

carrying it into effect. If he did, however, then the far greater probability is this,—that Brackenbury, during the interval that elapsed between Green's departure and the arrival of Tyrrel, conveyed the hapless children abroad; and thus gave foundation for the report mentioned by More,\* Polydore Virgil, Bacon and others, that the children of Edward IV. had escaped, and were concealed in a foreign land.

Sir James Tyrrel, the other leading personage in the reputed tragedy, has been even more obviously misrepresented than Sir Robert Brackenbury. Instead of being an obscure individual, at the period when tradition would make it appear that he was first recommended to the notice of his sovereign by a page in waiting, his name, as a great officer of the crown, is associated with the reign of Edward IV.; and his prowess had been both acknowledged and rewarded by Richard of Gloucester long antecedent to the period in question, and possibly before the page was born. Tyrrel was a man of ancient and high family.† His brother, Sir Thomas Tyrrel, was one selected for the honourable distinction of bearing the mortal remains of Edward IV. to the tomb;‡ and Sir James himself was nominated by that monarch a commissioner for executing the office of high constable of England, an office suppressed by Henry VIII. on account of its dangerous and almost unbounded power.§ So far from this warrior being created a simple knight by King Richard for murdering his royal nephews, he is known to have borne that distinction full ten years previously; “Sir James Tyrrel,” as appears by the Paston Letters,|| having been appointed, shortly after King Edward's restoration, to convey the Countess of Warwick from Beaulieu sanctuary to the north. He was made a knight banneret¶ by Richard in Scotland;\*\* a mark of high distinction never bestowed but on great and special occasions. He was master of the horse to King Edward IV., and walked in that capacity at the coronation of Richard III.,†† and the identical period when an obscure page, “of special friendship,” availed himself of the confidence reposed in him by his royal master, to advance the interests of “a man who lay without in the pallet chamber,”‡‡—Sir James Tyrrel, the individual in question, was master of the king's henchmen or pages!§§ a place of great trust, and one which required him, as a part of his duty, to be personally attendant on his sovereign,||| and to keep guard, not repose, in the antechamber so long as the monarch was stirring. In the fifteenth century, that era of feudal power, kings were not in the habit of talking thus familiarly with their attendants, and communicating their feelings of pleasure or displeasure at the conduct of men in authority. It would have been derogatory even to the dignity of a baron to have so condescended; and Richard, who, in common with all the princes of the House of York, was “great and stately,¶¶ ambitious of authority, and impatient of partners,” was as little likely to have needed his page

\* More, p. 126; Pol. Virg., p. 569; Bacon, p. 4.

† “Tyrrel's situation was not that in which Sir Thomas More represents him; he was of an ancient and high family, had long before received the honour of knighthood, and engaged the office of master of the horse.”—*Bayley's Hist. of the Tower*, vol. i. p. 62; see also *Walpole's Reply to Dr. Milles, Archæol.* for 1770.

‡ Harl. MSS., No. 6, p. 3.

§ Walpole's Reply to Milles.—*Archæol.* for 1770.

|| Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 145.

¶ “Knight bannerets were created only by the king or commander-in-chief when they themselves were present in the field; and nothing but signal bravery entitled any man in those martial ages to so distinguished an honour.”—*Walpole's Reply to Milles.*

\*\* Harl. MSS., No. 293, fol. 208.

†† More, p. 128.

||| Harl. MSS., No. 642, fol. 196.

¶¶ Hist. Doubts, p. 55.

§§ Walpole's Reply to Milles.

¶¶ More, p. 7.

to enlighten him as to the character of those by whom he was immediately surrounded,\* as to have communicated to so humble an individual as much of the nature of his fearful secret as is implied by the words which terminated the page's recommendation of Sir James Tyrrel,—“the thing were right hard that *he* would refuse.”†

