

prudent administration, it will be seen how great injustice has been done to Richard III. as king, whatever difference of opinion may prevail as regards his character as a man. Perhaps no monarch who ever ascended the throne of these realms was so competent to exercise the royal prerogative; and it is doubtful if the archives of this country could produce a corresponding instance of activity, zeal and devotion to the cares of government, in so brief a space of time, and under such trying and difficult circumstances.

So clear and explicit are the entries, that they form a complete diary of Richard's proceedings from his accession to his death, there being scarcely a day in which some notification may not be adduced to show where he was sojourning, and what great event occupied prominently either his time or his attention.* Conjecture, then, may henceforth be discarded as regards the regal career of Richard III.; and as wonder is excited at the energy and activity of mind and body so astonishingly developed therein, regret must equally be felt that any informality should have marked the elevation of a monarch whose intelligence and political wisdom were far in advance of the times in which he lived.

King Richard's first act, after creating the usual number of knights of the Bath customary at a coronation, was immediately to assemble and dismiss to their homes the lords spiritual and temporal,† and the barons and knights of the shires, with a strict charge, as magistrates and men in authority, to exercise their power in maintaining tranquillity and punishing the lawless in their several districts, appointing commissioners of array "for the security and defence of the king and of his realm, and for the conservation of the peace."§ He likewise assembled the judges, and in an eloquent address, enjoined them to a firm and impartial administration of justice within their jurisdiction and upon their circuits. He communicated to them his resolution of proceeding forthwith to the north "to pacify that country, and to redress certain riots there lately done;"|| and in this, his intended progress through the kingdom, intimated his determination of personally examining into the wants of his subjects, exacting a reformation of abuses, and suppressing with severity all insubordination or disregard of the laws. The 4000 men whom he had summoned from York when the metropolis was in so disordered a state "that Richard dared not to trust the Londoners for fear of the queen's blood,"¶ and whom he afterwards retained to swell the pageant of his coronation, he countermanded home "shortly after that solemnity, with sufficient rewards for their travail."**

On the 9th of July (three days after he was anointed king) Richard, by letters patent, appointed the "right high and mighty prince Edward,†† his first-begotten son," to be lieutenant of Ireland,‡‡ dispatching a special mes-

* So numerous are these documents, that even a partial selection would fill a volume of considerable size; for the most important entries are inserted at full length, and the substance is given of all the rest. The last possessor of this invaluable manuscript, was the antiquary and historian, John Strype, and it appears to be the same MS. (observes Mr. Sharon Turner) which is a few times quoted in the annotations appended to Bishop Kennett's Collection of English Monarchs, under the name of "King Richard's Diary," and signed "J. S."—*Middle Ages*, preface to vol. iii. p. 21.

† Harl. MSS., No. 293, p. 208.

‡ Buck, lib. i. p. 27.

§ Fabyan, fol. 154.

** Fabyan, fol. 154.

†† The wording of this entry sufficiently refutes the assertion of some few historians that King Richard created his son "Prince of Wales" upon his coronation at Westminster, the 6th day of July.

§ Rymer's Add. MSS., 4616, art. 26.

¶ Drake's Eborac., p. 115.

‡‡ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 242.

senger to that portion of his dominions to show that "the king, after the establishing of this his realm of England, principally afore other things, intendeth for the weal of this land of Ireland,"* and appointing Gerald, Earl of Kildare, "the young prince's deputy."† His sense of justice in the liquidation of debts duly incurred is strikingly evinced in the next instrument which passed the royal signet, letters patent, bearing date the 18th of July anno 1^{mo} Richard III., being issued "for the payment of 52*l.* and 20*d.*, resting due to divers persons for their services done to his dearest brother, the late king, and to Edward bastard, late called Edward V."‡

Having arranged all matters of import within the metropolis calculated to give confidence to the citizens and promote the peaceable disposition evinced by the populace, King Richard, with his queen, quitted London for Greenwich and Windsor, at which royal demesnes he sojourned a brief period to arrange the ceremonial of his progress through the kingdom, and to requite the services of those trusty friends whose zeal had been the means of elevating him to the throne. To the Duke of Buckingham, the most devoted of his partisans, and whom he styles "his right trusty and entirely beloved cousin," he awarded all the manors, lordships and lands of Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford,§ which Edward IV. had unjustly appropriated to himself,|| concluding the letters patent which conveyed to him this munificent recompense for his zeal, and which are dated "at Greenwich, the 13th day of July, in the first year of our reign," by the following testimonial, that it was given for "the true, faithful and laudable service which our said cousin hath, in many sundry wise, done to us, to our right singular will and pleasure."¶ His gratitude to this nobleman is, indeed, abundantly displayed. Besides receiving many valuable donations, as "a special gift" from the king, very speedily after the coronation ceremony, he was successively created constable of England for life,** confirmed in his former appointments of chief justice and chamberlain of North and South Wales,†† made steward of many valuable crown manors, and appointed governor of the royal castles in Wales.‡‡ The Duke of Norfolk was nominated admiral of England, Ireland and Aquitaine for life.§§ The Earls of Surrey and Lincoln, the Lords Lovell and Nevil, Bishop Stillington, Sir James Tyrrel, Sir Thomas Ratcliffe, Brackenbury, Catesby, Kendall and innumerable other followers and friends, were all distinguished by some manifestation of their sovereign's especial favour or regard.¶¶ No individual, indeed, appears to have been overlooked

* On the 18th of July King Richard gave evidence of his sincerity in this declaration, by reforming and raising the value of the Irish coinage, in which, it appears by his official declaration, great abuses had prevailed, both as regards deficiency in weight, and mixture of alloy with the silver bullion at the Irish mint. To guard against repetition of this evil, he commanded that the new silver coinage should bear "on one side the arms of England, and on the other three crowns."—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 233.

