate who had earlier been offered by James the not too rich bishopric of Gloucester. Winchester and Ely, the two richest bishoprics to fall vacant, were not given new bishops until 1628, when both were filled by men who had a long and close association with Laud. Richard Neile, bishop of Durham, was translated to Winchester and John Buckeridge, bishop of Rochester, went to Ely.²

Buckeridge had been Laud's tutor at St John's College, Oxford. He had held the see of Rochester since 1611 and Heylyn, Laud's biographer, attributes his promotion in 1628 as due to 'the power and favour'

¹Rev. Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, 7 Oct. 1626 (Birch, Charles, i. 155-7).

²Laud, Works, iii. 192-6; CSPD, 1625-6, p. 570; CSPD, 1627-8, pp. 41, 326, 451; CSPD, 1628-9, pp. 47, 108.

of his former student.¹ Laud had for a time served as chaplain to Richard Neile when Neile was bishop of Rochester. Laud had a longstanding debt of gratitude to repay Neile. Neile had supported his election to the presidency of St John's College, Oxford, in 1611. Abbot, then but recently nominated archbishop of Canterbury, opposed the election of Laud. The election dispute was finally settled by James in Laud's favour. Laud believed that the support of Neile had secured the office for him.²

The contest for bishoprics was perhaps more interesting than the final winners. Theophilus Field had entered the lists early with a letter to Buckingham asking for either Ely or Bath and Wells:

My lord, I am grown an old man and am like old household stuff, apt to be broke upon often removing. I desire it therefore but once for all, be it Ely, or Bath and Wells; I will spend the remainder of my days writing an history of your good deeds to me and others, whereby I may vindicate you from the envy and obloquy of this wicked age wherein we live. . . .³

¹Peter Heylyn, Cyprianus Anglicus: or, the history of the life and death of . . . William Laud (1668), i. 45.

²Ibid., pp. 54-5.

³T. Field to Buckingham, n.d. (Cabala, p. 111). The letter is difficult to date. Bath and Wells was filled (20 June 1626) before Ely was vacant (6 Oct. 1626) and Ely was filled (8 April 1628) before Bath and Wells was vacant (14 July 1628). The best surmise is that Field wrote it in late 1626, anticipating the death of the bishop of Ely, but before he knew Laud had been given Bath and Wells. Cf. Trevor-Roper, Laud, p. 186.

Field was aiming high, too high for his merits. When Laud was translated to Bath and Wells, Field was given his old bishopric of St David's. He immediately wrote to Buckingham a fulsome letter of thanks, saying that Buckingham had 'imitated God himself, who very oft, as he passes by and seems to turn from us, leaves a blessing behind'. He went on to relate that Laud had been helpful in arranging matters for him, and added complacently that 'his known zeal for the duke in the late parliament "wherein the inconsiderate multitude, like so many dogs in a village, barking for company, with full and foul mouth, yelped against the duke," was, no doubt, a great motive to the zeal of bishop Laud' in promoting his business.¹

John Williams, bishop of Lincoln, no longer in Buckingham's favour, attempted to secure Winchester by remarking to Buckingham that Winchester had once been promised him but that 'he would not receive it but as from the duke, nor would [he] make any application for it until he should appear to the duke to be no such foul man as he had been painted'.² This was making a virtue of a necessity. Since all

¹T. Field to Buckingham, August 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 326).

²John Williams, bishop of Lincoln, to same, 15 Oct. 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 455).

bishoprics save one went to the Laudian faction, Williams, Laud's arch-enemy, had little hope of succeeding.

Laud's position in the church was strengthened in 1627 when Archbishop Abbot was suspended from his office. Abbot had failed to support Buckingham in the parliament of 1626 and had further antagonized the crown by refusing to licence the sermon by Dr Richard Sibthorpe entitled Apostolical obedience, wherein the Arminian belief in the exalted position of the crown in the state was asserted, and which Charles wished to use to give a moral weight to his demand for a much-needed loan without having recourse to parliament. Abbot had been first sent from Canterbury in July, but he was deprived of his jurisdiction only on 9 October 1627, when the archbishopric was placed in commission.¹ The commissioners were all Laudian bishops: Montaigne of London, Neile of Durham, Buckeridge of Rochester, Howson of Oxford, and Laud, himself, of Bath and Wells. It was said that when the other four commissioners hesitated to sign the order for Abbot's suspension, Laud, the junior of them all in precedence, demanded

¹ Contarini to the Doge, 30 July 1627 (CSP Venetian, 1626-8, p. 305); Salvetti to the duke of Tuscany, 31 July 1627 (Skrine MSS, p. 125); Abbot's narrative in Rushworth, i. 431, passim; Feodera, xviii. 941-2; Gardiner, vi. 206.

the pen and placed his signature first.¹

In 1628 ten bishoprics changed hands; eight fell vacant, and Winchester and Ely, vacant since 1626, were filled. All ten went to Laudians. The complex interrelations of these appointments must be unravelled by starting at the core. The two key bishoprics were Winchester and the archbishopric of York.

After the death of Launcelot Andrewes in 1626, the crown waited more than a year to name a successor to the see of Winchester. But the courtier-bishops were not idle. George Montaigne, bishop of London, sent the duke a gift aimed at securing Winchester, but Buckingham tried to return it. Montaigne hastily wrote that it would break his heart if the gift were returned.² Montaigne had performed a service for Buckingham which he hoped would ingratiate him with the duke. When the earl of Suffolk died leaving the post of chancellor of the university of Cambridge vacant, Montaigne sent his chaplain, Dr Wilson, to solicit support for Buckingham in accordance with the expressed wish of Charles. Suffolk

¹Thomas Fuller, Appeal of injured innocence (1659), iii. 10.

²George Montaigne to Buckingham, March ? 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 119).

died 28 May 1626; Montaigne was himself at Cambridge on May 30 urging Buckingham's election.

But there also came to Cambridge John Cosin, chaplain of Bishop Neile of Durham, with letters from Neile urging support for Buckingham. Cosin, himself had recently received the presentation to the rectory of Brancepeth, in the diocese of Durham, through the good offices of both Buckingham and Laud.¹ Cosin went to Cambridge 'expressly signifying in his majesty's name' that Charles desired Buckingham's nomination. In his letter confirming their election, Charles specifically mentioned that he had employed the bishop of Durham in this matter.²

The fellows at Cambridge were also individually solicited on Buckingham's behalf by the recently appointed master of Trinity College, Leonard Mawe. Reverend Joseph Mead wrote that Mawe had entered the list of Buckingham supporters in the hope that his reward would be the bishopric of Exeter.³ Whatsoever the motives of his supporters, Buckingham mustered a very small plurality

¹21 Feb. 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 562); John Cosin to Laud, June 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 187).

²Rev. Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, 3 June 1626 (Ellis, Original letters, series 3, iii. 228-31); Gardiner, vi. 115-16; Sir Benjamin Rudyard to Sir Francis Nethersole, 2 June 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 346); Charles to the university of Cambridge, 6 June 1626 (Cabala, p. 188).

³Rev. Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, 1 July 1626 (Birch, Charles, i. 118).

when finally elected on 1 June 1626.

Though Montaigne was disappointed in that Winchester went to Neile of Durham, he was consoled by his translation to the now-vacant, rich and important see of Durham.¹ In July Laud succeeded to the prestigious see of London, promised him a year earlier by Charles.² Leonard Mawe was given Laud's old see of Bath and Wells rather than Exeter as he had hoped.³

Meanwhile, Tobias Matthew, archbishop of York, had died. Just twenty-two days after his elevation to Durham, Montaigne wrote to Buckingham for the vacancy. He said that it would show the world that the duke still held him in great favour and that he valued this even more than the honour of the bishopric.⁴ The anecdote is related that Charles was discussing a replacement for Matthew in Montaigne's presence, and failed to mention his name as a possibility. At last Montaigne could bear it no longer, and told the king, 'If you had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, you would

¹CSPD, 1627-8, p. 564; CSPD, 1628-9, p. 26.

²CSPD, 1628-9, p. 189; Laud, Works, iii. 205; Gardiner, vi. 207.

³CSPD, 1628-9, p. 211.

⁴George Montaigne to Buckingham, 1 April 1628 (*ibid.*, p. 59).

say unto this mountain [Montaigne], Go and be removed into that sea [see]!' ¹ Whether this witty plea, or the letter to Buckingham, was the more effective, just three months after receiving Durham, Montaigne was nominated archbishop of York. ²

Montaigne had not been alone in soliciting preferments. Walter Balcanquall, dean of Rochester, had not given up seeking promotion despite repeated rebuffs. Believing that Bishop Buckeridge of Rochester was due for a promotion, he wrote to Secretary Conway requesting that bishopric. He urged Conway to press his suit on the grounds that he was more likely to be of service to Buckingham 'than any new bishop which [could] be made at that time'. He claimed that both his earnestness for the loan and his friendship with 'many of the other side'; were adequate credentials for the promotion. ³ He was to be again disappointed. When Buckeridge was indeed promoted in 1628 to Ely, Rochester went to Walter Curle. ⁴

¹Quoted in Trevor-Roper, Laud, p. 91.

²CSPD, 1628-9, pp. 148, 179.

³Walter Balcanquall to Sec. Conway, 15 Jan. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 19).

⁴CSPD, 1628-9, pp. 47, 108, 211, 235.

Balcanquhall did not do well at all. Durham, vacated by Montaigne, went to Bishop Howson of Oxford, and Oxford was given to the poet-dean of Christ-Church, Richard Corbett, who had also obtained the deanery through Buckingham.¹ Richard Montague was preferred to the bishopric of Chichester,² vacated by the death of George Carleton, one of the first bishops who had benefitted from Buckingham's patronage.

The rise of Montague illustrates church patronage from the point of view of both patron and client. In 1624 Montague met Buckingham, who 'bad me rely upon him, and none but him, and let him know what preferments I desired, and I should have it. And that he spake not as a courtier, but as my real, true and constant friend.'³ Early in 1625 Montague heard that the bishop of Exeter, Valentine Carey, was mortally ill. After speculating that Laud would hardly want Exeter, he wrote to his friend John Cosin that Laud could do him a favour by reminding his 'great friend', Buckingham, 'of his voluntary and large offers unto me once'.⁴ Montague was trying to bring both Laud and

¹Ibid., pp. 235, 254; Trevor-Roper, 'James I and his bishops', p. 142.

²CSPD, 1628-9, p. 217.

³Richard Montague to John Cosin, 24 Oct. 1624 (Cosin correspondence, i. 22).

⁴Same to same, 14 Feb. 1625 (ibid., i. 60).

Buckingham into his campaign.

Later in 1625, when Montague was under attack in parliament for his extreme Arminian opinions, he wrote to Bishop Neile: 'My hope, next to God, must be in my lord duke, upon whom I will attend . . . as I conceive it my means must be to get, if it be possible, any, the least, bishopric, to make me off from the Commons.' He added that he had heard that John Thornborough, bishop of Worcester, was sick and speculated that should Laud succeed Thornborough and he Laud then he would be 'half delivered'.¹ Worcester had been a false hope; Thornborough died only in 1641. Both these efforts failed, and early in 1626 Montague was writing in discouragement, 'for my own particular, I had rather be dean of Paul's or Westminster than a bishop'.² When even this failed, Montague wrote: 'I have deserved better of the church. I beat the bushes, and others catch the birds.'³ He reiterated that he would settle for a deanery, and gave his friend, John Cosin, leave to relay that to Buckingham.

¹Same to Bishop Neile, 10 July 1625 (ibid., i. 78-9).

²Same to John Cosin, 28 June 1626 (ibid., i. 96).

³Same to same, July 1626 (ibid., i. 98).

In the middle of 1626 Montague had dinner with Buckingham and his family, and his hopes rose; he wrote hopefully that he sought Exeter and noted that the earl of Rutland, Buckingham's father-in-law, would help his suit.¹ Others also had their eyes on Exeter. Shortly before his death, Nicholas Felton, bishop of Ely, wrote to Sir John Coke asking him to use his influence with Buckingham to obtain Exeter for Robert Wright, bishop of Bristol. Felton maintained that it had been Valentine Carey's dying wish that Wright succeed him at Exeter.² If Coke tried to use his influence he failed, as did Montague. Joseph Hall, a Calvinist, was elected bishop of Exeter.

When the dean of Windsor died in 1627, Montague tried hard to get that office.³ Again he missed. He remarked to Cosin, 'you know I told the duke's grace that I was not ambitious'.⁴ It was not until 1628 that Montague obtained a bishopric, and then, three days after he was nominated, but before his friend could have heard, Montague ended a letter to him,

¹Ibid., i. 98-9, 101, 103-4, 106.

²Nicholas Felton to Sir John Coke, 17 June 1626 (Cowper MSS, i. 271).

³Richard Montague to John Cosin, 2 July 1627 (Cosin correspondence, i. 125).

⁴Same to same, 4 Nov. 1627 (ibid., i. 137).

'if I were a bishop, I should send a bishop's blessing'.¹ After his epic struggle, his sly hint may be forgiven.

In the height of his depression in 1626 Montague had written Cosin: 'I must grow miserable [miserly] not to buy a bishopric.'² This brings up the question of simony, the sale of bishoprics, a matter of considerable delicacy. A recent student of the church in the early Stuart period, Professor Christopher Hill, has made the statement that the only bishopric which Buckingham did not sell was the grant of Salisbury to John Davenant in 1621.³ To make such a claim, it is necessary to inspect the mass of manuscript and printed material relating to the church and its bishops in this period. Perhaps Professor Hill has done so, but his documentation does not show it. There is little evidence that he used manuscript sources, basing his study for the most part on printed sources.

¹Same to same, 7 July 1628 (ibid., i. 142); CSPD, 1628-9, p. 217.

²Richard Montague to John Cosin, n.d., probably July 1626 (Cosin correspondence, i. 98).

³Hill, p. 21; cf. L. Stone also claims this: 'Buckingham was notorious for his sale of bishoprics' (Crisis of the aristocracy, p. 408). But judging from his references, Stone based his assumption, giving no specific illustrations, on Hill's study, and not from an independent research into the sources.

He cites seven instances of simony: one, that of Godfrey Goodman attempting to purchase the bishopric of Hereford, occurs in 1633, five years after Buckingham's death; Goodman's most recent biographer has satisfactorily refuted the charge, though not to Professor Hill's satisfaction.¹ The other six rest on the most flimsy evidence.

Theophilus Field, Professor Hill implies, was impeached in the parliament of 1621 for brokerage and bribery relating to the bishopric. Yet Bishop Field was impeached for bribery in the courts, not in the bishopric, and the brokerage related to the handling of his offices under the bishopric, not to the bishopric itself.² Professor Hill bases his claim that Martin Fotherby purchased the bishopric of Salisbury in 1618 for £3,500 on no other evidence than Anthony Weldon, who has long been considered a malicious and unreliable source. Weldon, on the page following this story, states that some bishops received their posts gratis, as a result of their flattery.³

¹Compare Soden, chapter xix, with Hill, p. 310, 310n.

²Hill, pp. 309-10; Gardiner, iv. 125.

³Hill, p. 310; Weldon, 'Court and character of King James', in Secret history, i. 438-9.

The tenor of Weldon's statements supports Professor Hill about sales in general; Weldon, however, qualifies his statements more than Professor Hill, who has taken a limited statement from an unreliable source and blown it into a fallacious generalization.

The next two cases Professor Hill cites as rumours told to James Ussher, archbishop of Armagh, by 'respectable characters'. Aside from the fact that even Ussher's correspondents relate them as rumours, the 'respectable characters' are both arch-puritans, and therefore hardly impartial witnesses.¹ The fifth case is that of Lewis Bayly, bishop of Bangor, who in the parliament of 1626 was faced with charges alleging simony, bribery, extortion, and incontinency. Bayly was widely regarded as an incredible choice for a bishopric; both Montague and Chamberlain report adversely of him. But the only charge proved against him in 1626 was incontinency.² The last instance Professor Hill cites is Montague's remark: 'I must grow very miserable [miserly] not to buy a bishopric.'³

¹Hill, p. 310; Alexander Cook to James Ussher, 30 Nov. 1626, Samuel Ward to same, 13 Feb. 1627 (Richard Parr, The life of . . . James Ussher (1686), pp. 373, 377).

²Hill, p. 310; J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 4 Jan. 1617 (Chamberlain, ii. 48); Richard Montague to John Cosin, n.d. (Cosin correspondence, i. 86); Rev. Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, 22 April 1626 (Birch, Charles, i. 96).

³Hill, p. 310; see above, p. 139.

If Professor Hill were merely trying to demonstrate that an aura of corruption hung around the bishops, he could rest with his case proved. But he has hardly proven that every bishop except Davenant bought his bishopric from Buckingham.

Not one single bishopric which changed hands between 1621 and 1628, and, it would seem that this holds true for the period 1616 to 1620, can definitely be said to have been sold by or to anyone. Yet no doubt some of them were. It is true, for example, that Laud gave Williams a living of £120 in his diocese of Llandaff in return for his help in procuring the bishopric, and that when Montaigne angled for Winchester he sent Buckingham a gift which Buckingham intended to return.¹ These were two transactions in the period which smack somewhat of sale, yet neither of them was on this evidence sales, since Laud offered Williams a rather small gratuity, and Montaigne gave Buckingham a present. Even more characteristic than these was a letter from William Juxon, head of St John's College, Oxford, to Laud, in which he casually mentioned that Dr Rawlinson, head of St Edmund's Hall, Oxford, since 1610, a candidate for the bishopric of Oxford, had built a new house and would be willing to

¹See above, pp. 119, 132.

give it to the bishopric if he were made a bishop.¹
This might be an encouragement to his candidacy, which was unsuccessful, but it could hardly be called an attempt to buy the bishopric. Though simony no doubt existed, it is difficult to link Buckingham definitely with a bishop who purchased a see from him.

The resentment which had developed against the episcopacy in the early Stuart period no doubt had its roots in puritan theology, but a less wordly, courtly episcopate would have been less open to attack. The acquiescence of Buckingham in the appointment of only Arminian bishops contributed to the weakening of the church. The latitudinarian atmosphere of the Elizabethan church, which James had tried to preserve, was replaced with a 'thorough' to which most laity, puritan or not, were hostile. Finally, he brought the blight of transience in office to the church.

¹William Juxon to Laud, 26 Dec. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 479).

CHAPTER V

THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

The effect of the patronage of Buckingham in the central administration was felt more in a political than an administrative manner. His handling of patronage was largely one involving the major and middle-rank officers, for the most part not interesting himself in the multitude of minor offices. The variety of offices in the central administration was great; the posts, below that of chief officer, ranged in importance from treasurer of the household to that of bellringer. The central administration had at least three thousand offices, of which about eighteen hundred were in the royal household.¹ The variety, and the rather minor nature of many of the offices, is the keynote of a description of the central administration.

Akin to the variety of offices was the lack of specialization coupled with an overlapping of administrative functions by various departments. Chancery was not only a court of equity, but also the

¹This tabulation is based upon the appendix in Aylmer, The king's servants, pp. 420-87.

major administrative department charged with registering the official acts of the king.¹ There was no recognized set of criteria to judge the ability of a candidate to perform the office he sought. Cranfield was the only man of finance to head the treasury in the period of Buckingham's control: Suffolk was a leading peer, Montagu and Ley lawyers. Sir Edward Conway went from soldier and ambassador to the office of secretary of state, while Sir John Coke came to that same office from admiralty affairs, and Sir Dudley Carleton from serving as an ambassador. In 1622 John Coke wrote:

I was not bred in servile or illegal trades, the university was my nurse, I have travelled many countries, where I saw peace and war. I am acquainted with books, and no stranger to the courts and affairs of the world.²

Here, then, was the best qualification a candidate for office could imagine: a liberal education, which fitted him for a variety of offices, with no mention of specific abilities for any. If the number and variety of offices acted as an inherent check on the control of

¹M. S. Giuseppi, Guide to the contents of the Public Record Office, i. 7-8.

²John Coke to Buckingham, 12 Oct. 1622 (Cowper MSS, i. 121). Coke, apparently, did not send this letter because it was a little ill-tempered. He had been waiting at least four years for preferment from Buckingham (cf. ibid., i. 98, passim).

patronage by one man, the lack of specialization was a freeing influence. It was unnecessary to seek out the technically proficient; choice could be based on real or assumed personal qualities. This was true with initial appointment as well as with promotion.

Crown patronage had more limits than freedoms. The major crown officers had the 'gift' of the offices below them, that is, they enjoyed the right of appointment of the administrative officials below them.

Buckingham was able to circumvent this by appointing major officers who would use their 'gift' at his discretion, but he could not entirely eliminate the right.¹ The major limitation upon patronage was the vague notion of office as a kind of property, together with the related notions of tenure, reversion, and sale.²

While the general conception of office as similar to private property acted as a check on patronage, its effects must not be exaggerated: removal could be effected by bringing pressure upon the

¹See below, pp. 198-203.

²For a thorough discussion see Aylmer, The king's servants, especially chapters iii and iv.

incumbent to resign. But there still would arise the question of compensation, if for no other reason but as an inducement for the resignation. Related to the proprietary notion of office was the concept of tenure. Most major offices were held at pleasure, but the majority of the offices in the middle-ranks had life tenures, so that they offered the best security and were the most desirable.¹

How seriously the question of tenure was taken may be seen from the case of Sir Henry Mervyn, vice-admiral of the Narrow Seas under James. Early in the reign of Charles, Mervyn complained to the king that, with the permission of James, he had purchased his commission for life at a cost of £3,500. Since he was suspended without cause shown, he demanded either his re-instatement or the return of the purchase price. Investigations showed that Mervyn had been suspended by James upon a complaint from the French ambassador that Mervyn had engaged in piracy against French ships. But since Mervyn had not been prosecuted, there was no just cause for his removal and the suspension was lifted.²

¹Ibid., pp. 106-7.

²Sir Henry Mervyn to Charles, Sept. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 114); Sir John Coke to _____, [4 Oct. 1625] (ibid., p. 117).

Cases such as this led Professor Aylmer to point out that many officials were all but irremovable.¹ Tenure offered a serious limitation to the operation of patronage.

Reversion, the grant of the succession to an office, was a method of extending tenure, as well as a means of insuring in advance that an incumbent would be succeeded in his office. Since reversion limited the crown's freedom of appointment, it also acted as a check upon royal patronage. Professor Aylmer estimates that more than half the middle-rank offices carried reversions at any given time in the reign of Charles; this estimate would almost certainly hold true for the reign of James.² But most major offices did not have reversions attached to them. This is a reflection of their uncertain tenure, at pleasure, and of their political importance. The influence of Buckingham was greatest at this level for the usual restrictions as to tenure and reversion were non-existent.

None of the notions of property, tenure, and reversion would have acted as a check upon patronage if royal officials had not been reluctant to relinquish their offices. But the average office-holder clung to

¹Aylmer, The king's servants, p. 9.

²Ibid., p. 105.

office. Crown salaries were low and the striving of officers for pensions, annuities, leases of property at low rents and grants of crown perquisites has to be seen in the light of the fear of officers of financial disaster through loss of office.¹ Office alone was no guarantee of financial security as Secretary Conway advised his daughters:

. . . Last night was buried Mr Secretary Morton leaving a desolate and unfortunate lady; by which women may be made wise to know that husbands with lands are fair blessings; for service and offices make fair shows and promises but are no inheritance.²

The proprietary concepts about office led logically to the sale of office, which was reinforced by the feeling that some form of compensation was owed to the person who surrendered his right of tenure in the office, or his reversionary right to the office. In addition, it was generally assumed that since office was remunerative, the effective agent in procuring office for a client deserved a reward.

Sale of office had adverse effects on the administration, on the position of the crown, and on the ethics of patronage. On the administration itself, sale had the effect of minimizing the concept of public

¹Ibid., p. 165.

²Edward, Lord Conway, to his children, Heligenwith and Mary Conway, 9 Sept. 1625 (HMC, Fourteenth report, appendix, part ii: The manuscripts of the duke of Portland, iii. 20).

service in office and emphasizing the proprietary aspects; further, it lowered public morality, for there was often only a nuance between just compensation for a relinquished office and the various forms of bribery. Sale partially restricted the freedom of appointment of the crown, for once the king knowingly allowed an office to be sold, he had a moral obligation to retain the buyer as an official, or he would then be guilty of practicing a subtle kind of fraud upon the buyer. With regard to patronage, sale had the effect of subverting the patron-client relationship into a mere business arrangement. Sale did not, however, hinder the operation of patronage, only its ethics. There was usually more than one suitor willing to buy an office, and office did not go merely to the highest bidder as the transaction for the appointment of a successor to Lord Chancellor Ellesmere illustrates.¹

Sale did not lower the calibre of office-holders; it lowered the calibre of their ethics, and cast an ambiguous aura around the moral climate of the administration. While officers in the early Stuart period had a defective sense of personal rectitude, they were not incompetent. Or rather, if they were incompetent, they would still have achieved office if

¹See below, pp. 175-6.

sale and allied transactions had not existed. It is only necessary to remember the advancement by Buckingham of his family to conclude that factors other than venality explain the undistinguished character of many of the office-holders.¹ Sale must be thought of as one of several common ways of acquiring office under Buckingham, and not as the sole way. Professor Aylmer has sufficiently illustrated that the 'three P's' of patrimony, patronage and purchase operated inter-dependently.²

The role of patronage in office-holding, the lack of specialization in the administration, and the limits which proprietary ideas of office placed upon transfer of office, can be illustrated by the very long campaign which Sir Dudley Carleton waged in order to obtain an office. The career of Carleton is a microcosm of the world of office-seekers and office-holders, of the conditions under which they functioned, of the stratagems which they employed, the reverses which they suffered. Above all, Carleton's story is typical of the slowness and confusion which surrounded the quest for preferment.

¹Aylmer, The king's servants, pp. 237-9.

²Ibid., p. 159, passim.

From 1610 to 1616 Carleton was ambassador to the Republic of Venice, from 1616 to 1625 ambassador to the United Provinces. Carleton wanted an office at home because ambassadorial posts were costly and salaries were regularly in arrears. In 1619, in an effort to repay him his long overdue allowance, Carleton was granted the privilege of making a baron, but nothing came of it; he could find no buyer for the sale of baronies had become unpopular.¹ Office at home also meant the possibility of strengthening his financial position while permitting him to take a greater part in the affairs of government. The first reason led him in 1617 to attempt to secure the reversion to the provostship of Eton,² a lucrative and prestigious scholarly office presently enjoyed by his father-in-law, Sir Henry Savile; the second to try for the secretaryship of state in 1618, also lucrative, but above all a key position in the determining of policy.³ Neither attempt was successful, but the latter was the more serious attempt.

¹T. Locke to Sir D. Carleton, 27 March, 5 June 1619 (CSPD, 1619-23, pp. 28, 51); Mayes, 'Sale of peerages', p. 26.

²Richard Harrison to Sir D. Carleton, 28 May, 24 July 1617 (CSPD, 1611-18, pp. 470, 477).

³F. M. G. Higham, The principal secretary of state, p. 535.

Carleton employed his nephews as his agents in trying for the office of secretary of state. His nephew, John, wrote to tell him that though Buckingham thought well of Carleton, 'three of his best friends' thought the best strategy would be for Carleton to offer £3,000 for the office, especially at this time when Secretary Naunton was seeking a promotion, and Sir Thomas Lake, the other secretary, was in disfavour.¹ Thus, there were two opportunities presenting themselves for the office.

