diction all such persons as set apart virtue, and promote the execution of sin and vice, to be reformed, repressed, and punished; not sparing for any love or favour the offender, be he temporal or spiritual."*

From Cambridge the king repaired to Nottingham, entering that town on the 20th instant.† The castle was a strongly fortified and princely abode, one he had often been in the habit of occupying as lord warden of the north, and its central situation pointed it out as a desirable dwelling-place on the present emergency, from its affording a secure asylum for the queen in the event of open hostilities again compelling Richard in person to take the command of his troops. It was not alone from the shore of Brittany that danger threatened the peace of the realm. True it was, that the most strenuous exertions were making by the friends of Henry of Richmond to recover from the evil consequences which had so fatally crushed their former efforts for his advancement; but time was requisite to mature and carry into execution future and corresponding designs from that quarter. The great source of uneasiness to Richard, at this time, arose from his position with Scotland, and the open warfare which had commenced on the borders of the two kingdoms.

James was again at enmity with his subjects. He could neither trust his nobles, nor they their king; and his brother, the Duke of Albany, ever ready and willing to fan the flames of discord between the two great estates of the realm, had fled to England to escape his brother's vengeance, discomfited, but not subdued. The most friendly feeling had always subsisted between this latter prince and Richard: so that, although he did not openly espouse his cause, he connived at his residence in his dominions; and the perpetual skirmishes by land on the frontiers, the result of this negative support, and the numerous aggressions committed at sea in vessels manned by English seamen, threatened serious results to the peace of both kingdoms, unless the impending evil could be quelled by pacific negotiations. Hence the cause of King Richard's sudden departure from the metropolis, and of his present progress to the north. Little, however, did Richard anticipate the bitter domestic trial that was about to overwhelm him, and in one fatal moment to blight the hopes that had supported him in all his difficulties, cheered him in all his trials, and animated him in his desperate struggles to gain the crown and prove himself worthy of his election to it. The monarch's stay at Nottingham was marked by the sudden death of the child of his fond affection, his youthful heir, Edward, Prince of Wales, whose succession to the throne he had so recently laboured to secure, and whose dissolution severed the ties that bound his afflicted parent to the object he had so earnestly coveted—the sceptre that was now to depart from his house. "How vain is the thought of man, willing to establish his affairs without God!" are the emphatic words of the Chronicler of Croyland, who has left the most explicit account of this calamitous event; "for about the feast of St. Edward, in the month of April, 1484, this only son, in whom all hope of royal succession was reposed by so many oaths, died after a short illness at Middleham Castle." . . . . . "Then might you have seen the father and mother, having heard the news at Nottingham, where they then dwelt, almost mad with sudden grief."‡ The anguish of the royal couple, indeed, appears to have been intense; they were altogether incapable of consolation; and the remarkable words of the other cotemporary annalist, when recording the young prince's decease, "he died an unhappy death,"§ induce the supposition that their affliction was rendered doubly severe by its not having arisen from natural causes.

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 281.
† Ibid., fol. 166.
‡ Chron. Croy., p. 571.
§ Rous, p. 216.

There are, however, circumstances which justify the surmise that the youthful prince was constitutionally fragile and of a weakly frame; for amongst other items inserted in his household account is one for the expenses of "my lord prince's chariot from York to Pontefract,"* at the time that he accompanied his royal parents thither after the coronation,—a mode of conveyance only then in use for state prisoners, for females, and invalids.†

It also appears that he had not been withdrawn from the north, whither he had been sent shortly after his creation as Prince of Wales, even to share in the Christmas festivities which signalized his parents' triumphal return to the metropolis.

Possibly the knowledge of Buckingham's league with the Earl of Richmond may have determined the monarch to intrust his son to the guardianship of his faithful northern subjects, until the anticipated danger was altogether at an end; certain it is that he finally parted from the young prince at Pontefract shortly after the festivities at York, as the last notice of the personal movements of the illustrious child is conveyed in another entry for the "baiting of the chariot at York" on his progress to Middleham, and likewise charges for expenses of the lord prince's horse"‡ at the same city. That this separation was not caused by any want of affection on King Richard's part is clear from the whole tenour of his conduct. "His parental feelings were pure and kind," observes Mr. Sharon Turner;§ and the language used by the monarch in the patents for creating the young Edward Prince of Wales not only justifies this assertion, but exhibits such a tenderness of feeling and affectionate pride as fully to explain the depth of anguish which followed the announcement of the child's decease: "whose excellent wit and remarkable endowments of nature wherewith (his young age considered) he is singularly furnished, do portend to us great and undoubted hopes by the favour of God that he will make a good man."‖ But these hopes were not to be realized. "And if," as forcibly remarks an accomplished writer¶ of the present day, "he was accessory to the murder of his nephews, the blow must have fallen with additional force, from the suggestions of his conscience that it might have been directed as an act of retributive justice;" for, by a singular coincidence, Edward, the sole heir of Richard III., breathed his last on the ninth day of April** 1484, the day twelvemonth that chronicled the decease of King Edward IV., and likewise the accession of his ill-fated successor, the young and hapless Edward V.

