

to be placed in St. George's Chapel." And in the March following, we read "of the badge of his order being paid for, though he did not take possession of his stall until after the month of April."* This emancipation from the trammels of boyhood and installation at so early an age to the highest dignity which could be awarded to prince or subject, and the insignia of which, since its first institution, the greatest monarchs in all succeeding ages have thought it an honour to wear, appear to mark the point whence Richard's true entrance into public and political life may be dated. The more so, as a passage in the Paston Letters† intimates, that in the following month (30th of April, 1466) this prince was employed on some special mission, either of a warlike or confidential import; viz., "Item: as for tidings, the Earl of Northumberland is home into the North, and my Lord of Gloucester shall after, as to-morrow men say."

If, then, but little of actual importance remains on record, connected with the early youth of Richard III., and if his domestic habits and pursuits at that important period of his life must be rather implied from circumstances than actually illustrated by existing records, yet it cannot but be considered an indication of his peaceable and tranquil career, that up to this period no verified tale of horror, no accusation, however forcible, reported by the rancour of his enemies, associates itself with his memory, or can be fairly and unequivocally brought home to him. King Edward might, from a selfish feeling, have endowed his young brother with manors and lordships, that the stream of such vast wealth should flow into and enrich his own coffers, or be the means of cementing in wardship the aid and alliance of some discontented baron. He might have loaded him with high-sounding titles and ancient dignities, to gratify personal or family pride; or have nominated him to important offices and appointments, as the means of preventing the power thus nominally bestowed from being turned against himself by treachery or rebellion: but, unless this monarch had considered Gloucester as worthy to bear and fitting to adorn one of the most distinguished positions to which it was in the sovereign's power to advance him,—one exclusively of honour,‡ instituted to stimulate and reward military prowess, wholly unconnected with emolument, and productive of no personal advantage to himself,—he would scarcely have been induced, at the early age of fourteen, to invest the young Richard with so high a distinction as was that of the order of the Garter in those days of true chivalry and gallant knighthood.

* Sir Harris Nicolas's Order of British Knighthood, p. 92.

† Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 289.

‡ Rot. Turris Lond. ap. Anst. Reg. Gart., vol. i. p. 131.

CHAPTER V.

Re-interment of the Duke of York and the Earl of Rutland at Fotheringay.—Richard selected by the king to follow their remains in state.—Coolness between Edward IV. and his brother of Clarence.—Character of King Edward, of George of Clarence, of Richard of Gloucester.—Superior mental qualifications of Gloucester.—Absence of all foundation for his alleged depravity.—Marriage of Edward IV.—Mortification of Warwick.—Jealousy of Clarence.—Warwick essays to tamper with Clarence and Gloucester.—Marriage of Clarence.—Indignation of the king.—Open rupture between Edward, Warwick and Clarence.—Gloucester continues faithful to the king.—Honours awarded to him.—He is created lord high admiral, and chief constable of England.—Unsettled state of the kingdom.—Open insurrection.—Edward IV. abdicates the throne.—Escapes into Burgundy.—Richard shares his exile.—Restoration of Henry VI.—Attainder of Edward IV. and of Richard, Duke of Gloucester.

RICHARD of Gloucester was but a stripling in age when he entered the arena of political life. As stated at the conclusion of the last chapter, this entrance may be dated from the period when he was created a knight of the Garter, shortly after attaining his fourteenth year: and most active was his public career from that early period. The first document concerning him, which next presents itself to notice, is, perhaps, the most pleasing of any that are associated with his memory. It was a tribute of filial affection;—one of those scenes of domestic tenderness which form so redeeming a feature in the life and history of the House of York,—a resting place, amidst the harrowing scenes of rapine, murder and rebellion, which associate themselves on most occasions with the striking events of this turbulent period.

