

grounded upon the error of Speed, is clenched into the positive assertion of Hume as to a popular belief for which there is not the slightest ground.

We may now turn from the ex-parte statements which represent the young adventurer as of low birth and mean education, to an undoubted document in which he sets forth his own history. It is a Latin letter written to Isabella, queen of Spain, wife of king Ferdinand, and is dated from Dendermonde, August 25, 1493.* This letter is so interesting, that we take the freedom of re-publishing that portion of it which relates the early history of him who subscribes himself, "Richard Plantagenet, second son of Edward formerly king, duke of York, &c."

"Most serene and most excellent Princess, my most honoured Lady and Cousin, I commend me entirely to your Majesty. Whereas the prince of Wales, eldest son of Edward formerly king of England, of pious memory, my dearest lord and father, was miserably put to death, and I myself, then nearly nine years of age, was also delivered to a certain lord to be killed, it pleased the Divine Clemency that that lord, having compassion on my innocence, preserved me alive and in safety; first, however, causing me to swear on the holy sacrament, that to no one should I disclose my name, origin, or family, until a certain number of years had passed. He sent me therefore abroad, with two persons, who should watch over and take charge of me; and thus I, an orphan, bereaved of my royal father and brother, an exile from my kingdom, and deprived of country, inheritance and fortune, a fugitive in the midst of extreme perils, led my miserable life in fear, and weeping, and grief and for the space of nearly eight years lay hid in divers provinces. At length, one of those who had charge of me being dead, and the other returned to his country, and never afterwards seen, scarcely had I emerged from childhood, alone and without means, I remained for a time in the kingdom of Portugal, and thence sailed to Ireland, where being recognised by the illustrious lords, the earls of Desmond and Kildare, my cousins, as also by other noblemen of the island, I was received with great joy and honour. Thence being invited by the king of France, with many ships and attendants, and having been promised aid and assistance against Henry of Richmond, the wicked usurper of the kingdom of

* This most curious letter, first published by Sir Frederic Madden, is in the British Museum. The paper in the "Archæologia" gives a copy of the original, as well as a translation.

England, I came to the aforesaid king of France, who received me honourably, as a kinsman and friend. But on his failing to afford me the promised assistance, I betook myself to the illustrious princess, the lady duchess of Burgundy, sister of my father, my dearest aunt, who, with her known humanity and virtue, welcomed me with all piety and honour; out of regard also to her, the most serene king of the Romans, and his son, the archduke of Austria, and the duke of Saxony, my dearest cousins, as likewise the kings of Denmark and Scotland, who sent to me their envoys, for the purpose of friendship and alliance. The great nobles of the kingdom of England did the same who execrate the proud and wicked tyranny of this Henry of Richmond.* The letter then concludes with a touching appeal to Isabella, on account of their consanguinity, that she should influence the king of Spain to pity the numerous calamities of the house of York, and further him with assistance.

At the time when the so-styled "Richard Plantagenet" wrote this letter from Dendermonde, a town belonging to the archduke of Austria, Henry had despatched an embassy to the archduke of Burgundy, to protest against his affording any assistance to an adventurer of low birth, maintaining that the sons of Edward were murdered in the Tower by their uncle, "which to believe or affirm otherwise would be the height of madness."† The ambassadors were also directed to declare Margaret of Burgundy as the instigator of this plot against the king of England.‡ The envoys of the king, Sir Edward Poyning and Dr. Warham, demanded the surrender of him who called himself Richard of York, or his expulsion from the territory of the archduke. The council of the sovereign of Burgundy was divided in opinion as to the pretensions of the adventurer; and it was returned for answer, that the archduke would render him no aid, but that he could not control the duchess Margaret, who, on the lands which she held as

* Sir Frederic Madden conceives that a proof of the imposition of Perkin is furnished in this letter, by the assertion that the duke of York was "nearly nine years of age" at the time of his escape, when he was really in his eleventh year. Sir F. Madden, upon the testimony of a herald, believes that the second son of king Edward was born in 1472. His birth has been commonly referred to 1473. Sir H. Nicolas says, "The date of the birth of this prince has not been exactly ascertained, but it may be assigned to the year 1472." The princes were in the Tower in June, 1483.