The lowering clouds which were gradually gathering around King Richard thickened daily; and after the first deep burst of agony had passed away, he felt the necessity of doing violence to his feelings, by struggling with domestic sorrow, and directing his energies towards those cares of state which he had taken upon himself. Grievous as was his affliction, "the king, nevertheless," continues the ecclesiastical historian,†† "attended to the defence of his realm, for it was reported that the exiles, with their leader, the Earl of Richmond, to whom they all, in the hope of his contracting a marriage with King Edward's daughter, swore fealty as their king, would shortly land in England. The Bishop of Ely, indeed, had never rested, and both himself and the leading nobility who had been attainted and outlawed actively renewed

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 118.
† Bacon's Henry VII., p. 8.
‡ Harl. MSS., fol. 118.
§ Sharon Turner's Middle Ages, vol. iv. p. 15.
‖ "King Richard's Journal penes me. J. S."—*Strype's Notes to Kenneth*, p. 525.
¶ Memoir prefixed to the Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York, by Sir H. Nicolas, p. 42.
** Ibid., p. 42.
†† Chron. Croy., p. 571.

their operations—not alone on the continent, but by correspondence with their English allies. Yet more threatening was the aspect of affairs in the north. Several English ships were captured by the French near Scarborough, and two of the king's most brave captains, Sir Thos. Everingham and John Nesfield,* were likewise made prisoners.

To guard against any sudden invasion, either on the southern or northern shores, and also that he might obtain speedy intelligence from the agents employed by him to watch the movements of his enemies, Richard adopted the admirable plan, introduced by Edward IV. during the preceding Scotch war, of placing swift couriers at every twentieth mile, so that by their passing letters from hand to hand, he could obtain the news of two hundred miles within two days.† Nor was he in want of spies abroad, from whom he learnt almost all the intentions of his rival, to resist whom he was far better prepared than on the former occasion, from the particular grants recently issued and put in force throughout the realm.‡ Thus shielded from immediate personal danger, and strengthened for any great emergencies, Richard prepared to leave Nottingham. By various entries in his register,§ among which is a warrant for the yearly payment of ten marks to a chaplain, whom the king had appointed "to pray for him in a chapel before the holy-rood at Northampton," it appears that he remained at Nottingham from the 20th of March to the 25th of April, when he resumed his progress to the north, and entered York on the 1st day of May. Acute must have been the sufferings of the king and his bereaved consort on revisiting this scene of their former festivities—the city in which, with proud exultation, they had seen the brows of their idolized child wreathed with a demi-crown of the heir-apparent, and receiving homage as Prince of Wales, but which now, by recalling to remembrance the brief duration of their parental happiness, brought more home to them the irreparable loss they had sustained by the premature death of the object of their tenderest solicitude.

The decease of the young prince made no change in the situation of the offspring of Edward IV.; neither, indeed, could it have done so without nullifying the plea of illegitimacy which had elevated their uncle to the throne: but as it became necessary to appoint an heir to the crown to guard against the event of the king's demise, Richard nominated, as his successor, his nephew, Edward, the young Earl of Warwick, son of the ill-fated Duke of Clarence, who was the lawful inheritor of the sceptre by male descent, if he had not been debarred from legal claims by reason of his parent's attainder. This selection most thoroughly exonerates the monarch from the unjust charges ordinarily imputed to him of ill-treatment to this prince. His wardship and marriage had been bestowed by Edward IV. on the Marquis Dorset, the queen's son by her former husband;‖ consequently, if the generally-received opinion is well founded, that the young earl's mind was weakened by cruelty and neglect in childhood,¶ the accusation rests on his early guardian, and not upon Richard III., who could have exercised no authority over his unhappy nephew until, by the decease of Edward IV. and the subsequent attainder of the Marquis Dorset, the Earl of Warwick was restored to the surviving members of his father's family. The marquis was governor of the Tower, and there he had closely incarcerated the infant earl from the

* Chron. Croy., p. 571.
† Ibid.
‡ Ibid.
§ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 168. 173.
‖ Cal. Rot., p. 325.
¶ "He was a child of most unhappy fortunes, having from his cradle been nursed up in prison."—*Sandford*, book v. p. 114.

period of his parent's execution until the elevation of Richard to the throne opened his prison gates.

As far as the few memorials of this unfortunate prince admit of an opinion being formed, there appears substantial reason for supposing that he was taken under the kind protection of his maternal aunt,* the queen consort, immediately after his emancipation from the thraldom of the Wydville connection; for among the noble guests enumerated by the cotemporary historian,† which graced the courtly train at Warwick Castle when Queen Anne rejoined the king at this abode of her ancestors, was "Edward, Earl of Warwick,‡ then a child in about his ninth year;"§ and it is evident that the young prince was abiding with the king and queen at the time when he was nominated as successor to the throne, from the particular wording of the account which perpetuates that event. Not long after the death of the prince, Edward, the young Earl of Warwick, eldest son of George, Duke of Clarence, was declared heir-apparent of England in court royal; and "in services at table and chamber was served next to the king and queen."‖

From York Richard proceeded to his favourite Middleham, so long his dwelling-place as Duke of Gloucester, and the scene of his child's last earthly sufferings,—a spot once endeared to him as the birth-place of his heir, now doubly fraught with desolation from his decease having happened within its walls! No memorial is known to exist relative to the funeral of the young prince, or denoting his place of interment; but the strong affection his father bore him when living, united to the magnificence with which the funeral obsequies of the illustrious dead were solemnized in that age, leaves no doubt of the strict observance of the ceremonies suited to the interment of the heir-apparent of the throne; while the touching words, "whom God pardon,"¶ added in Richard's own hand-writing to one of the grants** which awarded payment of the last expenses incurred by the young prince, convey more forcibly than the most laboured monumental inscription the deep sorrow which filled the father's heart for this cherished idol of his affections.