† *Ibid.*, 433, fol. 243.

‡ *Ibid.*, 433, fol. 104.

§ Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, at his decease left two daughters, co-heirs to his enormous wealth; the one espoused King Henry IV., the other the progenitor of the Duke of Buckingham. On the death of Henry VI., the posterity of the eldest sister became extinct, and Buckingham, as the lineal descendant of the youngest co-heir, claimed the property formerly divided between them. It was, however, refused to the Duke by King Edward IV., who took possession of the lands; and it has also been asserted that King Richard was equally unmindful of Buckingham's just claim; but the entry in the *Harl. MSS.*, (433, fol. 107,) and the testimony of Dugdale, (vol. i. p. 168,) afford satisfactory proof to the contrary.

|| Dugdale's Bar., vol. i. p. 168.

** Rymer's Add. MSS., 4616, art. 23.

†† Rymer's Add. MSS., 4616, art. 6.

‡‡ See *Harl. MSS.*, No. 433.

¶ *Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 107.

¶¶ *Ibid.*, art. 6.

§§ *Ibid.*

who had either served him long or faithfully. Yet, in the midst of all this pressure of business, and the important avocations of state, necessarily attendant on the commencement of a new reign, Richard did not neglect his domestic duties, but, with his characteristic foresight and vigilance, gave a due portion of time and thought towards regulating his establishment at Middleham, and providing for the rule and management of his son's household there, deprived as the young prince must necessarily henceforth be of the constant residence of one parent, and the active superintendence of the other. "This is the ordinance made by the king's good grace," states the ancient and curious MS. which has thus perpetuated Richard's attention to the well-being of his family at his favourite Middleham, "for such number of persons as shall be in the north as the king's household, and to begin the 24th day of July."* An attentive observance to the hours of God's service is the first thing enjoined, after which the utmost care is given towards providing for the just and equitable government of the whole establishment, and to the forming of such rules as could contribute to the welfare even of the humblest retainer. The expenses of the household were to be examined, and paid monthly: and this ordinance, so remarkable as affording evidence of Richard's sound principles of order and justice, concludes with these remarkable words—"that convenient fare be ordained for the household servants, and strangers to fare better than others."†

The young Lord of Lincoln, Richard's favourite nephew, appears to have been nominated by this monarch to the lucrative office of governor of his household and ruler of his extensive demesnes in the north; the above quoted fragment, containing not only various items providing for the comfort of the earl and the support of his exalted rank, but also the following decree, "that the costs of my Lord of Lincoln, when he rideth to sessions or any meetings appointed by the council," are to be paid by the treasurer, but that at all ridings, huntings and disports, "my said lord to be at his own costs and charges." Who, or what is meant by "the children," so especially named in this interesting document, or what is to be understood by so vague a term, is, as has been before noticed, a mystery that justifies many conjectures, but is altogether difficult of any satisfactory solution. That the young Earl of Salisbury was one of these adults admits not of doubt, for, in King Richard's household book of costs at Middleham, the expenses of the lord prince at this abode, and at that particular period, are distinctly and minutely detailed,‡ not only prior to the framing of the above-named ordinance, but for many weeks after it was acted upon. Possibly the Lady Katharine Plantagenet, betrothed in "her young age"§ to William Herbert, Earl of Huntingdon, and the Lord John Plantagenet, both illegitimate by birth, but acknowledged as his children by Richard,|| may have been resident at Middleham, and early associated with the Earl of Salisbury. Nevertheless, coupling the term "children" with the king's remarkable expression in the letters patent, issued within a few days of this domestic arrangement, "Edward his first begotten son," it justifies the surmise, as has been before argued, that the Earl of Salisbury was not the sole child of Richard and the Lady Anne, although the monarch's illegitimate offspring may probably have been included among the youthful members so distinctly specified in the household regulations of Middleham.

All preliminaries, public and private, being arranged, King Richard, on the 23d of July, 1483, commenced his royal progress, quitting Windsor for

* See Appendix ZZ.

† Harl. MSS., 433, p. 269.

‡ Ibid., p. 118.

§ Banks, Dormant and Extinct Baronage, vol. ii. p. 273.

|| Harl. MSS., No. 258, fol. 11; and No. 433, fol. 211.

Reading; his stay in which town was marked by an act of liberality that is greatly at variance with the heartless spirit so universally imputed to him. He granted to Katharine, Lady Hastings, his full and entire pardon* for the offences of her recently-executed lord, released the title and estates from attainder and forfeiture, confirming her son and the rest of her children in all their possessions and just rights, and promising "to protect and defend the widow and to suffer none to do her wrong."† Thence he passed on to Oxford, and at the entrance of that city was welcomed with great reverence by the chancellor and heads of the university, where, "after they had expressed their love and duty to him, he was honourably and processionally received in Magdalen College‡ by the founder, Bishop Waynflete, the president and scholars thereof, and lodged there that night."§ The king was accompanied by the Bishops of Durham, Worcester, St. Asaph and St. David's, the Earls of Lincoln and Surrey, the Lords Lovell, Stanley, Audley, Beauchamp, and many other knights and nobles.¶

