

It is much to be lamented that so little is known of the childhood of the youthful Earl of Salisbury, his son; or has been preserved of the Lady Anne, the wife of his choice: but the same absence of fact and of incident, the same dearth of material for biographical notice, will be found generally to prevail in the case of all the illustrious consorts of the eminent men who flourished at that period.

Of Isabel, wife of the Duke of Clarence, for example, little has been recorded beyond her marriage and her death. Of her parent, the Countess of Warwick,\* the richly endowed heiress of a noble race, and of her estimable kinswoman, the enduring and devoted wife of the faithful Oxford,† nothing more is known than the extent of their riches and the persecutions that their wealth entailed upon them. Even the queens consort of England, at that age of mystery and uncertainty, afford brief matter for biographical detail, and Cecily, Duchess of York,‡ the mother and grandmother of the princes of the entire dynasty so designated, and Margaret, Countess of Richmond,§ the ancestress of the next and every succeeding race of English monarchs up to the present day, afford only the outlines of a career so eminent for virtue, and so remarkable for vicissitude, that regret cannot but be felt at the brevity of those records which have nevertheless served to immortalize their names.¶

It is by no means surprising, then, that the wife of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, should share in the obscurity that has hitherto concealed even well-certified, though long hidden, testimonies of her husband's active life. Judging, however, from many circumstances which assimilate her career with that of her sister, the Duchess of Clarence, it appears probable that the Lady Anne suffered from the same ill health, and inherited the same fragile constitution that carried the Lady Isabel to an early grave.¶ There is also solid ground for the supposition that the young Earl of Salisbury, though usually represented as Richard's only legitimate child, was but the eldest and sole surviving son, and that the cares of an infant family engrossed the Lady Anne's attention, although they survived not to reward her maternal care and anxiety. The causes for this surmise are not based on conjecture, but are gathered from the wording of documents in which such a fact would not be implied without foundation. On the creation of the young Edward as Earl of Salisbury, the letters patent,\*\* and which yet exist, distinctly term him

\* Anne, Countess of Warwick, the mother of the royal Duchesses of Clarence and Gloucester, was, as has been before stated, the sole heir to the honours and inheritance of the Earls of Warwick, which title she carried into the family of Neville.

† Margaret, consort of John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, was daughter of the Earl of Salisbury, sister of Richard, Earl of Warwick, and aunt to the Duchesses of Clarence and Gloucester.—*Paston Letters*, vol. i. p. 94; vol. ii. p. 340.

‡ Cecily, Duchess of York, was the parent of Edward IV. and Richard III., and grandmother of Edward V. She was also the grandmother of Elizabeth of York, in whose person the Red and White Roses were united, arising from the marriage of this princess with Henry VII.

§ Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby, was the mother of King Henry VII., founder of the Tudor race, and grandmother to Margaret, consort of James IV. of Scotland; the ancestress of that branch of the race of Stuart, in whom the kingdoms of England and Scotland became united.—*Life of Mary Beaufort, Countess of Richmond*, by the Authoress.

¶ See Obligations of Literature to the Mothers of England, by the Authoress, pp. 55, 56.

¶ There is a remarkable coincidence in the death of the two sisters, both of whom appear to have died of decline; and their wasting away, and gradual decay, were in both instances attributed, but without foundation, to poison; and said to be accelerated by evil and supernatural influence.

\*\* Cal. Rot. Pat., p. 322.

"the eldest son of Richard, Duke of Gloucester." In the Harl. MSS.\* a very curious document is preserved, in which Richard himself styles the young prince "Edward, his first begotten son": and in a collection of ordinances which, at a later period of his life, he issued for the regulation of his household in the north, one of the leading items is this:—That "my Lord of Lincoln," his favourite nephew,† and "my Lord Morley," probably his son's preceptor, "be at one breakfast;" and "the children together at one breakfast." He also afterwards implies the high rank of the parties thus specified, by commanding that no livery exceeds his (Gloucester's) limitation, "but only to my lord and the children."