But when Sir Thomas Lake was dismissed, he was succeeded by Sir George Calvert, 'a sober industrious bureaucrat', who had served as secretary to Robert Cecil, earl of Salisbury, and to Sir Ralph Winwood.² He seems to have received the office on the recommendation of Buckingham without a money payment, although both Sir Dudley Carleton and Sir John Digby, later earl of Bristol, were willing to pay.³ Almost immediately, Carleton began dealing with Calvert and

¹ John Carleton to Sir D. Carleton, 9 Nov. 1618 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 593).

² Higham, pp. 74-5; John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 20 Feb. 1619 (Chamberlain, ii. 216); David H. Willson, The privy councillors in the house of commons, 1604-1629, p. 87.

³ CSPD, 1611-18, p. 592; John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 20 Feb. 1619 (Chamberlain, ii. 216); Thomas Lorkin to Sir Thomas Puckering, 30 June 1618 (Birch, James, ii. 79).

with Naunton for their office, but his agent in England believed that Naunton was only 'trifling' and Calvert would be more likely to accept his offer.¹ But again nothing came of the negotiations.

For a few years Carleton seems to have resigned himself to a waiting game, for there is no record of his being a suitor for office again until 1623. But this does not mean that he remained idle. He kept in touch with influential persons. He sent the earl of Arundel a Dutch painting to add to his fine collection; he congratulated Northumberland on his release from the Tower; he wrote to Lord Keeper Williams to congratulate him on his appointment and to remind him that he sought a position at home.²

In the intervening years, several events occurred which were to establish the conditions under which he sought office in 1623. In January of 1620 Sir Henry Wotton, at the request of Buckingham, was granted the reversion to the mastership of the rolls, an office held by Sir Julius Caesar.³ In 1622, when

¹T. Locke to Sir D. Carleton, 30 April 1619 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 41).

²Earl of Arundel to same, 20 July 1621 (*ibid.*, p. 277); Sir D. Carleton to earl of Northumberland, 10 Aug. 1621 (*ibid.*, p. 282); Lord Keeper Williams to Sir D. Carleton, 23 Aug. 1621 (*ibid.*, p. 284).

³16 Jan. 1620 (*ibid.*, p. 113).

Lionel Cranfield was appointed lord treasurer, Buckingham attempted to transfer Sir Julius Caesar into Cranfield's former office of master of the court of wards and liveries, and giving Sir Henry Wotton the choice of occupying Caesar's old office through his reversion to it, or of taking instead a reversion to the mastership of the wards. Cranfield and Caesar, however, were both reluctant to relinquish the offices, and the plan came to nothing. Buckingham advised Wotton that he 'had better keep to his majesty's gracious promise for the rolls'.¹

Also in 1622 Buckingham decided to replace Secretary Naunton with Sir Edward Conway. Naunton had been in difficulties with James and Buckingham since 1620, first for indiscretion in handling correspondence relating to the Palatine crisis, then for indiscreet conversation with the French ambassador.² But Naunton was not in disfavour with Buckingham, only his usefulness in the post was declining. Buckingham dealt gently with him. In September of 1622 Naunton wrote Buckingham pleading not to be released from office until

¹Buckingham to Sir Henry Wotton, 2 Jan. 1622 (Fortescue papers, pp. 172-3); earl of Leicester to Viscount De Lisle, 3 Sept. 1621 (De L'Isle MSS, v. 424).

²Gardiner, iii. 391; Higham, pp. 78-9; M. B. Rex, University representation in England 1604-90, pp. 97-8.

his wife gave birth, for a year earlier she had miscarried as a result of a rumour that her husband was to lose his office.¹ It seems that Buckingham honoured this plea and even served as one of the godparents at the christening of the child.² Naunton soon after resigned, and early in 1623 Conway was appointed secretary of state.³

Conway, acting on the directions of Buckingham, set about to provide some compensation for Naunton. In April of 1623 Conway reported to Buckingham, then in Madrid, that Middlesex was unwilling to authorize a grant of £500 in land for Naunton. Instead, he offered a pension of £1,000, but not for twenty-one years as Naunton requested. In June Conway informed Naunton's secretary that the best terms he could obtain from Middlesex was a life pension of £1,000 on 'some certain assignment, to cease when £500 a year in land is settled upon him'.⁵

¹Sir Robert Naunton to Buckingham, 4 Sept. 1622 (Goodman, ii. 242-3); 'Sir Robert Naunton', DNB, xl. 128.

²J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 4 Jan. 1623 (Chamberlain, ii. 470).

³Sir Francis Nethersole to same, 28 Sept. 1622 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 451); J. Chamberlain to same, 12 Oct., 16 Nov. 1622, 4, 25 Jan. 1623 (Chamberlain, ii. 458, 463, 470, 474); Gardiner, iv. 409-10.

⁴Sec. Conway to Buckingham, 12 April 1623 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 557).

⁵Same to George Verney, 9 June 1623 (*ibid.*, p. 602).

Naunton's secretary replied the following day that this would be satisfactory.¹

Here one can see the complexities of patronage and transfer of office. Middlesex was unwilling to allow land to leave the crown permanently to the benefit of Naunton's heirs, and he was unwilling to grant the pension for twenty-one years because Naunton probably would not live that long, and thus again crown income would go to his heirs. Naunton settled for a pension for his lifetime on 'some certain assignment', which is to say, he wanted the pension granted out of the revenue of one of the reliable and prompt disbursing departments, such as the court of wards, rather than out of the exchequer, which was notoriously in arrears on pensions and other disbursements throughout the early Stuart period.²

Throughout these events, Carleton remained at his embassy at the Hague. Sir Edward Conway was too far in Buckingham's favour for Carleton to imagine that an attempt for Naunton's post could succeed. In 1623,

¹George Verney to Sec. Conway, 10 June 1623 (ibid., p. 603).

²Aylmer, The king's servants, p. 161.

however, all these events and all these men became involved in the disposition of the office of provost of Eton.

Thomas Murray, provost of Eton, died on 9 April 1623; the office was not formally filled until July 1624.¹ But even the informal and bargaining phase lasted a full year, from March 1623 to April 1624. Lord Keeper Williams, who originally had ambitions for the place, relinquished his right as visitor of Eton College to nominate Murray's successor to Buckingham, but he reserved 'the colation of the same, to be disposed as [Buckingham] shall please'.² Francis Bacon, Viscount St Albans, entered the lists first; in late March, when Murray was near death, Bacon approached Secretary Conway for the provostship. Conway went at once to the king and placed Bacon's suit before him, as being favoured by Buckingham. James informed Conway that he had already promised the place at the request of Buckingham to Sir William Beecher, whom Chamberlain associated with Buckingham as early as 1617, and who had recently succeeded Sir Albertus Moreton in the clerkship of the

¹John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 19 April 1623, 24 July 1624 (Chamberlain, ii. 489-90, 571).

²Lord Keeper Williams to Buckingham in Spain, n.d. (Cabala, p. 284).

privy council.¹ Sir Robert Naunton also entered the field, offering 'to quit all pensions, promises, and pretensions whatsoever', in return for the provostship,² but James delayed action on any of these suits until he could confer with Buckingham. Buckingham's absence in Spain no doubt accounts for much of the delay in this matter.

As it became apparent that the provostship would not be disposed of quickly, Carleton belatedly entered the field. He had sought the reversion to the office unsuccessfully in 1617, when his father-in-law was provost.³ In July of 1623 Carleton's friend, Henry Rich, Baron Kensington, captain of the Royal Guards, wrote that though Buckingham was friendly to Carleton, he was already 'engaged' for the provostship of Eton; Kensington suggested that Carleton try for some other preferment.⁴ Carleton had approached Kensington before

¹Viscount St Albans to Sec. Conway, 25 March 1623 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 538); Conway to St Albans, 27 March 1623 (ibid., p. 540); St Albans to Conway, 29 March 1623 (ibid., p. 542); John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 27 Aug. 1617 (Chamberlain, ii. 97-8); same to same, 4 Jan. 1623 (ibid., ii. 472).

²Same to same, 19 April 1623 (ibid., ii. 490).

³See above, p. 152.

⁴Baron Kensington to Sir D. Carleton, 19 July 1623 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 22).

his departure for Spain to join Buckingham; he also solicited the support of those who remained at court. Carlisle promised to do him 'any service in his power, though one of his own dearest friends [was] a competitor for this vacant preferment'.¹ Arundel approached James on Carleton's behalf but was also told by James that the provostship was already promised; Arundel implied that James would give Carleton better preferment soon.²

Carleton was not deterred; early in 1624 he was still trying for the office through Buckingham's good friend, Sir George Goring, lieutenant of the band of gentleman pensioners. His nephew learned from Goring that a strong new contender for the post had arisen. This was Sir Henry Wotton. 'Sir Henry Wotton has lately presented Buckingham with many curious pictures, whereby it is thought he aims at the provostship of Eton' was the disappointing news his nephew sent him.³ In April of 1624 Wotton had clearly outdistanced the field, and in July he was formally

¹Earl of Carlisle to same, 21 June 1623 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 616).

²Earl of Arundel to same, April ? 1623 (*ibid.*, p. 574).

³Dudley Carleton to same, 28 March 1624 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 201).

confirmed as prevost. Other suitors had to be satisfied before he could be installed in his post.¹ Beecher, Naunton, and Wotton had been the principal candidates; Bacon and Carleton peripheral ones. The latter two were ignored; the former three were all provided for one way or another.

Naunton was elevated to the mastership of the wards, vacant by the fall of Middlesex, an office that reportedly, Lord Zouche, Viscount Mandeville, Sir Edward Leech, Sir Benjamin Rudyard, and Sir Walter Pye sought.² Wotton gave up his reversion to the mastership of the rolls, valued at £5,000, to Buckingham, and his right to fill a vacant clerkship in chancery, valued at around £2,500, to Sir William Beecher; Buckingham then further compensated Beecher by promising him £2,000 out of the sale of the reversion to the mastership of the rolls.³ Thus, Naunton obtained one of the most lucrative offices in the realm, Wotton received the

¹Sir Francis Nethersole to same, 10 July, 19 July 1624 (ibid., pp. 297, 307); J. Chamberlain to same, 24 July 1624 (Chamberlain, ii. 571).

²Sir Francis Nethersole to same, 3 July 1624 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 292); J. Chamberlain to same, 3 July, 21 Aug., 9 Oct. 1624 (Chamberlain, ii. 568-9, 577, 582); H. E. Bell, An introduction to the history and records of the courts of wards and liveries, p. 19.

³Dudley Carleton to Sir D. Carleton, 4 April 1624 (CSPD, 1623-5, pp. 207-8); same to same, 11 April 1624 (SP 84/117: 31 A [Ruigh transcripts]); Sir Francis Nethersole to same, 15 July 1624 (SP 14/170:2 [ibid.]); Aylmer, The king's servants, table 9, p. 222.

provostship, and Beecher made almost £5,000 for surrendering his reversion. The reversion to the mastership of the rolls was given to Sir Robert Heath, a client of the duke, early in 1625.¹ Carleton obtained neither office nor financial reward. The countess of Bedford had accurately stated the case when she had written to Carleton that 'those that are nearest the well-head know not with what bucket to draw for themselves or their friends'.²

The mere rumour of a vacancy created by a death, a promotion, or a disgrace, sent suitors scurrying for preferments to the offices which would be vacated. Buckingham's position resulted in his being solicited constantly for offices however minor. Robert Tyrwhitt, who held a minor household post, asked Buckingham to procure a place in the bedchamber for him, 'that being the height and sum of my desires'.³ Robert Man petitioned Buckingham for an 'inferior place' in his or the king's service as he had served his

¹Feb. 1624 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 487).

²Countess of Bedford to Sir D. Carleton, 24 April 1623 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 569).

³Robert Tyrwhitt to Buckingham, 1625? (CSPD, Add., 1625-49, p. 85); cf. List of the servants of Prince Charles scheduled to go into Spain with him, 21 March [1623] (HMC, Third report: The calendar of Philips' manuscripts, p. 284).

father many years as gardener.¹ When the contest for the provostship of Eton was just beginning, Sir Ralph Freeman approached Buckingham with the request to succeed Sir Henry Wotton as ambassador to Venice should Wotton be preferred to the provostship. Freeman also requested that the mastership of requests which he would vacate be given to Sir Albertus Moreton.² Secretary Calvert, believing that Sir William Beecher stood a good chance to receive the provostship, wrote Secretary Conway recommending Simon Digby for the clerkship of the privy council which Beecher would surrender.³ Indeed, Edward Clarke reported to Buckingham, who was in Spain, that Digby had written directly to the king seeking the post. Clarke claimed that Digby was 'jealous of your lordship, or unwilling to derive any good or benefit from your hand' and that his application had been advanced by the earl of Bristol, then at odds with Buckingham.⁴ Calvert's recommendation adds weight to this speculation on the part of Clarke for Calvert was known as an ally of Bristol.⁵

¹Robert Man to Buckingham, 1627? (CSPD, Add., 1625-49, p. 253).

²Sir Ralph Freeman to same, 30 Aug. 1623 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 70).

³Sir George Calvert to Sec. Conway, 18 April 1623 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 559).

⁴Edward Clarke to Buckingham, 1 Aug. 1623 (Goodman, ii. 300).

⁵Dudley Carleton to Sir D. Carleton, 26 June 1624 (SP 14/168:17 [Ruigh transcripts]); Higham, p. 74.

Buckingham's own clients expected to be rewarded when changes took place. The large number of posts which were transferred in 1624 following the impeachment of Middlesex, caused Sir Henry Mildmay, master of the jewels, who was given no new preferments, to wonder if Buckingham still intended to patronize him and to warn him that he should 'no longer . . . err by bringing in other people's creatures, instead of faithful adherents of his own'.¹ Wotton himself was to later write that 'dependents and suitors . . . are always the burrs, and sometimes the briers of favourites'.² No doubt, Buckingham agreed. He excused himself from taking into his service a gentleman recommended by Lord Zouche on the plea that he had 'already so many gentlemen that he rather wishes to disburden himself of some than to entertain others'.³

Nevertheless, Carleton had not yet succeeded in securing an office in England. He remained optimistic and as soon as it was clear that Sir Henry Wotton would obtain the provostship of Eton, he began

¹ Sir Henry Mildmay to Sec. Conway, 20 July 1624 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 307).

² Wotton, Parallel, p. 14.

³ Buckingham to Lord Zouche, 20 Oct. 1623 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 100).

once more to negotiate with Sir George Calvert for the office of secretary of state. Carleton had been informed that Calvert was willing to retire from office, for his catholic and Spanish sympathies separated him from the war-like policy towards Spain which Buckingham and Charles were espousing.¹ In May of 1624 Carleton's nephew advised him that Calvert would sell his office for £6,000, even though Lord Hollis had offered £8,000 when Calvert first received the promotion, and Sir John Suckling had offered £7,000 since. His nephew went on to say that Calvert thought £6,000 a very reasonable sum and that Sir George Goring would approach Buckingham on his behalf. His nephew also advised that his suit would gain weight if the queen of Bohemia wrote to both her brother Charles and Buckingham soliciting the office for him.² A month later Carleton received word that Buckingham was favourable to the idea of his succeeding Calvert, and it was suggested that he come in person to persue his suit even though Buckingham had advised that 'it would be hard to find out the means of satisfaction in so

¹Dudley Carleton to Sir D. Carleton, 6, 24 April 1624 (ibid., pp. 209, 222-3).

²Same to same, 3 May 1624 (ibid., p. 231).

bare a time'.¹ Clearly, both Calvert and Buckingham assumed that for the transfer to occur Buckingham -- not Carleton -- would have to raise the requested £6,000.

Matters were in abeyance for a while, Cranfield's dismissal having thrown open many opportunities for preferments. Dudley Carleton wrote to his uncle:

I hope the eyes of your lordship's friends will be really vigilant upon his fall, that among the removes that may be made in consequence thereof something may be reserved for your lordship not unworthy of your long service. . . .²

In June Dudley reported to his uncle on the condition of his suit; money was the obvious stumbling block as far as Dudley was concerned:

But to tell your lordship plainly what I conceive; I do not think that I or anybody else can deal effectually with these men without we could show them what good should come to them, what increase to their own stock. Everyman has his necessities, and therefore must prefer such suits in the first rank which will bring³ the preferers a particular emolument. . . .

In the same letter his nephew advised him to come to England to press his suit in person. But in a later

¹Same to same, 1 June 1624 (SP 14/167:1 [Ruigh transcripts]).

²Same to same, 19 April 1624 (SP 14/163:16 [*ibid.*]).

³Same to same, 12 June 1624 (SP 14/167:53 [*ibid.*]).

letter he warned his uncle to come without his family and possessions for many would assume that he was leaving his embassy and would solicit for his post even before he was assured any preferment. His nephew mentioned Sir Robert Phelps, Sir Edward Barrett, and Sir Francis Nethersole as persons who would like to succeed him at the Hague.¹

In September Carleton was informed that Buckingham now patronized Sir John Coke as Calvert's successor.² Carleton sent some statuary to his nephew to be given to Buckingham as a gift. In November Carleton was reassured that Buckingham was still favourable to his succeeding Calvert, but though the situation looked promising, his nephew was wary of disposing 'so rich a present as the marbles, unless Buckingham has some decided intention'.³ Sir Francis Nethersole, a good friend and constant correspondent, advised Carleton to have patience, noting that Buckingham 'never did anything post-haste in his life, except when he went to Spain', and that at the moment Buckingham was greatly pressed since everything was referred to him. Nethersole did not think it wise for

¹Same to same, 26 June 1624 (SP 14/168:47 [ibid.]).

²Same to same, 26 Sept. 1624 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 344).

³Same to same, 23 Nov. 1624 (ibid., p. 390).

Carleton to come to England at the present time.¹ Carleton remained at the Hague and the gift of the statuary was withheld until a more opportune time presented itself. That moment came in January of 1625 when Calvert resigned his secretaryship. Immediately Carleton's nephew went to Buckingham and offered him his uncle's gift of the statuary. Dudley Carleton reported that Buckingham was at first hesitant to accept the gift 'as being too valuable a present'. When Buckingham offered a present in return, he was informed that 'that would offend, and that he had other means of helping his friends'.² It was clear that an office was desired in return.

But the secretaryship went to Sir Albertus Moreton who paid Calvert £3,000 out of his own funds, thus leaving only £3,000 to be raised 'somewhere' for Calvert's compensation.³ No doubt this took the form of his creation as Baron Baltimore in the Irish peerage soon after his retirement.⁴ It may well be that Moreton obtained the office because he was willing

¹Sir Francis Nethersole to same, 18 Dec. 1624 (ibid., pp. 412-3).

²Dudley Carleton to same, 16 Jan. 1625 (ibid., p. 450).

³J. Chamberlain to same, 12 Feb. 1625 (Chamberlain, ii. 600).

⁴16 Feb. 1625 ('List of creations', p. 110).

to underwrite half of the compensation Calvert demanded, while Carleton apparently was not.

Nevertheless, Carleton's gift did not go unrewarded. Carleton's nephew suggested that he now try for the ambassadorship to France and use that post to sue for the office of vice-chamberlain, at the moment still in the hands of the earl of Bristol. In any event, his nephew wanted Carleton to send him one letter for the ambassadorship and one for the office of vice-chamberlain, to be used as the situation warranted.¹ But within a week of the presentation of the gift of the statuary, Carleton was informed that he would receive the vice-chamberlainship as soon as Buckingham arranged a settlement with Sir Edward Barrett who had a promise of the office.²

Yet there was another obstacle: Bristol refused to resign. Two months after he had been promised the place, Carleton was still not in possession of the office. His nephew wrote encouragingly that Buckingham's 'credit [was] involved' in the promotion, for either Buckingham or Bristol 'must fall without a speedy reconciliation, which can only be effected by the duke triumphing and

¹Dudley Carleton to Sir D. Carleton, 16 Jan. 1625 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 450).

²Same to same, 24 Jan. 1625 (ibid., p. 457).

[Bristol] submitting, which he absolutely refuses'.¹

But, fortunately for Carleton, James died at the end of March; Bristol's patent lapsed, and Carleton was installed in the office. The power struggle between Buckingham and Bristol ended in Carleton obtaining an office at home after eight years' efforts.

But no sooner did Carleton obtain the vice-chamberlainship than he renewed efforts to obtain the secretaryship, which seems to have been the dream of his heart from the beginning. In September of 1625 Sir Albertus Moreton died, having enjoyed his office only seven months, and Carleton was again in the running. Still he was thwarted in his ambition. Sir John Coke, the right arm of Buckingham in the admiralty, received the office, and Coke's former office as a master of requests went to Sir Thomas Aylesbury, another admiralty official upon whom Buckingham relied. Sir George Goring wrote Carleton that his friends were not neglecting him, but that 'there was a double former engagement' to Coke and Aylesbury. He added that one reason for the slowness of obtaining preferments for Carleton had been his dependence 'on persons averse to the duke and his undertaking', but that this was no

¹ Same to same, 10 March 1625 (ibid., p. 495); cf. Chamberlain to same, 12 March 1625 (Chamberlain, ii. 607).

longer so because of the efforts of the earls of Carlisle and Holland.¹ In 1626 Carleton was created Baron Carlton of Imbercourt,² thus adding honour to office.

Again in 1627 Carleton tried for the secretaryship, which was rumoured soon to be vacated by the preferment of Conway to the office of lord deputy of Ireland.³ But this was a false rumour. It was not until December 1628, four months after the assassination of Buckingham, that Carleton finally obtained the office he desired from the beginning, the secretaryship. Buckingham had promised it to him, and Charles honoured the commitment.⁴ Carleton had received one last preferment from Buckingham just a month prior to the fatal day. He was raised in the peerage as Viscount Dorchester.⁵ Despite the many years of frustration, the many rebuffs, the great

¹ Sir George Goring to Sir D. Carleton, 8 Sept. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 100); Aylmer, The king's servants, p. 77.

² 22 May 1626 ('List of creations', p. 112).

³ Duchess of Richmond and Lennox to John Langford, 30 March 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 114).

⁴ Gardiner, vi. 340-1, 372-3.

⁵ 25 July 1623 ('List of creations', p. 116).

disappointments, Carleton was never bitter about his treatment at the hand of Buckingham. He realized that politics was a game that had to be played cautiously and patiently always believing that in the end success would be achieved. On the death of Buckingham he wrote to the queen of Bohemia an eulogy of his patron without the least expression of any bitterness.¹

To understand the real nature of the process of patronage, and the practical difficulties of office-holders and office-seekers in the royal administration, the career of Sir Dudley Carleton is the case to study. It becomes evident that the true flaw in the administrative system in the early Stuart period was that it was a slow, cumbersome, involuted method of getting things done. Susceptible to corruption it was, but even under Buckingham the corruption was the lesser evil, the inefficiency the greater. It is also clear that all that was required were bureaucrats willing to look after tiresome details of administration; Buckingham did not, with the possible exception of Cranfield, attract statesmen into his service, since, controlling personally every matter of policy, all he desired were men who would unquestioningly carry out.

¹Dudley, Viscount Dorchester, to Elizabeth, queen of Bohemia, 27 Aug. 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 270).

his instructions.¹ His greatest shortcoming was his unwillingness to take responsible persons into his trust and to see all disagreements with himself as personal attacks rather than justifiable conflicts of opinion.

The bulk of the patronage under Buckingham consisted of appointments to office and promotion within the administration. He had little interest in local government. Here he only took precautions to see that those who supported him or his projects were rewarded with the local offices they sought and to prevent his enemies from obtaining posts.² His influence in local government was necessarily limited. Most local offices were filled by men prominent in their respective counties whose status or wealth made them logical choices for positions in the administration of the public needs of a county. Buckingham was more concerned with establishing his own position in the central administration than in building up a base for popular support by becoming intimately involved in local government.

The period from 1616 through 1619 was a transitional one for the favourite. Somerset fell but

¹Willson, Privy councillors, p. 21.

²Thomas G. Barnes, Somerset 1625-1640: a county's government during the 'personal rule', p. 172.

the Howards still held major offices. Buckingham effected two appointments in 1616. In April he obtained for Sir Oliver St John, the brother-in-law of his step-brother, Edward, the office of lord deputy of Ireland. It is doubtful that St John paid for the office,¹ but Buckingham offended the privy council when he failed to consult them about the appointment. The lord lieutenancy of Ireland was by this time an honourific post, but his deputy was the resident English governor in Ireland. Thus, the privy councillors, remembering that in their lifetime the Irish had made a serious revolt, took umbrage at the appointment of a person to such an office without their approval. While Chamberlain conceded that St John was 'a very able and sufficient man', his own snobbishness led him to believe that the Irish would feel themselves degraded by the appointment of a man of 'no greater note and nobility'.²

Later in 1616 the favourite obtained the place of chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster for Sir John Dacombe, who also received his knighthood through

¹ Sir George Blundell to Sir D. Carleton, 29 April 1616 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 364).

² J. Chamberlain to same, 6 April 1616 (Chamberlain, i. 620).

Buckingham.¹ Dacombe held the reversion to the office, but his appointment was strenuously opposed by many in the privy council on the grounds that reversions were not valid for judgeships. They argued that since the chancellor was also head of the duchy court, Dacombe's reversion was worthless. They also pointed out that Dacombe had been associated with the attempt by the earl of Somerset to obtain a general pardon for himself pass the great seal in 1615. But the privy councillors were only able to delay the appointment for a few days.² It would seem that Buckingham himself was supporting a man whom his followers opposed because of his association with the old favourites. But these were not times when men were known to sacrifice self-interest. When Dacombe saw that Somerset's usefulness was at an end, he sought a new patron. Buckingham was the rising star and so he decided to link his fortune to that of the new favourite. If Dacombe bought the support of the favourite, it was not commonly known at the time.

In 1617 Buckingham approved the appointment of Sir Francis Bacon to the office of lord keeper,

¹ Same to same, 8 June 1616 (*ibid.*, ii. 7); Edward Sherburne to same, 12 June 1616 (*CSPD*, 1611-18, p. 373).

² J. Chamberlain to same, 15 June 1615, 30 April, 8 June 1616 (*Chamberlain*, i. 602, 626; ii. 7).

although his role in Bacon's rise was not prominent. Bacon was already attorney-general and the logical successor to the deceased Lord Chancellor Ellesmere, who had often mentioned Bacon as the best qualified to succeed him. Four days after Ellesmere's death, Bacon was given the office, though with the less prestigious title of lord keeper. Bacon had paid court to the favourite by frequent letters of advice, as well as by assiduous attendance upon Buckingham's mother; yet it seems that 'this was more in order to forestall a veto than to secure an affirmative for his possession of the office'.¹ It seems unlikely that any money changed hands for Bacon's promotion. Sir John Bennett offered £30,000 for the office, but it is not clear to whom;² if the sum is correct and the offer really was made, it was almost certainly an offer to the king himself, since such a large sum of money would not at this time have been offered to Buckingham.

The promotion of Bacon left the office of attorney-general vacant, and James resolved to give it

¹Spedding, vi. 151; Gardiner, iii. 78, 211; cf. Sir Francis Bacon to Sir George Villiers, 12 Aug. 1616 (*Cabala*, p. 57); Same to same, 'Letter of advice', (*ibid.*, pp. 37-48).