The reception given to Richard, at Oxford, as little implies hatred or unpopularity, as does the public support afforded to him by the bishops, on this and other occasions, favour the tradition of his reputed crimes. He was welcomed with loyalty, respect and affection. Every honour that could be paid to him by the university was abundantly shown;¶ and this monarch's visit to the university is perpetuated by its famed antiquary, Anthony Wood,** as one of the most interesting and memorable scenes connected with the early history of this seat of learning. The day after his arrival, solemn disputations on moral philosophy and divinity were held in the hall, by command and at the desire of the king; when the disputants, one of whom was that celebrated reviver of learning, Grocyn, "the friend and patron of Erasmus,"†† were honourably rewarded. On the ensuing day, King Richard, with his noble retinue, visited several of the colleges, and heard disputations also in the public schools, "scattering his benevolence very liberally to all that he heard dispute or make orations to him;"‡‡ and in conformity with a promise made to the scholars at his reception, he confirmed the privileges of the university granted by his predecessors. He was equally mindful, also, of the town of Oxford, for which he showed his love by releasing it from the usual crown fee due to each sovereign at his accession. Richard III. was, indeed, a great benefactor to both the universities; for although Cambridge, so often distinguished by his bounty, came not at this time within the royal progress, yet it did not escape his attention. In addition to other marks of royal favour to that seminary of learning, he endowed Queen's College, the foundation of which, begun by the unfortunate Margaret of Anjou, had been completed by the widowed§§ queen of Edward IV.,||| with 500 marks per annum; and for the benefit of both Oxford and Cambridge, he caused an act to be made, that

* Dated at Reading, 23d July, anno 1 Richard III.

† Harl. MSS., 433, p. 108.

‡ Magdalen College is required by its statutes to entertain the kings of England and their eldest sons, whenever they come to Oxford.—*Chalmers' Hist. of Oxford*, p. 211.

§ Gutch's Hist. of Oxford, p. 638.

|| Ibid.

¶ See Appendix AAA.

** Wood's Hist. and Antiq. of Oxon., vol. i. p. 233.

†† Gutch, p. 638.

‡‡ Ibid., p. 639.

§§ Ibid.

||| Elizabeth Woodville, consort of Edward IV., obtained his license, in the sixth year of his reign, to complete the foundation of Queen's College, Cambridge, begun by her predecessor, Margaret of Anjou, but left incomplete, owing to her exile and the deposition of Henry VI.—*Sandford*, book iii. p. 385.

strangers might bring printed books into England, and sell them by retail,—a matter of great importance to these seminaries of learning in the infancy of printing.* But although most histories that treat of the eventful times in which this sovereign lived are abundantly filled with accounts of his misdeeds and his alleged depravity, how few notice the undeniable evidence of his bounty, his patronage of literature, and the high estimation in which he was evidently held by the learned and the good!† Yet the golden opinions which he reaped during his stay at Oxford, are registered in the college archives, and would seem to have universally prevailed;—such, at least, is a fair inference from the glowing description which records his visit, and thus describes its termination:—“So that after the Muses had crowned his brows with sacred wreaths for his entertainment, he, the same day, went to Woodstock; the university then taking leave of him with all submission.”

The act which certifies this monarch's sojourn at Woodstock, fully proved the honesty of the resolution he expressed to the judges, of personally examining into the wants of his subjects, and redressing their grievances. The inhabitants presented to him a petition, setting forth that his brother King Edward had, unjustly and “against conscience, annexed and incorporated to the forest of Wichwood,—and placed it under forest law,—a great circuit of country,”‡ to the serious injury of the dwellers in those parts. Richard not only received their appeal most graciously, but, after due inquiry into the merits of the case, he disafforested the tract of land, together with “other vast woods adjacent,”§ confirming the restitution to the inhabitants by charter.||

At Gloucester, to which place the royal progress was next directed, he was received with the utmost loyalty and affection. This city, whence Richard derived his youthful title of duke, had remained firm to King Edward and himself amidst all their reverses of fortune. “When Queen Margaret besieged the city of Gloucester with the king's power, the citizens stood at defiance with her army, and told her it was the Duke of Gloucester, his town, who was with the king, and for the king, and for him they would hold it.”¶

Richard never forgot a kindness. True, indeed, as asserted by his bitter enemy, Sir Thomas More, with “large gifts he got him unsteadfast friendship,”** but his grateful remembrance of former benefits, his justice, and his

* Gutch, 639.

† The piety, erudition and eminent virtues of Waynfleet, Bishop of Winchester, the founder of Magdalen College, where the king lodged, and who went there expressly to receive the monarch, and to superintend in person the arrangements that were to welcome the illustrious visitor, are attested equally by his own biographers, as by the historians of Oxford and Winchester. So high was the reputation of this exemplary ecclesiastic, that King Henry VI. solicited him to superintend the progress, constitution and discipline of Eton College, of which he appointed him provost in 1443; and on the death of Cardinal Beaufort, in 1447, the king advanced him to the see of Winchester, honouring with his presence the ceremony of Waynfleet's enthronement. He was selected to baptize the monarch's princely son, and in the year 1456 he was appointed by him lord high chancellor, which office he resigned on the deposition of his royal patron and benefactor. Nevertheless, Waynfleet was treated by Edward IV. with marked attention, and on his founding Magdalen College, this monarch condescended to visit it, unasked, and simply from respect to his high character and talents.

This eminent prelate, having received three crowned heads as visitors in his college, viz., Henry VI., Edward IV. and Richard III., lived to see the union of the Houses of York and Lancaster, by the marriage of Henry VII. with the Princess Elizabeth, and to be twice honoured with the company of their eldest son, Arthur, Prince of Wales.—*Chalmers' Oxford*, vol. i. pp. 191—193.

