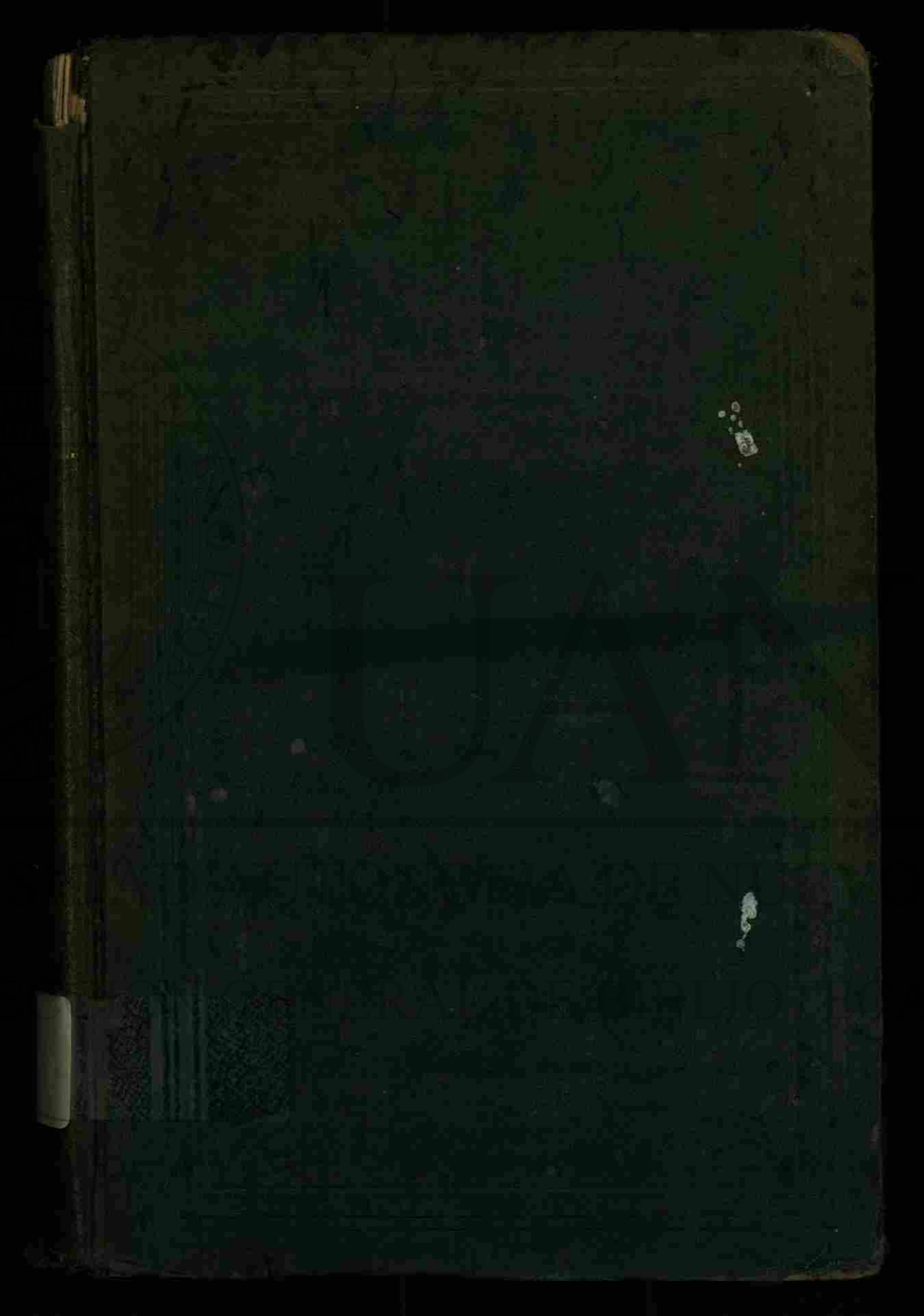

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AS

Duke of Gloucester

AND

KING OF ENGLAND.

BY

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TO HIMSELF.

IT IS NOW, ALAS! INSCRIBED

To his Memory.

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AND THE CONDESCENDING KINDNESS WHICH ADDED SO GREATLY TO

THEIR VALUE,

WILL CAUSE HIM TO BE LONG REMEMBERED

BY MANY WHO NOW MOURN THE LOSS OF THEIR FRIEND AND

BENEFACTOR,

BUT BY NO ONE MORE GRATEFULLY

THAN BY

THE AUTHOR.

T. K. & P. G. Collins, Printers.

PREFACE.

It has long been acknowledged, that the era of King Richard the Third comprehends the darkest, the most complex, and the worst authenticated portion of the English annals. The general historian, whose course through the middle ages is guided by a long series of trustworthy chroniclers, finds himself, when near the close of that important period, forsaken by the great body of his authorities, and those who remain are swayed by the violent prejudices and strong antipathies which are natural amongst a people who have long been a prey to civil discord. Shrinking from such corrupt and uncertain authority, history becomes silent; she resigns the doubtful and the mysterious to the poet, whose imagination weaves out of such materials the dark and terrible tragedies by which he seeks to awe and to instruct. Thus it has been with the period of Richard the Third. The historian relates comparatively little—the poet is full to overflowing. The former being reduced to chronicle doubts and suspicions, and being compelled to write his meagre narrative from the imperfect statements of timid friends or the slander of triumphant enemies, his work, thus constructed, becomes tame and uninviting; it excites no sympathy, takes no hold upon the public mind, is read and is speedily forgotten. The defeat of the historian is the triumph of the poet. He occupies the vacant field, turns to account the dark hint, the half-breathed suspicion, and, unshackled by chronology, unfettered by any consideration of the credibility of the evidence upon which he relies, he pours into the unoccupied and "too credulous ear" his thrilling and attractive tale. Such must always be the case when history leaves her work to be done by the poet, and such is the precise state of things in the period under present consideration. The genius of Shakspeare seized upon the history of Richard the Third as a vacant possession, and peopled it with beings who have, indeed, historic names, but whose attributed descriptions and actions are, for the most part, the mere imaginings of the bard.

The truth of this representation has long been partially felt by all persons who have investigated the history of those troubled times. Particular facts, nay, considerable portions of the popular belief, have been, from time to time, subjected to examination, and found to be altogether devoid of foundation; and much acute reasoning and profound argument have been bestowed in criticism upon the contradictory and incredible statements of the few authorities that were accessible to the earlier historians of Richard's reign. Doubts have

been openly expressed, and controversy energetically maintained; but disputation is an avenue through which truth, and especially historical truth, is but seldom arrived at: consequently, after many and lengthened discussions from writers of acknowledged ability, the boundaries of the historical and the poetical in the received popular version of the history of Richard the Third remain as indefinite as ever. If the author of the present work had imagined that the course pursued by the zealous inquirers to whom she has alluded was that by which the truth might be discovered, she would have deemed her interference to be in the highest degree presumptuous. If the questions in dispute were to be determined, or could possibly be determined, by acute reasoning or profound philosophical inquiry, she would have shrunk from attempting to exhibit powers to the possession of which she is well aware she cannot pretend; but, it appearing to her that mere argument and discussion were unsatisfactory modes of attempting to determine a doubtful question in history, and that the humble seeker after authorities might in a case like this do better service than the most brilliant or philosophical of speculators, she resolved on collecting from every available source all existing authentic notices, however trivial, of the defamed prince and monarch. Many of them were found in MSS., many were gathered from recent publications bearing on the events of this period, especially the important works edited by Sir Harris Nicolas, G. C. M. G., and those of the Camden Society, which has done and is doing so much for historical literature, and many were so widely scattered, or were deposited in places so unlikely to afford materials for such a purpose, that it is by no means astonishing that they have occasionally escaped the notice of general historians.

When brought together, and placed in opposition to the statements which have so long and so lamentably passed for history, the results were so convincing that the author felt encouraged to submit them to the public. She was well aware that in so doing she should oppose herself to opinions long and deeply rooted—to a part of our national historical belief which it is something like heresy to dispute. But, strong in the power of the evidences she has analyzed, and in the belief that no prejudice can withstand the truth when fairly and simply displayed, she indulges the hope that her unwearied research having fortified her with facts, and her own views being supported by those who rank high in literary fame, she may be shielded from the charge either of defective judgment or of presumption in her bold undertaking.

The favourable opinion of many literary friends possessed of taste and judgment, and the assistance kindly afforded to the author in various ways, have rendered her task less formidable than might have been anticipated from the importance of the subject. To John Bruce, Esq., her obligations are very great, not only for the aid afforded by his acquaintance with the historical literature of the period, but likewise from the kindness with which it has been imparted. To Sir Henry Ellis, K. H.; to Sir Charles George Young,

Garter; to the late lamented Right Honourable Thomas P. Courtenay; to Thomas Duffus Hardy, Esq., Keeper of Records in the Tower; and to John Bowyer Nichols, Esq.; she is greatly indebted;—to some of them for important facts, to others for their ready help afforded to her when seeking for information. Nor can she omit expressing her thanks to Sir William Heygate, Bart., Thomas Pares, Esq., and those other kind and zealous friends who facilitated the accomplishment of her wish to examine personally the present state of the several places connected with the closing scenes of King Richard's career, especially Bosworth Field, Nottingham Castle, and the localities in Leicester, and its vicinity,—localities on which history, poetry, and the drama have combined to cast an imperishable interest. The author cannot, however, but feel timidity in presenting to the public a work which, although the result of great toil and labour to herself, must of necessity war with so many prejudices, that the first effort to shake them can scarcely hope to be received with favour. Still, unless it be considered advisable that, because errors and mis-statements have been promulgated in less enlightened times, and been received in succeeding ages as historical facts, they should continue to be perpetuated in spite of all the evidence which modern research has rendered available for their refutation,—unless this be thought advisable, she hopes to receive a patient and candid hearing. If the task had fallen into abler hands, it might have led to results which she cannot anticipate as likely to arise from her own weak efforts. A mind more profound might have applied her materials in a variety of ways which have probably escaped her notice; but she trusts that the importance of her theme will procure her work an indulgent reception from the reading portion of the community, and qualify with the more learned the defects of its execution. Attention being drawn to the subject, a sense of justice may gradually pervade the public at large; and, by the aid of other and abler pens, King Richard's character be ultimately rescued from imputations which rest upon grounds as shallow and untenable as that of his personal deformity. In this way the fabulous tales which have been long associated with his memory will be weeded from the pages of history, and his character as a prince be rescued from those unjust charges which alone derogate from the acknowledged superiority of his regal career.

Newlan House, Lymington,
May 1, 1844.

RICHARD THE THIRD,

AS DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, AND

KING OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

Prejudices entertained against Richard III.—Origin of the marvellous tales associated with his memory, based on tradition, not on history.—Peculiar position of Richard.—Dearth of historical writers in his reign.—State of society at the Plantagenet dynasty.—The battles of Hastings and Bosworth compared.—General coincidence of results arising from Harold's and Richard's defeat and death.—Favourable circumstances attending the accession of William I. and Henry VII.—Contrary effect on their deceased rivals.—Richard the victim of party spirit and political malevolence.

Few of the founders of new dynasties have been more unsparingly reviled, few men more bitterly calumniated than Richard the Third.

Length of years has not softened the asperity with which a hostile faction delighted to magnify his evil deeds, and which did not allow any one redeeming quality to appear in their extenuation; neither have more enlightened times brought to this monarch's aid a continuous biographical narrative to rescue his memory from at least a portion of the aggravated crimes with which the romance of early days and the ever prevalent love of the marvellous have delighted to invest his brief career.

From our very childhood his name is pronounced with terror; supernatural appearances both at his birth* and his death† have been freely circulated to increase the odium which attaches to the remembrance of one who, from his cradle, seemed marked as a monster, hideous alike to contemplate or describe.‡ Nursery tales§ have united with history‖ and tradition,¶ in rendering him a

* "King Richard III., whose monstrous birth foreshowed his monstrous proceedings, for he was born with all his teeth, and hair to his shoulders."—*Camden's Remains*, p. 353.

† "The fame went that he had the same night (the eve of his death) a dreadful and a terrible dream, for it seemed to him, being asleep, that he saw divers images, like terrible devils, which pulled and hauled him, not suffering him to take any quiet or rest."—*Grafton's Chronicle*, p. 219.

‡ Rous, Hist. Reg. Ang. p. 215. Polydore Virgil, p. 562.

§ The familiar legend of "The Children in the Wood," has been considered to be, and apparently with reason, an obscure and disguised relation of the suspected murder of his nephews by King Richard III. (*Sharon Turner's Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 407); and whoever peruses this tale, under that impression, and compares the "doleful story" of the two babes in the ballad, with Sir Thomas More's historical narrative of the "dolourous end of those babes," (*More's Rycharde III.*, p. 127,) cannot fail of being struck with the general resemblance it bears to leading facts connected with the tradition of the death of the young princes. See Appendix A.

‖ Sir Thomas More's Hist. of Kynge Rycharde III., p. 8. Lord Bacon's Hist. of King Henry VII., p. 2.

¶ Sir Richard Baker's Chronicle of the Kings of England, p. 235.

by-word and reproach to posterity; and by the aid of the drama,* the perverted representations of malignant adversaries† have been impressed, in language the most powerful, and through a form the most attractive, on the minds of successive generations.‡

It is time that at least some justice was done to Richard III. as a monarch, however opinions may vary as regards the measure of his guilt as a man.

This can only be effected by taking the unerring voice of truth as a guide, by banishing from remembrance all merely traditional legends, and by striving to form an impartial decision from well-attested and indisputable facts, gleamed not from the annalists of after times, or from the party statements of over-zealous friends on the one hand, and virulent enemies on the other, but derived from cotemporary authority, and the unbiassed testimony of eye-witnesses.

The period has long since passed when prejudice could prevail to warp the judgment in historical narration; and few in this age will be disposed to reject the evidence of disinterested cotemporaries, because it overthrows the more marvellous relations of political animosity. It may justly be asked why Richard III. of all the sovereigns of England was so peculiarly the prey of rancour and malevolence? But the reason is obvious. Richard alone, of all his predecessors, was a vanquished and defeated monarch, at a period when personal prowess and heroism formed the standard of respect and admiration. He was the last of his dynasty, the object of especial indignation both to the family of his predecessor, and of hatred and jealousy to his rival. He lived also at a time when national literature was at its lowest ebb,§ from the stagnation which the fury of civil warfare had brought upon letters and the fine arts generally; so that little difficulty presents itself in assigning abundant cause for the scanty intelligence and paucity of materials which contribute to add mystery to the horrors of this dark and savage period. Alternately occupied in fighting for one party, or in defending the cause of the adverse faction, the highest nobles in the land thought only of inciting their infant progeny to deeds of arms, or steeling their young minds against the subtilty and want of faith which so unhappily disgraced the age. The art of printing was as yet scarcely known, so that all accounts, whether historical or traditional, were written in manuscript with great cost and labour: family archives and private memoirs, therefore, must necessarily have been rare at that period; and it cannot be doubted, that the few public documents of the times were influenced by party spirit and prejudiced views.

Of the scanty references that did exist, many of the original MSS. were either wholly destroyed, or the copies so mutilated and injured, not only from the warfare and desolation that pervaded the land arising from civil discord,‖ but also from the destruction of the religious houses which so speedily followed, that, in many important points, doubts can no longer be removed, difficulties solved, or the contradictory statements of cotemporaries be reconciled or explained.

* Shakspeare's Tragedy of Richard III.
† Hall and Holinshed's Chronicles.
‡ Walpole's Historic Doubts, p. 114. § Hume, vol. iv. p. 217.
‖ Some idea may be formed of the fatal consequences which resulted to literature from the ravages of an infuriated mob, even at a much later period than that now under consideration, by referring to Stow's description of the conduct of Wyatt's followers in their attack on the magnificent palace of the Bishop of Winchester, at Bankside, (1554,) in the ancient and valuable library attached to which the books were so numerous, that the historian, in speaking of the numbers which were cut up and wholly destroyed, says, "that men might have gone up to their knees in the leaves so torn out and scattered about."—*Stow's Survey.*

No historian of eminence flourished at the close of the Plantagenet dynasty. No learned biographer or philosophical statesman lived during King Richard's short and turbulent reign, to narrate minutely the combination of circumstances which led to his aspiring to the crown;* and to describe the munificent acts and wise regulations, which, being still preserved in the national archives, and corroborated by rare and valuable manuscripts,† bear evidence indisputable of this monarch's powerful mind and of his comprehensive and vigorous views. These, however, have only recently been made partially known, from attention being directed to the subject, owing to the publication of provincial histories,‡ the examination of municipal records and the correspondence or private diaries of reputable and disinterested cotemporaries.§

On the other hand, biographers and annalists of known ability, encouraged by the patronage bestowed on letters by Henry VII., Richard's successor, used their talents during his long and tranquil reign to laud the victorious sovereign; to perpetuate the wisdom, foresight and piety of him who had brought peace to the desolated land; and to seek or hope for favour and advancement, by eulogizing the reigning prince, and vilifying the fallen monarch.‖ Had Richard III. survived the battle of Bosworth, and lived to perfect, in a series of years, the wise laws, the profound views and judicious measures framed in the course of a few short months, posterity would in all probability have heard but little imputation against the Duke of Gloucester; whilst his ambition and alleged usurpation would have been overlooked, like that of Henry IV. and other of his predecessors, in the benefits

* The chronicler of Croyland, and Rous, the Warwick antiquary, are almost the only cotemporary annalists of King Richard's reign. The first is valuable authority; for the author was "a doctor of canon law, and one of King Edward the Fourth's councillors," (*Cont. Croy. in Gale*, vol. i. p. 557;) but his narrative is brief, being a mere epitome of events, which is the more to be lamented as his facts are authenticated by parliamentary documents. Rous, on the contrary, by dedicating his work, "Historia Regum Anglicæ," to Richard's rival, cannot be considered an impartial authority, even had he not rendered himself unworthy of credit by his contradictory account of this monarch, written previous to the above-named historical work, which was compiled for King Henry VII.—*Supplement to Walpole's Historic Doubts.*

† The Harl. MS. Number 433, contains a register of the grants, &c., which passed the privy-seal or sign manual during the reigns of King Edward V. and King Richard III., consisting of no less than two thousand three hundred and seventy-eight articles. In addition to the above, No. 18 contains manuscripts and collectanies, out of the Parl. Rolls of Richard III., and No. 22 a short abstract, taken out of the Parl. Rolls, of the private acts during the reign of Richard III.—See *Preface to the Catalogue of the Harl. MSS.*, p. 16.

‡ See Drake's Hist. of York; Surtees's Hist. of Durham; Whittaker's Hist. of Richmondshire, and other eminent northern historians.

§ See also several of the works recently published by the Camden Society, together with that valuable collection of original letters, entitled "The Paston Correspondence."

‖ Bernard Andreas, the biographer of Henry VII., was poet laureate to that monarch, and tutor to Prince Arthur, his eldest son. His work, which is full of curious matter, has never been published, but the manuscript may be found in the Cott. MSS. Dom. A. xviii. It was written in the year 1500. Polydore Virgil, Dean of Wells, historiographer to Henry VII., completed his history, which was begun in the year 1505, under the immediate patronage of that monarch's second son and successor, King Henry VIII. Fabian, the city chronicler, was a zealous Lancastrian, and compiled his work during the reign of Henry VII. Lord Bacon's well-known life of this sovereign, though not written until after the succession of James I., was a transcript from the Tudor historians, from whose chronicles he obtained the leading facts, which he perpetuated in his own more finished style of composition.—See *Archæologia*, vol. xxvii. p. 153.

which resulted to the realm at large from his powerful rule, and the brilliancy which marked his kingly career.

But it was otherwise decreed. Richard was a fallen and a vanquished foe, the victim of that all-absorbing ambition on which his enemies have grounded their accusations, and which was more than a counterpoise to his legislative zeal and ability. Those faithful and firm friends who could best have testified to his good deeds, or have defended his memory from unjust aspersions, were numbered with himself amongst the slain at Bosworth field. Those who had dealt treacherously with their patron and benefactor felt their consciences soothed, and themselves relieved from odium, by the obloquy that increased tenfold after his death. While the kingdom at large, rejoicing in the union of the Red and White Roses, the contests between which had so long desolated the land with all the misery attending domestic warfare, cared but little that the crimes of King Edward IV., out of courtesy to his daughter, the reigning queen, were laid wholly to the charge of the much-execrated Gloucester, or that the accession of his peacefully disposed successor was left undisputed, and rendered more acceptable to the populace by the unworthy actions and criminal deeds unsparingly ascribed, whether justly or unjustly, to the last monarch of the House of Plantagenet. The superstitious belief in omens, warnings and predictions which peculiarly characterized the period that closed the brief career of King Richard, were industriously promulgated to invest with the terror of supernatural appearances the simplest and most natural events; while the ferocious deeds, which so sullied the brilliant rule of the House of York, withdrawn by common consent from the shoulders of the elder brothers to burden exclusively the memory of the fallen Gloucester, were believed firmly to have been proved, as by a judgment from on high, in the accumulation of untoward events, which so early sealed the fate of one of the bravest soldiers and most potent monarchs of the age in which he flourished.

Except by those well versed in our national history, during the disastrous times that terminated the Plantagenet dynasty, it is scarcely possible to be conceived the state into which England had degenerated; the struggle for pre-eminence between the rival factions having led its inhabitants to despise every acquirement that had a tendency to soften the minds of individuals, or to interfere with the progress of vengeance and ambition. Caxton, who was the chief agent in dispelling the grievous darkness that so filled the land, gives, in his Picture of London,* a feeling portraiture of the existing state of things; but though the magic of his wonderful art gradually swept away the mists that had long enveloped all that was good and great, yet the advantages arising from its powerful influence were experienced less in his own particular time than in after years. Richard III., to whom he dedicated one of the rarest of his works,† and to whose chivalrous feelings and princely demeanour he bears such conclusive testimony, by his eloquent appeal in the preface, lived not long enough to benefit from an invention which, by enumerating the generous and noble qualities of his youth, and perpetuating the wisdom of his legal acts, might have made a powerful contrast in after years with the Tudor chronicles, which detailed only his crimes, whether real or imputed.

But no such favourable circumstance befriended this monarch. His early childhood, from the causes just named, was wrapt in mystery. His maturer years were stigmatized by accusations equally opposed to reason and unsupported by proof; while his entire conduct and actions, from his birth

* See Appendix B.

† The Booke of the Order of Chivalry or Knighthoode: Caxton, 1484.

to his death, are rendered so obscure by the contradictory statements and marvellous circumstances which mingle with some few well-attested facts, that they have hitherto distracted the biographer, and defied the general historian to unravel them. Richard III. was destined to terminate with his brief reign the darkest period, morally speaking, of our national annals; for with his reign terminated that unceasing period of feudal oppression and civil warfare, which, commencing at the Norman conquest and ending with the defeat at Bosworth, is usually designated "the middle ages."

With the Tudor line, as with the Norman race, a new and brighter order of things dawned upon the land. The decisive battles of Hastings and of Bosworth, the most important in a political point of view, perhaps, of any of our domestic contests, were parallel in their subversion of the ancient order of things, and also in the effect which they produced of establishing a distinct chronological era in English history: for with the subjugation of the Saxon monarchs and the accession of William I. commenced that chivalric though despotic period which reached its climax during the brilliant reigns of the Plantagenets, and terminated in the ruin and downfall of that divided house, in the person of its last representative, Richard III. On the other hand, Henry VII., from whom all subsequent monarchs of this realm have descended, may justly be considered the founder of those liberties, and the father of that civil and political freedom, which so distinguish the last three centuries from the state of tyrannical oppression that immediately preceded it; rendering the one the age of proud nobility and servile vassalage; the other that of an enlightened aristocracy, with a generous and free-born people.

The coincidence, indeed, of circumstances and results, arising from the defeat respectively of Richard and Harold, were most remarkable as relates to their important effect on the kingdom at large. Henry of Richmond, like William the Conqueror, ascended the throne with all the fame attendant on victory; and profited no less by the odium that must ever attach to the violent and unjust deposition of a youthful sovereign.* Their claims, too, were alike aided by the religious enthusiasm already kindled in their favour, from their connection with the pious kings Edward the Confessor and Henry VI.; the former canonized as Saint Edward, the other only denied a corresponding exaltation in consequence of the enormous fees which were demanded by Pope Julius for the apotheosis of "Saint Henry of Lancaster."† The reign of the latter, also, like that of the former monarch, encouraged by its weakness the preponderating influence of an overbearing aristocracy, and they tended, in like manner, to facilitate the revolution by which that powerful body was in its turn subdued. Again, the circumstance of Edward the Confessor being the son of a Norman princess‡ gave early encouragement to the expectations of his kinsman, and furnished the duke at his decease with a pretence for asserting his right to the crown; so, also, it is well known that Henry VI. early prognosticated the succession of Henry of Richmond, and that his words, considered prophetic in that superstitious age, greatly

* Harold I. was appointed regent of England, and Richard III. was nominated lord protector of the realm during the minority of the lawful heirs of the throne; and both these princes deposed their sovereigns, who were minors, and took upon them the royal prerogative.—*Sandford*, book i. p. 4; book v. p. 407.

† "The general opinion was, that Pope Julius was too deare, and that the king would not come to his rates."—*Bacon's Henry VII.*, p. 227.

‡ William I. of England, and seventh Duke of Normandy, was cousin to Edward the Confessor; his mother Emma, the wife of King Etheldred, being the daughter of Richard fifth Duke of Normandy, who was uncle to William, surnamed the Conqueror.—*Sandford*, book i. p. 1.

aided the claims,—that of being the son of a Lancastrian princess,*—on which Richmond based his pretensions to the crown. The imbecility of the lawful heirs to the crown, the unfortunate Edward of Warwick† and "the gentle" Edgar Atheling, who is described as wholly unfit to govern, both in mind and body,‡ by destroying the hopes of the advocates for legitimate succession, and precluding opposition to the invaders, left the crown open respectively to the founders of the Norman and Tudor lines; who, though cementing eventually the old and new dynasties, by marriage with the female representative of the former, were, nevertheless, more palpably usurpers than the monarchs whom they so unsparingly branded as such; in consequence of legitimate male issue being alive,§ when they seized the throne by violence, and established themselves on it by right of conquest. Finally, the discontent of the opposing parties speedily manifesting itself in insurrection, conspiracy and revolt, the policy of William, as also of Henry VII., aimed at subduing the power of the nobility, weakening the authority of the clergy and augmenting the liberties of the people. In both cases the accession of these monarchs formed epochs of mental cultivation in their subjects, which could not fail to reflect brilliancy on their reigns: the Norman princes, by their love of minstrelsy and poetry, their patronage of letters and of learned men, laying the foundation of that thirst for knowledge which reached its climax under the Tudor monarchs

* Henry VII. of England, and second Earl of Richmond of that descent, was nephew to Henry VI., being the son of that monarch's half-brother, Edmund Tudor, espoused to the Lady Margaret Beaufort, only child of John Duke of Somerset, the grandson of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster.—*Life of Margaret Beaufort*, p. 43.

† Edward, Earl of Warwick was about 10 years of age (*Dugdale*, vol. ii. p. 162), when Henry VII. contested the crown with Richard III. at Bosworth; but in consequence of the severities and close imprisonment which this hapless prince had endured from his early childhood, his mind had become so enfeebled that he was altogether incapacitated from being the leader of his party or assuming the reigns of government. Nevertheless, as the only surviving son of George, Duke of Clarence, King Richard's elder brother, he was the lawful inheritor of the English throne upon his uncle's decease, and after the disappearance of the young princes his cousins; for although the daughters of Edward IV. were alive and at liberty, yet up to this period of English history females had not exercised the regal authority in Britain.

‡ Milton, Hist. Brit., book vi. p. 82.

§ On the demise of Edward the Confessor, there were three surviving children of his nephew Edward, son of Edmund Ironside, who, had not that prince died before his uncle, would by heirship have succeeded to the throne. These consisted of a son, Edgar Atheling, constitutionally weak, but the undoubted heir of the crown, and his young sisters Margaret and Christina. Prince Edgar was acknowledged king upon the decease of his great uncle, but was speedily dethroned by his kinsman Harold, who had been appointed regent during the young king's minority. Edgar lived under Harold's government until that prince was slain by the Norman conqueror; upon whose usurpation a pension for life was settled upon the dethroned monarch. Of the two daughters, Margaret, the elder, married Malcolm III., King of Scotland, and Christina took the veil. By the subsequent union of Matilda, Margaret's daughter, with the youngest son of King William, eventually Henry I., the Saxon and Norman lines were united.—*Millon's History of Britain*, book vi.; *Sandford*, book i. On the accession of Henry VII., seven legitimate heirs to the crown were living, viz., the five daughters of Edward IV. and the son and daughter of George, Duke of Clarence, who had been put to death in the Tower. Of these, the unhappy Edward of Clarence, a state prisoner from his infancy, was even more rigidly guarded than before by the Tudor monarch; failure of issue in the deceased king, Richard III., having rendered Prince Edward the last male survivor of his ill-fated race. He was finally beheaded by Henry on frivolous accusations, but really from political jealousy, at the early age of twenty-four, in the year 1499; and by the marriage of this monarch with Elizabeth, the eldest of King Edward the Fourth's daughters, the long divided houses of York and Lancaster became united.—*Excerpta Historica*, p. 123.

from the adventitious aid of printing and the encouragement bestowed by Henry VII. and his family on the earliest typographical efforts. It is, therefore, apparent that the founder of the Tudor dynasty must have possessed, as was before stated, the full benefit of cotemporary biographers and able historians to enumerate his virtues and extenuate his errors; while Richard III. was selected by these self-same writers as the victim to exalt the fame and magnify the judicious policy pursued by his more cautious and successful rival.

As the image of the deceased king faded from remembrance, deformity of body, without sufficient co-existing proof,* was gradually associated with alleged deformity of mind; thus strengthening the contrast, bodily as well as mental, between the new monarch and his fallen predecessor—the distorted appearance of the one seeming in unison with his dark and crooked policy;† while the moral and religious habits of the other, being annexed to superiority of form and feature,‡ speedily secured golden opinions for the second Alfred,—"the Solomon of England,"§—and increased to positive frenzy the odium and abhorrence which to this day attach to "Crook-backed Richard," the demon incarnate of prejudice, of superstition, and of political malevolence.‖ Let it not, however, be supposed, that in entering on the arena of controversy respecting the alleged acts of Richard III., any desire is entertained of exalting him into a hero of romance. The crimes laid to his charge, whether real or imaginary, (for this is not the place in which to discuss their validity,) were many and grievous; and his elevation to the crown was marked by transactions which, to speak in the mildest terms, were open to severe condemnation, unmitigable censure. But the same unerring guide, Truth, will equally aid the historian in collecting well-attested facts, whether adduced in corroboration of good or evil deeds; and in the absence of all proof—nay, of even substantial foundation for imputed crimes greater and more heinous than were ever, perhaps, heaped on the memory of any individual,—surely the charitable and truly English feeling claimed for the vilest of malefactors, until he has been tried by credible witnesses and pronounced guilty by upright and disinterested judges, will not be denied to one of the illustrious line of the Plantagenets, when seeking from his countrymen, at the expiration of three centuries, that justice which the fury of party spirit prevented his obtaining at the time he lived.

* Stow, in his valuable work, "The Survey of London," declared, "that he could find no such note of deformity in King Richard III. as historians commonly relate;" and he acknowledged, *viva voce*, that he had spoken with some ancient men, who, from their own sight and knowledge, affirmed that he was of bodily shape comely enough, only of low stature. Now, as "honest John Stowe" was born in 1525, only forty years after Richard's decease, he must have had many facilities for speaking with those who had both known and seen the king; he was also remarkable for his circumstantial detail of the persons of princes, and "very inquisitive," too, in the description of their persons and features.—*Life of Stow*, prefixed to his *Survey of London*, p. xviii., ed. 1720.

† "There never was in any man a greater uniformity of body and mind than was in him, both of them equally deformed. Of body he was but low, crook'd-backed, hook-shouldered, splay-footed, and goggle-eyed; his face little and round, his complexion swarthy, his left arm from his birth dry and withered; born a monster in nature, with all his teeth, with hair on his head and nails on his fingers and toes. And just such were the qualities of his mind."—*Baker's Chronicle*, p. 234.

‡ See Appendix C.

§ Bacon's Henry VII., p. 231.

‖ "Since the heavens have shap'd my body so,
Let hell make crook'd my mind to answer it."
Richard III., Act I. Scene I.

CHAPTER II.

Offspring of Edward III.—Richard II. deposed by Henry of Lancaster, who usurps the throne.—Superior title of the Earl of March.—The Earl of Cambridge conspires to dethrone Henry V.—He is seized and executed for high treason.—Rivalry of the Houses of York and Lancaster.—The honours of the race of Clarence and of York centre in Richard Plantagenet, heir of the attainted Cambridge.—His childhood, wardship, character and high reputation.—Unpopularity of Henry VI.—His loss of reason.—Duke of York is made Protector.—Birth of Edward Prince of Wales.—Hostility of Queen Margaret towards the Duke of York.—He asserts his title to the throne.—His claims admitted by parliament.—Indignation of Margaret.—Battle of Wakefield.—The Duke of York is slain.—Edward, his eldest son, proclaimed king.

Before entering on the more particular and personal history of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, in order that the nature of his political position may be clearly understood, it will be necessary briefly to review the state of public affairs up to the birth of that prince; so far, at least, as is requisite to show what was the situation of his parents, both as regards their connection with the throne, and likewise with that faction of which they were the acknowledged head. The offspring of Edward III. and Philippa of Hainault, who commenced their reign in the year 1327, consisted of seven sons and five daughters.* Of these the eldest, Edward the Black Prince, died of consumption shortly before his father, so that the crown, in 1377, devolved on a minor, Richard II., his only surviving child.

That prince, weak, irascible and self-willed, though endowed with amiable and affectionate qualities, was deposed in 1399 by his cousin Henry of Bolingbroke, heir to John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, the fourth son of Edward III. Parliament, however, had previously nominated as successor to Richard II., who had early been united to Ann of Bohemia, but without issue, Roger Mortimer, Earl of March,† the grandson of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, elder brother to John of Gaunt, and the legitimate heir to the throne; Prince William, King Edward's second son, having died young.‡

The House of Lancaster being powerful, wealthy and highly popular, this branch of King Edward's family retained possession of the usurped sceptre, and transferred it to their lineal successors for three consecutive reigns; viz., that of Henry IV., who forcibly seized it, his son Henry V. and Henry VI. his grandson; the three sovereigns who compose that branch of the Plantagenet dynasty, which, in our regnal annals, is denominated the Lancastrian.

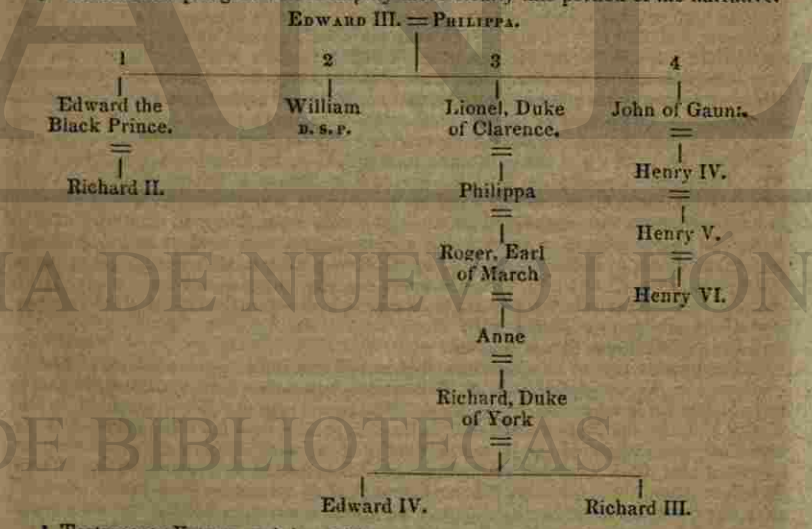
But their sway, though uninterrupted for upwards of half a century, was neither peaceful nor altogether uncontested. Notwithstanding the alleged abdication of Richard II., and the fact that Parliament ratified§ the usurpation of Henry IV.,‖ the claims of the descendants of Lionel, Duke of Clarence were considered, at Richard's decease, indisputable by the laws of

* See Appendix D.
† Rot. Parl., vol. v. p. 484.
‡ In the Cott. MSS. there is preserved a very interesting cotemporaneous account of the funeral of this young prince, who was born at Hatfield in 1336, and dying 3d March, was buried at York, 9 Edw. III.—*Cott. MSS.*, Nero C. viii. fol. 213.
§ Rot. Parl., vol. iii. p. 416.
‖ Ibid., p. 424.

inheritance. This Prince Lionel left an only child, Philippa, married to Edward Mortimer, Earl of March, in whose son Roger centred the above-named claims.* This son, however, dying before the deposed monarch, his heir, a child seven years of age, with an infant brother, were imprisoned for many years at Windsor Castle,† and their wardship bestowed on the Prince of Wales, afterwards Henry V., that their rich possessions and rival claims to the crown might ensure from the heir apparent continued and safe custody. Unusual as is such a result in such cases of conflicting interests, a chivalric and romantic friendship sprang up between the prince and his imprisoned cousins; so that, upon his accession to the throne, Henry V. experienced no opposition from Edmund Mortimer,‡ but numbered him amongst his most devoted followers.

Thus stood matters during the usurping reign of Henry IV. as regards the four eldest branches of King Edward's race.§ The fifth son of that monarch was Edmund Langley, Duke of York, who married Isabel, daughter and co-heiress of Peter, King of Castile and Leon.‖ John of Gaunt having espoused her sister, a double connection by birth and by marriage united, for a brief period, the houses of York and Lancaster; but this alliance produced a mere temporary submission to the usurpation of the latter; for the Duke of York's second son,¶ the Earl of Cambridge, espousing the Lady Ann Mortimer, sister to the above-named Earl of March, and granddaughter of Philippa of Clarence, that branch speedily and with great energy advocated the rights of primogeniture, which had been tacitly abandoned by Edward Mortimer, the rightful heir. This nobleman was childless,** so that no personal ambition stimulated opposition to his early friend and former guardian; and the other

* Sandford, book iii. ch. xii.
† Hume, vol. iv. p. 62.
‡ Kennet, vol. i. p. 315.
§ The annexed pedigree will exemplify more clearly this portion of the narrative.



‖ Testamenta Vetusta, vol. i. p. 124.
¶ Richard of York, surnamed of Coningsburgh, from the place of his birth, and created Earl of Cambridge by Henry V. shortly after his accession to the throne.—*Parl. Ann.* 11 *Hen. V.*
** Sir Francis Biondi's Hist. of the Civill Warres, vol. i. p. 114.

male branches of the House of March having gradually fallen victims to zeal for their race, or dying without issue, the lineal rights of their ancestor, Lionel of Clarence, became vested, after Edmund Mortimer's decease, in Richard Plantagenet, the only son of the Lady Ann Mortimer and the Earl of Cambridge.* Now this latter prince was not of a temperament quietly to abandon his child's just claims; consequently, in the third year of King Henry's reign, upon the eve of that monarch's departure on an expedition into France, he joined in a conspiracy with some leading nobles, the Lord Treasurer Scroop, and Sir Thomas Grey, who were favourable to his cause, to depose Henry V.,† and restore the lawful heir to the throne in the person of the above-named Edmund Mortimer, Philippa's grandson, and his own brother by marriage. Being, however, betrayed by the Earl of March, to whom he had disclosed this conspiracy, the ostensible design of which was to place him on the throne of his ancestors, but doubtless with the ultimate view of his son's succession, he was seized, tried, and condemned on his own confession,‡ and beheaded with the other conspirators at Southampton§ in the year 1415, and third of Henry V.

The untimely death of this prince, who was much and deservedly beloved, induced in his race a particular and personal cause of hatred against the line of Lancaster; and the two branches of Clarence and York being united by marriage and influenced by mutual feelings of indignation from injuries inflicted by the reigning family, they henceforth became leagued in one common cause of enmity against them; whence the unceasing and exterminating warfare that characterized the period in which their several claims were so fiercely contested under the well-known application of the Wars of the Roses.‖ By the

* Testamenta Vetusta, vol. ii. p. 110.

† Some of the early chronicles ascribe this conspiracy to Charles VI. of France, stating that he offered a million of gold for the betrayal or murder of King Henry; but the high esteem with which Richard of Coningsburgh was regarded by his royal kinsman, who had created him in the year previous Earl of Cambridge, a title which had before been borne by his father and brother, renders it highly improbable that any less powerful inducement than that of preserving the right of his posterity to the crown, would have induced in the earl so desperate and ungrateful a scheme.—*Sandford*, book v. p. 366.

‡ The indictment of the Earl of Cambridge may be found on the Rolls of Parliament, vol. iv. p. 64; and the substance, in English, in the Lansdown MSS. No. 1. art. 27. The letter of confession from the earl to King Henry V. is preserved in the Cottonian MSS. Vesp. C. xiv. fol. 39; and his memorable letter, suing for mercy after his condemnation, is also contained in the same collection, Vesp. F. iii. fol. 7. These letters, as autographs of so remarkable a person, are most curious and interesting; but as the whole have been published by Sir Henry Ellis, in his valuable collection of "Original Letters," vol. i. 2d series, it is not considered necessary here to give more than correct reference to the genuine documents, which so minutely detail the unhappy end of the grandsire of Richard III.

§ Cott. MSS. Vesp. C. xiv. fol. 39.

‖ The precise period at which the Red and White Roses were adopted as hostile emblems in the divided House of Plantagenet, has never been satisfactorily ascertained; but an ancient cotemporaneous MS. (see Appendix E), discovered by Sir Henry Ellis in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, proves that the White Rose was an hereditary cognizance of the House of York, and borne as such by the duke when he inherited the title. Camden states that the Lancastrians derived the badge of the Red Rose from their ancestor Edmund, first Earl of Lancaster, "on whose person," says Sandford, "was originally founded the great contention betwixt the two royal houses of Lancaster and York." And in a curious article, entitled "Impresses," Camden, in his Remains, p. 451, asserts, that "Edmund Crouch-backe, second son of Henry III., used a Red Rose, wherewith his tomb at Westminster is adorned." Also, that "John of Gaunt, fifth Duke of Lancaster, took a Red Rose to his device, as it were by right of his first wife, the heiress of Lancaster, grandchild to the above-named Edmund Crouch-backe;" and that "Edmund of Langley, Duke of York, his younger brother, adopted as his emblem the White Rose."

demise of Edward,* eldest son of Edmund Langley, Duke of York, who was slain at the battle of Agincourt, and left no issue, the infant heir of the recently executed Earl of Cambridge became the head of this family, and the inheritor of his uncle's fortune and honours;† but in consequence of his father's rebellion and subsequent attainder, these latter were withheld from him.

At the death of the Duke of York, in 1415, a few months after the execution of the Earl of Cambridge, Richard Plantagenet was only three years of age; nevertheless the suspicions induced by the earl's conspiracy, and the jealousy resulting from the justness of his son's maternal claims on the crown, led to his being immediately apprehended and committed to the Tower, under the custody and vigilant care of Robert Waterton,‡ brother to King Henry's favourite attendant: there he continued closely imprisoned for a considerable time, associated with the celebrated Duke of Orleans and other noble prisoners who had been captured at the battle of Agincourt, in which his uncle had so recently fallen.

So long as Henry V. survived, and for some time after the accession of his son Henry VI., the young Plantagenet experienced all the evil effects of his father's unfortunate rebellion and attainder. His mother dying during his infancy was spared a participation in the misery that afterwards befell her husband and her child.§ On the decease, however, of her only surviving brother, the before-named Earl of March, without issue, her orphan son, already heir to the vast possessions of the House of York, succeeded also to the immense wealth and hereditary honours of this his maternal uncle,‖ including the earldoms of March and Ulster, and the lordships of Wigmore, Clare, Trim and Connaught: he consequently united thus, in his own person, the representation of King Edward's third and fifth sons, and by virtue of direct heirship from the former, became the lineal inheritor of the sovereignty of England.¶

* Edward Plantagenet was created Earl of Rutland during his father's lifetime, 13 Richard II.; but on his decease, in 1402, succeeded him in his titles and estates as Duke of York and Earl of Cambridge. This latter dignity, as stated in a former note, was granted to his younger brother, Richard of Coningsburgh, in the second year of King Henry V., who held it at the time when he was executed at Southampton for conspiracy against the king.—*Sandford*, book v. p. 363.

† Nichol's Royal Wills, p. 222.

‡ A petition from Waterton, praying for payment of the 150*l.* per annum, awarded to him for the board and safe keeping of the infant prince, is published in Rymer's Fœdera, vol. ix. p. 317. See Appendix F.

§ The Lady Anne Mortimer died young, and left two children by the Earl of Cambridge; a son, the above-named Richard Plantagenet, and a daughter, Isabel. From the tender years of her brother at his father's death, and from the circumstance of the Earl of Cambridge having married again some time before his execution, the lady Isabel was, in all probability, the eldest. She was afterwards united to Henry Bourchier, Earl of Essex and Viscount Bourchier, by whom she had a numerous family. The second wife of Richard, Earl of Cambridge, was Maud, the daughter of Thomas Lord Clifford, by whom he had no issue. She subsequently espoused John Lord Latimer, and died about the 25th of Hen. VI.—*Sandford*, book v. p. 367.

‖ On the accession of Henry VI., the Earl of March was appointed lord-lieutenant of Ireland, and died in that country, 3d Henry VI., 1424.—*Sloane MSS.*, 17. 6. Of this ill-fated nobleman we find the following notice in Biondi, book iv. p. 25:—"At this time (Henry VI. 1424), Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, formerly deprived of his liberty, died at Trimmes, in Ireland, whereupon his just and lawful pretences fell upon Richard Plantagenet, sonne of that Richard, Earl of Cambridge, who, by the commandment of Henry V., was beheaded at Southampton in 1415."—See also *Sandford*, book iii. p. 225.

¶ Sandford, book v. p. 369.

It was not, however, until the fourth year of the reign of Henry VI. that the young Richard Plantagenet, then about thirteen years of age,* after being knighted with his youthful monarch, was fully restored to his two-fold rank,† as Duke of York and Earl of Cambridge and Rutland on the paternal side, and Earl of March and Ulster in right of his mother. The reigning family appeared at this time too firmly seated on the throne to dread a revival of those claims which had now remained in abeyance for three generations, and in the mean time had been confirmed to themselves by repeated acts of the legislature. Great care was also taken that, from his earliest childhood, the heir of the House of York should be intimately associated with, and carefully guarded by, leaders of the Lancastrian party, his wardship‡ having been assigned to Ralph, Earl of Westmoreland, who had married the princess Joane Beaufort, daughter of John of Gaunt and sister to Henry Bolingbroke, the founder of the Lancastrian dynasty. The evil fortunes which so early overwhelmed the family of the Earl of Cambridge appear to have been productive of singular benefit to his infant son and successor in tempering his character and conduct; for all the writers of that period agree in admitting that he was a prince of considerable ability, and one of the most upright and excellent characters that adorned the age.

Courageous and intrepid, humane and beneficent, he was remarkable for his heroism in the field of battle, and for his temperate and conciliating conduct in political affairs;§ and this, too, under circumstances of strong excitement and peculiar temptation.‖ These estimable qualities, and the factious spirit which early agitated the court of Henry VI. (arising from the struggle for power between Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester and Cardinal Beaufort), accelerated the advancement of this promising young prince, and laid the foundation for that popularity which eventually restored the diadem to the House of York in the person of his eldest son, King Edward IV. Upon the departure of Henry VI. into France, to be crowned monarch of that realm, he nominated the Duke of York to be constable of England;¶ and after the demise of the king's uncle, the Duke of Bedford, in 1435, Richard was appointed, at the early age of seventeen,** to the regency of France.†† Recalled from this arduous station by the machinations of the opposite party, the Duke of York became so distinguished for his military prowess and daring achievements, that, in 1440, he was again appointed

* Richard Plantagenet being three years of age when the Duke of York was slain at Agincourt, 25th October, 1415, he must have been in his twelfth year when he succeeded to the honours of the House of March on the demise of his uncle (3d of Hen. VI. 1424), and aged about thirteen when fully restored to his dignity as Duke of York in the Parliament assembled at Leicester in the fourth year of that monarch's reign. —*Sandford*, book v. p. 365.

† Vincent on Brooke, p. 621.

‡ Fœdera, vol. x. p. 358.

§ Hume, vol. iv. p. 168.

‖ Sharon Turner, vol. iii. p. 174.

¶ Rot. Parl. Hen. VI. p. 1. m. 7.

** It was in allusion to this high appointment, that his great political antagonist, Edmund, Duke of Somerset, exclaimed, at a subsequent period, "that if York had not learned to play the king by his regency in France, he had never forgot to obey as a subject in England."—*Echard*, vol. i. p. 214.