But, admitting that King Richard had so acted under the blind influence of a shallow policy, and the absence of every feeling of humanity, was it probable that facts known to so many unprincipled men, whose fortune would have been advanced by divulging to Henry VII. the criminality of his rival, —and this, too, so speedily after the transaction, that the facts could have been proved, and peaceable possession of the crown secured to him and the royal Elizabeth of York,—should never have been narrated until after a lapse of twenty-five or thirty years? Yet it was at this distance of time that it was first detailed by Sir Thomas More,‡ only given by him as an acknowledged report, and as the most plausible of the different rumours§ which had been circulated relative to the unexplained disappearance of the illustrious children. Green, Brackenbury, Tyrrel and the page; Forest, Dighton, Slaughter and the priest of the Tower; setting aside the three others who waited conjointly with Forest|| upon the princes;—these individuals could, each and all, have implicated or cleared King Richard, had the above accusation been made by his enemies during his lifetime. But the utmost that was then alleged against him, as shown by cotemporaries, was, that he held his nephews in captivity, and that report stated that they were dead;¶ and all that can, with any certainty, be proved, amounts to the summing up of Fabyan:\*\* “They were put under sure keeping within the Tower, in such wise that they never came abroad after.” Whether they ended their days speedily, or after years of imprisonment within that gloomy fortress, or were conveyed early and secretly abroad by command of their uncle, or later through the agency of Brackenbury, Tyrrel, or the personal friends of their parents on the commencement of the insurrection in the southern counties to effect their liberation, are points which cannot be determined, unless the discovery of other documents than are at present known to exist should throw further light on this mysterious subject.†† There is, however, one very important record favouring the belief that the princes may have been sent out of the kingdom, in the acknowledged fact that plots were formed for carrying into effect pre-

\* Sir James Tyrrel's reputed jealousy of Catesby and Radcliffe could not have existed, as he was at this time in a far higher and more confidential position than either of those knights, being one of King Richard's body-guard and counsellors; and before this alleged introduction to his sovereign, he had been invested by him with the lucrative and valuable appointment of steward of the duchy of Cornwall.—*See Harl. MSS., No. 433, fol. 40.*

† More, p. 131.

‡ The History of Richard III. appears from the title affixed to have been written about the year 1513, when More was one of the under-sheriffs of London, and was printed in Grafton's Continuation of the Metrical Chronicle of John Hardyng, in 1543.—*See preface to Singer's Reprint of More, p. 12.*

§ Buck, lib. iii. p. 84.

|| “To the execution whereof, he appointed Miles Forest, one of the four that kept them.”—*More, p. 131.*

¶ Chron. Croy., 567.

\*\* Fabyan, p. 515.

†† “Others,” relates Sir George Buck, “say confidently the young princes were embarked in a ship at the Tower Wharf, and conveyed from thence to sea, so cast into the black deeps; others aver they were not drowned, but set safe on shores beyond seas. And thus their stories and relations are scattered in various forms, their accusations differing in very many and material points; which shakes the credit of their suggestion, and makes it both fabulous and uncertain, one giving the lie to the other.”—*Buck, lib. iii. p. 84.*

cisely the same measure in the persons of the princesses, even before it was rumoured that their brothers were dead. "It was reported," says the Croyland historian,\* "that those men who had taken sanctuary advised that some of the king's daughters should escape abroad in disguise; so that if any thing happened to their brothers in the Tower, the kingdom might, nevertheless, by their safety, revert to the true heirs. This having been discovered, a strict watch was set over the abbey and all the parts adjacent, over whom John Neffield, Esq., was appointed captain in chief, so that no one could enter or come out of the abbey without his knowledge." This summary proceeding would have naturally been adopted had King Richard been duped by the disappearance of the princes from the Tower; and the report of their death, which speedily followed this enactment, would as naturally be spread, both by those whose suspicions would have been roused by their absence, and those who had risked their own lives to compass the children's escape. It would also satisfactorily explain the cause why their violent death was so generally rumoured, and why no contradiction was given to the rumour by King Richard, who, as the whole of the southern counties were in open rebellion, would scarcely be so impolitic as to add to his danger by proclaiming the escape of Edward V. and his brother, and thus feed the very opposition to his newly-enjoyed dignity which it was his object to crush at the outset.

The occurrences of another reign being foreign to the subject of these pages, it would be irrelevant here to notice the appearance and discuss the apparent claims or reputed imposture of Perkin Warbeck, a youth who, about ten years after the period of the alleged murder of the princes, proclaimed himself the young Duke of York,† and laid claim to the crown; nevertheless, much might be said on a subject so replete with interesting matter, whether as regards the illustrious persons who suffered from their belief in his identity,‡—from the seeming confirmation given to his tale by the King of Scotland bestowing upon him his near kinswoman in marriage,§—from the length of time in which he struggled with Henry VII.,|| owing to the support given to him by foreign courts; by the unfortunate Earl of Warwick (Clarence's son) being beheaded without even a shadow of cause,¶ but that of endeavouring to escape from prison, where Perkin, with that prince, was inveigled to

\* Chron. Croy., p. 567.