† The king's examination of the supposed murderers was made at this period, according to Bacon. See *ante*, p. 170.

‡ The substance of the instructions to the ambassadors is given by Polydore Vergil. See "Documents relating to Perkin Warbeck," p. 160.

her dower, was wholly independent. Henry was indignant at this practical rejection of his demand; and, by way of revenge, strictly prohibited all intercourse between England and Flanders, and removed the mart of English cloth from Antwerp. He had made a hasty peace with France, that the pretensions of one whom he professed to regard as a contemptible impostor should not be put forward and advocated; and he now inflicted the most serious injury upon the commerce of England, because the son of the boatman of Tournay was not surrendered to him. It seems incredible that the facts of this young man's origin and education, which Henry professed to have received from his companions, and those brought up with him in their youth, should not have been known to the ministers of the archduke Philip. If the same inquiries at Tournay, as Henry alleged to have been made, had established the imposture, it is scarcely to be believed that respect for the dowager-duchess of Burgundy's fraudulent schemes would have led the archduke to encounter the hostility of Henry, who had ample means of injury at his command.

The pretensions of the adventurer in Flanders gradually found powerful but secret supporters in England. In August, 1494, Henry had instructed his envoy to declare to the court of France, that "there is no nobleman, gentleman, or person of any condition in the realm of England, that does not well know that it is a manifest and evident imposture." * The same agent was sent a second time to the French king, with instructions dated the 30th of December in the same year, to express the indifference which Henry affected to feel for this attempt to shake his title. Yet at this time the subtle king was engaged in corrupting Sir Robert Clifford to betray the associates who had sent him to Flanders; and to whom Clifford had reported that the young man was the indubitable "White Rose." On the 20th of January, 1495, there is this significant entry in the privy purse expenses of Henry VII. :—"Delivered to Sir Robert Clifford, by the hand of Master Bray, 500*l*." Towards the end of 1494, lord Fitzwalter, Sir Simon Mountford, Sir Thomas Thwaites, Robert Ratcliffe, and others, were arrested on a charge of high treason, and were proved to have corresponded with the friends of Richard abroad. All received sentence of death; and Mountford, Thwaites, and Ratcliffe were at once executed. On the 7th of January, Clifford, who was considered by some to have been a spy from the beginning, arrived from Flanders;

* Instructions to Richmond, King-at-arms, "Archæologia," vol. xxvii. p. 165.

and, throwing himself on his knees before the king, humbly supplicated for pardon, when he was certain that he should receive a reward. He was commanded to tell all he knew; and forthwith impeached Sir William Stanley. The rich and powerful knight, who had saved the life of the earl of Richmond on Bosworth Field, when the onslaught of Richard would have been fatal without such interposition—the faithful chamberlain of king Henry VII.—was accused of favouring the pretensions of the "garçon" in Flanders, and had said, that were he sure that he was the son of Edward, he would never fight against him. He had one quality which obliterated from the king's mind all claims of ancient friendship. He was enormously rich; and when Henry knew that Stanley's head had fallen on the sawdust of the scaffold on Tower-hill, he had the further satisfaction of putting forty thousand pounds of money and plate into his own treasury, and of securing lands to the crown worth three thousand annual pounds. There are two entries in his "Privy Purse Expenses" which show that this dear friend of Stanley was not wholly wanting in generosity on the last occasion in which friendship could be exhibited. The king gave "To sir William Stanley, at his execution, 10*l*."—supposed to be a reward to the headsman; and he paid 15*l*. 19*s*. for his "burial at Syon." *