†† This most important command bestowed on one so young, affords a remarkable proof at how very early an age after Richard's restoration to his rank and title his dormant claims on the crown were tacitly admitted. "Bedford, the king's uncle, being dead," says Biondi, "a new choice was made of who should succeed him as regent of France. Of two that pretended thereunto, the Duke of York bore away the bell; whereat the Duke of Somerset was scandalized, who, being the king's cousin, thought to have been preferred before him, but the council was of another opinion: York's true pretence unto the crown, though at that time not spoken of, was perhaps the cause why they would not discontent him."—*Biondi*, vol. ii. p. 96.

"lieutenant-general and governor-general" of that kingdom;* but being superseded at the expiration of five years, really through the ambition of John, Duke of Somerset, but under pretence of suppressing a formidable insurrection in Ireland,† he displayed on that occasion such strong judgment and such eminent self-command, that it revived in full force the recollection of those regal claims which were possessed by so noble a character,‡ and considerably strengthened his title to that throne which was, ere long, to be openly contested.

The Duke of York himself gave no encouragement for many years to cabals or conspiracies in his favour. The unhappy fate of his parent had been an awful and a severe lesson to him in childhood. The earlier years of his life had been devoted to warlike exploits in other lands, and as a natural result he was but little connected with political schemes at home. He was loyal to the reigning monarch, and submissive to the laws of the realm. He ruled justly and wisely as the vicegerent of that sovereign, and cheerfully obeyed his mandate when officially recalled from the honourable appointments§ before mentioned; but a combination of events in after years (which it is unnecessary here to do more than very briefly advert to) forced him eventually to take a decisive part in the domestic struggles that agitated his country, and finally, in self-defence, to enforce those pretensions to the crown which he clearly inherited from Edward III. through the royal descent of his illustrious mother.

From the time that Henry VI. ascended the throne, as an infant but eight months old, this country was little less than one continued scene of disorder and contention. Naturally weak and timid, possessed of every mild and endearing virtue that could attach the affections in private life, but deficient in vigour of mind, in judgment, and those nobler qualities which dignify the character, and are, indeed, essential in the ruler of a great and powerful nation, this amiable sovereign became from his earliest childhood the victim of ambitious guardians,‖ and continued through life the tool of designing and selfish ministers. The measure of his misfortunes was completed by his marriage with Margaret of Anjou,¶ a princess of singular beauty and ac-

* Minutes of Priv. Coun. 19 Hen. VI. 1440.

† Stow asserts that "in 1449 there began a new rebellion in Ireland; but Richard, Duke of York, being sent thither to appease the same, so assuaged the fury of the wild and savage people there, that he won such favour among them as could never be separated from him." It has been also observed by Sir Henry Ellis, that "in justice to the Duke of York it must be stated, that the acts which were passed in the Parliament of Ireland under his administration reflect the greatest credit on his memory." —*Ellis, Original Letters*, vol. i. p. 107.

‡ Sandford, book v. p. 371.

§ Sir Harris Nicolas, in his preface to "Minutes of the Privy Council," 15 Hen. VI. 1437 (p. xi.), states that "on the 7th of April the council ordered letters to be written to the Duke of York, whose command as lieutenant of France had expired, and who was unwilling to retain that office, thanking him for his services and requesting him to continue in France until his successor arrived." The same learned writer also adds (p. xiv.), "there seems to have been considerable difficulty in finding a successor for the Duke of York, &c. &c. After much consideration, Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, accepted it, on condition that he had the same powers granted as his predecessor," (pp. xi. xiv.) A most convincing proof of the trust reposed in him, and of the confidence entertained in his loyalty and high principles.

‖ Cont. Croyland Chron., p. 52.

¶ This princess was the daughter of Reyner, Duke of Anjou, titular king of Jerusalem, Sicily, Arago, Valence, &c., and Isabel his wife, third daughter of Charles, Duke of Lorraine. She was united to Henry VI. at Southwick in Hants, on the 22d of April, 1445, and on the 30th of May following was crowned at Westminster.—*Sandford*, book iv. p. 290.

complishments, but of so masculine a spirit and so unyielding a disposition, that she increased the disaffection which was felt towards her royal consort, and by her violent temper and inordinate ambition fed the discontent that arose from the misgovernment of those evil counsellors who influenced the simple-minded king in his unpopular measures. The illness of Henry VI. in the thirtieth year of his reign* (about thirteen years after his union with Queen Margaret), ending in imbecility of the most distressing kind,† openly rekindled the long-smothered contentions between the rival branches of the House of Plantagenet; and the Duke of York, by the death of different members of the reigning family without issue, having become first prince of the blood, and, consequently, next in order of succession to the throne, apart from his dormant maternal claims, was unanimously elected by Parliament‡ "protector and defender of the realm," and in April, 1454, invested with all the state and importance attached to heir presumptive of the crown.

The birth of an heir apparent, Edward, Prince of Wales, at this critical juncture, and under circumstances of painful suspicion as regards his legitimacy, increased rather than diminished the strength of the opposing party.§ The distraction which had so long desolated the kingdom was attributed, and most justly, to the long minority‖ of the reigning sovereign and the factious spirit of his regency; the prospect, therefore, of similar evils recurring in the person of his infant son, born so many years after his marriage, and when the king, by reason of his infirmities, was in a manner dead to his subjects, aroused a feeling of discontent in the supporters of the rights of primogeniture, that was daily fostered by the imperious conduct of the queen-mother and the obnoxious measures of her ministers.

A curious and striking proof of the general feeling relative to the claims of the Duke of York, and of the favourable manner with which they were advocated by the people at large, is evinced by some cotemporaneous rhythmical lines, quoted by Augustine Vincent,¶ the learned antiquary, from an ancient roll in his possession;** which verses attest the pains that were taken to promulgate the lineage of York at the time he was advanced to the protectorate,†† by means of itinerant minstrels, the popular historians of the day.‡‡

* W. Wyr., p. 477.

† The melancholy state of the unfortunate monarch is most affectingly described in the parliamentary record which perpetuates the event. Certain nobles, accompanied by the Bishop of Chester, were deputed by the House of Lords to ascertain by a personal interview the exact condition of the afflicted king, and to endeavour to learn his pleasure on public matters of importance, "to the which matters nor to any of them they could get no answer nor sign; for no prayer nor desire, lamentable cheer nor expectation, nor any thing that they or any of them could do or say, to their great sorrow and discomfort. After dinner they came to the king's highness in the same place where they were before, and there they moved and stirred him by all the ways and means that they could think to have answer of the said matter . . . . . but they could have no answer, word, nor sign, and therefore with sorrowful hearts came their way."—*Rot. Parl.*, vol. v. p. 241.

‡ Rot. Parl., vol. v. p. 242.

§ Fabian Chron., p. 456.

‖ Sharon Turner, vol. iii. p. 192.

¶ Vincent's Catalogue of the Nobility, p. 622.

** See Appendix G.

†† The composition in question was written by an Augustine friar of the monastery of Clare in Suffolk, the manorial rights of which were the lineal inheritance of the now popular Duke of York.—*Weever's Funeral Monuments*, p. 734.

‡‡ It was chiefly by means of these metrical traditions that the people of England, before the introduction of printing, became acquainted with the leading events of their national history; and through the medium of wandering musicians, the chroniclers

The power of the Duke of York* thus gaining ground, notwithstanding the birth of an heir apparent, and the jealous indignation of Margaret of Anjou being roused past all control, an open rupture was the result; and for a space of ten years the animosity, the hatred, the spirit of vengeance, which characterized the two parties, can only be estimated by perusing the minute and particular accounts written by cotemporary annalists† of the principal battles which marked, and may truly be said to have disgraced, this most sanguinary age.‡ Of these no farther notice is here required than the simple statement, that at the expiration of that period (October 1460) the Duke of York, being irritated to extremity by the political and personal opposition of the queen, and goaded by his incensed party to revenge the insults which had been repeatedly offered to them by the House of Somerset, who considered themselves next to the infant Prince of Wales in heirship to Henry VI.,§ at

of those early days, who chaunted their rude verses in the several houses of entertainment which they frequented in their rambles, much interesting matter was transmitted from generation to generation, and thus preserved for the benefit of more enlightened times.

* "It is not unworthy of observation, that the rebels of this period expected increased popularity from connecting their insurrections with any name appertaining to the House of York." Jack Sharpe, for example, was "of Wigmore's lands in Wales," and Jack Cade was "a Mortimer," cousin to the Duke of York (as he termed himself at least); and this rebel's ejaculation, "Now is Mortimer lord of this city," when on passing the famed London Stone he struck it with his sword, is familiar to all acquainted with the history of this period.—*Ellis's Original Letters*, 2d series, p. 113.

† Whethamstede, pp. 353—481; also W. Wyr., p. 484.

‡ Amongst the Harleian MSS. (see No. 901, art. 5) has been preserved an original document, containing the names of the kings, princes and nobles slain during these desperate battles between the houses of York and Lancaster, when they so fiercely contested for the crown. In the brief period of fifty-four years it numbers on the list 3 kings, 12 dukes, 1 marquis, 17 earls, 1 viscount and 24 barons.

§ The connection of the House of Somerset with the reigning family was as follows:—John of Gaunt was thrice married. By his first wife, the Lady Blanch, heiress of the Duke of Lancaster (and in right of whom he assumed that title), he had one only son, Henry of Bolingbroke, afterwards Henry IV. By his second wife, the Princess Constance, co-heiress of the King of Castile and Leon, he had no male issue. But during her lifetime he had four sons and one daughter by Dame Katherine Swynford, widow of Sir Otes Swynford, formerly a knight in his service, and whom he eventually espoused after the decease of the Princess Constance.

By an act passed in the reign of Richard II. (*Rot. Parl.*, vol. iii. p. 343), these children, surnamed De Beaufort, were, on the duke's marriage with their mother, legitimized by Parliament, and the eldest son was forthwith created Earl of Somerset; but though thus permitted to share with the lawful offspring of John of Gaunt the enormous wealth and vast possessions of their common parent, yet the deed itself was not at that time considered as entitling them to succession to the crown; but, on the contrary, as excepting them by special reservation (*Excerpt. Hist.*, p. 153) from all regal immunities that might accrue to the descendants of their illustrious parent. From this important point originated the enmity and personal jealousy that subsisted between the Duke of York and the above-named family of Somerset, the latter acting on all occasions, as indeed they considered themselves to be the representatives of the House of Lancaster on failure of direct male issue; and the former, as heir presumptive, and entitled to the crown by lineal and unimpeachable descent, disdaining the claims of the De Beauforts, springing as they did from a corrupted and illegitimate source.

The high position, however, which the Earl of Somerset occupied at the court of Henry VI. is evinced by his being styled, in a letter from the privy council to the inhabitants of Bordeaux when appointed lieutenant-general of France, as "a powerful and distinguished prince of the king's blood and lineage." (*Minutes of Priv. Coun.*, civ.); by his being created Duke of Somerset and Lord of Kendale, with precedence above the Duke of Norfolk; and by his being allowed to inspect the register of the king's lands, that he might select those which he thought proper.—*Ibid.*, cx.

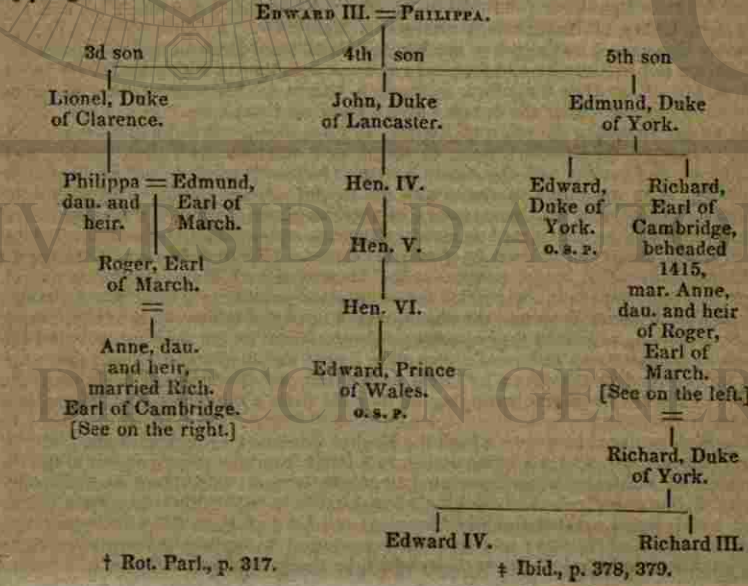
length publicly appealed to Parliament for a recognition of his title to the throne* as the descendant of Lionel, Duke of Clarence.

His claims having been presented in legal form to the lord chancellor, were by him submitted to the twelve judges, and, after being argued at considerable length by the great law officers of the crown, they were dispassionately considered, and at last finally recognized by the House of Lords.† Reluctant to depose the well-meaning but simple-minded monarch, who had recovered his reason indeed, but continued weak in health, and yet more infirm of purpose, an act was passed by the more moderate of each party to the effect that Henry VI. should retain the sceptre for the remainder of his life, but that succession to the throne should devolve, on his decease, to the Duke of York and his heirs.†

The opposing statutes of Henry of Bolingbroke were repealed, a new act

This nobleman died in 1444, (*Collins's Peerage*, i. 197,) and was succeeded in his titles and station by his brother Edmund, whose haughty and imperious manners rendered him generally unpopular; while the ascendancy which he obtained over King Henry and Queen Margaret caused great indignation amongst the ancient nobles of the land, which increased to open hostility, when, through the influence of his royal mistress, the obnoxious favourite was chosen as chief minister of the crown. To this source may unhesitatingly be ascribed the origin of the Duke of York's rebellious conduct towards his sovereign (*Paston Letters*, vol. i. p. 65), which was first evinced in a petition urging the arrest of Somerset, and calling on the king to institute inquiry into his conduct, (*Rot. Parl.* v. p. 316,) and which was followed by articles of impeachment exhibited against him as chief minister in 1451 (*Cott. MSS.*, Vesp. C. p. 14). His personal influence over the queen increased the odium of his mal-administration; and his being publicly arrested "in her chamber" (*Sandford*, book iv. p. 294) and presence, during the king's appalling illness, and thence committed by the lords to the Tower, did not tend to discourage the reports relative to the illegitimacy of the Prince of Wales; although Somerset's committal is by himself alleged to have been ordered by the privy council solely to secure his personal safety.—*Harl. MS.* 543, p. 163.

* The Duke of York's title to the throne will be more clearly shown by the following pedigree:—



† Rot. Parl., p. 317.

‡ Ibid., p. 378, 379.

of settlement was passed, to which the royal assent was given by the weak and imbecile monarch,* and an income of 10,000*l.* per annum, an enormous sum in those days, was awarded to Richard, Duke of York; when this new parliamentary admission of his title was added to the lineal claims of the House of Mortimer, of which he was the representative.

The queen was sojourning with the young prince, at the castle of Harlech in North Wales,† whither she had fled for refuge after the capture of King Henry, and the defeat of the Lancastrians at Northampton,‡ when this important decision was communicated to her, accompanied by the royal mandate, enforcing, in no measured terms, their immediate and peaceable return to court.§ Spurning with indignation and disdain an enactment which deprived her son of his inheritance, and limited her own and her husband's regal position to the mere sufferance of Parliament, Margaret fled instantly to Scotland, and implored, in all the agony of desperation, assistance from its youthful monarch,‖ through the medium of the queen regent, Mary of Gueldres, his mother, who ruled during his minority. She assembled, by the co-operation of her northern partisans, the Earl of Northumberland and the Lord Clifford, such a powerful force in so incredibly short a period, that it enabled her immediately to defy the decision of Parliament, and to resist the commands of her pusillanimous lord and sovereign.

The Duke of York, unprepared for such prompt measures, hastened to crush at its outset an opposition so formidable to his recently admitted claims to the crown. He foresaw not that he was hastening to his destruction, and that the crown so fatally contested by his ancestors, so recently secured to himself and his heirs, would never grace either his own brow or that of his youthful rival. Accompanied by his second son, Edmund, Duke of Rutland, and by his brother-in-law, the Earl of Salisbury, he reached, by forced marches, his patrimonial castle of Sendal, with about 6000 men, on the 21st December, 1460, in which stronghold he held his Christmas, and was to have been speedily joined there by a powerful force from Wales, headed by his eldest son, the Earl of March, whom he hastily dispatched to summon his vassals on this important occasion. But the fate of Richard Plantagenet was destined to be irrevocably sealed, and the furious contests between him and Margaret of Anjou brought to a sudden and final close by the approaching battle of Wakefield. The intrepid queen had already crossed the Scottish frontiers, and being joined by her favourite Somerset and the heroic Earls of Devon and Wilts,¶ she reached the gates of York before the duke was in any position to encounter the formidable force which she had assembled. Heedless of the advice of his friends,** and regarding only the taunts of his enemies, in an unguarded moment the brave and high-minded Duke of York sallied forth from his castle,†† and was induced, under peculiarly disadvantageous circumstances, increased by the breach of faith and dishonourable conduct of the Lancastrian leaders, to encounter his vindictive foes.

The battle was brief, but the result was most important; for after a desperate conflict, and the display, on the part of the duke, of coolness, courage,

* Rot. Parl., p. 380.

† Warkworth Chron., p. 35.

‡ Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 51.

§ W. Wyr., p. 481.

‖ James I., King of Scotland, married in 1424 Joane, daughter of John I., Earl of Somerset, and granddaughter of John of Gaunt. It was from their grandson, James III., thus closely allied to the House of Lancaster, that Margaret of Anjou at this time entreated assistance; his royal parent, James II., having fallen a victim to zeal for her husband's cause a few months previously at the siege of Roxburgh, August 3d, 1460.—*Granger's Biog. Hist.*, p. 33.

¶ W. Wyr., p. 484.

†† W. Wyr., p. 485.

** See Appendix H.

and valour, worthy of his high repute, the noble warrior, covered with wounds, and maintaining his intrepid courage and his undaunted spirit to the last, was surrounded by foes, and overpowered by superior numbers.* Being taken prisoner, with his faithful kinsman, the Earl of Salisbury, he was, after a short delay, put to death in a manner so aggravated by the bitter insults that preceded its execution, that it portrays far better than all comment the ferocious spirit which degraded the character of the English nobility during these domestic feuds.

Being dragged in mockery to an ant-hill, and crowned by a diadem of knotted grass,† he was insultingly placed there as on a throne, before which his enemies deridingly made their submission, exclaiming, in unhallowed perversion of sacred language, "Hail! king without a kingdom. Hail! prince without a people."‡

Cruelty having been heaped on scorn, and the worst passions of vengeance and hatred indulged to satiety, he was at length beheaded§ amidst the most exulting shouts.‖ His head, fixed on a lance, was presented in triumph to the queen, and speedily placed by her commands over the gates of York,¶ surmounted in derision by a paper crown;** by its side were also arranged the heads of Salisbury and many of his devoted adherents.††

The Earl of Rutland, his second son, a youth of seventeen,‡‡ most prepossessing in appearance and of singular beauty, flying from the fatal spot with his tutor, Robert Aspell, the duke's chaplain, was overtaken by the Lord Clifford; and the royal stripling, in reply to his prayers for mercy, was stabbed with unrelenting ferocity to the heart.§§

The inhumanity of this savage deed, and the active part taken by this nobleman in the death and insults offered to the Duke of York, procured for him in after years the appellation of the "Black Clifford." The murder of the inoffensive Rutland, however, was fully avenged by the heavy retribution which was visited on the offspring of this cold-hearted chieftain after his own speedy decease, which occurred within a few months following that of his innocent victim; and, as if in requital for the treachery practised to York, by means almost similar‖‖ to that which had effected the destruction of this prince and his son. The romantic fate of Henry "the Shepherd Lord," Clifford's heir, is too well known, however, to require a more particular detail in these pages.¶¶

Sad as was the tragedy which thus prematurely terminated the career of Richard, Duke of York, who, like his illustrious parent, was suddenly cut off by a violent and untimely death, it speedily put an end, for a brief interval

* Whethamstede, p. 489. † Ibid.

‡ John Whethamstede, otherwise called Frumentarius, from whose cotemporary authority the above revolting details have been taken, was abbot of St. Alban's during the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV. He was an historian of repute, and wrote divers treatises; amongst others, a book of the record of things happening while he was abbot, which book Holinshed had seen, and in some passages of his time followed.—*Baker's Chronicle*, p. 201.

§ Hall's Chron., p. 251. ‖ Appendix I.

¶ Cont. Croyland, p. 530. ** W. Wyr., p. 485.

†† Rot. Parl., p. 466.

‡‡ Scarcely two historians agree respecting the age of the Earl of Rutland at this period; some representing him as *six*, others as having attained his *tenth* and *twelfth year*. But the coeval testimony of William of Wyrcester leaves no doubt as regards the date of his birth, which he fixes at Rouen, in May, 1443; consequently, at the time of his assassination, the young earl must have been seventeen years of age.—See *W. Wyr. Ann. apud Hearne*, p. 461.

§§ Whethamstede, p. 489. Hall, 251.

‖‖ Habington's Life of Edward IV., p. 16. ¶¶ Appendix J.

at least, to the barbarities exercised for so many years by the contending factions. Goaded to desperation by the bitter insults heaped on their idolized leader, the Yorkists speedily rallied their full force round the heir of the unfortunate duke; and fighting with an energy and zeal that nothing could resist, they quickly recovered, under the young Earl of March, the ascendancy that seemed irrevocably lost on the execution of his ill-fated parent.

Victory followed upon victory, and vengeance was summarily taken on the sanguinary leaders of the late disastrous affray. Henry VI., Queen Margaret, and their son, Edward, Prince of Wales, after many desperate conflicts, fled into Scotland for refuge; and Edward of March, now Duke of York, having proceeded to London,* whither he was invited both by the nobles and the people, was proclaimed king, under the plea that Henry had violated his solemn pledge to the nation,† but in reality from that monarch's utter incapacity to rule, and the odium excited in the metropolis, and throughout the country generally, by the excesses‡ of the royalists' party both at Wakefield and St. Alban's. Whatever was the accelerating cause, the transition of the sceptre from the line of Lancaster to that of York was rapid and decisive; the young duke was elected king, and taking possession of the throne of his ancestors, he was crowned at Westminster within three months of his father's untimely death;§ and by the title of Edward IV. became the acknowledged sovereign of these realms, and founder of the Yorkist dynasty.

Leaving him in the full enjoyment of dominions which had been secured by so fearful a waste of human life and treasure, and having briefly portrayed the existing state of public affairs from the usurpation of the line of Lancaster, in the person of Henry IV., to the period which chronicles the accession of the House of York in that of King Edward IV., it is now the fitting time to commence the private and personal history of the prince who is to form the subject of the present memoir, and whose feelings and impressions, from the earliest dawn of reason, could not fail to be influenced by the violent passions and struggle for power which, in defiance of all principle, moral or religious, marked the period in which Richard of Gloucester was born.

* W. Wyr., p. 489. † Rot. Parl., p. 465.

‡ The chronicler of Croyland, in narrating the effect of the battle of Wakefield on the minds of King Henry's supporters, states that, "elated with their victory, they rushed like a whirlwind over England, and plundered without respect of persons or place. They attacked the churches, took away their vessels, books, and clothes; even the sacramental pyxes, shaking out the eucharist, and slew the priests who resisted. So they acted for a breadth of thirty miles, all the way from York nearly up to London."—*Chron. Croy.*, p. 531.

§ W. Wyr., p. 490.

CHAPTER III.

Richard born at Fotheringay.—Youngest son of the Duke of York and the Lady Cecily Neville.—The high lineage, accomplishments and rare beauty of his mother.—The Duke of York, the ward of her father.—Their early marriage.—Numerous offspring.—Lawless period when Richard was born.—Superior education of the young Plantagenets.—Their aspiring views inherited from their mother.—Monstrous tales relative to Richard's birth disproved.—The civil wars at their height during the childhood of Richard.—Attainder of his father and brothers.—His capture with his mother at Ludlow, and concealment.—The Yorkists regain the ascendancy.—Henry VI. made prisoner.—Claims of the Duke of York to the crown.—Conceded by the peers.—Ratified by the king.—Opposition of the queen and Lancastrian party.—Death of the Duke of York.

Richard Plantagenet, usually designated as Richard of Gloucester, was born at Fotheringay the 2d of October, 1452.* He was the youngest son and the eleventh child† of the illustrious warrior whose busy and turbulent life closed so tragically at the battle of Wakefield, on the 31st December, 1460. Of the consort of the Duke of York, the parent of his numerous offspring, no mention has hitherto been made, because it was desirable that the brief sketch of that prince's political career should be uninterrupted by domestic details. But the mother of Richard III. was no common character. Although her actions are not absolutely interwoven with the public records of the land as were those of her husband, she was nevertheless fully as remarkable for the varied fortunes that marked her troubled life, and for the vicissitudes to which she was exposed in consequence of her political connection. She is therefore entitled to a distinct and especial notice, not merely as one of the most eminent women of the age in which she flourished, but because Cecily, Duchess of York, will be found a most important personage, and to have occupied a very prominent position in the eventful life of her youngest son, Richard III.

Of high birth, superior attainments, and such rare and exquisite beauty that she obtained in childhood, throughout the district adjoining her father's abode, the appellation of the "Rose of Raby,"‡ she yet evinced a greatness of mind during periods of unexampled trial, and displayed a zeal and rectitude of purpose in the active performance of conjugal and maternal duties of no ordinary description, that render her even more an object of respect and admiration than of sympathy for the poignant sorrows which marked her sad and eventful career. This distinguished lady was the youngest of twenty-two children§ of Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, nine of whom were by his first wife, the daughter of Hugh, Earl of Stafford, and thirteen the issue of his second marriage with the Princess Joane Beaufort, the illegitimate daughter of John of Gaunt and Dame Katharine Swynford before mentioned. Though by birth a Lancastrian,—her mother being half-sister to the usurper Henry, of Bolingbroke,—yet, from very early childhood, the Lady Cecily was the companion of the attainted heir of the House

* W. Wyr., p. 477.
† Vincent on Brooke, p. 621.
‡ Strickland's Queens of England, vol. iii. p. 317.
§ Blore's Monumental Remains, part iii.

of York, who was brought up and educated in her father's house; the wardship* of the young Plantagenet, her future husband, having been bestowed by Henry V. upon the Earl of Westmoreland,† shortly after the execution of Richard's father, the Earl of Cambridge.‡ This, it was hoped, would afford security to the reigning family against future rebellion from that source; as principles of loyalty would naturally be infused into the youthful mind of Richard Plantagenet by the House of Neville, bound as they were by ties of consanguinity to the ruling House of Lancaster.

Of the place, or the precise period, at which the marriage of the Duke of York with the Lady Cecily was solemnized, no record has been found, but it probably occurred before the expiration of his wardship, and when the parties were mere children; the guardians of rich minors at this early period having the privilege of marrying their wards to whomsoever, and on what terms they pleased:§ and this arbitrary power was generally used, and, indeed, granted, for the purpose of enriching the family of him on whom the boon was conferred.‖ The Lady Cecily was about two years younger than her noble consort, having been born on the 3d of May, 1415;¶ and the loyalty of the young couple, and their entire submission to King Henry VI., who was first cousin, once removed, to Neville's daughter, as also the interest and attachment felt by that monarch for them, is evinced by the fact of his standing godfather** to their eldest son, who was thence named Henry, in deference to his royal sponsor and kinsman.

A numerous progeny was the result of their union, although it would appear from a passage in the ancient cotemporary roll before mentioned,†† that many years elapsed after their marriage before there was any prospect of perpetuating, in a direct line, the hereditary wealth and honours that had become centred in the young Duke of York.

The illustrious couple were, however, blest eventually with twelve children,‡‡ eight sons and four daughters. Of these, Henry, the eldest son,

* Fœdera, vol. x. p. 358.
† See Appendix K.
‡ The documents printed in the Fœdera, relative to the custody and wardship of Richard, Duke of York, enable this prince's career to be clearly traced from the period of his father's execution and attainder until he was restored to the family honours, both on the paternal and maternal side. This is not only interesting, but very important, as relates to various circumstances connected with his political career, and that of his offspring, Edward IV. and Richard III.
§ Paston Letters, vol. iii. p. 227.
‖ Excerpta Historica, p. 3.
¶ W. Wyr., p. 453.
** Archæologia, vol. xiii. p. 7.
†† Vincent, p. 621.
‡‡ The children of Richard, Duke of York, by the Lady Cecily Neville, his wife, were as follows:—
Ann of York, Duchess of Exeter, born at Fotheringay, 10th August, 1439; married first to Henry Holland, Duke of Exeter, secondly to Sir Thomas St. Leger, Knt.
Henry of York, born at Hatfield, 10th February, 1441.
Edward of York, born at Rouen, 28th April, 1442. afterwards Edward IV.
Edmonde of York, born at Rouen, 17th May, 1443, Earl of Rutland.
Elizabeth of York, born at Rouen, 22d April, 1444, married to John De la Pole, Duke of Suffolk.
Margaret of York, born at Fotheringay, 3d May, 1446, married to Charles, Duke of Burgundy.
William of York, born at Fotheringay, 7th July, 1447.
John of York, born at Neyte, near Worcester, 7th November, 1448.
George of York, born in Ireland, 21st October, 1449, afterwards Duke of Clarence.
Thomas of York, deceased in infancy, probably between the years 1450 and 1451.
Richard of York, born at Fotheringay, 2d October, 1452, afterwards Richard III.
Ursula of York, of whom no other mention is made than of her name, and that she died young.
Wm. of Wyrcester, apud Hearne, p. 461; *Sandford*, book v. p. 374; *Vincent on Brooke*, p. 621.

above mentioned, as also William, John and Thomas, their fourth, fifth and seventh sons, died in boyhood; Edmonde, the youthful Earl of Rutland, was slain on the same day with his illustrious parent; and Ursula, their youngest child, died in infancy.*

Thus, on the demise of the Duke of York, three sons and three daughters alone survived him. The former were Edward, the second son, Earl of March, his heir and successor, born at Rouen, 28th of April, 1442,† during his father's regency in France, who succeeded to the dignities of his house, and obtained that crown for which the life of his sire and his grandsire had been prematurely sacrificed; George, the sixth son, afterwards Duke of Clarence, born in 1449, at Dublin, during his parents' abode in Ireland; and Richard, the eighth son, the future monarch of England, born in the year 1452,‡ at the castle of Fotheringay, the patrimonial seat of his ancestors.§

Greater stress has been laid on the number and succession of the offspring of the Duke of York and the Lady Cecily,‖ because inattention to the vast difference of age between Edward, Earl of March, their third, and Richard of Gloucester, their eleventh child, has been one leading cause of confusion as to dates, and also of many conflicting statements relative to important events, in which the latter prince is considered to have acted a prominent part, but which, it will be hereafter seen, was improbable, if not actually impossible, by reason of his extreme youth. From the odium attached to many of these, consequently, this simple but material fact in great measure exonerates him. Happily, on a point so conclusive, so essential towards a clear perception of the character of Richard III., there remains no room for doubt, or occasion for conjecture; as the ancient roll,¶ which has been already noticed on two occasions in this work,—and which was written evidently by an ecclesiastical partisan of the House of York,—after tracing the pedigree on which was founded the claim of that house to the crown, terminates in such minute particulars of the duke's immediate family, so distinctly and separately names each child in their order of birth, and narrates the whole domestic history with such a quaint minuteness, that were not many of the facts therein stated corroborated by graver records, the original style and tenour of this obsolete ballad would, of itself, sufficiently bespeak its genuineness and authenticity.**

The birth-place of Richard of Gloucester has been variously stated by different authors, some having fixed it at Berkhampstead Castle, others at Fotheringay, both which domains, however, at the time he was born, were the occasional abode of his illustrious parents; but the authority of William of Wyrcester,†† a cotemporary historian of credit, places the scene of his

* Vincent on Brooke, p. 621.

† W. Wyr., p. 462. ‡ Ibid., p. 477.

§ Fotheringay Castle was erected by Edmund Langley, first Duke of York, the fifth son of Edward III., and the great grandsire of Richard of Gloucester.—*W. Wyr.*, p. 473.

‖ See some pointed remarks on this subject in the "Excerpta Historica," wherein it is stated, that "a history of the royal family, with a correct account of their births, marriages and deaths, is still a desideratum in historical literature."—*Adden. et Corrig.*, p. 427.

¶ Vincent on Brooke, p. 622.

** Authority so unimpeachable as that of Vincent and Sandford, both members of the College of Arms and writers of undoubted veracity, united to that of Weever, the indefatigable antiquary and obituary, are sufficient to warrant the genuineness of the rhythmical lines referred to in the text (chap. ii), and inserted in Appendix G.

†† William Botoner, called Wyrcester, was born on or about the year 1415, 3d Hen. V., and died in 1490. Many of his letters are preserved in the Paston Collection, vol. i. Dr. Lingard terms him "a cotemporary and well-informed writer," (vol. v. p. 190;) and Wyrcester, in his own Annals, says, that on many occasions he "spoke from knowledge and not hearsay."

birth beyond dispute, establishing the fact from his own knowledge of its having occurred at Fotheringay, on Monday the 2d of October, 1452.* This likewise marks the exact age of the young prince at the period of his father's decease; which event happening on the 31st of December, 1460, it will be seen that he had just attained his eighth year, and was, consequently, about ten years younger than his royal brother at the time that Edward IV., in the eighteenth year of his age, ascended the throne of England.

But the personal history of Richard III. must be commenced at a period long antecedent either to the death of his illustrious parent or the elevation of his royal brother to the throne; for few as were the years which he had numbered, and child as he was at that awful crisis, he may more truly be considered then to have entered upon his political rather than his individual career.

The fearful events that so unhappily called him into notice, and which have transmitted his name with such ignominy to posterity, together with the vicissitudes that marked his turbulent life, must be traced to causes that were in operation at a far earlier period of his existence than that which placed the crown of England on the brow of King Edward IV.

From the very hour of his birth, this ill-omened prince may be said to have inhaled the noxious vapours of that poisoned atmosphere which afterwards teemed with murder, treachery and rebellion; and ere reason or mature judgment could be exercised, the germs of that fatal ambition, which proved the bane of his after life, as it had previously led to the destruction of his immediate ancestors, were sown too deeply in his opening mind ever after to be eradicated.

Richard of Gloucester was the victim of circumstances resulting from the unhappy times in which he lived; and as his character derived its tone from the scenes of violence and bloodshed which deprived him so prematurely of a father's guidance and affection, it will be necessary, in justice to his redeeming qualities, to go back a few years, and examine into the state and domestic habits of the family of the Duke of York, at the birth of this his youngest surviving child. Out of eight sons it was reserved for him, the last born, to perpetuate the name of his illustrious parent; and it seemed as if this fatal appellation was destined to be an ominous heirloom to all of his race who bore it,† and that with the name of Richard was to be transferred a portion of that evil fortune which led to the violent death of Richard II., and entailed such disastrous results on the divided House of Plantagenet.

The offspring of the Duke of York and the Lady Cecily, whatever were the names bestowed upon them, were, at the period under present consideration, both numerous and flourishing. Although Henry, the eldest son, like his gentle and amiable godsire, was destined to leave no issue to perpetuate the name; and instead of contesting with his royal sponsor the crown of mortality, as says the old roll,

"My Lord Herry
God chosen hath to enherite heaven's bliss,"‡

while others of their progeny were early taken from their parents, and, consequently, spared the trials which awaited their surviving children; yet, judging from the attainments for which the remaining sons and daughters of

* W. Wyr., p. 477.

† See Appendix L. ‡ Vincent, p. 621.

the House of York were so pre-eminently conspicuous, they must have been not only highly endowed by nature with an excellent capacity, but also have been more than usually accomplished for the early period at which they flourished.

To the Lady Cecily, in great measure, may be attributed the superior acquirements of her family, who, it is evident, from various sources, were most carefully educated by her; for the instruction of the high-born youth in the middle ages was chiefly intrusted to maternal superintendence, owing to the warlike claims which personal or feudal engagements continually imposed upon the nobles of the land. That the Duchess of York was the companion of her husband in all his varied fortunes is evident from the different birth-places of their offspring, which show her to have been with him in France during his regency in that kingdom, in Ireland during his disturbed command in that country, and in all the several districts in England where public or private duty called him. But she selected for the immediate tuition of her progeny a preceptress so in every way worthy of the important trust, that it exemplifies, in a striking manner, not merely her maternal solicitude but the superior judgment exercised by the Lady Cecily in all the duties of life. The lady governess to the young princes was the daughter of Sir Edward Cornwall, Baron of Burford, and the widow of Sir Hugh Mortimer, a collateral branch of the House of York;* and from whom, in the absence of their natural parents, the young Plantagenets evidently received the most careful instruction, and an education very superior to that which was ordinarily bestowed in the era in which they lived.

Of the uniform manner in which the household of the Duchess of York was probably conducted, of the religious and moral sentiments there inculcated, we have substantial proof in a valuable and highly interesting document which has been preserved to the present day;† narrating the order, rules and regulations observed in her establishment,‡ and evincing the sound principles and strict discipline enforced by its noble mistress.

"She useth to arise at seven of the clock, and hath readye her chapleyne to saye with her mattins of the daye, and mattins of our lady, and when she is fully readye she hath a lowe mass in her chambre; and after masse she taketh something to recreate nature and soe goeth to the chapelle, hearinge the divine service and two lowe masses. From thence to dynner, duringe the tyme whereof she hath a lecture of holy matter, either 'Hilton of Contemplative and Active Life,' or other spiritual and instructive works. After dinner she giveth audyence to all such as hath any matter to shewe unto her by the space of one hower, and then sleepeth one quarter of an hower, and after she hath slepte she contynueth in prayer unto the first peale of evensonge. In the tyme of supper she recyteth the lecture that was had at dinner to those that be in her presence. After supper she disposeth herself to be famyliare with her gentlewomen, to the seeac'on§ of honest myrthe; and one houre before her going to bed she taketh a cuppe of wyne, and after that, goeth to her pryvie closette and taketh her leave of God for all nighte, makinge end of her prayers for that daye, and by eighte of the clocke is in bedde."‖

* Ancient Charters in the British Museum, vol. xiv. p. 3.
† In a collection of papers now at the Board of Green Cloth, St. James's.
‡ See Appendix M. § Probably, seasoning, or encouraging.
‖ In the curious document above alluded to, the hours observed for the serving of meals are specified in the rules for the household arrangements: they are interesting, as illustrative of the manners and customs of that early period.

Rules of the House.

Upon eating days. At dinner by eleven of the clocke.
Upon fasting days. At dinner by twelve of the clocke.
At supper, upon eating dayes, (for the officers,) at four of the clocke.
My Lady and the household at five of the clocke at supper.
Livery of fires and candles, from the feast of All-hallows, unto Good Friday—then expireth the time of fire and candle.

Orders and rules of the Princess Cecill. Printed by the Society of Antiquaries.

Although the particular record whence the foregoing is extracted was drawn up at a much later period of her life than that now under consideration, yet the same spirit that influenced her conduct in after years, there can be little doubt, also animated this eminent lady in the regulation of her domestic circle, at a time when maternal solicitude would naturally infuse into her actions an energy and buoyancy of spirit, which had long and sorrowfully ceased, at the time when that well-devised and perfect system, which reflects such honour on her memory, was strictly observed in her abode at Berkhampstead.*

This conclusion is warranted by similar ordinances having been framed for the regulation of the household of her son George, Duke of Clarence, long after he was emancipated from maternal influence:† and yet more, by corresponding rules having been afterwards drawn up by her eldest son, King Edward IV., for the observance of his own offspring;‡ in which many of the regulations so closely correspond with those pursued by his mother, that it may fairly be inferred he followed the same plans which had been strictly enforced in the education and conduct of himself and his brothers in their own youth at Ludlow.

The greatest affection towards their noble parents§ was the result of this judicious treatment; for though constant and severe discipline appears to have been observed, yet evidence is not wanting in proof also of the indulgence with which they were regarded, and the familiarity with which, when absent, they expressed their childless wishes to their father, and communicated to him all their imaginary grievances. This is instanced by an original letter‖ preserved in the Cott. MSS.¶ from the young Earl of March to his father, the Duke of York, written when a mere stripling, petitioning for some "fyne bonetts" for himself and the Earl of Rutland, and complaining of the extreme severity, "the odieux rule and demeaning," of one "Richard Crofte and his brother," apparently their tutors**—a document which is the more interesting from its being (as Sir Henry Ellis, who first made it known to the public, observes) one of the earliest specimens extant of domestic and familiar Eng-

* Archæologia, vol. xiii. p. 7.
† Entitled "Ordinances for the Household of George, Duke of Clarence, made the 9th of December, 1469." Published by the Society of Antiquaries, 1790.
‡ Sloane MSS., No. 3. p. 479.
§ Archæol., vol. xiii. ‖ See Appendix N.
¶ Cott. MSS., vol. iii. fol. 9.
** This Richard Crofte was the celebrated warrior, whose name so frequently appears in the warlike annals of the reign of Edward IV. He was the grandson of Sir John de Crofte, and of Janet, daughter of the renowned Owen Glendower. He espoused the lady governess of the young Plantagenets; hence, it is presumed, from the above-named complaint, that the elder sons were at this time intrusted to the custody of himself and his brother. It is worthy of notice that, notwithstanding the juvenile complaint of "Crofte's odieux rule and demeaning," King Edward's attachment to his tutor in maturer years was evinced by the emoluments which he bestowed upon him after his accession to the crown. Sir Richard Crofte lived to a great age, and was one of the most distinguished soldiers of his time: he survived every member of the family in whose service he had so early been engaged, and had to mourn the premature and violent deaths of the whole of his princely pupils.—*Retrospective Review*, 2d Series, vol. i. p. 472.

lish correspondence.* Were any thing wanted to prove still more strongly the great care and pains bestowed on the education of the young Plantagenets, a second letter from the youthful princes, yet more confirmatory on this point, and by no means less pleasing from the dutiful feeling which pervades the whole, has been preserved in the same valuable collection of manuscripts.† As original letters most vividly portray the true and natural character of individuals, by depicting their inmost thoughts and feelings, the insertion of one of these letters at full length will afford evidence more conclusive than could have reasonably been expected at this distant period of the actual state of the Duke of York's family; of the filial affection entertained towards their parents,—a point the more worthy of regard, as this feeling has been disputed from the events which happened in after years, and of the actual mode in which their children were reared at the time of the birth of Richard of Gloucester and during his tenderest infancy.

The second letter, as the one least known, has been selected in illustration of these points: it is dated the 3d of June, and was written, as it would appear, in 1454, when the Earl of March was twelve, and the Earl of Rutland eleven years of age.

"Right high and mighty Prince, our most worshipful and greatly redoubted lord and father,—In as lowly wise as any sons can, or may, we recommend us unto your good lordship; and please it your highness to wit, that we have received your worshipful letters yesterday by your servant William Cleton, bearing date at York the 29th day of May.‡

"By the which William, and by the relation of John Milewater, we conceive your worshipful and victorious speed against your enemies; to their great shame, and to us the most comfortable things that we desired to hear. Whereof we thank Almighty God of his gifts; beseeching him heartily to give you that good and cotidian fortune, hereafter to know your enemies, and to have the victory of them. And if it please your highness to know of our welfare at the making of this letter, we were in good health of body, thanked be God; beseeching your good and gracious fatherhood of your daily blessing. And where ye command us by your said letters to attend specially to our learning in our young age, that should cause us to grow to honour and worship in our old age, please it your highness to wit, that we have attended our learning since we came hither,§ and shall hereafter, by the which we trust to God your gracious lordship and good fatherhood shall be pleased. Also we beseech your good lordship, that it may please you to send us Harry

* Previous to the reign of Henry V., specimens of English correspondence are rare. Letters before that time were usually written in French or Latin, and were the production chiefly of the great and learned. The letters of the learned were mere verbose treatises, mostly on express subjects; those of the great, who employed scribes, from their formality, resembled legal instruments. We have nothing earlier than the fifteenth century which can be called a familiar letter. The earliest royal signature known in this country is the signature of Richard II.—*Ellis's Original Letters*, 1st Series, p. 9.

† Cott. MSS. Vesp. F. xiii. fol. 35.

‡ Apparently acquainting them that he had triumphed over the Duke of Suffolk, and been appointed protector and defender of the realm. This conclusion is formed (for the year is not mentioned) from his son styling him "protector and defender of England," to which office he was first appointed in April, 1454, and from there being proof that he was not at York subsequent to any fortunate event in his life after he bore those titles.—*Excerpta Historica*, p. 8.

§ This possibly may refer to the duke's expostulations in reply to their complaints respecting Richard Crofte and his brother, if, as is surmised, the young princes were at this period under their tutelage.

Lovedeyne, groom of your kitchen, whose service is to us right agreeable; and we will send you John Boyes to wait on your good lordship.

"Right high and mighty Prince, our most worshipful and greatly redoubted lord and father, we beseech Almighty God give you as good life and long, as your own princely heart can best desire.

"Written at your castle of Ludlow the 3d day of June.

"Your humble sons,

"E. Marche.

"E. Rutland.

"To the right high and mighty Prince, our most worshipful and greatly redoubted lord and father, the Duke of York, protector and defender of England."*

These letters were both dated from Ludlow, at which castle, it appears, from the expression used by the young Earl of March "since we came hither," that the household of the Duke of York had recently taken up their abode. His offspring are said to have been chiefly brought up in the north,† in the castles of Fotheringay, Middleham and Sendal; though they may also be occasionally found dwelling with their parents at Wigmore, Berkhampstead, Clare and other lordships in England, Ireland and Wales, which accrued to the Duke of York by birth or by marriage, from the princely houses of Mortimer Clarence, York and Westmoreland.‡ Baynard's Castle, too, one of the most imposing fabrics in the metropolis, was about this period bestowed upon him§ by King Henry VI.; and this ancient fortress is not only chronicled as the dwelling-place of himself and the Lady Cecily, on various important occasions, but it was the scene of some of the most striking political events connected with themselves and their children, especially Richard of Gloucester, with whose after career it is intimately associated.

And well was it for the mother of so numerous a family, born in such troubled times, the victims of hereditary feuds, and destined, like their parents, to be from infancy to the grave the sport of fortune, and exposed to all the extremes of vicissitude, that places of refuge, appertaining to them by inheritance, were so widely and numerously distributed; for, as may be gathered from the preceding pages, little security or peace could long be enjoyed by the kindred of so prominent, and to the reigning family and their

* The obsolete spelling has been modernized in the copy here inserted, but the letter is printed literally in the Excerpta Historica, p. 8.

† Buck's Richard III., lib. i. p. 7. ‡ See Appendix O.

§ Baynard's Castle has been generally stated to have been given to the Duke of York by King Henry VI., on the decease of his uncle Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, in 1447. This is an error, for Polydore Virgil expressly states, that in 31 Hen. VI., Edmund of Hadham, that monarch's half brother, on his being created Earl of Richmond, "obtained a grant from the king in fee of that mansion-house called Baynard's Castle, situated near Paul's Wharf in London." The earl possessed it but four years, as he died November 1, 1456; upon which the fortress again lapsed to the crown. The Duke of York was at that time protector and defender of the realm; and, as this mansion had usually been occupied by princes of the blood-royal, it was most probably taken possession of by the duke in right of his high office; or it may have been awarded to him by the council, and his occupation of it confirmed to him by King Henry, on his recovery and re-assumption of the regal power; for the earliest mention of the Duke of York, in conjunction with this fortress, is in January, 1458, when he is stated to have "taken up his abode at his mansion at Baynard's Castle within the city" during the important convocation of the nobles, when summoned by the king with the view of effecting a reconciliation and arresting the fierce contests of his turbulent subjects.—*Fabian*, p. 463; *Pennant*, p. 348; and *Dugdale*, vol. ii. p. 229.

partisans so obnoxious, a character as was the illustrious prince to whom, in her youth, the Lady Cecily Neville was allied.

Early imbued, however, as we have reason to believe their children were with honourable sentiments, severe as regards religion and morality,* and admirable in the culture and display of the domestic affections,† it is yet due to them to state, from the crimes which attach to their memories, and the calamities that marked their after-life, that the ambition, the pride, and unbending spirit which characterized alike the sons and the daughters of York,‡ were inherited from, and in all likelihood infused into their infant minds, from their birth, by their mother, in whose character these feelings formed a leading feature. She was a princess of "spotless character;"§ and as such was respected by her enemies and revered by all her cotemporaries, whatever might be their political bias;‖ but her natural temper was "so high and ambitious" that her name to this day is perpetuated as a proverb in the counties adjoining her abode, where pride and arrogance in a person are generally expressed by the significant term, "She is a proud Cis."¶ The duke, her consort, early subdued by misfortune, was mild, temperate and humane,** remarkable for his peaceable and submissive disposition, until goaded to anger and desperation by his enemies. Not so the Lady Cecily: the blood of the haughty Nevilles and the imperious Beauforts flowed in her veins; nine of her brothers were, by descent, marriage or creation, peers of the realm; and her sisters were matched with the most

* Of this, farther proof can scarcely be desired than the very perfect system drawn up for the service of the young Prince of Wales by King Edward IV. above referred to, which is still preserved in the Sloane MSS. No. 3479, and the admirable rules issued by Richard, Duke of Gloucester, for the use and regulation of his household before his elevation to the throne.—*Harleian MSS.* 433. fol. 269.