† Lord Bacon's Henry VII., p. 149.

‡ The Lord Fitzwater, Sir William Stanley, Sir Simon Mountford, Sir Robert Ratcliffe, Sir William Daubeny, as martyrs of state, confirmed their testimonies with their blood; so did the king's sergeant Ferrier, also Corbet, Sir Quinton Belts, and Gage, gentlemen of good worth, with 200 more at least, put to death in sundry cities and towns for their confidence and opinions in this prince.—*Buck*, lib. iii. p. 100.

§ "King James entertained him in all things as became the person of Richard, Duke of York, embraced his quarrel, and the more to put it out of doubt that he took him to be a great prince, and not a representative only, he gave consent that this duke should take to wife the Lady Katharine Gordon, daughter to the Earl of Huntley, being a near kinswoman of the king himself, and a young virgin of excellent beauty and virtue."—*Lord Bacon's Henry VII.*, p. 153. She was also nearly related to the English monarch; the youngest daughter of James I. and Joan Beaufort his queen having espoused the Earl of Huntley: the consort of Perkin Warbeck was therefore second cousin to Henry VII.—See *Sandford's Geneal. Hist.*, book iv. p. 312.

|| "It was one of the longest plays of that kind that hath been in memory, and might, perhaps, have had another end, if he had not met with a king both wise, stout and fortunate."—*Bacon*, p. 195.

¶ All men knew he was not only a true and certain prince, but free from all practice; yet he was restrained of his liberty, and a prisoner the most part of his life from the time of his father's attainder: this was after he had survived King Richard, his uncle, fifteen years.—*Buck*, lib. iii. p. 96.

his destruction;\* the absence of all satisfactory proof that the confession imputed to Warbeck was ever made;† and the positive evidence of cotemporary writers, that the imposture, if acknowledged, was not promulgated or generally known at the time.‡

These, and various other points of real import in testing the validity of Perkin's tale, might be dwelt on with advantage to his reputed claims; but, as the entire drama which comprises the wonderful career of this remarkable individual belongs exclusively to the reign of Henry VII., and has no connection with that of Richard III., unless clear and undisputed evidence existed proving the escape of one or both of the princes, the inquiry into his identity or imposture cannot with propriety be pursued in this memoir. No allusion, indeed, to the appearance of Warbeck would have been required, but that his alleged imposture is said to have produced from the murderers of the hapless brothers that confession which Sir Thomas More has incorporated in his history; and the examination into the truth of which reputed confession furnishes, perhaps, the strongest evidence of the untenable nature of those calumnies which have so long been believed and perpetuated. Shortly after the appearance of Perkin Warbeck, the confidence in his identity became so general that King Henry had cause for serious alarm. To have recourse to arms, he thought would "show fear;"§ therefore, says his biographer, "he chose to work by countermeine. His purposes were two: the one, to lay open the abuse; the other, to break the knot of the conspirators."|| To detect the imposture, it was essential to make it appear that the Duke of York was dead. There were but four persons that could speak upon knowledge of the murder; viz., Tyrrel, Dighton, Forest, and the priest of the Tower;‡ that buried the princes; of which four, Forest and the priest were dead and there remained alive only Sir James Tyrrel and John Dighton. "These two," states Lord Bacon, "the king caused to be committed to the Tower, and examined touching the manner of the death of the two innocent princes. They agreed both in a tale,—as the king gave out,"—and that tale is the same promulgated by Sir Thomas More. But what does Lord Bacon state—that consummate lawyer and politician—after terminating his relation of the narrative? He makes this remarkable admission: "Thus much was then delivered abroad to the effect of those examinations; but the king, nevertheless, made no use of them in any of his declarations; whereby it seems that those examinations left the business somewhat perplexed; and as for Sir James Tyrrel, he was soon after beheaded in the Tower yard for other matters of treason; but John

\* "The opinion of the king's great wisdom did surcharge him with a sinister fame that Perkin was but his bait to entrap the Earl of Warwick."—*Bacon*, p. 193.