The months of May and June were entirely spent by Richard in visits to the extreme north of his kingdom, in personally surveying the coasts exposed to the inroads of the Scotch and of the French, in examining into the condition of those of his subjects over whom he had formerly ruled, as the viceroy of his brother, and in renewing his connection with his old associates in

* Anne, the consort of Richard III., was the youngest sister of Isabel, Duchess of Clarence.—*Sandford*, book v. p. 114.
† Rous, p. 217.
‡ Rous, the historian, is the more to be credited for this fact, as he saw the young earl in company with Richard, at Warwick, on his progress to York, he being a chauntry priest connected with the castle, and dwelling at Guy's Cliff, adjoining the town of Warwick.—*Hist. Doubts*, p. 62.
§ George, Duke of Clarence, was put to death in the Tower on the 18th February, 1478, Edward, his son and heir, being at that time three years of age and upwards, (*Dugdale*, vol. ii. p. 162); and King Richard and Queen Anne were on a visit at Warwick Castle 8th August, 1483.—*Rous*, p. 217.
‖ Rous, p. 217.
¶ "Warrant for payment of 139*l.* 10*s.* to John Dawney, late the king's treasurer of Pountfreit, due to him for divers provisions and emptions by him made for the expense of the king's most dear son, *whom God pardon*.
"Given at York, 21st July, An°. 2^do^."
Harl. MSS., 433, p. 183.
** "Warrant for payment of 73*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* unto John Dawney, late treasurer of the household, with the king's dearest son, the prince.
"Given at the Castle of Pountfreit, 23d July, An°. 2^do^."
Harl. MSS., fol. 124.

arms,—striving to ingratiate himself with the people to whom he owed so many obligations, both at an early period of his life and during the late formidable insurrection, when the fidelity of the northern men formed so striking a contrast with the contumacious and turbulent spirit evinced in the southern division of the kingdom.

Durham, Scarborough and York appear to have been his chief abiding places during this military survey. He was sojourning at the first-named city on the 15th of May, at Scarborough on the 22d, and at York on the 27th inst.,* on which latter day he signed a warrant for "the payment of twelve marks to the friars of Richmond for the saying of 1000 masses for the soul of King Edward IV.;† another instance of his attachment to his brother's memory, however little he may have shared the same feeling for Elizabeth and her offspring. After a brief sojourn at York, Richard departed for Pontefract; and remaining there from the 30th of May to the 13th of June, he again returned to York: at the regal palace of which city circumstances render it probable that the queen and the youthful Earl of Warwick dwelt, surrounded by the court, during the period occupied by King Richard in his various and rapid journeys, and where the monarch was himself stationary from the 14th to the 25th of June.‡ Thence he once more bent his steps northward, resting at Scarborough from the 30th§ of June to the 11th of July, and returning to York on the 20th of that month. By this time his activity and unwearied exertions had been rewarded by a success that, in great measure, compensated for the inauspicious appearance of public affairs, which threatened such evil consequences at the spring of the year. He had gained many and signal advantages over the Scotch by sea;‖ and after several skirmishes by land, which were all attended with advantage to the English, a decisive battle was fought on the West March,¶ in which, although the loss was nearly equal in both armies, yet the Duke of Albany, who, fighting on the English side, had recently been captured** with the Earl of Douglas,†† was retaken; and it was forthwith intimated that preparations were making by the Scottish monarch for sending ambassadors to England to negotiate a peace between the two kingdoms.‡‡

The king's object in removing his court to the north being thus fully accomplished, he felt the necessity of returning to his city of London; things having assumed a more serious aspect as regarded the movements and intentions of the Earl of Richmond, not alone from his own immediate operations, but by strong symptoms of insubordination among the disaffected in the metropolis. Before quitting York, however, a material change was made in the succession to the crown, the name of the young Earl of Warwick being withdrawn, and that of his cousin, the gallant and chivalrous Earl of Lincoln, eldest son of King Richard's eldest surviving sister, the Duchess of Suffolk, being substituted in its place.§§ The general rumour of the weakness of intel-

* Harl. MSS., 433, pp. 165. 195.

† Ibid., fol. 176.

‡ Ibid., fol. 165. 195.

§ The sign manual is affixed to a document issued from this town on the 30th, commanding "mariners, soldiers, &c., to be taken up at the king's price, to do the king service in certain of his ships; and victual and other things behoveful for the same.

"Dated at Scarborough, 30th June, 1484."

Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 179.

‖ Chron. Croy., p. 571.

¶ Marches signify the bounds and limits between us and Wales, or between us and Scotland. The word is used generally for the precincts of the king's dominions in the statute 24 Hen. VIII. cap. 8.

** Chron. Croy., p. 571.

†† Lingard, p. 263.

‡‡ Ibid.

§§ Rous, p. 217.

lect, which has always prevailed, and rendered the unfortunate heir of the House of Clarence* so much an object of compassion, had, in all probability, (judging from this sudden and decisive step,) become but too apparent to his uncle: and if, indeed, symptoms of hopeless imbecility displayed itself at so tender an age, undoubtedly it afforded but little prospect of comfort to the young prince or advantage to the kingdom, should any unlooked-for casualty early call him to a contested throne.