As relates to the immediate biography of the young Earl of Salisbury, a most interesting and curious document,§ preserved in the same MS. library,|| gives the only few brief memorials that have been transmitted to posterity relative to this young prince in his childhood. These are contained in a fragment connected with the household expenditure and the administration and economy of the Duke of Gloucester, at Middleham, during this and the following year, in which the details are so minute that even the colour of the young prince's dress is inserted, as also the price of a feather to be worn in his cap. One item commemorates the sudden death and burial of Lord Richard Bernall, his governor, who, it would seem, expired and was interred at Pomfret, recently after a journey from Middleham, a specified sum being inserted for "y<sup>e</sup> Lord Richard's costs from Middleham to Ponctfret," and another expenditure for "the Lord Richard's burial." Various entries connected with this nobleman show the entire association of the young prince with his tutor, and it also proves that Middleham was their fixed abode during Gloucester's active military career. The cost of the young Edward's primer and psalter, together with that of the black satin with which they were covered, is specified in this remarkable fragment, which also demonstrates the nature of the amusements in which the illustrious child was permitted to indulge. These latter items are particularly pleasing and altogether invaluable, as relates to the private history of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, from portraying the lenity of his domestic rule, evinced by the encouragement which he gave to the pastimes of the period, such as payment for a pack of hounds, the wages of a resident jester, the election of a king of rush-bearing, and a king, also, of Middleham, mummeries evidently connected with the district where he resided. Other items are still more important, from the proof they afford of Richard's attention to the comforts and rights of his personal attendants and those of his offspring.

These, together with the frequent and munificent alms-offerings of himself and his family to the religious houses in the vicinity of Middleham, attest his strict observance of the devotional ordinances of the period, and display, in a remarkable manner, the admirable regularity and perfect order which characterized his domestic establishment.

And it was fortunate for the honour of the kingdom and the tranquillity of the Yorkist dynasty, that the active habits of Gloucester were so singularly opposed to the supineness of King Edward, for his ancient enemy, Louis XI., was no indifferent spectator of a state of things which his tribute-money¶

\* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 242.

† Ibid., p. 269.

‡ John, Earl of Lincoln, was the son of Elizabeth, Duchess of Suffolk, the eldest surviving sister of King Edward IV. and Richard, Duke of Gloucester; Anne, Duchess of Exeter, her elder sister, having died in 1475, leaving an only child, a daughter, the ancestress of the present ancient and noble family of Manners, Earls of Rutland.

§ See Appendix MM.

|| Harl. MSS., 433, p. 118.

¶ Habington, p. 200.



had been chiefly instrumental in effecting, and the payment of which he meant only to continue, together with his seeming friendship with the English court, until such time as he considered it convenient to throw off the mask. The King of Scotland, equally subtle in his policy, but less scrupulous in preserving even an appearance of faith, openly showed his intention of annulling the alliance with England, which had been cemented by the betrothment of the heir of his crown with the Princess Cecily of York. Constant outrages were perpetrated by the Scotch borderers on the English frontiers, for which neither redress nor compensation could be obtained: and although the rich dowry promised with the English princess on her union with the Duke of Rothsay was regularly paid by instalments beforehand, as had been agreed at the time of the contract, still, year after year rolled on, and the articles of marriage were not fulfilled; neither was the money received by James, as the pledge of King Edward's sincerity, returned by the Scottish monarch as had been stipulated, in the event of the non-fulfilment of the marriage.

Accordingly, in 1478, the sums hitherto paid by this country were discontinued, but without producing the desired effect on the treacherous king; and the exasperation of Edward IV. at what he designated James's "meanness of conduct and breach of faith"\* being heightened by the artful representation of the Duke of Albany, King James's brother, who for his ambitious and rebellious conduct had been exiled from his native land, and now sought the assistance of England in restoring him to his country and his honours,† war was proclaimed against Scotland, and the command of the expedition intrusted to the Duke of Gloucester. "This prince," observes Habington, "had now no competitor in greatness both of judgment and power."‡ His royal brother, equally irascible as in youth, and furious at opposition to his views, was nevertheless so subdued by his inert habits, that all power of exertion seemed to be denied him; and notwithstanding the indignation felt and expressed against the Scottish sovereign, King Edward's love of ease prevailed over his revengeful spirit, and he was well content to leave to others that vengeance which he had determined to inflict. "Willing to decline labour," adds his biographer,§ "he waived the expedition, and Gloucester, ambitious to gain opinion, especially with the soldiers, most forwardly undertook it:" thus proving the truth of a previous quotation from this same author, "that the king desired to live to the best advantage of his pleasure; Gloucester, of his honour."