† "He was not only sharply restrained in the Tower, but the fame was, the question or gehenne (the rack) was given to him; until at length, by torments and extremities, he was forced to say any thing, and content to say all they would have him, by a forced recantation of his family, name and royal parentage; and with a loud voice to read the same, which might pass at present with the multitude for current, who knew not how it was forced from him."—*Buck*, lib. iii. p. 93, 94.

‡ "It was unknown to Fabyan and Polydore Virgil, both cotemporaries."—*Laing*, (in Henry,) vol. xii. p. 444. Bernard Andreas states that it was printed.—*Archæologia*, vol. xxvii. p. 153. Had it been printed on authority, it could not have escaped the knowledge of Fabyan, an alderman and sheriff of London, or been unknown to Polydore Virgil, who wrote professedly by command of Henry VII.; neither is it probable that Lord Bacon would have substituted a different confession from that which, if printed at the time, as asserted by Andrew, must have been regarded as a legal document. "But Lord Bacon did not dare to adhere to this ridiculous account," observes Lord Orford, in noticing the gross and manifest blunders in Warbeck's pretended confession, (see *Hall*, fol. 153.) "but forges another, though in reality not much more credible."—*Hist. Doubts*, p. 131.

§ Bacon's Henry VII., p. 122.

|| *Ibid.*

¶ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

Dighton, *who, it seemeth, spake best for the king*, was forthwith set at liberty and was the principal means of divulging this tradition. Therefore, this kind of proof being left so naked, the king used the more diligence in the tracing of Perkin.\*

On a tale, then, that "the king gave out," and that king he who had defeated and slain his calumniated rival and possessed himself of the throne,—a tale "left so naked of proof," that even the politic and wily Henry VII. could make no use of it for exposing the imposture of the alleged Duke of York,—has Richard III. been upbraided as a murderer, the destroyer by wholesale of his own kindred: and this on no other proof but the reputed confession of a low "horsekeeper,"—a suborned witness,—a self-convicted regicide, traitor and midnight assassin,—the truth of whose testimony may be judged of by Lord Bacon's expression, "who, it seemeth, *spake best for the king*," and who was therefore set at liberty, and was the chief means "of divulging this tradition." Surely, the very term "tradition" divulges Lord Bacon's want of confidence in the validity of the tale.

But it may naturally be inquired, how came Henry VII. to cause Sir James Tyrrel and Dighton to be thus suddenly committed to the Tower and examined, at the expiration of ten years, touching the murder of the young princes? Was he previously in possession of the facts that are reputed to have been confessed by them? If so, how came these individuals not to have been subpoenaed as witnesses on Lambert Simnel's imposture, and thus have proved facts that would have preserved the king from future imposture, and would have saved him from executing Sir William Stanley, his mother's brother-in-law, his faithful friend and zealous follower? How was it that no means were taken, at the accession of the monarch whose invasion was tolerated chiefly from indignation at the mysterious disappearance of the young princes, either to expose the villany, or to bring to condign punishment the reputed murderers of the two brothers of his betrothed queen—a measure that would have rendered him so popular and made Richard an object of unqualified execration? How was it that Sir James Tyrrel was spared, "when the Duke of Norfolk and Lord Lovel, Catesby, Radcliffe and the real abettors or accomplices of Richard, were either attainted or executed?"† and that "no mention of the murder was made in the very act of Parliament that attainted King Richard himself, and which, could it have been verified, would have been the most heinous aggravation of his crimes?"‡ Sir James Tyrrel, instead of being an object of execration, continued unblemished in reputation up to the period under consideration, having been honoured and trusted, not only by Richard III., but by his political rival, Henry VII., from whom he received the high and confidential appointment of governor of Guisnes, and was nominated, even after Warbeck's appearance and honourable reception at Paris, one of the royal commissioners for completing a treaty with France;§ facts that are altogether irreconcilable, if it was so well known that he was "the employed man from King Richard"|| for murdering his nephews. Henry VII., desirous as he was to prove the fact of their destruction, neither accuses Sir James of the act in his public declarations, nor gives any foundation whatever throughout his reign for a rumour that rests on no other ground than common report;¶ for Tyrrel, instead of being beheaded "soon after" Warbeck's appearance, as erroneously stated by Lord Bacon, was actually living twenty years after that event on terms of intimacy and friendship with the kindred of the murdered children;

\* Bacon, p. 125.