With that decision of purpose which invariably led Richard to carry into immediate execution measures which he had seen the wisdom of adopting, he nominated† his sister's accomplished son to fill that exalted position which after events proved his brother's child would have been unfitted to occupy.‡ The abilities of the Earl of Lincoln were well known to his uncle, for they had been tried and proved on many important occasions; moreover, he was of an age and of a temperament to take an ardent part in the stirring scenes of these mutable times, and was equally by nature as by education suited for the high post he might one day be called upon to fill, could the legitimate claims of the youthful Warwick be overlooked in the more active habits and brilliant acquirements of his cousin of Lincoln.§

Whatever may have been the exciting cause that induced the change of succession to the crown, yet none among the many calumnies so unjustly laid to Richard's charge are more unfounded than the accusation of his having harshly treated and cruelly imprisoned his unfortunate nephew.‖ He sent him at this time, it is true, to Sheriff Hutton Castle, but not as a prisoner:¶ it had been the home of young Warwick's ancestors,** and was, at this identical period, occupied by his immediate kindred, the Nevilles. The king had, himself, visited the castle to examine into its fitness for his

* "He had been kept in the Tower from his very infancy, out of all company of men, and sight of beasts, so as he scarcely knew a hen from a goose, nor one beast from another."—*Baker's Chron.*, p. 225.

† Rous, p. 217.

‡ Nearly the whole of the Tudor chroniclers coincide with Hall (p. 55) in his description of the deficiency of intellect which was apparent in the young prince's conversation, when in after years he was conveyed to the royal palace at Shene, to establish the fact of Lambert Simnell's imposture. How far this weakness of mind may have been induced by early severity and constant imprisonment, it is hard to decide; but as the cotemporary evidence of Rous (p. 217) proves that during one portion of his life, at least, he was admitted to the dignities and enjoyments of his high birth, when residing at the court of Richard III., it adds force to the attestation of Cardinal Pole, his nephew, and the inheritor of his possessions, (*Phillip's Life of Cardinal Pole*, p. 228,) that the mental powers of the unfortunate Warwick never advanced beyond that of the earliest childhood.

§ "This earl was a man of great wit and courage."—*Bacon*, p. 28.

‖ Horace Walpole states, that the king had an affection for his nephew, in proof of which he instances his proclaiming him heir to the crown, after the decease of his son, and ordering him to be served next to himself and the queen; although he adds, he afterwards set him aside, and confined him in the Castle of Sheriff Hutton, on account of the plots of his enemies thickening, so that he found it necessary to secure such as had any pretension to the crown.—*Hist. Doubts*, p. 62.

¶ The prince was kept here during the whole of Richard's reign, but he was not treated harshly.—*Castel. Hutton.*, p. 17.

** Sheriff Hutton descended by marriage to the noble family of the Nevilles, and continued in their possession upwards of 300 years, through a regular series of reigns, until seized by Edward IV. in 1471, who soon after gave the castle and manor to his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard III. On the Wardens' Tower four shields of arms are placed, exhibiting the achievements of the Nevilles; the third shield is quartered with the royal arms, one of the Nevilles having married a daughter of John of Gaunt.—*Castel. Hutton.*, pp. 4. 9.

nephew's abode:* and the extreme beauty of the situation, together with the attention he had some years previously bestowed in renovating and embellishing this noble demesne, had, it will be remembered, tempted Edward IV. to purchase back, at a high price, the lordly pile, which he, of free gift, had bestowed in his youth on Richard of Gloucester.

"I saw no house in the north so like a princely lodging," is the language of Leland;† and Camden bears testimony to "the stately mansion"‡ allotted for the dwelling of young Edward of Warwick. If, then, during his abode at Sheriff Hutton, the earl was guarded as a kind of state-prisoner, it arose from the disorganized state of the realm, and the necessity of protecting all of the blood royal from falling into the hands of their enemies, and thus being made a fresh tool for insurrection and revolt: but the "strict confinement" named by Rous§ was by no means imposed from harshness or severity. It was absolutely essential for the young prince's safety, recently nominated, as he had been, heir-apparent to the throne, and notoriously the last male heir of the line of Plantagenet. Admitting, then, that the dwelling-place selected for him was one of strength and security, and that limits were set to his walks, as is traditionally reported,‖ yet these precautionary measures obviously were the consequences of the turbulent age rather than the result of unworthy or cruel motives on the part of the king. To whose particular care Richard entrusted the custody and education of his nephew is not known; but the historian of York states,¶ that "the castle of Sheriff Hutton was then in the possession of the Nevilles,"** and he instances its selection for the future dwelling of the Earl of Warwick as another instance of the trust which the king reposed in the northern rather than the southern parts of the kingdom. And truly he had sufficient cause for this preference, for two distinct principalities could scarcely be more opposed in sentiment and action than were these two extremes of the realm.

Although the insurgents had been wholly defeated in the recent rebellion, it had neither lessened their enmity to Richard nor changed their zeal for Richmond; and the oath by which the leading members of the rebellious compact had bound themselves to succeed or fall in his cause raised, by degrees, the drooping spirits of their adherents in England, and encouraged them to labour stealthily, but unceasingly, to further some future re-union. These

* "It appears from some coeval records connected with this princely fabric, that King Richard occasionally visited the castle during his progresses in Yorkshire; and likewise that there are letters preserved to this very day in Richard's own handwriting, dated Sheriff Hutton Castle." From the same source is derived the knowledge of the fact that "the king had gone over to Sheriff Hutton Castle to examine its strength previous to assigning it as the future dwelling-place of the Earl of Warwick."—*Castel. Hutton.*, pp. 2. 15.

† Leland's Itin., vol. i. p. 73. ‡ Camden's Brit., p. 588.

§ Rous, p. 217.