The successful result of this prince's mission formed, indeed, a marked contrast to the inglorious peace purchased by France, and displays, in a remarkable manner, the different sentiments which influenced the two brothers when called upon to assert either their own rights, or to uphold the honour of their country.

Both in England and Scotland the warlike preparations were on an extensive scale. King James resolved on heading his own troops, and the wording of the patent which conferred upon Richard the sole command of the English army, attests the confidence reposed in him by the king, as well as the popularity of the prince himself at this period of his career.

The letter recites, "that notwithstanding the truce which had lately been concluded with James, King of Scotland, he was again about to wage war; and that the king, not only on account of his consanguinity and fidelity, but also by reason of his approved prowess and other virtues, appointed his brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester, his lieutenant-general, during his own

\* Lingard, vol. v. p. 230.

† Habington, p. 223.

‡ *Fœdera*, vol. xii. p. 173.

§ *Ibid.*

absence, to oppose, if they [the Scotch] should enter the English territory."\* But the assembling an army which would be sufficiently powerful to invade Scotland, and compel King James to make restitution for his breach of faith, and restoration of the sums of money so unlawfully detained, occupied, of necessity, very considerable time; the expenses attending it, also, were enormous, and could only be met by the most severe and cruel exactions on the great mass of the people.† Gloucester, however, had secured the English frontiers from all hostile invasion by the efficient state to which he had brought the walls and fortresses on the border country‡ during his more peaceful career; the which, united to his watchfulness when waiting for the means of acting otherwise than on the merely defensive, kept the Scotch in awe, and secured the northern counties from any extensive pillage or spoil. All preliminaries being at length completed for invading Scotland, and a corresponding commission as lieutenant-general§ to that before granted, but with even additional powers, being conferred upon him, in June, 1482, the Duke of Gloucester laid siege to the town and castle of Berwick, justly termed the key of Scotland. He was accompanied by an army of nearly 23,000 men, and was supported by the most renowned English warriors of the period; while the attention displayed by the king towards supporting his brother's honour and dignity, as well as promoting his personal comfort, is evinced by the attendance of the king's treasurer, Sir John Elrington, knight,|| and other leading officers of the royal household; as also by his sending his own physician¶ to watch over his welfare and safety.

The Castle of Berwick, then the strongest fort in the north, was commanded by the valiant Earl of Borthwick, who made such determined resistance, that Gloucester speedily foresaw the length of time which it would take to subdue it; and having forced the town to capitulate and lodged a small but determined band within it, he resolved, with his accustomed energy, to penetrate instantly to the Scottish capital; so that, by surprising King James before time permitted him to be aware of his design, he might secure full indemnification for the insult offered to England and the contempt shown to her sovereign. Richard's able generalship being always tempered by judgment, and characterized by keen foresight, he seldom failed in his designs, however bold might be the spirit in which his measures were conceived: and the present case is a striking instance of his well-certified military sagacity. Leaving the Lord Stanley and 4000 men-at-arms to continue the siege, he entered Scotland with the main body of the English army; \*\* and, striking terror into the inhabitants in the line of his march by setting fire to such towns and villages as resisted his progress, he marched direct to Edinburgh, within the castle of which city the king had taken refuge, on hearing of the Duke of Gloucester's approach. To the honour of Richard, it must be recorded that he saved Edinburgh from

\* *Fœdera*, vol. xii. p. 115.

† King Edward devised the most despotic and novel measures for exacting sums of money from his subjects. At one time he sent his privy seal through England, to move men to give liberally to him.—*Baker's Chron.*, p. 216. At another time he gathered money upon penal statutes, levied severe contributions on the clergy, and heavily fined those who had omitted to fulfil their feudal tenures. But the most obnoxious levy, and that which bore heaviest on the whole country, was the exacting large sums by means of what was termed "a benevolence," (*Cont. Croy.*, pp. 563, 568,) which consisted of plate and money demanded from the people as a gift, or extorted from them on various pretences without legislative authority; by which his agents gathered vast sums to replenish the regal coffers at the expense of his impoverished subjects.

‡ Issue Roll of Exchequer, pp. 499, 501.

§ *Fœdera*, vol. xii. p. 168.

¶ See Appendix NN.

|| Issue Roll of Exchequer, p. 501.