²George Gerard to Sir Dudley Carleton, 20 March 1617 (*CSPD*, 1611-18, p. 449).

to Sir Henry Yelverton, who had held solicitor-generalship for the past four years. But there was an inexplicable delay in the signing of the warrant. Some friends of Yelverton soon discovered the reason for the delay: Buckingham was piqued at Yelverton because he had not solicited his support. In an interview which Yelverton reluctantly attended, Buckingham explained his opposition. His intentions had been to support Yelverton, without compensation, even though Sir James Ley had offered him £10,000 for the office. He had withheld his support following his failure to approach him for the office. Now, if Yelverton obtained the appointment the court would think that his own favour with the king was in eclipse. Yelverton replied that favourites had not usually meddled with the granting of this office, but that he understood that Buckingham's position demanded that he acquiesce in the appointment of a new attorney-general and that a friend be installed in the office, since 'it was a place that the greatest men in the realm might have hurt or good by it'. Buckingham was not entirely pleased with Yelverton's response, but his attendance at the interview was sufficient. Buckingham personally brought Yelverton's warrant to James for his signature. Later Yelverton gave James £4,000 as a gift, but there is no evidence that he presented Buckingham with anything, nor was the £4,000 in payment for the office; it was truly a

gift.¹ The delay in granting Yelverton the office, nevertheless, made it clear that Buckingham's acquiescence in the appointment was necessary.

The first appointment which Buckingham effected in 1618 was that of Sir Robert Naunton as secretary of state. The previous holder, Sir Ralph Winwood, had died in October of 1617, and immediately competition for the post had begun. Sir John Holles and Sir John Bennett both offered £10,000 for it, but to whom they made the offer is not clear.² Naunton

¹ James Whitelocke, Liber famelicus of Sir James Whitelocke, ed. John Bruce, pp. 55-7; J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 15 March 1617 (Chamberlain, ii 62); Gardiner, iii. 79-80.

² Edward Sherburne to Sir Dudley Carleton, 7 Nov. 1617 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 494). For the unsuccessful bids of Sir John Holles for the secretaryship, the chancellorship of the duchy of Lancaster, and a place on the Privy Council, cf. same to same, (*ibid.*); John Chamberlain to same, 31 Jan. 1618 (Chamberlain, ii. 133). For a short sketch of the efforts to obtain office see Alexander Thomson, 'John Holles', JMH, viii. 145-72 (1936). His purchase first of the title Baron Houghton and later the earldom of Clare are discussed in Mayes, 'Sales of peerages', p. 24. Commenting on the inability of Holles to obtain office, Gervase Holles, the family biographer, believed 'that this perpetual averseness to the duke of Buckingham was the main thing that choked up his way to preferment' (Gervase Holles, Memorials of the Holles family, ed. A. C. Wood, p. 100). He neglects to mention the aversion James had to the rigid puritanism of Holles.

received the post no doubt because he was 'so inward with [Buckingham's] mother that he is termed her chancellor', and also because he made Christopher, the younger brother of Buckingham, heir to lands worth £500 a year.¹

In the early months of 1618 Chamberlain reported stiff competition for the office of chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, vacant by the death of Sir John Dacombe in January.² One of the numerous correspondents of Sir Dudley Carleton estimated that there were forty-three suitors for the office,³ but the major rivals all worked through Buckingham. Sir Thomas Lake, the secretary of state, made at least a casual try for it, but with little hope of success.⁴ Sir Lionel Cranfield made an impassioned plea for the post. In January he wrote Buckingham offering to give him his mastership of requests, a profitable customs office, and to 'do anything besides [which] your

¹ John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 26 Oct. 1616 (Chamberlain, ii. 30); Sir Edward Harwood to same, 27 Dec. 1617 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 505); cf. Gardiner, iii. 101.

² John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 31 Jan. 1618 (Chamberlain, ii. 133).

³ Nathaniel Brent to same, 31 Jan. 1618 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 518).

⁴ Sir Thomas Puckering to Buckingham, 24 Jan. 1618 (Fortescue papers, p. 44).

lordship shall please to command'.¹ Chamberlain reported that others in the competition for the office were Sir Thomas Edmondes, Sir Edward Coke, Sir Robert Naunton, Sir Thomas Savage, Sir Richard Weston, and Lord Hollis. The latter three were willing to purchase the office, while the others hoped to obtain it freely.² Cranfield was rumoured to have offered £8,000 for the place.³

The other major competitor was Sir Humphrey May. He had the support of the earl of Pembroke and the countess of Bedford and had proceeded to buy off some of the candidates for the office. May promised the reversion of his office of surveyor of the court of wards and liveries, which he had but recently acquired, to both Sir Benjamin Rudyard and to John Packer, Buckingham's secretary.⁴ Buckingham disliked May, but May was also able to secure the support of Prince Charles. Finally May wrote an apologetic letter to Buckingham seeking his support. Buckingham deferred

¹Sir Lionel Cranfield to same, 14 Jan. 1618 (ibid., p. 42).

²J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 31 Jan. 1618 (Chamberlain, ii. 133).

³Same to same, 7 March 1618 (ibid., ii. 148).

⁴G. Gerard to same, 6 March 1618 (Fortescue papers, pp. 45-6); Jan. 1618 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 514).

to the wishes of the powerful supporters May had recruited and allowed him the office. In return May relinquished his pension of £300 a year in the exchequer to John Packer and Sir Benjamin Rudyard succeeded May as surveyor of the court of wards and liveries. May also gave the lease of Savoy house, the London residence of the duchy, to the countess of Buckingham.¹

Cranfield was furious for not having been granted the office. Chamberlain reported that he lost his patience so far as malapertly to expostulate with his Majesty touching a promise, and his own merits and deserts, and how he had undergone the envy both of court and city for his service; besides comparisons and contestings with Sir Humphrey May in the presence of the lord of Buckingham, and that in foul terms.²

Cranfield possessed little tact, and his brusque, outspoken nature accounted for much of the ease with which Buckingham was able to have him removed from his high offices in 1624. But in 1618 his star was just

¹George Gerard to Sir Dudley Carleton, 6 March 1618 (Fortescue papers, pp. 45-6); Sir Humphrey May to Buckingham, March ? 1618 (*ibid.*, pp. 46-7); Buckingham to Sir H. May, March 1618 (Fortescue MSS, p. 54); John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 16 March 1618, 11 Sept. 1619 (Chamberlain, ii. 149, 263); CSPD, 1611-18, p. 525; 'Sir Humphrey May', DNB, xxxvii. 140; Whitelocke, Liber famelicus, p. 61.

²John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 16 March 1618 (Chamberlain, ii. 149).

beginning to rise. The king and Buckingham contented Cranfield with the grant of the lucrative mastership of the wardrobe. It was rumoured that Cranfield paid £6,000 for the office, but there is no record of any payment.¹ It seems that this was a promotion based on merit and ability and marked the initial rise of Cranfield as a financial expert in charge of fiscal reform for the king. Here, as elsewhere, he fought the negligence that was more crippling to crown finances than the corruption which usually accompanied it.² He succeeded James, Lord Hay, that 'elegant trifler', as master of the wardrobe. Hay was created Viscount Doncaster and was given a gift of £20,000 in consolation for the loss of his office.³

The principal event of 1618-19 was the fall of the Howard faction. The major significance of their fall was that it removed the last real center of rivalry and resistance to Buckingham's ascendancy. Between 1619 and his death in 1628, no one obtained a significant office in the royal administration without

¹ Thomas Lorkin to Sir Thomas Puckering, 28 July 1618 (Birch, James, ii. 83); Prestwich, pp. 257-8, 264.

² Tawney, Business and politics, passim.

³ Ibid., pp. 156, 162; 5 [July] 1628 ('List of creations', p. 104).

the acquiescence of Buckingham.

By the fall of the Howards, Buckingham acquired the disposition of four chief offices. The secretaryship vacated by Sir Thomas Lake went to Sir George Calvert. The son-in-law of the earl of Suffolk, William Knollys, Viscount Wallingford, was dismissed as master of the court of wards and liveries for maladministration and was succeeded by the already overburdened Sir Lionel Cranfield.¹ Cranfield was by now involved in reforms of the royal household, the navy, the treasury, and, by virtue of his new office, reforms in the politically sensitive area of feudal incidents. It seems that Cranfield did not pay for this promotion either, for a servant of Wallingford reported that his master had 'resigned' the mastership of the wards to Cranfield 'without consideration',² despite the rumour that he had paid £6,000 for the office. Cranfield was regarded by James and

¹Dietz, p. 171; Bell, p. 19; Prestwich, pp. 233-4 n. 3.

²Thomas Moore to Framlingham Gawdy, 1 Feb. 1619 (HMC, Tenth report, appendix; The manuscripts of the Gawdy family, p. 111); John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 16 Jan. 1619 (Chamberlain, ii. 203).

Buckingham as a magician, who could bring fiscal reform and economic retrenchment at no inconvenience to their expensive indulgences.¹

Regrettably, the successor to the earl of Suffolk as lord treasurer had no other claim to the office than a full purse, which he was willing to empty. There were many candidates for the office: Thomas Howard, earl of Arundel, who despite his Howard connections was not in disfavour; Sir Robert Naunton, who was not satisfied with his secretaryship; James Ley, a former chief justice of Ireland and soon to be married to a Villiers lady; Fulke Greville, chancellor of the exchequer and thus the logical choice for preferment; and Henry Montagu, lord chief justice of England. One name was conspicuous by its absence -- Cranfield's. He would seem to be an obvious choice, yet he was not in contention. From May of 1619 to January of 1621 Cranfield was under a cloud because he was reluctant to marry Anne Brett, a cousin of Buckingham.² When Cranfield finally married the lady

¹Cf. Tawney, Business and politics, pp. 173, 206-7, 218-20, for the unrealistic expectations of James and Buckingham.

²Nathaniel Brent to Sir Dudley Carleton, 29 May 1619 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 49); Sir Francis Nethersole to same, 18 Jan. 1620 (*ibid.*, p. 113); Gardiner, iii. 212-13.

in January of 1621, the office of lord treasurer was already bestowed. Late in 1620 Sir Henry Montagu was given the office and a viscountcy in return for £20,000.¹ Chamberlain's comment on the choice was to the point: 'habet quod det, and by removing him they make a double harvest'.² His lord chief justiceship was given to Sir James Ley, who shortly afterwards married Jane Boteler, a niece of Buckingham.³

The last of the offices vacated by the Howards, the lord admiralsip, went to Buckingham himself. After the fall of the Howards, stability prevailed in the upper ranks of the office-holders for about a year. Then Buckingham passed through his first public crisis. Charges were brought in parliament that Sir Francis Bacon, by now closely associated with Buckingham, was taking bribes as lord chancellor. To add to his concern, a storm broke over the granting of

¹Thomas Locke to Sir D. Carleton, 2 Dec. 1620 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 196); Sir Charles Montagu to Sir Edward Montagu, 13 Dec. 1620 (HMC, The manuscripts of the duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, i. 255-6 [hereafter cited as Buccleuch MSS]); Walter Younger, Diary of Walter Younger, ed. George Roberts, p. 40; Girolamo Lando to the doge, 13 Nov. 1620 (CSP Venetian, 1619-20, p. 473). Lando gives the figure as £30,000, but this is an error, yet see below, p. 188.

²John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 13 Nov. 1619 (Chamberlain, ii. 272).

³Same to same, 3 Feb. 1621 (*ibid.*, ii. 338).

royal monopolies, involving his brothers and other kin, and again involving Bacon, since he, as lord chancellor, had allowed the grants to pass the great seal. Finally, Sir Henry Yelverton, smarting from the humiliations which Buckingham had inflicted by the recent loss of his office of attorney-general for his failure to support the monopolists, attacked Buckingham in the Commons.¹ Buckingham was genuinely frightened; this was his first parliament. Lord Keeper Williams advised him to 'swim with the tide, and you cannot be drowned';² he had to abandon his brothers, lead the attack on the monopolists and the monopolies, and even desert Bacon. Buckingham was reluctant to sacrifice Bacon and at first tried to save him, but he soon realized that his own position would be in jeopardy if Bacon was not given up.³

Again a major office was vacant under the aura of scandal. Yet there was no shortage of

¹J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 29 April 1620 (Chamberlain, ii. 302); Commons debates 1621, vi. 394-5; Rushworth, i. 32; cf. Sir Henry Yelverton to John Murray, 24 April 1620 (David Dalrymple, Memorials and letters relating to the history of Britain in the reign of James the First [1766], pp. 99-104); Gardiner, iv. 22-3.

²Hacket, i. 50.

³Gardiner, iv. 1-140; Willson, James, pp. 418-19.

competitors for the prestigious and influential post. Hacket claimed that Sir James Ley, lord chief justice of the king's bench, Sir Henry Hobart, lord chief justice of the common pleas, the earl of Arundel, the earl of Rutland, the father-in-law of Buckingham, and Sir Lionel Cranfield were all competitors.¹ But Bacon was succeeded by the worldly-wise John Williams. Hacket claimed that Williams had so impressed James by a letter he had written supporting the candidacy of Cranfield that he decided to give the office to Williams, and Buckingham delightedly consented.² The story is a most unlikely one. Cranfield had not been a serious contender for the office, and it seems more likely that the lord keepership had been destined for Williams once the fall of Bacon became inevitable.³ The primary virtue of the new lord keeper was his political acumen. A true politique, a churchman in name only, Williams was the only political realist close to the favourite.

Sir Henry Montagu, Viscount Mandeville, lord treasurer for less than a year, was asked to resign in

¹Hacket, i. 51.

²Ibid., i. 51-2.

³Roberts, pp. 40-2, follows Hacket, but see Gardiner, iv. 134-5.

1621. He was given the office of lord president of the council, an office that had been dormant since 1553 and which was revived in order to satisfy him.¹ It was reported that Mandeville refused an earldom, but his brother Edward had been created Baron Montagu just a few months earlier, which prompted Chamberlain to note on the dismissal of Mandeville from the treasurer-ship that the crown in ten months had received £40,000 from the Montagu family. Though Mandeville is known to have paid £20,000 as a gift to Buckingham, which on his dismissal came to be looked upon as a loan, it is doubtful that Sir Edward Montagu paid more than the accustomed price of £10,000 for a barony.² Mandeville's son later married a kinswoman of Buckingham and in this way obtained a restitution of part of the 'loan'.³

Sir Lioned Cranfield succeeded Mandeville as lord treasurer. He had now reached his zenith of favour and power. It seems to have been the third promotion Cranfield enjoyed without payment, for none

¹Handbook of British chronology, p. 136.

²Earl of Leicester to Viscount Lisle, 3 Sept. 1621 (De Lisle MSS, v. 424); 29 June 1621 ('List of creations', p. 107); Mayes, 'Sales of peerages', pp. 27 n. 39, 28 n. 40; John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 13 Oct. 1621 (Chamberlain, ii. 399); Gardiner, iv. 24 n.

³Ruigh, i. 79.

of his contemporaries mentions a transfer of money in association with this exchange of office. Cranfield was in especial favour at this time. He had recently married into the Villiers family, and unlike Mandeville, he encouraged the speedy conclusion of a marriage alliance with Spain. The parallel appointments of Williams and Cranfield in 1621 are of great significance. Cranfield was as realistic financially as Williams was politically. They disliked one another, but together they represented the wisest counsellors Buckingham allowed to hold offices of importance; that neither of them held office long reveals much about the character of Buckingham and his patronage.

The appointments of Sir Robert Heath and Robert Shute in 1621 were more characteristic. Buckingham had employed both to collect the profits of the office of enrolling pleas for the court of king's bench -- a lucrative post held in their names in trust for Buckingham.¹ Sir James Whitelocke, who had hoped to be appointed to the office with Heath, bitterly recorded in his diary: 'They will be but bankers, or cashmen, at the earl of Buckingham's command. . . .'²

¹19 Nov. 1616, 11 Feb. 1617 (CSPD, 1611-18, pp. 407, 433).

²Whitelocke, Liber famelicus, p. 59.

Buckingham, according to Chamberlain, paid them each £600 yearly to manage the office.¹ In 1618 Buckingham had tried to obtain the recordership of London for Shute, but the aldermen had refused to elect him.² Buckingham had then suggested, through James, that Sir Robert Heath should be elected. The aldermen agreed and chose Heath to be their recorder. When in 1621 Heath was promoted to the office of solicitor-general, Buckingham successfully persuaded the aldermen of London to elect Robert Shute their new recorder, though they had protested that Shute had been 'fifteen times outlawed'.³ Chamberlain commented:

¹J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 7 Nov. 1618 (Chamberlain, ii. 180-1). In a letter written over two years later, he estimated the wage to be between £700 and £800 (same to same, 3 Feb. 1621 [Chamberlain, ii. 337-8]). According to Professor Stone, Buckingham paid them only eight percent of the profits each (Crisis of the aristocracy, p. 445). Professor Aylmer estimates that the office grossed between £5,500 and £6,200 yearly, and profits ranged from £4,000 in 1619, £4,500 in 1623, £3,800 in 1627 (Aylmer, The king's servants, p. 215). If Stone's estimate of the wage is correct, Heath and Shute were only paid between £300 and £350 each annually.

²John Pory to Sir Dudley Carleton, 7 Nov. 1618 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 591).

³J. Chamberlain to same, 14 Nov. 1618 (Chamberlain, ii. 304); Whitelocke, Liber famelicus, pp. 64-9; Gardiner, iii. 31-5, 216-19.

The reason of Heath's preferment and his is said to be the saving of seven or eight hundred pounds a year to the lord of Buckingham out of Roper's office in the King's Bench, which was paid them in regard it was taken and held in their name.¹

Chamberlain believed that Buckingham had made the City of London his accessory in a scheme to save himself a few hundred pounds a year. But this was not so. Though Heath was promoted, he retained his share in the clerkship and was joined by Sir George Paul, registrar of the court of High Commission, who replaced Robert Shute.²

The next office to change hands was that of Sir Robert Naunton, the secretary of state.³ His successor, Sir Edward Conway, had served in the Cadiz expedition under the earl of Essex in 1596, had been governor of Brill, one of the cautionary towns sold by James in 1616, and had recently served as an ambassador to the German States. He had been appointed as acting secretary for Naunton in 1622; in January of 1623 he succeeded to the office of secretary of state.⁴

¹J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 3 Feb. 1621 (Chamberlain, ii. 337-8).

²30 March 1621 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 241).

³See above, pp. 115-6.

⁴'Sir Edward Conway', DNB, xii. 50-1; Higham, p. 79.

Chamberlain reported that when James officially appointed him, he lauded Conway 'for his birth, for his soldiery, for his languages, for his sufficiency, and for his honesty', but Chamberlain knowingly continued, 'others add for his courtship and courtesy in seeking to fasten the title of excellency on the lord marquis'.¹

Arthur Wilson described Conway as a 'rough, unpolished piece for such an employment', adding

But the king . . . would often make himself merry with [Conway's] imperfect scrawl in writing, and hacking expressions in reading, so that he would break into laughter, and say in a facetious way, 'Had ever man such a secretary, that can neither write nor read?'²

When in Spain, Buckingham also complained of his handwriting; in 1628, because his signature was so legible, one of Conway's letters was suspected of being a forgery.³

Conway, then, was hardly in the tradition of the two Cecils, or even the scholarly Naunton. He was, however, industrious, and equally important to Buckingham, completely loyal: 'I have seen some things in the court which I can neither understand nor give a reason for.'⁴ Sir John Oglander complained that

¹J. Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 25 Jan. 1623 (Chamberlain, ii. 474).

²Wilson, History of Great Britain, p. 133.

³Buckingham to Sec. Conway, n.d., but from Madrid, 1623 (printed in Williamson, Buckingham, appendix, pp. 320-1); Higham, p. 79 n.

⁴Sec. Conway to earl of Leicester, 29 Sept. 1625 (De L'Isle MSS., v. 440).

he was 'too flattering and complimentary', and explained why he was especially disliked in these terms:

He would tender his service to all, and deny no man a courtesy or favour in words; but in deeds he never would nor could perform it. Therein was his great imperfect, as being willing to deny none, nor able to pleasure all.¹

Conway did nothing without the advice of Buckingham. His entire dependence on Buckingham did not make him an attractive person, but his subserviency was well rewarded. Through Buckingham he obtained titles, offices, and pensions.²

Several offices changed hands in 1624,³ but the major event of the year was the impeachment and fall of Lionel Cranfield, earl of Middlesex.⁴

Professor A. P. Newton saluted Cranfield as 'the last Tudor servant of the state', with whose overthrow not only an individual career, but also a system of government neared its close.⁵ Cranfield was succeeded as

¹Oglander, Memoirs, p. 161.

²'List of creations', pp. 109, 112, 113; Feodera, xviii. 87, 428, 535, 575, 577; CSPD, 1627-8, p. 107; Higham, p. 78; Gardiner, iv. 410-11; Willson, Privy councillors, pp. 93-4.

³See above, pp. 158-61.

⁴See above, pp. 48-50, 181.

⁵The late Professor Newton's unpublished manuscript on Cranfield is summarized and commented upon in Tawney, Business and politics, pp. 290-1.

lord treasurer by Sir James Ley, a second-rate sycophant whom the Venetian ambassador characterized as 'entirely and servilely dependent on Buckingham'.¹ Ley had married into the Villiers family and was soon to be ennobled, justifying Arthur Wilson's observation: 'Happy is he can get a kinswoman, it is the next way to a thriving office, or to some new swelling title.'²

If the major event of 1624 was the fall of Middlesex, the principal event of 1625 was the removal from office of the lord keeper, John Williams, bishop of Lincoln.³ Williams, like Middlesex, was opposed to the termination of the Spanish alliance based on the marriage of Charles to the infanta. He also wanted to conciliate opposition at home. Williams erred in expressing these views at a time when both Charles and Buckingham were determined to pursue an aggressive war policy as a means of capturing popular support. Williams himself believed that his opposition to the termination of the Spanish match was the reason behind his dismissal: 'In the consultation about the dissolution

¹ Zuane Pesaro to the doge, 8 Nov. 1624 (CSP Venetian, 1623-5, p. 481).

² Wilson, History of Great Britain, p. 147.

³ For the office of secretary of state, twice filled in 1625, see above, pp. 168-70.

of the Spanish treaty, (which the duke made my sin against the Holy Ghost) I differed from the duke as to the best way to serve the duke and save himself.¹ His deft political sense provided Buckingham with the means of dismissal. Sensing opposition to his appointment as lord keeper because he was a man of relative obscurity, Williams had asked to be appointed on probation for three years.² In October of 1625 Charles informed him his period of probation was over, and asked him to resign; Williams reluctantly complied.³ Williams did not challenge his removal perhaps because he realized that to do so would end the possibility of being recalled into service as had happened with Middlesex. Williams always kept alive the hope that he would again enjoy office.

The disgrace of Williams was as great a disaster as Cranfield's has been. Tolerant of puritanism, conciliatory toward the house of commons, anxious to establish a viable political relationship between crown and country, Williams could have proved

¹ John Williams, bishop of Lincoln, to Sir George Goring, 30 Oct. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 137).

² For the reaction to the appointment of Williams to the Lord Keepership, see for example CSP Venetian, 1621-3, p. 88; Hackett, i. 61-2.

³ *Ibid.*, ii. 22-5.

the salvation of Buckingham.¹ Like Cranfield, Williams gave unpleasant advice: in 1625 he suggested that Buckingham give up his admiralship and take the office of lord steward, vacant for many months following the death of the duke of Lennox early in 1624, on the grounds that it was a safer position for a favourite. But Williams, apparently, also made the suggestion with the idea that Buckingham could do less harm in a post such as the stewardship. Buckingham saw through the ruse, and was offended.² During the parliament of 1625, when Buckingham was urging a dissolution, Williams, in a fine phrase, warned him that 'no man, ~~that~~ is wise, will show himself angry with the people of England'.³

Sir Thomas Coventry, the attorney-general, succeeded Williams as lord keeper. Coventry had succeeded Sir Henry Yelverton in his offices as solicitor-general in 1617 and attorney-general in 1621.

¹About the political good sense of Williams, Gardiner observed: 'as far as it is possible to argue from cause to consequence if Williams had been trusted by Charles . . . there would have been no civil war and no dethronement' (iv. 340). For the effect of the fall of Williams on the church see above, pp. 123-4.

²Lord Keeper Williams to Buckingham, 2 March 1625 (Cabala, pp. 280-1); Roberts, p. 82.

³Hacket, ii. 16.

Bacon had written James when Coventry was first appointed that he held him 'doubtful' for the king's service, 'not but that he is well learned, and an honest man; but he hath been, as it were, bred by Lord [Edward] Coke, and seasoned in his ways'.¹ It was reported to Sir John Davys, the attorney-general for Ireland, that he no doubt could have obtained the solicitorship for himself, because Coventry received the office 'by means of the great favourite of the time, without the allowance (or rather against the will) of the lord keeper. . . .'² But Coventry had distinguished himself by his ability to adapt his views as the situation demanded and so he was preferred to the office of lord keeper. Sir Robert Heath took over his office of attorney-general, and Richard Sheldon, whose prior service was as a personal lawyer to Buckingham, became solicitor-general in place of Heath.³ These appointments were simply promotions of his supporters, and there is no evidence, and no reason to indicate, that they paid for their offices; it seems unlikely that they did.

¹ Sir Francis Bacon to King James, 13 Nov. 1616 (Spedding, vi. 131).

² Sir Robert Jacob to Sir John Davys, 13 May 1617 (HMC, Report on the manuscripts of the late Reginald Rawdon Hastings, iv. 16).

³ CSPD, 1625-6, pp. 131, 142-3, 148.

Crown patronage often involved local magnates who claimed a proprietary interest in royal appointments made within their jurisdiction. The case of the chief justiceship of Chester is an example. In November of 1625 Secretary Conway wrote the earl of Northampton, lord president of the council of Wales, that Buckingham wished Sir Thomas Harris to be appointed the successor of Sir Thomas Chamberlayne, chief justice of Chester, who had recently died¹ Almost two years earlier Harris had been in a dispute concerning his right to a baronetcy which Sir Christopher Villiers had obtained for him. The cause was heard by the earl of Arundel in his capacity as earl marshal and it was declared that Harris was not entitled to the dignity. But Harris remained a baronet because the grant had passed the great seal, though the verdict that he was 'no gentleman' did much to harm his reputation.²

¹Sec. Conway to earl of Northampton, 12 Oct. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 123).

²King to Earl Marshal Arundel, 16 Oct. 1623 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 95); John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 4 Dec. 1624 (Chamberlain, ii. 590); Sir George Paul to Edward Nicholas, 21 March 1625 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 506); petition of Sir Thomas Harris to the king, [March], 1625 (ibid.); P. H. Hardacre, 'The Earl Marshal, the heralds, and the house of commons, 1604-41', International Review of Social History, ii. 115 (1957); Stone, 'Inflation of honours', p. 54.

Though Northampton owed both his position and title to Buckingham,¹ he immediately protested that Harris 'in the opinion of all men, is thought so absolutely unfit . . . that he cannot recommend him, nor give way to him'.² Buckingham then decided to reconsider the appointment. He ordered Conway to defer the appointment until he could look further into the matter.³ While matters were in suspension, Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, who was secretary, clerk of the council, and clerk signet at council in the marches of Wales since 1593,⁴ wrote Secretary Coke urging that Harris not be appointed, for he was 'as like to ruin that court as any man I know';⁵ while Attorney-General

¹Whitelocke, Liber famelicus, p. 95; 20 Nov. 1617 (Foedera, xvii. 43-5). Gardiner believed that William, Baron Compton, the brother-in-law of the countess of Buckingham, who was raised in the peerage as earl of Northampton, may have paid for his peerage, but there is no evidence to support this and Mayes disputes it (Gardiner, iii. 214-16; Mayes, 'Sale of peerages', p. 25, 25 n).

²Earl of Northampton to Buckingham, 20 Oct. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 128).

³Buckingham to Sec. Conway, 4 Nov. 1625 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 143).