† Hist. Doubts, p. 58.

‡ Ibid., p. 59.

§ Laing, in Henry, vol. xii. p. 446.

|| Bacon, p. 122.

¶ See Bacon's Henry VII., p. 125; Buck's Richard III., p. 84; Walpole's Hist. Doubts, p. 57; Laing, in Henry, vol. xii. p. 446.

having been committed to the Tower in 1502, not to be examined touching the death of the princes, but relative to the escape of their cousin, the persecuted Duke of Suffolk.\* For succouring this prince in his misfortunes and for aiding the flight of the eldest surviving nephew of his former benefactors, Edward IV. and Richard III., Sir James Tyrrel was, indeed, "soon after executed;" his ignominious end proving his devotion to the House of York, and disproving, as far as recorded proofs of fidelity can disprove mere report, the startling accusation that has singled out a man of ancient family, a brave soldier, a gallant knight and a public servant of acknowledged worth, one who filled the most honourable offices under three successive monarchs,—the parent of the young princes, their uncle, and the possessor of their throne,—as a hireling assassin, a cool, calculating, heartless murderer.

The unfortunate duke whom he assisted to escape could hold out no hope of recompense to those friends who sympathized in his persecutions;† he wandered for years over France and Germany in a state of abject penury,—houseless, an exile, "finding no place for rest or safety;"‡ whereas certain danger was incurred by braving the indignation of the monarch, whose political jealousy had committed Suffolk to prison.§ Nevertheless, Sir James Tyrrel, the long-reputed destroyer of the young princes, had the moral courage to risk life and fortune, and was condemned to suffer imprisonment, death and attainder, for co-operating to save the life of a friendless, persecuted member of that race, two of the noblest scions of which he is alleged to have coolly, determinately and stealthily murdered!

The examination of the various questions resulting from the conflicting testimony that suggested the foregoing observations cannot, however, (from the reasons before assigned,) be farther discussed; although one conclusive remark, one on which the entire condemnation or acquittal of Richard III. may fairly be permitted to rest, is not alone admissible, but imperative, as relates to his justification. If Tyrrel and Dighton made the confession so craftily promulgated by Henry VII., although not officially disclosed by his command, how was it that Sir Thomas More, bred to the law, and early conversant with judicial proceedings,|| did not make use of this proof of

\* Edmund, Duke of Suffolk, was the eldest surviving son of Elizabeth, Duchess of Suffolk, sister of Edward IV. and Richard III. His eldest brother, John, Earl of Lincoln, whose name occurs so frequently in these pages, was slain in the battle of Stoke, shortly after the accession of Henry VII., and had been in consequence attainted in Parliament. Edmund, the second son, was entitled to the honours and estates on the demise of his father, the Duke of Suffolk; but King Henry, jealous of all who claimed kindred with the House of York, deprived him, most unjustly, of his inheritance; and under the frivolous pretence of considering him the heir of his attainted brother, rather than the inheritor of his father's titles and possessions, he compelled him to accept, as a boon, a small stipend, and substituted the inferior rank of earl for the higher title of duke.—*Rot. Parl.*, vi. p. 474.

† William de la Pole, the Earl of Suffolk's brother, Lord Courtenay, who had espoused a daughter of King Edward IV., Sir William Wyndham, and Sir James Tyrrel, with a few others, were apprehended. To the two first no other crime could be imputed than their relationship to the fugitive; the other two were condemned and executed for having favoured the escape of the king's enemy.—*Lingard's Hist. Eng.*, vol. vi. p. 322.

‡ Sandford, *Geneal. Hist.*, book v. p. 379.

§ "It was impossible to attribute the king's conduct to any other motive than a desire to humble a rival family."—*Lingard*, vol. vi. p. 331.

|| Sir Thomas More was the son of Sir John More, one of the judges of the King's Bench. He was bred to the bar, and was early chosen law-reader in Furnival's Inn. At the age of twenty-one he obtained a seat in Parliament. He was a judge of the sheriff's court, a justice of the peace, and made treasurer of the exchequer shortly after being knighted by King Henry VIII. In 1523 he was chosen speaker of the