Almost the first act of Edward IV., after his accession to the crown, was to remove the head of his illustrious parent from its ignominious elevation over the gates of York, and honourably to inter his remains beside those of the young Earl of Rutland, at Pontefract. When firmly established on the throne, and after a few years of tranquillity had somewhat replenished the impoverished coffers of the kingdom, the young monarch farther evinced his strong affection for the memory of his deceased parent and brother, by deciding on the removal of their remains to the burial-place appertaining to their family, in the chancel of the collegiate church founded by their ancestor at Fotheringay.* Richard of Gloucester, on this important occasion, was selected by his sovereign to transport the remains of their father, and to accompany them in state the whole way, following next after the corpse,† supported by the chief of the nobility and officers, whose attendance was commanded on this interesting and solemn occasion.

The funeral was one of the most splendid and sumptuous on record, little less than regal;‡ and while admiration is elicited by this dutiful testimony of

* Edward Plantagenet, second Duke of York, founded a magnificent college at Fotheringay, for which he was obliged to mortgage great part of his estate. Being slain at Agincourt, his body was brought to England and buried in the choir of his collegiate church, under a marble slab, with his figure inlaid in brass, according to his will.—*Nichol's Royal Wills*, p. 223.

† Sandford, book v. p. 373.

‡ See Appendix U.

respect paid by King Edward to the memory of his father,* it cannot but suggest a strong conviction to the mind that George of Clarence must early have forfeited the esteem and confidence of his royal brother, or at a very early age have estranged himself from his kindred; otherwise the youthful Duke of Gloucester would scarcely have been selected to take the lead in a ceremony so imposing, and which was so religiously considered as the public solemnization of the funeral of a deceased parent.

It may, perhaps, be said that Richard, as the youngest son, was the fitting person to follow in the entire train of the mournful cavalcade; but then, where was Clarence when it reached its final destination? The king stood at the entrance of the churchyard, arrayed in the deepest mourning, to receive from Gloucester the relics, and to precede the revered remains of his relatives to the altar of Fotheringay church;† but no mention is made of Clarence, though many noble personages are enumerated by Sandford, as aiding the monarch in the solemn ceremony which he so minutely describes, and making the offerings then customary for the repose of the dead.

It is quite evident, therefore, that Clarence was not present; and this, united to other matters of less import than a domestic reunion of so sacred a nature, forces the conviction that even at this early period of the reign of Edward IV., the factious and rebellious spirit of the irresolute Clarence was discerned and resented by the king; while the firmness and decision which characterized the young Richard of Gloucester, equally apparent to his elder brother, formed the groundwork of that unity of feeling which, throughout their lives, existed between Edward IV. and the subject of the present memoir.

Young, indeed, as he was at this period, there are not wanting undoubted memorials which evince Gloucester to have been a prince endowed with a most powerful mind, and gifted with shrewdness and discretion far beyond his years and far exceeding that possessed by his more noble-looking brothers. Sir Thomas More, in describing these princes, says, in the quaint language of his time, "All three, as they were great states of birth, so were they great and stately of stomach, greedy and ambitious of authority, and impatient of partners;‡" and he further adds, after eulogizing his elder brothers—"Richard, the third son, of whom we now entreat, was in wit and courage equal with either of them, though in body and prowess far under them both." Personal bravery, indeed, was a characteristic heir-loom in the House of York; and King Edward IV., the first of that line, was unexampled in English history for the frequency and completeness of his victories and the number or high character of his appointments.§ But though an able general, and of invincible courage, he was so averse from business, so devoted to pleasure, so vain of his person and so self-willed in his actions, that, notwithstanding he was by nature endowed with an understanding of no ordinary power, he was generally looked upon by his nobles as a weak, though fascinating prince,|| and treated as a shallow politician by foreign potentates.¶

* Sandford states that the royal crown was borne at the Duke of York's funeral, to intimate "that of right he was king."—Book v. chap. iv. p. 369.

† King Richard III. is conjectured to have put a finishing hand to this church, (his father and his uncle, who commenced it, having both been slain in battle before the work was completed,) for, in addition to the royal arms of this monarch carved in wood on the pulpit, which is as old as the building itself, on each side of the supporters was a boar, which was King Richard's crest. One of these Mr. Hutton described as still perfect in 1802.—*Life of William Hutton, F. R. SS.*, p. 253.