⁴Penry Williams, The council in the marches of Wales under Elizabeth I, appendix iv, p. 349. Aylmer claims that Greville held the post of clerk of the council from 1583 until his murder in 1628 (The king's servants, p. 131).

⁵Lord Brooke to Sir John Coke, Nov. 1625 (Cowper MSS, i. 232).

Heath wrote Secretary Conway that Harris was 'a man of so mean descent, and so ill report that it would give much discontentment'¹ if he was appointed. Heath added that Northampton planned to come to court, and might press for the appointment of someone the duke might not like.

Northampton had been successful in having first Sir Thomas Chamberlayne and then Sir James Whitelocke transferred from that office when they proved a little independent of him. When Whitelocke showed himself to be more unbending than Chamberlayne had been, Northampton requested Buckingham to offer Whitelocke a new post so that he could replace him once more by the aged Sir Thomas Chamberlayne. Buckingham employed Lord Keeper Williams, a friend of Whitelocke's to persuade him to accept a place on the king's bench which he had earlier refused. Northampton saw in the appointment of old Sir Thomas Chamberlayne not only a man unable to perform his duties personally and so more apt to be under his influence, but also that he would soon profit from the appointment of his

¹Sir Robert Heath to Sec. Conway, 10 Nov. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 147).

successor.¹ Buckingham's interference in appointing Harris was not well regarded at all by Northampton: it meant the loss of revenue from the sale, the intrusion of an official who was not his own man but another's, and was an infringement of his right of appointment in the marches of Wales.

Conway reached an understanding with Northampton, and reported back to Heath that the earl had agreed not to suggest anyone for the office until he had seen Buckingham.² Secretary Coke was able to inform Lord Brooke that Northampton had assured him he would not dispose of the office until he heard from Buckingham, but that the name of Serjeant Bridgman had been suggested.³ Buckingham no longer pressed for Harris and agreed instead to allow John Bridgman, who was already a justice in Wales, to be appointed chief justice of Chester.⁴

¹Whitelocke, Liber famelicus, pp. 95-6; Francis, Lord Verulam to Sir Thomas Chamberlayne, 24 May, 22 June 1620 (HMC, Thirteenth report, appendix, part iv: The manuscripts of John Dovaston, p. 258); Warrant to earl of Northampton, 3 Nov. 1623 (*ibid.*); Sir Thomas Chamberlayne to Buckingham, 17 Oct. 1624 (Fortescue MSS, p. 456); Lord Keeper Williams to John Packer, 19 Oct. 1624 (*ibid.*, p. 458).

²Sec. Conway to Sir Robert Heath, 11 Nov. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 148).

³Sir John Coke to Lord Brooke, 9, 20 Dec. 1625 (Cowper MSS, i. 236, 239).

⁴CSPD, 1625-6, p. 561; Foedera, xviii. 631, 632.

Although Buckingham controlled patronage, when patronage extended beyond the realm of crown officials at the center of the government, local magnates had to be considered, as they always had been. When Conway requested the earl of Northampton to grant the minor place of clerk of the fines in the court of Wales to one of his relatives, he took the precaution to inform Northampton that he had requested both Buckingham and James not to promise the place to anyone 'till his lordship's opinion is known'.¹ The approval of the local magnate was deemed necessary, though not all were equally jealous of their position as was Northampton.

More pliable was Emmanuel, Lord Scroope, created earl of Sunderland in 1627, lord president of the council in the North. When a seat on the council fell vacant in 1627 Buckingham nominated Sir Arthur Ingram junior for the place. Sunderland agreed to appoint Ingram as a favour to the duke and would accept no payment for the office though Ingram had offered £350. He did note, though, that £600 was the usual sum given for the place.² A few years earlier

¹Sec. Conway to earl of Northampton, 16 Aug. 1624 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 327).

²Earl of Sunderland to Buckingham, n.d., [1627] (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 498); 16 Feb. 1627 (CSPD, Add., 1625-49, p. 197).

James had appointed Sir George Calvert to be one of the council of the North, but left a second place to be filled by a nominee of the lord president so as to guarantee his right to appointment to offices on the council.¹ Though he dominated the political scene, Buckingham could not eliminate the right of appointments enjoyed by leading local magnates.

In 1626 Buckingham cemented an alliance with the earl of Pembroke, lord chamberlain, who had been instrumental in bringing Buckingham to the attention of the king many years ago, but who had gradually fallen into opposition and enmity. Pembroke and Buckingham had quarrelled frequently over positions in the household, which Pembroke controlled as chamberlain.² For some time Pembroke had wanted to be the lord steward, but was unwilling to relinquish his chamberlainship unless it could go to his brother, the earl of Montgomery. The household was the one area where the patronage of Buckingham was not unrivalled, and Pembroke intended to keep it that way; Buckingham, on the other hand, wished the chamberlainship to go to

¹Sec. Conway to Sir George Calvert, 11 Aug. 1623 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 52).

²See above p.55-6 for an example of their disputes; also earl of Kellie to earl of Mar, 14 Jan. 1620 (Mar and Kellie suppl., pp. 187-9).

his most loyal supporter in the nobility, the earl of Carlisle.¹ In the middle of 1626, when Buckingham desperately needed Pembroke's support in the house of lords to combat the impeachment proceedings against him in the house of commons, Buckingham gave in. The alliance was sealed by the marriage of Montgomery's son to Buckingham's daughter; Pembroke became lord steward, Montgomery lord chamberlain.² The transaction is worth noting, for it was perhaps the only major transfer of office between 1619 and 1628 which did not see Buckingham in the dominant position, playing trump cards.

The more characteristic situation developed in the last months of 1626. The chief justice of the court of king's bench, who as the senior judge of England was styled the lord chief justice of England, was Sir Randall Crew. In November of 1626 Crew refused to lend his judicial authority to the collection of the forced loan. He was immediately dismissed, and succeeded by Sir Nicholas Hyde, who had recently helped Buckingham defend himself against the

¹Same to same, 11 Nov. 1625 (ibid., p. 237).

²Sir Benjamin Rudyard to Sir Francis Nethersole, 3 Aug. 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 596).

impeachment charges earlier that year.¹ As the impeachment of Cranfield and the fall of Williams were destructive of financial and political reform within the government, so the dismissal of Crew implied the destruction of an independent judiciary.

The chief justiceship of the common pleas was also vacant at this time, and Buckingham managed to provide for himself and his family by appointing Sir Thomas Richardson, a serjeant in the common pleas, to the office. Richardson paid the duke £7,000, and married the Lady Ashburnham, a widowed aunt of the duke.² This is one of the few appointments in the last years of the regime of Buckingham that involved an apparent outright sale. It would seem that the other appointees had something to recommend them other than money, while Richardson was not in that fortunate case.

No major offices changed hands in 1627, but there was a veritable spate of rearrangements in 1628. By the middle of 1628 Buckingham began to take account of his unpopularity. In July and August he made an

¹ to Rev. Joseph Mead, 10, 17 Nov. 1626 (Birch, Charles, i. 168, 170); Contarini to the Doge, 27 Nov. 1626 (CSP Venetian, 1626-8, p. 33); John Rous, The diary of John Rous . . . from 1625 to 1642, ed. M. A. E. Green, p. 7.

² John Pory to Rev. Joseph Mead, 26 Nov. 1626 (Birch, Charles, i. 174-5, 177); 28 Nov. 1626 (Foedera, xviii. 869).

attempt to placate opinion by reintroducing into the government men who were sympathetic to the house of commons, yet supporters of the royal prerogative. It was his intention to appoint moderates in order to regain the support and confidence of the people for himself and for crown policy. The earls of Arundel and Bristol, both of whom had spent time in the Tower because of their opposition to Buckingham, Bristol having been publicly accused of high treason by Buckingham, were restored to favour. They did not, however, receive offices.

James Ley, earl of Marlborough, was removed from the treasurership and given the honourary post of lord president of the council.¹ It was reported that the king gave him £10,000 for his office while his wife received £5,000 and his daughter the preferring of two viscounts.² Henry Montagu, earl of Manchester, succeeded the late earl of Worcester as lord privy seal.³ Sir Richard Weston, recently created Baron Weston, who since 1621 had been serving as chancellor

¹ 15 July 1628 (Handbook of British chronology, p. 137); Sec. Conway to Sir John Coke, 11 July 1628 (Cowper MSS, i. 358).

² Hum. Fulwoode to Sir John Coke, 17 July 1628 (Cowper MSS, i. 359); Sir Robert Ayton to James, earl of Carlisle, 18 July 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 218).

³ 4 July 1628 (Handbook of British chronology, p. 94); 30 June 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 182); Sec. Conway to Sir John Coke, 11 July 1628 (Cowper MSS, i. 358).

of the exchequer and under-treasurer, was appointed lord treasurer.¹ Sir Edward Barrett, Lord Newburgh, an associate of Weston and a former ambassador to France, moved into the post of chancellor and under-treasurer of the exchequer.² The aims of these men were to procure peace with France and Spain and stability at home.³ Weston wrote the duke, just five days before his assassination, that he longed 'to see him at home again with honour, in a quiet and settled court, studying his Majesty's affairs which require, to cure them, rest and vigilancy'.⁴

Buckingham made one further effort to silence criticism. He surrendered his office of warden of the Cinque Ports to the earl of Suffolk, who had offered him his support in the parliament of 1626,⁵ in the hope that this would quiet those who pointed to the numerous offices which he personally held. Taken

¹ 13 April 1628 ('List of creations', p. 128); 15 July 1628 (Handbook of British chronology, p. 104).

² G.E.C., Peerage, i. 431; 7 Aug. 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 248).

³ Willson, Privy councillors, p. 51.

⁴ Richard, Lord Weston, to Buckingham, 18 Aug. 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 259); cf. same to same, 13 Aug. 1628 (*ibid.*, p. 254).

⁵ 22 July 1628 (*ibid.*, p. 224); Theophilus, earl of Suffolk, to Buckingham, May 1626 (CSPD, Add., 1625-49, p. 131).

together, the appointments of 1628 represent almost a total capitulation on the part of Buckingham. He had been the strongest voice for the war since 1624. He had led the war himself throughout its disastrous course. To appoint a group of men who were with one voice for peace was to give up the idea of persuing war, to abandon his dream of performing some noble feat of arms that would make England and Europe gasp in awe. For Buckingham capitulation came too late. Perhaps the only compliment that one can pay him is to say that he acquiesced in the appointment of men who were at his death to conclude a peace with France and Spain and enable the crown to function eleven years without parliament.

Patronage under Buckingham in the central administration was characterized by great transience in office. In 1620 Chamberlain wrote:

It seems we live of late under some rolling planet, for it is observed that in less than five years most of our principal officers have been displaced or disgraced, as a lord chancellor, a lord treasurer, a lord chamberlain, a lord admiral, a master of the horse, a secretary, a master of the wards, a lord chief justice and an attorney-general.¹

¹ John Chamberlain to Sir D. Carleton, 4 Nov. 1620 (Chamberlain, ii. 325).

These displacements record the transference of power from the Howards to Buckingham. The chief officers in the administration were not merely bureaucrats, they were also the leading advisers of the crown. Since their duties brought them in contact with the king and court, it was necessary for Buckingham to assure himself of their loyalty. The removals from office in the period 1616-1620 were to be expected when viewed in this light, the 'ministers' of one administration replaced by those of the incoming administration. But when four years later Chamberlain could write ' . . . that we have four lord treasurers living at once, four lord chamberlains, four secretaries, three masters of the wards, two keepers or chancellors, two admirals et sic de ceteris in several places and office!';¹ there can be no justification for the great number of leading crown officials discharged.

From a purely administrative point of view, the shifts, though foolish, did not disrupt the ordinary operation of the departments for the bureaucracy carried on. But the frequent removal of the chief

¹ Same to same, 18 Dec. 1624 (ibid., ii. 592).

officers made good administration impossible. From a political point of view, the transience was disastrous. The kaladeiscopic swiftness of rise and fall dismayed and embarrassed the nobility and gentry; it lessened the respect held for leading crown officials; it produced among those who had been disgraced or removed, and among their friends and relatives, a strong opposition to both king and crown.

CHAPTER VI

THE ADMIRALTY

The admiralty was the most important office which Buckingham held. Through the office, together with the wardenship of the Cinque Ports which he acquired in 1624, Buckingham controlled patronage in maritime affairs. A purser, a ship captain, a navy painter, a vice-admiral in one of the coast counties, all were in Buckingham's gift.¹ Beginning with Buckingham's tenure, the lord admiral was not only commander of the fleet in time of war, but also was responsible for the administration of the navy in peace time.² Previously, the administration of the navy had been left to the four 'principal officers' of the navy, that is, the treasurer, comptroller, surveyor and clerk of the navy.³

But administration by the navy officers was found wanting. By the accession of James a serious

¹e.g. CSPD, 1625-6, pp. 10, 50, 53, 218, 219; CSPD, 1627-8, pp. 510, 512, 516; CSPD, 1628-9, p. 253; Sir William Monson, The naval tracts of Sir William Monson, ed. M. Oppenheim, iii. 419-20.

²M. Oppenheim, History of the administration of the royal navy . . . from 1509 to 1660, pp. 86, 104, 189-94.

³G. F. James and J. J. Shaw, 'Admiralty administration and personnel, 1619-1714: part I', BIHR, xiv. 11 (1928).

deterioration had already been noticed. The decline in the quality of naval administration dated back, at least, to the last years of the great Sir John Hawkins,¹ but, as Professor Stone has shown, the standards never seem to have been very high.² While costs continued to increase, efficiency and strength did not. Graft, waste, ineptitude and embezzlement had appeared in every department. In 1608 the findings of a commission appointed to investigate serious administrative shortcomings and the great peculation in the Navy were set aside through the influence of Lord Admiral Nottingham, the aged hero of the Armada. James did nothing more effective than lecture the guilty parties.³ An attempt to establish a new commission to investigate abuses in the navy in 1613 proved abortive.⁴ But in 1617 James had begun to realize the need for reform and could no longer ignore the chronic maladministration of the navy as he had done on the two previous occasions.

¹G. E. Aylmer, 'Attempts at administrative reforms 1625-40', EHR, lxxii. 234 (1957).

²L. Stone, 'The Armada campaign', History, xxix. 120-43 (1944).

³W. L. Clowes, The royal navy: a history from the earliest times to the present, ii. 17.

⁴John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 10 June 1613 (Chamberlain, i. 455); 13 June 1623 (CSPD, 1611-18, pp. 186-7); Whitelocke, Liber famelicus, pp. 43ff.; Aylmer, 'Attempts at administrative reforms', p. 234.

The growing indolence of Lord Admiral Nottingham, who had never shown energy in administration, left unchecked the mismanagement of a negligent, if not corrupt, treasurer of the navy, Sir Robert Mansell.¹

The graft and peculation which flourished under his administration finally attained such dimensions that in 1618 a long and searching inquiry was instituted into the condition of the navy.² Between 1608 and 1618 the treasurer of the navy had expended between £31,000 and £50,000 annually while the surveyor of victuals spent between £8,000 and £13,000.³ Yet, there had been no naval activity and, as the commission of 1618 pointed out, the fleet was in great decay.⁴

The scandals unearthed by the commission led to the resignation of Lord Admiral Nottingham who was unwilling to implement the suggested and much needed reforms.⁵ Buckingham was appointed to succeed him,

¹Oppenheim, p. 189.

²Sir Henry Yelverton to Sir Clement Edmondes, 20 June 1618 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 546).

³Dietz, p. 446.

⁴For a good account of the corruption of the navy officials in this period, see Oppenheim, pp. 191-7.

⁵Cf. Tawney, Business and politics, p. 161; Report of the commissioners of the navy to the privy council, 29 Sept. 1618 (APC, 1618-19, p. 263); the report is printed in full in John Charnock, History of marine architecture, ii. 211-70; Sir Lionel Cranfield to Buckingham, 3 Sept. 1618 (Goodman, ii. 164-7); Gardiner, iii. 205; Privy Council to Nottingham, 28 Oct. 1618 (APC, 1611-18, pp. 280-1).

though it had been rumoured earlier that he was reluctant to accept the office because of his youth and inexperience.¹ Buckingham reportedly purchased the office for £3,000 and the promise of an annual pension of £1,000 for the lives of Nottingham, his wife and their son, Charles.²

The person most responsible for the abuses in the navy sold his office just as the investigations of the commissioners were beginning. In May of 1618 Sir Robert Mansell, treasurer of the navy since 1604, sold his office to Sir William Russell, a wealthy merchant, prominent in the East India and Russia companies.³ But Mansell did not leave the navy in disgrace. A few days after selling the treasurership, Mansell was appointed vice-admiral of England for life, his grant specifically including a legal opinion that he could not be deprived of the vice-admiralship except for misdemeanours committed in the exercise of that office.⁴ Perhaps this happy arrangement for Mansell was the

¹Sir Edward Harwood to Sir Dudley Carleton, 7 Jan. 1618 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 511); Gardiner, iii. 205.

²John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 24 Oct. 1618, 6 Feb. 1619 (Chamberlain, ii. 173, 210).

³'Sir William Russell', DNB, xlix. 429; 10 May 1618 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 540); John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 5 May 1618 (Chamberlain, ii. 161).

⁴14 May 1618 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 541).

parting reward of Nottingham for the long service of his kinsman, or a consolation for his surrender of the more lucrative navy treasurership.¹ Mansell had other associations which may account for the acquiescence in this preferment: his first wife had been the sister of Sir Francis Bacon, and recently he had married the sister of Sir John Roper from whom Buckingham had purchased the lucrative clerkship of the king's bench.² Mansell also had connections with the earl of Pembroke, at this time a supporter of Buckingham, dating back to at least 1612.³ The preferment of an official as corrupt as Mansell at a time when the navy was undergoing a drastic overhaul did not speak well of what was to come.

More important than the appointment of Mansell to the largely honourific office of vice-admiral of England was the establishment of a commission to administer the navy. John Coke, one of the commissioners appointed to investigate the navy, had recommended the restructuring of the administrative system, arguing that it would enhance the dignity and

¹W. G. Perrin, 'The vice-admiral and rear-admiral of the United Kingdom', Mariner's Mirror, iv. 27 (1928).

²'Sir Robert Mansell', DNB, xxxvi. 89.

³Ruigh, i. 86.

power of the lord admiral by extending his control throughout the navy.¹ Two weeks after Buckingham received his patent for the lord admiralship, the commissioners were granted the permanence they desired and were charged with the administration of the navy.² By agreeing to establish a standing commission directly responsible to himself, Buckingham freed the lord admiral from the demands of routine administration while guaranteeing that naval administration would not be neglected. Buckingham also accepted Coke's advice on the composition of the commission. Coke had maintained that success in this endeavour would depend 'upon the sufficiency of them that shall have the execution', broadly intimating that those who had carried out the investigations into the navy should be appointed the new commissioners of the navy.³ Sir Richard Bingley, the surveyor of the navy, and Sir Guildford Slingsby, comptroller of the navy, were 'sequestered from their posts', their corruption having been made manifest.⁴ The only principal officer permitted to retain his

¹ John Coke to Buckingham, 7 Nov. 1618 (Cowper MSS, i. 99).

² 28 Jan. 1619 (Foedera, xviii. 124-30); 12 Feb. 1619 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 12).

³ John Coke to Buckingham, 17 Oct. 1618 (Cowper MSS, i. 98).

⁴ Clowes, ii. 16.

office was Sir William Russell, the new treasurer of the navy.

Russell was not responsible for the administration of the navy as had been Mansell. His duties were financial and confined to keeping accounts. Russell became deeply involved in providing money and credit to meet naval expenses and it may not be unconnected with his new financial responsibilities as naval treasurer that he sold many of his shares in the East India Company.¹ It was advantageous for the crown to have in its service men such as Russell who could be persuaded to expend both their credit and their own financial resources in fulfilling their duties. Soon after assuming office, John Coke persuaded Russell to lend the service £5,000. Coke recognized the value of such a servant and advised Buckingham 'to take notice of Sir William Russell's forwardness herein, it will encourage him to take like care hereafter to settle other arrearages'.² Cranfield was to render the same advice a few years later when Russell once more made

¹Robert Ashton, 'The disbursing official under the early Stuarts: the cases of Sir William Russell and Philip Burlamachi', BIHR, xxx. 163-5 (1957); CSPD, 1619-23, pp. 290, 296; CSPD, 1623-5, p. 455; CSP Col., East Indies, 1617-21, pp. 99-100; ibid., 1622-4, pp. 93, 487.

²John Coke to Buckingham, 1618 (Cowper MSS, i. 101).

substantial contributions.¹ The retention of Russell as treasurer of the navy was salutary and perhaps one of the wisest appointments, and yet, to reward one of his parasitic clients, Buckingham had him removed in 1627.² Though Russell cooperated with the new commissioners, he was only appointed to the commission when a new patent was issued on the accession of Charles.³

The credit James claimed for Buckingham in his opening speech to parliament in 1621 was due this commission. James boasted that he had chosen 'an honest and industrious young man' rather than 'an old beaten soldier' to be lord admiral, who, though personally lacking experience, 'wanted neither reason nor care to make commissioners, such as for their skill and diligence have brought the matter to good pass which (now) it is at'.⁴ Coke's ability to persuade Buckingham to retain the commissioners as the naval administrators was all the greater when it is considered that these men did not represent a body

¹Sir Lionel Cranfield to same, 12 Oct. 1621 (Goodman, ii. 207).

²See below, p. 274.

³7 April 1625 (Foedera, xviii. 13-17).

⁴Commons debates 1621, vi. 369.

subservient to Buckingham. Eight of the twelve members had previously sat on the commission investigating the household in June 1618.¹ The other four were added for their expert knowledge. The commissioners formed a rather competent group and it is to the credit of Buckingham that he recognized it as such, if only because it meant that the success of the commission would assure him of the favour of James.

Sir Lionel Cranfield officially headed the commission. He brought to it his business acumen and devoted his energy to the investigation. Cranfield realized that his work on the various reform commissions would prove the key to his preferment to high office.² His influence with both James and Buckingham, who greatly valued his advice in financial matters, was an asset that the commission could not do without. Though Cranfield was at this time a client of Buckingham, his future career sufficiently illustrates that he was a man of independent spirit. As he assumed several other administrative duties, Cranfield was unable to devote his full time to the commission and his position as principal commissioner was assumed by

¹Sir Lionel Cranfield, Sir Richard Weston, Sir John Wolstenholme, Nicholas Fortescue, Francis Gifton, Richard Sutton, William Pitt and John Osborne (21 June 1618, APC, 1618-19, p. 179).

²Prestwich, p. 213.

John Coke.

Cranfield introduced one of his own able clients, Sir Richard Weston, to the commission.¹ Weston had worked closely with Cranfield on previous reform commissions and had some administrative ability.² He quickly learned to court the favour of Buckingham and was successful in obtaining offices and honour through him. Though he initially played an active role on the naval commission, after 1621 his participation became more routine and in keeping with his duties as chancellor of the exchequer, an office obtained through the patronage of Buckingham.³ Weston became intimately involved in the financial affairs of the period. In 1624 he was chosen by Buckingham to head the interim commission of the treasury following the impeachment of his former patron, Middlesex. Finally, in 1628 he was

¹Clowes (ii. 16) errs in listing Thomas Weston as a navy commissioner rather than Sir Richard Weston. Thomas Weston was a merchant and colonist living at that time but not at all prominent in government (DNB, ix. 374). Tawney, Business and politics, p. 288.

²Willson, Privy councillors, pp. 90-1; Higham, pp. 147-8.

³Court minutes of the East India Company, 20 Jan. 1618 (CSP Col., East Indies, 1617-21, p. 111); T. Locke to Sir Dudley Carleton, 6, 27 Oct. 1621 (CSPD, 1619-23, pp. 296, 303); John Chamberlain to same, 8 July 1620 (Chamberlain, ii. 310); T. Locke to same, 23 March 1622 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 362); Sir Richard Weston to Buckingham, 3 Sept. 1622 (Cabala, p. 368).

appointed lord treasurer.¹ Weston was an opportunist. He saw in Buckingham the path to all favour. Even Lord Keeper Williams overcame his objections to the preferment of Weston by Buckingham when he realized that Weston was entirely devoted to the service of Buckingham.² As Sir Humphrey May later noted: 'The chancellor of the exchequer is not a spark but a flame of fire in anything that concerns the duke.'³

None of the five exchequer officials on the commission seem to have any definite connection with Buckingham. All five were knighted prior to the formation of the navy commission in recognition of their services on other reform commissions.⁴ Sir Nicholas Fortescue, chamberlain of the exchequer, a Roman Catholic, was 'a great friend' of Sir Thomas Lake, one of the recently displaced Howard clients.⁵ Fortescue

¹Same to same, 29 May 1624 (*ibid.*, p. 369); see above, p. 207.

²Lord Keeper Williams to Buckingham, 24 May 1624 (*Cabala*, pp. 276-7).

³Sir Humphrey May to same, 7 Oct. 1627 (*CSPD*, 1627-8, p. 375).

⁴John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 6 Feb. 1619 (*Chamberlain*, ii. 210).

⁵Same to same, 20 Feb. 1619 (*ibid.*, ii. 216); 'Sir Nicholas Fortescue', *DNB*, xx. 47-8.

seems also to have had an association with Cranfield which caused Cranfield to rebuke him for having remained silent during his impeachment.¹ Fortescue had served on a naval board as early as 1610, but like the other exchequer officials on the commission, his duties were primarily concerned with regulating the finances of the navy. The two auditors of imprests, Sir Francis Gofton and Sir Richard Sutton, had held their offices for several years and were to remain efficient servants.² Sir William Pitt, teller of the exchequer, the present tenant of an office long in his family, knew Cranfield as early as 1605, but it was probably his office which accounts for his appointment.³ Sir John Osborne, lord treasurer's remembrancer in the exchequer, also came from a family with long connections in the exchequer.⁴

The merchant community was represented on the commission by two leading commercial magnates, Sir John

¹Earl of Middlesex to Sir Nicholas Fortescue, [May 1624] (Knole MSS, p. 288).

²Aylmer, The king's servants, p. 78 n. 2.

³Ibid., p. 90; Tawney, Business and politics, p. 83, n. 2.

⁴Sir John Osborne is not separately noticed in the DNB, but see his brother Sir Peter Osborne, DNB, xliii. 293; Ruigh, i. 87. Tawney is mistaken when he refers to Sir John Osborne as the brother-in-law of Cranfield (Business and politics, p. 157 n. 1). He had correctly identified Sir Henry Osborne as Cranfield's brother-in-law earlier (ibid., p. 87).

Wolstenholme and Sir Thomas Smythe. Wolstenholme was a prominent member of several colonial enterprises, a successful customs farmer, and one of the wealthiest merchants of London. Wolstenholme was very active in the service of the crown throughout this period, though, like many other officials, he often placed his own interests first.¹ Smythe was also a prosperous colonial entrepreneur. He had served as governor of the East India Company since 1600, and was treasurer of the Virginia Company. In 1619 the East India Company complied with orders from James to re-elect Smythe their governor though 'with some little difficulty'.² Early in 1621 he was accused of having embezzled funds from the Virginia Company, and though not found guilty, his name was not entirely cleared. James, as was his wont, nevertheless, continued to rely on his advice.³ Both Wolstenholme and Smythe were independent of the favour of Buckingham because of their wealth and position in the merchant community, but they could not risk his displeasure.

¹'Sir John Wolstenholme', DNB, lxii. 344; Tawney, Business and politics, p. 87.

²John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 15 July 1619 (Chamberlain, ii. 251); court minutes of the East India Company, 2 July 1619 (CSP Col., East Indies, 1617-21, p. 283).