Whilst these severe measures were proceeding in England, against those who had taken an interest in the fortunes of the young man who was supported by Margaret of Burgundy, Sir Edward Poynings, appointed the deputy of Ireland, was employed with an army "to search and purge all such towns and places where Perkin was received, relieved, or favoured." † The earl of Kildare was arrested, and sent to England. A parliament was called by the deputy, in which some salutary laws were enacted; recent English statutes were declared to have the force of law; and it was provided that all measures brought before the Irish legislature should have the previous approval of the king and council in England. Henry chose to deal with clemency towards those who had supported the adventurer who landed at Cork in 1492. He reversed the attainder of the earl of Kildare; pardoned the earl of Desmond; and only excepted from his mercy lord Barry and John Water. In the middle of July, 1495, a bold effort was made by "Richard" to land at Deal, with a portion of his foreign troops. The inhabitants repulsed the invaders, and made prisoners of a hundred and sixty-

* "Privy Purse Expenses," published in "Excerpta Historica," p. 101. † Hall.

nine, all of whom Henry caused to be hanged. Their young leader returned to his protectress, after an ineffectual attempt to besiege Waterford. But, early in 1496, Henry concluded a commercial treaty with Philip, the archduke, to which an article was annexed that the rebels of either prince should be expelled from their territories, if required. In a few months, the young man, driven out from the Burgundian provinces, was dwelling in honour at the court of James IV., in Scotland, having arrived there with a considerable military force. At this period a statute was passed, which indicates that the Lords and Commons thought it necessary to take some measure of security, that in a possible change of dynasty the supporters of the reigning king should not be exposed to the renewal of such persecutions as had occurred in the times of Henry VI. and Edward IV. The act declares, that "subjects are bounden to serve their prince and sovereign lord *for the time being*, in his wars for the defence of him and the land, against every rebellion, power, and might reared against him." It then enacts that no person for the same "true service of allegiance" shall be "convict or attaind of high treason nor of other offences for that cause."* This constitutional principle, thus solemnly set forth at a time when there was a doubtful claimant of the crown in arms, and a true Plantagenet in prison, is evidence that the probability of a real war for the succession was strongly impressed upon those who had everything to risk in such a conflict.

The employment of spies was an established principle of the government of Henry. There are repeated entries in his book of "Privy Purse Expenses" of payments to these dangerous tools. In one place the entry is "To a fellow with a beard—a spy, in reward, 1*l*." In another, "To two monks, spies, in reward, 2*l*." He had his men, too, ready for bold acts of violence as well as treachery. One of his most devoted instruments was Ramsay, lord Bothwell, who was ambassador from James III. of Scotland to Henry, and who was proscribed in the parliament which James IV. called at Edinburgh, in 1488. In 1491 Bothwell was in England, and was in the intimate confidence of Henry; for he concluded an agreement with sir Thomas Todde that he, and the earl of Buchan, should seize the persons of king James and his brother, and deliver them to the king of England. In a statute of that year, all Scots are commanded to depart the realm, because the king of Scotland and his subjects will not observe treaties of any ty; "for the which

* Statutes, by Authority, 11 Henry VII. c. 1. p. 568.

it is better to be with them at open war than under such a feigned peace." According to the indenture which Bothwell signed, Henry had advanced on loan 266*l*. 13*s*. 4*d*., to excite an act of treachery against his neighbour-king, at the time of this "feigned peace." There was no open war, nor had there been for some years, when the adventurer from Flanders appeared at the Scottish court. But James IV. had no cause to love Henry, and he gave a ready welcome to him who was prepared to dispute the throne of England with its possessor. He treated him in every respect as the real duke of York; and he gave the most absolute proof of his conviction of the truth of his pretensions by bestowing upon him in marriage his own kinswoman, lady Catherine Gordon. At the court of James IV., the young man so favoured was attended by fourteen hundred men, of all nations. It appears from a very curious paper, dated at Rouen, in March, 1496, purporting to disclose a plot against the life of Henry VII., that the men and money with which the self-styled duke of York was supplied came from Maximilian, king of the Romans, and not from the duchess of Burgundy. The prior of St. John of Jerusalem is accused in this paper of being privy to the conspiracy; and it is alleged that "when Perkin Warbeck was in Flanders, a servant of his often wrote letters to the said prior of St. John," in one of which it was stated in words of secret signification, "how the Merchant of the Ruby was not able to sell his merchandise in Flanders at the price he demanded, on which account he had gone to the court of the king of the Romans." The "Merchant of the Ruby" is further explained to be "Perkin Warbeck."* With other help, then, than that of Margaret of Burgundy, he has come to show his merchandise to James of Scotland. But Henry of England is not sleeping. Wherever there is danger, there he has his spies. Ramsay, lord Bothwell, has obtained a license for his return to the Scottish court. His relations with Henry are amongst the deepest secrets. He enters into the palace of James; he sees his guests; he is informed of his councils. His business is to obtain the best intelligence for the king of England, and to perpetrate any atrocity that is within his power, either by corruption or violence. Through two extant letters of this most accomplished spy, we have a distinct view of the position of the so-called Richard, in the autumn of