‡ More's *Rycharde III.*, pp. 7, 8.

§ Turner's *Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 361.

|| Philip de Comines, p. 242.

¶ Ibid., p. 246.

Tender and devoted affection to his family was the brightest quality in this monarch's character, and vindictive and revengeful cruelty* to his enemies, his greatest defect. He had little foresight and no penetration save in military affairs; but he was generous, witty and conciliating, and he won the hearts of the mass of his people by his princely bearing, his courteous manners and his frank and affable deportment.†

George, Duke of Clarence, was "a goodly and noble prince,"‡ scarcely inferior to the king in beauty of person and dignity of demeanour. The chronicler of Croyland, speaking of him and his young brother of Gloucester, says, that "the said princes possessed so much talent, that all men, even those learned in the law, wondered" at them;§ and again, "these three brothers, the king and the dukes, were of such excellent understanding, that if they did not quarrel it would be difficult to break the triple cord."|| But Clarence, though undoubtedly the most amiable in private life,¶ and fully as daring and intrepid when called upon to evince the inherent bravery of his race, was naturally of an unquiet and restless spirit. He was easy of access, forgiving in temper, and possessed of warm and kindly feelings; but he was a fickle and unstable prince,** and in strength of mind far inferior to either of his brothers. To a deficiency in judgment,†† he united an imprudent openness, and great violence of temper,‡‡ so that he easily became the prey of designing men, and was often the dupe of time-serving friends, who were far beneath himself in goodness of heart and in intellectual endowments.

Richard of Gloucester, ten years younger than the king, and four years junior to Clarence, was gifted with such vigorous powers of intellect, that, in spite of the disparity of years, he has been found hitherto on all occasions associated with his brothers, and is always named in conjunction with them, from the decided position he maintained, when called upon to act for himself, and from the ascendancy which he seems early to have exercised over those around him. He appears to have united in his slender person, all the more powerful mental qualifications which were denied to his more comely relatives, as though nature, in the impartial distribution of her gifts, had compensated to him by strength of mind for inferiority in personal appearance. His genius was enterprising, and his temper liberal;§§ in manner he was cour-

* The unrelenting policy of King Edward is made known by Philip de Comines, to whom he mentioned that it was his practice to spare the common people, but ever to put the gentry to death; for this purpose he would ride over the field of battle, when the victory was complete, to see that none but the soldiery were spared; so that the carnage after the conflict was more destructive than during the heat of the engagement.—*Comines*, p. 251.

† "There never was any prince of this land attaining the crown by battle," observes Sir Thomas More, "so heartily beloved with the substance of the people; nor he himself so specially in any part of his life, as at the time of his death."—*More's Rycharde III.*, p. 2.

‡ More, p. 7.

§ *Cont. Hist. Croyland*, p. 557.

|| Ibid.

¶ "He was a good master, but an uncertain friend; which delivers him to us to have been, according to the nature of weak men, sooner persuaded by an obsequious flatterer than a free advice. We cannot judge him of any evil nature, only busy and inconstant, thinking it a circumstance of greatness to be still in action. He was too open breasted for the court, where suspicion looks through a man, and discovers his resolutions though in the dark, and locked up in secrecy. But, what was his ruin, he was, whether the House of York or Lancaster prevailed, still second to the crown; so that his eye, by looking too steadfastly on the beauty of it, became unlawfully enamoured."—*Halington's Life of King Edward IV.*, p. 195.

** Hume, chap. xxii. p. 241.

†† Ibid., p. 222.

‡‡ Ibid., p. 241.

