

miserable clause Charles II. ; while a third class, content to halve the difference, recommend that the clause Oliver should not be inserted, but that its place should be represented by a wide blank, suited to serve the purpose of a line of asterisks in a piece of abridged narrative. Now, doubtful as the fact may seem, there is actually some meaning in this controversy. In its ostensible relation to a bit of marble, it merely involves the not very important question, whether the new House of Commons is to be adorned by some sixty statues or so, or by only fifty-nine ; but in its true relation to principle it involves a question of somewhat greater magnitude,—the existing amount of liberal opinion ; and its producing springs lie deep among the great parties of the country.

One very important party in the transaction is the Book of Common Prayer. Among the Presbyterians of Scotland, as with the better English historians, Charles I. does not stand high. Such was the character of his government, that they had as one man to take up arms against it ; and it is known that, save for their success on that occasion, the Star Chamber would have become as permanent an institution in England as the Bastille did on the opposite side of the Channel ; that the new mode of raising ship-money would have formed the model for levying all the other taxes ; and that the English House of Commons would have shared exactly the same fate as that of the nearly contemporary French Chamber, the States-General, under Louis XIII. The British Government would have ceased to be representative ; the religion of Laud would have become for a time that of the two kingdoms, and then have merged into the Romanism of the third ; and the state officers, assisted by the bishops, would have, meanwhile, carried on the agreeable amusement of shutting up honest men for life in dungeons, confiscating their properties, and cutting out their ears, or, if the ears had