‡ Rous, p. 216.

§ Lingard, vol. vi. p. 349.

¶ Buck, lib. iii. p. 83; also Fleetwood, Chron., p. 26.

§ Buck, lib. v. p. 138.

** More, p. 9.

munificence, even in this royal progress alone, exemplify, in a striking degree, the additional evidence of this historian, that “he was free of dyspence,” and “above his power liberal.” The city of Gloucester was most abundantly rewarded for the love that the citizens had borne him. He granted them many exemptions and immunities,* appointed a mayor and sheriffs,† and, after annexing “two adjoining hundreds, made it a county of itself, calling it the county of the city of Gloucester.”‡ Tewkesbury, the scene of his early military renown, was the next station on his progress. He reached it on the 4th of August, and after visiting the abbot, and bestowing large sums on the abbey,§ he passed on with his noble train to Worcester, the bishop of which diocese had attended Richard to Oxford,|| and had accompanied him throughout his tour. This prelate, it will be remembered, was one of the executors¶ of Edward IV., and preceptor and president of the council** to the deposed Edward V., and had been arrested and imprisoned as such by the lord protector at Stoney Stratford; yet is he chronicled as one of the four bishops who, by their presence, imparted sanctity and added dignity to the new king's progress through his dominions. Such support seems wholly incomprehensible, if Richard were the monster of depravity usually represented; the more so, as Dr. Alcock, the Bishop of Worcester, was highly celebrated in his day for his virtues, his learning and his piety. Still more irreconcilable with the odious character so long affixed to this king is the popularity which greeted him wherever he sojourned. The city of Worcester, following the example set by the commonalties of London and Gloucester, tendered him “a benevolence,”†† or sum of money to defray his expenses. Richard, however, was too wise a legislator not to perceive the evil of a tax which pressed so heavily on the industrious portion of his subjects; he, therefore, thanked them for their liberality, but, in each case, declined the money offered, stating that he “would rather possess their hearts than their wealth.”‡‡ Surely, incidents of this kind disprove, infinitely beyond the most laboured arguments, the calumnies of a later age, and imputations based only on oral conjecture, originating in political rancour, and propagated by angry opponents and prejudiced writers. “Every one that is acquainted with English history,” observes Drake, who rescued from obscurity so many original documents connected with Richard III., “must know that there is hardly any part of it so dark as the short reign of this king: the Lancastrian party which destroyed and succeeded him took care to suppress his virtues, and to paint his vices in the most glaring colours.”§§

From Worcester the monarch proceeded to the city of Warwick, the birth-place of his royal consort. Here he was joined by the queen, who came direct for the purpose from Windsor with a numerous retinue; and in this place he delayed his progress for a brief space, to hold a court, which was characterized by every demonstration of regal pomp and splendour,

* Buck, lib. i. p. 28.

† Lingard, vol. vi. p. 349.

§ Harl. MSS., No. 433, p. 110.

¶ See Royal Wills, p. 347.

‡‡ The severe imposition called “benevolence”—a despotic mode of raising money, by exacting large sums as voluntary gifts from the great body of the people—was devised by King Edward IV., and abolished by Richard III.—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 980, art. 23.

‡‡ Rous, p. 215.

§§ See Drake's “Eboracum,” or History and Antiquities of York, p. 118,—a work of great research, containing literal copies of all King Richard's letters and proclamations sent to the mayor and citizens of York, together with the daily orders in council about the state of affairs to this king's death, extracted from the city registers.

there being present most of the great officers of the crown, the Chief Justice of England, the Duke of Albany, brother to the Scottish king, Edward, the youthful Earl of Warwick, and a numerous assemblage of bishops, earls, barons, and "other lords and illustrious ladies in like manner with the queen."* During the king's sojourn at Warwick Castle,—an abode well fitted for the ceremonial of such recognition,—ambassadors met him from the courts of Spain, France and Burgundy, to deliver their letters of credence† from their sovereigns, acknowledging his title, and paying him that homage which could alone render the royal diadem valuable in his eyes. And in this princely dwelling of his child's grandsire, the mighty Warwick, who raised and dethroned kings "at pleasure,"‡ he received the highest honours which could be conferred on him by foreign potentates; a proposal being made by the Spanish ambassador for a marriage between the king's only son, Edward, Earl of Salisbury, and the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella,§ the most powerful sovereigns of Europe. The same envoy, whose mission was so flattering to Richard's pride and ambition, also publicly made known to the English nobility the affront which had formerly been offered to the illustrious Isabella|| by Edward IV. "in refusing her, and taking to his wife a widow of England"¶—a communication invaluable to the new monarch, at this particular crisis, from its lessening the dignity of Elizabeth Wydville, so scornfully designated by Granfidus de Sasiola, "a widow of England!" and strengthening the recently admitted follies and unkingly proceedings of the deceased monarch.

At the expiration of a week,** accompanied by his queen, the ambassadors, and a considerable addition to his retinue, King Richard quitted Warwick Castle for Coventry, the city where, in childhood, he had been delivered with his mother a prisoner into the hands of Henry VI., and where his father was attainted, his brothers outlawed, and the aspiring hopes of his proud race apparently crushed for ever. Now he entered it monarch of the realm, and with every accessory which could dignify the ruler of a great and powerful kingdom. The precise date of his stay here is made known by his signing, on the 15th August at Coventry, an order for payment for articles furnished to "Queen Anne, the king's consort,"†† preparatory to her regal progress.