§§ "His genius was enterprising, and his temper liberal."—*Paston Letters*, vol. i.

teous,* and in general deportment, mild, affable and companionable.† He is represented by his cotemporaries as pious and charitable;‡ noble,§ bountiful and munificent beyond his means;|| a high-spirited youth, whom all praised and applauded,¶ possessed of shining abilities,** stout in heart, and of great audacity.†† Unlike his brother of Clarence, he was close and secret‡‡ in his purposes; and he seems early to have learnt the wisdom of cautiously communicating his thoughts;§§ but he was peaceable in conduct,||| consistent in his actions, possessed of acute discernment,¶¶ and evinced solid judgment in his dealings with mankind.*** He appears to have been endowed with some peculiar fascination of voice or speech††† which subdued even his enemies,‡‡‡ and enabled him to penetrate the thoughts of others without unveiling his own.§§§ It is true that his policy was deep, and his ambition unrelenting;|||| nevertheless, he was considered by his associates to be without dissimulation, tractable without injury, merciful without cruelty;¶¶¶ and even his bitterest enemy, Cardinal Morton, speaks of his "good qualities being fixed on his memory."**** Bred from his youth to martial deeds, and by nature "a courageous and most daring prince,"†††† his temperament was better suited for war than for peace;‡‡‡‡ yet even his foes, though depicting him as "lowly in countenance and arrogant of heart,"§§§§ have borne testimony to the generous,||||| unsuspecting and noble feelings which generally characterized his youth;¶¶¶¶

* "Disposition affable and courteous."—*Buck's Richard III.*, lib. iii. p. 78.

† "At court, and in his general deportment, of an affable respect, and tractable clearness."—*Ibid.*, lib. v. p. 148.

‡ "Your bountiful and gracious charity." . . . "Your large and abundant alms."—Address from the University of Cambridge to Richard, Duke of Gloucester. *Baker's MS.*, xxvi. p. 6. See also *Rous*, p. 215, and *Polydore Virgil*, lib. xxv. Both these writers, although his avowed enemies, speak much in commendation of his pious and charitable institutions, many of which they enumerate.

§ "Although desire of rule did blind him, yet in his other actions, like a true Plantagenet, he was noble."—*Bacon's Henry VII.*, p. 55.

|| "Free was he of dyspence, [to spend or lay out money,] and somewhat above his power liberal."—*More's Rycharde III.*, p. 9.

¶ "A high-spirited youth, whom all were praising and applauding."—*Turner's Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 343.

** "Those good abilities, whereof he hath already right many, little needing my praise."—*Grafton*, p. 142.

†† "Such a great audacity, and such a stout stomach reigned in his body."—*Ibid.*, p. 232.

‡‡ "He was close and secret."—*More*, p. 9.

§§ "A deep dissimular, outwardly companionable when he inwardly hated."—*Ibid.*

||| "This prince, during his brother's reign, attempted to live on good terms with all parties."—*Hume*, chap. xxii. p. 247.

¶¶ "His wisdom appearing with his justice, in the good laws he made."—*Stow*, p. 882.

*** "Wherever he resided, he won the inhabitants."—*Hutton*, p. 83.

††† "There is to this the commendation of his eloquence and pleasing speech."—*Buck*, lib. v. p. 536. "Valour and eloquence met in his person."—*Ang. Spec.*, p. 536.

‡‡‡ "He went about to win unto him . . . all kind of men."—*More*, p. 124.

§§§ "Friend and foe was much what indifferent where his advantage grew."—*Ibid.*, p. 9.

|||| "A prince of deepest policy and unrelenting ambition."—*Hume*, chap. xxii. p. 241.

¶¶¶ *Grafton*, p. 152. **** *Ibid.*, p. 147.

†††† "A courageous and most daring prince."—*Cont. Croy.*, p. 574.

‡‡‡‡ "None evil captain was he in the war, as to which his disposition was more metely than for peace."—*More*, p. 9.

§§§§ *Ibid.*

||||| "With large gifts, he got him unsteadfast friendship."—*Ibid.*

¶¶¶¶ "A prince of military virtue approved jealous of the honour of the English nation."—*Bacon's Henry VII.*, p. 2.

whilst the evidence of his brother, Edward IV., in a public document still extant, affords proof beyond all refutation, of the probity, virtue and integrity which he felt to be deserving of public notice and of substantial reward.* That these virtues of his young age were matured in after years, and continued to influence his actions, is made known by a parliamentary roll,† in which "the great wit, prudence, justice, princely courage, memorable and laudable acts, in divers battles, which we by experience know ye heretofore have done for the salvation and defence of this same realme," attests the opinion entertained of his character and conduct, not merely by his lordly compeers, but by the great mass of the people who flourished in his time.