\*\* Habington, p. 205.



pillage and destruction: "his entry was only a spectacle of glory, the people applauding the mercy of an enemy who presented them with a triumph, not a battle; and welcomed him as a prince who took arms not for pccy\* or malice, but for the safety of a neighbouring kingdom."†

The nobles of Scotland, alarmed at the imminent peril in which they were placed, and the desolation which threatened their country, increased as it was by their having as a body deserted their sovereign, who was deservedly unpopular with his subjects, sent to the Duke of Gloucester imploring a suspension of arms, and desiring to cement peace on any terms; offering him full restitution on every point, even to the immediate solemnization of the marriage between the Duke of Rothsay and his niece, the Princess Cecily. The reply of Gloucester, "that he came to right the honour of his country, often violated by the Scots," was worthy of him; and so also were the terms which he submitted to their consideration; viz., the restoration of the money paid by King Edward; the capitulation of the Castle of Berwick, so dear to the Scotch, not alone from its being a most ancient appurtenance to their crown, but from its constituting, as it were, the portal of their land; and the recall and restoration of the Duke of Albany to that princely position and to those honours and dignities of which he had been deprived by his brother. The honour of his niece Richard would not compromise by accepting an extorted consent to her union with the young Duke of Rothsay; the marriage, he said, must now be left to King Edward's future consideration: not so the refunding the sums paid for her dowry; that he stipulated for without delay, together with the above-named concessions, as the sole price of his relinquishing further hostilities.

No argument could weaken Gloucester's resolution: whereupon a day was appointed for the restitution of all money lent by King Edward;‡ a pledge given for reparation of all damage done the English by any inroad of the Scottish borderers; and Berwick was ceded to England, with a covenant, too, "by no act hereafter to labour the reduction of it."§

"Thus, having avenged the indignity shown to his niece, upheld the regality of his sovereign, defended his country from insult and wrong, and been the medium of effecting a reconciliation between the Duke of Albany and his misguided brother, Gloucester quitted Edinburgh in triumph; and with all increase of glory to the English name, (and by consequence to his own,) he returned to Berwick, which, according to the former agreement, had been yielded to the Lord Stanley."|| "Thence," continues Habington, "in all solemnity of greatness he came toward London, to yield an account of his prosperous enterprise; and to show how much more nobly he in this expedition against Scotland had managed the peace for the honour of the English nation, than his brother had in his undertaking against France; considering that in lieu of a little money which King Edward got from King Louis, he had taken the only place of strength whereby the Scots might with safety to themselves have endangered their neighbours, and brought them to what conditions he

\* Probably specie, an abbreviation of the old French word "espèce," money paid in tale; or, as has been surmised, a corruption of the ancient Latin term "pecuniosus," of or belonging to money.—*Bayley*, vol. i.

† Habington, p. 204.

‡ In the 12th volume of the *Fœdera*, p. 161, will be found inserted at full length the "obligation made by the provost, merchants and inhabitants of Edinburgh, 3d August, 1482," reciting that it had been agreed that a marriage should be solemnized between James, the eldest son of James III. of Scotland, and Cecily, second daughter of King Edward IV. of England; and binding themselves to repay such sums of money as had been advanced to the King of Scotland on that account.

§ Habington, p. 205.

|| *Ibid.*, p. 206.

appointed; forcing the king to immure himself, while the English, at liberty, spoiled the country, and possessed themselves of his capital city of Edinburgh."\*

Richard was welcomed by King Edward—as, indeed, he justly merited—with the warmest affection. Having received, with his compeers, the thanks of the Houses of Parliament,† the royal approbation was publicly given, and with great solemnity, to those wise and vigorous measures‡ which had ended in reducing Berwick and humbling the Scots. It is true that the English monarch deplored the immense cost which, at so great an outlay as 100,000*l.*,§ had secured but little positive advantage to England, severe as were her exactions from the Scotch; yet, satisfied with the energy of Gloucester's proceeding, and pleased with the ample revenge which he had taken on his faithless ally, he disguised his anxiety at the vast expense,|| and strove to appease the discontent of his impoverished subjects, by the most sumptuous entertainments and gorgeous festivities. These were not limited to the princes and peers of his luxurious court, or to the ancient lords of the realm, but were extended to the civic authorities of London; the lord mayor and aldermen being among the king's guests, while the good will of their consorts was secured by presents timely bestowed and exultingly received;¶ for, as laconically observed by Sir Thomas More, in allusion to this matter, "people oftentimes more esteeme and take for greater kindenesse a lyttle courtesye, then a greate benefyte."\*\* Thus Edward maintained his popularity in the metropolis, and preserved that place in the affections of the citizens which had so early been bestowed on the unreflective monarch from his gallant bearing, his graceful carriage, his frank, courteous and affable deportment.