* This singular narrative first appears in Sir F. Madden's paper in the "Archæologia," vol. xxvii.

1496.* We learn, from the first letter, that the war which James was contemplating in favour of the adventurer was against the will of the nobles and the people; and that Bothwell had won over the brother of James to promise that he would not join the host against Henry. But he also informs the king that he has been busy about the matter that Master Wyat propounded to him; and that "my lord of Buchan takes upon him the fulfilling of it." My lord of Buchan is the worthy who bargained with Henry to seize his young king, James IV.; and now he is ready to enterprise another matter,—which is, "in the long night," to make a prisoner "within his tent" of that guest of the king of Scotland whom Henry dreads; "for he has no watch but the king's appointed to be about him; and they have ordained the Englishmen and the strangers to be at another quarter." There came a man, Bothwell says, on the 25th of August, out of Carlisle to "Perkin," and "Perkin" brought him to the king; and that the man came from the brother of lord Dacre, as he learnt from secret information. The Northumberland men came to meetings between them and Scotsmen. He then urges Henry to be prepared for attack. In a second letter, Bothwell protests that "all this long time I have remained under respite and assurance within the realm of Scotland, and most in the court about the king, giving attendance and making labours to do your grace the best service I can, and have full oft-times solicited the king's highness, and all the well-advised lords of this realm, to leave the favour and support they give to this feigned boy." The king, he goes on to say, with all the whole people of his realm he can make, and Perkin and his company with him, in number fourteen hundred of all nations, will enter England on the 17th of September, "in the quarrel of this same feigned boy." In another passage we see that "the feigned boy" treated upon affairs of national import as a sovereign prince, not eagerly catching at any prospect of assistance, but deliberating upon terms as if he were already lord of the realm which he claimed: "Sir, the second day of September the king sent for his lords that were nearest about him, and caused them to pass into the chamber of council, and thereafter called Perkin to them, and they laid many desires to him, both anent the restorance of the seven sheriffdoms, the delivery of the castle and town of Berwick; and also for the listing of the king's army, and for charges made upon him and his company, to bind him to pay

* Ellis, "Original Letters," Series I., vol. i. pp. 22 to 32. The letters of Bothwell are in the Scotch dialect.

one hundred thousand marks within five years after his entry. To this asked he delay until the morn; and on the morn entered he in the council, and took with him sir George Neville, Lound the priest, and Heron; and after long communing has bound him to deliver Berwick, and to pay for the costs made on him fifty thousand marks in two years, and thus is this taken up in writing." The lord Concessault—he who was captain of the guard of honour when the adventurer was first welcomed by the king of France—comes to the Scottish court, professing that he was sent to offer a mediation between England and Scotland. The crafty Bothwell goes on to say, pressing Henry to be "privy," that he had wormed out of the lord Concessault, that he had offered the king of Scotland a hundred thousand crowns to send Perkin into France. He adds, "I think his coming hither has done but little good, for he and the boy are every day in counsel." The traitor to his country constantly urges Henry to come quickly and make war in Scotland, setting forth the poverty of James, "who had not a hundred pounds till he had coined his chains and his plate." The following is one of the most curious passages of the correspondence: "Sir, here is come out of Flanders Roderick de la Lane, with two little ships and three hundred of Almain. I stood by when the king received him in presence of Perkin; and thus he said in French: 'Sir, I am come here according to my promise to do your highness service, and for none other man's sake am I come here; for an I had not had your letters of warrant, I had been arrested in Flanders and put to great trouble for Perkin's sake.' And he came not near Perkin. And then came Perkin to him, and he saluted him, and asked how his aunt did; and he said, 'Well.' And he inquired if he had any letters from her to him, and he said he durst bring none, but [what] he had for the king. And surely he has brought the king sundry pleasant things for the war, both for man and horse."