† The strong fraternal affection that existed between Margaret of York and George, Duke of Clarence, has formed the subject of cotemporary historical notice (see *Chronicle of Croyland*, p. 561), and the fidelity and devotion of Richard Plantagenet for his elder brother, King Edward IV., under the greatest possible reverses of fortune, as will be hereafter shown, formed a bright and beautiful feature in his character. A reference to Fleetwood's Narrative, p. 9, written by a personal attendant of the House of York, will still farther evince how strongly this feeling influenced every member of the family, and how religiously it was inculcated upon them all by their mother, the Lady Cecily.

‡ Sir Thomas More, in his Life of Richard III., (p. 8,) though speaking of the elder sons in terms of high encomium, says, "All three, as they were great states of birth, so were they great and stately of stomach, greedy and ambitious of authority and impatient of partners."

As regards the daughters, Ann the eldest, who married her first cousin, Henry Holland, Duke of Exeter, the faithful and firm friend of his ill-fated kinsman and godsire Henry VI., fully exemplified the same characteristics; unable to mould her husband to her own aspiring views and those of her family, she sacrificed him to her ambition; and instead of suing for pardon when the House of York condemned him as an exile and an outlaw, she heartlessly triumphed over the misery and wretchedness induced by his fidelity to his unhappy sovereign, and availing herself of his attainder and proscription, espoused in his lifetime Sir Thomas St. Leger.—See *Phil. de Comines*, lib. iii. p. 73; also *Stow's Annals*, temp. 12 Ed. IV. The Lady Margaret, her younger sister, though a much more amiable character in private life, was equally imbued with the same ambitious spirit, and indulged the same vindictive sentiments towards all who were opposed to the House of York. Her rich possessions in Burgundy she expended in projects tending to ruin the enemies of her race; and she was significantly termed "Juno," with reference to Henry VII., because, says Lord Bacon, "she was to him as Juno was to Æneas, stirring both heaven and hell to do him mischief."—*Bacon's Hen. VII.*, p. 113.

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‖ Archæol. xiii.

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** Hume, vol. iv. p. 168.

eminent and noble in the land.* When, therefore, she, the youngest of such highly-allied kindred, was placed in a yet more elevated position,† and that even the queenly diadem‡ was her probable destiny, by reason of her union with the legitimate heir of the crown, all her Lancastrian prepossessions were merged in the superior claims of the House of York, and her views henceforth were constantly fixed on those regal honours which she considered due to her husband and the lawful inheritance of her children. It has, indeed, been stated by some writers, that the Lady Cecily married the heir of York wholly with the hope of being a queen.§ Be it so, she was queen-like in all her actions, noble and dignified in her conduct and demeanour, and just even to severity in all her transactions. She was neither unduly elevated in days of prosperity, nor was she weakly subdued by calamity and peril: under all her afflictions she "carried a steady soul,"‖ though she shared in common with her kindred that love of sovereign power, which led to their "making and unmaking kings,"¶ when they had no pretext for usurping the crown themselves. Nor does this lofty ambition, destructive as its seeds afterwards proved when it had ripened and yielded fruit in her offspring, seem at variance with the stern virtues ascribed to the Lady Cecily, if the times in which she lived are taken into consideration. Pride of birth to a degree almost incredible in later times, and disdain for all persons unconnected with ancient and noble descent, was the characteristic of the age in which she flourished.** The education of the high-born infant was based on these sentiments, and fostered by every external mark of sovereign and absolute power. Feudal despotism had then reached its climax; and although the abuse of that system, which at the period under consideration made the nobles of the land literally its rulers, led, in the next century, to the total destruction of the baronial ascendancy, and opened the path of freedom to the long enslaved land, yet the fact is nevertheless incontrovertible, that during the career of the Plantagenet race, personal courage and haughty independence were distinctive marks of the aristocratic noble; whilst arrogance and exacted homage, with few exceptions at least, characterized as a body the "lordly dame" of the fifteenth century. The De la Poles were the only instance on record of a family rising at this age of proud nobility from "trade to rank and splendour."†† The heir of its house, John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, was espoused to Elizabeth of York, second daughter of the Lady Cecily; and as if the evil destiny which marked the elder branch of the Plantagenets was ever to attach itself to those with whom they were allied, the De la Poles, as they exceeded the Nevilles, when in prosperity, in dignity and power, so did they also in the hour of adversity exceed them in misfortune and in the depth of calamity which extinguished their race.‡‡ Can it then be wondered at that Neville's proud daughter, sensible that her first-born would be the representative by right of primogeniture of Edward III. and Philippa of Hainault, that her consort was the rightful heir of a throne, wrested from his ancestors by usurpation, and then ruled ostensibly by an imbecile monarch, but virtually by an unworthy minister, allied to him by illegitimate descent, should, without considering

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† —— "the yengest,
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Vincent, p. 622.

‡ Ibid.

§ Nichol's Fotheringay.

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¶ Archæol., vol. xiii.

** Paston Letters, vol. iv.

†† Heylin, p. 368.

‡‡ Archæol., vol. xiii.

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¶ Archæol., vol. xiii.

** Paston Letters, vol. iv.

†† Heylin, p. 368.

‡‡ Archæol., vol. xiii.

the disastrous results to which such tuition, if uncontrolled, might lead daring and turbulent spirits, infuse into the young minds of her offspring that feeling, which, enforced by a mother's example, and strengthened by a mother's precept, constituting their besetting sin through life—which blighted the character of her eldest and most unworthy daughter, Ann, the merciless Duchess of Exeter, and which has left so indelible a stain upon the name and the memory of Richard, her youngest son, the last monarch of the Plantagenet race?

Prevalent as the desire is, in the present day, of weeding from history those extravagant tales which, based on no authority, and corroborated by no substantial evidence, had their sole origin in the superstitious belief of miracles, industriously propagated by the monkish chroniclers in credulous times, it is presumed that it will be unnecessary here to detail or discuss the marvellous absurdities which have been perpetuated relative to the birth of this prince. Many of them are quite revolting, and the greater part suited only to the coarse taste of a semi-barbarous age, in which it was thought necessary to make matters of mere daily occurrence conformable to the after-career of those individuals who acted a more prominent part than their fellow-men; and even to invest with superhuman or demoniacal powers the innocent child at its birth, who, by the influence of good or evil passions, was fated to perform, at a subsequent period, a conspicuous part in the great drama of life. How forcibly is this exemplified, as relates to the subject of the present memoir, by the pen of the immortal Shakspeare:—

> "The women cried,
> 'O Jesus, bless us! he is born with teeth!'
> And so I was, which plainly signified
> That I should snarl and bite, and play the dog."
>
> *Henry VI.*, 3d Part, Act. V. Scene VI.

Unhappy Richard, thus predestined to crime ere yet the smile of helpless infancy had given place to that of dawning reason!

Not the slightest foundation exists for reports so outrageous to common sense, so staggering even to the most ordinary understanding, as those propagated for three centuries and upwards in connection with the birth of Richard of Gloucester; nor can any trace of them be found in cotemporary records, with the single exception of John Rous, "the monk of Warwick;" whose narrative* has been pronounced by Lord Orford, after careful and critical examination,† "too despicable and lying even amongst monkish authors," to merit quotation.‡ The chronicler of Croyland, William of Wyrcester, the Abbot of St. Alban's, and all other annalists of credit belonging to that period, make no mention or allusion to them; and even Sir Thomas More, whose history has been the chief source whence more modern writers have derived their prejudices against Richard of Gloucester, prefaces his marvellous report by the modifying sentence, "it is for truth reported," or "as the fame runneth;"§ by adding forthwith, "whether men of hatred reporte above the truth," proving, however, that his statement was founded on no authority, but on report alone; and thus implying his own

* Hist. Reg. Ang., p. 214. † Hist. Doubts, p. 106.

‡ Laing, in his valuable "Dissertation on the Crimes imputed to Richard III.," after quoting the statement made by Rous relative to the miraculous birth of this prince, adds, "The historian who deduces Richard's crimes from a calculation of his nativity, may attest the popular belief and rumour; but his private information must rest where he has placed it—on the authority of the stars."—Appendix at the close of *Henry's Hist. of England*, vol. xii. p. 424.

§ More, p. 8.

suspicion of the rancorous feeling whence the tradition emanated. No authentic record, indeed, is extant respecting the birth of Richard Plantagenet, beyond the date of time and place where it occurred. Mr. Hutton, the indefatigable antiquary, who for the space of eighteen years devoted himself with such unwearied zeal to the traditions connected with this prince, that he is stated to have "surveyed the favoured object of his researches with an attention, an ardour, and a perseverance never before displayed by any English historian,"* asserts, that, after keen inquiry among the localities of his childhood, there is but little to record; that "the idle tales" of his birth are "beneath the notice of history;" and that his "infancy was spent in his father's house, where he cuckt his ball and shoot his taw with the same delight as other lads."† His entrance into life, however, occurring but shortly before that of Edward, Prince of Wales, and about the time when the distressing malady of King Henry VI. led to the Duke of York's being nominated protector of the realm, there is little doubt that the young Richard was particularly exposed, from his very cradle, to the evil effects of that struggle for a crown, which excited, to an unexampled excess, the vindictive passions to which the above nomination was the prelude. His father, it appears, immediately assumed the regal style, when called upon as heir presumptive to exercise the sovereign authority; for, in the Paston Papers, there is preserved an original letter from the Duke of York, with his title appended at the top, in kingly form, and sealed with his own signet, bearing the arms of France and England quarterly.‡ His mother, too, gave audience in her throne-room at Fotheringay Castle, with all the pomp and majesty of a queen, which high station she had by this time considered her due, and of the title appertaining to which she was indeed only deprived by the untimely death of her princely consort. Thus it is apparent that her youngest son must have been prematurely placed in a far more elevated and dangerous position than that which marked the more tranquil childhood of his elder, but not less aspiring, brothers; and, accordingly, the cotemporary annals of that epoch make frequent mention of the younger children of the Lady Cecily as being associated with their parent in most perilous situations. At times, surprised and seized in their retirement by the opposing faction;§ at others, flying in all haste from the enemy,‖ who plundered and ransacked without compunction all that had not escaped from the unbridled fury and fierce vengeance which civil contests excited in the soldiery to so lamentable a degree.¶

Very early, therefore, must the subject of this memoir have been inured to the sanguinary proceedings, and been an eye-witness of the harrowing scenes, which, so subversive of the best feelings of human nature, marked his youthful days; and very early, too, must the baneful influence of a desire to command and not to obey, of disdain for the constituted authorities, and a resolution to seize the throne and wrest the sceptre from "the Lord's anointed"** by open violence and sacrilegious†† fraud, have been engrafted on

* Critical Review, vol. lxvi. p. 217.

† Hutton's Bosworth, p. xvii. ‡ Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 76.

§ Hearne's Fragment, p. 284. ‖ Chron. Croyland, p. 551.

¶ Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 184. ** Chron. Croyland, p. 556.

†† See the account of Queen Margaret's conspiracy to destroy the Duke of York and his friends the Lords of Warwick and Salisbury, by treacherously inviting them in courteous language, and under the royal signet, to attend the king, and thus fall into the trap prepared for their destruction. Also the deception practised by the Duke of York shortly afterwards, in retort for the queen's crafty proceeding, that of causing persons to swear in front of his army that King Henry had suddenly expired,

his youthful mind; and this, too, at a time of life when impressions are most durable, and the bias given to the good or evil of maturer years. Richard III. may, in truth, be said to have been cradled by ambition, nurtured on desperate deeds, and inured by example and tuition, from the first dawn of reason, to consider a crown as the ultimatum of human happiness, and its attainment the sole object and chief business of life.

The Lady Cecily's elder sons were, during his infancy, old enough to be associated with their father in most of the conflicts and turbulent scenes which marked the latter years of his chequered life; having been initiated by him, at a very tender age, into all the martial acquirements, in accordance with the warlike spirit of the times; and innumerable are the instances of filial affection which characterized, in early years, the offspring of the Duke of York. The infant Richard being, however, in conjunction with his brother George, peculiarly the object of the Lady Cecily's anxious and devoted care on those occasions of fearful peril and vicissitude which separated her from her husband and elder sons, the display of maternal love, so keenly and indelibly felt in early childhood, may well account for, and will fully explain, the respectful deference which Richard III., despite of Lancastrian tales to his prejudice, is proved by undeniable authority to have testified through life for his affectionate, though not altogether faultless, mother.*

This young prince was about seven years of age when he was called upon to experience the severe vicissitudes, and personally share in the disastrous consequences of that proximity to the throne which for three generations had periled the lives and nearly ruined the fortunes of his illustrious house; and from this tender age he may, indeed, be said to have commenced not only his public, but, as far as regards historical records, also his political career.†

It was in October, 1459, that the two factions of the Red and White Roses, having been roused to the highest degree of fury from the want of faith and bitterness of feeling‡ which had been recently displayed by the leaders of these two opposing interests, assembled in order of battle near the town and castle of Ludlow;§ the Lancastrians following the Yorkists' troops to the confines of Wales, where the latter had been summoned to join their chief in the neighbourhood of his patrimonial fortress. And fierce, indeed, would the contest probably have been had a battle ensued, for both parties were bent on each other's destruction: but the treachery‖ which so often in these unhappy feuds decided prematurely the fate of the day, gave to the king's party on this occasion so unlooked-for an advantage, that the Yorkists were compelled to disperse in all haste, ere the morn of the intended conflict had dawned. The duke, taking with him his second son, Edmonde, Earl of

and commanding masses to be publicly sung by the soldiers for the repose of his soul. —*Kennet's Complete Hist. of England*, vol. i. p. 414; also *Turner's Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 219.

* Buck's Richard III., lib. i. p. 82.

† Rot. Parl., p. 370.

‡ In reply to the proclamation issued by the peaceably disposed King Henry VI., offering pardon to all who would submit to his clemency, the Duke of York, though earnestly asserting his loyalty to him as his sovereign, added, "that the king's indemnity signified little, so long as the queen's predominant power in all things so overawed him."—*Sandford*, book iv. p. 295.

§ Stow's Chronicle, pp. 405, 406.

‖ Sir Andrew Trollope suddenly departed secretly in the night, and joined, with the chief soldiers from Calais, the royal banner. This desertion, the dismay it created, and the uncertainty how many would imitate the treachery, unnerved the courage of the rest.—*Sharon Turner*, vol. iii. p. 219.

Rutland, an interesting and noble youth of about sixteen years of age, departed secretly at midnight* from his stronghold at Ludlow; and flying in all haste through Wales, sought refuge for himself and his child amongst the wilds and fastnesses of Ireland, where he was received with enthusiasm, and served with fidelity, in consequence of the popularity† he had acquired during his former just, but mild, government of that country.‡

Edward, Earl of March, his eldest son, who was just springing into manhood, and had been already distinguished for military prowess beyond his years, was also compelled, for the preservation of his life, to escape into France, with his noble kinsmen, the Lords of Salisbury and Warwick, leaving to the mercy of their foes the Duchess of York and her infant sons George and Richard Plantagenet.§

In accordance with the devastating system of civil warfare then pursued, the town of Ludlow became the immediate object of plunder and rapine.‖ Every valuable article in the castle was seized and destroyed within a few hours, after it was ascertained that the duke, with his elder sons, had escaped, and that his dwelling, in some measure, was left unguarded and defenceless; the despoilers finding within its secret apartments the Lady Cecily and her young offspring, they were immediately made prisoners of state, and, by command of King Henry, consigned to the custody of her elder sister, the Duchess of Buckingham,¶ who was espoused to one of the firmest supporters of the line of Lancaster.

A parliament being forthwith summoned to meet at Coventry,** where the king and his court were then fixed, the Duke of York, with the youthful Earls of March and Rutland, were immediately attainted of high treason, together with the chief partisans of their cause, who were proclaimed with themselves "traitors to the king, enemies to their country, and rebels to the crown."†† The whole of their lands were confiscated,‡‡ and the Lady Cecily, with her younger children, found herself not merely a prisoner with them, and bereft of home and "all her goods,"§§ but overwhelmed also by the conviction of its utter and irretrievable ruin, in consequence of the severe measures adopted towards the House of York.‖‖ Its leaders were all exiles, or outlawed as traitors; every branch of her own family was attainted for the share

* Whethamstede, p. 459. † Kennet, vol. i. p. 419.

‡ Richard III. when he ascended the throne adverted to the kindness shown to his father at this crisis by "certain nobles and gentles of his land of Ireland," in "the instructions given by him to his cousin the Bishop of Enachden, to be showed on his behalf to his cousin the Earl of Desmond," in the first year of his reign, viz., "Remembering the manifold and notable service and kindness by the earl's father unto the famous prince, the Duke of York, the king's father, at divers seasons of great necessity in those parts to his great jeopardies and charges doon." In another portion of this curious document, he feelingly alludes to his extreme youth at the time, "the king then being of young age;" thus evincing how early his interest was fixed on the troubles of the period, and also how deep an impression they left upon his mind.—*Harl. MS.* 433, fol. 265.

§ Whethamstede, p. 474. ‖ Hearne's Fragment, p. 284.

¶ Anne, the nineteenth child of Ralph, first Earl of Westmoreland, (and own sister to Cecily, Duchess of York,) was married first to Humphrey, Duke of Buckingham, and afterwards to Walter Blount, Lord Mountjoy.—*Blore's Monumental Remains*, part iii. p. 31.

** Rot. Parl., p. 370. †† W. Wyrcester, p. 478.

‡‡ The Parliament "as yet abideth upon the great matters of attainder and forfeiture."—*Paston Letters*, vol. i. p. 179.

§§ Cecily, Duchess of York, "was deprived of all her goods; she come yester evening late to Coventry."—*Paston Letters*, vol. i. p. 179.

‖‖ Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 179.

which they had taken in the rebellion,* or, like herself, deprived of their rich possessions, and utterly in the power and at the mercy of their foes. But her husband's cause was not so desperate as it at first appeared:† it was in effect become too popular, and had been espoused too warmly, to be ruined by the event of a single dispersion of his supporters.

In less than three months from the fatal sacking of Ludlow, the consort of the attainted duke is recorded as having been well received in Kent,‡ where a serious insurrection had already been kindled in favour of her illustrious husband, who possibly held lands and retainers in that county by descent from the House of Clare. It is most probable, however, that at the time the insurrection commenced, the Lady Cecily was a state prisoner in Kent, in the custody of her sister, the Duchess of Buckingham, to whose charge she had been so recently committed, and that she was dwelling with her at Tunbridge Castle, the hereditary abode of the De Clares, Earls of Gloucester,§ whose patrimonial demesnes passed by marriage to the Staffords, Dukes of Buckingham, on the demise of the last earl in the 21st of Edward III., 1317. The pretensions of the Duke of York to the throne being upheld by the powerful influence of his wife's kindred, and aided by their vast wealth, fortune once more began to smile on the exiled chief and his family, so that the young Edward of March was encouraged in the ensuing year to return to England and face his opponents; and in conjunction with the leaders of the Yorkist faction again to unfurl the standard of rebellion,‖ and give battle to the Lancastrians at Northampton.

So signal a victory was there achieved over the royal army, that danger now spread even to the warmest supporters of the unfortunate Henry VI., who was himself taken prisoner, and the chief of his adherents scattered or slain.¶ The queen and her young son, Edward, Prince of Wales, were compelled to seek safety in flight, which was accomplished under great perils, and with extreme difficulty;** and the Duke of York, who was then sojourning in much state at Dublin, was summoned from his exile by his triumphant party†† to assume a still higher position than that which had led to his attainder in the previous year. The Lady Cecily, emboldened by these brighter prospects, had returned to the metropolis;‡‡ but whether by formal release from captivity, or through the connivance of her sister at her escape, does not appear; most probably the latter, as she seems to have reached

* Alice, Countess of Salisbury, was attainted upon the charge of having counselled and abetted all the treason.—*Rot. Parl.*, p. 349.

† Rymer, vol. ii. p. 444.

‡ "My lady duchess is still again received in Kent. The Duke of York is at Dublin, strengthened with his earles and hommagers, as ye shall see by a bill. God send the king victory of his enemies, and rest and peace amongst his lords."—*Paston Letters*, vol. i. p. 184.

§ Camden says, "This great family of the Clares were resident for the most part at their castle of Tunbridge, in Kent, to which they had a liberty called the Loway, reaching three miles every way from the centre, answerable to that which belonged to their seigniory of Bryany in Normandy, which they exchanged for it." And again: "The Castle of Tunbridge, in Kent, was the ancient seigniory of the Clares, Earls of Gloucester."—*Camden's Remains*, p. 279. Richard de Clare, Earl of Gloucester and Lord of Tunbridge, erected a church and founded a priory there in the reign of Henry III.; and King Edward I. was nobly feasted at Tunbridge by Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, through whose three sisters, his co-heiresses, the vast possessions of the House of Clare descended to Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, and Mortimer, Earl of March.—*Sandford*, book iii. pp. 140, 141.

‖ W. Wyrcester, p. 481.

¶ Ibid.

** Stow's Chron., p. 409.

†† Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 184.

‡‡ W. Wyrcester, p. 483.

London secretly, and to have continued there in disguise; for, instead of openly taking up her abode in Baynard's Castle, her husband's mansion, she privately sought an asylum for herself and young children at the law-chambers of Sir John Paston, a faithful friend and ally of the family, in the Temple. Possibly she shrank from exposing herself and her offspring to the chance of recapture, as at Ludlow; or risking the destruction of property which there ensued, in case another reverse of fortune should render her again a prey to her political enemies; for Baynard's Castle, though garrisoned by a powerful force under the command of her son, the Earl of March, was hourly expected to be besieged. Be the cause what it may, the facts are clearly established by a cotemporaneous letter* of so interesting a nature, that, conveying, as it does, one of the few well-authenticated memorials of the childhood of Richard III., that portion of it demands insertion in these pages:—

"To the Right Worshipful Sir and Master John Paston at Norwich, be this letter delivered in haste.

"Right worshipful Sir and Master, I recommend me unto you; please you, to wit, the Monday after Lady-day,† there come hither to my master's place my Master Bowser, Sir Harry Ratford, John Clay, and the harbinger of my Lord of March, desiring that my Lady of York might be here until the coming of my Lord of York, and her two sons, my Lord George‡ and my Lord Richard,§ and my Lady Margaret‖ her daughter, which I granted them, in your name, to lie here till Michaelmas. And she had not lain here two nights, but she had tidings of the landing of my Lord at Chester. The Tuesday after my lord sent for her, that she should come to him to Hereford; and thither she is gone, and she hath left here both the sons and the daughter, and the Lord of March cometh every day to see them.

"Written by a confidential servant of John Paston, one Christopher Hausson, October 12. 1460."

Here we see exemplified, in a very striking manner, the strong affection which, although strangely corrupted in after years, was evidently in their youth a spontaneous and inherent feeling in the children of the House of York.

Edward, its heir, the admired and the flattered, "the goodliest gentleman that ever eyes beheld,"¶ commanding his father's garrison with the firmness and vigour of an experienced leader,** though but a minor in years, and called upon to watch over that father's interest, entailing, as it did, so important a result as the reversal of his attainder and his own probable succession to the throne, is yet to be found affectionately attending to the comfort and safety of his young brothers and sister, thus unexpectedly thrown upon his watchful care. Notwithstanding his political difficulties and the importance of his military claims, the Earl of March found leisure each day to visit them, and despite of public engagements, that might well have been supposed all-engrossing to a youth of eighteen, yet privately performing, in his own person, those endearing offices of affection, and taking upon himself those

* Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 199.

† Monday after the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, 15th September, 1460.

‡ Afterwards Duke of Clarence, at this time in his 11th year, being born 21st October, 1449.

§ Afterwards Duke of Gloucester, aged about 8, being born the 2d October, 1452.

‖ Afterwards Duchess of Burgundy, 14 years of age, being born in May, 1445.—*W. Wyrcester apud Hearne*, p. 461.

¶ Philip de Comines, lib. iv. cap. 10.

** Sharon Turner, vol. iii. p. 226.

parental duties and anxieties, of which the young princes and the Lady Margaret had been temporarily deprived in the absence of their natural protectors.

Surely this must negative that sweeping charge of cruelty and utter heartlessness so often ascribed to King Edward the Fourth; and as completely must it controvert the impression so long conveyed, though without a shadow of foundation for the report, that Richard of Gloucester was an object of abhorrence from his birth—a precocious monster of wickedness, and, as such, alike detested and dreaded by his kindred and connections.

The Castle of Ludlow,* the scene of their calamitous separation in the preceding year, was the scene also of the reunion of the Duke of York and the Lady Cecily, who hastily quitted the metropolis, leaving her children securely placed at Sir John Paston's chambers in the Temple, to await her lord's arrival at Hereford, when intelligence was received of his departure from Ireland. The conclusion of the letter, a portion of which has just been inserted, while establishing this fact, narrates also the almost regal authority which the duke was empowered to exercise on his progress to London;† the unhappy Henry VI. being virtually a prisoner in the hands of the young Edward of March, and his kinsmen the Earls of Salisbury and Warwick, who, by ostensibly allowing their monarch his liberty and showing a marked deference to his views, his wishes and his pleasures,‡ furthered by means of the royal mandate, over which they had uncontrolled power, measures too important to be delegated generally to subjects.

On the 10th October, 1460, the duke and duchess reached London, and at Baynard's Castle, the long-separated branches of the illustrious family of York were once more happily re-united.§ The younger children, as above stated, were already domiciled in the metropolis, and the elder sons are also proved to have been there, from their being associated with their princely parent in solemnly swearing, before the assembled peers of the realm, "not to abridge the king's life or endanger his liberty."‖

The political events consequent on this sudden emancipation of the Duke of York from exile have been already narrated in the chapter which treated of his public career; in which it will be remembered, that up to this period he had not actually claimed the crown, but merely urged his right of succession. When, however, this latter point was conceded to him and his heirs, not only by act of Parliament, but ratified by the royal assent, from his having now openly asserted his pretensions to their fullest extent, there needed little else to render his triumph complete. This result speedily followed, for Parliament further enacted¶ that henceforth, "to encompass the Duke of York's death should be considered high treason," and an acknowledgment of the justness of his conceded rights was established by his being created "Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall and Earl of Chester,"**

* W. Wyrcester, p. 483.

† "My Lord of York hath divers strange commissions from the king for to sit in divers towns coming homeward; that is to say, in Ludlow, Coventry, &c. &c., to punish them by the faults to the king's law. The king is away at Eltham and at Greenwich to hunt. The queen and the prince abideth in Wales always, and there is with her the Duke of Exeter and others." This Duke of Exeter, the near kinsman and devoted partisan of the House of Lancaster, was espoused to the eldest daughter of the Duke of York. It would appear, however, that their colliding interests soon produced disunion in the husband and wife; the Lady Anne being as firmly devoted to her father's cause and that of the elder branch of the Plantagenet race, as was the duke to that of the hapless Henry and his heroic queen.

‡ Whethamstede, p. 482.

§ W. Wyrcester, p. 483.

‖ Rot. Parl., p. 379.

¶ Ibid., p. 380.

** Kennet, vol. i. p. 424.

in addition to the lofty title of "protector of the realm;" and in support of these new dignities, a yearly income awarded to him of 5000 marks* for his own estate, 3000 for the Earl of March, and 2000 for the Earl of Rutland.†

Thus, after years of storm and tempest, the sun of prosperity seemed at last to shine with renewed lustre upon the House of York; peace and unanimity appeared secure to the duke and his household, as if to compensate for the many reverses of fortune that had, in the end, terminated so happily for them.

But it was a prosperity too brilliant to be lasting. A few weeks of reunion and domestic happiness were destined to usher in a futurity fraught with degradation and death to the father, with sorrow and calamity to his widow, and ultimate misery to his descendants and their offspring. The Duke of York was hastily summoned to oppose Queen Margaret in the north; and once more taking young Edmund of Rutland as his companion, dispatching the Earl of March into Wales to assemble their feudatory adherents in the marches,‡ and leaving the Lady Cecily again to watch over the lives and interest of the junior branches of their family, the illustrious prince proceeded with a small but trusty band to his fortress at Sendal near Wakefield, there to meet, in conjunction with the youthful Rutland, a speedy and a tragical death, and there, as already narrated, to receive, as if in mockery of human ambition, a paper crown in lieu of that much-coveted diadem for which he had so long fought and bled.

* A mark was anciently valued at 30*s.*; it is now generally taken for the sum of 13*s.* 4*d.* It is a silver coin, and varies materially in the several countries, Germany, Sweden and Denmark, where it is still current.

† Rot. Parl., p. 382.

‡ This term "marches" designated the boundaries between England and Wales. It was similarly used with reference to Scotland; and also in allusion to our provincial limits in France, the Netherlands and other continental possessions.

CHAPTER IV.

The widowed Duchess of York secretly conveys her younger sons to Utrecht.—Advantages derived from their exile.—Strength of mind displayed by their mother.—Accession and coronation of Edward IV.—He dispatches messengers to Burgundy for his brothers.—Invests Prince George with the Duchy of Clarence.—Creates Richard Duke of Gloucester.—Richard's domestic education, martial instruction.—Absence of all foundation for his reputed deformity.—His general appearance deduced from the testimony of cotemporary writers and original portraits.—His probable domestication in the family of the Earl of Warwick, and early companionship with the Lady Anne Neville, his future wife.—King Edward's affection for Gloucester.—He is created a Knight of the Garter.

The widowed Duchess of York, overwhelmed at the disastrous intelligence of her husband's defeat and death and the murder of the unoffending Rutland, and fearing, from the cruelty exercised towards them, the total overthrow of her house and destruction of her remaining offspring, promptly took measures for secretly conveying out of the kingdom her two young sons, George and Richard Plantagenet.*

Her nephew, the famed Earl of Warwick, as admiral of the Channel,† was at this time master of the sea; and from his being resident in the metropolis as governor of the Tower,‡ when the sad tidings were communicated to the Lady Cecily, she was enabled, without delay, or dread of her children being intercepted, to convey them, by the co-operation of her kinsman, in safety to Holland. There she earnestly besought from Philip, Duke of Burgundy, an asylum and security for the youthful exiles; and that illustrious prince, having given them a friendly reception, they were forthwith speedily established, with suitable governors, in the city of Utrecht,§ where, it is asserted, they had princely and liberal education.‖ They continued to abide there until the House of York regained the ascendancy, and King Edward IV. was established permanently on the throne.

The Low Countries being at this crisis the seat of chivalry, renowned for its knightly spirit, and distinguished throughout Europe by its patronage of learning and encouragement of the fine arts,¶ the young princes benefited

* Hearne's Frag., p. 283.

† Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, was made captain of Calais in 1455, and subsequently admiral of the Channel; and the Paston letter which notifies these appointments adds, "The Duke of Exeter taketh a great displeasure that my Lord Warwick occupieth his office and taketh the charge of the keeping of the sea upon him." After the battle of Northampton, and when King Henry was in the custody of Warwick, he was reinstated in these high commands, and made governor of the Tower.—*Paston Letters*, vol. i. pp. 103, 201; *Stow's Annals; Fabian*, vol. i. p. 469.

‡ Whethamstede, p. 496.

§ Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 162.

‖ Buck, p. 8.

¶ Philip, Duke of Burgundy, was the most magnificent prince of his age, his court one of the most polished, and his fondness for the expiring customs of chivalry, and efforts for the advancement of literature, were equally great and influential. He instituted the order of the Knights of the Golden Fleece. He died 1467, and was succeeded by his son Charles, between whom and the Lady Margaret, sister to the orphan princes, (and their associate in their recent concealment in the Temple,) a marriage was afterwards negotiated; and, although interrupted for a time by the sudden demise of Duke Philip, was eventually solemnized, and proved the occasion of a second asylum to Richard of Gloucester, when, in after years, he was again an exile, and again compelled to flee from his country and his home.—*Life of Caxton*, p. 23.

materially by an event which, apparently fraught with such evil to their house, thus proved to themselves individually productive of singular advantage. It gave them opportunity for mental culture, and altogether a more accomplished education than the distracted state of England would have admitted of at that period.

The Duchess of York, who was a woman of great strength of mind and firmness of character, did not fly with them; but remained with her unmarried daughter, the Lady Margaret, in the metropolis,* calmly awaiting the result of the Earl of March's efforts to avenge his father's death. Though but eighteen years of age, the military talents of this young prince were of a very high order, excelling those even of the deceased duke.† The knowledge of this, no doubt, encouraged his mother with hope as to the final result of his energy and zeal in reviving the fallen state of their cause; but, experienced as she was in the trying scenes of those disastrous times, and gifted herself with a vigorous understanding, she could scarcely fail to be acquainted with the rash and thoughtless indiscretion which formed so marked a feature in the character of her eldest son. This knowledge justifiably determined her to remain at all risks in England, rather than to leave him, the sole prop of their ill-fated house, to his own unaided judgment and guidance at a juncture so critical and so fraught with danger.

Her influence over him, and her wise decision in this matter, are made apparent from a fact which strongly attests the respectful affection paid to her by the young monarch almost immediately after his accession, and when he may naturally be supposed to have been flushed by his success, and elated by the acquisition of a regal diadem. While London was in a state of the greatest excitement‡ previous to the decisive battle of Towton,§—the final contest between the rival factions,—which occurred within a month following the proclamation of Edward IV., the populace were calmed, and the minds of the citizens set at rest, by letters from the king to his mother; to whom he first made known the full particulars of an event which effectually secured to him that sovereignty to which he had so recently been elected. It was at her dwelling-place, and under her roof, that the possibility of that election was first made known to him; and there, also, in her presence, was it confirmed by the prelates and nobles of the realm.

It was in Baynard's Castle that the youthful representative of the House of York, the founder of that dynasty and first of his race, assumed the title and dignity of king;‖ and it was in that famed metropolitan abode of the late "good Duke Richard,"¶ that Cecily, his bereaved widow, reassembled around

* Excerpt. Hist., p. 223.

† S. Turner, vol. iii. p. 226.

‡ Hearne's Frag., p. 287.

§ A letter from William Paston to his brother John gives a very curious and authentic account of the battle of Towton (a village about ten miles south-west of York), which was fought on Palm Sunday, the 29th March, 1461, within a month after Edward's possessing himself of the crown, and upon the fate of which his future hopes of retaining it depended. It commences thus:—"Please you to know and to wit of such tidings, as my Lady of York hath by a letter of credence under the sign-manual of our Sovereign Lord, King Edward, which letter came unto our said Lady this same day, Easter Eve, and was seen and read by me, William Paston."—*Paston Letters*, vol. i. p. 217.

‖ Baker's Chron., p. 198.

¶ Hume, vol. iv. p. 194.

her the scattered remnant of her family;* and after witnessing the triumphant return of her son, and beholding, in due time, his accession and coronation, continued at intervals to reside, whenever circumstances obliged her to quit for a brief period the privacy at Berkhampstead, into which she immediately retired upon the death of her husband, and after her son's establishment upon the throne.†

By this unconstrained act the Lady Cecily evinced that true nobleness of character for which she was so remarkable. As a counterpoise to the severity of her recent loss, she might, as the surviving parent of the victorious sovereign, have continued to occupy that high position which the spirit of the times rendered so enviable, and which her ambitious temperament must have made it so hard to relinquish; but in her husband's grave the widow of the noble York appears to have buried all her aspiring views. Forthwith retiring from public life, she voluntarily relinquished all pomp and power; and although possessed, too, of considerable personal attractions, she withdrew from the fascinations of the court,‡ and devoted herself to the tranquil duties of life in scenes which had so recently witnessed her prosperous days, and which were now hallowed by the sorrows that had numbered their duration.

Tranquillity at length being somewhat restored to the desolated kingdom, Edward IV. dispatched trusty messengers to Burgundy to bring home his young brothers; and on their return to England, he suitably provided for their instruction in the practice of arms§ preparatory to their being of age, in accordance with the usage of those times, and experience sufficient to receive the honour of knighthood.

In his first parliament, King Edward amply endowed his widowed parent,‖ and afterwards strictly enforced the regular payment of the annuities settled upon her.¶ He invested Prince George, his eldest surviving brother, with the Duchy of Clarence; and Prince Richard, the youngest, he created Duke of Gloucester.** In the February following he further constituted Clarence lieutenant of Ireland; and, for the better support of his dignity as first prince of the blood royal, awarded him divers lands and manors in various counties, and also residences in the metropolis,†† in the parishes of St. Catherine Colman and St. Anne Aldersgate, both of which had lapsed to the crown by the attainder of the Duke of Northumberland.‡‡

Richard of Gloucester, whom the king had likewise made admiral of the sea,§§ was speedily nominated to even greater honours;‖‖ and the preamble of the patent conveying them to him, viz., "The king, in consideration of the sincere fraternal affection which he entertained towards his right well-beloved brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and admiral of the sea,"¶¶

* Pennant, p. 348. † Archæologia, vol. xiii. p. 7.

‡ In her widowhood, the Duchess of York, on all matters of import used the arms of France and England quarterly, thus implying that of right she was queen.—*Sandford*, book v. p. 369.

§ Buck's Rich. III., p. 8. ‖ Rot. Parl., p. 484.

¶ In Rymer's Fœdera will be found a mandate to the sheriff of York, commanding him to pay to Cecily, Duchess of York, the king's mother, the arrears of an annuity of 100*l.* which had been granted to her by the king, commencing on the 10th of June preceding. Dated 30th January, 1 Ed. IV., 1462.—Vol. xi. p. 483.

** Hearne's Frag., p. 285.

†† Dugdale's Baronage, vol. ii. p. 162. ‡‡ Ibid.

§§ Pat. 2d Ed. IV., p. 2. ‖‖ See Appendix Q.

¶¶ "And that he might the better and more honourably maintain the ducal rank, and the costs and charges incumbent thereon," King Edward granted to him "the castle and fee farm of the town of Gloucester, the constableship of Corfe Castle, and the manor of Kingston Lacy, county Dorset, parcel of the Duchy of Lancaster, the castle,

strongly marks, even at this early period, the peculiar interest and attachment entertained for the subject of this memoir by his royal brother.

Up to the present time, the fortunes of the three brothers have been so closely connected, that to consider the career of the younger apart from that of the elder would have been impracticable, or, if possible, would rather have baffled than aided an impartial review of the early days of Richard III. Moreover, viewing him in connection with his family, it is apparent that a prince fondly cherished by his kindred, early endowed with immense wealth, distinguished, too, by marks of singular favour, and testimonies, openly expressed, of strong affection from his sovereign and elder brother, could not have been the monster of depravity which posterity has been taught to believe him,—"malicious, wrathful, envious from his birth,"*—or have given indication, during infancy and boyhood, of that fiend-like temperament which hitherto has been generally considered the characteristic of the Duke of Gloucester. The desire of power and the ambition to possess a crown, were, as has been already stated, the predominant passions of his race; and, as far as the arrogance and insubordination of the great mass of the feudal lords could extenuate the same feelings in the kingly competitors of this era, they might, in some measure, be pardoned for their ferocious and appalling acts,—acts which, there can exist no doubt, infected with their baneful influence a mind but too early inured to the worst passions of human nature.

But every co-existent record and all the verified details of his youth, afford substantial cause to warrant the assumption that the vices imputed in maturer years to Richard of Gloucester were more the result of the evil times on which he fell than the development of the germs of vice which had remained concealed in his mind from childhood. If, however, the alleged depravity of this young prince is proved to be so erroneous, at least in his youthful days, far more decided is the absence of all foundation for the distorted figure and repulsive lineaments so universally ascribed to him in after ages. As it was observed in the opening of this memoir, the attestation of eye-witnesses or coeval authorities can alone be deemed conclusive on such points; it cannot, therefore, but be considered a very startling circumstance, that all the writers to whom the Duke of Gloucester could have been personally known, and from whose remarks the only genuine accounts of him can at the present day be obtained, are either silent on the subject,—thus tacitly proving that there was no such deformity to note,—or, otherwise, they disprove the assertion by direct and opposing statements. The chronicler of Croyland, Whethamstede, abbot of St. Alban's, the author of Fleetwood's Chronicle, the correspondents of the Paston family, and many other writers of more or less repute, lived at the same period with Richard, Duke of Gloucester; William of Wyrcester for example, who, when detailing the enthusiasm of the populace at the election of Edward IV. in St. John's Fields, says, "I was there, I heard them, and I returned with them into the city;"† and the author of the fragment relating to that monarch published by Hearne,‡ proves his intimate acquaintance with the House of York, by stating "My purpose is, and shall be, as touching the life of Edward IV., to write and show such things as I have heard of his own mouth; and also impart of such things in the

earldom, honour and lordship of Richmond, which had previously belonged to Edmund, late Earl of Richmond; also numerous manors, forty-six in number, in the counties of Oxford, Cambridge, Cornwall, Suffolk, Essex, Bedford, Rutland and Kent, which came to the crown by the attainder of John de Vere, Earl of Oxford."—*Rot. Parl.*, vol. vi. p. 227.

* More's Rycharde III., p. 8. † Ann. W. Wyr., p. 489.

‡ In Sprotti Cronica, apud Hearne, p. 299.

which I have been personally present, as well within the royaulme as without, during a certain space, more especial from 1468 to 1482."* This period embraces a most important part of Richard of Gloucester's life: a period when he was, on all public occasions, associated with his royal brother, yet this writer nowhere mentions any deformity. Neither is it noticed, or in any way alluded to, by any one of the other writers above quoted, though each and all must have known the fact had it existed. The Abbot of St. Alban's lived within a few miles of Berkhampstead, at which place much of Richard's childhood was passed, and where his mother mostly resided. Sir John Paston was attached to the household of the Princess Margaret,† his sister, and travelled as part of her retinue, in company with Gloucester, when in progress to solemnize her marriage.

The Fleetwood chronicler, on his own acknowledgment,‡ was a personal attendant on this prince and his royal brother at a later period of their lives; and the continuator of the History of Croyland (to quote the words of a modern writer§ well versed in these early narratives) "is one of the best of our English historians of the class to which he belongs. He was one of Edward the Fourth's councillors, and being connected with the House of York, but not writing until after the battle of Bosworth, he holds the balance pretty evenly between the rival parties." In these writers we have extant a series of connecting links extending from Gloucester's infancy to his decease; yet nowhere, in any one of them, is there to be found a foundation even for the report of a deformity so remarkable. Were it true, it is opposed to all reason to believe it could have escaped comment or mention by writers who narrated so minutely the passing events of their day. Honest Philip de Comines‖ (as he has been termed), a Flemish historian of undoubted veracity, and uninfluenced by party views—a foreigner, who only noticed the reigning sovereigns of England and their court, either as being cotemporaries or as politically connected with the French monarchs whose history he wrote,¶ neither asserts nor insinuates any thing remarkable in the external appearance of Richard of Gloucester. This historian twice mentions in his work, "that Edward IV. was the most beautiful prince that he had ever seen, or of his time."** He gives very many and most interesting accounts, from personal observation,†† of this king's habits and manners, yet animadverts with equal

* The writer of the brief narrative published by Hearne, and which contains so much important matter relative to the events of this period, appears to have held a responsible situation in the office of the lord high treasurer of England, Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, and also to have been high in the confidence of that nobleman; for he frequently appeals to him with earnestness in confirmation of the truth of his statements, which are given with such clearness and precision as fully to establish his assertion that he narrated from personal knowledge.

† Sir John Paston was knighted by Edward IV. at his coronation, perhaps in requital of the shelter he afforded to the Duchess of York and her young children, at his apartments in the Temple; this seems probable from his being afterwards so favourably distinguished by the Princess Margaret, who was associated with her brothers in their concealment.—*Paston Letters*, vol. ii. p. 3.

‡ History of the Arrival of Edward IV. in England, p. 1.

§ J. Bruce, Esq., editor of several of the publications of the Camden Society.

‖ Philip de Comines, who was formed as a writer more from experience than learning, is esteemed one of the most sagacious historians of his own or any other age. He penetrated deeply into men and things, and knew and exemplified the insignificancy of human grandeur.—*Granger, Biog. Hist. Eng.*, vol. i. p. 73.

¶ Lewis XI. and Charles VIII.

** Phil. de Comines, pp. 225. 246.

†† Louis XI. employed Philip de Comines in embassies to almost every court of Europe. He tells us himself, in his memoirs, that he was sent to that of England in the reign of Edward IV.—*Granger*, vol. i. p. 73.

freedom and honesty on his foibles and indiscretion. He was well known to the three brothers, and frequently saw them all. Can there, then, exist any doubt that the extraordinary beauty of form and feature which distinguished Edward IV. and the Duke of Clarence, and which called forth such encomiums from the historians, would not have also elicited from De Comines some allusion, in the way of comparison, with respect to the deformity of their young brother, had there been the slightest foundation for that revolting aspect with which after writers have invested him?

No record, indeed, has been found, cotemporary with Richard III., that affords even a shadow of foundation for the fables so long imposed on posterity, except the single authority of John Rous, the recluse of Warwick, whose history in Latin of the kings of England was dedicated, it will be remembered, to Henry VII. But, though an avowed Lancastrian and a bitter enemy of the line of York, this historian simply alleges, as regards Gloucester's person, that "he was small of stature, having a short face and uneven shoulders, the left being lower than the right."* Moreover, it is also deserving of notice, that one of the most rancorous passages in this author's narrative effectually controverts, at all events, the distorted features which are also reported to have marked King Richard's face: "At whose birth," says Rous, "Scorpion was in the ascendant,† which sign is the House of Mars; and as a scorpion, mild in countenance, stinging in the tail, so he showed himself to all." No positive assertion, from any friend or partisan, of the actual beauty of Richard's features, could better have substantiated the fact, than this indirect acknowledgment from one of the most malignant and bitter enemies of himself and his family, of the insinuating and bland expression which he possessed when his countenance was unruffled.

Polydore Virgil, author of the "Anglica Historica,"‡ an erudite writer of the period immediately succeeding that in which King Richard flourished, describes him as "slight in figure, in face short and compact, like his father."§

Sir George Buck,‖ the first historian who had sufficient hardihood to attempt the defence of this prince, and who appears to have had access to documents no longer extant, though quoted by him as then in Sir Robert Cotton's manuscript library, not only warmly defends Richard against the current accusation of moral guilt, but confesses himself unable to find any evidence whatever warranting the imputation of personal deformity. So likewise Horace Walpole, Lord Orford,¶ an elegant scholar and ingenious historian,

* Rous, Hist. Regum Ang. (apud Hearne), p. 215.

† Ibid.

‡ "From what source Polydore Virgil derived his account of the events contained in his Anglica Historica," observes the editor of Fleetwood's Chronicle (p. iv.), "is unknown; but he has given an excellent narrative, superior in style, abundant in facts and copious in description.—It of course strongly favours the House of Lancaster, and may, indeed, be considered as the account which that party was desirous should be believed. It is also stated in the Introduction to the Plumpton Correspondence, (p. xxiii.,) 'that many of his details are evidently founded upon authentic documents which have not survived the lapse of time, or which he may have wilfully destroyed—a practice imputed to this foreigner.'"

§ Polyd. Virg., p. 544.

‖ Sir George Buck was master of the revels, and one of the gentlemen of the privy chamber, to King James I. Lord Orford says, "Buck agrees with Philip de Comines, and with the Rolls of Parliament;" also that "Buck gains new credit the deeper the dark scene is fathomed."—*Historic Doubts*, p. 20.

¶ Granger, in enumerating the different portraits of this monarch, says, "Mr. Walpole, who is well known to have struck new light into some of the darkest passages of English history, has brought various presumptive proofs, unknown to Buck, that

and who, though as the avowed champion of Richard, open to controversy and dispute respecting his own interpretation of facts adduced, has never been accused or even suspected of inventing the facts which he advances,—yet he, who bestowed the most unwearied pains in searching for the source of the extraordinary reports connected with Gloucester's alleged misshapen appearance, and tested the value of the original authority by disproving or substantiating their authenticity, could find no corroboration of rumours so long believed; on the contrary, in his "Historic Doubts," this able writer produces coexistent statements, not merely to prove the beauty of Richard's features, but also to establish the fact of his generally prepossessing appearance.*

The purport of this memoir, however, is not unduly to exalt Richard of Gloucester, either in mind or person, still less to invest him with qualifications and personalities more fitted to embellish a romance than to find a place in the plain, unvarnished statements of historical research: its design is simply to rescue his memory from unfounded aspersions, and to vindicate him, whenever undeniable proof exists, from positive misstatement. The question of his personal deformity, however wide-spread the belief, may, to the philosophical reader, seem unimportant, when placed in comparison with his moral character; but in tracing the life of this prince, it is expedient that minor details should be considered, as well as matter of more importance; for it is the summing up the whole that constitutes the monstrous picture of this monarch that has been so long presented to our view.

