

me freely to thee to judge which of these are best, or whether there be a better; but be confident that my business cannot be done here, where, if I stay any time, I am lost. I earnestly desire thee that thou wilt freely admit Ashburnham into all counsellors which concern my business, and fully intrust him therein, that he may be ready at an hour's warning to be returned to him who is eternally thine,

CHARLES R.

XXXV.

New-Castle, July 1st, 1646.

DEAR HEART,

I had the contentment to receive thine of the 28th of June upon Saturday last. The same day I got a true copy of the London propositions, which ('tis said) will be here within ten days, and now do assure thee that they are such as I cannot grant without loss of my conscience, crown, and honour; to which, as I can no way consent, so, in my opinion, a flat denial is to be delayed as long as may be, and how to make an handsome denying answer is all the difficulty. For which I shall take the advice of Montrevil and the French ambassadour, delaying my answer (if it be possible) until one or both of them come; but if I cannot, I intend to make my delay upon my going to London (upon condition I may be there free and in safety), there to be better informed with the reasons of their propositions, and to make mine own.

Concerning Prince Charles, I have fully declared my resolution formerly; yet, least there may be need (hoping there will not), I do enjoin thee, as thou lovest me, to command him expressly to wait upon thee, and stay with thee, 'til he shall receive my further orders, and all his council and servants that they assist him to obey this my command, as likewise that he do nothing without the queen's advice, knowing that the queen will encourage his council to debate things, as they used to do, the better to prepare her judgements. For

Ireland, I promise to do nothing till I speak with Montrevil; in the meantime, all I can say is, that when he comes, I shall therein give thee full satisfaction.

But I must not forget the king. Assuredly my case will be, that I shall not be admitted to London, nor will the Scots (upon any termes) declare for me, but will retire their army, and restore their garrisons very speedily. Now, when this shall come to pass (as I am very confident it will within six weeks), how I shall [shall I?] dispose of myself? Here I cannot stay without being a prisoner; and, for going to Scotland, I can only do it, as I am ready to die, for the queen, but not otherways. Wherefore, if the queen shall counsel me to take some other courses, believe me she must very speedily, and quickly go to prepare things to that end. Trust me, sweetheart, I have very truly stated my case, whereupon I desire to have thine opinion as soon as may be, for it will fully satisfy him who is eternally thine,

CHARLES R.

Assure Digby that he still stands right in my opinion, and all my other friends that I am and will be ever constant to them.

XXXVI.

New-Castle, July 8th, 1646.

DEAR HEART,

Upon Friday last I had letters from the queen, Digby, and Jermyn (by the way of Amsterdam), all dated the 8th of June, and the next day I had thine of the 6th^a day of July by the ordinary, in both which all thy advice, whether negative or affirmative, is fully to my sence; and albeit, that (since I grant all) I need not answer any particulars, yet I cannot but speak of the covenant, because it is much mentioned to me; the which I hope thou hast named rather to

^a The queen's letters were dated by the new style, the king's by the old style, in accordance with the general custom of the countries in which they wrote.