We may judge from such authentic materials for history how difficult must have been the part which the young man had to play at the court of Scotland; married to a beautiful woman of the royal blood, whose love would have turned to hate against a low-born impostor—surrounded by jealous nobles—moving in presence of Henry's spy—and subject to the prying inquiries of the French ambassador, who told Bothwell "how great inquisition was made to understand of Perkin's birth, both by the admiral and him." And yet he seems to have borne all this ordeal without blemish;

for Bothwell states that he showed the French ambassador a paper about the origin of "the feigned boy," drawn up by Meautis, Henry's French secretary, and the ambassador "plainly said he never understood it, but rather trowed the contrary." At this season, a letter is written by the young man, dated from Edinburgh, October 18th, to Sir Bernard de la Forse, who had been employed by Edward IV., and had been the envoy of Richard III. to Spain; in which he desires the knight to be to him "as loving, faithful, and kind counsellor and friend, as ye were unto our said father;" praying him to do him the service of ascertaining "the good heart and mind that our most dear cousin, the king of Spain, beareth toward us;" and promising that he would be ready to perform any good in his power to him, and to "our right trusty and well-beloved servant, your son, Antony de la Forse, which hath full lovingly given his long attendance upon us in sundry countries." The autograph signature to this letter, "Your friend Richard of England," is "very remarkable from its bold and thoroughly English character, and would cause one to believe that the education of Perkin, in this respect, must have been attended to with considerable care."* In many other respects his education could not have been neglected. His abilities and acquirements must have been tested at the court of James, a poet himself and an encourager of letters, who brought the art of printing into Scotland. An ignorant impostor, qualified only by cunning for the difficult game he had to play, would have found himself ill at ease in the company of Gawin Douglas and William Dunbar. Whatever be the contradictory evidence which prevents us yielding an unqualified belief that this was the son of Edward IV., it is manifest that for years he sustained his part, without betraying by a single accident of self-consciousness that he was a deceiver, whose temporary elevation would only make his ultimate fall more humiliating. The theory that he was set up to act this part, as the child Lambert Simnel had done before him, to prepare the way for the succession of the earl of Warwick, appears irreconcilable with the fact of the open nature, and continuance, of the support which he received from the duchess of Burgundy, the king of the Romans, and the king of Scotland. The employment of the men and money at his command, however supplied, was wholly within his own power.

The winter was approaching, when James IV. and his adopted

* Sir F. Madden, "Archæologia," vol. xxvii. p. 184.

ally advanced with an army into Scotland. A proclamation signed R. R. was issued in the name of "the king of England;" which set forth the escape of the son of Edward IV. from the Tower, and his residence abroad, with little variation from the statement made to Isabella of Spain. It denounced Henry Tydder as a false usurper of the crown of England; called upon the people to arm in the cause of the true king; and promised rewards to such as should take or distress his mortal enemy. The king of Scotland had come to aid his righteous quarrel, and after the usurper was subdued would return peaceably into his own kingdom. This appeal to the people of England was wholly unsuccessful. If there had been no doubt whatever of the identity of the duke of York, it is very questionable if the nation generally would have stirred in a new war of succession. With the exception of the battle of Stoke, there had been internal peace for eleven years. Before the battle of Bosworth there had been no sword of Englishman drawn against Englishman for fourteen years. A quarter of a century of almost unbroken peace had enabled a generation to settle down in the quiet pursuits of industry, under a king essentially pacific. If Henry would abstain from grinding them by subsidies, and maintain order and security of property, they were as contented to be governed by the house of Tudor as by the house of York. The people would fight for their own liberties, but not for a barren title. But when an army of Scots, headed by the king of Scotland, entered England, the sturdy Northmen looked upon that invasion as the act of the ancient national enemy, and the fierce hatreds of centuries were again in full force. No alliance could have been more unpropitious than this; and it was felt to be so in the care with which the proclamation affirmed that the Scots came only in "true and faithful love and amity." James and his friend marched back to Scotland, their army having done much mischief, but having produced no political results.