Such was Richard, Duke of Gloucester—such the much-execrated monster, long believed and long represented as deficient in every quality, except such as were revolting to humanity.

A perfect character he certainly was not; for perfection at any period is not to be looked for in frail and erring man, still less at the time he flourished, when the wildest and fiercest passions raged in the human heart: but it cannot be denied that he possessed many qualities worthy of esteem; and when tested with other prominent characters of his age, Richard of Gloucester will be found to appear in a far from unamiable light, and to have betrayed only those counterbalancing defects which war often with the noblest feelings, and too frequently bring down to the level of mankind in general, those who would otherwise be elevated far above them by their brilliant achievements and their many great and estimable qualities.

For the successful pursuit of the study of history, it is indispensable that the mind should be unshackled, free from prejudice and divested of narrow-minded views: to such as will prosecute their researches in such a spirit, to all who will cast away preconceived notions, it will be apparent that Richard Plantagenet was far better constituted to wield the sceptre than either of his more highly extolled brothers; and had his path to the throne been direct, there can be little doubt he would have shown in history as a mighty monarch, a prudent lawgiver and a wise and powerful ruler.

Early distinguished by his sovereign with every testimonial of fraternal confidence and love, he was associated in affairs of state, and established in a prominent and dangerous position at court, when little more than a boy in years. An impartial retrospect of his chief characteristics will easily explain how from childhood he acquired, and always continued to maintain, such influence over his royal brother; for King Edward had sufficient discernment to perceive in Richard "a leading capacity and a rising spirit,"‡ and, as justly observed by the biographer of this prince, "he wished to promote his own interest by encouraging both." And very speedily was Gloucester called upon to display the germs of those qualities which have been above enumerated, and which will hereafter be still further noticed. They have now been indiscriminately selected from various sources, embracing the testimony of his opponents as well as his advocates; for Richard lived in too troubled a period not to possess his full share of the former, especially as he entered upon the turmoil of political strife at a season when ominous clouds were beginning to lower with their heavy shadows upon the House of York,

* "The king especially, considering the gratuitous, laudable and honourable services in manywise rendered to him by his most dear brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, his innate probity and other deserts of manners and virtues, and willing, therefore, to provide him a competent reward," &c., bestows on him, by letters patent, a fitting remuneration for his fidelity and honourable conduct.—*Cott. MSS. Julius*, book xii. fol. iii.

† Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 240.

‡ Hutton's *Bosworth*, p. xxii.

and peace and prosperity were once more on the eve of being merged in discord, treachery and domestic feud.

To make this prince's situation at this critical juncture more clear, it will be desirable to take a brief retrospect of the state of the kingdom up to the period of his emancipation from boyhood; especially such portion as more immediately involves his after policy and faithful conduct towards his royal brother: for the great cause of misstatement, as connected with Gloucester's generally received history, has arisen from his being judged by events that took their rise during his childhood, without due consideration being bestowed on the actual agents in those disastrous scenes in which Richard neither was nor could be personally implicated, until long after the important results to which they eventually led had involved him in the common ruin which overwhelmed his family.

Never did monarch assume a crown under brighter prospects, never did the tide of royal fortune flow more propitiously than during the opening years of the reign of Edward IV. Noble, courageous and princely in his actions, the son of the popular Duke of York gained credit for inheriting the excellencies that had shown so pre-eminently in his father and which were believed to be united in his successor, with every quality that could fascinate and interest a bold and chivalrous people. His amiable and affectionate consideration for his kindred,* and his judicious proclamation of a general amnesty,† seemed at the outset of the career to prove the goodness of his heart; while the severity exercised towards such of the defeated Lancastrians as would not submit to his clemency, equally satisfied the stern resentment and the rancorous policy of the day.‡ By his valour and intrepidity peace was restored to the long-desolated realm; and by the splendour of his court, and the encouragement of pastimes and pageants natural to his youth and his temperament, kindly and more gentle feelings were by degrees excited among his subjects.§ He sat personally in the courts of law,|| and continually visited distant and different parts of the country, for the purpose of redressing grievances and administering justice.¶ Arts, commerce, agriculture and letters began to revive and flourish once more; and Edward of York, their patron and encourager, beloved and obeyed by all, in a brief period attained to the highest degree of popularity.