Richard next proceeded to Leicester, where some symptoms of disaffection appear to have reached his ears; for, on the 17th August, he issued a mandate

* Rous, p. 216.

† These letters are preserved in the Harl. MSS., together with King Richard's replies to them. They are thus entitled:—

"Letter of Credence of Isabella, Queen of Spain, to the king, dated 6th June, A. D. 1483," written in Spanish and in English.—No. 433, fol. 236.

"Letter of Louis XI., the French king, to Richard III., thanking him for the news of his accession to the crown."—It is written in French, signed Loys, and dated 31st July.—*Ibid.*

"Letter of Philip of Austria, Duke of Burgundy, &c., to King Richard III.," in French, dated at Gand, 30th July, 1483.—*Ibid.*

The letter of the Spanish queen being dated before the deposition of Edward V., it would seem that the Spanish government mistook Richard's elevation to the protectorate for his elevation to the throne. It was undoubtedly delivered to this monarch by the ambassador in person, and was evidently designed for him, not only from the proposal for his son's marriage with which the envoy was charged, but also from the nature of the verbal relations which Queen Isabella informs Richard she has empowered "her orator to show his majesty."

‡ "He made kings and put down kings, almost at pleasure, and not impossible to have attained it himself, if he had not reckoned it a greater thing to make a king than to be a king."—*More*, p. 98.

§ Rous, p. 216.

¶ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 235.

** Rous, p. 216.

|| Appendix BBB.

†† Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 109.

in that town, commanding "2000 Welsh bills or glaives" to be made for him in all haste, and authorizing one of the officers of his household "to impress as many smiths" as were requisite for the completion of the order.* Official documents were also dispatched from the same city to "seventy knights and esquires of Yorkshire, and the neighbouring counties,† commanding them to await his coming at the Castle of Pontefract by a given day:‡ and, previous to his departure, he wrote a letter in French to the Duke of Burgundy, dated "at the Castle of Leicester, 18th of August, 1483."§

At Nottingham, which town King Richard entered on the 19th instant, the first indications were given of his contemplating a second coronation; a letter being addressed by his private secretary, John Kendall, to the mayor, recorder, aldermen and sheriffs of York, announcing his approach to that city, and enjoining them to "receive his highness and the queen at their coming, as laudably as their wisdom can imagine;" Kendall advising that the streets through which the king's grace shall pass should be hung "with cloth of arras, tapestry-work, and other; for that there come many southern lords, and men of worship with them, which will mark greatly your receiving their graces."|| Proclamations were also issued, commanding the attendance at York of the surrounding nobility and gentry, that they might be awaiting the monarch's arrival to take the oath of allegiance, and to greet the prince who had so long dwelt among them; and from this time the most active preparations appear to have been made by Richard III. for renewing, in the northern metropolis, the gorgeous scene which had marked his enthronement at Westminster. Whether this repetition was induced by a desire of displaying to the foreign ambassadors the unanimity with which his accession was hailed, or whether the proposed alliance with Spain made Richard regret the absence of his princely son Edward, the youthful Earl of Salisbury, on the former occasion, and resolve on making his title to the throne not only evident to Granfidus de Sasiola, the proud "orator of Spain," but a prominent part of the ceremony, by associating him publicly in the procession, and by his subsequent investiture with the principality of Wales, must remain matter of conjecture. There is, however, ground for this latter surmise; for, independent of the remarkable expression in Kendall's letter, "the men of worship, which will mark greatly your receiving their graces," the young Earl of Salisbury, who has before been noticed as absent from London at his parent's coronation on the 6th of July, is known to have remained uninterruptedly at Middleham from the time of his father's accession until the 22d of August following, the very day that the notification was sent to York relative to the king's contemplated renewal of his installation.

This fact is clearly established by reference to the household book before named,¶ entries for my lord prince's expenses with his attendants being there charged from Midsummer-day, June 21st, to the 2d day of August; and again, from that date to the 22d of the same month, when the Earl of Salisbury evidently quitted Middleham to join his royal parents at Pontefract, preparatory to their triumphal entry into York. The cost of "my lord prince's" household on his journey thither are distinctly and minutely specified.**

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 110.

† *Ibid.*, fol. 111.

‡ "Trusty and well beloved" . . . "For certain causes and considerations us moving, such as shall be showed unto you at your coming, we command you to give your attendance upon us upon our coming unto our Castle of Pomfret, which, by God's grace, shall be the 26th day of the present month of August. Given at Leicester the 18th of August, anno 1 Richard III., 1483."—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 101.

§ *Ibid.*, fol. 237.

¶ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 118.

|| Drake's Eborac., p. 116.

** Extracts from the original document will be found on reference to Appendix MM.

Wages are charged for his running footmen,* and several even of the stages enumerated, showing that he rested at Wetherby and Tadcaster prior to reaching Pontefract Castle, where Richard and Queen Anne arrived on the 27th of August. The monarch did not forget his former abode at this renowned castle, nor his early connection with the inhabitants. He awarded to them many valuable grants, appointed a mayor and corporation, and bestowed large sums of money in charity and religious donations prior to departing for York, which city he entered in great state on the 29th of August, 1483.