The invasion of England, and the natural excesses which accompanied it, offered a fit occasion for Henry to demand a large grant from parliament. The tax was paid without resistance in most parts of the kingdom. But in Cornwall, the people were instigated by one Flammock, an attorney, and by a farrier, to take up arms; for they said the northern counties ought to pay for the means of defence, with which the western had no concern. Sixteen thousand insurgents commenced a progress to London, to demand the punishment of the king's ministers, archbishop Morton and sir

Reginald Gray, as the promoters of the tax. Lord Audely placed himself at their head, when they had reached Wells. At Blackheath they encamped. A battle took place on the 22nd of June. At the bridge at Deptford they obstinately defended the passage against the king's troops. But the bridge was forced; and they fled in consternation. There was a great slaughter, and many hundred prisoners were taken. Audely was beheaded, and the attorney and the farrier were hanged. Henry treated the prisoners with a politic mercy, and they returned home. During this insurrection James again crossed the border, and besieged Norham castle. But he retreated before the earl of Surrey. The ambassador of Ferdinand of Spain now undertook to mediate between James and Henry; and a truce was finally concluded. Henry required that Perkin should be given up, but without success. The disappointed pretender to the crown of England now quitted the court of James, having received a safe conduct from his chivalric supporter. He departed from Scotland with four ships, and a small body of followers. Once more he addressed himself to his old friends at Cork, but received no encouragement. He then sailed to the coast of Cornwall; and in September landed at Whitsand Bay. The Cornishmen, still disposed for revolt, flocked to the standard of Richard the Fourth. He seized St. Michael's Mount; and there he left his wife, Catherine, the faithful sharer of his fortunes. The enterprise now began to wear a more serious aspect than at any former period. Before the adventurer had reached Exeter he had six thousand men under his command. King Henry himself has related the issue, in a letter to the bishop of Bath and Wells, dated from Woodstock, the 20th of September.* Perkin, he says, is landed; "our commons of Cornwall take his part, but no gentleman. On the 17th of September he came before Exeter, and attacked the east gate and the north gate, but they were so defended that he lost three or four hundred of his company." The king then encloses a letter from the earl of Devonshire, which describes another attack on the 18th. A local record states that the north gate was burnt, and that the insurgents forced an entrance into the town by the east gate, but were repulsed by the citizens.† The insurgents and their leader then quitted Exeter, without molestation; and proceeded to Collumpton, where, says the earl, "many of his company departed from him, and I trust more will." On the 25th of September, the king himself

* Ellis, "Original Letters," Series I., vol. i.

† *Ibid.*, p. 39, in note.

writes to one of his nobles: "Cousin, trust for certain that upon Thursday about midnight, Perkin fled from his company at Taunton, and took no leave nor license of them."* It appears that very heavy fines were levied upon many persons who had favoured these western insurrections, amounting, in Somerset, Dorset, Wilts, Hampshire, and Devon, to nearly ten thousand pounds; so that some support was given to these rash enterprises beyond that of the class whom Hall calls "dung-hill ruffians." Amongst those so fined were four abbots. The forsaken adventurer rode through that autumn night from Taunton to the monastery of Beaulieu, in the New Forest, whose ruins still show its ancient importance. Here he demanded sanctuary on the 21st of September. The privileged retreat was quickly surrounded by the king's forces; and in a few days he surrendered, upon a promise that his life should be spared. Henry was most anxious to secure the wife of the captive; and having effected his object without difficulty, he placed her under the protection of his queen. Her beauty obtained for Catherine the name of "The White Rose," when the utterance of that name with sympathy was no longer dangerous.