Little time, however, was allowed for feasting and pageants, or for redeeming, by the blessings of peace and prosperity, the devastating effects of war. Louis XI. had been the secret agent in fomenting discord between England and Scotland; and now an unlooked-for event afforded him the means, so long desired, of casting off the English yoke, and ridding himself from the detestable tribute which necessity alone had induced him to pay. Mary, Duchess

\* Habington, p. 207.

† On the 18th February, (22d Ed. IV.) 1483, the Commons appeared before the king in full parliament, and "after recommendation first made of the very powerful prince, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and also of the Earl of Northumberland and Lord Stanley, and other barons and knights, for their noble gests, acts and services made and performed to the king in defence of the realm in the war lately waged in Scotland and the parts thereof," declared by their speaker that they had granted certain subsidies for the safety and defence of the realm.—*Rot. Parl.*, vol. vi. p. 197.

‡ The king, therefore, to show how much he approved the conditions of the peace, went solemnly in procession from St. Stephen's Chapel, accompanied with the queen and a mighty retinue of the greatest lords, into Westminster Hall, where, in presence of the Earl of Angus, the Lord Grey and Sir James Liddell, ambassadors extraordinary from Scotland, the peace was ratified.—*Habington*, p. 208.

§ *Cont. Croy.*, p. 563.

|| Some idea may be formed of the cost of this expedition by entries yet preserved in the "Issue Roll of the Exchequer" for that year; a few items extracted from which will be found inserted in Appendix OO.

¶ Fabyan, the city chronicler, gives two examples of this. In July, 1481, the king invited the mayor and part of the corporation to a hunt in Waltham Forest, and feasted them with a rich dinner and wine, in a bower of green boughs, and gave them plenty of venison at parting. The next month he sent two harts and six bucks to the wives of the mayor and aldermen, with a tun of wine to drink with them.—*Fabyan's Chron.*, p. 512. Hall remarks, that his courteous lowliness and familiarity were so great that they occasioned the suspicion that he was poisoned, (p. 341;) and Sir Thomas More says, that "hee was wyth hys people so benygne, courtesye, and so famyler, that no parte of hys vertues was more esteemed."—*More*, p. 4.

\*\* *More*, p. 5.



of Burgundy, died within four years of her marriage with the Archduke Maximilian of Austria, leaving two infant children, a son and a daughter. The prospect of annexing to France a portion of the rich provinces of Burgundy, by affiancing the dauphin to the orphan princess of that wealthy principality, was far more tempting to the French monarch than the empty honour that would have accrued to his heir by an alliance with the Princess Royal of England; and Louis was never over-scrupulous in the measures which he adopted for compassing his views. Faith and treaties he considered as mere political agents, never as the pledge of kingly honour; consequently, by his deep policy in this matter, he succeeded as heretofore in accomplishing his designs, and in overreaching those sovereigns whom he had blinded by his specious and plausible representations.

The infant Margaret was delivered to commissioners appointed by the French monarch; and King Edward had not merely to endure the mortification of seeing the annulment of his long-cherished views relative to the aggrandizement of his eldest daughter, her place being actually filled by another before he was fully aware of the perjury practised towards him, but the tribute-money, hitherto so punctually paid, and which had so long been his great support and dependence, and upheld his credit with his subjects,\* ceased to be paid at the same time.

The serious deprivation which this entailed, by reason of his extravagant habits, increased the bitterness of feeling with which he contemplated this fresh mortification, this repetition of the insult offered, but in a far more offensive degree, by Louis, to that which he had recently visited so severely on the weak-minded James of Scotland. It was in vain that King Edward recalled to mind how often he had been warned by the lords of his realm,† and by foreign allies, against the specious conduct of Louis; or that he now saw, in its fullest extent, the value of Gloucester's expostulation at Picquiny, and found how easily and completely he had been duped by his rival. Retrospection was useless. The evil consequences alone remained to excite his indignation, and rouse every vindictive passion of his nature. With the violence of temper which made this monarch yearn for vengeance at any cost, when exasperated, or thwarted in his ambitious views, no sooner was this breach of faith communicated to him than he resolved on being avenged, and humbling Louis fully as severely as he had the Scotch people and their dissembling ruler. Summoning the lords of his council, he made known his injuries, and represented to them his daughter's wrongs.‡ With the dauntless spirit of Englishmen, the leading nobility resented the affront offered to their young princess,§ and viewed it with an indignation fully as great as that felt by their sovereign. The whole court, nay, the whole kingdom, were loud in their call for war, and in requiring instant preparations to be made for the invasion of France. But prominent above all was the Duke of Gloucester, in his desire of upholding the dignity of the crown