Prosperity, however, was less suited to exalt the character of this inconsiderate monarch, than were the harder lessons of adversity.** He soon became careless, indifferent and short-sighted, except in the pursuit of pleasure. He omitted to calculate on the fleeting tenure of public applause; and, ever guided by passion more than by prudence, unmindful of the fact that the crowned head can never be the independent actor of a less exalted sphere, King Edward, in an unguarded moment, subdued by the beauty and virtues of a Lancastrian widow pleading in all lowliness of heart forgiveness and favour for herself and her offspring, elevated, by a secret marriage, to the exalted dignity of Queen of England, the Lady Elizabeth Grey,†† and placed the regal circlet on the brow of one not only a subject, but the relict of an

* In addition to the honours and wealth with which King Edward so amply endowed his brothers, and the annuity which he immediately settled on the Lady Cecily, his widowed parent, he made a special provision for his young sister Margaret, then "of tender age and under her mother's care," by a grant of 400 marks yearly from the exchequer for her clothing and other expenses.—*Fœdera*, vol. xi. p. 540.

† W. Wyrcester, *Annales*, p. 500.

§ Habington's *Edw. IV.*, p. 228.

¶ Paston Letters, vol. iv. p. 59.

†† Hearne's *Fragment*, p. 292.

‡ Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 239.

|| Sandford, book v. p. 384.

** *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 59.

attainted rebel, and the consequent associate and ally of a faction still hated by his own devoted partisans.

It has generally been asserted that the Earl of Warwick was, at the precise time of this marriage, in France,* having been sent there by King Edward IV. expressly to treat for the hand of the Princess Bona, of Savoy,† sister to the Queen of France, and then resident with her at the French court. This, however, appears to be one of the many and most inexplicable errors of later historians;‡ it being disproved not only by the silence of the French chroniclers as regards any such embassy, but also by the positive contradiction of our own cotemporary writers,§ such contradiction being elicited from facts stated by them which are entirely opposed to it. One in particular, and he the most correct annalist of the time, mentions the efforts which were made by Warwick himself to induce his sovereign to select as queen-consort "the relict of the late King of Scotland,"|| which would at least seem to contradict the fact of that noble lord being employed as an accredited agent on a similar mission in France,¶ even were it not on record that he was not absent from England at the time the event occurred; for by reference to the "*Fœdera*,"** it will be seen that he was politically employed in London within a few days of the marriage, and also engaged on state affairs there immediately subsequent to it. Another proof of the groundless nature of this long perpetuated tradition is the testimony of the celebrated Isabella of Castille, who, many years afterwards, when proposing an alliance with this country, after she had become the wife of Ferdinand of Arragon, and when Richard III. was on the English throne, instructed her ambassador to say, "that King Edward IV. had made her the bitter enemy of himself and of this country, by his refusal of her, and taking to wife a widow woman of England."†† This assertion certainly gives ground for supposing that some negotiation may have pended between the Spanish and English courts; but the very circumstance of the refusal proceeding from King Edward, and the consequent offence taken by the Castilian princess, would seem to imply that the proposition originated from Spain, and not from any authorized overture being made either publicly or privately from the monarch himself.

Equally fallacious is the supposition that resentment at the reputed affront to the Lady Bona and to himself as the diplomatist engaged, was the cause of that fearful discord which now arose between King Edward and his all-powerful kinsman; although there can remain little doubt, if circumstances are dispassionately considered, that this ill-judged marriage was itself the source of Warwick's defection, and all its disastrous consequences. That he, in common with the nobles of the Yorkist party, felt indignant at so unseemly an alliance,‡‡ is probable; and also that, in his individual instance, that feeling was heightened by having two daughters co-heiresses to his enormous wealth, one of whom he may have considered, if a subject were

* Hall, p. 262.