‖ Around Sheriff Hutton Park, states its historian, were many fine oaks of ancient growth and venerable appearance. One of these trees, which was blown down many years since, is said to have been standing in the reign of Richard III.: it was called the "Warwick Oak," from having been, according to the tradition of the neighbourhood, the limit to which the unfortunate Earl of Warwick was permitted to extend his walks during the period of his confinement in the castle of Sheriff Hutton.—*Castel. Hutton.*, p. 40.

¶ Drake's Ebor., p. 124.

** The Harl. MSS., No. 433, perpetuates many grants and marks of liberality shown by Richard to different members of this family, especially to Ralph Lord Neville, to Sir John Neville, and to Dame Alice Neville, all the near kindred of his queen. Sir John Neville was at this time governor of Pomfret Castle; it is therefore probable that Sheriff Hutton Castle was under the charge of the Lord Neville.—*Harl. MSS.*, fol. 57. 193.

designs were made known to the king through the vigilance of his spies; and no expense was spared to procure, unceasingly, the most explicit accounts from Brittany. Experience had shown him that neither severe enactments at home nor strict watchfulness abroad could control or counteract the threatened danger to his crown; and although well-disposed to have recourse to negotiation, and again to try the effect of bribes and costly gifts, it seemed probable that these politic essays would be as little crowned with ultimate success as had been the similar attempts of himself and his deceased brother. Nevertheless, fortune once more smiled on Richard! more faintly, it is true, than heretofore, but sufficiently to inspire a hope that his rival, like Buckingham, might be entrapped into his hands, and peace thus be effectually secured to the disturbed kingdom.*

Francis of Brittany was now advanced in years, and recent severe illness had greatly weakened his faculties, so that the measures of his government had devolved almost entirely on his confidential minister, Peter Landois.† This individual, as is common with favourites at court, had become so obnoxious to his compeers, that the circumstance afforded an unlooked-for prospect of success to Richard.‡ The alliance and support of the powerful English monarch was of greater value to the unpopular Landois than the friendship of the exiled and attainted Earl of Richmond; and under the influence of munificent presents sent ostensibly to his afflicted sovereign, but judiciously made over to the minister,§ in addition to a promise that the revenues of the earldom of Richmond,‖ which had anciently belonged to the dukes of Brittany,¶ should be restored to that principality, Francis was made to promise, through the medium of his official adviser Landois, that he would again clandestinely capture and imprison the earl; an underplot being secretly formed by the treacherous courtier to seize and deliver him into the hands of the English ambassadors.**

But the vigilance of Richard's deadly enemy, Bishop Morton, again preserved Richmond and defeated the well-laid plans of the king. This prelate had discovered the nefarious design of Landois, and dispatching the trusty Urswick to the Earl of Richmond, that ecclesiastic disclosed to him his danger in sufficient time to enable him to escape from the traps of his crafty adversaries.††

Scrupulously concealing his secret, even from his intimate and staunch friends, Richmond, attended by five trusty followers only, proceeded ostensibly to visit one of his adherents in an adjoining village; and thus having eluded suspicion by his seeming openness, the earl suddenly entered a thick wood, and, assuming the garb of a humble page,‡‡ fled to the confines of

* Grafton, p. 188.

† The English ambassadors came to the duke's house, where with him they could have no manner of communication concerning their weighty affairs, by reason that he, being faint and weakened by a long and daily infirmity, began a little to wax idle and weak in his wit and remembrance. For which cause, Peter Landoyse, his chief treasurer, a man both of pregnant wit and great authority, ruled and adjudged all things at his pleasure and commandment.—*Grafton*, p. 189.

‡ Ibid. § Ibid., p. 190. ‖ Ibid.

¶ The honour of Richmond appears to have been considered as extending into various counties, comprising the whole of the possessions of the family of Brittany in England. The lands in Yorkshire formed only part of what was afterwards called the honour of Richmond,—and in early times the honour of Brittany, or the honour of the Earl of Brittany,—which extended into various counties. The title of Earl of Richmond was of much later date, and probably assumed in consequence of the Castle of Richmond being the principal seat of the property.—*Report of the Lords' Committee on the Dignity of the Peerage*, vol. ix. p. 132.

** Grafton, p. 192. †† Ibid., p. 191. ‡‡ Ibid., p. 192.

Brittany, and, by dint of great exertions, reached the frontiers of France* before Landois had even sufficiently matured his scheme to carry it into effect.† The anger and rage of the defeated and wily minister could only be equalled by the disappointment of the English monarch,‡ whose mortification was increased in consequence of the unfriendly feelings which subsisted between himself and the French king. This very circumstance, however, secured for Richmond a more flattering reception than he might otherwise have met with from Charles VIII., who, being also at enmity with the court of Bretagne, received the princely exile with marked respect, invited him to his court, and conducted him in person to Paris, which city, henceforth, became the point of re-union to the exiled English. The malady which had attacked the Duke of Brittany having subsided, and his mind becoming to a certain degree restored, his indignation was aroused upon hearing of the treachery designed by his minister,§ and he strove to compensate for the deception by furnishing the English refugees with money to enable them to join their prince.‖ He did not, however, give Richmond any encouragement to return to Brittany.