\* "He hadde leste all gatherynge of money, which is the onlye thinge that withdraweth the heartes of Englyshmenne fro the prince; nor any thing intended he to take in hand by which he should be driven thereto, for his tribute out of France he had before obtained."—*More*, p. 4.

† Philip de Comines, vol. ii. p. 62.

‡ The extent of the French monarch's perfidy, and the nature of the injury inflicted on Edward IV., cannot be better manifested than by the simple fact, that after the treaty of Picquiny, which checked farther hostility between England and France, the Princess Royal of England, betrothed to the heir of the French throne, was immediately and ever afterwards recognized at the court of Louis XI. as "Madame le Dauphine."—*Sandford, Geneal. Hist.*, book v. p. 395.

§ Chron. Croy., p. 563.

and the honour of his house,\* "expressing aloud his desire that all his estate might be spent, and all his veins emptied, in revenge of this injury."

That he was sincere can scarcely be doubted, when his recent conduct is considered in Scotland, and attention bestowed on his former opposition to the time-serving policy of Louis: for in the one case he derived no personal or pecuniary benefit for the restitution he procured for England; and in the other he stood alone, and risked the king's displeasure, by his strenuous efforts to expose the selfish views of the French monarch.

The most extensive preparations throughout the country were made for commencing a war with France in the ensuing spring; and no other language was heard at the English court but indignation at the conduct of Louis, and determination to avenge his perfidy, by "regaining honour to the nation, and adding his kingdom to the crown."† The great feudal lords, retiring to their ancient halls, summoned their vassals and retainers; and all who held lands by military tenure hastened to assemble the archers and knights, by which they were bound to the service of their king; subsidies were voted by Parliament, considerable sums levied by the church, and the tocsin of war, as if by universal consent, sounded throughout the land.

But Louis, as if rendered invulnerable by some magic charm, was again saved from a renewal of those desolating wars which had ever enriched the English and impoverished the French nation; not, however, this time, by his own subtlety, or through the medium of his own intervention, but by one of those solemn decrees which prove the fallacy of human designs, through the uncertain tenure of human life.

King Edward, although in the prime of manhood, had prematurely accelerated old age by the luxurious habits in which he had indulged.

An illness, at first considered unimportant, soon began to assume an alarming appearance, and the monarch speedily felt that his dissolution was approaching. The period allotted him to prepare for the last solemn scene was very short, but this he appears to have devoted to those serious considerations which he had so long and so lamentably disregarded; and the few days that preceded the death of the recently vain-glorious, but now repentant sovereign, formed a marked contrast to his hitherto thoughtless career. His attention, from the commencement of danger, was exclusively devoted to those religious duties which he had so fearfully neglected, and to endeavouring to make reparation for the severe exactions with which he had grievously oppressed his subjects, to enrich the royal coffers and gratify his personal enjoyments. His disorder, an intermittent fever, produced by a surfeit,‡ but, no doubt, accelerated by agitation arising from the French monarch's perfidy and his own short-sightedness, terminated his life on the 9th of April, 1483, at his palace of Westminster, before there was sufficient time to summon the young Prince of Wales from Ludlow, where he was residing, or to enable Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who had returned to his military duties in the north, to attend on the death-bed of a brother whom he had ever so faithfully served, and to whom he was known to be warmly attached. Edward IV. expired in the 41st year of his age, and in the 21st of his reign;§ presenting one of the most deplorable instances that regal annals can furnish, of brilliant talents being sacrificed to trifling enjoyments, of the most warlike and daring temperament being reduced to almost effeminate weakness, and of one of the most popular, most enterprising, and most ardent monarchs that perhaps ever was elevated to a contested crown, dying the victim of mortified ambition, inflicted by a crafty ally, arising

\* Habington, p. 223.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ Chron. Croy., p. 564.



chiefly from his own shallow policy and those avaricious desires which were induced by licentious and intemperate habits.