After the most attentive examination of cotemporary evidence, whether gleaned from native chroniclers or foreign writers, the evidence in reference to the personal appearance of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, will be found to amount to this: that he was "slight in figure,† and short of stature;"‡ that his features were "compact§ and handsome,‖ though his face was always thin;"¶ that the expression of his countenance was "mild"** and pleasing;†† but when excited, it at times assumed a character of fierce impetuosity‡‡

Richard was neither that deformed person nor that monster of cruelty and impiety which he has been represented by our historians."—*Granger's Biog. Hist. of England*, vol. i. p. 24.

* In Walpole's "Historic Doubts" it is narrated that the old Countess of Desmond, who had danced with Richard, declared he "was the handsomest man in the room except his brother Edward, and was very well made."—*Historic Doubts*, p. 102. This anecdote has been doubtingly received, and never fairly treated, on account of the prejudices that had prevailed before Lord Walpole narrated it, relative to the Duke of Gloucester's deformity. Yet, even admitting that the description was over-wrought and highly-coloured, it can scarcely be supposed that any cotemporary would have ventured to pronounce as positively handsome a prince reputed to be as repulsive in feature as he was distorted in figure. This statement was, in all probability, much nearer the truth than those hideous and revolting descriptions to which it has been opposed.

† "In figure slight."—*Polydore Virgil*, p. 544.

‡ "Small of stature."—*Rous*, p. 215. "Of low stature."—*John Stow*, p. xiii.

§ "Like his father's, short and compact."—*Polydore Virgil*, p. 544.

‖ "His face was handsome."—*Turner's Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 476. "Thy face worthy of the highest empire and command."—*Oration of the Scotch Ambassador, in Buck*, lib. v. p. 140.

¶ "His face always thin."—*Cont. Croy.*, p. 574.

** "Mild in countenance."—*John Rous*, p. 215.

†† "Lowlye of countenance."—*More.*

‡‡ "Such as is in states (persons of high birth), called *warlye*, in other menne otherwise."—*More, Ibid.* (This word Grafton renders warlike, which was its literal signification as shown by a corresponding expression in letters patent coeval with that period: "aid of archers and other warrelye men."—*Fœdera*, vol. xii. p. 173. Various definitions have been given by the early chroniclers to this expressive look which left so strong an impression on the beholder, but they all imply resolution and firm determination of purpose. That Sir Thomas More intended the phrase to convey the idea of a haughty, majestic or martial air, is beyond dispute, by the distinction he draws in the application of the word, between persons of high and low estate.)

peculiarly its own. He does not seem to have been deficient in activity; rather, indeed, does the contrary appear to have been the case,* both in his youthful exercises and manly appointments; but he was fragile and slightly built, and his whole frame indicated from childhood a constitutional weakness,† and afforded undeniable evidence of great delicacy of health.‡ That the singular and very extraordinary beauty of his elder brothers,§ their unusual height and finely-proportioned limbs, rendered Richard's appearance, in itself, by no means sufficiently remarkable to induce comment or observation, yet homely-looking and insignificant by comparison, when opposed to the princely demeanour and robust aspect of Edward the Fourth and the noble George of Clarence. There appears little doubt that illness and bodily suffering enfeebled the childhood of the young prince, because, independent of this fact being positively vouched‖ for by a living historian, of whom it has been justly said, that his¶ "endeavours to discover manuscript historical authorities cannot be too highly praised," the metrical narrative** written during his boyhood after detailing the death of two brothers who preceded, and of a younger sister who succeeded him in the order of birth, says,—

"Richard liveth yet;"—

thus implying that his survival was considered as doubtful as those of his infantine relatives who had so prematurely passed to the tomb.

Constitutional debility of any kind would induce a pallid and puny appearance; this is brought daily within the most ordinary observation; but it by no means imposes, as a natural consequence, deformity of the most distressing kind, still less features revolting to all with whom the unhappy individual may be associated. That this description was not applicable to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, is yet further evinced by testimony scarcely less conclusive than that of cotemporary writers, whose positive or tacit disavowal of this calumny is amply confirmed by every original portrait and painting of this prince. Of these, many more are extant than is usually believed; several, wholly unknown to the public generally, having descended to ancient and noble families in this kingdom, where they may yet be found preserved among their valuable private collections.††

* "The judgment and courage of his sword actions rendered him of a full honour and experience, which fortune gratified with many victories."—*Buck*, lib. v. p. 148.

† "Small in body and weak in strength."—*John Rous*, p. 217.

‡ "Weak in body, afflicted by sickness, but powerful in mind."—*Sharon Turner*, vol. iv. p. 92.

§ Sir Thomas More, in describing Edward IV., says, "he was very princely to behold, of visage lovely, of bodye myghtie, strong and clean made;" and in eulogizing the personal appearance of George, Duke of Clarence, he states that "he was a goodly noble prince, and at all pointes fortunate."—*Hist. Rychd. III.*, pp. 3. 7.

‖ Sharon Turner, vol. iii. p. 477.

¶ Introd. Fleet. Chron., p. xiv.

** Vincent on Brooke, p. 622.

†† Through the kindness of Sir Henry Ellis, who has compiled a list of royal English portraits, the author has been furnished with the following list of those of King Richard:—

1. In the royal collection at Windsor, formerly at Kensington Palace, with three rings on the right hand, one of which he is putting on the little finger with his left hand.
2. At Costessy Park, on panel; in the act of placing a ring on the little finger of the left hand, the thumb and third finger of which are also ornamented with rings.
3. At Hatfield House. A head.
4. At Charlecote House, Warwickshire.

The assertion of Rous, the antiquary of Warwick, that Richard's left shoulder was lower than the right, was, nevertheless, very probably a fact, though wholly unconnected with any inherent deformity. It would, indeed, be a natural result to one who, from his infancy, had been inured to warlike exercises, but was not endowed by nature with a frame of sufficient strength to support, without injury, the severe discipline consequent on the martial education of that period.* The love of dress, nay, the absolute mania for it, which prevailed in the middle ages, is well known, though its extravagance would almost surpass belief but for the acts of Parliament† which were passed for the purpose of repressing its excess and absurdity.‡ To individuals trained in military pursuits, the highly-wrought armour of those times would become the chief object of attraction; and at no period of our national history was this defensive accoutrement more attentively studied, both with reference to personal safety and costliness of material, than towards the close of the fifteenth century. Even that of the most heavy construction was finished with an attention to ornament, elegance and taste, that dazzled the youthful aspirant fully as much as it charmed the older and more experienced warrior. "No higher degree of perfection was ever attained in armour,"

5. At Thornedon House, Essex.

6. In the possession (1822) of George Hornby, Esq., of Brasennose College, Oxford.

7, 8. Two portraits in the Society of Antiquaries' apartments, Somerset House. In one of these the right hand is engaged in placing a ring upon the third finger of the left hand; in the other, which is a very ancient picture, half-length, the king is represented with a dagger or short sword in his right hand.

In addition to these paintings, there is extant an illuminated MS. roll, now in the College of Arms, containing full-length portraits of King Richard, Queen Anne and their son, the Earl of Salisbury, "laboured and finished by Master John Rous, of Warwick," the cotemporary historian and antiquary. Engravings from this roll will be found in the *Paston Letters*, vol. v., likewise in *Lord Orford's Works*, vol. ii. p. 215, who has also given, in his "Historic Doubts," two full-length portraits of King Richard and Queen Anne, believed to have been taken from a window in a priory at Little Malvern that was destroyed by a storm. See *Supplement to Historic Doubts*. Half-length portraits of Richard, his queen and his son are preserved in the *Cottonian MSS.* Julius E. IV. fol. 223, appended to a series of excellent delineations, illustrative of the life of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. This very curious MS. was also written and illuminated by John Rous, the antiquary of Warwick, and the portraits in it were published by Strutt in his *Regal and Eccles. Antiq.*, No. xlviii.

The royal portrait at Kensington, No. 1, in the above list, was engraved by Vertue, and is the authority for most of the ordinary engraved portraits of this monarch. The very fine original portrait at Costessy Park, No. 2, is that prefixed to vol. i. of this work, which, by the favour of Lord Stafford, the author has been enabled to present to the public now engraved for the first time. The subject selected for the frontispiece of the 2d vol., are the full-length figures of King Richard, Queen Anne and Edward, Prince of Wales, taken from the originals drawn by the hand of their cotemporary "John Rous, the historian," in the illuminated roll yet preserved, as above stated, in the College of Arms. It may be satisfactory to state, on the authority of the late Mr. Seguir, keeper of the Royal paintings and of the National Gallery, that these illuminated drawings, having attained their highest perfection during the 15th century, are considered superior even to oil paintings, as faithful illustrations, in consequence of the latter art being at that era yet in its infancy. The portrait in the possession of the Society of Antiquaries, No. 7, in the above list, was lithographed for the 5th vol. of the "Paston Letters." It was presented to the Society by the Rev. Thomas Kerrich. —*Archæologia*, vol. xxii. p. 448.

* See Appendix R.

† Rot. Parl. vol. v. p. 504; also Stow, p. 459.

‡ In addition to the statutes passed in the 3d and 22d years of Edward IV., Stow states, in his *Chronicle*, (p. 419,) that "cursing by the clergy," and heavy fines to the laity, were the consequence of exceeding the prescribed rules and ordinances.—*Stow*, p. 429.

observes Dr. Meyrick, in his valuable Treatise upon Ancient Armour, "than during the times of Richard III."* Nothing, indeed, can exceed its beauty and the elaborate nature of the workmanship, as displayed in the monumental effigies of that period; though its ponderous weight, encasing, as it did, the entire person with plates of metal,† could only have been endured by early habit or very constant practice. The great mart for this species of workmanship, the emporium, indeed, where its manufacture was most cultivated, and where the newest fashion met with the most ready sale, was the Low Countries, in which Richard Plantagenet, just springing into youth, was first trained to the practice of arms, and taught the rudiments of the noble arts connected with chivalry and knighthood. A dauntless spirit and a proud ambition were inherent in him; he was associated in his exercises with the robust and muscular Clarence; the same knightly harness appropriated to one brother would be bestowed on the other; and to the early adoption of the ponderous armour then in use, especially the heavy casquetal, or steel cap, with its large oval ear-pieces, the hausse-col, or gorget of steel, together with the huge fan-shaped elbow-pieces, and the immense pauldrons, or shoulder-plates, rising perpendicularly to defend the neck, will sufficiently account, apart from all other cause, for the inequality in Richard's shoulders.‡ without his being "crook-backed" by nature, or otherwise of a figure which would altogether negative the gallant bearing so universally ascribed to him on the field of battle§ by writers of both parties. It must also be remembered, that Rous, the only cotemporary who names this inequality, spoke of it, not as characterizing Gloucester in his youth and manhood, but as an inelegance attached to his form much later in life, when the effect of a very active martial career would most probably be indicated by some such contortion, on a form naturally fragile; but as the same writer has also plainly and explicitly stated the exact nature and extent of Richard's alleged deformity, and this, not from report only, or mere hearsay, but from actual personal observation,‖ it not only satisfactorily accounts for the silence of other writers on a defect which was not apparent at the early period in which they wrote; but it also fully justifies the statement of Mr. Sharon Turner, who has devoted great attention towards investigating this long-disputed point, that "for the humpback and crooked form there is adequate authority."¶

But it may naturally be asked, whence, then, arose an idea, so firmly be-

* Richard, in a letter from York, at a later period of his history, orders "three coats of arms beaten with gold, for our own person."—*Hist. of British Costume*, vol. ii. p. 215.

† Archæologia, vol. xxi.

‡ This probable cause for Richard's alleged ungraceful form is borne out by an historical fact, that has strong reference to an almost parallel circumstance. Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, the favourite son of Henry III., and from whom the monarchs of that line derive their descent, one of the most distinguished warriors of the age, whose exploits have immortalized his name, and whose gallant bearing has been a fertile theme for cotemporary annalists, (*Walsingham*, p. 483,) was surnamed "Crouchback," since corrupted to "Crook-back," (*Biondi*, p. 45,) it is stated, from "the bowing of his back;" but no historian of his time ascribes deformity to this prince, neither was he so depicted on his monument in Westminster Abbey, though he is there represented on horseback, and in his coat of mail.—*Sandford*, book iii. p. 103. Another writer, indeed, has remarked, that so little authority is there for his being crook-backed, that it even appears doubtful whether the appellation was bestowed from his rounded shoulders, or from his wearing a "crouch" or cross on his back, as customary with those who vowed a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.—*Baker's Chronicle*, p. 90.

§ "Sundrye victories hadd hee, and sometime overthrows, but never in defaulte as for his own parsone, either of hardinesse or polytike order."—*More*, p. 8.

‖ Rous saw Richard at Warwick, after his accession to the throne.—*Walpole's Historic Doubts*, pp. 104. 109.

¶ Turner, Middle Ages, vol. iii. p. 477.

lieved, that it has stood the test of ages, and been transferred for three centuries from the graver pages of history to the simplest elementary tales connected with our national biography? That it was unsupported by the testimony of writers immediately succeeding the period in which those that have been quoted flourished, is apparent; not merely from Polydore Virgil and the authorities above named, but also from Stow, whose writings have always been esteemed for their honest, clear and correct details;* and whose strong evidence against the misshapen appearance, just beginning in his time to be imputed to King Richard, was cited in the introductory chapter of this memoir. It will there be seen that he asserts, "he had spoken by word of mouth with some ancient men, who, from their own sight and knowledge, affirmed that he was of bodily shape comely enough, only of low stature," and, likewise, "that in all his inquiries" (and it must be remembered that he was born within forty years of Richard's death) "he could find no such note of deformity as historians commonly relate." This note of deformity, and other rumours equally unfair to King Richard, and at first only suggested, but afterwards speedily asserted as fact by succeeding chroniclers, to flatter the reigning sovereign of the new dynasty, emanated exclusively, there can be little doubt, from the writings of Sir Thomas More. He flourished during Stow's childhood, at a period when historical research was little considered, and when biographical memoirs were rare and indifferently cared for; so that the beauty of his composition, his estimable character, and his profound erudition, obtained for his work at the time it appeared a credence on all points which an impartial review of it in the present day will prove that it by no means deserved; both on account of its inaccurate detail of many well-known facts, and also from the glaring errors and inconsistencies into which the author was betrayed by the most inveterate and deep-rooted prejudices. Yet even Sir Thomas More, violent as he was against Richard of Gloucester, by no means vouches for the truth of the startling assertions which he was the means of promulgating. "Richard was deformed," he says, "as the fame ranne of those that hated him."† What stronger language can be adduced than this? What contradiction more efficient, than his own few quaint words, "as menne of hatred reporte?"‡ It at once proves that the work which was productive of such mischievous results, was founded only upon tradition and its authority, not derived from actual observation:§ it at once shows whence may be traced rumours that receive no corroboration from any cotemporary source, but evidently proceeded from

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The very work in question has even been ascribed to this ecclesiastic, though apparently without foundation;** nevertheless, it is quite clear, from the testimony of More's biographer,†† that "the mistakes, discrepancies and falsifications" of the history that bears his name, together with the "hideous portrait of Richard" contained in it, were derived from details and conversations in boyhood from Morton, his avowed enemy and bitter persecutor, who sought that monarch's destruction on every occasion, and by whose death, at length accomplished, this prelate was placed by his royal master in the most elevated position; the favour of his sovereign, Henry VII., being further evinced by his obtaining for him his elevation to the dignity of a cardinal.‡‡

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It is, therefore, obvious that the testimony of one so prejudiced and so interested must be received with much caution.* Still greater doubt attaches itself to the relation of such as framed their description of King Richard upon mere hearsay evidence, and from reports which sprang up after his death, originating in the malice of his enemies.

Resuming the narrative at the point whence it diverged for this lengthened but necessary digression, viz., the nomination of Richard to the dukedom of Gloucester, and his investiture with lands and appointments fitting to support the dignity attached to a prince of the blood royal,† it may here assist the recollection of the order of events in a chronological abstract of his early life, to state that Richard had just attained his ninth year; his creation as Duke of Gloucester occurring November 4th, 1461, in the first parliament held by King Edward IV. after his coronation.‡

It will be apparent that at so tender an age the young prince could take no part in the turbulent proceedings which marked the opening years of his brother's reign. The character of the times, and the course of instruction then rigidly observed, would alone have restrained the exercise of talents even the most precocious, and neutralized the passions of the most depraved boyhood. The laws of chivalry§ were, during the dominion of the Plantagenet race, in full and undisputed vigour. One system of education prevailed, and the high-born and the high-bred, in every civilized court throughout Europe, submitted to the severe discipline which it imposed.‖ The infant aspirant for knighthood, whether prince or peer, remained till he was seven years of age under the control and tutelage of his mother or female relatives; during which period he was carefully instructed in religious and moral, as well as in domestic duties, and taught also the limited scholastic acquirements of that period. After attaining his seventh year, the young noble was removed from maternal care, and admitted into the family of some renowned feudatory lord, who initiated the youthful claimant for military fame into the mysteries and hardships of a martial and chivalrous career.¶ There, inured by degrees to the mortifications, restraint, and disregard of danger imposed on the associates of the bold leaders of those rude times, and far removed from the enervating influence of the solicitude and anxiety of home, the future warrior, under the designation of a page, remained until the age of fourteen;** when, being invested with his first degree, that of squire, and having exchanged with much solemnity the short dagger of the page for the sword allotted to this second grade of chivalry,†† he became qualified to follow his gallant leader, either to the field of battle, or to be associated with him in the more peaceful joust and chivalric tournament, to lead his warsteed, to buckle on his armour, to furnish him with fresh horses and weapons, and himself to strive and win the spurs of knighthood, if happily opportunity presented itself for doing so. At the age of twenty-one, the honour of knighthood itself was conferred upon him, under circumstances of great solemnity,* accompanied with very impressive rites and ceremonies, the initiation being rendered still more solemn from its being hallowed by the church, and ushered in and accompanied by those pompous ecclesiastical processions and religious services which flung such a romantic colouring over the early days and scenes of our national history. It is true that instances are not wanting in which this final investiture was formally bestowed at a much earlier, and even at a very tender age, as in the case of infant monarchs and princely minors; two instances of which, viz., that of King Henry VI. and Richard, Duke of York, have been already mentioned in this memoir; nevertheless, even when from peculiar circumstances the dignity had been so prematurely given, the routine afterwards pursued was as similar as regal etiquette permitted;† and the age of twenty-one, apart from all previous ceremonial, established definitively and in effect as such the warrior knight of the middle ages.

In this manner, as it would appear from the few and brief memorials of his early years which are yet extant, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was educated.

That he remained under his mother's especial care up to the usual age of seven, has been already shown by the fact of his being seized with her, and associated in her imprisonment, after the sacking of Ludlow Castle; and it is made still further evident by her dispatching him so promptly to Utrecht, on the occasion of his father's death. But from this period the young prince's name is no longer mentioned in connection with the Lady Cecily. His royal brother sent messengers to bring him to England, and provided both him and Clarence, on their arrival, with instructors suited to their age and high station; but there is no mention made of Gloucester's rejoining his widowed parent, or sharing her retirement at Berkhampstead. Whether the wardship of Richard was granted as a reward to one of the powerful supporters of the crown, as was customary in these times with minors so richly endowed, or whether Edward IV. retained in his own hands this vast source of wealth and power,‡ cannot now be ascertained; but as Sir George Buck states that the king, "when he called home his two brothers, entered them into the practice of arms,"§ it appears most probable that on his return from Flanders, Gloucester was forthwith submitted to the prescribed probation of the succeeding seven years, in the abode of some powerful baron, which, as above shown, was then usual with such as were destined to perform the duties of a warrior knight, and to be well tutored in the chivalrous accomplishments of the age. This surmise appears to be the more certain as regards this prince, because,

* Lord Bacon says, when summing up the character of Cardinal Morton: "Hee was a wise man, and an eloquent, but in his nature harsh and haughtie; much accepted by the king, but envyed by the nobility and hated by the people. Hee wonne the king with secrecie and diligence, but chiefly because he was his old servant in his lesse fortunes; and also for that (in his affections) hee was not without an inveterate malice against the House of York, under whom he had been in trouble."—*Bacon's Hen. VII.*, p. 198.

† Whittak. Hist. of Craven, p. 67.

‡ Rot. Parl., vol. v. p. 461, and Sandford, book v. p. 405.

§ See Vertuous Precepts of Chivalry, in Boswell's "Concords of Honour," pp. 8. 10: printed An. Dom. 1597.

‖ See "The Accedence of Armorie," by Master Gerard Leigh, pp. 70, 71: reprint of 1612.

¶ Essays on Chivalry, No. I. Graphic Illus., p. 25.

** Ibid.

†† Ibid.

* James's Hist. of Chivalry, p. 22.

† A very interesting example, in illustration of this, is given by Froissart in his Chronicle, when detailing the leading incidents relative to the battle of Cressy, shortly before which memorable engagement Edward, Prince of Wales, surnamed "the Black Prince," was knighted by his royal parent, King Edward III., at the early age of sixteen. Perceiving the prince in danger of being overpowered by numbers, the nobles who surrounded him sent a message to the monarch, who was "on a little windmill hill" adjoining, soliciting assistance. "Then the king said, 'Is my son dead, or hurt, or felled to the earth?' 'No, sir,' quoth the knight; 'but he is hard matched, wherefore he hath need of your aid.' 'Well,' said the king, 'return to him and to them that sent you, and desire them to send no more to me on any account while my son is alive; and also say to them, that they suffer him this day *to win his spurs;* for, if God be pleased, I wish the honour of this engagement to be his and theirs who are about him.' "—*Berner's Froissart*, vol. i. p. 289.

‡ Hutton's Bosworth, p. xxii.

§ Buck, lib. i. p. 8.

with the exception of letters from King Edward, conferring on his young brother, in addition to the honours and possessions before enumerated, the castles, manors, lands, &c. which had been forfeited by the attainder of Henry Beaufort, late Duke of Somerset, (anno 3d Edw. IV.,)* and the grant of Caistert in Norfolk, and Weardale forest in the palatinate of Durham.‡ no other public document relating to him is on record, until the fifth year of his royal brother's reign, when, by an entry on the issue roll of the Exchequer,§ it is recorded that money was "paid to Richard, Earl of Warwick for costs and expenses incurred by him on behalf of the Duke of Gloucester, the king's brother." This entry is very valuable, not merely as a guide to the probable nature of Richard's mode of life after his emancipation from childhood, but it will be found also highly important in explaining much that has hitherto appeared mysterious in his after years; it proving how early he was domesticated in the family of the Earl of Warwick, who, if not actually his guardian, and as such laying the foundation of views that were remarkable in their final accomplishment, was, it is most clear, invested with some charge respecting him personally, that led to the grant of money now under consideration.

Of the nature of this power, however, at least in a modified sense, there can exist no doubt; for the usage of the times reconciles the fact of the military guardianship, if considered in that light alone; and though its full extent as a wardship may be disputed, yet the conjecture, even to this extreme point, seems reasonable, from the tenour of this entry agreeing so entirely with that of petitions in the Fœdera, presented by guardians for similar payment relative to wards.

The age of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, at the time of this entry (1465) was fourteen years: now this corresponds precisely with the intermediate probationary term exacted by the laws of chivalry for the knightly instruction of noble youths at that period. This fact, taken in conjunction with the omission of all mention of this prince's name in political affairs during the intervening years, and the particular wording of the document, "for costs and expenses incurred by him on behalf of the Duke of Gloucester," seems to warrant the conclusion that Richard, the renowned Earl of Warwick, the "king maker" and the king dethroner, was the warrior lord selected by King Edward IV. for initiating his young brother into the noble practice of arms.

This heroic and most powerful chieftain was peculiarly fitted for so high a trust. His magnificent style of living and large possessions had procured for him the appellation of "the Great Earl of Warwick;"‖ his fame had spread throughout Europe, and his authority in England was almost absolute:¶ independent, too, of his claims to the respect and gratitude of the king and his brother, from his devotion to their deceased parent, he was their mother's nephew,** their own near kinsman, and one of the most zealous and

* Rymer's Add. MSS. No. 4614., art. 91. † Paston Letters, vol. iv. p. 59.
‡ Surtees's History of Durham, p. lx. § Anno 5 Edw. IV., p. 490, 8vo. 1837.
‖ Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 91.
¶ At this time, observes Mr. Sharon Turner, (on the authority of an author living at that period,) none before Warwick had in England half the possessions which he then enjoyed. He had the entire earldom of Warwick, all the lands of the Spencers and the earldom of Salisbury. He was great chamberlain of England, the chief admiral, captain of Calais, and also lieutenant of Ireland; an accumulation of honours and power which made him inferior only to his sovereign. These possessions, exclusive of his own estates, amounted to 20,000 marks a year.—*Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 268.
** Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, was the eldest son of Ralph Neville, Earl of

firm supporters of their house. His father, the Earl of Salisbury, had been a principal promoter of the Duke of York's pretensions to the crown, and in advocating to the last what he considered to be his just cause, he fell a victim to his fidelity, being taken prisoner, as it will be remembered, and beheaded with the duke at the fatal encounter at Wakefield. The Earl of Warwick, his son, so created in right of his wife, the heiress of that house, devoted himself to advance the cause of his cousin, the young Earl of March, as strenuously as the Earl of Salisbury* had previously that of the Duke of York. Both these young nobles deplored the untimely death of their illustrious and noble parents; both became leagued in one common cause against their sanguinary opponents; and the ultimate advancement of King Edward IV. to the throne was, in a great measure, owing to the vigorous measures, decisive conduct, and vast influence of Richard, Earl of Warwick. This noble was, therefore, as before observed, the most fitting person, by consanguinity and chivalrous fame, that the sovereign could have selected "to season the forwardnesse"† and excite the emulation of the young prince; whether in preparing him for the honourable distinction of knighthood, or for acquiring the highest degree of excellence in the martial pursuits of the age. And these were of extreme importance to King Edward; for while the dethroned Henry of Lancaster remained alive, and was protected by other crowned heads, his seat on the English throne could scarcely be considered either firm or fixed. He needed, therefore, all possible support from his natural allies, and, consequently, (as Mr. Hutton observes,) "he initiated his brothers into the use of arms, as an additional strength to his house."‡ The military fame which distinguished Gloucester in after years, and which has been so highly extolled even by his enemies,§ bespeaks him to have been tutored by no ordinary person, and would have done full justice to lessons so ably inculcated, even if his instructor had been, as is surmised, the powerful and renowned Warwick himself. At the Castle of Middleham, then the hereditary demesne of his illustrious kinsman, did the young Richard of Gloucester, in all probability, pass his boyish days. There, in the domestic circle of England's proudest baron, he must have been associated with the flower of British chivalry; and at a time when, without reference to his extreme youth, and with a total disregard of all existing records, he is universally believed to have been concocting schemes fraught with destruction to his fellow men, he was, in all likelihood, practising with his youthful and noble compeers the manly exercises that marked the age; some bold and athletic, others sportive, with "hawk and hound, seasoned with ladies' smiles;" and forming those early friendships which lasted through life, and which, from their devotedness and durability, form a striking feature in

Westmoreland, K. G., by his second wife Joane, daughter of John of Gaunt. From marrying Alice, the daughter and heir of Thomas de Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, K. G., he was created Earl of Salisbury, and was appointed lord great chamberlain of England, 39 Henry VI., but was beheaded at York shortly afterwards. His eldest son, Richard, K. G., acquired the earldom of Warwick by marrying Ann, sister and heir to Henry, Duke of Warwick, and is celebrated in the history of England as the "king maker," from his great influence and power.—*Testamenta Vetusta*, p. 287.
* King Edward IV., in his speech from the throne at the first parliament held after his accession, couples the Earl of Salisbury's name with that of the Duke of York: after thanking the Commons for their "true hearts and great assistance" in restoring him to the throne of his ancestors, he adds, "also, in that ye have tenderly had in remembrance the correction of the horrible murder and cruel death of my lord and father, my brother Rutland, and my cousin of Salisbury and other, I thank you heartily."—*Rot. Parl.*, v. p. 487.
† Buck, lib. i. p. 8.
‡ Hutton's Bosworth, p. xviii. § Rous, p. 215, and More, p. 9.

Gloucester's chequered career. There, too, in all probability, it may be inferred that Richard first bestowed his affections* on his gentle cousin Anne, Warwick's youngest and most lovely daughter;† who, treading in the footsteps of his mother, the Lady Cecily, from being the companion in childhood of the orphan prince, and then perchance the "ladye love" of his chivalrous probation, acquired an influence over him, that led in after years, to his selecting her as his consort when she was in adversity, and he in the zenith of his greatness. Very many historical notices and chance local details afford strong presumptive evidence to warrant this conclusion. "The partiality of Richard for Middleham through life is," says its historian, "well known;"‡ and Sir George Buck, speaking of his childhood, states "that this Richard Plantagenet lived for the most part in the castle of Middleham;"§ which could not have been the case during his father's lifetime, because Middleham was the baronial hall of Warwick,‖ and not that of York. A yet more important link in the chain of evidence is afforded by the association of Gloucester's name with the young heir of the house of Lovell,¶ in the identical entry that connects this prince in boyhood with the Earl of Warwick. After the words in the exchequer roll, above quoted, viz.: "Paid to Richard, Earl of Warwick, for costs and expenses incurred by him on behalf of the Duke of Gloucester, the king's brother," there follows immediately this additional clause: "and for the exhibition and marriage of the son and heir of the Lord Lovell."** Now the custody and wardship of minors at this period, as there has been before occasion to notice, were a source both of immense profit to the barons and of unlimited patronage to the crown; and it may be reckoned among the many serious grievances which the corruption of the feudal system brought upon the country, especially as relates to marriage.†† The circumstance, therefore, of the association of these two noble youths with Warwick in one public document, together with their corresponding ages, and the devoted attachment which induced such marks of favour through life from the prince, and devotion to him even to death from the Lord Lovell,‡‡ is, to say

* Buck, lib. i. p. 81.

† Ibid., p. 8.

‡ Whittaker's Hist. of Richmondshire, vol. i. p. 335.

§ Buck, lib. i. p. 7.

‖ Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 185.

¶ Francis Lovell, son and heir to John Lord Lovell, married Anne, daughter of Henry Lord Fitz Hugh. He very soon succeeded his father as Lord Lovell, and was afterwards created Viscount Lovell.—*Paston Letters*, vol. iv.

** Issue Rolls of the Exchec., p. 409.

†† The feudal lord exercised the privilege of receiving the lands and person of the minor, and retaining them till the male ward arrived at the age of twenty-one years, and the female of fourteen years; during which interval the rents and profits of the estates belonged entirely to the guardian. The right of marriage was still more opposite to reason and justice, since by this the guardian in chivalry might dispose of his charge in wedlock to any one he chose; or, what is more, might sell the disposition of him to another, without troubling himself at all about the inclination or affections of the unfortunate ward.—*Blackstone's Commentaries*, vols. ii. and iv.

‡‡ The life of this young nobleman, and the vicissitudes that marked his singular career, arising chiefly from his devotion to Richard of Gloucester, constitute one of the most remarkable narratives connected with these tragical times. The Lord Lovell accompanied the prince in most of his military campaigns; and on Richard's being appointed to the protectorate, he procured for the companion of his youth the lucrative office of chief butler of England.—*Harl. MS.* 433, fol. 223. At this monarch's coronation he walked on the king's left hand, bearing one of the swords of justice, (*Excerpt. Hist.* p. 380;) and after attending him to the battle of Bosworth, and opposing with determined zeal the accession of his rival, Henry VII., he is supposed to have been starved to death in a subterraneous chamber at his own seat, Minster Lovell, in Oxfordshire, the skeleton of a man seated in a chair, with his head reclining on a table, being accidentally discovered there in a chamber under ground, towards the close of the seventeenth century. The Lord Lovell probably took refuge in this place of concealment after his defeat at the battle of Stoke, a large reward being offered for his apprehension; and his melancholy end is supposed to have occurred from neglect on the part of those who were intrusted with the secret.—*Lingard*, vol. v. p. 290.

the least, strong presumptive proof that both were associated in boyhood under the roof of the illustrious "king maker," the Earl of Warwick, and both, perhaps, connected in wardship with that almost sovereign chief. No decisive authority, indeed, appears extant to warrant the positive assumption of so important a fact; but as the historical traditions of distant periods are often verified by official records, so the document now quoted affords the strongest ground for believing that Gloucester was, for some years, under the entire charge of the great "Warwick," either in a civil or warlike capacity. The inference thus drawn merits deep consideration, arising from the value that attaches to every particular that can throw light on the early days of a monarch whose life is so wrapt in mystery as that of Richard III.

Whatever degree of probability may be attached to this surmise, one thing at least remains undisputed, as connected with the youth of this prince; and it is a matter of extreme importance to his character and his disposition; namely, that evidence is afforded by the very next public notice of repute respecting Gloucester, of King Edward's strong and unabated affection for him, and of his anxious desire to promote his young brother's advancement to the highest and most honourable posts. If the written memorials of his history then are few, yet on this one point at least they are authentic and valuable; nor could any more convincing proof be desired than that afforded by his being elected, in the fourteenth year of his age, to the high honour of a knight of the most noble order of the Garter, an institution which made England the centre of chivalry,* it being one of the most ancient lay orders in the world, and at that time limited to twenty-six companions.† The rarity of the distinction is evinced by its not having been bestowed by the founder, Edward III., even upon his own son, Thomas, Duke of Gloucester; for, although that prince sat in Parliament as constable of England,‡ he was not created a knight of the Garter until after his nephew had ascended the throne.§ Conclusive evidence is thus afforded of the progress that Richard must have made in the martial accomplishments of the times; since it appears that being of the blood royal‖ did not necessarily, at this early period, suffice for enrolment as a member of a fraternity, the qualifications professedly required for which were military ardour and princely and gallant deportment.¶ "On the 4th of February, 1466, directions were given for delivering the sword and helmet of the sovereign's brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester,

* Noble's Hist. of Col. of Arms, p. 20.

† The first names enrolled by Edward III., its royal founder, on the most noble order of the Garter, were the young and gallant Edward, his eldest son, (surnamed the Black Prince,) and the most heroic of his brave companions at Cressy. On the king's return from his triumphant expedition into France, he rewarded other valiant knights who had faithfully served him there by investing them also with this noble and chivalrous order, which then consisted of twenty-six brethren in arms; of this number the monarch himself formed one; the remainder were all persons of choice endowments, and acknowledged military reputation.—*Art of Heraldry*, p. 99.

‡ Sandford's Geneal. Hist., book iii. p. 227.

§ Edmondson's Heraldry, art. Orders of Knighthood.

‖ The Duke of Gloucester himself, when monarch of England, exemplified this remark, inasmuch as, after his accession to the throne, he neither created his only son, Edward, Prince of Wales, a knight of the Garter, nor did he bestow this much-esteemed dignity either upon Edward, Earl of Warwick, or John, Earl of Lincoln, although he nominated each of these princes, his nephews, at different periods, successors to the throne.

¶ See Appendix T.

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

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

* Sir Harris Nicolas's Order of British Knighthood, p. 92.
† Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 289.
‡ Rot. Turris Lond. ap. Anst. Reg. Gart., vol. i. p. 131.

CHAPTER V.

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

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

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

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

* Edward Plantagenet, second Duke of York, founded a magnificent college at Fotheringay, for which he was obliged to mortgage great part of his estate. Being slain at Agincourt, his body was brought to England and buried in the choir of his collegiate church, under a marble slab, with his figure inlaid in brass, according to his will.—*Nichol's Royal Wills*, p. 223.
† Sandford, book v. p. 373.
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respect paid by King Edward to the memory of his father,* it cannot but suggest a strong conviction to the mind that George of Clarence must early have forfeited the esteem and confidence of his royal brother, or at a very early age have estranged himself from his kindred; otherwise the youthful Duke of Gloucester would scarcely have been selected to take the lead in a ceremony so imposing, and which was so religiously considered as the public solemnization of the funeral of a deceased parent.

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

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

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

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

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

‡ More's Rycharde III., pp. 7, 8.

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

‖ Philip de Comines, p. 242.

¶ Ibid., p. 246.

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

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

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

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

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

‡ More, p. 7.

§ Cont. Hist. Croyland, p. 557.

‖ Ibid.

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

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

†† Ibid., p. 222.

‡‡ Ibid., p. 241.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¶¶¶ Grafton, p. 152.

**** Ibid., p. 147.

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

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

§§§§ Ibid.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

† Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 240.

‡ Hutton's Bosworth, p. xxii.

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

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

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

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

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

† W. Wyrcester, Annales, p. 500.

‡ Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 239.

§ Habington's Edw. IV., p. 228.

‖ Sandford, book v. p. 384.

¶ Paston Letters, vol. iv. p. 59.

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

†† Hearne's Fragment, p. 292.

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

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

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

* Hall, p. 262.

† Sandford, book v. p. 384.

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

§ Hearne's Fragment, p. 292.

‖ Cont. Croyland, p. 551.

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

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

†† Harl. MSS., No. 433. p. 235.

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

to be selected, better entitled by birth and consanguinity, and in reward of his own services, to be raised to the distinguished position of King Edward's queen, rather than the widow of that monarch's enemy and opponent.* But that no alleviation or offence at the match was outwardly evinced by him after its announcement, is manifested by this most conclusive fact; viz., that the Earl of Warwick, in conjunction with the king's brother, the Duke of Clarence, presented the queen to the populace at Reading, after she had there been approved as such "by the earl himself and all the prelates and great lords of the realm,"† and also because he stood sponsor‡ for their first-born child, the Princess Elizabeth of York.§ It was shortly after this last event that Warwick was appointed ambassador to France;‖ and then it was that this proud chieftain became the tool of the wily Louis XI.; then it was that the most absolute and despotic noble that ever swayed the destinies of England,¶ and who possessed such astonishing power of moulding to his views the great and the gifted in his own land, was, in his turn, wholly subdued, though unknowingly and unsuspected by himself, and made the victim of one of the most crafty and unprincipled monarchs that ever sat on the throne of France. Had King Edward been endowed, like his younger brother, Richard of Gloucester, with the faculty of penetrating the workings of the human heart, he might, notwithstanding the discontent at his ill-judged union,** have maintained undisputed his popularity and peaceful rule by conciliation and judicious counsel during the absence of the despotic Earl of Warwick: but, jealous of the authority, and weary of the thraldom in which he was kept by those powerful feudatory lords who had helped to seat him on the throne of his ancestors, the monarch sought to neutralize the power of the ancient aristocracy of the realm through the means of a counteracting and newly-created nobility. Hence he raised to the highest dignities the relatives of the queen,†† and conferred on her connections those places of profit and emolument‡‡ which were greatly coveted by the impoverished gentry of his own party, and which, indeed, were justly due to them in requital of their faithful services: thus inducing universal discontent at an alliance which, though in itself impolitic, had been already pardoned,§§ and the ill-will arising from which would probably have been speedily forgotten, but for the irritating results it continually induced.‖‖ In corroboration of this it will be sufficient to state, that though many disappointments and mortifications were experienced by the Earl of Warwick, especially the bestowing in marriage upon the son of the queen, by her first husband, the king's own niece, daughter of his eldest sister, the Duchess of Exeter, who had been long designed by the earl for his nephew,* and with whom, indeed, proposals of alliance were even then pending; yet his fidelity towards his acknowledged sovereign, and his peaceable demeanour towards the queen and her relatives, continued unbroken,† until, by their influence with the king, that monarch was induced to disregard the advice and remonstrance of his powerful kinsman, and to accept a treaty of marriage from Philip, Duke of Burgundy, for uniting his heir with the Lady Margaret Plantagenet, the sovereign's youngest sister. "This," says the Chronicler of Croyland, in his most valuable history,‡ "I consider to be the true cause of the dispute between the king and the earl," as the latter was at personal enmity with Prince Charles, of Burgundy, and wished, moreover, to promote an alliance between the House of York and the court of France, with whom, of late, he had been amicably connected, and was, in fact, secretly allied.§ When, in addition to his previous mortification at the king's ill-advised marriage, and that which immediately followed from his views being thwarted in regard to his nephew, owing to the marriage of the Lady Anne, of Exeter, with Sir Thomas Grey, was joined this sanctioned alliance of the Lady Margaret with a prince of Lancastrian lineage,‖ who had warmly espoused the cause of that race,¶ and, also, the decided opposition evinced by Edward IV. towards an expressed desire of his brother George, Duke of Clarence, to unite himself with his cousin Isabel, the eldest of the daughters of the Earl of Warwick,** it may easily be supposed, that the proud irascible noble felt his power was at an end, and that his services were forgotten and most ungratefully requited by the kinsman whom he had chiefly aided to establish on the throne.

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

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

† Cont. Croy., p. 551.

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

§ Eventually espoused to King Henry VII.

‖ Hearne's Fragment, p. 296.

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

** W. Wyr., p. 506.

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

‡‡ Col. Rot. Parl., 312.

§§ Chron. Croy, p. 542.

‖‖ To add to their discontent, the Lord Mountjoy, treasurer of England, was removed, to make place for the queen's father, who was created Earl Rivers; and soon afterwards, at the resignation of the Earl of Worcester, lord high constable of England. —*Lingard*, vol. v. p. 186.

* W. Wyr., p. 507.

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

‡ Chron. Croy., p. 551.

‖ Lingard, vol. v. p. 137.

** Excerpt. Hist., p. 300.

†† Ibid., p. 227.

‡‡ W. Wyr., p. 512.

§ Hearne's Frag., p. 227.

¶ Excerpt. Hist., p. 223.

§§ Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 3.

and Warwick, in publicly testifying their submission to the king's will, and evincing their affectionate interest in the welfare of their sister, the Lady Margaret; who, preceded by the Earl of Warwick, and attended by her brothers, the king and the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester, was escorted as far as Margate, whence she embarked with her suite for Holland.* Greater stress has been laid on this incident as being the first occasion in which Richard, Duke of Gloucester is officially named in connection with public events, and the only time in which it appears that he acted in conjunction with his brother of Clarence and the Earl of Warwick.

It was a fitting occasion for unity, and one in which the young princes were likely to feel an undivided interest; for it will be remembered that this their youngest sister shared the vicissitudes of their childhood, and was in particular associated with them in their concealment at the Temple; but it was affection for the Lady Margaret, not deference for the king's judgment, that produced the feeling of harmony; and with the occurrence ended the brief union which, on this one solitary occasion, caused Clarence and Gloucester to act in concert.

Warwick, as already stated, felt himself aggrieved in various ways. His enthusiasm for King Edward had gradually cooled; and now he repented of the part which he had taken in raising to the throne the kinsman who sought to humble his pride and to diminish his power in every way; and, with the bold and daring spirit which ever characterized his actions, he forthwith turned his attention to the king's young brothers; dissembling his own discontent until he had tested their sentiments.

The reserve of Gloucester, young as he was, baffled all his efforts to corrupt him: the fidelity of this prince to his royal brother was not to be tampered with, and, as Sandford alleges, Warwick "found he dared not trust him."† Not so the unstable Clarence: he, fickle and irritable, was an easy instrument for the earl to mould to his views. Already he had absented himself from court, from jealous indignation at the ascendency of the queen and the elevation of her kindred; so that he found him as inclined to listen to complaints against the king as the earl was prepared to urge the wrongs which he conceived had been inflicted on himself, his brothers and his connections generally. Thus, having been foiled in his hopes of seeing the eldest of his coheiresses raised to that throne on which he had aided to place her cousin, —who he, perhaps, secretly hoped might in gratitude have selected his child to share honours and dignities so great and unlooked for,—the Earl of Warwick henceforth bent all his thoughts on Clarence, then the first prince of the blood royal, and sought to appease his mortification by striving to promote the union of the Lady Isabel with the next male heir‡ to the crown.

The decided opposition made by the king to this union, the disapprobation which he expressed, and the efforts which he made to crush all connection between Warwick and his brother, served to complete the exasperation of that proud and haughty baron. Clarence, too, was easily led by him to consider the opposition to his marriage as a personal grievance, and an act so tyrannical as to rouse all the innate jealousy of his nature.

It was a common cause of offence, then, which really united in firm alliance the Earl of Warwick and the Duke of Clarence, although the marriage of the Lady Margaret produced a brief harmony between all parties. Warwick had been ostensibly reconciled to King Edward before its solemnization, and his pride was soothed at being appointed to fill so marked and prominent a

* Excerpt. Hist., p. 224. † Sandford, book v. p. 386.

‡ King Edward IV. had two daughters, but as yet no son, and up to this period female sovereigns had not ruled in England.

position in the royal progress as that of bearing on his own charger his young and beautiful cousin; for "she rode behind him on horseback through the streets of London,"*—a post the most honourable that could well have been assigned him. Nevertheless, the renewal of friendship between Edward IV. and his offended relative was of very short duration. The conviction that undue lenity was evinced towards the Lancastrians,† owing to the queen's former connection with that faction, the heads of which, from their contempt of the Yorkist dynasty, yet lived out of the kingdom, either in exile or from attainder, had rankled perpetually and deeply in the minds of all the Nevilles,‡ and King Edward, exasperated against them, and the Earl of Warwick in particular, was excited beyond all forgiveness by the announcement of a clandestine marriage between the Duke of Clarence, then but nineteen years of age, and the Lady Isabel Neville, about two years younger, at the suggestion of her father and in open defiance of the king's expressed disapprobation of the union.§

Enticing the young prince to Calais, of which dependency Warwick was then governor, he there bestowed on him, at the church of Notre Dame and by the hands of his brother, the Archbishop of York, his eldest daughter in marriage,‖ with a settlement upon them of one-half of the Countess of Warwick's rich inheritance, having first obtained a dispensation from Pope Paul III., dated at Rome, 1468, inasmuch as the two cousins were related within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity.¶ From this point the reigning family of England must be viewed in a divided and twofold light: the Duke of Clarence siding with his father-in-law and kinsman, the Earl of Warwick; and the Duke of Gloucester supporting, with all zeal and fervour, the royal prerogative, and defending with energy and warmth the enactments of his brother Edward IV. That this young prince was constitutionally weak in health, though bold and daring in temperament, has been already distinctly expressed; and whether it was to this cause, as exciting peculiar interest, or that the disparity in their years induced feelings more akin to that of sire and son, than the more juvenile bond of fraternal love, or whether the king, struck with the solid judgment and quick perception which formed so striking a feature in his young brother's character, evinced for him a degree of confidence and consideration which, in return, elicited from Gloucester a devotion that never failed, even under the most trying circumstances, cannot, of

* Excerpt. Hist., p. 227.

† Paston Papers, vol. iv., Letter 52.

‡ Richard, Earl of Warwick, had two brothers, both equally shrewd and ambitious as himself, but not such consummate politicians. Lord Montague, the eldest, had obtained the lands of the Percys, together with the title of Earl of Northumberland; George, the youngest, was made lord high chancellor on King Edward's accession, and was at this time also Archbishop of York. Of these aspiring brothers, the two eldest were slain in battle, and the youngest lingered in poverty and in exile, a prisoner until within a few months of his death.

§ Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 162.

‖ "Be it known and remembered, that the Tuesday, the xii day of the month of July, in the translation of Saint Benet the abbot, the ixth yere of the reign of our Sovereign Lord, King Edward IV., in the castelle of Calais, the said Duke took in marriage Isabelle, one of the daughters and heirs of the said Richard, Earl of Warwick, which that time was present there; and five other knights of the Garter, and many other lords and ladies and worshipful knights, well accompanied with wise and discreet esquires, in right great number, to the laud praysing of God, and to the honour and worship of the world; and there abode after the day of matrimony five days, and then shipped into Ingland, leaving the said duchess at Calais aforesaid, and went himself and the said earl to the city of London, and so forth northward."—*Ordinances and Regulations for the Royal Household.*

¶ Dugdale's Baronage, vol. ii. p. 162.

course, now be determined. But, whatever may have been the cause, it is apparent that the king was attached to Gloucester in no common degree; for, by reference to the parliamentary documents and state records of that monarch's reign, it appears that scarcely a year passed, from his accession to his death, without some publicly notified testimony of it.* Shortly before this present time he had granted to him the castle and manors which had belonged to Lord Hungerford, and all the possessions of Henry, Duke of Somerset, and Edmund, his brother;† and, almost immediately after his expressed indignation at Clarence's marriage, he marked his favour to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, by nominating him chief justice of South Wales, and creating him lord high admiral and chief constable of England for life.‡

These responsible appointments, occurring, as they do, at the period up to which this prince's personal memoir has been brought, viz., 1468, from that connection between his domestic and political life which it was the design of this brief retrospection of public events to render apparent. He had now fully entered upon that active career from which he never withdrew for the remainder of his days; and from henceforth the elder and younger brother will be found acting in concert on every important affair, actuated apparently by mutual confidence and united by the warmest attachment. Gloucester publicly accompanied the monarch in his regal progresses to different parts of the country, and is invariably named with him on all striking occasions. "The king is come to London," says Sir John Paston, in a letter to his mother, "and there came with him, and rode again in company with him, the Duke of Gloucester."§ And again, in the same invaluable collection of cotemporary records, it is observed, with reference to a letter of later date, "We find the Duke of Gloucester accompanied the king, but we hear nothing of the Duke of Clarence."‖ This letter relates to Edward the Fourth's memorable visit to Norwich, where, in the year 1469, he went in haste, with the view of raising subsidies, and ascertaining the state of the public mind; intimation having been privately made of Warwick's expressed disaffection of the unanimity which existed between the earl and his brother of Clarence, and likewise of the conspiracies which were secretly fomented by them.