Wearied with the difficulties that had so often threatened his peace in consequence of the asylum afforded to the earl in his principality, Francis renounced all further connection with the confederates, and concluded a friendly alliance with Richard. This important arrangement was completed during the king's stay at Pontefract, from the castle of which place a proclamation was issued,¶ announcing that the king had entered into a truce with Francis, Duke of Brittany, from the 1st of July to the 24th of August next ensuing. That period was now fast approaching, and the king was the more desirous to negotiate peace with Scotland, that he might be free to quit the north and be nearer to the new point of danger,—the dominions of the French sovereign, —in which his rival was not only lodged in safety, but succoured with a display of warmth and generosity that caused Richard as much alarm as it excited in him anger and indignation. He quitted York on the 21st July, rested at Pontefract on the 23d, and entered Nottingham on the 30th, where he again sojourned for some weeks, and where he was greeted with the anticipated letter from the Scottish monarch, desiring safe conduct for his ambassadors coming to England to treat respecting a peace.**

It was with no small degree of satisfaction that Richard, on the 6th of August, affixed his signature to the required instrument,†† enabling him as it did, to direct his attention exclusively to the policy of Charles VIII. Little time was allowed him for doubt on that subject; and his annoyance at the escape of his rival from the plot of Landois was aggravated by reports that it was the intention of the French to take from the English the Castle of Guisnes.‡‡ Immediate provision was made for the defence of this fortress, but conviction

* Pol. Virg., 555.

† The stratagem by which Landois had hoped to secure the person of Henry of Richmond was to have been carried into execution through the medium of certain trusty captains, a band of whom he had hired under the pretext of aiding the earl in his designs upon England, but who were secretly instructed to seize their victim, and likewise at the same time the most influential of the exiled nobles. It was not until the fourth day of his departure that Richmond's flight was discovered. Couriers and horsemen were then dispatched to the coast and to the frontier towns in all haste, and with such celerity did they proceed, that the fugitive "was not entered into the realm of France scarce one hour" when his pursuers reached the point which marked the boundaries of Bretagne.—*Grafton*, p. 193.

‡ Ibid. § Ibid., p. 195. ‖ Ibid.

¶ Fœdera, xii. p. 226. ** Ibid., p. 230.

†† Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 263. ‡‡ Fœdera, xii. p. 232.

was brought home to Richard's mind that circumspection abroad would avail little in counteracting the designs of his rival, unless by well-timed severity at home, a check could be put to the hopes inspired by his own rebellious subjects. Consequently many persons of wealth and family who were ascertained to be in correspondence with the exiles, were imprisoned, and an example made by the execution on Tower Hill, of one of the most seditious of the ringleaders, William Collingbourne. He had been arrested some weeks previously with a gentleman by the name of Turberville, on manifest proofs of treasonable practices, notwithstanding which, he had renewed his communication with Richmond; and although he had received from Richard's bounty places and emoluments of such import* that the highest nobles in the realm coveted the reversion upon his arrest, he, during his imprisonment, proffered substantial sums to any individual who would join Richmond and Dorset, and urge them to invade the English coasts, so as to secure the revenues due to the crown at Michaelmas, assuring them that he and others would cause the people to rise in arms for Richmond.† Perhaps no more striking instance could be adduced from Richard's life or reign of the unfairness with which he has been treated, or the unjustness with which his every action has been perverted and condemned, than the report so universally believed that Collingbourne was executed merely for a political sarcasm on the king and his three chief advisers, the Lord Lovell, Sir Richard Ratcliffe, and Sir William Catesby.

"The Ratte, the Cat, and Lovell our dogge,
Rule all England under the Hogge."‡

True it is that he did make and disseminate the distich; and it is by no means improbable that these doggerels were devised and circulated for a seditious purpose: but it was not alone for so simple a transaction that Collingbourne was condemned to suffer death; it was for open and avowed treason, as is clear from the indictment, which charges him, in addition to the accusations above named, with striving to bring the king and his government into contempt through the medium of rhymes stuck on the doors of St. Paul's church,§ and with infusing groundless suspicions into the French king's mind, so as to induce him to aid Richmond in expelling Richard from the throne. He sought and merited the condemnation he received—that of the death of a traitor; and if, in the execution of his sentence, unnecessary cruelty was exercised,‖ the odium rested with the civil authorities who carried it into effect, and neither with the judge who found him guilty, nor with the king, who, though he sanctioned his execution, was at the time in a distant part of his kingdom. The precise date of Collingbourne's death does not plainly appear, but he was arraigned on the 18th July, and his previous suspension from office is made apparent by a letter from the king to his venerable mother, bearing date the 3d of June, 1483;¶ a document of so much interest and value,

* Among the innumerable grants preserved in the Tower records is one from Richard III. of the manor of Clofert to William Collyngbourne, whom the king styles "Sergeant of our Pantry."

† See Collingbourne's indictment, in Holinshed, p. 746.

‡ "Meaning, by the hog, the dreadful wild boar, which was the king's cognizance: but because the first line ended in dog, the metrician could not—observing the regiments of metre—end the second verse in boar, but called the boar an hog. This partial schoolmaster of breves and songs, caused Collingbourne to be abbreviated shorter by the head, and to be divided into four quarters."

§ Holinsh. Chron., p. 746.

‖ Fabyan states, when recording the harrowing details of his death, that he "died to the compassion of much people."—*Fabyan*, p. 518.