The royal party were welcomed by the citizens with a display of enthusiasm and zealous attachment that fully confirms the accounts given by local historians† of the devotion with which Richard was beloved, not alone in York, but throughout the whole of the northern counties. The feeling appears to have been reciprocal. "This place," says Drake, "he seems to have paid an extraordinary regard to;" and that portion of Kendall's letter which announces "to the good masters, the mayor and aldermen of York," King Richard's purposed visit to their city, is couched in words too remarkable to be omitted in these pages.§ "The cause I write to you now is, forasmuch as I verily know the king's mind and entire affection that his grace beareth towards you and your worshipful city, for manifold your kind and loving designings to his grace showed heretofore, which his grace will never forget; and intendeth, therefore, so to do unto you [beyond] that [which] all the kings that ever reigned bestowed upon you, did they never so much." This letter, as may be supposed, produced extraordinary emulation in the citizens to outvie other places, and even to rival one another in "the pomp and ceremony of the king's reception," and "Richard, on coming to the goodly and ancient city of York, the scope and goal of his progress, was received with all possible honour and festivity."|| Plays, pageants, feasts and goodly speeches occupied the week that preceded the coronation; to increase the splendour of which solemnity, King Richard sent an order to Piers Curteys, keeper of the wardrobe,¶ to forward apparel for the occasion of so costly a description that it exceeded, if possible, the magnificence of that worn at his first inauguration.

On the 8th of September the solemn rite was performed in the most imposing manner: the gorgeous procession was led by the clergy, fully vested in their pontifical robes, followed by the mayor and aldermen and a large attendance of the spiritual and temporal peers.** Supported by the great officers of the crown,†† and attended by a lordly retinue of nobles, barons and knights, the king walked in regal splendour, wearing his crown and bearing his sceptre.‡‡ The queen, preceded, in like manner, by the lords of her household, and attended by a suitable number of prelates, peers and peeresses,

* Harl. MSS., 433, p. 118.

† Richard III., whatever may be the crimes imputed to him, was personally popular in the north.—*Surtees's Durham*, p. 60.

‡ Drake's Eborac., p. 116.

§ See Appendix CCC.

|| The presence of the Lord Chief Justice of England, Sir William Hussey, who, from his being mentioned as with the king at Warwick, would seem to have accompanied Richard throughout in his progress, is shown by a remarkable instrument, signed at York, which illustrates, in a striking degree, the odious custom of enriching the royal coffers by the disposal of the wardship of rich minors:—

"Sale of the ward and marriage of Anne, daughter and heir of John Salvayne, knight, to Sir William Husse, knight, chief justice, for 1000 marks. Given at York, the 7th day of September, anno 1 Richard III."—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 433, fol. 113.

‡‡ Drake, p. 117.

† Rous, p. 216.

|| Ibid.

** Drake, p. 116.

graced the procession, wearing her regal coronet and holding by the left hand her princely son, whose brow was encircled with the diadem appertaining to the heir-apparent of England.* Five heralds in coat-armour; banners of "our Lady," the Trinity, St. George, St. Edward and St. Cuthbert; lastly, standards of the richest sarsenet embroidered with King Richard's badge, "the silver boar:" forty trumpet banners, and hundreds of pennons, pensils, and streamers of dazzling hues and rich materials, closed the procession, which was received at the cathedral doors with all homage and dutiful respect by Archbishop Rotheram; in the chapter house† appertaining to which,‡ amidst the tumultuous acclamations of thousands who had known him "long and well," King Richard III. and Anne his queen were, by "the lord primate of England,"§ solemnly crowned, a second time, sovereigns of the realm.

The imposing service concluded, the procession, after passing through the chief streets of the city, returned in the same state to the palace,|| where the king created his son, the young Earl of Salisbury, "Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester,"¶ investing him with the principality "by a golden rod, a coronet of gold and other ensigns."** At the same time he conferred the honour of knighthood on Granfidius Sasiola, the Spanish envoy, who was present at the ceremony, and "put round his neck a golden collar in memory of the event;†† striking him "three times upon his shoulders with the sword, and by other marks of honour, according to the English custom, with agreeable words added; in testimony whereof the king gave him his letters patent, dated at his court at York."‡‡ Triumphant sports, masks and revels concluded the solemnities; and the most sumptuous entertainment was given at the palace to all the illustrious personages who had taken part in the ceremony of the day—"a day," says Polydore Virgil, "of great state for York;" there being "three princes wearing crowns—the king, the queen and the Prince of Wales."§§ But, flattering to the citizens as was the renewal of this imposing rite within their ancient walls, it is an error to suppose that Richard III., by a second coronation, exceeded his prerogative, or committed any out-

* This crown is of plain gold, and unornamented with jewels; and where there is an heir-apparent to the throne, it is placed, during his infancy, on a velvet cushion before the seat of the Prince of Wales in the House of Lords on all state occasions.

† Drake, p. 117.

‡ It is said that the chair at the north of the altar on York Minster, in which King Richard III. was crowned, is older than the cathedral itself; being that in which several of the Saxon kings were also invested with the symbols of royalty.—*Pool's Lectures on the Decorations of Churches*.

§ The Archbishop of York, by whom Richard III. was crowned the second time, was lord high chancellor at the decease of King Edward IV., by whom he was distinguished with particular marks of favour and regard. This ecclesiastic, upon hearing of the arrest of Edward V. by the lord protector, proceeded to the widowed queen, and delivered into her hands the great seal for the "use and behoof of her son," with which he had been entrusted by his deceased parent. "Madam," quoth he, "be of good cheer, for I assure you, if they crown any other king than your son, whom they now have with them, we shall on the morrow crown his brother whom you have here with you."—*More*, p. 30.

|| Formerly the kings of England had a palace at York, on the north side of the river Ouse, from which it had a gradual ascent. It was almost demolished during the civil wars, although sufficient was left of the ruins to convey an idea of its original magnificence.