The consequent result was, that all parties remained in an unsettled state for the space of another twelvemonth; during which period perpetual disputes and temporary reconciliations rather tended to increase the alienation than to allay the smothered but indignant feelings of the haughty and irascible opponents.

But neither into these disputes nor into the foreign politics of the day, is it the design of this memoir to enter, or, indeed, to treat farther of the transactions of Edward the Fourth's own times than is absolutely requisite towards clearly elucidating the career of Richard, Duke of Gloucester. It will be sufficient for preserving the continuity of the narrative as relates to his movements, briefly to state that Margaret of Lancaster, the exiled queen, ever watchful to restore her husband to liberty and reinstate the Prince of Wales in his hereditary honours, hailed with joyful feelings the divisions amongst the Yorkist leaders; and her partisans in England, animated by her unsubdued spirit and by the promise of excellence evinced by her young son, rallied again their forces; so that towards the close of the same year, 1469, open rebellion was proclaimed in the north of England. The disaffection rapidly spread, and, under the command of a popular leader, called

* See Appendix V.
† Pat. 9 Edw. IV., p. 314.
‡ Ibid., p. 315.
§ Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 289.
‖ Ibid., vol. iv.

Robin of Redesdale,* the insurgents, to the number of 60,000 men, commenced their march towards London.† They gained a signal victory over the supporters of the House of York at the battle of Edgecote;‡ shortly after which engagement the father and brother of the reigning queen, Earl Rivers and Sir John Wydville, were taken prisoners and beheaded§ at Northampton. The royal troops were every where defeated, and King Edward himself, not being supported with unanimity by his followers, fell into the hands of Warwick and Clarence,‖ who, although not as yet openly leagued with the Lancastrian party, hoped to intimidate the monarch by temporary captivity, and to mould him again to their views by this display of strength and power. He was sent first to Warwick Castle, and thence to Middleham, and there placed in the custody of George Neville, Archbishop of York; but, as his treacherous kinsman had no actual authority for detaining their sovereign a prisoner, and they having reason to fear a rescue from the more moderate of the Yorkist party, he was, ere long, voluntarily released;¶ but the indignity and injury were never forgotten by the monarch, and were, in truth, an unexampled and bitter insult.

The Duchess of York, who has been already named as a rare and uncommon character, a woman of powerful understanding, keen discernment, and severe virture, beheld with feelings of grief and anxiety the rancorous spirit of hostility which actuated her sons in their persecution of each other. The king, openly defied by Clarence, is made the victim of duplicity, deprived of his liberty, and in fear even of an untimely death;** while the bitter edicts

* Chron. Croy., p. 542.

† On their progress to the metropolis, the rebels, instigated by the Lords of Clarence and Warwick, distributed papers among the people containing the substance of their grievances, which were as follows: That the king had been too profuse in his bounty to the Wydville family; that they had abused his favour by estranging him from the ancient nobles of the realm; and that to satisfy their inordinate ambition and avarice, he had unlawfully expended vast sums belonging to the church, diminished the royal household, and imposed heavy burdens on the people. They therefore required the king to punish the queen's kindred, and to dismiss them from his councils.—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 543.

‡ Ibid.

§ "The jealousy which had been kindled in the minds of many towards the Earl Ryvers broke out with deadly violence in the following year; when, being seized by the Lancastrian rebels, encouraged by the Earl of Warwick, his chief enemy, he was beheaded at Northampton, with his second son, Sir John Wydville, on the 12th August, 1469. Anthony Wydville, Lord Scales, succeeded to the earldom, and also to the office of constable of England."—*Excerpta Historica*, p. 27.

‖ Cont. Croy., p. 551.

¶ The imprisonment of Edward IV. by Clarence and Warwick is another amongst the many conflicting statements connected with these obscure times. But the testimony of cotemporary writers completely sets at rest all doubts raised by later historians, however respectable the authority whence such doubts may have been promulgated. As every instance of Clarence's treachery to Edward IV. renders more striking the uncompromising fidelity of Richard of Gloucester, it is important to this memoir, to substantiate all such examples by reference to the only legitimate source whence the truth may be elicited—that of annalists who were living at the time when the event occurred.—See Appendix W.

** The Warkworth Chronicle, written during the first thirteen years of the reign of Edward IV., fully portrays the contumacious and rebellious spirit of Clarence, and the great provocation given by him to his royal brother. "Howbeit that our sovereign lord granted unto George, Duke of Clarence, and Richard, Earl of Warwick, his pardon general of all offences committed and done against him, yet the said duke and earl unnaturally, unkindly and untruly intended his destruction and the subversion of his realm and the common weal of the same, and to make the said Duke of Clarence king of this his said realm, against God's law, man's law and all reason."—Page 52. (Edited by J. O. Halliwell, Esq., and published by the Camden Society.)

issued not long after by the monarch against his offending brother evinced the deadly hatred that operated in him to the exclusion of all fraternal affection towards Clarence: one hundred pounds' worth of land of yearly value, or one thousand pounds in ready money, "being promised by the king" to him "that taketh and bringeth the said duke."* Many were the efforts made by their parent to appease this unnatural dissension before it had attained so formidable a height, and to soften and subdue the ungovernable passions that raged so fearfully in the hearts of her elder sons; but, although exercising the authority of maternal love and availing herself of the hold which she evidently maintained over her children's affections, this authority was never exerted except in the privacy of domestic life; and no stronger proof can be given of the true greatness of the Lady Cecily's character than the rigid manner in which she continued to abstain from all interference in public or political affairs. Possessing, as has been already shown, great influence over the king's mind, she might, from the deference which he paid her upon his accession to the throne, and from the claims which her misfortunes gave her on the sympathy of her own kindred, have produced as much division in the councils of the young monarch as those which had been so unhappily wrought by the consort of the dethroned Henry VI. But, with a high degree of moral courage and self-command, that seems never to have been sufficiently made the object of their comment and admiration by historians, the Duchess of York, from the moment that her son was crowned, strove to bury in oblivion all thought of those regal dignities which she once so earnestly coveted, and had so nearly enjoyed; seeking aid from the only true source of strength to enable her to calm her naturally high and ambitious temper, by the steady exercise of religion, in a dignified retirement, and the unobtrusive practice of every noble and feminine virtue.

Although Edward IV. was first proclaimed king under her roof, although he chose her as the medium of announcing to the citizens of London the victories that secured his accession, and though he repaired from her maternal abode to that sacred edifice in which, by the solemn office of religious consecration, he was made the crowned, as well as the elected monarch of England, this high-minded scion of the house of Neville, the widow of the "Prince of Wales,"† heir presumptive of a throne which she, as his consort, seemed destined to share,‡ in no one instance appears acting publicly in the capacity of mother of the reigning sovereign, until the report of his imprudent overtures to the Lady Elizabeth Grey rendered her apprehensive of the effect which such an alliance might have on the future stability of the throne. It is said that the young king, influenced by a sense of duty, consulted his mother on the occasion: be that as it may, she certainly addressed him the most earnest appeal,§ and strenuously exhorted him to abstain from so imprudent a connection; unhappily, however, with no good effect, as appears by the reply of the giddy and inconsiderate monarch,‖ notwithstanding that, in

* Close Rolls of 10th Edw. IV. m. 8. dorso.

† "For so was he created."—*Archæologia*, vol. xiii. p. 7.

‡ The arms of Cecily Neville, Duchess of York, impaled with those of her husband, exhibiting the royal arms, ensigned with a coronet, and supported with two angels standing upon as many roses, within the rays of the sun, were carved on a niche upon the southeast pillar of St. Benet's steeple, near Paul's Wharf, the parish church of Baynard's Castle, her metropolitan abode. These Sandford caused to be delineated in his "Genealogical History of the Kings of England before the conflagration of London, Anno 1666," book v. chap. iv. p. 369.

§ Archæologia, vol. xiii. p. 7.

‖ These are both inserted in Buck's "Hist. of the Reigne of King Richarde III.," (lib. iv. p. 119, ed. 1646,) where they may be found unabbreviated.

addition to the arguments which she employed against so unseemly an alliance as regarded political consideration and regal precedent, she farther urged his previous betrothment to one of his subjects* far higher in rank than the daughter of Sir Richard Wydville, but who, as a subject, was equally unsuited to his present regal station.

Betrothments, at this period of English history, were considered to be fully as binding by the canon law as the rites of marriage:† they could only be annulled by papal dispensation. This was well known to the Duchess of York; and she foresaw, as the result proved, that nothing but misery and contention to her son and his offspring would result from an alliance contracted under such impediments, with one who was powerless, by birth and connection, to soften the evils which it induced, and the struggles for legitimacy which it too surely indicated, and but too unhappily produced in after years. Submitting, however, with her usual self-command, to the marriage, after it was solemnized, and publicly acknowledged by the lords of the council, the Duchess of York again retired for a period into the privacy of domestic life.

But though she appears to have observed towards the queen-consort, after Elizabeth was crowned as such, the deference which was due to her regal position; and her tenderness towards her son in his domestic circle is shown by her standing sponsor for his eldest child, and from his second daughter, the Princess Cecily, being so named in compliment to her; yet was she too innately imbued with hereditary pride of birth, and too sensitive on the point of her own near assumption of the same regal dignity, not to feel deeply and bitterly the ill-judged marriage of her eldest son, the founder of the Yorkist dynasty. By this union King Edward forfeited his mother's respect, and weakened her affection; while Clarence's treacherous and unprincipled conduct warred with all the better and nobler feelings of her nature. In the young Duke of Gloucester she beheld a firmness of character that contrasted as strongly with the weak points in his eldest brother, as his fidelity to this latter was opposed to the envious and ungenerous acts which, from his entrance into life, had characterized every movement of her second son towards his royal kinsman. Richard's highly honourable career was equally at issue with that of the ignoble political conduct of the "false and perjured Clarence." On his actions she could dwell with pride and pleasure; and on him, therefore, there is little doubt that his mother henceforth fixed her hopes and strong affections. The peaceable demeanour of the Duke of Gloucester coincided, too, with her own exemplary line of conduct; and it was most exemplary, considering her peculiar position, and the temptations which it offered to one by nature of so ambitious and unbending a temper. This eulogium on the Lady Cecily, founded as it is on well-authenticated facts, as also the causes that led to her affections being more strongly centred on her youngest son in proportion as they were gradually weaned from his elder brothers, will be found important at a later period of this memoir, when considering accusations against Richard III. which it would now be premature to discuss.

* The Lady Elinor Talbot, daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, who is also called, in authentic writings, the Lady Butler, because she afterwards became the wife and widow of the Lord Butler.—*Buck*, lib. iv. p. 122.

† "By the ancient canon law, a contract for marriage might be valid and perfect without the church ceremony."—See *Gibson's Codex*, tit. 22. Hence there have been decisions in the ecclesiastical courts by which second marriages have been annulled on account of the existence of a pre-contract.—*Decret.*, lib. iv. tit. i. c. 21; *Turner's Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 457.

The unnatural warfare that speedily ensued between Edward IV. and the Duke of Clarence, after the former had regained his liberty, and the defiance by her nephews, the Nevilles, of the acknowledged sovereignty of their king, shown by the most seditious proclamations and open rebellion, kindled again all the gentler feelings of the Lady Cecily's nature, and once more induced the public exercise of maternal rebuke and interference. She procured a meeting at Baynard's Castle between the two brothers and her impetuous kindred,* and once more exerting that all-powerful influence which appears never to have been weakened, she again succeeded in effecting a reconciliation: but it was transient and insincere. Injuries had accumulated too thickly, and pressed too heavily, to be forgotten; and petty insults had aggravated a predisposition to enmity. The calm produced by this well-designed family assemblage, only rendered still more violent the storm of hateful passions which it preceded. A spirit of disaffection had gradually spread throughout the realm and soon ripened into avowed insurrection; and this was manifested in so many different districts, and was fomented by such influential persons, that King Edward found himself compelled to resist, by force of arms, the universal insurrection which had, in the first instance, been instigated by his own brother, and was afterwards encouraged by his nearest relations.† On the 26th of March, 1470, he appointed Richard, Duke of Gloucester, then but seventeen years of age, "commissioner of array in the county of Gloucester,"‡ in consequence of the rebellion of "George, Duke of Clarence, and Richard, Earl of Warwick;" and by other letters patent of the 15th of April following, the young prince was nominated a commissioner for a similar purpose in the counties of Devonshire and Cornwall.§

A series of vindictive conflicts followed this recommencement of civil war, in which, for a brief period, King Edward gained the ascendency; and Clarence and Warwick were compelled to fly to France, where, by reason of the amity which had long been secretly fostered between Louis XI. and the Earl of Warwick, they were most courteously received.‖ There they found sojourning Margaret of Anjou, with Prince Edward of Lancaster, her son; and all hope of pardon from King Edward appearing futile by reason of their avowed rebellion, and all further connection with the Yorkist faction being irrevocably broken by their abandonment of their royal chief, notwithstanding his conciliatory proclamation,¶ they were induced by the French monarch openly to espouse the cause of the exiled queen and that of the deposed Henry VI., and publicly to avow their intention of reinstating that sovereign

* Fabyan, p. 500.

† By the confession of Sir Robert Welles it appears that the Duke of Clarence took a much more active part in the rising of Lincolnshire than is generally supposed; and that the real object of the rebellion was to place the crown on Clarence's brow, and that both Clarence and Warwick had for some time been urging the Lord Welles and his son to continue firm to their cause.—*Warkworth*, p. 51, and *Excerpt. Hist.*, p. 282.

‡ Cal. Rol. Pat. 10 Edw. IV. § Ibid.

‖ Chron. Croy., p. 533.

¶ The strong affection borne by the king to his family, notwithstanding the aggravation he had received, and the natural warmth and innate goodness of his heart, are proved beyond all doubt, by the efforts he made to conciliate Clarence and Warwick, even when compelled by self-defence to take up arms, and to issue edicts to counteract their treachery and defiance of his authority, "yet natheless, our said sovereign lord, considering the nighness of blood that they the said duke and earl be unto him, and the tender love which he hath aforetime borne unto them, were therefore loathe to lose them, if they would submit them to his grace, and put him in surety of their good demeaning hereafter."—*Warkworth's Chronicle.*

on the throne of England.* To make this most extraordinary alliance more binding, a marriage was contracted between the youthful Prince of Wales and the Lady Anne Neville, youngest daughter of the Earl of Warwick, whose sister, as was before stated, had been united to the Duke of Clarence about a year previously. But as the desire of regaining for his child and her royal consort their long-lost rights was the ex-queen's sole inducement for yielding, after a severe struggle, to the earnest solicitations of Louis in favour of this betrothment of her only son, at the youthful age of sixteen, to the co-heiress of his bitterest foe, one year his junior,† the fulfilment of the contract was made to depend on the dethronement of Edward IV., and the solemnization of the marriage was to be the recompense only of King Henry the Sixth's restoration to the throne.

Ambition and revenge being predominant features in the earl's character, united to great decision and unwearied zeal in whatever he undertook, he commenced preparations without loss of time for his projected invasion: and receiving prompt and considerable aid from Louis XI., both in men and shipping, he was speedily in a state, accompanied by the Duke of Clarence, to effect a landing in England, and to issue proclamations denouncing Edward of York a usurper, and declaring the imprisoned Henry of Lancaster to be the lawful sovereign of the kingdom.

Upon this the young Duke of Gloucester was immediately appointed warden of the northern marches,‡ and thither he was hastening with the king and his adherents, to quell the insurrection in those revolted districts, when information was privately conveyed to them that Warwick and Clarence had landed on the southern coast, and that King Edward was once more about to be treacherously betrayed by others of his perfidious relatives in the north.§ Thus openly defied, and basely entrapped, the recently idolized monarch found himself, in a brief period, a king only in name. Perceiving his liberty to be again endangered, and his situation growing desperate, his own brother being arrayed against him, the once popular, but not despised, Edward of York was compelled to abdicate his throne, and, together with Richard of Gloucester and a small band of faithful followers, to fly the kingdom. He embarked from Lynn, in Norfolk, September, 1470, and sailing forthwith to Flanders, besought an asylum from his sister Margaret, at the court of Burgundy, to the reigning duke of which principality, it will be remembered, she had recently been united; but so extreme was his poverty, by reason of his precipitate flight, that it is said his kingly robe, lined with martin skins, was all he possessed‖ wherewith to recompense the brave man who conveyed him across the seas. The insurgents hastened with all speed to London, released from captivity the unfortunate Henry VI., and on the 13th of October, 1470, just nine years after his dethronement, the hapless monarch resumed the crown, and again ostensibly exercised the royal prerogative.¶ Queen Margaret, however, in her league with Warwick, had greatly circumscribed that chieftain's delegated powers.** She was suspicious of his fidelity, and could ill brook a friendly alliance with so bitter an enemy, the chief agent of all their misery and distress. But her unhappy consort, naturally deficient in intellect, had become so weakened in mind by close imprisonment and

* Cont. Croy., p. 533. † Harl. MSS., p. 543.

‡ Rymer, vol. ii. p. 658. § Chron. Croy., p. 553.

‖ "For the king's escape was so hasty, that not onely his apparell and other furniture were lost or left behind, but even his treasure; so that to defray the charge of his transportation he was necessitated to give the master of the ship a gowne furr'd with martens."—*Habington's Edward IV.*, p. 66.

¶ Croy. Chron., p. 554. ** Harl. MSS., No. 543.

neglect,* and the present excitement had so enfeebled his slender powers of exertion, that he became paralyzed, as it were, and a mere cipher in seconding the efforts of his friends. Finding him wholly incapacitated for government, Warwick and Clarence were compelled, after his release from captivity, to summon in all haste a Parliament,† that their acts might receive legitimate sanction without waiting for the arrival of the queen, as had been stipulated by her. In this assembly, Henry of Lancaster was again acknowledged king; Edward IV. was proclaimed an usurper, and both himself and his brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, were attainted and outlawed. All fresh statutes were repealed, and the long-exiled supporters of the House of Lancaster were restored to their honours and estates; while the Earl of Warwick and the Duke of Clarence were empowered to act as regents during the minority of the Prince of Wales, and in default of issue to him, George, Duke of Clarence was declared successor to the throne.‡ Thus did the Earl of Warwick fully prove the true cause of his gradual defection from Edward IV. An impartial review of the whole tenour of his conduct, from the period of Edward's marriage with the Lady Elizabeth Grey to his expulsion from the throne by Warwick's means, brings home the conviction that he destined his own offspring to share it, by allying them with whosoever swayed the sceptre. Mortified at his thwarted views in his kinsman of the House of York, he considered it would be as possible to dethrone him as it had been to unseat his predecessor. It is true that from this counter-revolution time would be necessary to mature his scheme; but his daughter was young, and the unparalleled success that had hitherto attended his projects, raising him as it had to the highest pinnacle of greatness, making him a king all but in title, and more than a king in arbitrary power, fed that insatiable ambition which, perhaps, nothing but a crown would altogether have satisfied. The Duke of Gloucester, however, young as he was, there can be little doubt from subsequent events, very early penetrated the earl's motives. He was of no temperament to be ensnared by the dangerous policy which had duped the unreflecting George of Clarence. Faithful to the interests of his family, and true to his sovereign, who was its head, he preferred, when affairs had reached so desperate a crisis, exile and poverty with his royal brother, to dishonourable elevation at the hands of his enemies. The sacrifice induced by such a decison can scarcely be understood at the present day; though its extent is made sufficiently apparent by reference to the chroniclers of those disastrous times. "I saw," says Philip de Comines, "the Duke of Exeter barefoot and ragged, begging his meate from door to door, in the Low Countries,"§ and this, too, though that nobleman and the prince of the country had married two sisters, the sisters of Edward IV. and Richard of Gloucester. Neither was his brother-in-law the only appalling instance; for "with this so unfortunate lord the Somersets and others shared with him

* This is proved by a very touching passage in Warkworth's Chronicle, which would almost seem to indicate that he was once more reduced to hopeless imbecility. "In the beginning of the month of October, the year of our Lord 1470, the Bishop of Winchester, by the assent of the Duke of Clarence and the Earl of Warwick, went to the Tower of London, where King Henry was in prison by King Edward's commandment, and there took him from his keepers, which was not worshipfully arrayed as a prince, and not so cleanly kept as should seem such a prince: they had him out, and new arrayed him and brought him to the palace of Westminster, and so he was restored to the crown again."—*Warkworth's Chron.*, p. 11.

† That this might not appear the act of faction, but the universal consent of the kingdom, a parliament was summoned, wherein nothing was denied which the prevailing party thought fit to be authorized.—*Habington*, p. 70.

‡ Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 191.

§ Comines, vol. i. p. 239.

in misery,"* and Margaret, Countess of Oxford, the graceful and accomplished sister of the Earl of Warwick, bred in the lap of luxury, imbued with the haughty feelings of the age, and once possessed of enormous wealth, was compelled to support herself and her husband, after his attainder and imprisonment, "by working with her needle."† Yet did Gloucester voluntarily share Edward's privations in Burgundy, and serve him in his adversity with as much cheerfulness and fidelity as when he had accepted, with grateful feelings, in days of prosperity, the high honours and wealthy endowments which that monarch so early bestowed upon him. A comparison cannot fail to be here drawn between the unworthy feelings that influenced Clarence to accelerate the downfall of so near a relative, one who had distinguished him in his youth by kindness little less than paternal, and that of the much defamed Gloucester, who, traditionally reputed to be devoid of every kind and generous sentiment, was, nevertheless, the willing companion and friend in his adverse fortune of that brother who had so tenderly fostered him in childhood: and who, though elevated at this crisis to a degree of authority and importance far beyond that usual to a youth of seventeen, scrupled not to sacrifice all wealth, honours, independence, to become a houseless wanderer and an outcast from his home, to participate in the attainder that deprived King Edward and himself as his partisan of every possession‡ whether hereditary or acquired.

* Habington's Edw. IV., p. 42.

† Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 340.

‡ "King Edward, therefore, and all his adherents, were attainted of high treason, their lands and goods confiscated. He and his posterity for ever disabled to inherit not only the crown, but any other hereditary estate; his claim to the kingdom was rejected as a most unjust pretension, and his former government condemned as of a tyrannous usurper."—*Habington's Edward IV.*, p. 70.

CHAPTER VI.

Edward IV. resolves on again contesting the crown.—He returns to England with the Duke of Gloucester.—They effect a landing in Yorkshire.—Perjury of King Edward.—Success of his scheme.—Clarence repents his desertion of his family.—Gloucester chiefly instrumental in effecting a final reconciliation between his brothers.—King Edward recovers the throne.—Henry VI. again a captive.—Battle of Barnet.—The Earl of Warwick is slain.—Battle of Tewkesbury.—Death of Edward, Prince of Wales.—Queen Margaret captured—committed to the Tower.—Insurrection of Falconbridge.—Sudden dissolution of Henry VI.—The Duke of Gloucester unjustly accused of his murder, tested by reference to cotemporaries.—Origin of the imputation.—Gloucester receives the thanks of the Houses of Parliament.—His fidelity to the king rewarded by high honours and important trusts.

The return to England of Queen Margaret and her son Edward, Prince of Wales, with additional troops and subsidies from France, seemed alone wanting to complete and render decisive the extraordinary revolution which has been above alluded to.

In consequence of conflicting interests at the Burgundian and French courts, which it is unnecessary here to discuss, the disastrous position of Edward IV. seemed fully as deplorable out of England as his precipitate flight proved it to have been in his own dominions; and few other than minds so vigorously constituted as were those of the warlike sons of York, but would have sunk under the difficulties which from every quarter seemed to threaten the founder of that royal line with death or imprisonment. But the deposed king and his brother of Gloucester were not of dispositions tamely to submit to a reverse of fortune as sudden as it was severe. They were young, active, courageous, and strongly imbued with the chivalric and daring spirit of the times. All the strong and violent passions of their irascible race were kindled by the treachery that had been practised towards them, and their education had fitted them rather for desperate deeds than the quiet virtues of domestic life. A combination, too, of those trivial events which, apparently unimportant in themselves, so frequently tend either to frustrate or ensure the accomplishment of the most important schemes, so favoured the success of their project, that it almost seemed as if the sun of York was never to be more than partially eclipsed, however dense the clouds or ominous the darkness that dimmed for a while its beams, and seemed to threaten the total extinction of its splendour. Although Margaret of Anjou and her noble son were supported by the entire power of Louis XI., yet the advanced season of the year, added to perpetual storms, and an accumulation of the most untoward casualties, retarded them month after month from landing.

Warwick was in despair. Clarence in the interval had time for reflection,* and also for communication with those true friends, who, in all its degradation,

* "When the king was in Holland, the Duke of Clarence, the king's second brother, considering the great inconvenience whereunto as well his brother the king, he, and his brother the Duke of Gloucester were fallen unto, through and by the division that was between them, whereunto, by the subtle compassing of the Earl of Warwick and his complices, they were brought and reduced."—*Fleet. Chron.*, p. 9.

endeavoured to bring home to him the humiliating position in which he had placed himself, as the tool of his father-in-law and the betrayer of his brothers. Thus, by a variety of incidents, so remarkable and complicated that it would require too much space to enter here into a more particular examination of the details, Edward of York and his faithful companions had rallied their forces sufficiently to contemplate a return to England through the private aid of Charles of Burgundy, and before the heroic but ill-fated Margaret could complete her arrangements or fulfil any portion of her contract with the Earl of Warwick.

The promptitude and zeal of the Yorkists compensating for the superior advantages that were rendered futile to the Lancastrians by delays and disasters of various kinds,* a counter-revolution was speedily brought about; and in a very brief period the rival sovereigns were again found fiercely contesting for the oft-disputed crown. With so small a body of troops, that they were more than once deterred from landing on the coasts, which Warwick's vigilance had so well guarded,† King Edward at length effected his design at Ravenspur, in Yorkshire;‡ and the perjury there practised by the usurping Henry of Lancaster in the previous century,§ probably instigated the Yorkist monarch to attempt a like deception. Profiting by the example of Bolingbroke, and its heinousness being palliated by the baneful precedent of his father's duplicity at Ludlow,‖ he approached the gates of York, not ostensibly as a sovereign,¶ but merely a claimant, as he alleged, for his hereditary right of the duchy of York,** bestowed on the Duke of Clarence after King Edward's attainder and expulsion from the throne. The means so cunningly devised were successful in their result, and the exiled representative of the House of York was, under these pretensions,†† welcomed to

* "And Queen Margaret, and Prince Edward, her son, with other knights, squires, and other men of the King of France, had navy to bring them to England, which, when they were shipped in France, the wind was so contrary unto them xvij days and nights, that they might not come from Normandy with unto England, which with a wind might have sailed it in xij hours."—*Warkworth's Chron.*, p. 17.

† Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 57; also Fleetwood's Chron., p. 2.

‡ "Upon the morn Wednesday and Thursday, the xiiij day of March, fell great storms, winds and tempests upon the sea, so that the said xiiij day, in great torment, he (Edward) came to Humbrehede, where the other ships were dissevered from him. The king with his ship alone, wherein was the Lord Hastings, his chamberlain, and other, to the number of v^c^ well-chosen men, landed within Humber, on Holderness side, at a place called Ravenspoure. The King's brother, Rich^d^, Duke of Gloucester, and in his company iij^c^ men, landed at another place iiij mile from thence."—*Fleetwood's Chron.*, pp. 2, 3.

§ "The same oath swore Henry of Bolingbrook, when, pretending to the duchy of Lancaster, he landed in the north, and armed against King Richard II.; which he broke, as Edward IV. after did, upon the like advantage."—*Habington's Edward IV.*, p. 75.

‖ See Chapter III.

¶ "And he said to the mayor and alderman, that he never would claim no title, nor take upon hande to be King of England, nor would have done afore that time, but by the exciting of the Earl of Warwick; and thereto before all people he cried, 'A King Henry! A King and Prince Edward!' and weared an ostrich feather, Prince Edward's livery; and after this, he was suffered to pass the city, and so held his way southward; and no man let him nor hurt him."—*Warkworth's Chron.*, p. 14.

** "The Duke of Clarence, that greater hopes might not invite him to return to his brother, was possest of the duchy of York.—*Habington's Edward IV.*, p. 71.

†† "All began to exclaim against the injustice of the last parliament in conferring the duchy of York, which by right of primogeniture belonged to Edward, upon his second brother, George, Duke of Clarence; which act could not be imagined freely granted by the Parliament, but extorted by the over great sway of Warwick."—*Habington*, p. 74.

the city, and permitted to depart from it to his own lordship and demesnes, by many who would otherwise have disputed his reassumption of the regal prerogative, from the indignation which had been felt at his injudicious exercise of the kingly power. The leading cause, however, of that success which enabled King Edward to throw off the mask which he had assumed, and to avail himself of the good fortune which attended his promptitude and judicious measures after landing, was the indication given by the Duke of Clarence of defection from the rebellious standard of Warwick. It has been before stated, that great unanimity and strong affection for each other was a leading trait in the children of the family of York, the fickle and unsteady Clarence forming the only exception to this their peculiar and brightest characteristic. With him it appears to have been merely weakened, but not subdued, by the more overwhelming passions of jealousy and ambition; jealousy at the ill-judged elevation of the Wydville family; ambition at the prospect of being king, instead of the brother by whom he had felt himself injured and aggrieved.

So long as these exciting causes were fomented by his father-in-law, Warwick,* so long did Clarence continue at enmity with his family; but when, by a depth and versatility of policy unsuspected, and, indeed, incomprehensible to a mind so ill formed for penetration as was that of the unreflecting Clarence, he found that the rival of his house, the monarch of Lancaster, was to be substituted for his exiled brother,—that he had been the tool of Warwick, and that, in grasping at a vain shadow, he had, in reality, removed himself one degree farther from the possible possession of a crown which he had so laboured and so degraded himself for the purpose of attaining,—the now-repentant duke lamented his defection, and saw, in its broad light, the folly and weakness of his conduct. The shallow policy which he had pursued, in becoming the dupe of Warwick, when fancying himself protesting solely against the undue influence of Edward's queen, was now apparent; and this conviction was brought more home to him by the remonstrance of the female portion of his family,† whose kindly influence revived all the softer and better feelings of his nature. The Duchess of York, indeed, must have beheld with grief unutterable the ruin to their house which resulted from such unnatural rebellion in her son; and, co-operating with her daughters, the Duchesses of Exeter, Suffolk and Burgundy, they commenced the most strenuous exertions to heal so disgraceful a rupture, and laboured unceasingly to win back the misguided Clarence to his family and his faction.

This prince was the peculiarly beloved brother of his sister, the Princess of Burgundy; and by her untiring zeal, and by solemn promises of pardon and oblivion of the past, previously extorted by her‡ from Edward IV., Clarence, inconsistent and restless, ever hasty in action but weak in purpose, again changed sides, and secretly promised, if his royal brother could land and effect a junction with him, that he would aid him with his support towards his re-establishment on that throne from which he had been so active an agent in expelling him a few months previously.

* See Appendix X.

† "By right covert ways and means, were good mediators and mediatrix, the high and mighty princess my Lady their mother, my Lady of Exeter, my Lady Suffolk, their sisters, but most specially my Lady of Burgundy."—*Fleet. Chron.*, p. 9.

‡ "Great and diligent labour with all effect was continually made by the high and mighty princess the Duchess of Burgundy, which at no time ceased to send her servants and messengers to the king where he was, and to my said Lord of Clarence into England."—*Fleet. Chron.*, p. 9.

By the most consummate generalship, and movements so well devised and ably executed, that Warwick himself was paralyzed at the boldness of an undertaking which had baffled even his foresight and penetration, King Edward reached within three miles of the Duke of Clarence's encampment without a single conflict, or the slightest opposition being offered to his progress. The fate of the brothers, nay, of the kingdom at large, now hung on the final decision of this latter wavering prince; and Gloucester, the much-defamed but consistent Gloucester, firm in his allegiance to the one, yet feelingly alive to the degradation of the other, was the chief agent in finally effecting that reconciliation—that re-union of interests which, in a few hours, overthrew the deep policy of France, the long-laboured schemes of Warwick, and the sanguine hopes of the Lancastrian queen, founded, as they were, on the apparent annihilation of the Yorkist dynasty. The Duke of Gloucester, "and other lords, past often formally between the brothers, and urged them, in all respects, both religious and politic, to prevent a quarrel so ruinous and so scandalous to both, wherein the triumph could not be but almost destruction to the conqueror."* Surely this fact must invalidate the unmitigated charge of fraternal hatred and jealous malignity so universally ascribed to Richard of Gloucester; surely this anxious desire to restore one brother to the crown and to reclaim the other from dishonour, must at least serve to qualify the opposing statements of a subsequent age, and throw discredit on the tradition that makes him destitute of every kindly sentiment.†

Satisfactorily, too, does it explain the nature of "the gratuitous, laudable, and honourable services," "the innate probity and other virtues," which King Edward publicly recorded in the letters patent which perpetuated alike the merits and the rewards which he considered it fitting to bestow on the Duke of Gloucester.

The meeting between the brothers—so important to the future destinies of England—is thus simply, but feelingly, narrated by an eye-witness, in a MS. preserved in the Harleian collection, little known until within the last few years:—"The king, upon an afternoon, issued out of Warwick with all his fellowship, by the space of three miles, into a fair field, towards Banbury, where he saw the duke, his brother, in fair array, come towards him with a great fellowship; and when they were together within less than half a mile, the king set his people in array, the banners displayed, and left them standing still, taking with him his *brother of Gloucester*, the Lord Rivers, Lord Hastings, and a few others, and went towards his brother of Clarence. And in likewise the duke, for his part, taking with him a few noblemen and leaving his host in good order, departed from them towards the king: and so they met betwixt both hosts, where was right kind and loving language betwixt them two." . . . "And then in likewise spake together the two Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester, and after the other noblemen being there with them, whereof all the people there that loved them were right glad and joyous, and thanked God highly of that joyous meeting, unity and accord, hoping that thereby should grow unto them prosperous fortune in all that they should after that have to do." . . . "And so with great gladness both

* Habington, Life of Edward IV. Bishop Kennet speaks in very high terms of Dr. Habington's biography of Edward IV., in the preface affixed to his valuable work, the "Complete History of England."—See vol. i.

† "I have no brother, I am like no brother:
And this word—love, which greybeards call divine,
Be resident in men like one another,
And not in me;—I am myself alone."
Shakspeare's Hen. VI., 3d Part, Act V., Sc. VI.

hosts, with their princes, together went to Warwick (city), and there lodged, and in the country near adjoining."*

Strong efforts were made to induce the rebellious Neville, Earl of Warwick, to return to his allegiance, but in vain. King Edward, therefore, by the advice of his brethren, Clarence and Gloucester, and accompanied by them, continued his march to London with all possible despatch, where he was joyfully received by the citizens; and, taking possession of the Tower and of the person of the unhappy Henry VI., he found himself once more established on the English throne, exactly six months after his abdication and expulsion and within one month of his landing at Ravenspur, under circumstances the most unfavourable and unpropitious that could well be conceived.

King Edward's queen, with her infant daughters, had fled to the Sanctuary at Westminster for refuge, immediately on her husband's expulsion from the throne; and in that melancholy abode, as if to render still more striking the important events that were crowded into the brief period of her royal consort's absence, she gave birth to their eldest son, afterwards Edward V.; a circumstance, there is little doubt, that added weight to his royal parent's restoration, as giving promise of legitimate succession in the line of York, without reason to fear the evils attendant upon a minority, King Edward being in the prime of life and naturally of a robust constitution. Edward IV. reached London the 9th April, 1471; and on the 11th, having entire possession of the city, he proceeded first to St. Paul's, to render thanks to Heaven for his triumph, and thence to the Sanctuary at Westminster, to "comforte" his queen, who "presentyd hym at his comyne," with a "fayre son a prince, to his hert's singular comforte and gladness."† Releasing the royal Elizabeth from her gloomy asylum, the king returned the same evening to London; and carrying her to Baynard's Castle, "they lodged at the lodgynge of my ladye his mother, where they heard divine service that night and upon the morn, Good Friday."‡ Once more, then, were the members of the House of York, in the fulness of prosperity, reassembled under the roof of the Lady Cecily; once more that severely tried princess had the happiness of seeing her offspring reunited in peace and in joy: for that she was herself present to welcome the exiles, to bless the reunion of the brothers, and to join in the religious services that hallowed a reconciliation she had so earnestly and devoutly laboured to effect, is apparent from the peculiar wording of the passage quoted, "at the lodgynge of my ladye his mother." Under her maternal charge, too, there is little doubt that the king left his royal consort and infant progeny when following up the triumph which he had so unexpectedly obtained; for the Earl of Warwick, though at first paralyzed at Edward's rapid movements, and subsequently dismayed at the desertion of Clarence, was too firmly pledged to Queen Margaret, and his honour was altogether too deeply involved, to desert a cause which he had so warmly and strenuously undertaken. In the midst of his domestic rejoicing, tidings were communicated to Edward IV. of his opponent's approach to the capital. The partisans of the House of York, who had emerged from their sanctuaries,§ were speedily assembled, and, after resting in the metropolis for the remainder of the above-named sacred

* Collected from a MS. in the Harleian Library, entitled "Historie of the Arrivall of Edward IV. in England, and final Recoverye of his Kingdom," sometimes entitled "Fleetwood's Chronicle," and recently edited and published by J. Bruce, Esq., for the Camden Society, p. 11.

† Fleet. Chron., p. 17. ‡ Ibid.

§ Chron. Croyl., p. 554.

day, to refresh* his wearied troops, he placed himself the following morning at the head of his army, and quitting London, met the Lancastrian leaders on a plain near Barnet, about ten miles north of the capital, where, on Easter even, the hostile forces encamped, preparatory to the approaching conflict, which took place on Easter Sunday, 14th April, 1471.† No battle on our warlike annals was more terrible,‡ more characterized by the worst passions of humanity, than that which in this year marked a festival peculiarly consecrated throughout the Christian world, to advocating the heavenly doctrines of the holy Founder of our religion, and designed to commemorate "on earth peace, good-will towards men." No hosannas ushered in the dawn of this most holy day; but, on the contrary, vows of extermination, of hatred, of revenge. Oh how truly may it be said that there are no battles like the battles of the hearth—no conflicts so fierce, so devoid of all that can soften man's savage nature, as those which arm "the father against the son, the son against the father," and which quench all natural affection in every relation of life.§

King Edward showed, in the arrangement of his forces, the different opinions which he entertained of the good faith and fidelity of his two brothers: the "vaward was commanded by the Duke of Gloucester; the rear, by the Lord Hastings; the main battle, by himself; but George, Duke of Clarence, commanded not in any way in chief that day:"‖—so difficult was it for the king to banish suspicion, so expedient to guard against treachery or the possibility of defection to the enemy. Perhaps, too, he may have had more cogent reasons for such precaution than have been made apparent; for it is very clear that the heart of the wavering duke was divided in affection between his noble father-in-law and his royal brother.¶ Prior to the battle, he is said to have most earnestly desired a reconciliation, and would gladly have lent his services as a pacificator; but Warwick was no mere time-server, he was no agent to second the views of others, but the powerful machine which influenced the workings of humbler operations. "Go, tell your master," he said, in reply to Clarence's emissaries, "that Warwick, true to his word, is a better man than the false and perjured Clarence."**

From the hour of four in the morning until ten in the forenoon,†† both parties fought with a fury almost unexampled; prodigies of valour were performed, but by none more than the young Duke of Gloucester, who, by an accidental circumstance in the arrangement of the contending army, was immediately opposed to the Earl of Warwick himself.‡‡ If any presumptive proof could invalidate the fabulous traditions of this prince's mis-shapen form and nerveless arm, his conduct in this battle may well be considered an adequate test. It was the first in which he had been engaged; but though he numbered but eighteen years, he bore down all before him, and "entred so farre and boldly into the ennemies' army, that two of his esquires,§§ Thomas Parr and John Milewater, being nearest to him, were slain; yet by his owne

* Warkworth's Chron., p. 15.

† Fleetwood's Chron., p. 18. ‡ Warkworth, p. 16.

§ Most touchingly has our great dramatist portrayed this, in the bitter lamentation of the unhappy parent who slew his only child in one of these direful feuds:—

"What stratagems, how fell, how butcherly,
Erroneous, mutinous, and unnatural,
This deadly quarrel daily doth beget!"

Third Part of Henry VI., Act II. Sc. V.

‖ Habington's Edw. IV., p. 81.

¶ Fleetwood's Chron., p. 12. ** Lingard, vol. v. p. 208.

†† Warkworth, p. 16. ‡‡ Turner's Middle Ages, vol. iii. p. 319.

§§ Buck's Life of Rich. III., lib. i. p. 9.

valour he quit himselfe, and put most part of the enemies to flight." The Earl of Warwick, after a time, dismounted and fought on foot. He urged on his followers with the determination of his character, and with all the energy of desperation; but in vain. Surrounded by his enemies, and prevented by a thick mist from discerning the situation of his friends, he fell—a victim to his misplaced zeal, to his ungovernable pride and fatal ambition. The death of their valiant leader decided the fate of the day. King Edward's foes fled in all directions, and many, who had remained neuter until then, joined his victorious banner, willing to share in the triumph which attended their sovereign's return to the metropolis, and to participate in the acclamations which greeted his final re-assumption of the throne, as he offered up at St. Paul's, "at even song the same day, his own standard and that of the Earl of Warwick," trophies alike of his signal victory, and of the utter discomfiture of his enemies. The hapless Henry VI., from infancy the sport of fortune, once more a captive, was again consigned to his apartments in the Tower, whence he had been withdrawn two days previously, not as a few months back, to be arrayed "in purple,"* and with "great reverence" brought to his palace at Westminster as a king, but, in outrage of those strong religious feelings with which he was innately imbued, to be taken on Easter even† to meet the hostile armies, and to be placed on Easter Sunday‡ in front of the battle, as a mark "to be shot at." The arrows, however, that decided the fate of Warwick and his brother, the Lord Montague, fell harmless round the Lancastrian monarch—the political victim, in fighting for whose cause the mighty Nevilles were numbered with the illustrious dead.

"King Henry, being in the forward during the battle, was not hurt, but he was brought again to the Tower of London, there to be kept."§ He was, indeed, too meek, too powerless an adversary to be dreaded as such, or to occasion either anxiety or alarm in King Edward's mind: other and far more formidable opponents were yet living to stimulate the valour and to excite the energies of the royal House of York. Margaret of Anjou, and her young son, the Prince of Wales, were rallying points for many who had fled from the field of Barnet; and the restored king felt that he must not risk the scattering of his faithful followers, so long as his rivals had footing in his dominions.

Dispersing, therefore, small bands in various directions to watch their movements, but keeping himself close to the metropolis, where his cause was most popular, Edward wisely devoted his attention to conciliate the mass of the people; and his good feeling as well as policy was evinced by innumerable proclamations of amnesty to all such as would voluntarily submit to him.

The respectful love and tender affection cherished in early days for his kinsmen, Warwick and Montague,‖ which not even their treachery and defalcation in after time could utterly efface, are forcibly displayed by his conduct observed towards them after their decease. In accordance with the usage of the times, the bodies of the illustrious dead were exposed to public view "two

* Bayley's Hist. of the Tower, vol. ii. p. 324.
† Warkworth's Chron., p. 15. ‡ Fleetwood's Chron., p. 18.
§ Warkworth's Chron., p. 17.
‖ The author of the cotemporary Fragment, published by Hearne, in speaking of the Marquis Montague, states that Edward "entirely loved him;" and the writer of the coeval work, which has been so frequently referred to in these pages under the designation of "Fleetwood's Chronicle," testifies that during King Edward's march toward the metropolis, after he had effected a landing at Ravenspur, "the Marquis Montague in no wise troubled him, ne none of his fellowship, but suffered him to pass in peaceable wise."—See *Hearne's Fragment*, p. 306; *Bruce's Arrival of King Edward IV.*, p. 6.

or three days barefaced in St. Paul's Church,"* that all who beheld them might be satisfied of their death,† and none make their pretended escape a deceptive plea for re-union; after which "they were carried down to the priory of Bisham,‡ where, among their ancestors by the mother's side, Earls of Salisbury, the two unquiet brothers rest in one tombe."

The ex-queen and her son, the youthful heir of his father's contested crown, landed at Weymouth§ on the very day that Warwick's fate was sealed on Barnet field. Sad, indeed, was the disastrous intelligence conveyed to the royal fugitives; but though, from sudden terror and on the impulse of the moment, they fled for safety to the sanctuary‖ of Beaulieu Abbey¶ in Hants, yet were their spirits not altogether broken. King Henry still lived, although again a captive; and Edward of York filled a throne which they felt to be theirs by right, and by the inheritance of three generations. Each party consequently prepared for another trial of strength. Hope on the one side, desperation on the other, induced the most determined efforts; and a fortnight was spent in untiring zeal and strenuous exertions suited to the great cause which they had at stake.

At the termination of this brief period, a consideration army had assembled near the town of Tewkesbury. All the chivalry of England were there arrayed, either under the banner of the Red Rose, again unfurled by the intrepid queen and her princely son, or drawn thither to uphold the restoration of the gallant monarch who had made the paler Rose so much more popular by his persuasive manners and the brilliancy that characterized his court.

Only twenty days elapsed before the antagonists of Barnet were once more placed in hostile position against each other; and the disastrous events of that recent contest stimulated almost to frenzy the passions of the contending parties, feeling as did each that this battle would be the great climax of their fate, and would decide the destiny of England as well as of its rival monarchs.

One circumstance rendered this action more than ordinarily important, which was, that Edward of Lancaster, the young Prince of Wales, then in his eighteenth year,—about a twelvemonth younger than Richard of Gloucester,—took the command of his father's army; and after personally addressing the soldiery, and animating their zeal in conjunction with and aided by his mother, the persevering Margaret,** he himself headed those faithful adherents†† which at the last fatal conflict had been led on to battle by the desperate and exasperated Warwick.

* Bayley's Hist. of the Tower, vol. ii. p. 333. † Fleetwood's Chron., p. 21.
‡ Habington's Edw. IV., p. 88. § Warkworth's Chron., p. 17.
‖ "Desperation forced her (Queen Margaret) to the common poor refuge of sanctuary. And in Bewlye, in Hampshire, a monastery of Cistercian monks, she registered herself, her son and followers, for persons privileged. To her, in this agonie of soul, came Edmond, Duke of Somerset, with his brother John Lord Beaufort, John Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, Jasper, Earl of Pembroke, John, Lord Prior of St. John's, and John Lord Wenlock. These noble personages laboured what they could by their comfort and presence to raise up the queen, sunk with the weight of her misfortunes."—*Habington*, p. 89.
¶ The small round tower said to have been appropriated to the use of Margaret of Anjou and Edward, Prince of Wales, is still in perfect preservation, and Beaulieu Abbey itself, to which the tradition of this tower affords so great an object of interest; although no longer realizing the description in Fleetwood's Chronicle, (p. 22,) of being as "ample and as large as the franchesse of Westminster, or of St. Martin's at London," is, in point of situation, extent of ruin, and romantic scenery, one of the most attractive spots of the innumerable sites in the New Forest hallowed by historical associations.
** Harl. MSS., No. 543.
†† "In the main battle was the prince, under the direction of the Lord Prior and the Lord Wenlock."—*Habington's Edw. IV.*, p. 93.

No better fortune, however, awaited the promising heir of the line of Lancaster than had attended the mighty "king maker" before. Equal prodigies of valour were performed, equal efforts made to ensure success; but a spell seemed to be set over the House of Lancaster, and an almost supernatural fortune to attend that of York. King Edward again intrusted the post of honour and of peril to his young brother, the Duke of Gloucester. Animated by former success, Richard aimed at this distinguished position; and the monarch, in placing his "vaward in the rule of the Duke of Gloucester,"* and in directing this gallant prince to commence the attack, evinced alike the confidence he felt in his fidelity, his zeal and his military skill. He was immediately opposed to the Duke of Somerset, the chief of the Lancastrian leaders, to whom had been assigned the "vaward" of King Henry's forces. The trust reposed in Richard was not misplaced, and Edward's judicious arrangement was demonstrated by the result: for it is generally acknowledged, that to the cool determination and able generalship of Gloucester may, in a great measure, be ascribed the success of the battle of Tewkesbury.