¶ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 2.

as portraying the unabated affection which still subsisted between Richard and his now aged parent, that the mind turns with satisfaction from scenes of bloodshed and acts of violence to rest on one genuine record of those kindly feelings which contrast so strikingly with the selfishness, ingratitude and avarice that were the prevalent incentives to action at this unsatisfactory period of English history. It would seem that Collingbourne held some lucrative and responsible situation connected with the Lady Cecily's rich demesnes—an office that the king was desirous of bestowing upon one of his own household. The style of this letter, couched, as it is, in such respectful terms, and breathing such filial deference, will better substantiate than could any conclusion drawn from it, the confiding tenderness and reverential affection which subsisted between King Richard and his mother:—

"Madam,—I recommend me to you as heartily as is to me possible. Beseeching you in my most humble and affectuous wise of your daily blessing to my singular comfort and defence in my need. And, madam, I heartily beseech you that I may often hear from you to my comfort. And such news as be here my servant, Thomas Bryan, this bearer, shall show you, to whom, please it you, to give credence unto. And, madam, I beseech you to be good and gracious, lady, to my lord my chamberlain to be your officer in Wiltshire in such as Collingbourne had. I trust he shall therein do you good service. And that it please you, that by this bearer I may understand your pleasure in this behalf. And I pray God to send you the accomplishment of your noble desires. Written at Pomfret the 3d day of June, 1484, with the hand of

"Your most humble son,
"Ricardus Rex."

It is apparent, from the king's expressed wish "of often hearing" from his mother, that himself and the Lady Cecily were in frequent correspondence, and living on the most amicable terms; and it cannot but be remarked, that if the style of the above letter helps to weaken the prevalent belief in Richard's despotic and overbearing disposition, it is equally characterized by the absence of that obsequiousness and fawning servility which are invariably ascribed to this monarch in the character of hypocrite and tyrant.*

There are no materials for biography so satisfactory as letters—none that so effectually portray the sentiments of the individual, who, in his confidential intercourse with relatives and friends, lays bare, as it were, the feelings of his heart, and depicts, unwittingly, the bent of his mind and inclinations. "In autographs," it has been effectively observed,† "we contemplate the identical lines traced by the great and good of former days; we may place our hands on the spot where theirs once rested, and in the studied or hasty letter may peruse their very thoughts and feelings." Perhaps, then, no more fitting opportunity could be selected than the present for inserting another letter from Richard III., which even beyond the one addressed to the Lady Cecily displays the absence of harsh and unrelenting severity, in a monarch whose character has been considered as altogether devoid of compassionate or merciful feelings.

The epistle alluded to is one relative to the proposed re-marriage of Jane Shore, whose beauty or sweetness of manners, in spite of her frailties, had

* "Look when he fawns he bites; and when he bites,
His venom tooth will rankle to the death."
Shakspeare's Rich. III., Act. I. Sc. III.

† See the "Retrospective Review" on "Nichol's Autographs of noble and remarkable Personages."

so captivated Thomas Lynom, the king's solicitor-general, that he was at this time desirous of making her his wife. It would appear that Richard was grieved and astonished at the contemplated union. She had been faithless to her own husband, and the avowed mistress of his deceased brother; moreover, in addition to the ordinary report of her having afterwards resided with the Lord Hastings up to the period of his execution, she was accused by King Richard himself, in his official proclamation, of an equally disreputable connection with the Marquis of Dorset. How far either of these last imputations is well founded it were hard to say, in consequence of the contradictory reports which envelop the fate of Jane Shore in the same veil of mystery that shrouds the career of almost all the prominent personages connected with her time. But this much is certain; she was the paramour of Edward IV. for many years; she did penance for her irregular life after his decease, and she is shown to be a prisoner in Ludgate for treasonable practices* at the identical period that so important a functionary as the solicitor-general sought her in marriage.

And what was the conduct pursued by the monarch in this emergency? Not that of a tyrant, not that of a persecutor, but of a kind and indulgent master, anxious to arrest a faithful servant in the commission of an act injurious to his interests, but willing to yield to his wishes if remonstrance failed to open his eyes to the unfortunate alliance which he desired to form. With this view Richard addressed the following remarkable letter† to Dr. Russell, Bishop of Lincoln, then lord chancellor, and to whom, as has been before observed, was applied the eulogy of "the learned and the good."‡

"By the King.

"Right Reverend Father in God, &c., signifying unto you that it is showed unto us, that our servant and solicitor, Thos. Lynom, marvellously blinded and abused with the late wife of William Shore, now being in Ludgate by our commandment, hath made contract of matrimony with her, as it is said, and intendeth, to our full great marvel, to proceed to effect the same. We, for many causes, would be sorry that he so should be disposed, pray you therefore to send for him, and in that ye godly may exhort and stir him to the contrary. And if ye find him utterly set for to marry her, and none otherwise would be advertised, then, if it may stand with the law of the church, we be content (the time of marriage being deferred to our coming next to London), that upon sufficient surety found of her good abearing [behaviour] ye do send for her keeper and discharge him of our commandment by warrant of these, committing her to the rule and guiding of her father or any other, by your discretion, in the mean season.§

"Given, &c.

"To the Right Rev. Father in God the
Bishop of Lincoln our chancellor."‖

* It is probable that Jane Shore was re-committed to Ludgate after the reward offered for the Marquis of Dorset's apprehension, and by no means unlikely that the charge of her unlawful connection with that nobleman may have originated from her having aided his departure from sanctuary, and either concealed him in her apartments or sanctioned her dwelling being used as the point of reunion for the insurgents in Buckingham's revolt, as it had previously been, there is reason to believe, in Hastings' conspiracy.

† Harl. MSS., No. 2378.

‡ More, p. 35.

§ There is no date given to this curious document; but it was probably written about this period—that is to say, during Richard's second absence from the metropolis, judging from the king's expression, "our coming next to London."

‖ Preserved among Lord Hardwicke's state papers in the Harleian Library, No. 2378.