Richard's criminality, and of Tyrrel and Dighton's revolting conduct,—not as one only out of "many reports," but as affording decisive evidence of the fact? "If Dighton and Tyrrel confessed the murder in the reign of Henry VII., how," asks Lord Orford, "could even the outlines be a secret and uncertain in the reign of Henry VIII.? Is it credible that they owned the fact, and concealed every one of the circumstances? If they related those circumstances, without which their confession could gain no manner of belief, could Sir Thomas More, chancellor of Henry VIII., and educated in the house of the prime minister of Henry VII., be ignorant of what it was so much the interest of Cardinal Morton to tell, and of Henry VII. to have known and ascertained?"\*

Fabyan, who lived and wrote at the precise time when the events are said to have occurred, and the value of whose chronicle rests mainly on his correctness as relates to matters happening in London and its vicinity, neither records the examination nor the alleged confession, although he expressly mentions the imprisonment and execution of Sir James Tyrrel for facilitating the escape of Suffolk.† On no other ground, then, than one of the passing tales of those days,—“days so covertly demeaned, one thing pretended and another meant,”‡ writes Sir Thomas More, when admitting the uncertain basis of the tradition,—was Sir James Tyrrel alleged to have made a confession never published, and not imputed to him until after he had excited the jealousy of Henry VII., and had been executed for reputed treason against the Tudor race and acknowledged fidelity to that of the House of York. The high reputation of the lord chancellor gave an interest and force to his narrative that led to its being adopted by the succeeding chroniclers, without the slightest regard to the truth or consistency of the tale. It was dramatized by Shakspeare, gravely recorded by Lord Bacon, and, passing gradually from mere report to asserted fact, has, for ages, been perpetuated as truth by historians, who felt more inclined to embellish their writings with the “tragedious story,” than to involve themselves in the labour of research and discussion which the exposure of so ephemeral a production would have imposed upon them. “The experience of every age justifies the great historian of Greece,§ in the conclusion to which he was led by his attempts to ascertain the grounds on which so much idle fable had been received as truth by his countrymen: Men will not take the trouble to search after truth, if any thing like it is ready to their hands.”|| Disclaiming all intention of being the advocate or extenuator of Richard III., unless when cotemporary documents redeem him from unmerited calumny, and without presuming even to risk an opinion relative to so mysterious an occurrence as the disappearance of the young princes from the Tower, and the share which their uncle might, in an evil hour, have been led to take in their destruction, it is incumbent on his biographer to state that no proof is known to exist of his having imbrued his hands in the blood of his nephews;¶ and that co-

House of Commons; in 1527, chancellor of Lancaster, and in 1530 he succeeded Cardinal Wolsey as Lord High Chancellor of England.—*Biog. Dict.*

\* Supplement to Hist. Doubts, p. 215.

† Fabyan, p. 533.

‡ More, p. 126.

§ Thucydides, lib. i. c. 20.

|| Hind's "Rise and Progress of Christianity," vol. ii. p. 58.

¶ The industrious antiquary, Master John Stowe, being required to deliver his opinion concerning the proofs of the murder, affirmed, it was never proved by any credible witness, no, not by probable suspicions, or so much as by the knights of the post, that King Richard was guilty of it. And Sir Thomas More says, that it could never come to light what became of the bodies of the two princes; Grafton, Hall and Holinshed agreeing in the same report, that “the truth hereof was utterly unknown.”—*Buck*, lib. iii. p. 106.

existent accounts afford no basis on which to ground accusations altogether irreconcilable with Richard's previous high character and unblemished reputation.\*

Even after his decease, neither the influence of sovereign power, of regal bribes, kingly favour, nor kingly threats, could succeed in fixing upon him the unhallowed deed;† and however much, on a cursory review of mere exparte evidence, and with minds prepared to admit the most exaggerated statements, appearances may seem to convict of murder a prince who, previously to his accession, was so estimated and beloved by his compeers that they would have risked “fortune and life”‡ to have served him, yet, when the points upon which the accusation rests are examined singly, it will be found that the imputation, long as it has been perpetuated, is neither justified by the contradictory reports given by his political enemies, nor is it borne out by the undecisive and prejudiced evidence whereon his condemnation has hitherto been founded.