† Sandford, book v. p. 384.

‡ Dr. Lingard considers the whole account as a fiction. See his most able investigation of this much disputed point.—*Hist. England*, vol. v. p. 190.

§ Hearne's *Fragment*, p. 292.

|| Cont. Croyland, p. 551.

¶ "Howbeit that some would affirm the Earl of Warwick should have been ambassador for him in Spain, to have Isabel, sister of Henry of Castille; the which affirming is not truth, for the Earl of Warwick was never in Spain, but continued all this season with his brother John, Marquis Montague, in the north, to withstand the coming in of King Harry VI."—*Hearne's Fragment*, p. 292.

** Tom. xi. pp. 424, 521.

†† Harl. MSS., No. 433. p. 225.

‡‡ Edward IV. was the first monarch of this realm who selected a subject to share the regal honours.

to be selected, better entitled by birth and consanguinity, and in reward of his own services, to be raised to the distinguished position of King Edward's queen, rather than the widow of that monarch's enemy and opponent.* But that no alleviation or offence at the match was outwardly evinced by him after its announcement, is manifested by this most conclusive fact; viz., that the Earl of Warwick, in conjunction with the king's brother, the Duke of Clarence, presented the queen to the populace at Reading, after she had there been approved as such "by the earl himself and all the prelates and great lords of the realm,"† and also because he stood sponsor‡ for their first-born child, the Princess Elizabeth of York.§ It was shortly after this last event that Warwick was appointed ambassador to France;|| and then it was that this proud chieftain became the tool of the wily Louis XI.; then it was that the most absolute and despotic noble that ever swayed the destinies of England,¶ and who possessed such astonishing power of moulding to his views the great and the gifted in his own land, was, in his turn, wholly subdued, though unknowingly and unsuspected by himself, and made the victim of one of the most crafty and unprincipled monarchs that ever sat on the throne of France. Had King Edward been endowed, like his younger brother, Richard of Gloucester, with the faculty of penetrating the workings of the human heart, he might, notwithstanding the discontent at his ill-judged union,** have maintained undisputed his popularity and peaceful rule by conciliation and judicious counsel during the absence of the despotic Earl of Warwick: but, jealous of the authority, and weary of the thralldom in which he was kept by those powerful feudatory lords who had helped to seat him on the throne of his ancestors, the monarch sought to neutralize the power of the ancient aristocracy of the realm through the means of a counteracting and newly-created nobility. Hence he raised to the highest dignities the relatives of the queen,†† and conferred on her connections those places of profit and emolument‡‡ which were greatly coveted by the impoverished gentry of his own party, and which, indeed, were justly due to them in requital of their faithful services: thus inducing universal discontent at an alliance which, though in itself impolitic, had been already pardoned,§§ and the ill-will arising from which would probably have been speedily forgotten, but for the irritating results it continually induced.¶¶ In corrobora-

* Elizabeth, the consort of King Edward IV., was the daughter of Sir Richard Wydeville, knight, and the widow of Sir John Grey, of Groby, slain fighting against that monarch at the battle of St. Alban.—*Sandford*, book v. p. 385.

† *Cont. Croy.*, p. 551.

‡ "In the fifth year of King Edward IV., the queen was delivered of a daughter, the which was christened 11th February, 1466; to whom was godfather the Earl of Warwick, and godmothers Cecily, Duchess of York, and Jacqueline, Duchess of Bedford, mother to king and queen."—*Hearne's Fragment*, p. 294.

§ Eventually espoused to King Henry VII.

|| *Hearne's Fragment*, p. 296.

¶ "Ever since the battle of Towton, Edward IV. had resigned the management of affairs to the wisdom and activity of the Nevilles."—*Lingard*, vol. v. p. 183.