³'Sir Thomas Smythe', DNB, liii. 128-9; Sec. Conway to Sir Thomas Smythe, 11 Dec. 1624 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 402).

The commission included naval experts. William Burrell, the master of the Shipwrights Company, was commissioned to build two new ships annually for the next five years and to give technical advice to the commissioners.¹ Thomas Norreys, who had served at one time as a naval purser, was to act as the surveyor for the commission.² Phineas Pett, the master shipwright who had been responsible for the building of ships prior to 1618, attacked Burrell and Norreys as his 'greatest enemies' and contended that the investigations of the commission were deliberately designed to ruin him.³ Pett had every reason to worry about his reputation because the report tabled by the commissioners well documented his inferior craftsmanship in the past few years.

Much of the success of the commission was due to the efforts of its most diligent member, John Coke, a capable administrator who performed his duties 'with much practical efficiency'.⁴ Coke seems to have

¹Clowes, ii. 16 n. 4; Aylmer, The king's servants, p. 254; 20 April 1619 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 38); *ibid.*, pp. 352, 487.

²A. W. Johns, 'The principal officers of the navy', Mariner's Mirror, xiv. 49, 53 (1928); Goodman, i. 55; Sir Henry Yelverton to Sir Thomas Edmondes, 18 June 1618 (APC, 1618-19, p. 174).

³Phineas Pett, The autobiography of Phineas Pett, ed. W. G. Perrin, i. 120.

⁴Willson, Privy councillors, p. 96; Gardiner, iii. 203.

attached himself to Buckingham's service not only from a desire to obtain office but also from a realization that only through the influence of Buckingham with James could the restoration of the navy be accomplished.¹

Coke had served as deputy to Sir Fulke Greville, when Greville had been treasurer of the navy in the last years of the reign of Elizabeth.² Greville most likely recommended Coke to Buckingham for the service,³ but Coke had a private association with Buckingham as his appointment to a commission to regulate the finances of the favourite indicates.⁴ Coke became closely associated with Buckingham in the administration of the navy, for Buckingham realized, as Secretary Morton was later to point out, that Coke 'best [understood] the importance of the business relating to the navy'.⁵

Buckingham accordingly showed a readiness to accept his recommendations and sought his advice.⁶

¹Ruigh, i. 85; Dorothea Coke, The last Elizabethan: Sir John Coke, p. 65.

²Cf. Cowper MSS, i. 41-2; Prestwich, p. 212.

³Ruigh, i. 85; cf. John Coke to Buckingham, 7 Oct. 1618 (Cowper MSS, i. 98).

⁴Same to his wife, 18 Feb. 1619 (*ibid.*, i. 104).

⁵Sir Albertus Moreton to Sec. Conway, 21 March 1625 (CSPD, 1623-5, pp. 504-5).

⁶Buckingham to Sir John Coke, 6 May 1619 (Cowper MSS, i. 105-6); cf. John Coke to Buckingham, 17 Oct. 1618 (*ibid.*, i. 98); Buckingham to Sir Robert Naunton, 1618 (*ibid.*, i. 101).

The special confidence Buckingham placed in Coke created dissension among his fellow naval commissioners. In March 1623 Coke informed Secretary Conway:

I have desired the assistance of my fellow commissioners, neither have I certified anything wherein they dissent. But where the pains and care of one man is rather required, I confess I have been forward to discharge the special trust reposed in me, though I know that thereby, as also by the many addresses, I have received from your Honour, I draw envy upon me.¹

But jealousy was also occasioned by the annual pension of £300 which Coke received but which the other commissioners did not.² Yet it was probably his diligence which irritated his fellow commissioners the most. In 1623, as senior commissioner, Coke informed Conway that he suspected some of his fellow commissioners, notably Burrell and Norreys, of indiscreet dealings. He could not resist adding that he had foreseen this eventuality when the commission was first established and had suggested 'a frame of government for the navy wherein, by regular and continued accounts, these errors ought suddenly to be discovered and reformed'. When this plan was rejected, Coke righteously assumed the responsibility for supervising

¹Sir John Coke to Sec. Conway, 16 March 1623 (ibid., i. 134-5).

²8 Nov. 1621 (ibid., i. 114); Fulke, Lord Brooke, to Sir John Coke, 16 Feb. 1622 (ibid., i. 116).

the activities of his fellow commissioners, and as he informed Conway, 'ever since I carried a watchful eye over them, and employed fit persons to discover their dealings'.¹

The administration of the navy after 1619 was, therefore, placed under the control of an able group of men, who, though perhaps more honest than the previous administration, were themselves not free from charges of profiting from their positions. It was the vice of office-holders of the period. Yet, it must be acknowledged that they performed creditably. Though they did not always enjoy the cooperation of the former officials, sometimes even meeting with open hostility,² the commissioners were able to carry out their reform program in an efficient manner. They were appalled that 'many gentlemen of worth' kept pressing Buckingham 'in that which apparently concerned not the safety and service of the king's ships but their particular advantage of retinues and dead pays'.³ The commissioners had confronted the vested interests of

¹Sir John Coke to Sec. Conway, 22 Aug. 1623 (quoted in Coke, The last Elizabethan, pp. 59-60; CSPD, 1623-5, p. 63).

²Statement by _____ Man, 8 March 1624 (*ibid.*, p. 180); Sec. Conway to Lord President Mandeville, 8 March 1624 (*ibid.*, p. 181).

³Commissioners of the navy (draft by John Coke) to Buckingham, March 1619 (Cowper MSS, i. 105).

several influential men whose lobbying they resented. Exasperated by the claims of their critics, the commissioners requested 'to be freed from the interruptions of their opponents'.¹

They were also irritated by the interference of Buckingham. He had interceded on behalf of John Man whose claim to a sixth master's place had been rejected by the commissioners. They complained bitterly that by questioning their decisions he was frustrating their attempt 'to restore the lord admiral's authority in disposing places in the navy'.² The commissioners asked rather for his support which he must have accorded them in this instance: a few years later the commissioners refused to honour the claim of Man's widow for a pension on the grounds that her husband had 'missed the place'.³

The commissioners were not always as successful. No action was taken on their recommendation to

¹Sir Lionel Cranfield to same, 15 July 1619 (ibid., i. 106).

²Sir John Coke for the commissioners to same, 24 Oct. 1619 (ibid.).

³Sec. Conway to Sir John Coke, 9 Feb. 1625 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 470); commissioners of the navy to Buckingham, 16 Feb. 1625 (ibid., p. 476); cf. 22 Dec. 1618 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 604).

abolish the offices of storekeeper of the navy and keeper of the outstores at Deptford, both held by John Wells. The latter office had been presented by the commission 'as a newly erected office and prejudicial to the king's service'.¹ When seven years later Wells petitioned the commissioners for permission to unite the two offices, they agreed that it would be 'for the advancement of the service if that course were adopted'.² This compromise, long in the obtaining, may have been influenced by the recent petition of Wells to Buckingham seeking his arrears in pay.³ Wells was perhaps allowed to combine the two offices in lieu of his back salary.⁴ Wells' request also came at a time when Buckingham had embarked on a martial foreign policy when some logistic value may have been seen in retaining the office at Deptford.

The commissioners provided a more economical administration than had Mansell and the principal officers of the navy. They issued a report in 1623 which underlined their achievements. They had built

¹ John Coke to Buckingham, 16 May 1619 (Cowper MSS, i. 108).

² Commissioners of the navy to same, 22 Feb. 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 259).

³ Petition of John Wells to same, 1626 (*ibid.*, p. 517).

⁴ 26 April 1626 ('Calendar of privy seals: Charles I', p. 26).

two ships annually and had kept costs to a five year total of £154,000, or slightly above the £30,000 a year they had maintained would be sufficient.¹ But, as Professor Dietz has shown, the total charges in 1622 and 1623 were much higher than they had been in Mansell's worst days.² The ships built by William Burrell were not sound: Captain Christian of the Bonaventure, almost a new ship serving on the east coast, wrote of 'the weak, and I may truly say, the miserable state of this ship. . . .'³ The special commission set up to investigate the navy commission in 1626-7 found Burrell seriously at fault in his construction of the ships.⁴ But even with these shortcomings the commissioners were able to remove, in part, the contemporary reputation of the navy for fraud and waste. The commissioners could not have accomplished even this much without the co-operation and

¹Sir Lionel Cranfield to Buckingham, 3 Sept. 1618 (Goodman, ii. 166); 31 Dec. 1623 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 136); Clowes, ii. 18; Dietz, p. 447.

²Dietz, p. 447.

³Capt. Edward Christian to commissioners of the navy, 4 Aug. 1623 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 43; Oppenheim, p. 88).

⁴Order of special commission of the navy, 29 Jan., 7 May 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, pp. 35, 168); Capt. R. Gyffard to Buckingham, 9 June 1627 (ibid., p. 210); John Heydon to Sir John Coke, 13 Sept. 1627 (Cowper MSS, i. 322); Sir Henry Mervyn to Buckingham, 25 Oct. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 407).

support of Buckingham. The achievements of the first five years of his tenure as lord admiral were not the commissioners' alone. Some of the praise belonged to Buckingham.

In 1624 Buckingham further consolidated his control of the navy through his purchase of the wardenship of the Cinque Ports from Lord Zouche.¹ Contemporaries accused him of ambition in engrossing both offices of lord admiral and lord warden but Buckingham seems to have done so out of genuine desire to improve administration. The documents printed by Gardiner on this charge seem to indicate that the amalgamation of the two offices was desirable.² His position as lord admiral was strengthened by the additional jurisdiction over a section of the coast which had always been free from his control and a source of friction between the lord admiral and lord warden.³

¹ Sir Francis Nethersole to Sir Dudley Carleton, 2 Sept. 1624 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 333); John Chamberlain to same, 4 Sept. 1624 (Chamberlain, ii. 580).

² Documents illustrating the impeachment of the duke of Buckingham in 1626, ed. S. R. Gardiner, pp. vi, 1-8 (hereafter cited as Impeachment documents); cf. Gardiner, vi. 101; Sir Henry Mainwaring, The life and works of Sir Henry Mainwaring, ed. G. E. Manwaring, i. 199; Monson, iii. 427n.

³ Buckingham to Lord Zouche, 7 Feb. 1620 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 121); Sir Henry Mainwaring to same, 20 March 1620 (*ibid.*, p. 131).

As early as 1620 it had been rumoured that Buckingham had designs on the Cinque Ports.¹ But these rumours were unfounded. It was not until 1623 that the purchase of the office was considered. The dismissal of Sir Henry Mainwaring, lieutenant of Dover Castle and deputy warden of the Cinque Ports, caused a serious rupture in the relations between the court and Lord Zouche.² Zouche ardently opposed the Spanish match and his dismissal of Mainwaring on the grounds of dereliction of duty followed too closely Mainwaring's appointment as captain of the flag-ship to be sent to Spain for Charles. Conway requested Zouche to allow Mainwaring to accept this preferment and 'privately' advised him that he should not withstand it 'being a point on which the king is much set'.³ But Zouche remained adamant even though Mainwaring had obtained the commission through Sir Robert Naunton, an associate of the duke, with the approval of the earl of Rutland, Buckingham's father-in-law and proposed admiral of this

¹Sir R. Younge to same, 14 June 1620 (ibid., p. 152).

²Lord Zouche to Sir Henry Mainwaring, 17 March 1623 (ibid., p. 528; Mainwaring, i. 96); Sir Henry Mainwaring to Lord Zouche, 9 April 1623 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 555).

³Sec. Conway to same, 26 April 1623 (ibid., p. 571).

fleet.¹

On his return from Spain Charles, who had become extremely irritated with Zouche over the matter, urged Zouche to reinstate Mainwaring.² It seems that Mainwaring had been able to persuade Charles that Zouche had wronged him because he had gone as captain in Rutland's fleet to Spain. Mainwaring himself stated that he was dismissed for affecting 'Buckingham's desires'.³ Zouche had a paper drawn up for the benefit of Prince Charles documenting his charges against Mainwaring. Statements by various officials of the Cinque Ports were also taken to add weight to the charges.⁴ Edward Nicholas, whose duty it was to draw up this document, as he was at this time secretary to Lord Zouche, found the whole matter distasteful for he was then seeking further preferment with either the prince

¹Sir Robert Naunton to Sec. Conway, 28 Feb. 1623 (*ibid.*, p. 505; *Mainwaring*, i. 95); Sir Henry Mainwaring to same, 3 March 1623 (*CSPD*, 1619-23, p. 509); Lord Zouche to Sir Arthur Mainwaring, 28 April 1623 (*ibid.*, p. 572).

²Charles to Lord Zouche, 4 Nov. 1623 (*CSPD*, 1623-5, p. 107); Sir Edward Zouche to same, 17 Nov. 1623 (*ibid.*, pp. 112-13); Archbishop Abbot to same, 18 Nov. 1623 (*ibid.*, p. 113).

³*Mainwaring*, i. 121.

⁴Lord Zouche to Edward Nicholas, 25 Nov. 1623 (*CSPD*, 1623-5, p. 119); statements by Richard Marsh, Thomas Fulnetby and Sam. More, 28, 29 Nov., 1 Dec. 1623 (*ibid.*, pp. 120-2); Edward Nicholas to Prince Charles, 3 Dec. 1623 (*ibid.*, p. 122).

or Buckingham.¹ In the end Charles had no choice but to recognize that Zouche had the right to dismiss any of his officers, but he informed Zouche that he was not convinced by the charges laid against Mainwaring.²

During the whole disagreeable affair, Sir Edward Zouche, knight marshal and heir of Lord Zouche, related to Buckingham an offer by Zouche to resign the wardenship on the consideration of an annual pension of £1,000. But Sir Edward could only report that Buckingham believed the office to be worth £500 and there the matter stood.³ But nine months later Buckingham made an agreement with Lord Zouche whereby he purchased the wardenship for £1,000 and a promise of £500 annually for life. Zouche included guarantees for his servants in the agreement. Richard Marsh, clerk of Dover Castle, Thomas Fulnetby, serjeant of the admiralty court of the Cinque Ports, and Captain Hill, muster-master, were to retain their places. Zouche further stipulated that Sir Henry Mainwaring was not to receive any office in the Cinque Ports 'on account his labouring Lord Zouche's disgrace, both in court and

¹ Same to Lord _____, 3 Dec. 1623 (ibid.).

² Charles to Lord Zouche, 23 Jan. 1624 (ibid., p. 151).

³ Sir Edward Zouche to same, 20 Oct. 1623 (ibid., pp. 100-1).

parliament'.¹ Zouche was greatly concerned that Mainwaring should again receive an office in the Cinque Ports. He followed up every rumour that hinted that this might happen.² But Mainwaring did not receive any further employment in the Cinque Ports, though Buckingham made use of his services. Mainwaring had been a former pirate who had gained pardon from James and had served on several naval exploits.³ His experience led to employment on a special commission on naval abuses in 1626-7 and in assisting the preparations for the expeditions to Rhé and Rochelle in 1627 and 1628.⁴

Mainwaring's former office of lieutenant of Dover Castle and deputy warden of the Cinque Ports was given to Sir John Hippisley.⁵ As early as 1618 Hippisley was referred to as 'a principal favourite of the lord of Buckingham'.⁶ He had accompanied Buckingham

¹Agreement between Lord Zouche and Buckingham, 17 July 1624 (*ibid.*, p. 304).

²Lord Zouche to Edward Nicholas, 21 Nov. 1624 (*ibid.*, p. 385; *Mainwaring*, i. 129).

³Oglander, *Royalist notebook*, p. 22; *Mainwaring*, i. 31.

⁴*Ibid.*, i. 163-99.

⁵John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 9 Oct. 1624 (*Chamberlain*, ii. 583); Keeler, pp. 215-16; Ruigh, i. 83, ii. 39 n. 61.

⁶John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 27 March 1618 (*Chamberlain*, ii. 152).

to Spain in 1623, but the offer of the lieutenancy of Dover Castle seems to have been his first reward for long and faithful service. His position in the Cinque Ports gave him the opportunity to grow wealthy all the while remaining extremely careful of the rights of Buckingham in the Ports.¹ Early in 1628 Hippisley tried to obtain a place nearer the king as lieutenant of the gentlemen pensioners,² an office which he did not receive perhaps owing to the death of Buckingham. His change of fortune following Buckingham's assassination may have been due to his great attention to the prerogatives of the lord warden and lord admiral. Under Hippisley, the Cinque Ports almost became a part of the admiralty for he recognized the superior authority of the lord admiral. But this relation was severed when Buckingham, in his last months, voluntarily surrendered the wardenship to the earl of Suffolk.³

Buckingham does not seem to have concerned himself too much with affairs in the Cinque Ports.

¹Sir John Hippisley to Buckingham, 3 March 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 78); same to Edward Nicholas, 3 March 1627 (ibid.); same to same, 7 March 1627 (ibid., p. 83); same to Buckingham, 7 May 1627 (ibid., p. 161).

²Same to same, 2 Feb. 1628 (ibid., p. 541).

³See above, p. 207.

though the officials bequeathed by Lord Zouche proved not to be the most competent.¹ Buckingham remained first lord admiral and only incidently lord warden of the Cinque Ports.

The accession of Charles had brought new problems and saw the beginnings of a more active foreign policy which would place great demands on the navy. Because both he and Buckingham were pleased with the achievements of the commissioners of the navy, it was decided to retain the services of the navy commission. A new patent was issued on 7 April 1625.²

Buckingham had played a minor part in the nominations to the commission in 1619, but in 1625 the commission membership reflected his influence. The valuable service which Sir John Coke had rendered the first commission did not go unrecognized. Coke retained his position as principal commissioner, the patent designating him as 'one specially deputed to receive our high admiral's directions upon all occasions of our service concerning . . . the navy, and to give account unto him how the same should be from time to time performed. . . .'³

¹Sir John Hippisley to Edward Nicholas, 22 Dec. 1624 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 415); same to Buckingham, 28 Jan. 1625 (ibid., p. 460); Lord Zouche to Edward Nicholas, 1 Feb. 1625 (ibid., p. 464).

²Foedera, xviii. 13-17.

³Ibid., xviii. 16.

Sir Robert Pye, auditor of the exchequer, was nominated to the commission. Pye had since 1616 served as financial adviser to Buckingham and had received the auditorship through his patronage. For several years Pye had been charged with securing the assignation of revenues for naval expenditures.¹ Sir Joshua Downing, keeper of the stores at Chatham, was appointed by Buckingham to succeed Thomas Norreys early in 1625 as 'commissioner for the survey of our ships'.² Downing retained this appointment in the new reign. He had served at sea and had most likely come to the attention of Buckingham through William Burrell.³ Dennis Fleming succeeded Sir Peter Buck as clerk of the ships, but his association with Buckingham is difficult to establish. A 'Dennis Fleming' is listed as a 'yeoman purveyor and garnitor' in the stables of King James over which Buckingham, as master of the horse, had jurisdiction.⁴ Fleming succeeded Buck on 18 March 1625, a few days

¹ Aylmer, The king's servants, pp. 311-13; Stone, Crisis, p. 284; Ruigh, i. 84.

² Sir John Coke to Buckingham, 29 Jan. 1625 (Cowper MSS, i. 183).

³ Johns, 'The principal officers', pp. 49, 53.

⁴ 'List of officials and servants in the stables', ca. 1618 (HMC, Sixth report: The manuscripts of Sir Reginald Graham, p. 325).

before the death of James.¹

Sir Allen Apsley, lieutenant of the Tower, who had married into the Villiers family, had a long association with the navy when appointed to the commission in 1625. Since 1612 he had served with Sir Marmaduke Darrell and his son, Sir Sampson Darrell, as victualler of the navy.² In 1623 Apsley and Sir Sampson Darrell were appointed 'officers of the admiralty' and surveyors of victuals.³ Apsley had recently purchased Sir Sampson's share in the marine victualling office when appointed to the commission.⁴ His daughter, Lucy Hutchinson, described the victualler-ship as 'a place then both of credit and great revenue'.⁵ Though Apsley may have prospered earlier, by 1630 the crown was heavily in debt to him.⁶ Indeed, soon after

¹Johns, 'The principal officers', pp. 50-1.

²'Sir Allen Apsley', DNB, ii. 128; 25 Jan. 1612 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 114).

³8 Jan. 1623 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 480).

⁴Jan. 1625 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 436).

⁵Lucy Hutchinson, Memoirs of the late Colonel Hutchinson by his widow (Everyman edn.), p. 8.

⁶Sir Allen Apsley to Edward Nicholas, 30 May 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 139); Aylmer, 'Attempts at administrative reform', p. 239 n. 3; notes by Edward Nicholas, 15 Dec. 1630 (CSPD, Add., 1625-49, p. 387).

his appointment as victualler he wrote to Lord Treasurer Middlesex advising him that he wished to sell his lieutenancy of the Tower 'so that he may serve his Majesty in victualling the navy'.¹ Buckingham supported his efforts to find a buyer 'to the end that he may be better able to discharge his service to his majesty in the place he has in the navy without trouble to his majesty for that which is behind and unpaid'.² As for so many other office-holders, Apsley's salary was greatly in arrears, and this was compounded in his case by the numerous loans which he made to the crown which were not repaid. Apsley, though, was not above syphoning funds for his own use as his conduct in provisioning the Cadiz expedition of 1625 attests.³

Sir William Russell, treasurer of the navy, like Sir Allen Apsley, was admitted to the commission because of the vast sums he was expending on behalf of the naval service. Sir John Wolstenholme and Sir Thomas Smythe were reappointed, but Smythe did not live out the year. Sir Richard Weston, chancellor of the

¹Sir Allen Apsley to earl of Middlesex, 11 July 1623 (Knole MSS, p. 282).

²Buckingham to same, 27 Jan. 1624 (Sackville [Knole] MSS, O.N. [Ruigh transcripts]).

³See below, p. 255.

exchequer, as well as three of the five original exchequer officials, Gofton, Sutton and Osborne, were again named to the commission. The composition of the commission of the navy in 1625 included many who were intimately associated with Buckingham and is an indication of his power as the new reign began.

Buckingham further controlled the navy by employing a personal secretary for admiralty affairs. He retained the services of Sir Thomas Aylesbury who had served Nottingham in that capacity for fourteen years.¹ Aylesbury was given more responsibility under Buckingham than he had previously enjoyed. When Buckingham left for Spain in 1623, the commissioners of the navy were instructed to follow the directions sent them by Aylesbury.² In 1625 Aylesbury left Buckingham's personal service to become a master of requests.³ When the administration of the navy reverted to the four principal officers in 1628, Aylesbury became surveyor of ships.⁴

¹James and Shaw, 'Admiralty administration', p. 166.

²Sec. Conway to commissioners of the navy, 3 April 1623 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 550).

³Sir George Goring to Sir Dudley Carleton, 8 Sept. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 100).

⁴See below, p. 274.

Aylesbury was succeeded by Edward Nicholas, 'one of those useful men who are intelligent, busy and subservient'.¹ Nicholas had served as secretary to Lord Zouche, lord warden of the Cinque Ports. When Nicholas decided to transfer his allegiance to Buckingham, Zouche was reluctant to allow him to leave his service. He at first refused to give him a recommendation. But after the wardenship of the Cinque Ports had been purchased, he offered him his services in securing the office of private secretary to the lord admiral.² Nicholas saw in Buckingham his opportunity to better his situation financially. He became one of the most influential men under the favourite in the early Stuart court. Throughout 1625-8 Nicholas kept busy drawing up memoranda and digests of business for Buckingham to be committed to the council, corresponding with captains on both sea and shore, suggesting individuals to form a commission of inquiry into the navy in 1626 and preparing instructions for their direction. In 1627 he received official standing as clerk of the council in extraordinary. Buckingham's absence on the expedition to the isle of Rhé emphasized the

¹Gardiner, v. 384.

²Matt. Nicholas to Edward Nicholas, 2 March 1624 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 175); Lord Zouche to same, 16 Oct. 1624 (ibid., p. 355); same to same, 27 Nov. 1624 (ibid., p. 393).

importance of his position; he was authorized to issue warrants for letters of marque, to call upon vice-admirals for their accounts and, broadly speaking, to assume the full responsibilities of admiralty administration until Buckingham's return.¹ But Nicholas added his quota to the general disorganization by accepting bribes for minor appointments. There was hardly any secrecy about it; on one occasion, Kenrick Edisbury, a servant of Sir William Russell, treasurer of the navy, who had procured from Nicholas a carpenter's warrant for someone, sent 'the thankfulness' which the carpenter had left with him.² No doubt the carpenter had had to bribe Edisbury also.

These were the men assigned the task of administering the navy between 1619 and 1628. In these ten years they offered competent, if not always honest, administration. They were faced with the herculean task of eradicating the tradition of negligence and dishonesty which permeated naval administration and which had reached its greatest heights under Mansell. But the fourteen years of

¹CSPD, 1625-8, passim.

²K. Edisbury to Edward Nicholas, 25 Jan. 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 233); Aylmer, The king's servants, p. 78; Monson, iii. 409 n.

misrule and corruption by Mansell proved a formidable obstacle which they could not entirely overcome. This became evident in the first three years of the reign of Charles when England was constantly engaged in wars. The deep wounds in the spirit of the navy account for much of the dereliction of duty at this time and the subsequent military failures.

The only naval activity undertaken in the reign of James, other than the costly fleet sent to Spain to bring back Charles in 1623, was the expedition to Algiers in 1620-1. The expedition had been long in planning and was now to be employed as a diplomatic move to support the Elector Palatine as well as an attempt to suppress the Algerine pirates who had been preying on English and Dutch commerce.¹ Buckingham nominated Sir Robert Mansell admiral of the expedition.² Mansell selected the experienced Sir Richard Hawkins, the son of the famous Sir John Hawkins, as his vice-admiral to the chagrin of Sir Thomas Button.³ Button only accepted the rear-admiralship

¹Gardiner, iii. 288; iv. 224.

²8 Sept. 1620 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 13).

³'Sir Richard Hawkins', DNB, xxv. 224-5.

following the personal mediation of Buckingham, to whom he was distantly related through the wife of Sir Edward Villiers. Button had succeeded Sir William Monson as admiral of the Narrow Seas in 1616, and Mansell later claimed that he gave the vice-admiralship to Hawkins rather than Button because he feared that Button's duties in the channel would prevent his assuming new responsibilities at an early date.¹ Buckingham was careful to send Edward Clarke, his confidential servant, as secretary of the fleet with the instruction that Clarke sit on all meetings convened to plan strategy.²

For this expedition the crown supplied six ships while the merchants were to provide twelve. Six merchants were to advise the navy commissioners, but 'all the captains were to be appointed by the lord admiral'.³ Yet it is doubtful that Buckingham made the selection personally. The men appointed to serve were all men who had long experience at sea and, in the opinion of one naval historian, were 'probably the best at the king's disposal'.⁴ But the expedition

¹'Sir Thomas Button', *ibid.*, viii. 99; Sir Robert Mansell to Buckingham, 10 July 1621 (Cabala, p. 299).

²Monson, iii. 109; Gardiner, vi. 68.

³Feb. 1619 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 13); 7 Feb. 1619 (*ibid.*, p. 12); Clowes, ii. 52.

⁴Julian S. Corbett, England in the Mediterranean, i. 98.

itself was a failure. Sir William Monson, bitter at having been passed over for employment in the expedition, blamed the 'improvident and inconstant carriage' of the commanders.¹ But Monson neglected to take into account the lack of precision in the instructions which Mansell received as well as the inadequate provisions and preparations for the fleet. Coke recognized that the commissioners had failed in their first test to adequately provide the fleet and warned Buckingham: 'For the fleet returning from Algiers, that which properly concerns you is the clamour of the captains.'²

But the real test for administration by naval commissioners came in the early years of the reign of Charles. James had always opposed war, but in the closing months of his reign England was drawing closer into armed conflict with Spain. Within three years of the death of James, England was at war with both Spain and France. The pursuit of an aggressive foreign policy demanded an efficient and effective administration to supply the navy in time of war. In 1625 an expedition to Cadiz was conceived. But the

¹Monson, iii. 96.