Inferences unfavourable to King Richard have been drawn arising from his liberality to Sir James Tyrrel,§ as well as to Sir Robert Brackenbury,|| and, likewise, from the names of the several persons stated to be concerned in the murder being all mentioned as benefiting, in some degree, by this monarch's favour. But, in condemning him on this ground only, the customs of the age and corresponding gratuities heaped upon old and faithful followers, alike in previous as in subsequent reigns, have altogether been overlooked. Brackenbury and Tyrrel were attached to Richard's service as Duke of Gloucester; and if a comparison is instituted between the grants bestowed upon them and any two favourite partisans of other English kings, it will be seen that instances abound of similar marks of favour. If Brackenbury and Tyrrel are to be implicated in the murder on this pretence, every supporter of King Richard may be implicated in the fearful deed, for his diary abounds in instances of his liberality and munificence to such as served him with fidelity. Sir William Catesby and Sir Richard Ratcliffe, John Kendall, the monarch's secretary, and Morgan Kydwelly, his attorney, with many others whose names are less publicly associated with his career, received grants and lucrative appointments fully as great as those bestowed upon Tyrrel and Brackenbury; while the Lords of Buckingham, Norfolk, Surrey, Northumberland, Lincoln, Neville, Huntingdon and Lovell, with innumerable knights, esquires and ecclesiastics of every grade, may be adduced as examples of the liberality with which the king dispensed his gifts in requital for zeal in his cause, or recompense for personal attachment.

John Green, whom Sir Thomas More admits to have been a “trusty follower”¶ of Richard's, and who was “yeoman of the king's chamber,” was not inappropriately recompensed for his long servitude,—apart from all connection with the murder,—in being appointed receiver of two lordships and of the Castle of Portchester;\*\* while the names of Dighton as “bailiff of Aiton

\* “No prince could well have a better character than Richard had gained till he came to be protector and dethroned his nephew; this action, and the views of the Lancastrian faction, gave birth to the calumnies with which he was loaded.”—*Carte's Hist. Eng.*, vol. ii. book xiii. p. 818.

† “The proof of the murder being left so naked, King Henry used the utmost diligence towards obtaining more sure information. He furnished these his employed men liberally with money to draw on and reward intelligence, giving them in charge to advertise continually what they found, and nevertheless still to go on.”—*Lord Bacon's Henry VII.*, p. 124.

‡ Fabyan, p. 515.

§ Harl. MSS., No. 433, pp. 26, 205.

¶ More's Rycharde III., p. 127.

|| *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 247.

\*\* Kennet, vol. i. p. 552.

in Staffordshire, with the accustomed wages,"\*—or Forest as "keeper of the Lady Cecily's wardrobe,"†—would have excited no more suspicion or even attention than that of the many other unimportant individuals whose names occur in King Richard's diary, if prejudice had not predisposed the mind to associate these entries with the reputed assassination of the princes. Indeed, the very office assigned to Forest would rather tend to exculpate than condemn him; for it can scarcely be imagined that Richard would place the murderer of her grandsons in a trustworthy situation in the mansion of his venerable parent; while the subsequent entry of a small annuity to Forest's widow‡ would favour the belief that he was an old and tried servant of the Duchess of York, rather than an hireling attached but a few months to her household. It has been farther argued that Green's culpability is implied by an entry in the Harl. MSS. granting him "a general pardon;"§ another example this of the false inferences which may be drawn by pronouncing judgment without due consideration being given to the usages of the era in which the entry was made.

The Federal|| abounds with instances of "a general pardon." In its pages will be found one granted to Dr. Rotheram, Archbishop of York, for all "murders, treasons, concealments, &c.;"¶ and this, after he had crowned King Richard in his northern capital, and long after he had been released from imprisonment and restored to his sovereign's favour. The Archbishop of Dublin, in the reign of King Henry VII., is, in like manner, "pardoned" for a catalogue of crimes\*\* which is truly appalling: and many such pardons might be adduced as granted to the most exemplary persons. Indeed, the very diary which records Green's pardon contains corresponding entries to William Brandone, to Robert Clifford and to Sir James Blount, the governor of Hammes.†† Yet these brave men have neither been suspected nor in any way implicated in heinous offences or revolting crimes. Nor was there any basis for condemning Green on such evidence: similar entries were customary in the middle ages, at the commencement of a new reign; and but for the traditional notoriety attached to Green, arising from Sir Thomas More's narrative, his pardon and his appointments would have excited as little suspicion as would otherwise have been called forth by the very natural and ordinary gift to Brackenbury, as governor of the Tower, of "the keeping of the lions" in that fortress, or the "custody of the mint," established within its precincts.