** *W. Wyr.*, p. 506.

†† The elevation of Elizabeth was the elevation of her family. By the influence of the king, her five sisters were married to the young Duke of Buckingham, the Earl of Arundel, the Earl of Kent, the heir of the Earl of Essex, and the Lord Herbert. Her brother Anthony, to the daughter of the late Lord Seales, with whom he obtained the title and estate; her brother John, in his twentieth year, to Catharine the dowager, but opulent Duchess of Norfolk, aged eighty; and Sir Thomas Grey, her son by her former husband, to Anne, the king's niece, daughter and heiress to the Duke of Exeter.—*Lingard*, book v. p. 186.

‡‡ *Col. Rot. Parl.*, 312.

§§ *Chron. Croy.*, p. 542.

¶¶ To add to their discontent, the Lord Mountjoy, treasurer of England, was removed,

tion of this it will be sufficient to state, that though many disappointments and mortifications were experienced by the Earl of Warwick, especially the bestowing in marriage upon the son of the queen, by her first husband, the king's own niece, daughter of his eldest sister, the Duchess of Exeter, who had been long designed by the earl for his nephew,* and with whom, indeed, proposals of alliance were even then pending; yet his fidelity towards his acknowledged sovereign, and his peaceable demeanour towards the queen and her relatives, continued unbroken,† until, by their influence with the king, that monarch was induced to disregard the advice and remonstrance of his powerful kinsman, and to accept a treaty of marriage from Philip, Duke of Burgundy, for uniting his heir with the Lady Margaret Plantagenet, the sovereign's youngest sister. "This," says the Chronicler of Croyland, in his most valuable history,‡ "I consider to be the true cause of the dispute between the king and the earl," as the latter was at personal enmity with Prince Charles, of Burgundy, and wished, moreover, to promote an alliance between the House of York and the court of France, with whom, of late, he had been amicably connected, and was, in fact, secretly allied.§ When, in addition to his previous mortification at the king's ill-advised marriage, and that which immediately followed from his views being thwarted in regard to his nephew, owing to the marriage of the Lady Anne, of Exeter, with Sir Thomas Grey, was joined this sanctioned alliance of the Lady Margaret with a prince of Lancastrian lineage,|| who had warmly espoused the cause of that race,¶ and, also, the decided opposition evinced by Edward IV. towards an expressed desire of his brother George, Duke of Clarence, to unite himself with his cousin Isabel, the eldest of the daughters of the Earl of Warwick,** it may easily be supposed, that the proud irascible noble felt his power was at an end, and that his services were forgotten and most ungratefully requited by the kinsman whom he had chiefly aided to establish on the throne.

In justice, however, to King Edward, it cannot be denied that the advantage to England by the alliance of the Princess Margaret with Count Charles of Burgundy, son to one of the most influential potentates of the age,†† was apparent to all but the jealous earl and his party, who were either personally or politically opposed to connection in that quarter. The union was postponed for a brief period on account of the sudden demise of Philip, the reigning duke, during which a partial reconciliation was effected between Warwick and his sovereign;‡‡ but it had no effect on the projected alliance with Count Charolois, for on the 18th June, in the following year, 1468, all definitive arrangements being completed, the young princess, with every demonstration of pomp and rejoicing, was conveyed from the metropolis to Margate, on her way to Flanders, and, landing at Sluys, was united to the Prince of Burgundy on the 9th July, 1468.§§ This auspicious event occurred about two years after the public funeral of the Duke of York, in which ceremony of state, as has already been observed, Richard of Gloucester took so prominent a part. And on this occasion he is found associated with Clarence

to make place for the queen's father, who was created Earl Rivers; and soon afterwards, at the resignation of the Earl of Worcester, lord high constable of England.—*Lingard*, vol. v. p. 186.

* *W. Wyr.*, p. 507.

† "The earl's favour continued towards all the queen's relatives until this marriage was brought about by their means."—*Cont. Croy.*, p. 551.

‡ *Chron. Croy.*, p. 551.

§ *Lingard*, vol. v. p. 137.

** *Excerpt. Hist.*, p. 300.

¶ *W. Wyr.*, p. 512.

|| *Hearne's Frag.*, p. 227.

¶ *Excerpt. Hist.*, p. 223.

†† *Ibid.*, p. 227.

‡‡ *Paston Letters*, vol. ii. p. 3.