²John Coke to Buckingham, 16 July 1621 (Cowper MSS, i. 112).

expedition was ill-planned and its failure at Cadiz was one of command and execution. All was left to the direction of men who were not fit judges in naval affairs. Want of sea experience and lack of unanimity on strategy proved the ruin of the expedition.¹ The failure was especially felt by Buckingham who hoped its success would win him the popular support he desired.

Buckingham had originally considered leading the expedition in person as admiral and chose as his lord marshal and general of the sea and land forces and second in command, Sir Edward Cecil.² But while preparations were underway, the expedition came under severe criticism in the parliament of 1625. On August 6 Sir John Eliot made a 'moderate speech',³ attacking both the administration of the navy and the general policy of the court, but defended Buckingham personally. Eliot blamed the shortcomings on the navy commissioners.⁴ Following the speech Eliot advised Buckingham to come to an accommodation with parliament by placing the responsibility for the disorders of the navy on the

¹Sir John Glanville, The voyage to Cadiz in 1625 . . ., ed. A. L. Grosart, passim.

²Sir Edward Cecil to Sec. Conway, 2 June 1625 (Cabala, pp. 167-8); same to Buckingham, 3 June 1625 (ibid., pp. 168-9).

³J. N. Ball, 'Sir John Eliot at the Oxford Parliament, 1625', BIHR, xxviii. 116 (1955).

⁴Debates in the House of Commons in 1625, ed. S. R. Gardiner, pp. 137-8.

commissioners, though Eliot conceded that Buckingham 'might have trouble over the fleet because it had so unnecessary preparation and expense'.¹ But Buckingham was not prepared to abandon the expedition and hoped to placate the opposition by appointing another to command the fleet. Yet, whether he decided to lead the expedition in person or not, there would be little alteration in public reaction to him. Lord Cromwell, recently returned from the Low Countries in search of preferment under Buckingham, frankly appraised Buckingham of the situation: 'All men say, if you go not with the fleet, you will suffer in it, because, if it prosper, it will be thought no act of yours; and if it succeed ill, they say, it might have been better, had you not guided the king.'² But Cromwell's advice was not well received and occasioned some bitterness.³

Buckingham was not one to heed a word of caution. His selection of Sir Edward Cecil to lead the expedition to Cadiz as both admiral and land marshall was most unfortunate. Cecil's experience had been

¹Sir John Eliot, An apology for Socrates and Negotium posterorum, ed. Alexander B. Grosart, ii. 53-5 (hereafter cited as Eliot, Negotium posterorum); Ball, 'Eliot at the Oxford Parliament', p. 119.

²Thomas, Lord Cromwell, to Buckingham, 8 Sept. 1625 (Cabala, p. 378).

³Sir George Blundell to same, 3 Nov. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 143).

solely on land, having served in military campaigns in the Low Countries since 1598.¹ His appointment honoured a promise made five years earlier when Buckingham failed to obtain for him the command of the English levies for the Palatinate. Both Prince Charles and Baron Dohna, the ambassador of the Elector Palatine, exerted their influence in favour of Sir Horatio Vere who obtained the preferment.² Buckingham realized that Vere was the wiser choice and in 1625 offered him a barony as an inducement for him to remain in command of the English forces in the service of the States-General.³ Cecil was indignant when he heard of the offer of a title to Vere when his own recent preferment had carried no such honour with it. In a bitter letter to Buckingham he asserted that he was 'equal in profession and before him [Vere] in birth', and demanded a title for himself.⁴ Buckingham

¹'Sir Edward Cecil', DNB, ix. 395.

²Lando to the doge, 11 Oct. 1620, 26 March 1621 (CSP Venetian, 1619-21, pp. 430, 618); [Rowland Woodward to Sir Francis Windebank], 1 July 1620 (CSPD, 1619-23, p. 159); Charles to Buckingham, 28 Nov. 1621 (Sir Charles Petrie, ed., The letters, speeches and proclamations of King Charles I, pp. 6-7); Gardiner (iii. 358) does not speak of the opposition of Charles.

³Buckingham to Sir Horatio Vere, 5 May 1625 (CSPD, Add., 1625-49, p. 9).

⁴Sir Edward Cecil to Buckingham, 19 July 1625 (Cabala, p. 169).

acquiesced, though Vere was rewarded first. In July Vere was created Baron Vere of Tilbury and in November Cecil was granted the higher dignity of a viscountcy, being created Viscount Wimbledon.¹

Buckingham selected the men in command with little thought to their qualifications: there was not one sea commander among them. The earl of Essex went as vice-admiral and colonel-general of the land forces while Sir Francis Steward was appointed rear-admiral. Buckingham's selection of both Essex and Steward was part of a temporary flirtation with the puritans in an attempt to gain support for his policy, and perhaps, in that way, a measure of support for himself.² Essex was a leading 'opposition' peer who in the past had never received a full command despite his experience and reputation as a military commander. He was distrusted not only because of his parliamentary opposition but also because of his background as the son of a traitor.³ Steward was a client of the rich and powerful lord chamberlain, the earl of Pembroke, a leading puritan peer. Steward had enjoyed the

¹24 July, 9 Nov. 1625 ('List of creations', pp. 110, 111).

²Maclear, 'Puritan relations with Buckingham', pp. 112, 132.

³Vernon F. Snow, 'Essex and the aristocratic opposition to the early Stuarts', JMH, xxxii. 225, 230 (1960).

patronage of the father of the present earl as well.¹ But Sir Francis Steward was discharged from the rear-admiralship when his ship proved too defective to even set out on the expedition.² Steward was not an ally of the duke as his actions in the parliament of 1626 clearly demonstrated.³ Buckingham promoted his brother-in-law, the earl of Denbigh, from vice-admiral of a squadron to rear-admiral in the place of Steward. This created dissension among the other vice-admirals and rear-admirals of the various squadrons in the expedition who jealously vied with each other for Denbigh's former commission. The fleet sailed before the dispute was settled and greatly disrupted the expedition. Cecil was unable to solve the dispute, further proof of his incapacity for leadership.⁴

Buckingham's influence on appointments to various commands of regiments sent on the expedition was quite extensive. Sir John Proude, Sir John Burgh and Sir William St Leger were asked to serve by the duke.⁵ They all had served in the Low Countries, and St Leger had been known as 'a particular servant of Buckingham'

¹ _____ to Rev. Joseph Mead, 28 April 1626 (Birch, Charles, i. 98).

² Glanville, Voyage to Cadiz, p. 13.

³ Rev. Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, 15 April 1626 (Birch, Charles, i. 95-6).

⁴ Glanville, Voyage to Cadiz, pp. 83-8.

⁵ Ibid., p. 2 n. 'c', 'd'; Buckingham to Sir John Burgh, 5 May 1625 (CSPD, Add., 1625-49, p. 10).

for some time.¹ As a favour to the earl of Holland, a favourite of his, Buckingham appointed Sir Charles Rich to a colonelcy.² Sir Edward Conway junior received the command of a regiment no doubt because of the devotion of his father, Secretary Conway, to the service of Buckingham.

Two letters of Cecil which accentuate the deplorable condition of the fleet on setting sail must also be accepted as confirmation that Cecil was badly served.³ But they must equally confirm his own 'helpless incapacity to grapple with bad servants and unexpected difficulties'.⁴ Cecil had complained before the expedition set out that Buckingham was recommending men unsuited for the service, and that though hired a few months before the actual departure no attempt had been made to train them.⁵ After the expedition Cecil wrote a lengthy report in which he observed that in this expedition there had been many 'ignorant captains

¹Sec. Conway to Sec. Calvert, 10 Aug. 1623 (CSPD, 1623-5, p. 50).

²Earl of Carlisle to Buckingham, n.d. (Cabala, p. 199).

³Sir Edward Cecil to Sir John Coke, 8 Nov. 1625, 27 Feb. 1626 (Glanville, Voyage to Cadiz, pp. xxxiii-xxxvi, xxxvi-xlv).

⁴Ibid., p. xlvi.

⁵Sir Edward Cecil to Sec. Conway, 8 Sept. 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, pp. 100-1).

and officers'. He also reported the following regarding their ethics:

The officers have thieves at their command to convey away their fees in boys of the worst sort, and with them share in wages as insufficient men. Cozenage of stores. . . . Those ships that were appointed to carry beer for me, carried away from us, for I never did see a drop of it.¹

No matter how legitimate his complaints, the expedition had been a failure and he, as its admiral, bore much of the blame. Buckingham was well aware that Cecil was not wholly at fault. When the decision to return was taken, Sir William St Leger dutifully reported to Buckingham: 'All the chieftains fly with open mouth upon the lord marshal, neither can nor will he [St Leger] excuse him; yet he knows that they that will blame him most are not blameless.'² The next day he repeated his charges against some in the council of war:

Some of them had no desire they should do anything, because they would value their counsel given before. The marshal had not such abilities as could be wished in a general. Speaks out of anguish to see so brave and chargeable a business so fully miscarried.³

Though the misconduct of the merchant captains seriously

¹Same to _____, 27 Feb. 1626 (Cowper MSS, i. 258-9).

²Sir William St Leger to Buckingham, 18 Dec. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 180).

³Same to same, 19 Dec. 1625 (*ibid.*, p. 181).

hindered the success of the expedition, the responsibility for the failure rested with those chosen to command. Buckingham, for selecting these men without attention to either ability or qualification, must share in the responsibility. Though Sir John Coke and the navy commissioners were accused of mismanagement, a friend correctly surmised that the charges were aimed at someone higher.¹ Coke himself noted several reasons for the failure: the inordinate delay in sailing, the departure as winter approached, inadequate provisions, and the employment of inexperienced men as soldiers and sailors.² To this must be added the inability of the new naval administration to cope with a war situation.

The old abuses which the naval commissioners of 1618 had attempted to reform had crept into the service again. Fraudulent officials had supplied the fleet with rotten cordage, the ships themselves were unseaworthy and leaky; while the unwholesome food that had been shipped aboard had stricken the crews with sickness.³ Sir William Monson quite rightly criticized

¹Hildebrand Sprusen to Sir John Coke, 7 March 1626 (Cowper MSS, i. 261).

²Notes in the writing of Sir John Coke, Dec. 1625 (*ibid.*, i. 241).

³Mainwaring, i. 143; Gardiner, vi. 21.

'the want of experience in the commanders',¹ but in a very real sense the failure of the expedition was due to the state of the vessels and the peculation of some of the commissioners and others responsible for securing the needs of the navy. Sir John Eliot, a vice-admiral of the county of Devon during the preparations of the fleet, denounced the naval administration, but he was aware that the disaster had been due primarily to the inadequate supplies and faulty equipment with which the fleet had set sail from England.² Almost £100,000 had been allotted for provisioning the fleet and placed in the hands of Sir Allen Apsley, the victualler, and Sir James Bagg, a vice-admiral of Devon.³ The victualling could have been worse had not Buckingham sent Sir John Coke to supervise it.⁴ Coke was dismayed when he arrived at Plymouth to oversee the preparations. Already he had received several complaints from regular officers in command of ships concerning the poor

¹Monson, iii. 118; cf. 'Observations', Dec. 1625 (CSPD, Add., 1625-49, p. 82).

²Sir John Eliot to Secretary Conway, 22 Dec. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 184); same to house of commons, 10 Feb. 1626 (Eliot, *Negotium posterorum*, i. 148-55); cf. Harold Hulme, 'The leadership of Sir John Eliot in the parliament of 1626', *JMH*, iv. 364 (1932).

³Sir Robert Pye to Sir John Coke, 14 May 1625 (Cowper MSS, i. 195).

⁴Buckingham to same, 2/12 June 1625 (*ibid.*, i. 202).

quality of the victuals, and the want of clothing for the men.¹ Sir Edward Glanville, recorder of Plymouth, sent on the expedition as secretary by the express orders of Buckingham who had been incensed by his opposition in the late parliament, claimed that many of the commanders were aware of the inadequate preparations for the fleet, but that complaints 'were all omitted and buried in dutiful silence'.²

Before the fleet had returned in disgrace and the full extent of the failure had been appraised, writs for a new parliament were issued.³ From the beginning the parliament of 1626 was concerned with the failure at Cadiz and the leaders of the house of commons were determined to seek out the causes and assign responsibility. They summoned the members of the council of war for the expedition to appear before them. Conway assured Buckingham that all, with the possible exception of Sir Robert Mansell, would 'make the same answer as formerly we did' and that Mansell would be warned 'sufficiently to keep him from flying

¹Capt. Thomas Vaughan to same, 21 May 1625 (ibid., i. 196); Capt. John Chudleigh to same, 22 May 1625 (ibid.); Capt. Thomas Love to same, 22 May 1625 (ibid., i. 197); Sir Francis Nethersole to same, 30 May 1625 (ibid., i. 201).

²11 Oct. 1625 (Glanville, Voyage to Cadiz, pp. 22-3); Gardiner, vi. 13.

³16 Dec. 1625 (Foedera, xviii. 245).

out, or to have him inexcusable if he do'.¹ But Mansell did not heed the advice and denied Buckingham's assurance to the commons in 1625 that he had proceeded on the advice of the council of war. Mansell 'undertook to prove that the expedition was not well counselled, nor likely to prosper'.² The breach this declaration occasioned between Buckingham and Mansell seems only to have been repaired in July 1628.³ Following Mansell, Sir John Eliot took up the cudgels and denounced the administration and blamed the failure at Cadiz on 'neither the enemy nor the sword' but 'those whom they trusted'.⁴

These were merely the first outcries which a few months later, May 1626, were to result in parliament undertaking impeachment procedures against Buckingham.⁵

¹Edward, Viscount Conway, to Buckingham, 8 March 1626 (CSPD, Add., 1625-49, p. 107).

²Sir Francis Nethersole to Sir Dudley Carleton, 11 Aug. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 82); Prestwich, p. 483.

³Rev. Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, 12 July 1628 (Birch, Charles, i. 374); Edward Nicholas to Sir John Coke, 3 July 1628 (Cowper MSS, i. 357).

⁴Sir John Eliot to house of commons, 10 Feb. 1626 (Eliot, Negotium posterorum, i. 148-55); Hulme, 'Leadership of Sir John Eliot', p. 365.

⁵Gardiner, vi. 91-121.

Buckingham believed that he could assuage public opinion by organizing another fleet which this time would be victorious. To head this new expedition he chose Lord Willoughby d'Eresby whom he had recalled from service in the Low Countries. Willoughby, like Cecil before him, had experience only on land. His previous military career included service under Essex and Nottingham at Cadiz in 1596 and as a colonel-general of English forces in Denmark.¹

Buckingham once more nominated his brother-in-law, Denbigh, to an important command, this time as vice-admiral. But he appointed the experienced Sir John Pennington rear-admiral.² Pennington had a long naval career which included service under Sir Walter Raleigh.³ In the later months of 1618 and through 1619, with Buckingham's assistance, Pennington unsuccessfully sought employment from the East India Company.⁴ Late in 1627, following his return from Rhé,

¹29 Aug. 1626 ('Calendar of privy seals: Charles I', p. 37); G.E.C., Peerage, xii, pt. ii. 679; 'Robert Bertie, Baron Willoughby d'Eresby', DNB, iv. 408; HMC, Fourteenth report, appendix, part ix: The manuscripts of James Round, p. 277; Gardiner, vi. 133; Sir Richard Gyffard to Edward Nicholas, 24, 27 Aug. 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, pp. 410-11).

²24 Sept. 1626 ('Calendar of privy seals: Charles I', p. 37); Lord Willoughby to Buckingham, 16 Sept. 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 430).

³'Sir John Pennington', DNB, xliv. 300.

⁴Court minutes of the East India Company, 6, 30 Oct., 10 Nov. 1618, 30 July, 22 Sept., 3, 8 Nov. 1619 (CSP Col., East Indies, 1617-21, pp. 202, 208, 210, 286, 297, 314, 317).

Pennington solicited the office of surveyor of the ordnance, a post vacated by the death of Sir Alexander Brett, but failed to obtain the office.¹ Nevertheless, Pennington was a valuable servant and Buckingham frequently relied upon him.

In 1625 Pennington had commanded the seven ships loaned to France by Charles for eighteen months. This action had angered English puritans who believed that the ships would be engaged in actions against the French Huguenots. The whole issue had caused much heated discussion in parliament to the embarrassment of Buckingham who at the time hoped to receive French support for his continental designs.² This matter, coupled with the attempt to impeach him, deeply concerned Buckingham who was worried that his reputation abroad had been ruined. He even felt obliged to write to Cardinal Richelieu denying the accusations levelled at him.³

Despite the lack of support from parliament, the preparations for the fleet had continued apace. But,

¹ Capt. John Pennington to Buckingham, 12 Dec. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 464).

² 'Sir John Pennington', DNE, xliv. 300; Buckingham to Sir John Pennington, 8 May 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 20); Sir John Coke to same, 18 May 1625 (*ibid.*, p. 25); Capt. John Pennington to Sir John Coke, 15 Feb. 1626 (Cowper MSS, i. 256); Clowes, ii. 57; Gardiner, v. 328; Impeachment documents, pp. vii-xi, 139 ff.

³ Buckingham to Cardinal Richelieu, Sept. 1626 (HMC, Ninth report, appendix, part ii: The manuscripts of Alfred Morrison, p. 248).

as previously, provisions were not quickly forthcoming and the men were mutinous. Captain Richard Gyffard, a former pirate and now vice-admiral of Willoughby's squadron, saw the real problem besetting the navy:

'Insufficient persons have employment through favour.'¹

He was pessimistic about the outcome and warned that both England and Buckingham would be dishonoured by the ill-success of the expedition. The fleet had been ordered to set sail in mid-August; it was October before the new expedition set out. A fierce storm played havoc with the leaky and almost unserviceable vessels that had been outfitted for the expedition and the fleet had to return just a short while after having set sail.² Buckingham was greatly disappointed at the performance of this fleet, but once more rewarded failure in one of his clients by raising Willoughby in the peerage as earl of Lindsey.³ Willoughby was exonerated and it was believed in some quarters that much of the difficulties of the fleet were due to the navy commissioners who were not performing as well as expected.

¹Capt. R. Gyffard to Edward Nicholas, 27 Aug. 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 411).

²Gardiner, vi. 133.

³22 Nov. 1626 ('List of creations', p. 112); cf. Ancaster MSS, p. xxx.

The miserable state of the fleets that had set out under Wimbledon in 1625 and Willoughby in 1626 occasioned the formation of a special commission in December 1626 to investigate alleged abuses in the navy.¹ Buckingham had found it necessary to report to the privy council early in November that the navy had an alarming deficit of £100,000. He then suggested the appointment of a special commission to investigate the abuses in the navy.² It was his intention that 'a committee of the council' aided by a few assistants should form this investigative body. Those first mentioned for inclusion on this special commission were Sir Allen Apsley, victualler of the navy, Sir William Russell, treasurer of the navy, Joshua Downing, keeper of the stores at Chatham, and John Wells, keeper of the stores at Deptford.³ All, except the latter, were navy

¹Charles to the special commissioners of the navy, 12 Dec. 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, pp. 494-5).

²Minutes by Edward Nicholas for Buckingham, 7 Oct. 1626 (*ibid.*, p. 450); Order of privy council, 29 Oct. 1626 (*ibid.*, p. 464); Buckingham to privy council, 2 Nov. 1626 (*ibid.*, p. 468); Notes by Edward Nicholas, Nov. ? 1626 (*ibid.*, p. 483); Aylmer, 'Attempts at administrative reforms', p. 235; 2 Nov. 1626 (APC, 1626, pp. 350-1).

³Memo of who are fit to be assistants to the commission, Dec. ? 1626 (CSPD, Add., 1625-49, p. 178).

commissioners; all held offices which were in varying degrees believed responsible for the inadequate provisioning of the fleets. Their appointment could not have been seriously considered if any good was to result from the special commission. The commission which was finally established included none of the standing commissioners, though Sir Richard Weston, chancellor of the exchequer, and Sir John Coke, secretary of state, were later added. Indeed, the ordinary commission was soon expressly excluded from examining abuses.¹ The special commission enjoyed wide powers and its investigations were not limited to that of the fleets of 1625 and 1626.²

But the special commission of 1626-7 offered no recommendations and apparently did not meet after the summer of 1627.³ Unfortunately, all they accomplished by pointing out abuses was to discredit even more the administration of the navy by commissioners.⁴

¹Jan. 1627 (CSPD, Add., 1625-49, p. 194); Aylmer, 'Attempts at administrative reforms', p. 235.

²Nov. ? 1626 (CSPD, Add., 1625-49, p. 178).

³Aylmer, 'Attempts at administrative reform', p. 235.

⁴Several estimates by the special commissioners, 18, 19 Jan. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, pp. 24-5); Special commissioners to Buckingham, 19, 20, 22 Jan. 1627 (*ibid.*, pp. 25, 26, 28).

The investigations did not really attempt to search out the causes for maladministration. Apsley and Bagg, responsible for the victualling of the fleet, continued to enjoy the patronage of Buckingham, though it had been demonstrated very well that they had provided the fleet with bad victuals and had reported a heavy expenditure. Not even officials of the dockyards were taken to task for the faulty condition of much of the equipment.¹ All continued as if the investigation had uncovered nothing grievously wrong with the navy and its administrative structure, not to mention the officials employed.

The task of the special commission was complicated by the preparations for a new fleet which Buckingham was this time determined to lead in person. The fleet was destined for the isle of Rhé and was intended as an offer of support to the French Huguenots at Rochelle.² Salvetti reported that Buckingham was confident that he would be able to regain the confidence of the people by this undertaking.³ Some saw the expedition as an attempt to regain the support of the

¹Gardiner, vi. 21-3.

²14 May 1627 (CSPD, Add., 1625-49, p. 211).

³Salvetti to duke of Tuscany, 30 April 1627 (Skrine MSS, p. 116).

puritans and it was reported to the Reverend Joseph Mead that Buckingham felt that the success of the expedition would make him 'more honoured and beloved of the commons than ever the earl of Essex was'.¹ Yet success would once more depend, to a large degree, on the men he chose for active service and upon those he left behind with instructions for provisioning the fleet and for the sending of replacements.

As his second in command for the Rhé expedition Buckingham appointed the able Sir John Burgh colonel-general of the army.² But Buckingham and Burgh disagreed on the strategy to be employed in the campaign. The breach between the two was serious enough that word of it reached England. Secretary Conway apprehensively wrote to his son in cypher commenting on the 'misunderstanding' and hoping 'that the rupture would not extend to any public inconvenience'.³ When Burgh was killed in action Buckingham had no one else to rely upon whose judgment was worth seeking, for as Sir John Oglander, Burgh's cousin, noted: '. . . for

¹Younge, Diary, p. 105; _____ to Rev. Joseph Mead, 13 April 1627 (Birch, Charles, i. 216).

²Buckingham to Sir John Burgh, 1 April 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 120); Sir John Burgh to Sir John Coke, 31 May 1627 (Cowper MSS, i. 307); warrant, May 1627 (CSPD, Add., 1625-49, p. 213).

³Sec. Conway to Sir Edward Conway junior, 3 Sept. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 329).

then there was none left who, out of his settled judgement, could counterpoise the duke's levity. On all informations he changed his opinions, so that divines, courtiers and buffoons being his instruments, commanded all.¹ And yet, even while Burgh lived, Buckingham was not disposed to accept his advice 'being proud and self opinionated, took his own way. . . .'²

Called to service once more as senior officers were Sir Charles Rich, Sir Edward Conway junior and Sir Alexander Brett.³ Brett was also surveyor of the ordnance, an office he obtained through his cousin, Buckingham, in 1625.⁴ The earl of Essex, though approached, absolutely refused to serve under Buckingham.⁵ He had earlier rejected Buckingham's offer of the vice-admiralship because, as he frankly informed Charles, 'he would have accepted, and far meaner office to his majesty's service, if his majesty had offered it; but to receive it from another he thought

¹Oglander, Royalist notebook, pp. 22, 30.

²D'Ewes, Autobiography, i. 366.

³31 March 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 116).

⁴7 Sept. 1625 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 548); Oglander, Royalist notebook, p. 16 n. 1.

⁵Snow, 'Essex and the aristocratic opposition', pp. 224-33.

not so fit, as for other reasons, so especially because he knew not his majesty's pleasure'.¹ Instead, Buckingham was obliged to appoint men like Sir William Courtenay whose share in the campaign at Rhé, according to one naval historian, 'was more disastrous even than the duke's'.² Buckingham appointed Sir George Blundell sergeant-major general of the expedition. Blundell, a faithful servant of the duke, had complained to Edward Nicholas that he had been made 'a pack horse' by the duke and was not as suitably rewarded as he should be.³

Charles himself took a hand in selecting officers in Buckingham's absence. Conway informed Buckingham that the officers to be sent with Sir William Beecher were 'all named by the king himself', sometimes in opposition to the wishes of the earls of Holland and Dorset, favourites of the duke. Even Conway was unable to dissuade him from making some of the appointments. Charles maintained that he and Buckingham were 'bound in honour' to prefer the officers he had appointed 'on account of the good

¹Rev. Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, 8 July 1626 (Birch, Charles, i. 126).

²Clowes, ii. 69.

³Sir George Blundell to Buckingham, 8 June 1626 (CSPD, 1625-6, p. 350); same to same, 1 May 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 159); same to Nicholas, 10 May 1627 (ibid., p. 171); warrant, 18? Sept. 1627 (ibid., p. 348).

words the duke had given them in his presence'.¹ For this reason Charles was pleased that Captain Oliver St John was given a command as the duke had promised,² though Sir John Coke had sought St John's place for 'a kinsman of Sir Thomas Button'.³

The interference of Charles was not always salutary as the appointment of Sir David Boswell indicates. Boswell, recommended to the duke by Secretary Conway, was accused of having embezzled the ship he was to command in the expedition. An investigation by the privy councillors substantiated the charge for they advised that they 'could not recommend him for present service'. Nevertheless, Charles 'put a gracious construction' upon Boswell's activities, and merely transferred his command to another ship,⁴ whose captain, Bond, he ordered displaced

¹Sec. Conway to Buckingham, 14 Aug. 1627 (ibid., p. 294).

²Same to Sec. Coke, 17 Aug. 1627 (ibid., p. 300).

³Capt. Oliver St John to Sec. Conway, 23 Aug. 1627 (ibid., p. 309).

⁴Sec. Conway to Edward Nicholas, 21 Feb. 1627 (ibid., p. 62); same to Sir John Coke, 18 Aug. 1627 (ibid., p. 301); same to same, 19 Aug. 1627 (Cowper MSS, i. 316); William Burrell to same 23 Aug. 1627 (ibid., i. 317); Sec. Coke to Sec. Conway, 25 Aug. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 313); Sec. Conway to Sec. Coke, 26 Aug. 1627 (ibid., p. 316).

in Boswell's favour. Nicholas supported the removal of Bond on the grounds that he was 'not sufficiently experienced' for the charge.¹ Conway seems to have been accused of wishing Bond to remain, though he claimed he favoured neither Bond nor Boswell.² Another ally of the duke, Henry, earl of Holland, interceded on Bond's behalf but to no avail.³

Charles was not alone in making recommendations. The navy commissioners, both collectively and individually, the captains of ships, and associates of the duke employed their influence with him to obtain positions for their friends.⁴ Buckingham appointed Captain George Heigham provost marshal of the army and Sir Andrew Gray master of the ordnance for the Rhé expedition.⁵ Sir William Tresham, the younger brother of Sir Louis Tresham who had gone with Buckingham and Charles to Spain, was also nominated a captain to serve

¹Sec. Coke to Sec. Conway, 30 Aug. 1627 (*ibid.*, p. 324); Sec. Conway to Edward Nicholas, 5 Sept. 1627 (*ibid.*, p. 332); Edward Nicholas to Sec. Conway, 6 Sept. 1627 (*ibid.*, p. 334).