Lengthened as has been this discussion, yet, as the truth of the tradition narrated by Sir Thomas More and Lord Bacon has been considered to have received confirmation from the discovery, in after years, of the supposed remains of the young princes, a brief notice of that occurrence is also indispensable.

"In the year 1674," states Sandford,‡‡ whose relation is given on the testimony of an eye-witness, one, he says, principally concerned in the scrutiny, "in order to the rebuilding of several offices in the Tower, and to clear the White Tower from all contiguous buildings, digging down the stairs which led from the king's lodgings to the chapel in the said tower, about ten feet in the ground were found the bones of two striplings in (as it seemed) a wooden chest, which, upon the survey, were found proportionable to the ages of those

\* Harl. MSS., No. 433, fol. 55.

† Ibid., fol. 187.

‡ Ibid., fol. 28.

§ Ibid.

¶ Harl. MSS., No. 433, fol. 58. 83. 101.

†† Sandford, *Geneal. Hist.*, book v. p. 404.

‡ Ibid., fol. 78.

|| *Hist. Doubts*, p. 50.

\*\* Ibid.

two brothers, (Edward V. and Richard, Duke of York,) about thirteen and eleven years; the skull of one being entire, the other broken, as were, indeed, many of the bones, as also the chest, by the violence of the labourers, who, not being sensible of what they had in hand, cast the rubbish and them away together; wherefore they were caused to sift the rubbish, and by that means preserved all the bones." . . . "Upon the presumption that these were the bones of the said princes, his majesty, King Charles II., was graciously pleased to command that the said bones should be put into a marble urn, and deposited among the relics of the royal family in the chapel of King Henry VII. in Westminster Abbey."

It may be doubted if any stronger instance could be adduced of the mischief that may result from a desire of reconciling historical traditions with coincidences which, chancing to agree with local legends, blind the enthusiastic and prejudging to all the many minor proofs that can alone substantiate the truth sought to be re-established. The discovery of these very bones, which for nearly two centuries has been considered to remove all doubt of Richard's guilt, is the silent instrument of clearing him from the imputation, if Sir Thomas More's statement, by which he has been condemned, is considered to be verified by their discovery. This historian, it will be remembered, relates that "about midnight" the young king and his brother were murdered; that after "long lying still to be thoroughly dead," their destroyers "laid their bodies naked out upon the bed, and fetched Sir James to see them; which, after the sight of them, caused these murderers to bury them at the stair-foot metely deep in the ground, under a great heap of stones."\* No mention is made of a chest; they were laid out "naked upon the bed;" and the nights in July (the reputed period of the dark deed) afford small time after midnight for two men to commit such a crime, to watch long over their expiring victims, to lay them out for the inspection of their employer, and, by his command, to dig a space sufficiently large to bury a chest deep in the ground; although the bodies of two youths might be hastily cast into "a deep hole"† under the stairs, and some stones cast upon them.‡ Sandford states that the chest was found when "digging down the stairs, about ten feet deep."§ More asserts that the bodies were buried at the "stair-foot, metely deep in the ground."|| In addition to this, the discovery was made in the stairs which led from the king's lodgings to the chapel; now Sandford, in his previous narrative of the murder, distinctly asserts that "the lodgings of the princes being in the building near the water-gate, which is, therefore, to this day, called the Bloody Tower, their bodies were buried in the stair-foot there, somewhat deep in the ground."¶ Both these statements are at variance with Sir Thomas More, the first promulgator of the tradition, and the source whence all subsequent historians have derived their information. If the young princes died in the Bloody Tower, and were buried at the stair-foot there, then it could not be their remains which were discovered in the stairs leading to the chapel; and if they inhabited the king's lodgings, and were buried where the remains were discovered, it at once invalidates the assertion of More,\*\* and of Lord Bacon†† likewise, that they were removed from "so vile a corner" by the king's command, who would have them buried in a better place because they were "a king's sons."

If reference is made to the early history of the Tower of London, it will be found that the portion of that fortress so long reputed to be the scene of

\* More, p. 131.

† Bacon, p. 123.

‡ More, p. 131.

\*\* More, p. 132.

† Buck, p. 84.

§ Sandford, p. 404.

¶ Sandford, p. 404.

†† Bacon, p. 123.