Fabyan, the Londoner, briefly relates, that, on the 28th of November, "Perkin was brought through the city unto the Tower, and there left as prisoner." Others state that he was taken leisurely on horseback through the city to the Tower, and then back again to Westminster. The story of his confessing his imposture in the presence of his wife rests upon no credible authority, and is not mentioned by Fabyan, Hall, or Bacon. The confession which he is stated to have made, of which Bacon speaks so contemptuously, was then dispersed abroad.† A letter from the king to the mayor of Waterford states, that "The said Perkin came unto us to the town of Taunton, from whence he fled; and immediately after his first coming, humbly submitting himself to us, hath of his free will openly showed, in the presence of all the lords here with us and all nobles, his name to be Pierce Osbeck, whence he has been named Perkin Warbeck.‡ It is precisely the same tale which Henry desired his herald to promulgate about "the garçon," in 1494. There is no copy set forth of the evidence so taken before "all the lord;" no attesting witnesses to the statement. It was altogether what Bacon describes as "the king's manner of showing things by pieces and dark lights." During seven months' imprisonment of

* Ellis, "Original Letters," p. 39, in note.

† See *ante*, p. 204.

‡ Note of Sir F. Madden in "Archæologia," vol. xxvii. p. 188.

Henry's captive, he was not treated with indignity. He was allowed to take exercise on horseback; for there is an entry in Henry's "Privy-Purse Expenses," of a payment, at the rate of 5*d.* a-day, during three months of 1498, "for Perkyn's horse-meat;" and another payment of 11*s.* "for Perkyn's riding-gown." * There is no distinct statement of his abiding place at this period. He was not concealed; but there was little chance that he could have been identified as the real duke of York, who purported to have escaped from the Tower fifteen years before, or ascertained to be an impostor, through casual glances at his person. Elizabeth, the widow of Edward IV., died in the very year when this adventurer first landed at Cork. The queen of Henry VII., and her sisters, probably never saw him. He was as effectually deprived of all opportunities of private communication with others, as if he had been shut up within stone walls. According to Hall, his apparent freedom was an insupportable duration; for "the king appointed certain keepers to attend upon him, which should not, the breadth of a nail, go from his person." In June, 1498, he escaped, and fled towards the coast. But he was in the toils. "Every by-way and lane was set abroad with the king's guard." In his despair, he turned back from the road to the sea, and threw himself into the priory of Sheen. The prior obtained from the king a promise that the fugitive's life should be spared; and the Tower then became his close prison. Hall relates, that upon being conveyed to London, "Perkin was brought to the court again to Westminster, with many a curse and reproach, and was one day set fettered in a pair of stocks before the door of Westminster hall." The chronicler adds, that the next day he was exhibited in the same way before the Standard in Cheap, and there "read openly his confession, written with his own hand." There was another prisoner in the Tower, who had there pined for fourteen years, Edward, earl of Warwick. From June, 1498, to November, 1499, these young men were fellow-prisoners. They probably had some means of intercourse, open or secret, during these sixteen months. In March, 1499, another pretended earl of Warwick appeared in Kent, and was announced from the pulpit by a friar of the order of St. Augustine. The poor tool, Wulford, was hanged, and the friar was imprisoned. Hall writes, that the friar set on foot this scheme, "to the intent to bring this earl into disdain and hatred." Men were not slow to believe that "this was but the king's device." † The earl of War-

* "Excerpta Historica," p. 117. † Bacon, p. 194.