In addition to the courage which was displayed by him at Barnet, he, on this occasion, manifested that keen foresight which formed so prominent a feature in his character. By a feigned retreat,† which only a mature policy could have suggested, he withdrew his adversaries from their strongest position,‡ and availed himself of the confusion which followed—when the latter too late discovered their error—to follow up his success, and reap the full measure of his acute penetration and bravery. This, together with the rash and precipitate conduct of the Lancastrian leaders,§ decided the fate of the day, and together with it that of their hapless cause.

The queen's army was entirely routed, and the Yorkist monarch gained a complete victory. No conquest, indeed, could be more decisive: thousands were left dead on the field; Queen Margaret herself was captured within a few days; and Edward, Prince of Wales, the young, the noble and the brave, forfeited his life in the first battle in which he had unsheathed the sword in defence of his royal parents, his inheritance and his crown. He was "taken fleeinge to the townwards, and slain in the field;"‖ but whether in the heat of battle or in cold blood as a prisoner, it seems almost impossible at this distant period to decide, so ambiguous and conflicting are the cotemporary accounts.

As the mode of his death, however, involves one of the most serious accusations which tradition has imputed to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, a minute examination of the circumstances, as far as this prince is concerned, is indispensable in these pages. Nearly the whole of what may be termed

* Fleetwood's Chron., p. 30.

† "The Duke of Somerset, seeing Glocester retire with some appearance of flight (an appearance, indeed, it was, only to betray the enemy,) ran after so farre in the pursute, that there was no safety in the retreat. Then did Glocester on the sudden turne backe upon him, and having by this deceit enticed him from his trenches, hee cut all the vanguard in pieces."—*Habington's Edw. IV.*, p. 94.

‡ "The Duke of Somerset entrencht his camp round so high and so strong, that the enemy could on no side force it."—*Ibid.*, p. 92.

§ "The Duke of Somerset, enraged with his discomfiture, and having Lord Wenlock's faith in some jealosie, upon his escape backe obrayded him with the most ignominious termes of cowardize and treason; and, transported by the heat of passion, with an axe hee had in his hand strooke out his braines. This outrage begot nothing but disorder in the queen's camp; and so great grew the confusion, that no man knew whom to obey, or how or where to make resistance against the assaulting enemy."—*Ibid.*, p. 94.

‖ Fleetwood's Chron., p. 30.

the popular and standard histories of England, from the earliest printed chronicles of the sixteenth to the abler productions that closed the eighteenth century, represent the Lancastrian prince as brought before Edward IV. after the battle a prisoner, and as incurring the resentment of that king by his bold and dauntless assumption to his face of right to the throne; and after stating this, and that he was struck by the irritated monarch with his gauntlet, as a signal of defiance, it is farther represented that he was finally dispatched by the sword of Richard of Gloucester. Whence, however, is this information obtained? and from what source springs the accusation? Not, certainly, from eye-witnesses of the event, neither from cotemporary chroniclers. These reports emanated from the annalists of the Tudor times; and in tracing the authority on which were based the statements of our great historian Hume, as also the immortal dramatist, Shakspeare, both of which centre in Holinshed,* the most popular writer of that period, it affords but one out of innumerable instances which might be adduced of the prejudiced and corrupt source whence accusations of such weighty import to the character and reputation of Richard III. were originally derived, and have been since perpetuated.

Sir George Buck, as previously observed, was the first who ventured, by reference to early and cotemporary writers, to dispute the legendary tales of a subsequent period; and he, though adopting the view of the prince being slain in cold blood, most expressly asserts, on the testimony of a "faithful MS. chronicle of those times,"† that the Duke of Gloucester "only, of all the great persons present, stood still and drew not his sword."‡

Lord Orford, in after years, though admitting that the style of Buck's writing laid him open to criticism, yet most ably and philosophically follows up his views when based on well-attested facts;§ and, by reference to the earlier historical records of this battle, he gives force to Sir George's assertions by pointing out how each succeeding chronicler added to the report, and how "much the story had gained from the time of Fabyan," the oldest historian‖ subsequent to the age of printing, who simply states, that the prince "was by the king's servants incontinently slain;" to the later Tudor annalists,¶ who, by substituting for the king's "servants" the names of his royal brothers, have been the means of fixing the entire odium, with still greater injustice, on Richard, Duke of Gloucester.** Much difference of opinion has, notwithstanding, ever prevailed on this point, arising chiefly from the contradictory accounts of the above-named chroniclers, and the manner in which they qualify their statements, by imputing them "to reporte;" but recent researches have at length proved how tenable were the grounds of objection taken by the apologists of Richard III., and how well founded were the "doubts" which they entertained, arising from the evi-

* "Shakspeare follows Holinshed," (see *Courtenay's Commentaries on Shakspeare's Historical Plays*, vol. ii. p. 27;) so also did Hume, and most implicitly; it being reserved for later times to that in which the philosophical historian penned his imperishable work to seek from the original documents the events narrated by him. It is, however, a well-known and admitted fact, that Holinshed copied Hall, and Hall (with his own additions) Polydore Virgil, who was not only a staunch Lancastrian, but virtually employed by Henry VII. to compile the history and the reports of his period.

† "Chron. in quarto, MS. apud Dom. Regis. Rob. Cotton."

‡ Buck. lib. iii. p. 81.

§ Historic Doubts, p. 20.

‖ Fabyan, p. 662.

¶ Polydore Virgil, p. 336; Hall, p. 301.

** See Guthrie, p. 314. "Whom Edward's brother, the Duke of Gloucester, murdered in cold blood, as he is said (though with no great show of probability) to have done his father, Henry VI."

dently corrupt source whence the charges were originally derived and afterwards propagated. It must be admitted by all who are in any degree conversant with the early literature of this country, that the documents of the fifteenth century are most deficient and meagre in detail: this resulted from the large portion of official records which were sacrificed to the jealous rivalry of the Roses, as each faction gained the ascendency and destroyed the edicts of his predecessor. The long-lamented deficiency is now, however, being almost daily supplied by the keen search after truth which at the present time so laudably prevails, and which has led to the publication of a number of interesting manuscripts and diaries written by men who themselves lived in those troubled times, and, in some instances, witnessed the things which they detailed.*

Of this description are two very remarkable narratives, as regards the subject now under discussion; because they were both penned about the same period, and, without doubt, by cotemporary writers;† although a broad distinction separates their views, inasmuch as one author was on the side of the House of York,—a servant who personally attended upon Edward IV. during his exile and on his restoration; the other, a staunch and violent Lancastrian, who, in his party zeal, minutely enumerates every evil trait that could in any degree sully the fame of the enemies of his own faction. These brief chronicles, which have been frequently quoted in these pages, were carelessly written; and, moreover, from the rapidity with which events of vast national import followed on each other, there can be no doubt they are often chronologically incorrect, certainly at all times compiled with partiality or prejudice to the cause which they espouse; yet, when they can be tested with other and standard authors, or with cotemporaries of undoubted credit, the corroborating evidence which they afford, as living writers and eye-witnesses, is most valuable ‡

In the point now under consideration, these two coeval diaries may truly

* Amongst the most valuable of these may be enumerated the Paston Letters, the Plumpton Correspondence, the manuscript papers published in the Archæologia, together with Sir Harris Nicolas's Testamenta Vetusta and Privy-purse Expenses; Sir Henry Ellis's Original Letters, and the publication of the Record Commissioners. These, and very many more of great value, local, municipal and collegiate, furnished by members of the Camden, Percy and Antiquarian Societies, have materially aided to dispel the mystery and ambiguity which so long prevailed, arising from the borrowed details of early and incompetent writers.

† "Historie of the Arrivall of Edward IV. in England, and finall Recoverage of his Kingdomes from Henry VI., A. D. 1471." Printed by the Camden Society from the Harl. MSS., No. 543; and "A Chronicle of the first thirteen Years of Edward IV.," by John Warkworth, D.D., Master of St. Peter's College, Cambridge, published by the same society from the MS. now in the library of that college.

‡ Particularly Fleetwood's Chronicle, which appears to have been written with the express view of making known to foreign countries the incidents of King Edward's restoration: for three days only after the termination of that narrative so designated, Edward IV., being then at Canterbury, addressed a letter in French to the nobles and burgomasters of Bruges, thanking them for the courteous hospitality which he had received from them during his exile, apprising them of the great success which had attended his expedition, and referring them to the bearer of the letter for further particulars of his victories. Those "further particulars" were contained in a very brief French abridgment of Fleetwood's Chronicle; and in the public library at Ghent there is a quarto MS. volume in vellum, which contains a cotemporary MS. of the abridgment, and of the king's letter, all written with great care and ornamented with four illuminations representing the battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury, the execution of the Duke of Somerset, and the attack of the bastard Falconbridge upon London. The identity of the Ghent MS. (see *Archæologia*, vol. xxi., p. 11) as an abridgment of the narrative recently published by the Camden Society, is unquestionable.—See *Bruce's Introduction*, pp. vi. vii.

be said to invalidate, if not to absolutely refute, the charge of Gloucester's participation in the murder of the young Prince of Wales; and they add force to the neutral position, if such a term may be permitted, of later writers,* who, uninfluenced by party feeling, were silent upon an accusation for which there appears no solid or sufficient foundation, and which took its rise a full century after the battle of Tewkesbury, and long subsequent to the decease of those who were present, or who narrated at the time the events of that fearful day.

The Yorkist narrative above alluded to, and commonly termed "Fleetwood's Chronicle," simply states that "Edward, called Prince, was taken fleeing to the townwards, and slain in the field,"† and "there was also slain Thos. the Earl of Devon, with many others." Warkworth, the Lancastrian authority, says, "and there was slain in the field Prince Edward, which cried for succour to his brother-in-law, the Duke of Clarence."‡

This latter testimony adds great weight to the assertion of the Yorkist chronicler, because not only do both use precisely the same expression, "slain in the field," but the latter writer, when adding the sentence "crying for help to Clarence," couples with the name of the Lancastrian prince, as does the other writer also, that of Courtney, Earl of Devon, who is well known to have been, in its most literal sense, "slain in the battle-field."§ But the circumstance that speaks most forcibly for the truth of the above statements is, that though emanating from the pen of men who were violently opposed to each other, from the respective parties which they espoused, yet is their account nevertheless substantially supported by the chronicler of Croyland; a man of education, high in the church, learned in the law, and, without any exception, the most impartial and able authority of the times. He says, "At last King Edward gained a signal victory, there being slain on the part of the queen, as well in the field as afterwards, by the revengeful hands of certain persons, the Prince Edward, the only son of King Henry, the defeated Duke of Somerset, the Earl of Devon, and other lords universally well remembered."‖ Here he corroborates, as much as could be expected from authors who did not mutually compare their writings, the statements contained in the diaries above quoted, viz., that Prince Edward and the Earl of Devon were slain in the field; and there can be little doubt, from certain well-attested facts afterwards occurring, that the somewhat ambiguously worded sentence which followed had reference to the revengeful execution of Somerset and others, whom King Edward by perjury withdrew from a sanctuary and most unworthily caused to be publicly beheaded a few days after the battle.¶

In addition to the above positive exculpation, perhaps the next most valuable evidence in defence of Gloucester is that of a wholly negative character; namely, the striking fact, that Sir Thomas More and Lord Bacon,** both violently opposed to Richard III., although recounting with bitterness his alleged vices and reputed crimes, make no mention whatever of the death of Edward, Prince of Wales, or even hint at any report having implicated the Duke of Gloucester in an event that there can be little doubt resulted from the fearful carnage of the battle, and not from the vindictive and unmanly indulgence of vengeance exercised on a powerless captive.

* See Rapin's Hist. of England, p. 615; also Carte, Henry, Sharon Turner and others; all of whom have doubted or impugned the veracity of the Lancastrian tales.

† Fleetwood's Chron., p. 30.

‡ Warkworth's Chron., p. 18.

§ Leland's Collect., p. 506.

‖ Chron. Croy., p. 555.

¶ Warkworth, p. 18.

** See More's Rycharde III., p. 9; and Bacon's Hen. VII., p. 2.

But, admitting the truth of the long-received tradition, that Edward of Lancaster was taken a prisoner; nay, even more, that he was brought into the king's tent, and therefore, if massacred, may still be said, by a flower of speech, to have been "slain in the field;" there yet remains not a shadow of proof for fixing so foul an act on the young Richard of Gloucester.

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Other and valuable modern testimony might be adduced to demonstrate the groundless nature of the charge which has been so long associated with Gloucester's memory; but reference to his own times, to the precise period when the calumnies arose, and to the cause that led to an accusation so wholly unsupported by cotemporaneous accounts, whether Yorkists or Lancastrian, is of itself the best and most substantial proof that the odium incurred by King Richard III. towards the close of his life, or rather the prejudices that prevailed against him after death, inclined the chroniclers of the succeeding age to associate his name indiscriminately with every unworthy act which was committed during his lifetime, rather than from having solid authority for such charges, or testimony to support them based on any valid source.

"There is little in reason," observes the late lamented Mr. Courtney, who, in his "Commentaries on Shakspeare's Historical Plays," has bestowed infinite labour and research in seeking the earliest original authorities, "for believing any part of the story."..."It is quite clear," he adds, "that there is nothing like evidence either of Prince Edward's smart reply to the king, or of his assassination by anybody; and there is not even the report *of one who lived near to the time*, of the participation of either of the king's brothers in the assassination, *if it* occurred." Truly, if the commentator of our great dramatic bard could afford to make this admission of the corrupt source whence the poet drew the material for one of his most admirable and striking scenes, and found sufficient cause to hazard an opinion so decided, arising from a conviction of its truth, the historian, professing to discard romance, and to be guided alone by plain, simple and well-authenticated facts, may well be content to divest his mind of long-received impressions, if they rest on no firmer basis than the legendary tales that reduce the important records of our country to the same level with the fables of early days and the traditions of later but even more dark and uncivilized times. How far King

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Edward himself was concerned in the massacre of the Lancastrian prince, it is not essential to this memoir to inquire;* but his revengeful conduct to his foes is unhappily made but too apparent in the occurrence which followed up his victory, and which not only darkened his own military fame, but casts a shade over that of his young brother, whom the king appointed his viceroy to carry into effect his faithless and cruel condemnation of those brave knights who had trusted to his royal pledge of safety and forgiveness.†

Such of the defeated Lancastrians as were enabled to effect their escape, sought refuge in a religious asylum at Tewkesbury, whither King Edward proceeded, sword in hand, to complete the fearful carnage of the day; but his progress was stayed by the abbott, at whose solemn intercession he was induced to respect the holy privilege of a sanctuary,‡ and to conclude his victory by promising that the lives should be spared of all such as were sheltered within the abbey: but, speedily repenting him of his lenity, he delegated the Duke of Gloucester, as high constable, in conjunction with the Duke of Norfolk, as lord marshal of England, a military tribunal;§ and commanding, as was ever his wont, that the soldiery should be spared, he enjoined the execution of their leaders,‖ the Lord Somerset, the Prior of St. John's and fourteen other of the noble partisans and chief supporters of the ex-queen and her princely son; who were consequently beheaded in the market-place of Tewkesbury on the Monday following the battle. Tranquillity, however, was not yet insured to King Edward or the line of York. Leaving as competent judges two of the highest officers of the realm, in the persons of the Lords of Gloucester and Norfolk, to decide the doom of his victims at Tewkesbury, the monarch proceeded with speed to Coventry, in order to quell the farther progress of the insurgents in the north. There, Margaret of Anjou was delivered into his hands a prisoner, having been captured in a church adjoining Tewkesbury, with the ladies of her suite, shortly after the engagement;¶ but before she could be conveyed by Edward's command a captive to the Tower, such intelligence reached the victorious monarch as compelled him in all haste to proceed in person to the metropolis,** whither the bereaved queen was conveyed in triumph as part of his train—alike the sport of fortune and the victim of the disastrous period in which she lived.

During the brief restoration of Henry VI., and upon the attainder of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, the Earl of Warwick had nominated as vice-

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This Sir Richard Croft was the same individual respecting whom King Edward wrote in his boyhood, complaining to his father of his "odious rule and governance." Certain it is, that the knight devoted himself to the interests of the House of York so long as they held the sceptre, and that his services were estimated and rewarded by the monarchs of that race; for after the accession of Edward IV. he was appointed general receiver of the earldom of March; and upon the elevation of King Richard to the throne, he granted "to Richard Croft, Knight, an annuity of 20*l.* of the lordships and manors of the earldom of March, within the county of Hereford."—*Retrospective Review*, second series, vol. i. p. 472; *Harl. MSS.*, 433, p. 665.

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admiral of the English Channel, his near kinsman, Thomas Neville, the illegitimate son of his uncle, Lord Falconberg, and consequently known in history as "the bastard of Falconbridge."*

The turbulent spirit of the "king maker," unaccompanied, however, with his nobleness of character, was inherited by this corrupt scion of the House of Neville; and feeling that his distinguished command was forfeited by the decisive battle of Barnet and the restoration of the line York, Falconbridge forthwith turned freebooter and pirate,† and directed his attention to change the face of affairs by boldly attempting to surprise London and release Henry VI. from captivity,‡ whilst Edward IV. was opposing his heroic queen and quelling the Lancastrian insurrection in the western and northern districts of the kingdom. The battle of Tewkesbury took place on the 4th of May, 1471, on the 11th of which month the ex-queen was delivered by Sir William Stanley a prisoner to the king at Coventry.§ On the 12th instant, Falconbridge attacked London;‖ and on the 16th, the king, changing his purposed course to the north, quitted Coventry¶ without delay, and summoning to his aid Richard of Gloucester, and carrying with him the desolate and childless Margaret, the two brothers, on the 21st instant, entered the metropolis in triumph.** So rapid were the movements, so momentous the events that were crowded into the brief space of seventeen days!

After consigning their illustrious captive to the Tower, there to be immured a prisoner, under the same walls which had so long held in thraldom her hapless consort, the royal Edward and his young brother, resting but one day in the metropolis, left it again on the 23d for Canterbury; the rebel and his lawless adherents having retired to Sandwich on hearing of the king's approach to oppose them.

Finding he had no chance of success in his wild and desperate project, Falconbridge made overtures for submission; offering to surrender up his vessels and his forces, if pardon were extended towards him. The Duke of Gloucester, ever firm to his allegiance and ever at the king's right hand ready to aid him by his courage or his counsels, saw the policy of converting into an ally so formidable and powerful a foe††—one who had at his command forty-seven ships and was at the head of 17,000 men. "Wherefore," says the chronicler, "the king sent thither his brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, to receive them in his name and all the ships;‡‡ as he so did the 26th day of the same month, (May, 1471,) the king that time being at Canterbury." This embassy brings to notice another of those unsupported charges which have been directed against and weigh so heavily upon the reputation of Richard, heaping on his devoted head every unworthy deed and suspected treachery of the king, his brother.

Falconbridge was pardoned and permitted even to depart for the feudatory demesnes of the House of Neville, in the north; but in the Michaelmas following, it appears that he was put to death and "his head set on London Bridge looking into Kentward."§§

This act has been fixed as a stigma on the Duke of Gloucester, because, in the month of May, by command of the king, he bore to the rebels his sovereign's forgiveness; and in the September following, no doubt for some fresh delinquency, enforced the subsequent order for his execution in the north. No consideration has been bestowed on the length of time which

* Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 75.
† Hab. Ed. IV., p. 101.
‡ Bayley's Hist. of the Tower, vol. iv. p. 329.
§ Fleetwood, p. 32.
‖ Ibid.
¶ Ibid.
** Fleetwood, p. 32.
†† Ibid. p. 33.
‡‡ Ibid. p. 39.
§§ Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 82.

elapsed between the two decrees; neither has another point ever been noticed, namely, the utter absence of all power possessed by the prince to nullify any after and requisite severity of the reigning monarch, as to cancel the mandate which was decided upon by the king and his council. If perjury was exercised towards Falconbridge, it rests with King Edward, and not with an agent so powerless as regards actual authority as was his young brother.

Some light is thrown on this matter by the Paston Correspondence, in which passages occur clearly implying that King Edward was the aggrieved party, and not his rebellious and unworthy kinsman,* whose pardon was followed up by such special marks of favour, as thoroughly to controvert the long-received tradition of perfidious cruelty, imputed chiefly, and most unwarrantably, to Richard, Duke of Gloucester. "Falconbridge," says Sir John Fenn,† "after he had submitted, was not only pardoned, but knighted and again appointed vice-admiral. This happened in May, 1471, but was of short continuance; for between the 13th and 29th of September following, he was beheaded, though whether for a fresh crime or not, is uncertain." Here is evidence—derived from a cotemporary source—which is utterly at variance with the hearsay reports of later times: and when the conduct of Falconbridge is considered,—that he was "a man of loose character," the leader of "mischievous persons,"‡ and that consideration is bestowed, likewise, on the desperate spirit that marked every branch of the proud, unbending and restless Nevilles,—little doubt can remain of some fresh crime having been committed, some rebellious feeling manifested by the same delinquent who was pardoned in the spring of the year in Kent, but afterwards beheaded in the autumn of the same year in Yorkshire.§ The distant period, indeed, of his execution itself removes all just charge of participation in the act from the Duke of Gloucester, who, by the records of the time, is only named, in the first instance, as the bearer of a general amnesty from his sovereign to the rebels, because, as stated by Habington, "his wisdom and valour had wrought him high in the opinion of the king."

Can it be reasonably doubted, then, that the same qualifications induced Edward to dispatch Gloucester to the north, if any fresh rise was threatened, or new conspiracy discovered, in one to whom so much lenity had been shown, but who was now to receive condemnation at his hands through the medium of the same agent, the high constable of England, if abuse of that pardon so recently bestowed had now rendered him unworthy of further consideration?

During the interval, however, which elapsed between the battle of Tewkesbury and the quelling of the insurrection of Falconbridge at Sandwich, an event occurred of far darker import—that, indeed, which, with one exception, has contributed, more than all others, to sully the reputation of the Duke of Gloucester and which has handed down his name with horror and detestation to posterity: this event is the mysterious death of the unhappy and care-worn Henry VI.

The decease of this monarch, like that of many of his royal predecessors, and, indeed, of almost every public character of those direful times, was alleged to have been accelerated by violence. The poisoned bowl, the secret assassin, or the more cool and calculating murderer, is each by turn brought forward to account for the death of every remarkable person that flourished in this or the preceding century. Necromancy and magic were

* Falconbridge was first cousin to King Edward, and own nephew (although ignobly born) to the Lady Cecily, being the natural son of her second brother.
† Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 75.
‡ Ibid.
§ Wark. Chron., p. 20.

fitting accompaniments to these dark times; and superstition cast a veil over the whole by spreading reports and inducing belief in tales unworthy the notice of history, as incompatible both with the laws of nature and of reason.

On how much or how little truth the reports of these violent deaths generally are founded, it is, at this distant period, utterly impossible to ascertain; but the lawless spirit of the age, it must be acknowledged, admits of little doubt as regards the greater proportion of them, and, perhaps, of none more so than that at present under consideration.

On the morning after King Edward the Fourth's triumphant entry into the metropolis, Henry VI., his meek and suffering rival, was found lifeless in the Tower; and towards the close of the same day—that which preceded the departure of the victorious monarch into Kent—the corpse of Henry of Lancaster, "upon a bier, and about the bier more glaives and staves than torches,"* was brought from the Tower to St. Paul's, and there publicly exposed to view preparatory to being conveyed to Chertsey for interment.

There were too many political motives for the expediency of the royal captive's death, not to favour the suspicion that it was hastened by violence; and a very cursory view of the leading crimes and miseries of those fearful times will show that political expediency was, in fact, the foundation of almost all the dark and daring deeds that sullied that degenerate era. Every malevolent and ireful feeling was doubtless rekindled in Edward's heart, by the attempt of Falconbridge† to release the Lancastrian monarch; and also by his setting‡ fire to the metropolis. To the ill-timed insurrection, then, of this daring character, there is strong reason to conclude may, at least in a great degree, be ascribed the sudden and premature death of Henry VI. Warwick, the king-maker, was slain, and Margaret of Anjou was a prisoner and childless; the young Prince of Wales was numbered with the dead, and the ex-king himself was not only in close confinement, but alike incapable of active measures, whether in mind or body. Yet Falconbridge had proved, within eight days of the battle of Barnet, and almost before Warwick's unquiet spirit rested in the silent tomb, that the daring temperament of this mighty chief yet lived in his kinsman, and that King Henry's name alone was sufficient to render Edward's throne unstable.§

The vindictive feeling which influenced this sovereign's military conduct to those opponents who thwarted his views or opposed his ambition, when coupled with such palpable cause for indignation,‖ affords the strongest ground for believing that the death of his unhappy rival was a matter previously determined upon by the Yorkist monarch, even if, as was alleged, nature, worn-out and exhausted, had really anticipated the decree by a tranquil and natural dissolution.¶

* Cott. MSS., Vitell. A. xvi. fol. 133.

† "So that, right in a short time, the said bastard and his fellowship had assembled to the number of xvj or xvij ᴍ men, as they accounted themselves. Which came afore London the xij day of May, in the quarrel of King Henry, whom they said they would have out of the Tower of London, as they pretended."—*Fleetwood's Chron.*, p. 334.

‡ In "three places were fires burning all at once."—*Ibid.*, p 37.

§ "The commons entering thus upon every slight invitation into rebellion, when the preservation of King Henry was but mentioned, made the king begin to consider how dangerous his life was to the state, and that his death would disarm even the hope of his faction for ever reflecting more upon the wars."—*Habington*, p. 103.

‖ "Wherefore the bastard loosed his guns into the city, and burnt at Aldgate and at London Bridge; for the which burning the commons of London were sore wroth and greatly moved against them; for and they had not burnt, the commons of the city would have let them in, maugre of the Lord Scale's head, the mayor and all his brethren."—*Warkworth's Chron.*, p. 19.

¶ Fleet. Chron., p. 38.

But the fate of the hapless Henry—whatever it may have been—and the character and policy of the ruthless Edward, are not subjects for discussion in these pages; it is the part which is said to have been acted by Richard, Duke of Gloucester, to which attention is to be directed, he having been unsparingly vilified as the actual murderer of the inoffensive monarch, without any one single document being extant to warrant the imputation, or even to afford reasonable ground of belief for so hateful, indeed, so altogether unnecessary, a crime.

It is not, as was before observed, by reference to later chroniclers, or from the positive assertions of after ages, that this important question should be tried; because in this case, as in the reputed massacre by Gloucester, of Edward, Prince of Wales, the implication, commencing at first with the ambiguous terms "it is said," or "as the fame ranne," and ending, at last, in decided and positive assertion of the fact, can be gradually and clearly traced. Much as these inaccuracies in our national annals are to be deplored, yet it is an evil well known and acknowledged; and so imperfect and contradictory are the statements, as relates to this period of history, by such as are termed the "Tudor historians," that on many matters of vast import scarcely two agree, from the mania that prevailed of inserting mere hearsay evidence, and thus adding, without competent authority, to the original manuscripts from which they professed to copy.

It is from annalists who were living at the period when the event occurred that the truth can alone be elicited, and these resolve themselves into three: viz., the two small fragments already quoted, under the title of Fleetwood's and Warkworth's Narrative, and the able ecclesiastical historian, the Chronicler of Croyland. These three writers penned the events which they record before the persecuted Henry for his piety and moral virtues was looked upon by the multitude as a martyr, and sought to be canonized as a saint, and also before Richard III., for the indulgence of political spleen, was held up to unqualified execration, alike to gratify the reigning sovereign as to extenuate his seizure of the crown. The statements of these three coeval writers are as follows:—The Yorkist narrative, after detailing the imprisonment of Queen Margaret, the death of the young prince and the total discomfiture of the Lancastrians, thus describes the death of the unhappy monarch:—"The certainty of all which came to the knowledge of the said Henry, late called king, being in the Tower of London: not having afore that knowledge of the said matters, he took it to so great despite, ire and indignation, that of pure melancholy he died, the 23d day of the month of May."*

Now nothing could be more probable than such a result, considering the revulsion of fortune which had agitated the infirm and feeble monarch† during the recent six months; the more so when it is also remembered, that throughout the vicissitudes of his troubled life, affection to his wife and love for his child were leading features in his amiable character, and amongst the earliest indications which he gave on a former occasion of returning reason after months of hopeless and distressing imbecility.

But, plausible as is the account just narrated of his decease, the circumstance of his being discovered dead on the only day that King Edward was in London,‡ united to the fact of that monarch having so recently placed Henry in a position of such peril at Barnet that his preservation seemed little less than miraculous,§ and of his having written to the Duke of Clarence (even when uncertain of the result of that engagement) "to keep

* Fleet. Chron., p. 38.

† See Appendix Y.

‡ "The king, incontinent after his coming to London, tarried but one day, and went with his whole army after his said traitors into Kent."—*Fleet. Chronicle*, p. 38.

§ Warkworth, p. 17.

King Henry out of sanctuary,"* affords, to say the least, more than ordinary ground of suspicion that the death of the captive sovereign was hastened by unfair and violent means. It also induces strong presumptive proof that the Lancastrian account, thus related by Warkworth, approaches nearest to the truth:—"And the same night," says that writer, "that King Edward came to London, King Henry, being inward in prison in the Tower of London, was put to death, the 21st day of May, on a Tuesday night, betwixt 11 and 12 of the clock."†

The extraordinary minuteness with which the murder is here described renders this opposite account almost as suspicious as did the entire suppression by the Yorkist chronicler of the popular reports connected with the suspected murder, unless, indeed, Dr. Habington's clear and explicit statement in his Life of King Edward IV. is received as the true version of this mysterious event, in which case the discrepancies of the opposing chroniclers may be completely reconciled. "It was, therefore, resolved in King Edward's cabinet council, that to take away all title from future insurrections, King Henry should be sacrificed."‡ This resolution, incredible as it appears, would hardly have been asserted by the biographer of the Yorkist monarch, unless he had positive proof of an accusation so prejudicial to the character of Edward IV.

But, however well authenticated the fact, such an avowal would have been very unsafe in an acknowledged follower of the House of York§ during the life of King Edward, although it was imperative on him and the cotemporary writers to furnish some cause for the sudden death of Henry VI. Hence the specious account given in Fleetwood's Chronicle of this appalling act; hence the veil scrupulously drawn over the harrowing facts which Warkworth, uninfluenced by fear of the populace, and unrestrained by the patronage of the king, so minutely details: for it can scarcely be imagined, excepting it had been a decree of the state, that any individual but the actual assassin could be in possession of such accurate information as that above given by the Lancastrian chronicler; nor does it seem natural that, if in possession of the entire truth, he should in a mere private diary, have disclosed so much, and yet have withheld the name of the murderer, unless, indeed, he knew it to have been commanded by the king himself.‖ Here the additional evidence of the third cotemporary, the prior of Croyland, becomes most important; for his description not only confirms the fact of Henry's death having been accelerated by violence, but his guarded expression gives but too much ground for believing that he considered it was the act of King Edward. "During this interval of time," he says, "the body of King Henry was found lifeless in the Tower: may God pardon and give time for repentance to that man, whoever he was, that dared to lay his sacrilegious

* Leland, Collect., vol. ii. p. 108.

† Warkworth, p. 21. ‡ Habington, p. 103.

§ The author of Fleetwood's Chronicle says of himself, that he was a servant of Edward IV., and that he "presently saw in effect a great part of his exployes, and the residewe knew by true relation of them that were present at every tyme."—Page 1.

‖ From such a source there might have arisen danger in an alleged imputation; but as regards the Duke of Gloucester, he was far too powerless at this time for such a matter to have been concealed, if he perpetrated it so publicly and undisguisedly as to be known in all its particulars to the principal of a college at Cambridge; for the learned doctor, the author of the above-quoted chronicle, was no courtier, no statesman, but the quiet, unpretending, but studious master of St. Peter's College, Cambridge, from 1473 to 1478.—See Introduction to his Diary, by J. O. Halliwell, Esq., p. xxi.

hands upon the Lord's anointed! The *doer* may obtain the name of a tyrant; the *sufferer*, of a glorious martyr."*

Surely the very circumstance of the prominent actors being brought into such juxtaposition would show that the learned ecclesiastic alluded to the rival monarchs themselves, designating one as the "tyrant," the other as the "glorious martyr."

But this able writer, though evidently favouring the belief of foul treatment to the helpless captive, gives no opening whatever for imputing the murder to Richard, Duke of Gloucester; neither can any such accusation be gathered from the other two chroniclers, or from Habington's admission of the horrible fact. This latter historian, indeed, although generally inimical to Gloucester, bestows great pains in showing the utter improbability of his being, in any way, connected with the transaction. "For however some, either to clear the memory of the king, or by after cruelties, guessing at precedents, will have this murder to be the sole act of the Duke of Gloucester, I cannot believe a man so cunning in declining envy, and winning honour to his name, would have taken such a business of his own counsel, and executed it with his own hands; neither did this concern Gloucester so particularly as to engage him alone in the cruelty, nor was the king so scrupulous, having commanded more unnecessary slaughters, and from his youth been never any stranger to such executions."†

Srong language this for the biographer of Edward IV., the more so as it was penned long after Richard's political enemies had distinctly charged him with the crime, and that Shakspeare‡ had made his perpetration of the murder the subject of two of the most powerful scenes in his tragedies of Henry VI. and Richard III.§ A passage in Warkworth,‖ which, if rightly interpreted, is altogether unconnected with King Henry's death, will probably explain the origin of this crime having been laid to the charge of the Duke of Gloucester. After describing the murder in the words recently quoted, he adds, "being then at the Tower, the Duke of Gloucester, brother to King Edward, and many other."¶ But why was Richard there? and who were the "many other" then at the Tower? No less illustrious personages than the whole of the royal family, the court, and the council** who are said to have decreed King Henry's murder! Fleetwood's Chronicle—written,

* Chron. Croyl., p. 557. † Habington, p. 103.

‡ See Courtenay's Commentaries, vol. ii. p. 72.

§ See Third Part of Henry VI., Act V., Scene VI.; and Richard III., Act I., Scene II.

‖ Leland, in his Collectanea, published at the commencement of the 16th century, quoted extensively from Warkworth's Chronicle. He narrated the circumstances of Henry's death as detailed in that manuscript, and inserted the passage here alluded to.—See *Lel. Collect.*, vol. ii. p. 507. Now Leland was cotemporary with Polydore Virgil, Sir Thomas More, Hall and other writers unfriendly to Richard's memory; and his works were published at the precise period that report began to implicate Richard of Gloucester as the murderer of Henry VI. The circumstance, therefore, of this prince being named in a coeval manuscript as at the Tower, where the monarch was discovered lifeless, afforded a fair ground for his enemies to assert as a fact that which had hitherto been reported without a shadow of proof.

¶ "And the same night that King Edward came to London, King Henry, being inward in prison in the Tower of London, was put to death, the 21st day of May, on a Tuesday night, betwixt eleven and twelve of the clock, being then at the Tower the Duke of Gloucester, brother to King Edward, and many other; and on the morrow he was chested and brought to Paul's, and his face open that every man might see him."—*Wark. Chron.*, p. 21.

** "The Lord Scales," more properly designated in Fleetwood's Chronicle as the Lord Rivers, from his having succeeded to his father's title before this insurrection, "and divers other of King Edward's council that were in London."—*Warkworth*, p. 20.

be it remembered, upon the spot, immediately after the events to which it relates, by some person possessed of full means of knowledge*—affords this important information:—"Over came from London," he states, when narrating the particulars of Falconbridge's insurrection, "fresh tidings to the king from the lords and the citizens, which with great instance moved the king in all possible haste to approach and come to the city to the defence of the queen, then being in the Tower of London, my lord prince and my ladies his daughters, and of the lords, and of the city, which, as they all wrote, was likely to stand in the greatest jeopardy that ever they stood."†

If King Edward, as is known to be the case, rested in London but one clear day;‡ if his royal consort, his infant progeny, and trusty friends were so perilously situated that he was summoned instantly to their aid, and felt it necessary to dispatch "a chosen fellowship out of his host afore his coming, to the number of xv^{c}. men, well besene for the comfort of the queen," can it be doubted that the Tower of London, in which she was abiding, would be the place to which King Edward would naturally direct his own footsteps: and that, limited to a few hours, wherein to recruit his strength, to dispense rewards to his faithful citizens,§ and to arrange his movements prior to marching into Kent the following day, the national fortress, where the queen and the court were assembled, would be the abiding place of Edward IV., although it might have been hazardous to couple his name more closely with so suspicious and revolting a transaction as the murder of Henry VI? The Tower of London was not, at this period, merely a state prison; it was the metropolitan palace,‖ the ordinary residence of our monarchs at periods of insurrection and danger:¶ and King Edward IV. is most particularly instanced as holding his court here with truly regal splendour, and as choosing it for the abode of his royal consort, during the memorable events that led to their painful separation.**

The Duke of Gloucester appears at this period to have had no distinct resi-

* Bruce's Introd., p. 5. † Fleet. Chron., p. 34.

‡ There is a slight discrepancy as to date in the Yorkist and Lancastrian chroniclers; Fleetwood fixing the date of King Henry's death on the 23d May, Warkworth on the 22d. But as both these writers agree that Edward remained in London but one clear day, the which was the festival of the Ascension, and that the unhappy monarch was found lifeless at the dawn, and exhibited as dead to the populace at St. Paul's towards the close of the same holy festival, the inaccuracy can only be ascribed to the carelessness, as regards dates, which characterized those early chroniclers; for Fabyan, who is very accurate respecting matters which occurred in London, corroborates the assertion of Warkworth, that the corpse of Henry VI. was exhibited to public view at St. Paul's on Ascension eve. The Croyland continuator gives no distinct date; but the commencement of his mysterious and ambiguous account —"I *forbear* to say that at this time the body of King Henry the VI. was found lifeless in the Tower,"—strengthens considerably the inference that his forbearance had reference to Edward IV.

§ "On the morrow that the king was come to London, for the good service that London had done him, he made knights of the aldermen Sir John Stokston, Sir Ranf Verney, Sir Richard Lee, Sir John Young, Sir Wm. Tayliow, Sir Geo. Ireland, Sir John Stoker, Sir Matthew Philip, Sir Wm. Hampton, Sir Thos. Stalbroke, Sir John Crosby, Sir Thomas Urswicke, recorder of London."—*Warkworth*, p. 21.

‖ "The buildings of the palace were then in a perfect state, and frequently inhabited by the royal family."—*Bayley's Hist. Tower*, Part I. p. 262.

¶ "During the insurrection of Wat Tyler, King Richard II. took refuge here with all his court, and the principal nobility and gentry, to the amount of 600 persons."—*Brayley's Londoniana*, vol. i. p. 94.

** "Edward IV. frequently kept his court in the tower with great magnificence; and in 1470, during the temporary subversion of his power, it formed the chief residence of his queen."—*Bray. Lond.*, vol. i. p. 94.

dence in the metropolis, but to have been altogether domesticated with King Edward and his court, both prior to his exile and up to that monarch's restoration to the throne.* Consequently there was nothing remarkable in the young prince being associated with the rest of the royal family at the Tower during the solitary day in which he halted in town, prior to marching into Kent on the "morrow,"† to aid his royal brother in quelling the revolt that had so suddenly called them from the west. Nay, the very safeguard of the queen and her infants, the security of the king and his council, would point it out as the place, under any circumstances, which would naturally have been appropriated to Gloucester and a chosen band of faithful followers, apart from every political plot or scheme secretly devised by Edward IV.

There is also another and an important circumstance which ought not to be overlooked. Richard of Gloucester had no command within the Tower, no power over its inmates: so far from it, the governorship was held at that period by the Lord Rivers;‡ and owing to the jealousy which existed between the queen's connections and the king's family, the Duke of Gloucester had perhaps even less means of access to the royal prisoner than the "many other," whoever they might be, who are named by Warkworth as "being then at the Tower" in conjunction with himself; setting aside the publicity that must have been given to any forcible or violent intruders upon the imprisoned monarch, by reason of his being personally attended by two esquires,§ Robert Ratcliffe and William Sayer, there placed with eleven other attendants equally to guard so important a captive, as ostensibly to pay him the respect which was due to his former regal state.

King Edward, indeed, was deeply interested in the death of Henry VI., for the Lancastrian monarch alone stood between him and undisputed possession of the sceptre of England.‖ Not so his young brother of Gloucester: the one had almost regained the object of his ambition; the other had only just entered upon his public career. In addition to this, since King Edward's expulsion from the throne, Richard was altogether removed from succession to the crown, a direct male heir to the house of which he was the youngest member having been borne to King Edward during his brief exile in Burgundy.

Thus the ambitious views which made later writers ascribe the murder to Gloucester, arising from the prejudice which attached to him in consequence of subsequent events, indicate most clearly that this prince was judged of in this matter rather by the odium that attached to Richard III. in his character as a king, than from any reports cotemporary with his career as Duke of Gloucester.

In short, the accusations against this prince do not rest upon any imputation

* See various brief but conclusive notices in Hearne's Fragment, the Paston Correspondence, and other cotemporary sources.

† Wark. Chron., p. 21.

‡ "The Earl Rivers, that was with the queen in the Tower of London."—*Fleetwood's Chron.*, p. 37.

§ Fœdera, pp. 212, 213.

‖ "But that the world might not suspect King Henry lived still, and thereupon lean to new designs, he was no sooner dead, but with show of funeral rites, his body was brought into St. Paul's church, where, upon Ascension day, his face uncovered, he was exposed to the curiosity of every eye. For the king was resolved rather to endure the scandal of his murder, than to hazard the question of his life, which continually gave life to new seditions."—*Habington's Edward IV.*, p. 104.

The above recital, in all its minuteness, is confirmed by the three cotemporary chroniclers; and Fleetwood strengthens the surmise of the king's co-operation in the murder by expressly stating that his funeral obsequies were solemnized under the direction and by the express command of Edward IV.—*Fleetwood*, p. 38.

of the unhallowed deed propagated at the time by cotemporary writers, or upon any substantial basis on which to fix the accusation, beyond this simple fact, that he, in common with "many other" were then at the Tower: but this fact, as justly observed by Mr. Courtenay, "affords no proof of the murder."*

Rous, the earliest historian that propagates the rumour of the crime being attributed to the Duke of Gloucester, writes evidently in entire ignorance of the circumstance. "He killed by others," he states, "or, as many believe, with his own hand, that most sacred man King Henry VI."† But it should be remembered that Rous wrote his work for a Lancastrian prince, the very monarch who vanquished Richard III., and who sought to canonize the king whom Gloucester's enemies had accused him of murdering. Fabyan speaks less vaguely of the popular report: but let it not be forgotten that his chronicle was not published until upwards of thirty years after the events in question, and most probably was not even compiled until prejudice had long held the ascendant, so far as relates to the circumstance under consideration. Yet even Fabyan, who was termed the "city chronicler," from his intimate acquaintance with matters occurring in London, where he lived and held office under Henry VII.,—even he, the father of the Tudor chroniclers, goes no farther than to say, "that of the death of the prince (Henry VI.) divers tales were told, but the most common fame went that he was stikked with a dagger by the hands of Richard of Gloucester."‡ "Common fame," as even the most unreflecting must admit, is no evidence of guilt: yet a bad name, once acquired, is an apology for every imputation; and there can be no doubt but that Richard's alleged agency in this odious transaction was laid to his charge, both by Fabyan and later writers, more in consequence of the impression which they had received of him after death had closed his brief career, than from any authenticated deed that could tarnish the honour or detract from the nobleness of the youthful career of Richard, Duke of Gloucester.

Polydore Virgil, who is the next historian in chronological order to Fabyan, only certifies, when repeating the tale, that "the common report" implicated the Duke of Gloucester. Philip de Comines adds but little to confirm this in prefacing the same report by the words, "if what was told me be true:" and the MS. London Chronicle, preserved in the Cotton. MSS., expressly adds, that "how he was dead, nobody knew."§

In all these quotations no one single allegation is brought home to the young prince beyond that of mere suspicion; and even this, unsatisfactory as it is, implies merely that suspicion rested on him, rather from his known fidelity to his brother and attachment to his cause, than from any alleged malignity of purpose either covertly or openly pursued by Richard towards the rival of the line of York.‖ The probable truth seems to have been given by Habington in his before-mentioned history of King Edward (whence an extract has recently been given), who sums up his narrative by saying that "the death of King Henry was acted in the dark, so that it cannot be affirmed

* Courtenay's Commentaries, vol. ii. p. 54.
† Hist. Reg. Ang., p. 215.
‡ Fabyan, p. 662.
§ Cotton. MSS., Vitell A. xvi. fol. 133.
‖ "Poor King Henry VI.," observes Holinshed, (who copied Hall, the follower of Polydore Virgil, and was the authority selected by Shakspeare for his historical plays,) "a little before deprived (as we have heard) of his realm and imperial crown, was now in the Tower, despoiled of his life by Richard, Duke of Gloucester, (as the constant fame ran) who to the intent that his brother Edward might reign in more surety, murdered the King Henry with a dagger."—*Holing. Chron.*, p. 324.

who was the executioner; only it is probable it was a resolution of the state;* the care of the king's safety and the public quiet in some sort making it, however cruel, yet necessary." This view is farther confirmed by two very early MSS.† quoted by the editor of Warkworth's Chronicle;‡ and is also adopted, to a certain degree, at least, by all historians whose works are based, not on hearsay or traditional evidence, but upon a full and impartial examination of original documents. It is from reasonings such as these that the truth can alone be elicited. Difference of opinion has existed from the time when doubts were first hazarded by Sir George Buck to that in which they were so ingeniously followed up by Lord Orford;§ and from the remote and turbulent period in which Richard III. flourished, many points of his history must still rest upon reasoning and conjecture alone. Not a few particulars, however, which in the time of Buck and Walpole were matters of mere speculation, have since been distinctly verified; and in spite of the opposition of Kennet to Buck, and of that of Hume to Lord Orford, together with the host of adversaries who violently opposed the views of this last most strenuous defender of King Richard, several very startling opinions, advanced both by Buck and Horace Walpole, have since been substantiated by examination of the public records‖ of those times; and from annalists whose manuscript diaries were wholly unknown to the above-mentioned writers, and have only very recently been published. These latter works, considering that the greater proportion were not designed for the public eye, and that they have remained in MS. until within the last few years, are far truer guides than those chroniclers¶ who made their elaborate narratives the vehicle of their own prejudices rather than the means of perpetuating the truth.

Let every cotemporary writer be investigated, as also the source examined whence later historians have drawn their conclusions, and it must be apparent that no proof, presumptive or circumstantial, can be adduced to fix the murder of Henry VI., or that of his young and gallant heir, on the Duke of

* Life of Edw. IV., p. 104.
† Sloane MSS., 3479, fol. 6; Arundel MSS., 325, fol. 28.
‡ See Introduction, note to p. xvii.
§ In perusing Walpole's "Historic Doubts," it is indispensable to take into consideration the prejudice and preconceived opinions with which he had to combat. The conviction of this, as he himself says in the supplement to his work, was the cause of his bestowing the appellation "Historic Doubts" on his first Essay; hoping that some able writer would take up the subject, so as to prevent the reign of Richard III. from disgracing our annals, by an intrusion of childish improbabilities that place that reign on a level with the story of "Jack the Giant-killer." Buck was the first historian who wrote in defence of Richard; he was hence called a lover of paradoxes, and certainly he injured his cause by seeking to palliate the monarch's imputed crimes by parallel instances. But Sir George Buck agrees with Philip de Comines, and with the rolls of Parliament; and the research which has of late years been made into our ancient records, state papers and parliamentary history, places Buck's history in a far more credible light than would have been allowed to it some years since, and fixes both him and Lord Orford as higher authority than those historians who wrote professedly to please the Tudor dynasty.—See *Walpole's Supplement* to his *Historic Doubts*, pp. 185. 194; also his Reply to Hume, to Dr. Masters, and to the learned Dean Mills, published in Lord Orford's works, vol. ii. p. 215.
‖ See Appendix Z.
¶ Mr. Bruce, in his Introduction to Fleetwood's Chronicle, (p. v.,) after stating that the original MS. was adopted by Edward IV. as an accurate relation of his achievements, adds, "All the other narratives either emanated from partisans of the adverse faction, or were written after the subsequent triumph of the House of Lancaster; when it would not have been prudent, perhaps not safe, to publish any thing which tended to relieve the Yorkists from the weight of popular odium which attached to the real or supposed crimes of their leaders."