²Sec. Conway to Edward Nicholas, 6 Sept. 1627 (*ibid.*).

³Henry, earl of Holland, to same, 13 Sept. 1627 (*ibid.*, p. 342).

⁴CSPD, 1625-8, passim.

⁵Buckingham to Capt. G. Heigham, 6 April 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 128); Admiral Sir John Watts and Capt. John Mason to Sir Andrew Gray, 11 Oct. 1627 (*ibid.*, p. 383).

under Buckingham 'in spite of his catholic faith'.¹

Among a list of officers recommended for employment on the Rhé expedition there appears the name of John Felton, the assassin of Buckingham, who was then a suitor for the company as a lieutenant. Felton had been recommended for the appointment by Sir William Uvedale, treasurer of the chamber, and Sir William Beecher, both favoured clients of Buckingham.²

Sir John Oglander, referring to Buckingham as 'a young general', assigned the responsibility for the failure to the men Buckingham chose for the service:

A general should be wise, grave, discreet, experienced man, not light, unsettled and to be led away with everyman's opinion, as was the duke. Wanting judgement in himself, he was facile to follow other men that had less than himself.³

Others found the whole policy at fault and in need of reappraisal. William, earl of Exeter, a staunch supporter of Buckingham, agreed that he had every reason to complain of the 'indiligence' of his servants,

¹M. E. Finch, The wealth of five Northamptonshire families, 1540-1640, pp. 96, 176.

²'List of officers', June 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 238); Aylmer, The king's servants, p. 82; Mary F. Keeler, The Long Parliament 1640-1; a biographical study of its members, p. 368.

³Oglander, Royalist notebook, pp. 28, 30.

but advised that Buckingham could abandon without loss of honour 'enterprises which could not be accomplished', all the while, though, he applauded as 'miraculous' what had so far been accomplished.¹ A few months earlier, Sir Robert Pye, another devoted client of the duke, advised him to consider the great expense of the expedition and asked that the duke 'advisedly consider of the end, and how far his majesty's revenue is extended'.² Pye, as auditor of the exchequer, was aware, better than most, how ruinous financially the whole enterprise was to the crown. No doubt it was this firm belief which also occasioned the momentary entry into public affairs by the earl of Middlesex who felt compelled to advise Buckingham to abandon the expedition to Rhé.³ Nicholas also seems to have advised Buckingham to return before engaging in any further action.⁴

Rhé was as disastrous for Buckingham as the campaigns of 1625 and 1626, perhaps even more so, for

¹Earl of Exeter to Buckingham, 23 Nov. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 421).

²Sir Robert Pye to same, 21 Sept. 1627 (*ibid.*, p. 353).

³Earl of Middlesex to same, 1627 (Knole MSS, p. 278).

⁴John Ashburnham to Edward Nicholas, 24 Oct. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 405); Edward Nicholas to Buckingham, 20 Dec. ? 1627 (*ibid.*, p. 474).

he had led this one in person. Charles did not desert Buckingham following the Rhé expedition. He blamed the failure on the slow and defective supplies and the lack of reinforcements.¹ Sir Henry Mervyn had complained about the victualling of the ships for Rhé: 'I protest to God I never saw ships sent to sea so ill accomodated that was so long preparing.'² The losses of the expedition were large, but were popularly believed to be even greater. As Salvetti observed: 'From the dislike of the duke the people exaggerate the amount of loss. . . .'³ Buckingham was sensitive about his losses at Rhé and Sir Sackville Crowe, one of his clients, suffered momentary disgrace for having reported the news of the disaster at Rhé 'in too free a manner'.⁴ It was misdirection of strategy and lack of attention to the training and upkeep of the fighting service that took their toll.⁵ And yet the incompetence of

¹Charles to Buckingham, 13 Oct. 1627 (Hardwicke State Papers, ii. 19); Sec. Conway to Sir Edward Conway junior, 14 Nov. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 434); numerous letters concerning need of supplies, victuals and replacements, 27 July to 22 Oct. 1627 (Hardwicke State Papers, ii. 23-53).

²Sir Henry Mervyn to Sir John Coke, 22 Oct. 1627 (Cowper MSS, i. 327).

³Salvetti to the duke of Tuscany, 26 Nov. 1627 (Skrine MSS, p. 131).

⁴Charles to Rev. J. Mead, 23 Nov. 1627 (Birch, Charles, i. 291); extract of a letter from London, 30 Nov. 1627 (*ibid.*, i. 297).

⁵Gardiner, vi. 173.

those left in England was quite clearly one of the gravest faults. Those on the battlefield recognized this. Sir Edward Conway junior warned his father: 'If we loose this island, it will be your faults in England.'¹ And yet, when all is considered, Gardiner's assessment of the expedition must stand: 'the charge which history has to bring against Buckingham is not so much that he failed in the expedition to Rhé, as that there was an expedition at all.'²

The debacle at Rhé discredited the navy commission. Buckingham had been debating whether or not to dissolve the commission and to return to administration by the principal officers. Interested parties, such as the corrupt former comptroller of the navy, Sir Guildford Slingsby, encouraged such a move claiming that the findings of the special commission of 1626-7 warranted it.³ Charles himself had complained to Buckingham that direction of a war effort by a commission was slow and cumbersome.⁴ Then, in

¹Sir Edward Conway junior to Sec. Conway, 14 Sept. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 331).

²Gardiner, vi. 200.

³Sir Guildford Slingsby to Sec. Conway, 1 May 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 160).

⁴Charles to Buckingham, 10 Oct. 1627 (Halliwell, Royal Letters, ii. 277).

December 1627, the commissioners presented their report showing that arrears had risen to £204,000.¹

Buckingham and Charles lost confidence in the ability of the commissioners and early in 1628 resumed the old plan of administering the navy by the four principal officers under the lord admiral.² The war activities of the previous years convinced Buckingham that the commission could only operate effectively in a time of peace 'when the dispatch of business might go a slower pace' but that 'the activeness of these times of war and danger (which require quicker motions and expedition) will safely permit'.³

Perhaps administration by the principal officers would be more efficient, but any improvement would depend greatly upon the men selected. Unfortunately, the principal officers appointed were not the most competent for the task. They enjoyed patents to the offices which had only been suspended during the tenure of the navy commission.⁴ Sir Guildford

¹19 Dec. 1627 (APC, 1627-8, pp. 188-90).

²21 Feb. 1628 (*ibid.*, pp. 307-8); the king's discharge, 20 Feb. 1628 (Cowper MSS, i. 339); Sec. Conway to Sir Robert Heath, 21 April 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 82); Oppenheim, p. 279.

³21 Feb. 1628 (APC, 1627-8, pp. 307-8).

⁴2 Nov. 1618 (APC, 1618-19, pp. 288-9).

Slingsby, who had been uncerimoniously dismissed in 1618 for misdemeanours in office, was welcomed back as comptroller of the navy. Sir Thomas Aylesbury, Buckingham's former admiralty secretary, became surveyor of the navy, having held a reversion to that office since 1616. Dennis Fleming remained as clerk of the ships, an office he had obtained early in 1625.¹ The most important official in this return to the former administrative structure was the treasurer of the navy. This office had been filled since 1627 by one of Buckingham's more sycophantic clients, Sir Sackville Crowe. Crowe had succeeded Sir William Russell as navy treasurer for reasons which are not clear.² He lacked both the ability and the means to provide the navy with much needed credit and money as had Sir William Russell from 1618 to 1627. This was especially disastrous at this time, for England was engaged in costly wars and revenues were strained. Indeed, Crowe proved to be as rapacious in office as had Sir Robert Mansell.³ The principal officers were not an inspiring group and, for the most part, were lacking in talent and ability. It was unfortunate that Buckingham

¹ Clowes, ii. 16-17; Johns, 'The principal officers', p. 49.

² 20 March 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 100); Aylmer, The king's servants, p. 91; Ashton, 'The disbursing official', p. 165.

³ Johns, 'the principal officers', pp. 46-7.

recognized their rights to the offices in virtue of the patents they held.

The principal officers were afforded an opportunity to prove their worth almost from the day of their appointment. Charles and Buckingham had not forsaken their plans to relieve Rochelle and a second expedition was already in preparation. This new expedition was to be led by the earl of Denbigh, Buckingham's brother-in-law, who had seen service in other expeditions.¹ He had no other recommendation than his relation to the duke. Sir Henry Palmer junior was selected vice-admiral. He was the son of Sir Henry Palmer, a former naval commander and comptroller of the navy, an office to which Sir Henry Palmer junior held a reversion after Sir Guildford Slingsby. Palmer had been employed in service against the pirates in the Narrow Seas and had served as a commander in the expeditions to Algiers, Cadiz and Rhé. He had recently received an appointment as vice-admiral of the Narrow Seas when called upon to join the fleet.² Captain John

¹Mainwaring, i. 190.

²Ibid.; 'Sir Henry Palmer' (father), DNB, xliii. 128; 17 Aug. 1611 (CSPD, 1611-18, p. 69); CSPD, 1625-8, passim; Clowes, ii. 60, 68; Sir Thomas Button to Buckingham, 11 Dec. 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 467); earl of Denbigh to Edward Nicholas, 13 Feb. 1628 (ibid., p. 561); cf. Oppenheim, pp. 282, 283 n. 5.

Weddell went as rear-admiral. His appointment greatly disappointed Sir Francis Carew who had recently given £1,000 to the naval service in the hope of obtaining the rear-admiralship.¹ But Weddell's past service probably earned him the commission. He had been employed for several years by the East India Company and had commanded a fleet to India in 1624. But on his return to England the East India Company threatened to prosecute him for having illegally traded privately. He avoided the threat by entering crown service and served under Buckingham at Rhé as a vice-admiral of squadron.² At least, this expedition had the benefit of including two experienced naval commanders.

The fleet had been commissioned to set out at the beginning of March, but it was the end of April before it set sail. Once more delay had been occasioned by the lack of men and money.³ Even before setting sail, the prospects for the expedition looked

¹Sir Francis Carew to Edward Nicholas, 16 March 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 22); Sir James Bagge to Buckingham, 17 March 1628 (ibid., p. 24).

²Mainwaring, i. 191; 'James Weddell', DNB, lx. 300-1; Buckingham to John Weddell, 28 Jan. 1628 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 532); John Weddell to Buckingham, 21 Feb. 1628 (ibid., p. 577); Clowes, ii. 65.

³Sir Henry Mainwaring to Buckingham, 16 March 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 21).

bleak. At the end of March Buckingham had ordered Denbigh to reduce the size of the fleet; two weeks later Denbigh reported a further reduction because of the lack of men to man the ships.¹ With this reduced force Denbigh sailed for Rochelle only to turn back after a brief encounter which accomplished nothing. Charles, angered by the retreat, ordered Denbigh to return immediately. But this was impossible owing to an outbreak of the plague, discontent among the seamen, and the disabled condition of the vessels.² The second Rochelle expedition proved more dismal than the first.

Though disheartened, Buckingham remained resolute in his determination to relieve Rochelle and so ordered Denbigh not to release his men. He planned to lead a third expedition in person in August.³ But he was faced with an increasingly mutinous naval service. At the end of May he was obliged to address a large group of mariners detailing what had been done to improve their lot and warning that severe action

¹Earl of Denbigh to same, 29 March 1628 (ibid., p.46); same to same, 17 April 1628 (ibid., p. 77).

²Gardiner, vi. 291; order of the privy council, 1 June 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 144).

³Edward Nicholas to Sir John Coke, 2 July 1628 (Cowper MSS, i. 357); Oppenheim, p. 233.

would be taken against them if they refused to serve.¹

Sir Henry Mainwaring claimed that some commanders in Denbigh's fleet were spreading the rumour that Rochelle was impossible of relief and that this accounted for much of the discontent in the service. Though Sir John Coke assured Buckingham that Mainwaring's claim was unfounded, he urged Denbigh to deny the allegations at once.²

Buckingham took an active interest in the preparations for this expedition. He was appalled at the general disorganization of the naval service, for he had not interested himself closely in the preparations of the previous expeditions. He was genuinely shocked to discover that the service was staffed by incompetent placemen and time-servers, as if he had not really believed the reports in the past which recounted the difficulties that beset those involved in making the necessary preparations for the various fleets. There was a general fear of assuming responsibility, or of taking the initiative; further order would always be awaited. In disgust, he complained to Conway: 'Everyman says he has all things ready, and

¹'Duke's manifesto at the Exchange, May 1628' (HMC, Various collections, iv: The manuscripts of F. H. T. Jervoise, p. 173).

²Sir John Coke to earl of Denbigh, 1 June 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 146); same to Buckingham, 2 June 1628 (ibid.).

yet all remains as at a stand.'¹ Edward Nicholas, Buckingham's admiralty secretary, upbraided the principal officers for the delays which the new expedition was experiencing: 'The remissness and ignorance of the officers of the navy have been principal hindrances that the fleet and provisions here preparing are not sooner ready.'² Indeed, if Nicholas may be believed, Buckingham came to regret dissolving the navy commission:

My lord now finds that he was mistaken when he changed the commissioners for the officers of the navy, who are above their places in imaginations, and for their want of understanding in such business not able to execute the same.³

Buckingham relied little on the principal officers. He called upon Sir John Coke to supervise the victualling of the fleet at Portsmouth. Coke, now a secretary of state, was not happy at this appointment and complained to Conway 'of the indignity of a king's secretary being made a clerk and accountant to the officers of the navy'.⁴ But Buckingham realized how valuable his service was to the navy: 'I doubt that had

¹Buckingham to Sec. Conway, 6 Aug. 1628 (ibid., p. 247).

²Edward Nicholas to Sir John Coke, 2 July 1628 (Cowper MSS, i. 357).

³Same to same, 3 July 1628 (ibid.).

⁴Sir John Coke to Sec. Conway, 4 June 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 149).

it not been for your extraordinary diligence it would have been a work almost impossible to have fitted the fleet and provision to return to Rochelle.'¹ But near the end of June all his efforts seemed wasted. Disheartened by the general disorganization and his best endeavours frustrated by the constant delays in setting sail, Coke asked to be relieved.²

At Portsmouth Coke realized that the navy commissioners failed because all their efforts had been directed at correcting abuses and not to discovering their origins. The commissioners had never confronted the deep wounds in the spirit of the navy that the fourteen years of corruption and mismanagement under Sir Robert Mansell had occasioned. They had rebuilt the fleet and expanded its capacity, but they did little to improve the lot of seamen and continued to condone the practice of employing influential landmen in positions of importance in the navy. The realization of this made Coke's work at Portsmouth all the more distasteful, for he had been the principal commissioner for so many years. He had entered the service initially in the hope of revitalizing the navy; now, ten years later,

¹Buckingham to Sir John Coke, 10 June 1628 (Cowper MSS, i. 348).

²Sir John Coke to Buckingham, 25 June 1628 (*ibid.*, i. 355).

he saw how desperate the situation still remained. Coke, nevertheless, continued to do his appointed task with the usual diligence and care.

Preparations for the third expedition were finally completed by mid-August. But Buckingham was not to lead it in person. On 23 August 1628 an assassin's knife ended his career. One of the grievances of his assassin, Lieutenant John Felton, was that Buckingham had denied him his patronage for a promotion to captain.¹ The assassination only delayed the sailing of the fleet for a few weeks. Charles appointed the earl of Lindsey to the command of the fleet, and early in September the fleet left England for la Rochelle.² Charles had determined on sending the fleet following the death of the duke, as Conway informed Bishop Laud, so as 'to avoid doubts that may arise upon the late execrable act committed on the person of the gracious duke'.³ Charles placed the

¹CSPD, 1628-9, pp. 268-71.

²King Charles to earl of Lindsey, 2 Sept. 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, p. 311); Sir Daniel Norton to Sec. Conway, 8 Sept. 1628 (*ibid.*, p. 323); William Towerson to same, 8 Sept. 1628 (*ibid.*, p. 324).

³Sec. Conway to Bishop Laud, 24 Aug. 1628 (*ibid.*, p. 273).

office of lord admiral in commission, a move suggested by Edward Nicholas, in order to permit the dowager duchess of Buckingham to enjoy the profits of the office to help meet the debts left by her husband and provide for her young children.¹

Naval historians are unanimous in their praise of the administration of the navy under Buckingham.² They had much to laud: the navy was greatly augmented and improved; the naval commissioners, whose work Buckingham encouraged and supported, were men of some competence and experience; routine administrative matters were no longer neglected to the extent they had been in the past; the amalgamation of the two offices of lord admiral and lord warden of the Cinque Ports had, for a short while, provided a more unified and efficient naval service. They agreed with the reply drafted by Sir John Coke in answering the charges regarding the state of the navy laid against Buckingham during his impeachment. Recalling thirty years of service, Coke maintained that in the past five

¹Sir Henry Mervyn to Edward Nicholas, 29 Aug. 1628 (ibid., p. 276); Clowes, ii. 16; Murray, 'The lord admiralty', p. 143.

²Oppenheim, pp. 194 ff.; Penn, p. 138; Clowes, ii. 2.

years the navy 'was much better than ever it was in my memory, and exceeded the navies of former times'.¹

But by 1628 Coke had become disenchanted. Certainly the navy had been greatly improved, its capacity increased. But abuses in the service remained. Reform had failed: disorganization prevailed; a lack of spirit permeated the service. Buckingham's policy of placing in command of fleets men whom he selected on qualifications other than experience and ability jeopardized the success of the expeditions. Lack of funds neutralized all efforts and meant delays in supply and victualling. For the chronic emptiness of the treasury Buckingham's inability to come to terms with parliament is largely accountable. Mounting discontent, expressed in parliament, was directed at the conduct of the wars against Spain and France which revealed serious inadequacies in naval services and incompetence in leadership. The disasters at Cadiz, Rhé and Rochelle were a serious blow to English pride. Perhaps Buckingham was correct in believing that one great victory would win him the acclaim of the populace, but that victory never came. Buckingham's policy, and his patronage of men who were, for the most part,

¹Draft by Sir John Coke of answers to charges against the lord high admiral, Sept. 1626 (Cowper MSS, i. 285).

unable to carry it out, accounts for the general discontent with his role in the affairs of state, a role for which he was believed incompetent.

CONCLUSION

Buckingham had not been popular with much of the court since the displacement of the last of the Howards early in 1619 when they believed that he aimed at complete power. The dislike of the populace fluctuated with his actions, but he enjoyed only a few brief months of public acclaim as the nation's hero when he returned from Spain with Prince Charles unmarried and led the movement for war against Spain. In 1622 Girolamo Lando, the Venetian ambassador, wrote an astute assessment of the position of Buckingham:

Although . . . Buckingham seems naturally modest, affable, kind and courteous, and deserving of the good fortune which he has enjoyed, . . . and although the people might glory in seeing his majesty perform a work more divine than royal in aggrandizing nothing yet they cannot endure that one born a simple gentleman . . . should be the sole access to the court, the sole means of favour, in fact one might say the king himself. . . .¹

Lando continued to explain the hostility to Buckingham as arising from his control of patronage and made no mention of policy.

This was true for the greater part of the reign of James when Buckingham was the favourite, but,

¹Girolamo Lando to the doge, 21 Sept. 1622 (CSP Venetian, 1621-3, p. 439).

increasingly, his unpopularity was a result not of the patronage he controlled but of a disastrous foreign policy which had entangled England in costly wars against Spain and France. In the reign of James Buckingham had been confronted with opposition from within the court; in the reign of Charles he met opposition from the house of commons. What had been mere sniping in earlier parliaments culminated in full scale attack in the parliament of 1626.

Of the thirteen charges upon which the commons proceeded to impeach Buckingham, eight pertained to patronage. They assailed his personal control of several important offices, his purchases of the offices of lord admiral and lord warden of the Cinque Ports, his sale of honours and offices, his numerous grants of titles, offices and pensions to members of his family, and the lavish grants he himself had received from the crown.¹ The charges were unsubstantiated; for the most part, they were based on hearsay and rumour. The commons lacked the evidence to prove that Buckingham was corrupt and venal; indeed, the charges laid against Buckingham were more a condemnation of the bestowers of these favours, James

¹Rushworth, i. 303-56; Gardiner, vi. 100-1.

and Charles, than the recipient against whom complaint was now made. As Buckingham himself claimed in answer to these charges in the house of lords, his accuser was 'common fame'.¹ The dissociation of most members of the house of lords from these procedures arose, perhaps, from a realization that the charges laid against Buckingham were designed to malign and discredit the duke with little respect to the formal requirements of law.²

Buckingham and Charles were prepared to allow the commons to continue their attack for it was a simple matter to refute the allegations. Buckingham had done many of the actions of which the commons complained with the approval of the king, or had merely followed traditional practices. Buckingham was also assured of the support of Charles. When Buckingham was attacked for having loaned ships to the French, Lady Scroope, aunt of the duchess of Buckingham, wrote, more accurately than she suspected:

¹Rushworth, i. 375.

²Harold Hulme, 'Charles I and the constitution', in Conflict in Stuart England, p. 96.

He [Buckingham] did nothing but by the king's direction; and it is reported the king should assure him, if he fell, he would fall with him. If this be true there is no doubt of him. . . . The causes against my brother [the earl of Rutland] and my lord [Buckingham] are for suspected persons, but there is little doubt of the removes,¹ for the king tells them they shall not be wronged.

Chamberlain, in his last letter to Sir Dudley Carleton, astutely assessed the attack on Buckingham in the commons:

. . . the disorderly and untoward courses have been taken, make them [the house of commons] catch at anything, but when all is done I think they will find want of counsel and good conduct rather than of integrity and good meaning: though it be no small fault for men of mean experience to undertake so much above their reach, and to think their own single capacity sufficient to compare with the strongest and soundest wits of all Christendom together.²

Indeed, the real grievance of the house of commons was not his control of several offices, but of his inability to handle the responsibilities of any one of the offices he held. They believed him incompetent and found it scandalous that he should have such great influence over other major office-holders that they would always be careful of his interests. They despaired of convincing Charles to seek other

¹Lady Scroope to Sir George Manners, 13 March 1626 (Rutland MSS, i. 477).

²John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 7 March 1626 (Chamberlain, ii. 629).

councillors when he secured the election of Buckingham to the chancellorship of the university of Cambridge during the very session when they were complaining of Buckingham's pluralism, thus insulting their deliberations. Angered and disgusted, the commons then decided to publish a public remonstrance and Charles prepared to dissolve parliament.¹

In a magnificent oration against Buckingham, which only 'the oratorical and imaginative temperament',² of Sir John Eliot could have written, Eliot characterized Buckingham 'as full of collusion and deceit', comparing him to 'the beast called by ancients stellionatus; a beast so blurred, so spotted, so full of foul lines, that they knew not what to make of it'. Regarding Buckingham's position vis-à-vis the king and the state, Eliot employed two vivid metaphors: 'in reference to the king, he must be styled the canker in his treasure; in reference to the state, the moth of all goodness'. In a peroration aimed directly at the question of patronage, Eliot concluded:

¹Gardiner, vi. 118-21.

²Ibid., vi. 107.

Though many hands are exercised, and divers have their gleanings, the harvest and great gatherings comes to one. For he it is that must protect the rest. His countenance draws all others to him as tributaries; and by that they are enforced not only to pillage for themselves, but for him, and to the full proportion of his avarice and ambition. . . . He raised and preferred to honours and commands those of his alliance, how mean soever.¹

Eliot painted an essentially untrue portrait of Buckingham. Historians have followed suit, characterizing the duke as mingling insolence and servility with political meglomania. They have viewed him only as arrogant and vain, using his influence with James and Charles to foster his own ends. But even Gardiner, who agrees that Buckingham possessed neither the qualifications nor the ability for the important offices which he held, saw the claims of the commons against Buckingham as exaggerated or untrue. Buckingham did not seek personal honour alone: this was incidental to the service he rendered the king. He always sought the interests of the state as he understood them.²

Buckingham stood for the old order in which service to the king was the highest service to the state. When Charles declared solemnly after the death of Buckingham that 'the world was much mistaken in him; for whereas it was

¹Rushworth, i. 353-5.

²Gardiner, vi. 107.

commonly thought he ruled his majesty, it was clean otherwise, having been his majesty's most faithful and obedient servant in all things'¹ he spoke a great truth.

The attack in parliament failed to remove the duke from the counsels of the king. The leaders of the opposition to Buckingham in the house of commons had hoped to so discredit the duke that suspicion alone of his actions and motives would be enough to persuade Charles to employ other councillors. Though the commons did not achieve their prime objective, they severely damaged the reputation of Buckingham by the publication of a public remonstrance at the dissolution of the parliament. Following the dissolution, the Venetian ambassador reported: 'I may say that this kingdom is divided into two. The king, Buckingham and a few individuals, who being near at hand sun themselves in the rays of royal favour; the other party consisting of the rest of the country.'² Throughout 1627 reports from all sources warned Buckingham and Charles of the mounting hatred for the duke. Speeches were dispersed, the purport of many being 'it can never be well with

¹J. Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, 20 Sept. 1628 (Ellis, Original letters, series i, vol iii. 263).

²Alvise Contarini to the doge, 21 Aug. 1626 (CSP Venetian, 1625-6, p. 512).

England until there be means made that the duke's head may be let fall from his shoulders'.¹ In November of 1627, when Buckingham returned from an unsuccessful attempt to capture the isle of Rhé, a satirical poem on the campaign appeared, beginning,

Art thou return'd again, with all thy faults,
Thou great commander of the all-go-naughts!

and ending with the couplet,

Three things have lost our honour, men surmise;-
Thy treachery, neglect, and cowardise.²

The warnings did not come only from the populace. The favourite's friends were urgently bringing his unpopularity to his attention. Sir George Goring warned the duke that no more money could be raised out of the City of London, because 'no man that is moneyed will lend upon any security if they think it will go the way of the court, which is now made diverse from the state'.³ This showed succinctly the growing isolation of the court from the nation.

Financial need once more compelled Charles to summon parliament in 1628. In this parliament

¹William Walrond to John Poulett, 12 June 1627 (CSPD, 1627-8, p. 213).

²Anonymous poem, Nov. 1627 (*ibid.*, p. 453).

³Sir George Goring to Buckingham, 5 Nov. 1627 (*ibid.*, p. 422).

Buckingham's policies were attacked almost to the exclusion of his patronage. He was not mentioned by name until the last moments before Charles prorogued parliament. The house of commons had been concerned primarily with formulating a petition of right, but the threat of prorogation had infuriated them. They decided to pass a second remonstrance against Buckingham, whom they held responsible for the prorogation. Charles allowed them to read it to him in the presence of the duke and informed the members assembled that he would 'give it such order as it deserved', then gave his hand to Buckingham to kiss and strode out of the room.¹ In the reign of Charles, Buckingham had become 'grimly impregnable'.² This, more than anything else, accounts for the great bitterness which came to be felt for the favourite who had first been so accessible. Slowly they realized that Buckingham could not be removed.