There is no compulsion enjoined in this epistle, no stretch of regal power, no threats, no stipulated resignation of office, but simply exhortation enjoined from the highest dignitary in the state, himself a prelate of unblemished reputation and virtue. The chancellor was empowered to release the frail but fascinating Jane from prison, to deliver her into the charge of the person most fitting to succour her — her own father, and even to sanction the marriage provided it held good "with the law of the church." Is this conduct indicative of cruelty? Does this letter exemplify the arbitrary, imperious, selfish destroyer of his people's comforts and happiness? Surely not! And when it is remembered that in Richard's days letters were neither designed for, nor liable to, publication, as in later times, but were the secret deposits of the unbiased sentiments of the individual who penned them, it must be admitted that the letters above given are satisfactory indications of the king's frame of mind, and tend materially to redeem his character from many of the harsh traits ordinarily affixed to him by historians.

It also completely exonerates him from the tradition of having caused Jane Shore's decease by starvation, from his merciless prohibition of all assistance being afforded her in her misery. She survived the monarch many years;* and the very circumstance of her dying in advanced age, and so decrepit that she was "but shrivelled skin and hard bone," removes her death to a period long subsequent to King Richard's reign, when her attractions,

> ——— "A pretty foot,
> A cherry lip,
> A bonny eye, a passing pleasing tongue,"†

were sufficiently remarkable to attract the young Marquis of Dorset, and after his attainder to win the king's solicitor-general.

Many more letters might be adduced illustrative of Richard's lenity, forbearance and kindness of heart; for, notwithstanding the rarity of epistolary communication at this early period of English history,‡ yet the letters of this monarch are abundant; they are mostly, it is true, on matters of state, but whether official or private, or of courtesy to crowned heads, the "chief are the king's own."§ The mass of facts connected with his remarkable career equally precludes the possibility of introducing the whole of his correspondence, as of making copious extracts from the invaluable register which has been so frequently referred to in this work. "I made the attempt," states Mr. Sharon Turner, when speaking on the latter point, "but I found the entries too numerous for insertion: it contains from 2000 to 2500 official documents, most of which are the king's beneficial grants."‖ Had the reign of Richard III. extended over as many years as it is now numbered by months, the above well-authenticated fact, and the probable results of so vigorous and active a mind—a mind devoted to the interests of his country and to the well-being of his subjects—would, in all probability, have conduced to the life and character of this monarch being perpetuated in a far different and truer light than that in which it has hitherto been depicted.

* Jane Shore was living at the time that Sir Thomas More wrote, which was nearly thirty years after Richard's decease; for, in his history of that monarch, he says, "Thus say they that knew her in her youth. Albeit some that now see her, *for she yet liveth*, deem her never to have been well visaged."—*Sir Thomas More*, p. 84.

† Shakspeare's Richard III., Act I. Sc. I.

‡ More, p. 84.

§ Ellis's Orig. Lett., 2d series, p. 147.

‖ Turner's Middle Ages, vol. iv. p. 58.

CHAPTER XVII.

King Richard returns to London.—Gloomy aspect of affairs in the metropolis.—Overtures of peace from King James of Scotland.—The body of King Henry VI. removed from Chertsey for reinterment at Windsor.—Injustice to Richard III. on this occasion.—His liberality displayed in his public buildings and collegiate endowments.—Pacific embassy from the French monarch.—Richard departs for Nottingham Castle, and receives the Scottish ambassadors in great state there.—Contract of marriage between the Prince of Scotland and the niece of King Richard, daughter of the Duke of Suffolk.—Treaty of peace with Francis, Duke of Brittany.—Richard's cordial reception on his entry into London.—His encouragement of the pastimes of the age.—He celebrates the festival of Christmas with great splendour.—Receives information of Richmond's projected invasion.—Measures promptly taken for the defence of the realm.—Exhausted state of Richard's finances.—His forced loans.—Discontent at that offensive mode of raising money.—Illness of the queen.—King Richard accused of wishing to marry his niece, and of poisoning his wife.—Both charges examined and ascertained to rest on no foundation but rumour.—Letter attributed to the Princess Elizabeth inconsistent with her exemplary character.—Death of the queen.—Her solemn burial at Westminster Abbey.

The month of August had commenced before King Richard could put into execution his earnest desire of returning to the capital of his kingdom. Six stormy months had marked the period since he had abruptly quitted the scene of his former triumph,—that city which had witnessed his accession, his coronation, and the ratification of his election to the crown. Threatening as the aspect of affairs then appeared, he yet quitted his capital sustained by hope, undaunted by fear, for he had attained the summit of his ambition. Not alone was his own brow encircled with the much-coveted diadem, but the sceptre seemed irrevocably fixed in his house by the act of settlement which had made the succession of his son the law of the land. How fragile is the slight tenure of earthly prosperity. The toil and the labour of years are crushed in a moment, and the littleness of man, at the height of his greatness, is often brought fearfully home to him by one of those immutable decrees from which there is no appeal. Although successful in arms, in political negotiation, and in the happy result of his own personal exertions, the king returned to his metropolis subdued in spirit and desolate in heart, for he was now childless. His youthful heir had been taken from him suddenly, and without warning. Before one anniversary had celebrated his parent's accession to the throne, or commemorated his own exalted position as Prince of Wales, young Edward of Gloucester slept in his tranquil grave. Disaffection, too, was overspreading the land; the regal treasury had become fearfully diminished, owing to the precautions requisite for frustrating the designs of Henry, Earl of Richmond; and internal discord foreboded as much cause for anxiety within the realm as had already been created by avowed hostility from foreign enemies. These accumulated difficulties had made the king yet more earnest to return to his capital. He was well acquainted with the seditious spirit which there prevailed, and he was not ignorant that his popularity was