Gloucester. The co-existent diaries, indeed, will all prove that George of Clarence was treacherous to his kindred, false to his colleagues, faithless in principle and in action. To him, however, individually, the crimes under discussion have never been imputed, scarcely, indeed, associated with his name; and why? because his evil deeds were visited by an early and violent death, and by such death he obtained pity and compassion. Richard of Gloucester, on the contrary, faithful in conduct, firm in allegiance, consistent, upright, honourable, is selected as the victim to bear each and every crime that resulted from the unnatural dissensions, the unrestrained ambition, or the restless jealousy of his elder brothers: and, were it not that among the many brief and transient notices of this troubled period some few recently discovered documents act as beacons to illuminate the almost impenetrable obscurity in which their lives are involved, the last monarch of the Plantagenet race might have remained a monument equally of moral turpitude as of unnatural personal deformity. Fortunately, however, for this much-maligned prince, the honour of our national representatives is concerned in the refutation of both charges; for it can scarcely be supposed that the aristocracy of England, that her proud barons and her lordly peers, could have conveyed the thanks of the Houses of Parliament to a perjured prince, a convicted regicide, an avowed murderer—one who, although a minor in age, had been singularly exposed to temptation owing to his youth and his perilous position, but who, in spite of the errors to be expected from the inexperience of a prince of eighteen, had sufficiently distinguished himself to merit honourable notice from the king and also from the highest authorities of the state. For it appears that after Edward IV. was finally re-established on the throne, only eleven weeks from his landing as an attainted fugitive, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, in presence of "his most royal majesty, having before him his lords spiritual and temporal," received the thanks of the House of Commons, through their speaker, William Allington,* for his "knightly demeaning," and for his "constant faith," with divers other nobles and yeomen being with the king beyond the sea.†

The opinion entertained by his sovereign of his disinterested conduct will be most effectually portrayed in the words of the letters patent‡ yet extant that publicly recorded these his sentiments: "The king, especially considering the gratuitous, laudable and honourable services in many wise rendered to him by his most dear brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, his propinquity in blood, his innate probity and other deserts of manners and virtues, and willing, therefore, to provide him a competent reward and remuneration, to the end that he might the better maintain his rank and the burthens incum-

* Journal of the Lord of Granthan. See Archæologia for 1836.

† It is true that the Duke of Clarence was included in the thanks voted for the "knightly demeaning of the king's brethren;" but it must not be forgotten that Clarence, by his timely defalcation, was chiefly instrumental in securing the restoration of King Edward to the throne. In addition to which, the innate jealousy of disposition which formed so leading a feature in George of Clarence would have rendered it an impolitic measure for the conduct of Richard of Gloucester to have been publicly opposed to his own, in face of the nobles and commonalty of his own country, and also of a distinguished foreigner, purposely present by invitation to be invested with regal marks of gratitude and esteem. Clarence was thanked for his "knightly demeaning;" those present knew such thanks had reference to his conduct at Barnet and Tewkesbury; but the assembled peers, the Seigneur de la Greythuse, the king, the queen, nay, the realm at large, could well distinguish between the tardy allegiance rendered by the capricious Clarence, and the "constant faith," unselfish affection, and disinterested zeal shown by Richard of Gloucester, "with other nobles and yeomen being beyond sea" with the king.

‡ By patent 4th December, 11 Edw. IV., 1471.

bent thereupon, granted to him the forfeited estates of Sir Thomas Dymoke, Sir Thomas de la Laund, John Truthall and John Davy, all of whom had been convicted of treason."* In further reward he was created lord high chamberlain of England for life, void upon the decease of the Earl of Warwick at Barnet, and invested with the manors of Middleham, Sheriff-Hutton, Penrith, and various lordships belonging to the House of Neville,† or appertaining to the estates of other nobles who were slain, or had been attainted after the battle of Barnet, or in the final contest at Tewkesbury; both which important victories the young prince had been greatly instrumental in achieving by his military skill and cool judgment, as well as by his determined bravery.

* Cottonian MSS., Julius B. xii. fol. 111.

† By patent, in July, 11 Edw. IV., 1471.

CHAPTER VII.

Distinguished position of Richard, Duke of Gloucester.—He takes the oath of allegiance to the infant Prince of Wales.—Probability of an early attachment having subsisted between Gloucester and his cousin, the Lady Anne Neville.—Betrothment of the Lady Anne to Prince Edward of Lancaster.—Gloucester seeks the hand of his cousin after the death of the young prince, and upon King Edward's restoration to the throne.—Probable date of Gloucester's marriage with the Lady Anne Neville.—He fixes his abode at Pomfret Castle on being appointed chief seneschal of the duchy of Lancaster.

Richard of Gloucester was now in the plenitude of his greatness. He had numbered scarcely nineteen years; yet had he signalized himself by his military prowess to a degree almost unprecedented, having within the brief space of three weeks, as already detailed, commanded the foremost ranks of King Edward's army in two of the most important and fiercely contested battles of that or, perhaps, any other age; the triumphant result of which was fully as much owing to his able generalship and deep policy, as to the determined bravery and undaunted courage that marked his conduct in both actions. Truly has it been said of him by his biographer Hutton,* "There are but few instances upon record of a military character rising to fame with the rapidity of Richard of Gloucester;" and with equal justice the same writer adds, "that Edward had given Richard much, but not more than he deserved:" for it has been already shown that this young prince, from his political ability,† was equally fitted to aid his brother in the affairs of civil life, as to espouse his cause with the sword; he having voluntarily mediated between King Edward and the time-serving Clarence, and having been also selected by that monarch to treat with the rebel Falconbridge; both which affairs being brought to a happy conclusion, marked, as it were, the crisis of Edward's fate.

Richard was, in truth, at this period the second personage in the kingdom; not, indeed, by order of birth, for, independent of the infant Prince of Wales, Clarence intervened between him and the monarch: but this latter prince had forfeited the respect of both factions; he first betrayed his brother, and he then perfidiously deserted his father-in-law; and however rash and turbulent the English multitude may prove when excited by great political contests, treachery in domestic life and breach of faith in public engagements will, sooner or later, be followed by the detestation even of those persons who were in the first instance benefited by the fraud.

Richard, young as he was, possessed in a strong degree, and had nobly exercised, those qualities which are peculiarly estimated by the really great—undeviating fidelity, fraternal affection, and firm, unshaken gratitude. And he gained his reward; for it is evident from the brief records that have been transmitted to posterity,‡ that he was henceforth considered fitting to be

* Hutton's Bosworth Field, p. xliv.

† "The Duke of Gloucester, whose wisdom and valour had wrought him high in the opinion of the king."—*Habington's Edw. IV.*, p. 108.

‡ Cott. MSS., Julius B. xii. fol. iii.

invested with military authority of the greatest importance, and had civil powers delegated to him that attest, beyond even the reach of calumny, the high consideration in which he was held by his sovereign and by the nation at large.

This point has been rendered more apparent by the discovery, a few years since, of a rare and very interesting relic belonging to this prince, viz., the original seal fabricated for him, at this period of his history, as Lord High Admiral of England.* The inscription that encircles this official signet proves that Richard of Gloucester was not only nominated a second time to that important office upon the death of the Earl of Warwick, who had been created admiral of England during the brief restoration of King Henry VI., but also that he was invested with the earldoms of Dorset and Somerset, which had become extinct in the Beaufort family by the death of the Duke of Somerset, to whom Gloucester was so directly opposed at Tewkesbury; with which forfeited titles he was probably rewarded in consequence of the principal share he had in the victory there obtained by Edward IV. This seal, which is delineated in the following engraving, is in the most perfect state of preservation. It represents "the admiral's ship with the mainsail filled, bearing the arms of France and England quarterly, with a label of three points ermine, each charged with a canton gules—a distinction borne by Richard as a younger branch of the Plantagenet family. On the forecastle, which is embattled and adorned with fleur de lys, stands a beacon, and under it hangs the anchor.† On the square sterncastle, which is adorned in the same manner, stands a dragon, supporting the admiral's flag with the same coat armour."‡ The inscription round the margin of the seal is as follows:—

S. Ric'i Duc' Glour' Admiralli Angl' & Com' Dors' & Soms'.

[Sigillum Ricardi Ducis Gloucestriæ Admiralli Angliæ & Comitis Dorset & Somerset.]

High, however, as was his position at King Edward's court, and dangerous as was that position to one so young, there is no one record extant, either private or public, no historical document, no cotemporary statement, to detract from the well-earned fame or to tarnish the justly acquired laurels which encircled the brow of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, before he had entered his twentieth year. In all acts of public duty, as well as in the private exercise of fraternal affection, Gloucester's name at this period is ever found conspicuous: but, by a singular coincidence, the earliest legal instrument extant that bears his signature, and in which it occupies a leaning and prominent place, is a solemn vow,§ the canceling of which in after years hurled this prince from the greatness to which he so early attained, and plunged him into the deepest abyss of popular odium. "On the 3d of July, 1471, the eleventh year of Edward IV., Gloucester, amongst other peers

* See Appendix AA.

† "The anchor-argent gorged in the arm with a coronet, and a cable through the ring, and fretted in true love's knot with the ends pendant Or, is the badge of the lorde admiral of England, as he is commander-in-chiefe over all the king's naval forces.

"The Earl of Southampton, lord high admiral in the reign of Henry VIII., used the badge of an anchor; so likewise did the Duke of Orkney, hereditary Lord High Admiral of Scotland, as his official badge. Edward, Earl of Lincoln, lord high admiral in 1556; George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, 1619; and James, Duke of York, brother to Charles II., used it as the achievement of the lord high admiral."—*Retros. Review*, 2d Series, vol. i. p. 302.

‡ Archæologia, vol. vii. p. 69.

§ Fœdera, vol. xi. p. 714.

and prelates, acknowledged Edward, Prince of Wales, eldest son of King Edward IV., to be very and undoubted heir to our said sovereign lord, as to the crowns and realms of England and of France, and lordship of Ireland;"* and took oath that in case he survived the king, his father, he would "take and accept him for very and righteous king of England."† How far subsequent events led Richard to tread in the dangerous path that afforded to his view a tempting prospect as leading to that crown, the eager desire of possessing which had proved the destruction equally of his father as of his grandsire, it is not here the fitting time to inquire; but the oath of allegiance taken by the Duke of Gloucester to his infant nephew, on his being created "Prince of Wales," immediately after King Edward's re-assumption of his sovereign power, affords proof that the uncontrollable ambition which has led later writers to ascribe wholly to the Duke of Gloucester the murder of Prince Edward of Lancaster, and of his parent, King Henry VI., as paving his way to the throne, is as entirely without foundation as the acts themselves have been shown to be unjustifiably attributed to him in the absence of all positive proof, or even rational traditionary evidence.

"What's in a name?" is a question that has been mooted by many a philosophical reasoner; Richard of Gloucester is at least a proof that an ill name extinguishes all belief in the possibility of a single good or redeeming quality. There is scarcely a reign in the annals of English history which exhibits so remarkable an instance of the uncertain tenure of popular favour as that of Richard III.; and a few private lives afford instances of such striking contrasts as may be deduced from the extraordinary incidents of his career, while he was yet a prince, and after he assumed the regal diadem. Gloucester, however, was far from being so devoid of the kindlier feelings of human nature, or so callous to warm and affectionate sympathies, as he has hitherto and is indeed invariably represented: and at the very time when he was exerting almost superhuman powers in defence and in support of his brother's life and royal prerogative, there is ground, from subsequent results, for believing that he had a twofold purpose in view; the recovery of the realm for King Edward, and the rendering himself worthy the possession of the early object of his chivalric and youthful attachment, in case a change in the aspect of the times should render void the betrothment of the Lady Anne Neville to the princely young Edward of Lancaster. In a preceding chapter it has been shown that there are strong reasons for supposing that Richard, when emerging from childhood, was placed under the military guardianship of his mother's nephew, the renowned Earl of Warwick; and that he remained altogether under his control for some years. The ambition also of that powerful chieftain, added to the custom that prevailed at the period under consideration of family intermarriages and infantine betrothments, adds weight to the inference previously suggested, that the Duke of Gloucester early fixed his affection on Warwick's younger daughter, and was in all likelihood encouraged by her aspiring parent to consider her as his future bride.

She was sufficiently young‡ on his return from Utrecht, to have been the playmate and companion of his boyish years; yet it seems, from her evident superiority, either of mind or person, made known by Sir George Buck,§

* The kings of England were simply styled "lords of Ireland" until the reign of King Henry VIII., when that monarch was declared "king of Ireland" by the states of that realm assembled in Parliament.—*Camden's Brit.*, vol. ii. p. 1300.

† See Appendix BB. for Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 227.

‡ The Lady Anne Neville was two years younger than her cousin, the young Duke of Gloucester; she was born at Warwick Castle in the year 1454; Richard, as already stated, in October, 1452.

§ Buck's Richard III., lib. i. p. 8.

under the quaint expression, "Anne, although the younger sister was the better woman," she was likely to have made a strong impression on the young prince, before the expiration of that probationary period when he passed from boyhood to man's estate.

That the Lady Anne Neville and her cousin of Gloucester were thus intimately associated in childhood rests not on mere surmise, but is proved, in one very striking instance, on the testimony of a narrative of historical value appended to Leland's* Collectanea, the genuineness of the authorities connected with which have never been disputed. The circumstance here alluded to is the appearance in public of the youthful co-heiresses of the Earl of Warwick with their royal kinsman, the young Duke of Gloucester, at the costly feast which celebrated the installation, as Archbishop of York, of their uncle, George Neville, Lord Chancellor of England.† That Richard came there with Warwick's family as a visitor to the archbishop's palace, and not in state as a prince of the blood royal, is inferred from his extreme youth, and from no mention being made of any other near members of the reigning family: likewise because his young cousins, as if in compliment to the youthful prince, were placed in a more honourable position than they would otherwise have been entitled to occupy; "sitting in the chief chamber," with the king's brother, although the name of their mother, the Countess of Warwick, occurs with "the estates sitting in the second chamber."‡

Here, then, positive proof appears of their intimacy in childhood; and presumptive proof also of a more marked association, at a great public ceremony, than was warranted by their rank, or justified by the ties of consanguinity that connected "the Lord of Warwick's daughters" with "the king's brother;" unless, indeed, some project was entertained of one of them being affianced to him.

In tracing the early career of kings and princes who flourished at a distant period, the materials of their biography become more and more concise, as length of time separates their era from that enlightened age in which the art

* John Leland, the learned historian, was chaplain and librarian to King Henry VIII., who appointed him his antiquary, with a commission to examine all the libraries of the cathedrals, abbeys, colleges and priories throughout the realm. He spent six years in travelling through the kingdom, and was the means of rescuing an infinity of valuable records from oblivion and destruction. His Collectanea and Itinerary, published by Hearne, the MSS. of which are preserved in the Bodleian Library, have afforded most copious materials of antiquity, biography and history to succeeding writers.—See *Huddesford's Life of Leland*, and *Granger's Biog. Hist. of England*, vol. i. p. 98.

† A very minute and curious detail of this magnificent entertainment may be found in Leland's Collectanea, copied, as it is stated, "out of an old paper roll," and entitled "The great Feast at the Enthronization of the Rev. Father in God, George Neville, Archbishop of York and Chancellor of England." The narrative first recites "the goodly provision made for the same," and then gives the names of the great officers officiating, specifying the Earl of Warwick as steward. It proceeds to describe the "estates" or order in precedency that was observed at the feast, viz.: "Estates sitting at the high table in the hall; estates sitting in the chief chamber, where, under a canopy, as prince of the blood royal, and upon the dais—a raised platform separating those entitled to such distinction from the rest of the guests—was seated the Duke of Gloucester, the king's brother; on his right hand, the Duchess of Suffolk, on his left hand the Countess of Westmoreland, and the Countess of Northumberland, and two of the Lord of Warwick's daughters."—*Leland's Collect.*, vol. ii. p. 503; vol. vi. p. 2.

‡ Proceeding forthwith to enumerate the names of the "estates sitting in the second chamber," the document then gives that of "the Countess of Warwick and others."—*Ib.*

of printing, by diminishing the manual labour attached to diffuse narrative, induced more clear and connected details. But, although remote historical notices may thus be limited in quantity, incidental or local circumstances bearing on the period, often complete the chain requisite towards establishing fair and justifiable inference. So in the present case; for the payment in the exchequer roll,* that implies Gloucester's abode under Warwick's roof in boyhood, receives corroboration from the account in Leland's Collectanea† of Warwick's family and their relative positions on the occasion of his brother's installation, since both documents correspond fully as regards date, which is a material point: the Archbishop of York having been translated to that see in June, 1465;‡ at the close of which year it was that payment for the costs and expenses incurred by the earl on behalf of the king's brother was liquidated. The feeling of attachment entertained by Warwick's daughters towards the House of York is distinctly stated by Habington in his Life of Edward IV., when, in speaking of the sentiments that influenced Isabel, Duchess of Clarence, during that monarch's expulsion from the throne, he says, "she having in her childhood, and those impressions are ever deepest, been instructed to affect the House of York, and approve its title:"§ indeed, the close intimacy which united the two families, setting aside their near relationship, is farther shown by the fact of the Lady Cecily having stood godmother for her niece, the elder of Warwick's co-heiresses.‖ But the chief evidence on this point is furnished by Sir George Buck, who quotes an ancient MS. in Sir Robert Cotton's possession,¶ and brings forward, likewise, the testimony of a cotemporary Flemish historian,** to show that Gloucester's neutral conduct on the capture of Edward, Prince of Wales, at Tewkesbury, was occasioned by deep-rooted attachment to the Lady Anne, "to whom," says the chronicler, "the duke was also very affectionate, though secretly, which he soon after demonstrated in marrying her." The affection here named must have been formed in their youthful days, for Gloucester could have had no recent opportunity of becoming attached to his cousin, since the Lady Anne is known to have resided at Calais with her mother during the troubled years that preceded King Edward's expulsion from the throne; and after her betrothment, she was placed in the hands of Margaret of Anjou, as an hostage for her father's fidelity. Richard, during the whole of that time, was altogether associated with his royal brother. He was his companion at Lynn, at Norfolk, when he escaped into Holland;†† he shared his exile in Flanders, and returned with him to England, taking a most active part in the battles that decided Warwick's fate, and which re-established King Edward on the throne. Nor let it be forgotten, as regards the statements of Sir George Buck, that Horace Walpole,‡‡ whose great aim was well-substantiated facts in Richard's career, in speaking of this historian, a full century after his decease, says that Buck "gains new credit the deeper this dark scene is fathomed;" and, also, that many of Buck's assertions having been corroborated by subsequent discoveries, leave little doubt of his authority.§§

* Issue Roll, anno 5 Edw. IV. † Leland's Collect., vol. vi. p. 3.
‡ Warkworth's Chron., p. 36.
§ Habington's Edw. IV., p. 60. ‖ Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 162.
¶ Lib. iii. p. 81. Chron. in quarto MS. apud Dom. Regis. Rob. Cotton.
** Joan Majerus, in Annal. Flandr., lib. xvii.
†† "Edward IV. embarked on the 3d October, 1470, from Lynn, accompanied only by his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, the Lord Scales, brother of the queen, the Lord Hastings his chamberlain, and a few hundred followers."—*Archæologia*, vol. xxvi. p. 263.
‡‡ Historic Doubts, p. 20. §§ Ibid. p. 129.

It is true the memorials here given are few and concise, embracing distant intervals; nevertheless, they are conclusive, and all bear very strongly on one of the most important points in Richard's mysterious career. The brief notices of the early years of this prince are indeed so scattered, and have been so distorted, that every link that helps to connect his boyish days with the acts of his manhood is invaluable to the historian; for the records of past ages not only become rare in proportion to the distance of time at which they occurred, but domestic feuds, by suppressing some facts and perverting others, add confusion to the scanty details which have happened to escape destruction. Here, however, is proof far removed from all doubt that the Lady Anne and Richard of Gloucester were intimately associated in childhood; and their marriage ultimately, in spite of their separation and the innumerable obstacles that were opposed to it from all quarters, warrants the assumption that Richard at least was early attached to his future bride, and justifies the inference, likewise, that the attachment was mutual. In addition to the facts above adduced, there are also many connecting circumstances which may be brought forward, tending to unravel the mystery which, hitherto, has seemed to attach to Gloucester's marriage with his cousin. It appears from Sandford, that Warwick began to tamper with both brothers* shortly after King Edward's marriage, but failed with the younger prince, although he succeeded in corrupting the elder; for Hall asserts that Clarence, in a conference with Warwick, swore by St. George, "if my brother of Gloucester would join me, I would make Edward know we were all one man's sons, which should be nearer to him than strangers of his wife's blood."† That Gloucester continued firm in resisting such arguments, is proved equally by his subsequent conduct, as also by that of the unsteady and irritable Clarence: but, notwithstanding the result of this "tampering" ended in the union, by marriage, of the latter prince with Warwick's eldest co-heiress, and precluded all probability of continued intercourse between Gloucester and his younger daughter, there is no proof of the actual betrothment of either of the sisters to the royal princes in childhood, although there is all but proof to show that the overbearing Warwick, aware of the attachment of both brothers to his daughters, promoted the marriage of his eldest child with the discontented Clarence as a seal to the treacherous and rebellious designs which he had successfully fomented in his young kinsman; and, also, that he discouraged all growing attachment between Gloucester and the Lady Anne, because he was unable to detach him from the interest of his royal brother, or make him the passive tool of his own mortified ambition.

If the mind could be divested of impressions which have been so long received that prejudice becomes too strong even to be shaken by facts, it could not fail to be perceived that the ruin which eventually overwhelmed the House of York, and the foundation of all the crimes imputed to Edward IV. and his brothers of Clarence and Gloucester, may be traced to this one all-absorbing passion of Warwick; a passion that made him seek to accomplish its end, first by fomenting fraternal discord, and afterwards by instilling into the minds of all three brothers every vindictive and hateful feeling that jealousy, anger and injuries received could engender in the breast of an insulted sovereign, and of young and irascible princes. With his keen-sighted sagacity of character, Warwick soon perceived the instability of Clarence, although it suited his purpose as the next male heir of the line of York to bestow upon him his eldest daughter; and circumstances are not wanting to induce the belief that he did not discourage in childhood the attachment of his other daughter

* Geneal. Hist., book v. p. 384. † Hall's Chron., p. 271.

to the more firm-minded and resolute Gloucester. But, unable to mould to his views this latter prince, who was scarcely less keen-sighted than his more experienced kinsman, he abandoned all idea of a double alliance with the ruling House of York, and kept his youngest child in reserve, as the instrument for compassing any ulterior views which his pride or ambition might suggest. It was most probably the tendency to disaffection gradually evinced by Warwick that led to Gloucester's removal from the feudatory abode of that proud chieftain, and to his being admitted at so early an age to the confidence of his royal brother; for the public association above mentioned of Richard with Warwick's co-heiresses at York occurred in the summer of 1465, when this young prince had entered his fourteenth, and the Lady Anne the twelfth year of her age; and the payment made to Warwick for Gloucester's expenses occurred at the close of the same year, that which immediately followed the king's marriage, and marked his undue and unwise elevation of the queen's kindred.

In the succeeding spring, (February, 1466,) when Richard was created a knight of the Garter, he was evidently firmly established at court, and high in favour with his royal brother; for, as already narrated, he was employed, in the ensuing month, (April, 1466,) on some mission in the north, either military or diplomatic; and is again to be found, a few months afterwards, (June, 1466,) by express command of the king, attending his father's state funeral as chief mourner, until the sovereign himself assumed that leading position at the entrance of the church where the royal remains were deposited.

From that epoch, Gloucester is constantly associated with his royal brother, both in his state progresses and on other public and political occasions, until Edward was driven from the throne by Clarence and Warwick, in October, 1470. This embraces a period of just four years; during which time the Lady Isabel was united to the Duke of Clarence, and her younger sister was betrothed to the heir of King Henry VI., which betrothment, by placing her entirely in the hands of the Lancastrian queen, must effectually have precluded all communication between the cousins: neither could Richard again have met the Lady Anne until she was the reputed "widow" of the gallant young prince, slain at the battle of Tewkesbury. By all the Tudor chroniclers she is represented as having been actually married to Edward of Lancaster; but the far more valuable testimony of cotemporary writers completely invalidates this long received and popular tradition. The error most probably arose from the degree of importance which was attached to betrothments at the period under consideration; when, indeed, they may almost be said to have constituted a portion of the marriage ceremony—so sacred was the pledge that bound the persons affianced to each other.* In the present day, the term, in its ordinary acceptation as a mere promise not binding in law, more especially when entered into, as it then was, by others, and frequently completed without even consulting the parties themselves until their consent was required, would by no means justify the view formerly entertained of its being an irrevocable and binding vow; but when considered with reference to the fifteenth century, a betrothment entered into by both parties with their full and free consent, was as binding and valid as a marriage solemnized before the church; for marriage, according to the doctrine of the ancient canon law, held good, however informally administered, provided the consent of the parties concerned was previously obtained.

Margaret of Anjou, however, well knew that if Warwick failed in his solemn pledge "on the Gospels," to restore the Lancastrian line, and which

* Sharon Turner, vol. iii. p. 457.

pledge alone made her reluctantly consent to allying her only child with the daughter of the bitterest enemy of her house, a papal dispensation could absolve her also from fulfilling, in its extreme sense, the marriage contract that was to cement by a domestic alliance her political league with the earl. When, in addition to this fact, consideration is bestowed on the deadly hatred which existed between the much-injured queen and the aspiring Warwick, and that Margaret so mistrusted her former persecutor, that, even after he had engaged to restore her husband to the throne, she so restricted his power that in the event of success he could neither dispense rewards to his companions in arms, appropriate any portion of the crown revenues on his own responsibility, or effect any permanent change in the government whatsoever, until after the arrival of herself and the prince in England,* there can exist but little doubt that the implacable consort of the insulted Henry VI.† would sanction no closer union between her youthful heir and Warwick's co-heiress —the one aged but sixteen, the other only entering his seventeenth year— than the betrothment usual at the period in which they flourished.

The binding nature of so solemn a contract fully explains the origin of that reputed marriage which all modern historians have narrated, and which gained credence possibly from the honours paid to the Lady Anne at the French court,‡ after the contract, by order of the scheming and crafty Louis XI., who had effected the treaty solely to suit his own subtle policy, and also by the conduct of the noble partisans of the House of Lancaster, who, hailing her as the accepted bride of their beloved prince, prematurely paid her the respectful deference that would have been her due as consort to the heir apparent of the throne. But no instrument exists to show that the parties were actually united by marriage.

That final ceremony, it is evident, was not designed to be solemnized until the political treaty that led to their betrothment was fully completed,—not until the Earl of Warwick had purchased the proud position which he coveted for his daughter, by restoring the crown to the line of Lancaster, and by constituting his future son-in-law Prince of Wales actually, and not merely from an empty and an attainted title.

Such is the view which appears most natural and most reasonable, when the relative position of both parties is considered, and when the importance of the result is calmly and dispassionately weighed. It is satisfactory, however, upon a point so important, that mere surmise is uncalled for, the fact itself being substantiated by the most conclusive evidence—that of a cotem-

* Harl. MSS., No. 543, fol. 168.

† Severe as were the reverses of fortune which befell the Lancastrian monarch, they were bitterly aggravated by the insults offered by Warwick to his meek and unoffending victim. After the battle of Hexham, the unhappy Henry was concealed for nearly a twelvemonth by the fidelity of his Lancastrian subjects; but being at length betrayed by a monk of Abingdon, when seated at dinner in Waddington Hall, he was conveyed to Islington, near London, where the royal captive was met by the Earl of Warwick, "who ordered by proclamation that no one should show him any respect, tied his feet to the stirrups as a prisoner, led him thrice round the pillory, and conducted him to the Tower."—*Lingard*, vol. v. p. 181. See also *Warkworth's Chron.*, p. 5; *Fœdera*, vol. xi. p. 548,

‡ The Lady Anne Neville, receiving the courtesies due to Princess of Wales by command of Louis IX., as stated by Monstrellet, (*Nouvelles Chroniques*, p. 35.) affords no proof of her marriage to Edward of Lancaster; for Elizabeth of York, the eldest daughter of King Edward IV., who was in after years affianced to the son of Louis XI., was, after the contract, invariably styled at the French court, "Madame la Dauphine."—*Sandford, Geneal. Hist.*, book v. p. 395. Yet it is well known that she was never united to this prince, Louis having perfidiously broken the contract to unite his heir to Mary of Burgundy.

porary writer, who has given a clear, minute and circumstantial detail "of the manner and guiding of the Earl of Warwick at Aungers, from the 15th day of July to the 4th day of August, 1470, which day he departed from Aungers, the French town where the contract was made."* After describing the efforts used by the insidious Louis XI. to purchase Warwick's pardon of the queen and the young prince, and detailing the difficulty which he experienced in inducing Margaret to extend forgiveness to the author of all their misery, he proceeds to narrate the particulars connected with the treaty of marriage urged upon her by the French king as the price of her political alliance with Warwick, and also the qualified assent at length extorted from her. "Touching the second point, that is, of marriage, true it is that the queen would not in anywise consent thereto," says this cotemporary writer;† "and so the queen persevered fifteen days, or she would any thing intend to the said treaty of marriage; the which finally by means and conduct of the King of France, and the councillors of the King of Sicily, being at Angers, the said marriage was agreed and promised."‡

The different articles connected with the "treatie of marryage" are then separately and distinctly given;§ after which the annalist adds this important and conclusive account of its nature and extent:—"Touching the time when the marriage shall be put in ure‖ [shall hap or happen], Item, that from thenceforth the said daughter of the Earl of Warwick shall be put and remain in the hands and keeping of Queen Margaret, and also that the *said marriage shall not be perfyted* till the Earl of Warwick had been with an army over the sea into England, and that he *had recovered the realm of England* in the most partie thereof for the King Henry." . . . "Many other points were spoken of in the *treatie* of marriage, which were over long to put in writing."

This exceedingly curious and valuable narrative is preserved among the Harleian MSS.,¶ and it is impossible that any account could be more clearly or concisely given; and its value as a cotemporary statement** is increased by its being transcribed in the handwriting of Stow, so proverbial for his accuracy and his love of truth in historical research. But the testimony most important as corroborative of the fact given by the writer above quoted, viz., that the treaty was a betrothment only and not a solemnized marriage, is the attestation of the Croyland historian, who was not merely cotemporaneous with the chronicler of Angers, but, as a doctor of the canon law, was himself in a situation above all others to discriminate accurately upon this point.

Most decisive and expressive are his words:—"To make this promise more binding," says this valuable historian, in allusion to Warwick's league with the House of Lancaster, "a marriage *was contracted* between the said prince and Anne, the youngest daughter of the Earl of Warwick; the Duke of Clarence having previously *married* Isabella, her eldest sister."* This author's testimony, as there has before been occasion to observe, is by far the highest on all matters connected with the period in which he wrote; and he was more likely to have become acquainted with the truth on this point, from his having been employed upon a mission to France, by King Edward IV. the year following, 1471—thus affording him every means of ascertaining the actual position of the respective parties: yet was he equally satisfied with the chronicler, whose circumstantial account has been given above, that the contract was simply a qualified betrothment. Throughout the entire of his narrative, the annalist at Angers term this contract "a treatie of marriage;" and no reasonable doubt can remain in the unprejudiced mind that it was a mere treaty, dependent for its ratification on the political scheme that was to ensure its ultimate fulfilment; and this, not implying the mere release of the royal captive from prison, not comprehending his nominal restoration to regal power, but, as explicitly stated by the writer, "recovering the *realm* of England in the *most partie thereof* for the King Henry;" thus enabling Anne of Warwick to carry a throne as her marriage portion, in exchange for the crown which her father's prowess was to win for her affianced consort.

This great political scheme, however, was never destined to be fulfilled. The Earl of Warwick fell at the battle of Barnet; the Lancastrian prince was slain a fortnight afterwards at Tewkesbury; and the Lady Anne, with the ill-fated Margaret of Anjou, were taken prisoners within a few days subsequent to that decisive conflict.† The bereaved queen, it is well known, was sent a captive to the Tower on the same day that marked King Edward's triumphal entry into the metropolis and the evening of which terminated the earthly career of her feeble and care-worn consort.‡ But the precise situation of Warwick's daughter is not so clearly shown, with the exception of the fact of her having been captured with Queen Margaret§ and their attendant ladies in a church adjoining the town of Tewkesbury.‖ There is no evidence, however, of her having been associated with the royal captive in the Tower:¶ but, from its being on record that within a few weeks of the fatal battle at Tewkesbury the Lady Anne was under the entire control of the Duke of Clarence, and judging from previous and corresponding precedents, it is probable that the widowed bride of the gallant heir of Lancaster, the victim equally with himself of political expediency and the tool of restless and ambitious parents, was consigned to the custody of her sister, the Duchess of Clarence,** precisely in the same manner as Cecily, Duchess of York, was

* Harl. MSS., 543, fol. 168.

† The chronicler twice alludes in his narrative to his being cotemporary with the period in which he wrote.

‡ In the Cottonian MSS. (Vesp. F. p. 32), may be found the original instrument by which the Duke de Guienne, brother to Louis XI., attests his approval of the treaty, which was made in his presence, and that of the French monarch, July 30th, 1470, at Angers. This document is very valuable, as corroborative of the statement preserved in the Harl. MSS.

§ See Appendix CC.

‖ Bailey, quoting Chaucer, defines *ure* as "fate, destiny, HAP;" and *hap*, as "fortune, chance." He also gives another definition of the word *ure*, viz., "use and custom;" and "use and custom," he adds in his second volume, "in ancient law, is the ordinary method of acting or proceeding in any case, which by length of time has obtained the force of law."—See *Bailey's Etymological Dictionary*, vols. i. and ii.

¶ It has likewise been published by Sir Henry Ellis in his Original Letters, 2d Series, vol. i. p. 132.

** Mr. Sharon Turner, who attentively examined this chronicler, considers that the writer must have been a person of eminence.—*Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 282.

* Chron. Croy., p. 553.

† Tewkesbury Chron. in Harl. MSS., 543, p. 102.

‡ Habington, p. 98.

§ "And afterwards these ladyes were taken: Queen Margaret, Prynce Edward's wyf, the secunde dowghtere of the Earl of Warwyckes, the Countesse of Devynshire, Dame Kateryne Vaux."—*Warkworth's Chron.*, p. 19.

‖ Fleetwood's Chron., p. 31.

¶ The Flemish chronicler, quoted by Sir George Buck, (lib. iii. p. 81,) and Provost, the French biographer of Queen Margaret, state that the Lady Anne was present at Prince Edward's death; but the gross errors into which the latter author has fallen—of which one instance will suffice, that of his stating Queen Margaret was in England on her husband's restoration in 1470—render his testimony of little value in doubtful points, except when he can be tested by other and more authentic writers. The Chronicle of Tewkesbury, contained in Stow's Collections, (*Harl. MSS.*, 545, p. 102,) is in all probability the most genuine and faithful record of the events of this battle.

** Leland's Collect., vol. ii. p. 495.

committed by Henry VI. to that of her sister of Buckingham, when almost similarly situated after the sacking of Ludlow. There is no doubt that she was included in the attainder that was issued against Queen Margaret and her own mother, the Countess of Warwick, together with other leading personages connected with the Lancastrian faction; and she appears to have remained a state prisoner under the charge of the Lady Isabel and Clarence during the absence of King Edward with his brother of Gloucester, when occupied in quelling the insurrection of Falconbridge.

Whatever were the sentiments entertained by Richard towards his youthful companion, and however keenly his former affection for his cousin may have revived when she was no longer withheld from him as the affianced of another, yet was he too much occupied by his military duties, too much pledged in honour to aid the king, when summoned to accompany him against the insurgents in Kent, to have either means or opportunity of making known his intentions. But the result affords fair inference for surmising that the desolate position of his orphan kinswoman was not unobserved or unheeded by Gloucester, and warrants also the supposition that his early attachment to the Lady Anne was well known to the Duke of Clarence: for, before Richard returned from Kent, and clearly in anticipation of his brother's probable conduct towards his sister-in-law, he adopted the most strenuous but extraordinary means of frustrating all communication between them—that of concealing her under the disguise of a kitchen maid. This point, however, equally with that which invalidates the previous marriage of the Lady Anne with Prince Edward of Lancaster, is better narrated in the words of cotemporary writers; because they confine themselves chiefly to such facts as come within their own knowledge and observation, and which are so indispensable towards forming a right judgment of the actual position of Richard of Gloucester and his youthful consort. "Let us now insert that dispute," says the Croyland chronicler,* "with difficulty to be appeased which happened during this Michaelmas term (1471) between the king's two brothers; for after, as is aforesaid, the son of King Henry, to whom the Lady Anne, younger daughter of the Earl of Warwick, was *betrothed*, fell in the battle of Tewkesbury, Richard, Duke of Gloucester besought that the said Anne should be given to him *to wife*, which request was repugnant to the views of his brother, the Duke of Clarence, who had previously married the earl's eldest daughter. He therefore caused the damsel to be concealed, lest it should become known to his brother where she was; fearing the division of the inheritance, which he wished to enjoy alone in right of his wife rather than undergo portion with any one. But the cunning of the said Duke of Gloucester so far prevailed, that, having discovered the maiden in the attire of a kitchen girl, in London, he caused her to be placed in the sanctuary of St. Martin's; which having been done, great discord arose between the brothers."

Concise as is this account, it embraces innumerable points that cannot be misinterpreted, excepting indeed by the prejudiced, or by such warm advocates for tradition that even truth itself fails to induce conviction in their minds. Richard must have sought his persecuted kinswoman immediately he was released from his military duties, because it appears he "had discovered her retreat" before the Michaelmas term following the battle of Tewkesbury; that is to say, between the 4th of May and the beginning of the following October. Again, he besought that the said Anne should "be given to him to wife." No merely selfish motives could have induced this request, for the Lady Anne and her mother, the Countess of Warwick, together with

* Chron. Croy., p. 557.

her deceased father, were all under a bill of attainder;* and, consequently, the riches to which she would have been entitled by birth as their co-heiress were now altogether in the gift of the king.

If, therefore, Warwick's forfeited and enormous possessions are supposed to have been the object which Gloucester alone coveted, they could have been bestowed by the monarch upon that prince, without any necessity for his taking the Lady Anne to wife; in the same manner as the lands of the attainted Cliffords† had in early boyhood been made over to him. Of this there is ample proof, for Richard had actually been already invested by his royal brother with a portion of the identical lands which he is made so exclusively to desire; as it appears "by patent, 11th July, 1471, the king, especially considering the gratuitous, laudable and honourable services rendered to him by his most dear brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and wishing to confer upon him some reward and remuneration for the same, granted to him the castles, manors,‡ and lordships of Sheriff-Hutton, county of York, which lately belonged to Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick." Neither must it be forgotten that the Duke of Gloucester was now in the fulness of power, and had so distinguished himself by his gallant bearing, and was in so high a position at King Edward's court, that so far from any advantage accruing to him from a union with his impoverished and persecuted cousin, alliances must have been open to him at foreign courts, as well as with the most wealthy subjects in his brother's kingdom; the more so as he was but in the spring time of life, and that he was already endowed with princely possessions, dignified by the highest appointments that could be bestowed upon him, and invested with almost regal authority. Moreover, let it be asked, why did Clarence "cause the damsel to be concealed," unless he suspected that the affection which had been early formed for her by Gloucester would lead him immediately to renew his vows of attachment, and incline her to listen to them? He evidently anticipated the fact, and acted upon it; for no mention is made by the chronicler of the Lady Anne's desire to be so concealed; no intimation is given of her repugnance to her cousin, or of her flying to avoid his overtures; but positive assertion is made by him that avarice—the coveting her share of riches that were her birthright, and which he trusted, perhaps, from her attainder, he should exclusively possess in right of her elder sister—alone influenced the unworthy prince, whose greedy desire for power and riches led him first to rebel against and dethrone his elder brother, and even to deprive him in his adversity of his patrimonial inheritance; and now instigated him to separate from his younger brother the object of his choice, and cruelly to persecute and degrade the unhappy victim whom he was bound by consanguinity and misfortune to protect, because as distinctly alleged by the chronicler, "he feared the division of the inheritance he wished to enjoy alone."§

What, however, was the part pursued by Richard of Gloucester—that prince who for three generations has been held up to scorn and contempt for every base, unmanly, treacherous and vindictive feeling? Let his conduct be once more contrasted with that of Clarence, who had betrayed and per-

* Anne, Countess of Warwick, sole heir to the honours and possessions of the noble Beauchamps, after the battle of Barnet, took sanctuary in Beaulieu Abbey, in Hampshire, "where she continued some time in a very mean condition, and thence privately got into the north, where she abode in great streight."—*Dugdale's Baronage*, vol. i. p. 307.

† "Much of the Cliffords' land, after the attainder of John Lord Clifford, was held by Gloucester."—*Whitaker's Craven*, p. 67.

‡ Cott. MSS., Julius B. xiii. fol. 111.

§ Chron. Croy., p. 557.

fidiously deceived every near relative and connection, and who was indebted to the very brother whom he was now injuring for his reconciliation with the king, and for his restoration to his own forfeited honours and possessions. Gloucester, says the Croyland narrator, "discovered the maiden in the attire of a kitchen girl in London;" instead of conveying her secretly from her concealment, instead of compelling her by force or by stratagem to become his wife, instead of outraging her already wounded feelings and taking advantage of her powerless situation, he removes her immediately from the degrading garb under which Clarence had concealed her, and with the respect due to his mother's niece and to his own near kinswoman, "caused her to be placed in the sanctuary of St. Martin," while he openly and honourably seeks from the king his assent to their marriage.

The most imaginative mind could scarcely have desired a hero of romance to act a nobler and more chivalrous part, one more dignified towards the object of his attachment, one more honourable to himself, more straightforward, more worthy of his hitherto irreproachable career. The Lady Anne, in her prosperity, had been the playmate of his childhood, the companion of his boyish days, the object of his youthful affections. Before either party had passed the age of minority, she had drunk to the very dregs of the cup of adversity; from being the affianced bride of the heir apparent to the throne, and receiving homage at the French court as Princess of Wales, she was degraded to assume the disguise of a kitchen girl in London, reduced to utter poverty by the attainder of herself and parents,—a desolate orphan, discarded by the relatives who should have protected her, and debased and persecuted by those to whom the law had consigned the custody of her life and person.

Such was the condition of Warwick's proud but destitute child—the ill-fated co-heiress of the Nevilles, the Beauchamps, the Despencers, and in whose veins flowed the blood of the highest and noblest in the land—when she was affectionately and unceasingly sought for by Richard, Duke of Gloucester, at a time, too, when the sun of prosperity shone upon him so resplendently, and with such a cloudless aspect, that, had his actions been alone influenced by that all-engrossing ambition which has been imputed to him in after years, he would assuredly rather have coveted the daughter of some illustrious prince, or the hand of an heiress to a crown, than have exerted his well-earned influence with his sovereign to rescue his dejected kinswoman from her humiliating situation, and to restore her as his bride to the proud position which she had lost, and to which his own prosperous career now enabled him to elevate her. He placed her in the only asylum where she could feel secure from compulsion, and safe alike from his own importunities or his brother's persecution.

It is worthy of remark, that throughout the entire narrative of the Croyland historian, he not only speaks most explicitly of the "betrothment" as such, but designates the Lady Anne as "the damsel," "the maiden,"—which terms, by confirming his previous account of the qualified treaty made respecting her destined marriage with the Prince of Wales, exonerates Richard of Gloucester from the unfounded charge of seeking the affection of "young Edward's bride," before the tears of "widowhood" had ceased to flow, and equally so of his outraging a custom most religiously and strictly observed in the fifteenth century, which rendered it an offence against the church and society at large, for "a widow" to espouse a second time before the first year of mourning had expired.* As to the precise time or under what circumstances the cousins were at length united, there exists no document or

* See Appendix DD.

satisfactory proof; but great and strenuous exertions appear to have been made by the Duke of Clarence to frustrate the wishes of Gloucester even after his appeal to the king. In consequence of this prince having placed the Lady Anne in sanctuary, "great discord arose," says the chronicler, "between the brothers," and "so many reasons were acutely alleged on both sides, in presence of the king sitting as umpire in the council chamber, that all bystanders, even those learned in the law, wondered that the said princes possessed so much talent in arguing their own cause." It is much to be regretted that the learned ecclesiastic who has recorded this dispute should not have more particularly narrated the points of contention. On this matter, however, he is altogether silent; but as an unmitigated charge of avarice against Clarence pervades his detail, while he advances nothing against Gloucester, it is probable that as Warwick settled upon the Lady Isabel half of her mother's rich inheritance as a dower* on her union with Clarence, this latter prince considered that she was entitled to possess the remaining half by inheritance upon the decease of one parent, and the attainder of the survivor. Be this as it may, it is very clear that no just cause of opposition could be brought against the application of his younger brother, for the chronicler proceeds to say, that, "at length, by the mediation of the king, it was finally agreed that on Gloucester's marriage he should have such lands as should be decided upon by arbitrators, and that Clarence should have the remainder;" leaving little or nothing to the true heiress, the Countess of Warwick, to whom the noble inheritance of the Warwicks and Despencers rightly belonged, and at whose disposal it was altogether left. Hence it would appear that the act of attainder was not withdrawn from Warwick's ill-fated widow,† although Gloucester must necessarily, to enable this arbitration to have been carried into effect, have procured its legal annulment as regards the case of his youthful daughter, his now affianced bride. The narrative of the Croyland historian is dated 1471; and by the expression, "it was finally agreed that on Gloucester's marriage he should have such lands as should be decided on by arbitrators," it is most probable that his marriage was solemnized within a few months of this decision; because the clause evidently implies that the arbitrators could not commence the proceedings on which they were to adjudicate until the young couple were indissolubly united in marriage. This decision, however, did not receive the sanction of Parliament until the 14th Edw. IV. (1474),‡ when it appears the co-heiresses were adjudged to equal divisions of their parent's enormous possessions, reserving to both princes a life interest in such division: "If the said Isabel or Anne died, leaving her husband surviving, he was to enjoy her moiety during his life."§

A special and very remarkable clause, however, is contained in this act of Parliament, that decided the long-contested question; it being provided "that if the Duke of Gloucester and Anne should be divorced, and afterwards marry again, the act should be as available as though no such divorce had taken place;" or, in case they should be divorced, and "after that he do his effectual diligence and continual devoir by all convenient and lawful means

* "In 9th Edward IV., the Earl of Warwick allured Clarence to his party, and the more firmly to knit him to his interest, offered him the Lady Isabel, his elder daughter, in marriage, with the one half of her mother's rich inheritance."—*Dugdale's Baronage*, vol. ii. p. 162.

† The Countess of Warwick, in her own and her husband's right, was possessed of 114 manors; her husband being killed at Barnet, all her land, by act of Parliament, was settled on her two daughters.—*Ang. Spec.*, p. 569.

‡ See Appendix EE.

§ Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 100.

to be lawfully married to the said Anne the daughter, and during the lyfe of the same Anne be not married ne wedded to any other woman," he should have as much "of the premises as pertained to her during his lifetime."

The necessity of this singular passage may be explained in various ways. In the first place, the Duke of Gloucester and Warwick's daughter were related within the forbidden degree of consanguinity; for at the marriage of the Duke of Clarence with her sister, the Lady Isabel, it is expressly stated that a dispensation from the pope was necessary to ensure the validity of their marriage.* Secondly, the Lady Anne had been solemnly betrothed to Prince Edward of Lancaster; and although her affianced husband was slain before she was united to him, yet marriage contracts at that age were so binding, that she equally required a dispensation to render any subsequent union valid in the sight of the ecclesiastical law.† Now, as it is quite evident that there could not have been time to procure from Rome these dispensations, arising from the peculiar position of Richard of Gloucester and his orphan cousin,‡ it became essential that the arbitrators, in adjudging the division of property, should, for the sake of their offspring, guard against any informality of marriage. But no such clause was needful as regards Clarence, because, in the one instance, the dispensation had been obtained, and in the other none was required, as the Lady Isabel had been united to that prince for some years, and their offspring were richly provided for by that "half of the inheritance" which constituted her dowry. Nevertheless, although the portion of the remaining half thus awarded to Gloucester and the Lady Anne was secured to them against any captious legal disputation in future, it appears from the words of the act that immediately followed the clause, that the umpires considered the possibility of such separation likely to arise from impediments advanced by others rather than from any probability of change in the affections of the cousins themselves: "if the Duke of Gloucester and Anne should be divorced and afterwards marry again, the act should be as available as though no such divorce had taken place." In the ordinary acceptation of the term divorce, nothing could be more improbable, or less to be desired, than the parties marrying again; but if the possessions awarded to the Duke of Gloucester, in right of the Lady Anne, were untenable by themselves or their progeny, without such renewal of the marriage ceremony, arising from unavoidable irregularity in their nuptials, some protecting clause was not merely just, but absolutely imperative on the part of the umpires. Nothing can well be more clear than that such was the meaning of the judges, for the final words of the act state that even if a divorce is considered requisite, yet if Gloucester does his utmost "by all convenient and lawful means to be lawfully married again to the Lady Anne," he shall still enjoy her possessions for life; thus showing there was some unavoidable impediment to their alliance, either ecclesiastical or civil; but most clearly and explicitly inferring that no diminution of regard was anticipated, no division of interests foreseen, although the property was justly and wisely secured against the contingency of another marriage later in life, if obstacles were brought forward to invalidate their first union.