Although schooled in adversity, and inured from infancy to the ferocity of civil warfare, Edward IV. was so devoted to the softer passion that it rendered him incapable of reflection and sound reason; whilst a vain confidence in himself and his advantageous position completed the evil which his inconsiderate conduct occasioned.

The glory of this monarch's character terminated, indeed, with those brilliant actions that had twice secured him the throne. The noble and princely qualities which gave such promise of future excellence on his accession, at the young age of eighteen, were lost in the selfishness, indolence and frivolity that marked his maturer years; while the lustre of his eventful reign, perhaps the most striking in English annals, was tarnished by the incapacity which he morally evinced to sway that sceptre which his invincible courage had obtained.

He left the duties of his exalted station to his young brother of Gloucester; and by thus prematurely and unwisely calling forth talents and ability for government that redounded so much to Richard's honour when pursued within bounds, laid the foundation of those ambitious projects, and fed that craving for sovereign power which was inherent in the House of York, which had entailed on their common ancestors\* an untimely end, which proved the destruction of Clarence, leading him to an early death by the hand of the executioner,† and which affixed on the royal Edward himself that stain which nothing can ever efface from his memory—the appalling crime of fratricide.

The founder of the Yorkist dynasty is, indeed, chiefly responsible for all the after miseries which befell his ill-fated descendants, and to the injudicious conduct of the first monarch of that royal line may be, in great measure, traced the cause and the consequence of those fearful crimes which exterminated alike both his race‡ and his dynasty. Had Edward IV. been a less accomplished and less affable prince, he might have been a better man and a more able sovereign; and had he fulfilled the high duties of his station, and not supinely abandoned himself to unworthy excesses, relinquishing the government, all but nominally, to his more right thinking and more nobly-disposed brother, then, in all probability, Richard, Duke of Gloucester,

\* Richard, Duke of Cambridge, the grandsire alike of Edward IV. and Richard III., was beheaded at Southampton, 6th August, 1415. Richard, Duke of York, their father, was beheaded on Wakefield Green, December 30, 1460.

† George, Duke of Clarence, was secretly executed in the Tower, by command of his brother, Edward IV., 18th February, 1478.

‡ By his queen, Elizabeth Woodville, King Edward had a numerous progeny, of whom two sons and five daughters alone survived their father, the remainder dying in childhood, viz.:—

1. Edward, Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward V., born November 4, 1470.
2. Richard, Duke of York, born 28th May, 1474.
3. George, Duke of Bedford, died an infant.
4. Elizabeth, Princess Royal, born 11th February, 1466, betrothed to the Dauphin of France, but eventually married to King Henry VII.
5. Cecily, affianced to James, Prince of Scotland, but afterwards married first to the Lord Viscount Welles, secondly to a person named Kyme, in Lincolnshire.
6. Anne, espoused Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk.
7. Mary, betrothed to the King of Denmark, but died in childhood.
8. Margaret, born 1472, died in her infancy.
9. Katherine, married to William Courtney, Earl of Devon.
10. Bridget, youngest child, born 1480, became a nun at Dartford.—*Sandford's Gen. Hist.*, book v. p. 393.

would have been commemorated, like the "good Duke Humphrey,"\* his predecessor in the title and his counterpart in position, as a prince of peculiarly vigorous mind, sound judgment and enlarged views; an able general, a profound politician, a dutiful subject and a just and upright man.

\* Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, youngest brother of King Henry V., was, "for his virtuous endowments, surnamed *the Good*; and for his justice, *Father of his Country*." In the first year of King Henry VI., his nephew, he was by Parliament made protector of England during the king's minority; but "by the envy of Margaret of Anjou, his nephew's queen," he was murdered at Bury St. Edmund's, A.D. 1446.—*Sandford's Gen. Hist.*, book iv. p. 308. Richard, Duke of Gloucester, youngest brother of the succeeding monarch, Edward IV., was the next prince who bore that ill-omened title; and, as narrated by the annalist of that period, in the first year of the reign of King Edward V., his nephew, "he received the same power as was conferred on Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, during the minority of Henry VI. with the title of Protector."—*Chron. Croy.*, p. 566.