wick stood in the way of Henry's family projects. A negotiation was proceeding to marry Arthur, prince of Wales, to Catherine, the daughter of Ferdinand of Spain. "Ferdinand," says Bacon, "had written to the king in plain terms, that he saw no assurance of his succession as long as the earl of Warwick lived; and that he was loth to send his daughter to troubles and dangers." The suggestion was not thrown away upon such an unprincipled schemer as Henry VII. "Lady Catherine herself, a sad and a religious woman, long after, when king Henry the Eighth's resolution of a divorce from her was first made known to her, used some words,—that she had not offended, but it was a judgment of God, for that her former marriage was made in blood,—meaning that of the earl of Warwick." * On the 21st of November, 1499, an indictment was preferred before the Lord High Steward and the Peers against the earl of Warwick for high treason. It set forth that two men, Thomas Astwood, one of Warwick's keepers, and Robert Cleymond, had, in August, conspired with him to make him king. They were to seize the Tower, and there defend themselves; or to obtain the royal treasure there, blow up the powder-magazine, and in the confusion escape. But it was also averred in the same wonderful document, that it was intended to make "Peter Warbeck, of Tournay," king. Cleymond, it was affirmed, with the assent of Warwick, knocked on the floor, Warbeck being confined beneath, and called out, "Perkin, be of good cheer and comfort; and afterwards the earl made a hole in the floor, to the intent that he might converse with him concerning the said treason." The chronicler states that Perkin, "by false persuasions and liberal promises, corrupted Strangeways, Blewet, Astwood, and long Roger, his keepers, being servants to sir John Digby, lieutenant; insomuch that they, as it was at their arraignment openly proved, intended to have slain the said master, and to have set Perkin and the earl of Warwick at large." † Two of these keepers were hanged; but Cleymond, who appears to have been so active and so confided in, vanishes, when the purpose is served for which he was in the Tower, in some capacity or other, that would enable him to act the betrayer. Upon this tissue of contradictory charges, set forth in Warwick's indictment the two young men were convicted. The earl of Warwick, wholly ignorant of the ways of the world, was induced to plead guilty. His companion in misfortune went through some form of trial, of which there is no record. He was arraigned

* Bacon, p. 196.

† Hall, p. 491.

as a foreigner. The doubtful Plantagenet was executed at Tyburn, —his old friend John Water, of Cork, suffering with him,—on the 23rd of November. The earl was beheaded within the Tower on the 28th of the same month. "One fierce and strong wave," says the old chronicler, with a touch of pity, "devoured and swallowed both their lives." * Hall, p. 488.

CHAPTER XII.

Edmund de la Pole, duke of Suffolk.—Marriage of Prince Arthur to Catherine of Arragon. —The Court of Henry VII.—Henry's passion for wealth.—Treaty with Scotland.—Death of Prince Arthur.—Contract of Prince Henry with Arthur's widow.—Death of Henry VII.—Extortions through Empson and Dudley.—Tendency towards absolute monarchy.—Few parliaments during this reign.—State of the Clergy.—Monastic establishments.—Population.—Agriculture.—Maritime Discovery.—Commerce.—Regulations of internal trade.—Wages.—Vagrancy.—Criminal Laws.—Public Health.—Feasts.—National Pride.—Pageants.—Sports.

AFTER fifteen years of a reign in which "the times were rough, and full of mutations and strange accidents," * Henry VII. sits steadily on his throne. There is only one Plantagenet connexion left to give him more trouble, Edmund de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, the brother of the earl of Lincoln, whom Richard III. declared his heir. He had manifestly wronged this nobleman, by withholding from him his property, and his true title of duke, pretending that the attainer of the elder brother cancelled his right. After the oppressed man, who appears to have been rash and ill-conducted, had fled abroad, and several persons had been executed upon a charge of conspiracy with him, the king contrived to get hold of him upon a promise to spare his life, and he shut him up in the Tower, leaving to his successor his pious command to put the prisoner to death. From the commencement of the sixteenth century to the end of Henry VII.'s reign, we have neither revolts nor wars. But the policy of the king has brought about two events, which will have a powerful influence on the future destinies of this country—the marriage of his son, Arthur, prince of Wales, to Catherine of Arragon, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella; and the marriage of his daughter, Margaret, to James IV. of Scotland.

In 1485 queen Isabella gave birth to Catalina, her youngest child. Arthur, the eldest son of Henry VII. and of Elizabeth of York, was born in 1486. Their second son, Henry, was born in 1491. Catalina, or Catherine, was educated with religious strictness; and she, as well as her sisters, acquired, under the most

* Bacon, "Dedication of History of Henry VII. to Prince Charles."

WILLA ALFONSO