The remonstrances of 1626 and 1628 only enraged Charles and made him more determined not to sacrifice his best friend. It was the prerogative of the king to select his advisers; Charles would not

¹Rushworth, i. 616-26; Sir Francis Nethersole to Elizabeth of Bohemia, 11, 19 June 1628 (CSPD, 1628-9, pp. 158, 168-9).

²Gardiner, vi. 117.

dismiss one of his councillors because he was unfavourable to the house of commons. Charles recognized what the commons perhaps had not fully grasped: his sovereignty had been challenged. Following the traditional constitutional theory that 'the king can do no wrong', the commons had proceeded to attack his principal councillor. But Charles had given Buckingham his unqualified support and had assumed full responsibility for the actions of his favourite and chief minister. By refusing to halt their attacks against Buckingham, the commons, for the first time, broached the question of ministerial responsibility.¹ The impeachments of Middlesex in 1624 and of Bacon in 1621 had not met with the open disapproval of the crown as did the impeachment of Buckingham in 1626. Charles would not allow the commons to dictate his selection of advisers and officers. He saw too clearly that the dismissal of Buckingham would be injurious of his prerogative and would enhance the dignity of the house of commons. To acknowledge the responsibility of Buckingham was indirectly to acknowledge his own.

By 1628 it had become quite apparent that Charles would not dismiss Buckingham. But fate, in the

¹Anderson, 'Ministerial responsibility', p. 388.

form of an assassin's knife, removed the councillor whom the commons accused of having occasioned the strife between the crown and parliament. The joy of the populace at the death of the duke and the public sympathy for John Felton, the assassin, revealed the extent of the rift between the court and the rest of the country. On 23 August 1628 many people believed that a new era of harmonious relations between crown and people would begin shortly. But they misjudged Charles' character and dismissed too lightly his statements in defence of Buckingham's actions. There were, though, promising signs: Archbishop Abbot and the earl of Bristol were restored to favour, while Sir Richard Weston and Sir William Wentworth were admitted to the intimate counsels of the king. The latter were advocates of peace and fiscal retrenchment thereby holding up the promise of an end to the disastrous and humiliating wars against Spain and France and the prospects of more efficient administration. But the religious and fiscal policies of the crown still remained divergent from those of parliament. As an observer several years later noted: 'I remember I was in England when the duke of Buckingham fell, whom many men thought the only cause of all the evils, but those that

were of that opinion did not find it so afterwards.'¹

The attack in parliament revealed one fundamental misconception about Buckingham and his patronage. In the parliament of 1626 Sir John Eliot charged that Buckingham had 'by his skill . . . raised a party in the court, a party in the country, and a main party in the chief places of government in the kingdom'.² Eliot here gave expression to a prevailing belief that Buckingham had established a patronage organization, a 'Villiers connexion' not only in the sense of family but also in the sense of a group of associates who advised him regularly on how to distribute the patronage which he controlled. Yet, there was neither a 'Villiers connexion' in the sense of a developed organization for patronage, nor in the sense of a consistent group of allies.

The lack of a developed organization is not surprising. Considering how informally a monarch handled suits for favour and office, it is easy to understand that a favourite would be even more informal. In both cases the key was access. Whoever had access to the king was a potential influence on his actions; the more

¹Sir Philip Perceval to Capt. John Barry, 15 March 1641 (HMC, Report on The manuscripts of the earl of Egmont, vol i. pt. i. 133).

²Rushworth, i. 354.

constant the access, the more potent the influence. So, too, with a favourite; hence, the absence of organization.

There was not a particular person to see when soliciting the favour of Buckingham. Buckingham's family, the king's courtiers, someone already in office, Buckingham himself, all were possible paths to his favours. A suitor would usually approach the closest associate of the duke with whom he was familiar. Thus, suitors for favours in no way related to the admiralty but who knew Edward Nicholas might use him as their approach to Buckingham, while suitors in the admiralty who knew a member of Buckingham's family might employ that approach. But always suitors for places, honours or pensions, for themselves or for others, had to remember the position of their patron, a factor which also explains the lack of a system for the distribution of his patronage.

Buckingham's personality was such that he shared with no one his power. Favourites were reluctant to divide their empires, since the very division created possible usurpers. Yet, once a favourite controlled all patronage, he was in the same position in regard to appointments to office as the king: he could not know all the suitors personally; he was faced with the problem of how to select his officials. Clarendon

believed that the 'single misfortune' of Buckingham's career was that he had not one faithful friend with wisdom and integrity to advise him.¹ But Buckingham discouraged the kind of honest talking that such a relationship would have entailed. Instead of having reliable friends to guide him in matters of patronage, he took over the inherent patronage mechanisms of the royal household and administration.

Thus, in the household he controlled some patronage through his position as master of the horse and some through the other individual office-holders, who were aware that it would be foolish for them not to be careful of the interests of the duke. Since the courtiers and nobles tended to congregate in the household rather than in the administration, his control was, to a degree, limited on the one hand by the access of lesser courtiers to the king, and on the other by the prestige of a noble such as the earl of Pembroke, who was not obligated to Buckingham and who was too wealthy, respected and powerful to be intimidated. The result was that patronage in the household was more loosely controlled than in the administration. Buckingham seems to have relied upon the fear officers had of giving him offence, rather than any positive

¹Clarendon, i. 55.

hierarchy of recommendation, to protect his interests and advance his clients.

In the administration his control was more complete, since many of the major office-holders were not usually influential peers who had frequent access to the king. In this area Buckingham also took over existing mechanisms of patronage. The great office-holders had positions under them which were in their 'gift'. Buckingham expected that his interests would be considered in the filling of these offices, since many heads of important offices owed their places to his patronage. This made unnecessary a patronage system independent of the administration.

The one exception of this ability to control the appointments by placing his own clients in the chief administrative positions was in the administration of the church. The church occupied a special position both on account of its detachment from the central administration proper, and also, from the point of view of patronage, on account of its non-hierarchical structure. The archbishop of Canterbury was primate of the church, but he had no control over appointments to bishoprics and deaneries: there was no chief appointing officer below the king. As a result, Buckingham, who enjoyed the easiest and most frequent access to the

king, became the obvious path to ecclesiastical preferments. John Williams and William Laud waged their long and bitter quarrel in an effort to gain the trust of Buckingham; Laud emerged triumphant, and as a consequence, advised Buckingham on appointments in the church.

The variety of possible approaches to the favourite, together with the utilization by Buckingham of the inherent patronage system in the royal government, made a Villiers organization unnecessary. Yet, as Buckingham gained power, and particularly as he began to be interested in policy as well as patronage, there rose about him a group of courtiers who were in roughly the same relationship to him as he was to the king. The earls of Carlisle and Holland were the most notable of this group, but Endymion Porter and Edward Nicholas were more typical. This small group of courtiers was in no sense a group of allies; they were merely scavengers after the favourite's refuse. Sir Henry Wotton noted that 'the truth is, the most of his allies rather leaned upon him than shored him up';¹ Clarendon also thought he was unfortunate in the selection of his associates:

¹Wotton, Reliquiae Wottonianae, p. 238.

. . . very few of his servants having been ever qualified enough to assist or advise him, and were intent only upon growing rich under him, not upon their master's growing good as well as great; insomuch as he was throughout his fortune a much wiser man than any servant or friend he had.¹

For this Buckingham was responsible. He wanted men who were essentially bureaucrats, content to handle the details of routine administration, while permitting him full freedom to advise the king on all matters. These able clerks had no pretense to statesmanship, and their mediocrity was the guarantee of their places. Among all those preferred by Buckingham to important offices, only Lionel Cranfield, first earl of Middlesex, and John Williams, bishop of Lincoln, had approached distinction as statesmen. By disagreeing with the policy of the duke and by advising the king to follow another course than that set out by the duke, they suffered his displeasure and subsequent removal from office. Buckingham saw all disagreement with his policies as an attack on his personal integrity; as a favourite, he allowed none to remain in power who might affect his relation with the king or throw doubt on the wisdom of his advice.

Buckingham did not attempt to surround himself with a group of associates who would support him in a

¹Clarendon, i. 56.

time of crisis. He understood, better than most, that his position was entirely dependent on his relation with first James, and later, Charles. Buckingham realized that he could not consolidate his position or power by building up a group of loyal allies by means of the patronage he distributed: he, more than any of the major office-holders, held office at pleasure. He had not any other security for his place and power than the affection of James and the friendship of Charles. The patronage he distributed was a result of his close association with the king; the termination of that relation would end his monopoly over the discharge of the patronage of the crown. Patronage was for him only one more of the perquisites he obtained as favourite. He distributed this patronage of the crown to family, friends and the associates and friends of his acquaintances, all who were prepared to recognize and acknowledge his place of great favour in the kingdom.

Patronage neither began nor ended with Buckingham. It was a method, under some circumstances a good method, for recruiting personnel. The abuse of patronage was hardly unique to Buckingham. The English in times past were accustomed to seeing offices bought and sold, bishops preferred for their wordliness, kinsmen of favourites advanced to honour and power.

His abuse of its spirit would not have been so offensive to his contemporaries if he had not controlled all the patronage of the royal administration. By placing men in the major offices who were his willing accomplices, he made available all offices in the central administration for people he favoured, too often for reasons other than ability or experience. The characteristics of his patronage were inconstancy, as seen in the many displacements, arrogance, in his demand of recognition of the high position he held, and venality, in the offices and honours which he sold or for which he had sought purchasers. James and Charles erred when they permitted Buckingham to gain control of much of the patronage which was at the disposal of the crown.

The handling of patronage by Buckingham occasioned several of the grievances recited in the parliaments of the 1620s. He made it impossible for the king to hear a variety of views; he separated the king from the main currents of public opinion. He offended the old nobility by excluding it from the dispensation of important patronage, while at the same time he debilitated it by the creation of new, and often unworthy peers. He weakened the church by involving it in the politics of the central administration, and by

finally turning over its patronage to a prelate who appointed only clerics of his own persuasion to the bishoprics, thus destroying the balance that the Elizabethan settlement had established and which James had wished to continue. Thus, the twin pillars of the crown, the church and the nobility, were abused to the point that the former was unable to support the crown, and the latter reluctant so long as Buckingham was supreme. He destroyed an independent judiciary. His one crowning achievement could have been a new refurbished and revitalized navy, but the disastrous course which his foreign policy took, only added his control over that branch of the administration to the list of the grievances of the nation against his rule. He wasted royal revenues by dissipation to his friends, family and himself. His patronage exacerbated all the grievances which were to lead to the civil war. The results of his association with James and Charles in the governance of England in the 1620s would only be felt in the succeeding decades of the reign of Charles.

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Introduction to the Bibliography

This thesis has been based on material culled out of printed sources. Much of the evidence has been found in the correspondence of contemporaries, the most notable source being the Calendars of state papers, domestic series, of the reigns of James I and Charles I. Diaries, journals and contemporary memoirs, biographies and histories have also proved valuable in helping to establish patron-client relationships involving Buckingham.

The Ruigh transcripts consist of a selection of letters transcribed by Robert E. Ruigh, Ph.D., associate professor of history at Loyola College, Montreal, and which were kindly made available to me. They include approximately fifty letters addressed to Sir Dudley Carleton, the English ambassador at the Hague, and are dated from December 1623 to the following August. They are all typescripts of the originals in the Public Record Office, London, and helped to clarify the edited versions found in the Calendar of state papers, domestic. These, as well as a few letters transcribed from the manuscripts of the Lord Sackville at Knole, Kent, offer observations on events surrounding

the parliament of 1624 and the impeachment of Lionel Cranfield, first earl of Middlesex. Though of no direct value for this thesis, it may be of interest to others to note that Professor Ruigh has typescripts of every known manuscript diary for the parliament of 1624, none of which has yet been published.

In general, the publications of the Historical Manuscripts Commission have been disappointing in the search for evidence of a patron-client relationship involving Buckingham. Many are similar to the Gawdy MSS which provides an interesting description of the domestic and social life of a wealthy Norfolk family. It depicts in fine fashion how the patronage system benefitted a family not noted for its attachment to the court, but affords little information about the patronage of Buckingham, other than to demonstrate that he did not have a monopoly in its distribution. The Ancaster MSS, which contains the manuscripts of the family of Lord Willoughby, an intimate of Buckingham, yields little to illustrate this attachment. The Rutland MSS contributes very little information on the relations of Buckingham with the family of his wife, the Manners, yet they furnish useful material on a family whose head was the premier Roman catholic peer.

Perhaps the most disappointing papers published by the Historical Manuscripts Commission have been the Buccleuch MSS and the Montagu MSS, the papers of the Montagu family, prominent at both the local and national levels of government. There are few references to the relations between Buckingham and Henry Montagu, Viscount Mandeville, later created first earl of Manchester, even though he held the offices of lord treasurer, lord president of the privy council and lord privy seal at various times in the 1620's. Lord Edward Montagu, his brother, was noted for his puritan zeal, which may readily be apprehended in the letters published, and, for the most part, confined his activities to the county, though he solicited favours from his brother. These are especially valuable in detailing the various manoeuvres employed by a prominent family interested in improving its position in the county by securing offices and favours at both the local and national levels.

The Knole MSS and the Sackville MSS, for the most part, consist of letters and papers of Lionel Cranfield when lord treasurer. The latter papers are a further portion of Lord Sackville's manuscripts at Knole Park, Kent. These contain warrants for grants of land and money to Buckingham and others from the

crown. They also include numerous petitions to the lord treasurer for the payment of salaries, often greatly in arrears, to servants of the crown.

A more intimate picture of Buckingham is given in the Netherby MSS. These are the papers of Sir Reginald Graham, gentleman of the horse to Buckingham. In it are letters and memoranda which clearly illustrate the nature of Buckingham's lavishness and the extent of his expenses. Apart from revealing some of the characteristic personal traits of the duke, they also show the economy of the stables of James and Charles when Buckingham was master of the horse.

Many of Buckingham's papers passed into the hands of John Packer, his secretary, and are briefly calendared in the Fortescue MSS. A selection of these letters had been printed a few years earlier by the Camden Society under the editorship of S. R. Gardiner (The Fortescue papers).

The Cowper MSS, very important for the study of the administration of the navy in this period, contains numerous papers illustrating the state of the navy in the reigns of Elizabeth and the early Stuarts brought together by Sir John Coke when he was appointed on a commission to investigate abuses in the navy. They also include the official and private correspondence

of Sir John Coke. The administrative reforms undertaken by the navy commissioners, the patronage opportunities in the navy and the general disorganization of the naval service in the preparations of fleets in the early years of the reign of Charles, are well documented. But the Cowper MSS also demonstrates the concern for revitalizing the navy.

The Mar and Kellie suppl. MSS are letters dating from 1612 to 1625 which regularly report news from the court in London to John, earl of Mar, by his cousin, Thomas, earl of Kellie. Mar and Kellie had been youthful playmates of James in Scotland. Kellie had come down to England with James and resided at the court. His letters are invaluable for court gossip and intrigues and contain numerous references to promotions, deaths, marriages and other information about court notables.

The Skrine MSS are a translation of the correspondence of Amerigo Salvetti, representative of the grand dukes of Tuscany at the English court in the first four years of the reign of Charles. They are the comments of an intelligent foreign resident on the events in England from April 1625 to December 1628. Taken together with the reports of the Venetian ambassador as printed in the Calendar of state papers, Venetian, these form valuable contemporary commentaries

by persons who, though outside the court, were aware of the events that transpired. The dispatches of the Venetian ambassadors provide an especially lively commentary on many of the chief episodes of the reigns of James I and Charles I.

The Calendar of state papers, domestic, for the reigns of James I and Charles I have been the most important source for this thesis, as a study of the footnotes will show. These are the records of the principal secretaries of state preserved in the Public Record Office and contain documents relating to a variety of subjects pertaining to the central administration. The edited correspondence calendared in the various volumes provides much information about the patronage of Buckingham and how it operated. The letters soliciting his favour, directly or through an intermediary, are numerous. The calendars have records of some of the grants of pensions, offices, titles and preferments of all kinds procured by Buckingham for his clients. These papers were valuable in helping to establish links between Buckingham and those whom he favoured.

A store of information, to be used carefully, is found in contemporary letters and chronicles. Valuable letters, many of them actually addressed to

Buckingham, and throwing light on his career, are printed in Cabala. The work in general, though, must be used with care for the dating of letters is often inaccurate. There is a wealth of interesting correspondence, furnishing important details on court life and political events, in the letters compiled by Thomas Birch (The court and times of James the first; The court and times of Charles the first). These consist mainly of the detailed and entertaining newsletters of John Chamberlain and the Rev. Joseph Mead. In these letters the lightest gossip is mingled with the important and memorable events of the reigns of the first two Stuarts. Godfrey Goodman, bishop of Gloucester, combines chronicle and letters in his two volume The court of King James. His first volume is a contemporary account of the events of the reign of James by one who benefitted from his attachment to the court. It is interesting to note that this chronicle presents the only contemporary account favourable to Lionel Cranfield. The second volume offers several letters by leading officials, some of which are addressed to Buckingham, commenting on the events at court.

One of the most valuable printed primary sources is The letters of John Chamberlain. John

Chamberlain regularly wrote to his patron and intimate friend, Sir Dudley Carleton, English ambassador first to the Republic of Venice and then to the United Provinces. These extremely frank letters to a friend provide a commentary on the outstanding men and events from 1597 to 1627. He was well informed and seems to have had access to the best sources of information. He reported all he heard, all the gossip of London and the court, both the most important and the less memorable, indeed, any matter he believed would be of interest to Carleton while away on his embassy. These informative newsletters afford some insight into the daily life of a man concerned with keeping his friend and patron thoroughly aware of events in the official world which could influence his career or further his ambitions.

Much evidence of ecclesiastical patronage may be found in the correspondence, diaries and contemporary biographies of the two leading churchmen of this period, John Williams and William Laud. John Hacket's Scrinia reserata (1693), an admiring biography of Lord Keeper Williams, bishop of Lincoln, must be used with care for Hacket tends to emphasize unduly the part played by Williams in most events. Though perhaps more balanced than Hacket, Peter Heylyn's Cyprianus Anglicus

(1668) does much the same for Laud. The rivalry of these two men for paramount influence over Buckingham forms an important episode in the study of the ecclesiastical patronage of Buckingham. The victory of Laud had a marked influence on the selection of men to fill the higher ecclesiastic posts as the letters and, especially, the diary of William Laud (The history of the troubles and tryal of . . . William Laud or volume three of The works of . . . William Laud) reveal.

The Laudian influence on church appointments after 1625 may be seen in The correspondence of John Cosin. These are the letters of Richard Montagu, a leading Arminian divine who became bishop of Chichester in 1628 in order to escape prosecution by the house of commons for his exalted view of the place of the crown in the governance of England. They are addressed to his good friend, John Cosin, chaplain to the influential bishop of Durham, Richard Neile. Unfortunately, the correspondence of Cosin himself with Montagu was destroyed, but the letters of Montagu demonstrate the part played by Laud in the distribution of ecclesiastical patronage under Buckingham.

The identification of some of the clients of Buckingham has been facilitated by the printed diaries and memoirs of contemporaries. Sir James Whitelocke's

Liber famelicus contains much of public and general interest, and is especially informative as a record of the professional advancement of an eminent lawyer who offered some opposition to the court. Memorials of the Holles family, on the other hand, provides valuable information on a family denied important office because of their opposition to Buckingham. Though chiefly of local interest, The memoirs of Sir John Oglander help identify local individuals who appear at court and provides interesting commentary on the leading officials and events of the period. The life and works of Sir Henry Mainwaring and The naval tracts of Sir William Monson are useful for patronage in the navy and for the comments of seamen on the naval expeditions of the first years of the reign of Charles. The general inability of the naval service to cope with a war situation is vividly recounted in The Voyage to Cadiz in 1625, a record of the Cadiz expedition set down by John Glanville who had been sent as secretary against his wishes by Buckingham.

Buckingham has yet to enjoy a good biography. His earliest and only contemporary biographer was Sir Henry Wotton, one of his clients, who wrote A short view of the life and death of George Villiers, duke of Buckingham in 1642. But this short account is merely

an eulogy to a patron. Since Buckingham was a significant personage in his day, contemporary histories record and comment on his activities. His character and career were villified in both The court and character of King James by Anthony Weldon (1650) and in Arthur Wilson's The history of Great Britain, being the life and reign of James the first (1653). Though both authors are notoriously unreliable and were writing in the first years of the Interregnum, their characterization of Buckingham has gained acceptance through frequent repetition in histories of the period.

Buckingham had no other biographer until early in the nineteenth century when George Smeeton published a series of tracts, one of which was entitled 'Historical and biographical memoirs of George Villiers, first duke of Buckingham' (1820). But this tract merely reproduced the opinions of Weldon and Wilson. The most comprehensive study of Buckingham appeared in 1860 in a three volume work by Mrs Katherine Thomson simply entitled The life and times of George Villiers, duke of Buckingham. Her study, unfortunately, lacks analysis and suffers from numerous inaccuracies, but it was the first which presented a detailed 'life' of Buckingham written from manuscript sources.

But all commentaries on the early Stuart era

were superceded by the invaluable History of England from the accession of James I to the outbreak of the civil war, 1603-42, by Samuel Rawson Gardiner, published in ten volumes in 1883-4, but which first appeared in separate studies as early as 1869. Gardiner has made this period peculiarly his own, all later historians of the early Stuart era owing, and acknowledging, a great debt to him. Yet his history is marred by its overall conceptual framework. Gardiner wrote with the conviction that England was ordained by God to have a parliamentary form of government and be protestant in religion. The defenders of the 'old' constitution, such as Buckingham, were not given the sympathetic treatment that was accorded the parliamentary leaders, the 'patriots'. This theme has been continued in the works of historians to this day. In consequence of the all encompassing study of Gardiner, historians have treated Buckingham harshly.

The first biography of Buckingham to appear after the publication of Gardiner's history incorporated his views, and, as subsequent biographies of the duke, lacked originality and demonstrated little evidence of having employed manuscript sources. The romance of George Villiers, first duke of Buckingham, and some men and women of the Stuart court by Sir Philip Gibbs (1908)

is nothing more than a popular history of the court of James with Buckingham as the central personage. Despite its failings and title, it is a better biography than either Miss M. A. Gibb's Buckingham (1935) or C. R. Cammell's The great duke of Buckingham (1939). The former merely repeats what others have written about Buckingham, while the latter is an exaggerated attempt to vindicate Buckingham, as the title so obviously implies. Cammell, though, has included interesting chapters on the private art collection of the duke and on Buckingham as a patron of the arts. The last biography in English is Hugh Ross Williamson's George Villiers, first duke of Buckingham: a study for a biography published in 1940. The only redeeming quality of this pretentious work is its humble subtitle. Williamson's claim to have thoroughly investigated Buckingham's career is specious. He deliberately propounds unrealistic hypotheses and offers an imaginative account of what he believes motivated Buckingham. Buckingham has also a biography in French by Philippe Erlanger appropriately entitled L'enigme du monde: George Villiers duc de Buckingham (1951). But Erlanger has relied heavily on other published biographies of Buckingham and offers little that is new.

Patronage is not a topic that lends itself easily to investigation. For this reason, the biographers of Buckingham have been content only to stipulate that he was the principal dispenser of royal patronage in the days of his ascendancy. Patronage in the early Stuart period has only undergone close scrutiny in the last decade. G. E. Aylmer, in his The king's servants: the civil service of Charles I, 1625-42, published in 1961, discusses patronage as one of the principal modes of entry into the service of the crown. In this book and in his two previous articles, 'Attempts at administrative reform, 1625-40' and 'Office holding as a factor in English history, 1625-42', Aylmer demonstrates that the administrative personnel of the reign of Charles, and which would almost equally apply for the reign of James, were generally inferior in calibre to the men upon whom the Tudors had relied.

There have also appeared several studies on the effect of patronage on the social structures of the late Tudor and early Stuart era. These studies have been especially concerned with the creation and distribution of honours, knighthoods, baronetcies and peerages. 'The sale of peerages in early Stuart England' and 'The early Stuarts and the Irish Peerage' by Charles R. Mayes are significant appraisals of the

social problems created by the too liberal distribution of social privileges in a class-conscious society. The arguments propounded by Mayes have been strengthened by Lawrence Stone's 'Inflation of honours, 1558-1641' and in his more recent The crisis of the aristocracy, 1558-1641. They have clearly shown how illusory was the belief of Buckingham that this form of patronage would have political and financial advantages.

But on the whole, there have been relatively few studies concerned directly with patronage in the administration of this period. It was necessary to have recourse to a variety of secondary sources to identify many of the clients of Buckingham. The effect of his patronage on the central administration, the church and the navy must be learned, in part, from the biographies, select monographs and articles listed in the selective bibliography of secondary sources which follows.

A) Primary sources

I. Manuscript sources

Ruigh transcripts

- i) Approximately fifty letters dating between Dec. 1623 and August 1624, State papers 14/160 to 14/171. Typewritten transcripts of the originals by Dr Robert E. Ruigh.
- ii) A selection of letters dating between March 1623 and Jan. 1624 from the manuscripts of Lord Sackville, preserved at Knole Park, Kent. Typewritten transcripts of the originals by Dr Robert E. Ruigh.

II. Printed primary sources

1. Calendars and official documents

Acts of the privy council of England, 1618-28. Edited by J. V. Lyle. London, 1930-58.

Calendar of state papers, colonial series, East Indies, China and Japan, 1617-29, preserved in the Public Record Office and elsewhere. Edited by W. Noel Sainsbury. London, 1870-84.

Calendar of state papers, domestic series, of the reign of Charles I, 1625-30, preserved in the Public Record Office. Edited by John Bruce. London, 1858-9.

Calendar of state papers, domestic series, of the reign of Charles I, addenda: 1625-49, preserved in the Public Record Office. Edited by W. D. Hamilton and S. C. Lomas. London, 1897.

Calendar of state papers, domestic series, of the reign of James I, 1611-25, preserved in the Public Record Office. Edited by M. A. E. Green. London, 1858-9.

Calendar of state papers, domestic series, of the reigns of Elizabeth and James I, addenda: 1580-1625, preserved in the Public Record Office. Edited by M. A. E. Green. London, 1872.

Calendar of state papers relating to Ireland, of the reign of Charles I, 1625-32, preserved in the Public Record Office. Edited by Robert Pentland Mahaffy. London, 1900.

Calendar of state papers and manuscripts relating to English affairs, preserved in the archives of Venice and in other libraries in northern Italy, 1616-28. Edited by Allen B. Hinds. London, 1910-14.

Foedera, conventiones, literae, et cujuscunque generis acta publica, inter reges Angliae et alios quosvis imperatores, reges, pontifices, principes, vel communitates, ab inunte saeculo duodecimo, viz. ab anno 1101, ad nostra usque tempora, habita aut tractata; ex autographis, infra secretiores archivorum regionum thesaurias, per multa saecula reconditis, . . . Edited by Thomas Rymer and continued by Robert Sanderson. vols xvii and xviii. 2nd edition. London, 1727-9.

2. Publications of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, London.

Ancaster MSS. The manuscripts of the earl of Ancaster, formerly at Grimsthorpe, Lincs. (1907).

Buccleuch (Montagu) MSS. The manuscripts of the duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, K.G., K.T., preserved at Montagu House, Whitehall. vol i: the Montagu papers. (1899).

Carreglwyd MSS. The manuscripts of Miss Conway Griffith of Carreglwyd, Anglesey, and Berw, North Wales. Fifth report, appendix I. (1876).

Cowper MSS. The manuscripts of the earl of Cowper, K.G., preserved at Melbourne Hall, Derbyshire. vol i. Twelfth report, appendix I. (1888).

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