¶ Warrant for a new great seal for the palatine of Chester, to be made for the prince, was given at York, the 16th day of September, anno 1 Richard III.—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 433, p. 114.

** *Fœdera*, vol. xii. p. 200.

‡‡ Drake's Eborac., p. 118.

†† Ibid.

§§ Pol. Virg., p. 547.

rage on the ordinary usages of the realm, by thus honouring a city which had always been remarkable for zeal and attachment to his race, and from which the dynasty, which he now represented, derived its title. It is, indeed, but justice to this monarch here to take the opportunity to exculpate him from two charges which, although apparently unimportant in themselves, yet help to swell the catalogue of those offences, the summing up of which complete the measure of the ill fame of Richard III. A second coronation has been represented an outrageous and unparalleled event; but, so far from such being the case, a repetition of the ceremony was usual, if not invariable, among the Anglo-Saxon kings. Although this custom was discontinued by the Norman monarchs, yet the founder of that race adopted the coronation oath of the Anglo-Saxon kings,* and Henry I. restored to the English, on the day of his coronation, their Anglo-Saxon laws and privileges.† The twofold coronation itself was revived very speedily by the Plantagenet dynasty, King Henry III. having been crowned with great solemnity at Gloucester in 1216, and again at Westminster in 1219;‡ and Henry VI., after being crowned in London in 1429, was a second time anointed king at Paris in the year 1431.§ Thus it is shown that Richard III., who for three centuries has laboured under the most disparaging imputations, arising from his second investiture with the symbols of royalty, only revived an ancient custom, of which a precedent was afforded him by Edward IV., who was crowned king in this very city after the battle of Hexham.¶ The splendid apparel worn by Richard at York, and on all state occasions, has likewise been made a subject of reproach to him,¶ whereas, in bestowing attention on his personal appearance, he merely acted in conformity with the spirit of the age in which he lived. Display in dress, during the fifteenth century, was carried to such an excess that the most severe legislative enactments became necessary to keep within bounds all ranks that were privileged to appear otherwise than in the "russet garb" which indicated vassalage and servitude; and a very slight glance at the wardrobe accounts of the Plantagenet monarchs, and of the sumptuary laws enacted to repress the absurd extravagances of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, will at once prove the fallacy of these personal accusations which have rendered Richard III. an object of censure** for displaying the rich and gorgeous attire which the custom of the times rendered not only imperative but a positive duty incumbent on princes and all men of high birth and exalted stations.††

* Ord. Vitel., p. 503.

† Sandford's Geneal. Hist., book ii. p. 87.

‡ Ibid., book iv. p. 289.

§ "Richard III. only followed the example of Edward IV. in being crowned at York. Edward, marching from York, met Henry VI. at Hexham, where victory declared for him; the unfortunate monarch escaped only by the fleetness of his horse. The royal equipage falling into Edward's possession, he immediately used it, by being solemnly crowned in that city, May 4, 1464. Henry's rich cap of maintenance, or abacot, having a double crown, was placed upon his head."—*Noble's Hist. Coll. of Arms*, p. 53.

¶ Turner's Middle Ages, vol. iii. p. 479.

** Ibid.

†† "These inferences," observes Sir Harris Nicolas, (in refuting the arguments of Mr. Sharon Turner,) "with respect to the character of Richard III., are, it is submitted, drawn from a mistaken estimate of evidence, rather than from erroneous data; and they prove the necessity of an historian, not merely using research but of being able to attach a proper value to his materials. The grounds upon which the opinion of Richard's vanity is built are, the account of the articles delivered out of the wardrobe for his coronation; the descriptions of chroniclers of his pompous appearance on public occasions; and the clothes for which he sent from York.

The festivities at York, which had precluded the ceremony of the coronation, were continued for many days after it was solemnized: but, amidst "tilts, tournaments, stage-plays and banquets, with feasting to the utmost prodigality,"* Richard devoted a considerable portion of his time to receiving petitions, redressing grievances and administering justice. Some of the northern soldiers, who, in their march back from London, had committed gross outrages, were executed for their lawless proceedings;† and although the Croyland writer states that Richard proceeded to York, "wishing to display his newly-acquired authority,"‡ yet the actions of this monarch are more corroborative of Rapin's assertion, that his going down there "was to minister justice everywhere." That he did so, and with strict impartiality, is proved by the local records that have perpetuated his progress from town to town during his journey to the north, and is likewise confirmed by a statement in Kendale's letter, addressed to the authorities at York, communicating to them the nature of the monarch's proceedings. "Thanked be Jesu," writes the royal secretary, "the king's grace is in good health, as is likewise the queen's grace, and in all their progress have been worshipfully received with pageants and other, &c. &c., and his lords and judges in every place, sitting determining the complaints of poor folks, with due punishment of offenders against his laws."§ It is, indeed, most clear that Richard did not contemplate a second coronation, when, following the example of his predecessors,|| he resolved on visiting the chief cities of the kingdom; neither did he direct his steps to York, merely with the vain desire of exhibiting his kingly position; for, setting aside the short period allotted to the citizens for arranging so important a ceremony, the circumstance of this monarch having been altogether unprepared for the gorgeous pageant, must alone establish that point. Independent of the messenger who was sent to London for the state robes and regal apparel, it appears that another was dispatched for the crown jewels, his costs on the journey, together with the expenses whilst executing his mission, being charged in Richard's private accounts.¶

Immediately after his second investiture with the symbols of royalty, the monarch dismissed the foreign envoys with letters to their respective sovereigns, and closed his stay at York by confirming overtures of peace and amity with the courts of Spain** and Scotland.†† His illegitimate son, the

Viewed without reference to similar accounts, in previous and subsequent reigns, the conclusion is natural that the sovereign to whom they relate was "a vain coxcomb," especially if the opinion be correct that that list was prepared by the monarch himself. But when records of this nature are compared with others, and it becomes evident that the splendid dresses worn by Richard formed the general costume of persons of rank of the age; and when the minuteness of detail, which is ascribed to his own taste, is proved to be the usual form in which wardrobe keepers and their officers entered the articles entrusted to their custody, the error of supposing that the splendour or the accurate description of the robes is in any degree indicative of Richard the Third's character, is manifest. A reference to these wardrobe accounts, or to any other list of apparel or jewels in the 14th or 15th and 16th centuries, will prove that there is not a single circumstance connected with Richard which justifies the opinion that he was more fond of splendour than his predecessors, much less that he was either 'a fop' or 'a coxcomb.'—*Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York*, edited by Sir Harris Nicolas, p. 4.

* Drake, p. 117.

† Chron. Croy., p. 567.

‡ Drake, p. 116.

§ The example set by King Henry I. of making a progress into the remote parts of the land for the administration of justice, was followed by most of his successors.

—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 980, fol. 34.

¶ Ibid., 433, p. 118.

†† *Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 246.

† Ibid., p. 116.

** *Fœdera*, xii. p. 200.

Lord John Plantagenet, he also knighted, conferring the same honour upon many northern gentlemen;* and willing to do the city and citizens some extraordinary bounty "for old services and new," he sent for the mayor, the alderman and commons on the 17th of September, and, "without any petition or asking," bestowed upon the city of York a charter of great value and importance. "Richard's munificence to our city at this time," observes Drake,† who has published a transcript of the original instrument, "whether it proceeded from gratitude or policy, was a truly royal gift I never found him, amongst all his other vices, taxed with covetousness, and he had many reasons, both on his own and his family's account, to induce him even to do more for a city which had always signalized itself in the interest of his house."

After a fortnight passed in a district so interesting to him, from long residence and early associations, and now endeared yet more by the proofs of attachment and loyalty so recently and enthusiastically displayed, Richard III. departed from York; carrying with him abundant proofs of the love of her citizens and of that personal attachment which was never diminished, never withdrawn,—no, not even when calumny had blighted Richard's fair fame, or death had rendered him powerless to reward the fidelity with which his grateful northern subjects cherished the memory and upheld the reputation of their friend and benefactor.‡

* Drake, p. 117.

† Ibid.

‡ What opinion our citizens of York had of King Richard will best appear by their own records; in which they took care to register every particular letter and message they received from him. And as his fate drew nigh, they endeavoured to show their loyalty or their gratitude to this prince in the best manner they were able.—*Ibid.*

CHAPTER XII.

King Richard resumes his regal progress.—Arrives at Pontefract.—Threatening aspect of public affairs.—The Earl of Lincoln nominated Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.—Nature of King Richard's edicts at this period.—His recognition of kindness shown to his race, and acts of justice to his political enemies.—He leaves Pontefract, and visits Doncaster, Gainsborough and Lincoln.—The people murmur at the imprisonment of the young princes.—The southern counties take up arms for their release.—The Duke of Buckingham proclaimed the leader of the rebels.—Rumoured death of the princes.—Inquiry into the origin of the report.—Contemporary writers examined.—Unsatisfactory tenour of their statements.—Sir Thomas More's narrative of the murder.—Its various discrepancies.—The tradition tested with coeval and existing records.—Brief notice of Sir Robert Brackenbury.—Sir James Tyrrel.—Plans for conveying the princesses out of the kingdom.—Strong points connected with Perkin Warbeck's career.—True cause of Sir James Tyrrel's execution.—Murder of the princes unauthenticated.—Reputed discovery of their remains.—Incompatible with the narrative of Sir Thomas More and Lord Bacon.—Observations resulting from the foregoing.—Causes that invalidate the tradition, and redeem King Richard from accusations founded on mere report.

KING Richard, accompanied by Queen Anne and the Prince of Wales, recommenced his royal progress about the middle of September, proceeding direct from York to Pontefract, which town he entered on the 20th of that month, with the view of returning to London through the eastern counties, and visiting the principal towns connected with that portion of the kingdom. But the festivities and apparent harmony which characterized this monarch's double coronation, and the peaceful state of things which marked his progress through so considerable a part of his dominions, were at an end: it had been but a temporary calm, the prelude of scenes of violence and disaffection, far more in keeping with that turbulent era than the uninterrupted tranquillity which formed so remarkable a feature in the dawn of this monarch's reign.

It has been shown that no effort was made to rescue Edward V.; no arm was raised in defence of the youthful princes, by the many and powerful lords who had been ennobled and enriched by their deceased parent: yet was there a feeling of commiseration in the humbler classes of the community; a still small voice of sympathy and affection for the royal orphans, which, like the mournful sound that betokens a coming storm, even under a cloudless sky, swept through the land and ended in a political convulsion that speedily brought home to Richard's heart the sense of the uncertain tenure of public applause, and the disquietude attendant upon a throne. From a proclamation sent to the mayor and bailiffs of Northampton,* forbidding the inhabitants to "take or receive any liveries or recognizances of any person of what estate, degree, or condition soever he be of," induced by a report that "great divisions and dissensions had arisen in consequence of oaths, the giving of signs and recognizances of time past," it is probable that some intimation of impending danger was communicated to the king, even before his arrival at York. But an order, sent from thence to Lord Dynham, lieu-

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 111.