* "The Duke of Clarence accordingly married her, in the church of Notre Dame, having obtained a dispensation from the pope, Paul III., by reason they stood allied in the second, third and fourth degrees of consanguinity, as also in respect that the mother of the duke was godmother to her."—*Dugdale*, vol. ii. p. 162.

† See Appendix FF.

‡ The time required for such instruments may be judged from the legal dispensations requisite for the Duke of Clarence and the Lady Isabel having been applied for and dated in 1468, although they were not received by or available to him until the following year, 1469.

Despite, then, of all opposition, and in defiance of every impediment, either as regards the present or the future, the Duke of Gloucester and the Lady Anne Neville, within a brief period of the discussion above narrated, were irrevocably united; nor can any reasonable doubts be entertained respecting the unanimity which, on both sides, led to the alliance; for no letters are extant, as in the case of King Edward, expressing the disapprobation of his venerable mother; no clandestine measures were resorted to by Gloucester, as in the case of the Duke of Clarence and the Lady Isabel; no protest is made by the Lady Anne herself, which, had such been entertained, she could have followed up from being protected by the church in the holiness of sanctuary, and of which protest Clarence would gladly have availed himself in support of his unjust and unbrother-like opposition. But having no such plea to advance, no reasonable objection to make,* against a marriage equally consonant with the spirit of the times as with the warm affection that seems ever to have subsisted between the closely-allied Houses of York and Neville,† Clarence unblushingly avowed even to the monarch himself, his unworthy and avaricious motives, when Edward personally appealed to him in behalf of Richard; for, to quote the words of a cotemporary writer, "the King entreateth my Lord of Clarence for my Lord of Gloucester, and he saith he may well have my lady, his sister-in-law, but they shall part no livelihood."‡ This threat, however, was rendered void by the fact of the king himself sitting as umpire in the case, and by his justice not only in leaving to his privy council, who were competent arbitrators, the final division of property, but also in securing the validity of their decision by a decree of Parliament.

Some historians consider that the marriage of Richard and the Lady Anne was not solemnized until the year 1473; and others have even given a later date, being influenced probably by the act of Parliament above cited, which ratified the award of Lady Anne's possession; not taking into consideration the fact stated by the Croyland writer, that the solemnization of the marriage was to precede such award. It is, however, apparent that the cousins must have been united in the spring of 1472; first, because Sandford§ expressly states that their eldest son was born in 1473, and, likewise, from its being affirmed by competent authority that the young prince was ten years of age when he walked in procession at his parent's coronation at York, in September, 1483. This view of the case is still farther confirmed by two letters contained in the Paston Correspondence; the one‖ from Sir John Paston to his brother, proving that the prince was not married on the 17th February, 1472; the other,¶ bearing date the 15th April, 1473,** in which, though speaking of "their late marriage," the writer by no means seems to imply that it was a recent event.

* "The slightest knowledge in the laws of equity," observes Hutton, when considering this quarrel, "will convince us that justice was on the side of Richard. If the ladies were joint heiresses, they were each entitled to a joint share; besides which, Warwick's promise of half might have convinced Clarence he had no right to more."—*Hutton's Preface to Bosworth*, p. lxv.

† Paston Letters, vol. iv.

‡ Ibid., vol. ii. p. 92.

§ Geneal. Hist., book v. p. 410.

‖ Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 90.

¶ Ibid., vol. ii. p. 131.

** Sir John Fenn, in a note appended to the above letter, says, "These brothers had been for some time at variance, and most probably their disputes were heightened at this time by the late marriage of the latter [Richard] with Anne, the widow of Prince Edward. Henry the Sixth's son, daughter and co-heir of the Earl of Warwick, sister to the Duchess of Clarence, whose possessions the duke was unwilling to divide with his sister, now his brother's wife."—*Paston Letters*, vol. ii. p. 131.

The youngcouple are said to have been married at Westminster,* and the ceremony was most probably performed by the Archbishop of York, since it appears that after Gloucester had publicly sought the king's sanction to the alliance, the Lady Anne was removed from her sanctuary at St. Martin's le Grand and placed under the care of her only surviving uncle, George Neville,† the prelate of that see.

On the 29th February, in the same year, 1472, the Duke of Gloucester was a second time appointed to the important office of high constable of England,‡ which had become vacant by the death of Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, who had been beheaded during the brief restoration of King Henry VI.;§ and this was followed shortly after by his royal brother nominating him to the lucrative situation of "keeper of all the king's forests beyond Trent for life," and justiciary of North Wales.‖

From this period the Duke of Gloucester seems to have retired from the court and to have altogether fixed his abode in the north of England; for, on the 20th of May, it appears that he resigned the office of great chamberlain into his brother's hands;¶ and he is shown by cotemporary papers in the Plumpton Correspondence to have been resident in great state at Pomfret about the same time, in virtue of his office as chief seneschal** of the duchy of Lancaster in the northern parts. Amongst other valuable documents contained in the above-named very curious collection of papers is an official letter†† from Richard, Duke of Gloucester, to Sir William Plumpton, dated "at Pomfret, 13th October, anno. circ. 1472;"‡‡ and the almost regal power which he evidently possessed and exercised by virtue of his high offices in the north, may be gathered from the same cotemporary records, by the style in which he is designated in certain legal claims, which were referred to his arbitration; viz., that they should "abide the award of the pre-potent prince and lord, the Lord Richard, Duke of Gloucester."§§

Thus, after a season of severe trial and reverses almost unparelleled, considering the youthful ages of the respective parties, did Richard and his young bride find that repose which had so long and so painfully been denied to them. Although he was now scarcely nineteen years of age, while his cousin had but just entered her seventeenth year,—for only four years had elapsed since their youthful companionship at York,—yet during that interval their lives had been forfeited by attainder, and liberty only preserved to the

* Hearne's Frag., p. 283.
† Strickland's Queens, vol. iii. p. 366.
‡ Sandford, book v. p. 406.
§ Fœdera, vol. xi. p. 654.
‖ Pat. 12 Ed. IV., p. 1. m. 10; Cal. Rot. Pat., p. 317.
¶ In the first volume of "Collections made by Rymer for the reign of King Edward IV.," it is stated, that the king, by patent 20th May, 12 Ed. IV., had, on the 18th May in the preceding year, granted to his brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, the office of great chamberlain of England for life; that he had resigned the office, and that his majesty had conferred the same on the Duke of Clarence.—*Rymer, Add. MSS.*, fo. 4614, art. 70.
** The Duke of Gloucester was made high constable of England 29th February, 1472; and resided at Pomfret, as chief seneschal of the duchy of Lancaster in the north parts.—See *Plumpton Correspondence*, published by the Camden Society, 4to. 1839.
†† Plumpton Papers, p. 26.
‡‡ Entitled "Letter from Richard, Duke of Gloucester, to Sir William Plumpton, Stewart of the Lordship of Spofford, directing him to restore certain stolen cattle to the owener;" or rather to aid in effecting its restoration as bailiff of the borough of Knaresborough. By virtue of his high office, this prince leased certain farms to Sir William Plumpton, together with the office of bailiff of Knaresborough. The stewardship of Spofford he derived from the Earl of Northumberland, Lord of Spofford, in which parish Plumpton lay.
§§ Plumpton Corresp., p. lxxxix.

one by flight to a distant land and to the other by the privilege of sanctuary in her own country. Both had been exiles, both had been outlawed; the one for fidelity to his brother and sovereign, the other as the passive instrument of a rebellious and ambitious parent. Both, within the short space of two years, had been reduced to utter penury by confiscation of lands and possessions; and both, from being houseless wanderers, had, though widely separated and under far different circumstances, experienced also the highest degree of prosperity which could be contrasted with adversity equally poignant and unmitigated.

The Lady Anne, during the period, had received the homage of peers and peeresses at the court of France as the affianced of King Henry's son, and the instrument of restoring the line of Lancaster to the throne; and Richard, the thanks of the English Houses of Parliament as the faithful and best-beloved brother of Edward of York, whom he had effectually aided to restore to his kingdom and his crown. Both had lost their natural protectors by a violent and premature death in the miserable feuds that numbered their fathers amongst the illustrious dead; and both had suffered the most severe persecution in the eyes of the whole land, when seeking to unite their destinies in marriage; arising from the avarice and cupidity which made Clarence desire the entire possession of the young heiresses' wealth, and even to threaten them by hostile preparations,* after the sovereign, in gratitude to Richard for his services, had waived in his behalf his undeniable right to the lands and lordships of Warwick's bereaved and friendless child forfeited to the crown. But fortune upheld them throughout their trials and smiled favourably on their attachment. To a district endeared to them both by the unfading recollections of childhood,† did Richard convey his young bride, when their destinies were at length indissolubly interwoven; and amidst the bold and wild scenery of the home of their ancestors,‡ did the Lady Anne and her princely consort pass the early days of their married life, when, young in age, although experienced in trial, they were thus enabled to share in those halcyon days of peace that once more dawned upon the land of their birth.

Few places were better in accordance with the vice-regal powers intrusted to Gloucester in the northern districts, than was the noble pile in which their bridal days were most probably passed.

Rearing its embattled towers among scenes fraught with the most stirring national associations; built on a rock whose rugged surface seemed fully in keeping with the impregnable stronghold that crowned its summit, the Castle of Pontefract, or Pomfret, as it is usually called, the patrimonial inheritance of the royal House of Lancaster, soared high above the surrounding lands; a fitting abode for the princely seneschals and hereditary high stewards of England.§

* Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 127.
† Richard's father and brother were both buried at Pontefract, and so likewise was the Lady Anne's grandfather, the Earl of Salisbury, who shared the fate of his above-named illustrious kinsmen after the battle of Wakefield.
‡ Pontefract Castle was in the same county with Middleham, Warwick's baronial hall, and it also adjoined the patrimonial inheritance of Richard's ancestors; it being in the immediate vicinity of Sendal Castle and the town of Wakefield, both of which lordships appertained to his father, the Duke of York, whose unhappy fate was perpetuated by a beautiful little chapel erected by Edward IV. on the bridge of Wakefield; while a stone cross, raised on the green sward between this latter town and Sendal Castle, marked the precise spot where the battle was fought in which the Duke of York, the Earl of Salisbury, and the unoffending Rutland met a violent death.
§ King Henry III. bestowed the earldom of Leicester, with the seneschalcy or

Though dating its origin from the Norman conquest, it had been from time to time enlarged and beautified by the powerful and magnificent Earls of Lancaster,* in those palmy days of feudal splendour, when each lordly chief played the part of sovereign in his extensive demesnes, and each proud baron was, in truth, a petty prince in his innumerable lordships and estates.

In this celebrated fortress, then—scarcely more remarkable for its imposing appearance, its strength and baronial splendour, than for the dark and terrible deeds inseparably interwoven with its name†—Gloucester and his gentle consort, the Lady Anne, appear, as far at least as can be gathered from the brief historical and local records of the period, to have enjoyed a peaceful termination to their recent persecutions;‡ and here, in the springtime of their lives, and in the fulness of their happiness, they sought, and for a brief interval enjoyed, that rest and tranquillity which Richard had fully earned by his fidelity and zeal, and which Warwick's daughter must have been well contented to find, after her sad reverses, and the calamitous scenes in which she had lately been called upon to participate.

stewardship of England, upon Edmond, Earl of Lancaster, his second son, on the attainder of Simon Montfort, Earl of Leicester, slain at the battle of Evesham, in the year 1264. Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, his heir, beheaded at Pontefract in 1322, bore upon his seal the superscription:—"Sigillum Thome Comitis Lancastrie et Leicestrie, Senescalli Anglie." The same high office was enjoyed successively by the Earl and Dukes of Lancaster (for so were they created 25 Edward III.) until the county palatine of Lancaster, with all the lands and honours belonging to the duchy of Lancaster, was carried to the crown in the person of Henry IV.; during whose reign, however, as well as under all the monarchs of that race, it still continued to be governed as a separate estate by its proper officers. On the accession of the House of York, King Edward IV. dissolved the former government; but although he appropriated the revenue exclusively to the crown, yet under certain modifications he sanctioned both the privileges and appointments which rendered it an estate apart from ordinary jurisdiction. The superintendence of these offices and powers were those that were now entrusted to Richard, Duke of Gloucester.

* Pomfret Castle was the ancestral abode of the Earls of Lancaster, who shine so conspicuously in the early annals of English history. In the reign of Edward II. this splendid fortress became the property of the crown, on the attainder and execution of Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, after the celebrated battle of Burrough-Brigg, 15 Edward II. It was, however, restored to his heir by that ill-fated monarch, and continued to be occupied by his descendants until conveyed to the crown, with the rest of the duchy of Lancaster, by Henry IV., the founder of that royal line. The above-named Thomas, as stated in a note at an earlier period of these memoirs, was the first peer of England who was executed on the scaffold. King Edward himself sat in judgment upon this princely noble, who was sentenced to be "hanged, drawn and quartered; but in regard of his regal blood, the extreme rigour of his doom was softened," and he was publicly beheaded, "before his own castle," of Pomfract, in the year 1322.—*Sandford*, book iii. p. 148.

† The miserable fate of the unhappy Richard II., said to have been murdered at Pomfret Castle, 1399, where, says the old chronicler, (*Walsingham*, p. 363,) "he was served with costly meats, but not suffered to eate, and dyed of forced famine in the 34th year of his age," is too well known to need recapitulation.

‡ The Duke of Gloucester evinced his attachment to Pontefract in after years, by granting to the town the charter of incorporation immediately after his elevation to the throne.—*Rous*, p. 215.

CHAPTER VIII.

The character of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, considered with reference to Shakspeare's tragedy of Richard III.—Gloucester's career, as dramatically represented, contrasted with historical records.—Shakspeare misled by the corrupt authorities of his age.—The fables of the early chroniclers furnished him with his descriptions.—The greater part of the charges brought against Richard of Gloucester by the dramatist disproved by the actual career of that prince, as verified by cotemporary documents.

The marriage of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, with the affianced bride of Prince Edward of Lancaster appears the most appropriate time that could be selected for contrasting their relative positions; as also for considering the character of the duke, as it is ordinarily received through the works of the immortal Shakspeare, with that of the less attractive but less erring evidence of historical records.

With great justice has it been observed by the learned author of the History of Durham*—a county in which, from his long residence, the Duke of Gloucester was judged by his own actions, rather than by the perverted statements of later times—that the "magic powers of Shakspeare have struck more terror to the soul of Richard than fifty Mores or Bacons armed in proof."†

No individual who has bestowed attention on the subject can doubt the accuracy of this assertion; for the human mind is so constituted that pictorial representations, whether conveyed through the medium of the pen or the pencil, remain indelibly impressed on the imagination, to the utter exclusion of graver details, if chronology and antiquarian lore are essential to test their validity, and to displace the more pleasing impressions which have been received in childhood through the medium of dramatic scenes.

A few years since, it would have been thought little less than sacrilege to impugn the statements of England's mighty dramatist, although truth itself had presided at the inquiry. Even now, when the spirit of research has so weakened the influence of mere tradition as to afford encouragement to the humblest votary of historical studies to seek and elucidate facts, whatever may be the consequences of their publication, yet is the lofty position of the Bard of Avon so inseparably interwoven with national pride and national affection, that the necessity of making apparent how much his masterly pen was misled by corrupt authorities is a task from which a daring hand might shrink, and the delicacy and difficulty of which cannot but be felt by the author of these memoirs.

The hardihood of the undertaking, however, has been considerably lessened by the researches of those able commentators who have lately bestowed attention and labour upon the subject; while it should also be borne in mind that the beauty and power of Shakspeare's dramas are wholly independent of the perverted statements of which he availed himself in their composition.

* Surtees's Hist. of Durham, p. lx.

† Sir Thomas More and Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, wrote the history of the reigns of Richard III. and of his successor, Henry VII.

Though dating its origin from the Norman conquest, it had been from time to time enlarged and beautified by the powerful and magnificent Earls of Lancaster,* in those palmy days of feudal splendour, when each lordly chief played the part of sovereign in his extensive demesnes, and each proud baron was, in truth, a petty prince in his innumerable lordships and estates.

In this celebrated fortress, then—scarcely more remarkable for its imposing appearance, its strength and baronial splendour, than for the dark and terrible deeds inseparably interwoven with its name†—Gloucester and his gentle consort, the Lady Anne, appear, as far at least as can be gathered from the brief historical and local records of the period, to have enjoyed a peaceful termination to their recent persecutions;‡ and here, in the springtime of their lives, and in the fulness of their happiness, they sought, and for a brief interval enjoyed, that rest and tranquillity which Richard had fully earned by his fidelity and zeal, and which Warwick's daughter must have been well contented to find, after her sad reverses, and the calamitous scenes in which she had lately been called upon to participate.

stewardship of England, upon Edmond, Earl of Lancaster, his second son, on the attainder of Simon Montfort, Earl of Leicester, slain at the battle of Evesham, in the year 1264. Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, his heir, beheaded at Pontefract in 1322, bore upon his seal the superscription:—"Sigillum Thome Comitis Lancastrie et Leicestrie, Senescalli Anglie." The same high office was enjoyed successively by the Earl and Dukes of Lancaster (for so were they created 25 Edward III.) until the county palatine of Lancaster, with all the lands and honours belonging to the duchy of Lancaster, was carried to the crown in the person of Henry IV.; during whose reign, however, as well as under all the monarchs of that race, it still continued to be governed as a separate estate by its proper officers. On the accession of the House of York, King Edward IV. dissolved the former government; but although he appropriated the revenue exclusively to the crown, yet under certain modifications he sanctioned both the privileges and appointments which rendered it an estate apart from ordinary jurisdiction. The superintendence of these offices and powers were those that were now entrusted to Richard, Duke of Gloucester.

* Pomfret Castle was the ancestral abode of the Earls of Lancaster, who shine so conspicuously in the early annals of English history. In the reign of Edward II. this splendid fortress became the property of the crown, on the attainder and execution of Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, after the celebrated battle of Burrough-Brigg, 15 Edward II. It was, however, restored to his heir by that ill-fated monarch, and continued to be occupied by his descendants until conveyed to the crown, with the rest of the duchy of Lancaster, by Henry IV., the founder of that royal line. The above-named Thomas, as stated in a note at an earlier period of these memoirs, was the first peer of England who was executed on the scaffold. King Edward himself sat in judgment upon this princely noble, who was sentenced to be "hanged, drawn and quartered; but in regard of his regal blood, the extreme rigour of his doom was softened," and he was publicly beheaded, "before his own castle," of Pomfract, in the year 1322.—*Sandford*, book iii. p. 148.

† The miserable fate of the unhappy Richard II., said to have been murdered at Pomfret Castle, 1399, where, says the old chronicler, (*Walsingham*, p. 363,) "he was served with costly meats, but not suffered to eate, and dyed of forced famine in the 34th year of his age," is too well known to need recapitulation.

‡ The Duke of Gloucester evinced his attachment to Pontefract in after years, by granting to the town the charter of incorporation immediately after his elevation to the throne.—*Rous*, p. 215.

CHAPTER VIII.

The character of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, considered with reference to Shakspeare's tragedy of Richard III.—Gloucester's career, as dramatically represented, contrasted with historical records.—Shakspeare misled by the corrupt authorities of his age.—The fables of the early chroniclers furnished him with his descriptions.—The greater part of the charges brought against Richard of Gloucester by the dramatist disproved by the actual career of that prince, as verified by cotemporary documents.

The marriage of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, with the affianced bride of Prince Edward of Lancaster appears the most appropriate time that could be selected for contrasting their relative positions; as also for considering the character of the duke, as it is ordinarily received through the works of the immortal Shakspeare, with that of the less attractive but less erring evidence of historical records.

With great justice has it been observed by the learned author of the History of Durham*—a county in which, from his long residence, the Duke of Gloucester was judged by his own actions, rather than by the perverted statements of later times—that the "magic powers of Shakspeare have struck more terror to the soul of Richard than fifty Mores or Bacons armed in proof."†

No individual who has bestowed attention on the subject can doubt the accuracy of this assertion; for the human mind is so constituted that pictorial representations, whether conveyed through the medium of the pen or the pencil, remain indelibly impressed on the imagination, to the utter exclusion of graver details, if chronology and antiquarian lore are essential to test their validity, and to displace the more pleasing impressions which have been received in childhood through the medium of dramatic scenes.

A few years since, it would have been thought little less than sacrilege to impugn the statements of England's mighty dramatist, although truth itself had presided at the inquiry. Even now, when the spirit of research has so weakened the influence of mere tradition as to afford encouragement to the humblest votary of historical studies to seek and elucidate facts, whatever may be the consequences of their publication, yet is the lofty position of the Bard of Avon so inseparably interwoven with national pride and national affection, that the necessity of making apparent how much his masterly pen was misled by corrupt authorities is a task from which a daring hand might shrink, and the delicacy and difficulty of which cannot but be felt by the author of these memoirs.

The hardihood of the undertaking, however, has been considerably lessened by the researches of those able commentators who have lately bestowed attention and labour upon the subject; while it should also be borne in mind that the beauty and power of Shakspeare's dramas are wholly independent of the perverted statements of which he availed himself in their composition.

* Surtees's Hist. of Durham, p. lx.

† Sir Thomas More and Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, wrote the history of the reigns of Richard III. and of his successor, Henry VII.

"The youth of England," observes a late lamented writer, "have been said to take their religion from Milton, and their history from Shakspeare;"* and he illustrates the latter remark by the authority of Coleridge, who instanced the great Duke of Marlborough,† Lord Chatham, and Southey,‡ the poet laureate; all of whom, he says, have acknowledged that their principal acquaintance with English history was derived in boyhood from Shakspeare's historical dramas.

Surely, then, if the important historical discoveries of late years have made apparent in several of these plays, inaccuracies and errors so striking, that, embracing as they do some of the leading events of our national annals, they can no longer escape observation, it behoves every admirer of Shakspeare, every individual who can appreciate the incomparable genius of the glory of the English drama, to add their feeble efforts towards clearing him from that imputation of chronological and historical error which really belongs only to the productions of those authors on whose testimony he rested his fame as an historical dramatic writer.

Independent of the justice of this measure towards one who has perpetuated some of the most glorious epochs in British history, it is, moreover, due to the bard as a debt of gratitude; for, by his unrivaled powers, he has given life to scenes, and importance to events, which otherwise, from their distant occurrence, would scarcely have been noticed in historical detail.

If Shakspeare has been the chief means of promulgating the erroneous traditions of the Tudor chroniclers, he has also been the leading instrument of making those errors known, by inducing a taste for historical knowledge, and creating such a lively interest for the periods which he so glowingly describes, that the intelligent mind seeks to perpetuate the pleasure derived from his writings by more minutely examining the sources from which he derived his graphic and affecting scenes. No one can peruse the works of Shakspeare without feeling the dignity and beauty of his productions; no one imbued with judgment to discern and taste to appreciate the bright inspirations of his genius, can fail of being an enthusiastic admirer both of the poet and the man. In all that relates to powerful imagery, to keen conception of human character and deep knowledge of the workings of the human heart, the Bard of Avon reigns triumphant: in all that relates to the embodying, as it were, of virtue and vice, of fear, of love, of ambition, of hatred and revenge, every strong passion, in a word, that wars with frail mortality, the inimitable Shakspeare stands alone and unrivaled.

But the time has passed away when the dramatist would be sought as historic authority also;§ and this not arising, it is scarcely necessary to say, from any defect in his composition, or weakness in delineating the events which he borrows from other writers, for in all such passages he improves and refines on the descriptions which he thought it fit to adopt, but because the periods of history from which the subjects selected by Shakspeare for his historical plays were taken, "are such as at the best can be depended on only for some principal facts, and not for the minute detail by which characters are unraveled;‖" some being too distant to be particular; others, "that of Richard for example, too full of discord and animosity to be true;"¶ whilst

* See Commentaries on the Historical Plays of Shakspeare, by the Rt. Hon. Peregrine Courtenay. Preface, p. iv.

† Coleridge's Literary Remains, vol. ii. p. 166.

‡ Southey's Works, vol. i. p. viii.

§ "In the reign of King James I. the middling classes were familiarly acquainted with Shakspeare's plays, and referred to them for English history."—*Coleridge*, quoted by Courtenay.

‖ Whately on Shakspeare, p. 28. ¶ Ibid.

throughout the whole series, supernatural causes are so intermingled, in accordance with the license of the poetry and the belief of the age, that although these fables add, and were intended to add, force to dramatic effect, they can no longer pass current for history.

The fabulous traditions transmitted by the early chroniclers are now well understood as such; and although historical writing lost much of its poetical character where fiction was separated from fact, and the charm of legendary lore discarded to make room for simple but well-authenticated truths, yet such truths are far more desirable in the narration of national events than the imagery of the poet or the embellishments of the dramatist.

In the tragedy about to be considered, the facts will best speak for themselves disrobed of their attractive dramatic garb, but not divested of their touching scenes, and such romantic incidents as can be well substantiated; the union of which, with the more harrowing details of darker ages, gives so peculiar a charm to our early national history.

The actual career of Richard of Gloucester has been so perverted, to suit ulterior views, that but for the aid of chronology, the handmaiden of history, it would almost baffle the most diligent to unravel the mystery which has concealed the truth for upwards of three centuries: but we "may contemplate great characters," says Sir Egerton Brydges, "with the lights we have, till we can form them into new portraits. The outlines must be the same; but the tints, colourings and aspects may be new." Such is the case with the subject under consideration; and although the new portrait of Richard of Gloucester must necessarily be at variance with that produced by the keenest delineator of human character that has, perhaps, ever appeared, yet justice requires that this prince should be contemplated in connection with the later information which modern research has rendered available. The outline of his portrait may remain the same, but the altered colouring and tints produce an aspect so different, that the picture becomes, as it were, new, when contrasted with the extravagant misrepresentation that has, for years, been palmed upon the world.

With the exception of a brief introduction, which will be presently noticed, Shakspeare commences his tragedy of Richard III. with the representation of the Lady Anne accompanying, as chief mourner, the corpse of King Henry VI. to Chertsey Abbey for interment, followed by her meeting, apparently accidentally, the Duke of Gloucester on the road; when, after much angry recrimination, founded on his alleged murder of the unhappy monarch and his princely son, he succeeds in winning for his bride the reputed relict of Prince Edward of Lancaster. Avoiding a renewal of the arguments which have been already fully discussed, when historically considering Richard's imputed share in the murder of those royal personages, it is apparent, from facts now fully substantiated,* that this prince and Warwick's daughter could not, under any circumstances, have met at King Henry's funeral; for the corpse of the unhappy monarch was taken to its final resting-place by water, and buried at midnight. "In a barge solemnly prepared with torches," says the chronicler of Croyland,† "the body of King Henry was conveyed, by water, to Chertsey, there to be buried." With foreign mercenaries to guard the sacred deposit, the corpse was removed, without interruption, from St. Paul's to its place of interment, and there, with all possible respect,‡ and with the customary solemnities of the age, it was "buryed in our Ladye Chapelle at the Abbey."

* Pell. Records, p. 495. † Cont. Croy., p. 556.

‡ The expenses attendant on the funeral of King Henry VI. have been preserved in the "Issue Rolls of the Exchequer," and completely refute the erroneous statements

Neither could the cousins, by any possibility, have met until very long after the funeral of the unfortunate Henry; for the Duke of Gloucester was in Kent with his royal brother at the time of this king's interment, and the Lady Anne was taken prisoner with Queen Margaret a few days after the battle of Tewkesbury (4th May), and remained either in state custody or in the charge of Clarence, by reason of her attainder, until she was discovered in the disguise of a kitchen-maid during the Michaelmas term following.

Equally, too, has the hideous and deformed appearance ascribed to Gloucester (with which the tragedy commences) been shown to have resulted from subsequent political malice; and although it is quite true that this prince sought Warwick's daughter in marriage after the House of Lancaster became extinct, yet the alliance was effected by open appeal to his sovereign and his brother, and not secured, as dramatically represented, either by stratagem, by violence, or the result of that demoniacal fascination—

"And I no friends to back my suit withal,
But the plain devil, and dissembling looks,"*—

which furnished the bard with so powerful a subject for his keen and masterly delineation. The extreme loveliness of the Lady Anne which Shakspeare commemorates, and which afforded him so effective a contrast to her misshapen lover, appears to be founded on fact: but instead of that beauty being unexpectedly forced upon Gloucester's observation, in the interesting and touching garb of youthful widowhood, and heightened, too, by outraged feelings, his very words—

"Your beauty, which did haunt me in my sleep,
To undertake the death of all the world,
So I might live an hour in your sweet bosom,"†—

confirm rather than invalidate the inference already deduced from historical documents, that Gloucester's attachment for his young kinswoman originated in early years, and had never been banished from his remembrance.

"Those eyes of thine from mine have drawn salt tears,"

even establish, to a certain degree, the testimony of those chroniclers who, in making Richard present at Prince Edward's death, assert that he drew not his sword from "respect to the prince's wife,"‡ to whom Richard "was affectionately, though secretly, attached."§ And when at length, by the decease of Edward of Lancaster, he was enabled to make known to the Lady Anne his long-cherished attachment, how widely different is the poet's startling account of the manner in which he secured the object of his love from the actual fact of the case, as given in the clear and simple narrative of the cotemporary historian already detailed; and which led Richard, in the height of his prosperity, to seek out, in her misery, his persecuted cousin, and, before applying to the king for sanction to their union, to place her in an asylum too hallowed to be violated even by a character so fiend-like as that which Richard, Duke of Gloucester, is made to glory in possessing.

"I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,

of Hall, Grafton, and Holinshed, that no decent respect was paid to the mortal remains of this unhappy and afflicted monarch. These, together with many interesting particulars connected with his interment, may be found inserted at length in *Bayley's History of the Tower*, vol. ii. p. 333.

* Richard III., Act I. Scene II.
‡ Buck, lib. iii. p. 81.
† Act I. Scene II.
§ Ibid.

Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
And that so lamely and unfashionable,
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them;—
Why I, in this weak piping time of peace,
Have no delight to pass away the time,
Unless to spy my shadow in the sun,
And descant on mine own deformity;
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,
To entertain these fair, well-spoken days,
I am determined to prove a villain,
And hate the idle pleasures of these days."*

Shakspeare, says another of that poet's able commentators,† makes great use of the current stories of the times concerning the circumstances of Richard's birth, "to intimate that his actions proceeded not from the occasion, but from a savageness of nature." The dramatist makes him to rejoice that the signs given at his birth were verified in his actions, and he makes him also to revel and luxuriate in crime, from its proving his innate propensity to evil, because, as observes the above-quoted commentator, "the deformity of his body was supposed to indicate a similar depravity of mind."‡ The historian, discarding all tradition connected with supernatural appearances, finds no foundation for so hateful a picture; but, on the contrary, invalidates the fables which have been so long promulgated, by producing the records of Gloucester's inflexible probity, of various rewards bestowed upon him for his fidelity, undeniable proofs of his firm attachment to his brother, and other testimonies of his gallant and noble deeds. His allegiance to his sovereign, and his peaceful demeanour to the queen consort and her family, are equally well attested; nor is there a single document, diary or cotemporary narrative, to warrant the accusations which have been poetically fixed on Richard, Duke of Gloucester, of hypocrisy to his youthful bride, execration of his venerable parent and fiend-like hatred and detestation of his brothers and his kindred.

To examine, separately, every unfair charge brought against Richard III. would exceed the limits that can be devoted to the present inquiry; but it is essential to notice the imputation that pervades the drama of Shakspeare, relative to his cruel and contemptuous treatment of King Edward's queen and connections.

"My Lord of Gloster, I have too long borne
Your blunt upbraidings, and your bitter scoffs:
By Heaven, I will acquaint his majesty
Of those gross taunts I often have endured.
I had rather be a country servant maid,
Than a great queen, with this condition,
To be so baited, scorn'd and storm'd at."§

If the smallest importance is to be attached to the authorities adduced in these memoirs, as connected with the earlier days of this prince's career, it must be apparent, that although the Duke of Clarence, immediately after the marriage of King Edward, absented himself from court, and openly gave vent to the most violent and rebellious feelings—feelings, indeed, so vindictive, that they eventually led to his inhumanly ordering search to be made for the queen's father and brother in their retreat in the Forest of Dean,‖ to

* Richard III., Act I. Sc. I.
‡ Ibid., p. 36.
† Whately on Shakspeare, p. 35.
§ Richard III., Act I. Scene III.

‖ "And at that tyme was the Lord Ryvers taken, and one of his sons, in the Forest of Dean, and brought to Northampton; and the Earl of Pembroke, and Sir Richard Herbert, his brother, were beheaded all at Northampton, all four; by the commandment of the Duke of Clarence and the Earl of Warwick."—*Warkworth's Chron.*, p. 7.

his commanding their execution without trial, and to his forthwith depriving the king and his royal consort of their regal honours and their crown; yet it is not only recorded of Richard, that he was most peaceable and well-conducted towards the queen and her kindred, but that her only surviving brother, the Lord Rivers, was associated in all the confidence of friendship with the monarch and himself during their exile; and that Gloucester and that nobleman mutually co-operated in re-establishing King Edward on the throne, and in releasing the queen and her infant offspring from sanctuary.* His unanimity with his royal brother has been attested by various documents, and the imprisonment of the Duke of Clarence, which Shakspeare makes to precede Richard's union with the Lady Anne, not only occurred some years subsequent to it, but could not, by any possibility, have been even contemplated at the time; for Gloucester had not only, a few months previously to that event, been the chief agent in reconciling the rebellious and ungrateful Clarence to his offended sovereign, but the avaricious opposition of this prince to Richard's proposed marriage with his cousin was the origin of those angry feelings which rankled in Clarence's heart until his death, but which appear not to have dwelt beyond the dispute in question, either upon King Edward's mind, or that of his younger and more generous brother.

This is apparent from the fact, that the same year in which the union of Richard with the Lady Anne was solemnized, Clarence was invested, as the husband of the eldest sister, with the title and dignities appertaining to his deceased father-in-law, the "Earl of Warwick,"† the heirship of which formed that source of contention which has been already detailed; and the royal favour which conferred on the faithful Gloucester the stewardship of England in the north, and restored to him his recently forfeited dignity of high constable of the realm, was, with self-denying impartiality on the part of the king, extended also to the perfidious Clarence, who was nominated to the high appointment of lord chamberlain of England for life, which had been voluntarily relinquished by Gloucester,‡ on his fixing his abode in the northern parts of the kingdom.

Again: the desolate, broken-hearted Margaret of Anjou, who is made by Shakspeare§ to wander unrestrained through palaces tenanted by her rival, Elizabeth Wydville, and to indulge in language little reconcilable either with her subdued spirit or the portly and polished demeanour attributed to King Rene's accomplished daughter by her cotemporaries,‖ was, at the same period, closely incarcerated in the Tower, where she was imprisoned from the day preceding her husband's death until she was removed in custody, first to Windsor, and thence to Wallingford. She was afterwards ransomed, at the

* See Fleetwood's Chron., pp. 2, 3. 11.

† "In the 12th Edw. IV. (in consideration of that his marriage with Isabel, the eldest daughter and co-heiress to the before-mentioned Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick and Salisbury) he was, by special letters patent, (*Rot. Pat.*, p. 4614, art. 70,) dated the 25th March, created 'Earl of Warwick and Salisbury;' and about two months after, viz., the 20th May, 1472, upon the surrender of his brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, he had the office of great chamberlain of England granted unto him for term of life; which high office had appertained to Richard, Earl of Warwick, before his decease at Barnet."—*Sandford*, book v. p. 412.

‡ By patent 20th May, 12th Edw. IV.,—stating that the king had, on the 18th May in the preceding year, granted to his brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, the office of great chamberlain of England for life; that he had resigned the office, and that his majesty had conferred the same on the Duke of Clarence.—*Add. MSS. by Rymer for the Reign of Edw. IV.*, No. 4614, art. 70.

§ Richard III., Act I. Sc. III.

‖ Harl. MSS., No. 542.

expiration of five years, by her father and the French king,* into whose dominions she was conveyed, with little respect and no regal state; and where, bereft of all domestic ties, and with a heart seared by trials and withered by afflictions, the heroic Margaret of Lancaster ended her most calamitous career.

Many other scenes in this tragedy might be as strongly contrasted with cotemporary documents, did the necessity of such a measure justify so long a digression. A few leading points, however, are alone sufficient to establish the object proposed—that of placing in juxtaposition the character and career of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, as perpetuated by Shakspeare, and such as it is proved to have been from authentic historical records. Before seeking for the causes that induced such discrepancy of detail and led to such conflicting statements, it is necessary, towards forming a right judgment on the subject, to consider further the imputations that are connected by Shakspeare with Richard's early childhood, as well as such calumnies as are heaped upon him in maturer years,—if, indeed, such a term is applicable at nineteen, his age at the period when the drama that bears his name commences. Few persons, however, on perusing its opening scenes, would imagine that the two characters there introduced to their notice were young persons in the spring time of life: a misshapen monster, if not hoary in age, at least advanced in years, and hardened in vice, is the association impressed by the description of Gloucester, instead of that of a youth distinguished by his gallantry, his prowess and his noble achievements; while the sentiments and conduct of the Lady Anne, little in accordance with her youthful age at seventeen, leave the impression of one well accustomed to the arts of flattery, and easily entrapped by the prospect of worldly advancement, in however unseemly a form it may be conveyed. This total disregard of the ages of the chief parties concerned, appears to be one leading cause of the erroneous views which have been so long entertained relative to Richard of Gloucester. It explains the discrepancies in date which occur in Shakspeare when he introduces this prince in other of his historical plays;† and reconciles also many seeming inconsistencies connected with acts laid to the charge of Richard of Gloucester, both in them and in the tragedy which is more particularly commemorative of his career. Thus, when a mere infant in arms, nay, even before he was born, he is by the dramatist made to take part in the feuds of the times, and also to display his callous and hardened nature. Such, for example, is the memorable scene that follows the execution of Jack Cade, in which Richard, bearding the veteran Clifford in that well-known passage,—

> "Oft have I seen a hot o'erweening cur
> Run back and bite, because he was withheld,"‡—

is thus rebuked by the warrior:—

> "Hence, heap of wrath, foul indigested lump,
> As crooked in thy manners as thy shape!"§

Now Iden, the sheriff of Kent, beheaded this rebel in July, 1450, just two years before Richard was born.‖ At the first battle of St. Alban's, Gloucester is not only named as slaying the Duke of Somerset, but is again displayed in the odious light that renders his name so detestable.

> "Sword, hold thy temper; heart, be wrathful still:
> Priests pray for enemies, but princes kill."¶

* Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 89.
† Second and Third Parts of Henry VI.
‡ Second Part of Henry VI., Act V. Scene I.
§ Ibid.
‖ W. Wyr., p. 470.
¶ Act V. Scene II.

And although little more than two years old at this very battle, the Duke of Gloucester is in addition represented as thrice saving the life of the valiant Earl of Salisbury.

——— "My noble father,
Three times to-day I holp him to his horse,
Three times bestrid him, thrice I led him off,
Persuaded him from any further act."*

At the battle of Wakefield, in the year 1460, when Richard was but eight years of age, and, as already mentioned, left under the charge of his mother, Cecily, Duchess of York, in London, he is said to have been present in Sendal Castle, and there to have precociously displayed that depravity and ambition which form the basis of the tragedy which has so contributed to blight this prince's fame:—

"An oath is of no moment"†—

Again—

——— "And father, do but think
How sweet a thing it is to wear a crown."‡

At the battle of Mortimer's Cross, and at that of Towten, both occurring after he had been sent by the Lady Cecily to Utrecht for safety, Richard is again represented, child as he then was, and far removed from the scene of action, as taking a leading part in the events of the day; singling out the boldest of their foes, and giving vent to those demoniacal sentiments which, throughout these tragedies, by inducing the execrations which so abound against the "foul-mouthed crook-back," accustom the mind to invest him with such revolting characteristics and personal deformities, as fully to justify the yet more odious picture he is eventually to exhibit in the character of King Richard III. Moreover, although he was a mere youth, of such tender years that he is only historically named as the object of his widowed parent's anxiety and of his royal brother's bounty, upon King Edward's accession to the crown, he is, notwithstanding, associated by the dramatist with the monarch from that period upon every occasion, and made to take part with him in every battle, as his equal in age, in experience, valour and judgment: though King Edward himself was but eighteen when he ascended the throne, and Richard an infant of eight years. It may also be observed, that there exists no document to prove his acting in any military capacity until ten years following that period; when the king was driven into exile, and Gloucester aided and fought to secure his brother's restoration.

These striking anomalies may be satisfactorily explained in two ways: partly, indeed, from the license permitted to the dramatist, as relates to time, action and embellishment of character;§ but they are chiefly to be attributed to the incorrect source whence Shakspeare derived his authority; on alone for his deformed portraiture both of Richard's mind and person, but also for most of the historical scenes connected with his career. That the poet succeeded in embodying to the life the leading features ascribed to Richard at the period when he wrote, and in making the crimes imputed to this prince seem the natural result of a temperament and form so hideous, is

* Ibid., Scene III.
† Third Part of Hen. VI., Act I. Scene II. ‡ Ibid.
§ The historical events recorded in Shakspeare's tragedy of Richard III. occupy a space of about fourteen years, but are frequently confused for the purposes of dramatic representation. The second scene of the first act commences with the funeral of King Henry VI., who is said to have been murdered on the 21st of May, 1471, while the imprisonment of Clarence, which is represented previously in the first scene, did not take place till 1477-8.—*Shakspeare*, Valpy edition.

evinced not only by the popularity that has ever attended the representation of this tragedy, but would seem also to be particularly illustrated by the fact of the bust of Richard III. being one out of three selected to embellish the monument of Shakspeare presented by Garrick to the poet's native town: thus indicating that, in the estimation of one of his most skilful and ardent admirers, a reference to this tragedy was considered one of the most appropriate emblems that could be chosen to perpetuate this poet's accurate display of the workings of the human heart.* As regards the source whence he gleaned materials that called forth so brilliant a display of his genius and transcendent dramatic powers, no doubt exists of the bard having selected as his chief authority, Holinshed, the latest and the most prejudiced of the Tudor historians: and that he is admitted so to have done is demonstrated in the painting of Shakspeare, preserved in the Town Hall of Stratford-upon-Avon; in which, occupying a prominent position in the ground before him, lie Holinshed's Chronicles, mingled with such ancient writers and legendary tales as the dramatist is known to have consulted in his other productions.

Here lies the explanation of those long-perpetuated fables, which the historian cannot but deeply lament, and which, usurping the place of facts, have transformed the narrative of the life of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, into a wild, unnatural romance, rather than embracing that intermixture of strength and weakness which, when truth alone furnishes the tale, will be found, on reference to our regal annals—with few exceptions at least—to sum up the career of crowned heads no less than of individuals in a humbler station of life. But history was not pursued in Shakspeare's time with the research and attention to chronological exactness which now characterize the study. The difficulty of procuring original documents, or of ascertaining if such records had been preserved, compelled the annalists of that early period to copy the works of preceding chroniclers, and thus perpetuate their erroneous statements, or even to increase the mischief of original inaccuracy by engrafting on hearsay reports the embellishments of a wonder-loving age.

It was, indeed, the almost utter impossibility of testing such contradictory reports, and the evident dearth of proper materials for the compilation of historical works, that first led to the foundation of those valuable libraries, which, under the names of the Cottonian,† Harleian, Bodleian, and similar collections, have so deservedly commemorated their great founders,‡ and which, open as they now are to the public, afford such rich sources of reference to all persons desirous of seeking truth and of correcting the errors to which the annalists of such times were liable.

The earliest printed chronicles, relating to the period under consideration, were not published until after the accession of the Tudor dynasty, when it was the interest of the writers to secure popularity by aspersing the characters of Richard III., and perpetuating every report that could strengthen the cause of the reigning sovereign and justify the deposal and death of his rival. "It

* Amongst the memorials of Shakspeare at Stratford-upon-Avon, the place of his birth, is the full length figure of the bard, in a niche in front of the Town Hall; the pedestal supporting which is ornamented with three busts, viz., Henry V., Richard III., and Queen Elizabeth.
† Sir Robert Cotton, who was cotemporary with Shakspeare, both having flourished during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, had observed with regret that the history, laws and constitution of Britain were, in general, very inefficiently understood; and in an expensive and indefatigable labour of upwards of forty years, he accumulated those numerous and inestimable treasures which compose the Cottonian Library. These valuable records are deposited in the British Museum, and open to public inspection. —See *Preface to the Catalogue of the Harl. MSS.*, p. 2.
‡ See Appendix GG.

is to Polydore Virgil," observes an able writer of the present day,* "that we must look as the source whence the stream of succeeding historians chiefly borrowed their materials." This historian wrote his work by express command of King Henry VII., the successor and bitter enemy of Richard, Hall copied from him, but with his own additions, gleaned from the malignant reports of the times, which were then in full force; and Grafton and Holinshed copied Hall, giving as positive facts, however, much matter which Hall himself merely reported from hearsay or conjecture: and all these chroniclers, availing themselves largely of the graphic descriptions of Sir Thomas More, incorporated in their works his monstrous account of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, without seeking to invalidate the inconsistencies of More's narrative by reference to cotemporary writers or to early and unpublished authorities.

If, then, the best materials for compiling the historical records of this period could alone be gleaned from the most corrupt and prejudiced sources; and if Shakspeare selected as his guide the chronicler who had most fully incorporated every tradition, every surmise, and every marvellous or malicious report connected with the last of the Plantagenet monarchs,—and this from believing it to be the most standard and true authority, as well as the latest and most popular account—sufficient foundation will appear for the odious picture which has so long been received as the exact representation of this much calumniated prince. The Tudor historians themselves had either no means of access to cotemporary documents, or were altogether unacquainted with the Croyland chronicler, and with those other more concise narratives connected with Richard's time which were afterwards collected by John Stow, and are now deposited in the Harleian library. These records were altogether unavailable to the poet, even had he been disposed for the laborious toil which was then incident to historical research; for let it not be forgotten that when the Bard of Avon flourished, the two university libraries were almost the only repositories of books of erudition in the kingdom, and that these were but scantily supplied; the royal library, founded after the general dissolution of religious houses from manuscripts collected out of the spoils of the monasteries by the second monarch of the Tudor dynasty, being exclusively appropriated to the use of the royal family and their instructors.†

Shakspeare, however, did not profess to be an historian: his vocation was that of a dramatist; his compositions were written from the creative fervour of his genius; and, unrestrained by history, he took the hint of his characters from the current fables of the day, and "adapted their depositions so as to give to such fictions a show of probability."‡ In his capacity of actor, manager and poet, he had no time to seek out materials which were difficult of access; his object was emphatic recitation, distinction and preservation of character, and the production, through the medium of the outward senses, of such pictures as would rest on the mind.

Facts well substantiated and chronological exactness are indispensable to the historian. Not so to the dramatist: he is licensed to substitute the type for the reality, and is privileged to select only the most striking features in illustration of the scenes which he undertakes to portray. Like an historical painter, he must crowd into the small space allowed him the leading personages connected with that subject; and, although unfettered by the minute exactness which is required in more elaborate productions, he must grasp the entire outline of his design, and develop the plot through the

* See Sir Frederick Madden's documents relative to Perkin Warbeck, *Archæologia*, vol. xxvii. p. 153.

† Preface to the Catalogue of the Harl. MSS.

‡ Whately on Shakspeare, p. 20.

medium of the characters themselves, by making each individual support the part which he was supposed to have enacted when living. Thus it is apparent, that however pleasing the representation of an historical play, yet, as in the case of an historical romance, it can scarcely be considered the most effective or the surest mode of conveying historical instruction. Most unphilosophical, then, is it to form an estimate of the character of Richard of Gloucester from such a source; considering that the remarkable scenes connected with his checkered life not merely afforded the most fertile theme for the display of the poet's peculiar genius, but that, from the striking and varied points in his character as delineated by Shakspeare, in accordance with the belief of the times, this tragedy has been invariably selected to develop the highest efforts of the histrionic art; and by means of Garrick, Kemble, Cooke, Kean and other great tragedians, has acquired a degree of popularity, and been invested with a spirit and appearance of truth, far beyond many other of this great dramatist's inimitable productions.

The leading events contained in the tragedy of Richard III., more especially such as are connected with the depravity of his mind and the deformity of his person, are either closely copied from Holinshed, or from his authority on such points, Sir Thomas More; so literally, indeed, that many passages are merely changed from the quaint prose version of the chroniclers themselves to the melodious verse of Shakspeare. But as these passages chiefly relate to portions of the monarch's life not yet considered in these memoirs, it would be premature here to extract the examples that might be adduced in corroboration of this acknowledged fact. Sufficient, it is hoped, has been advanced to render it apparent that the prejudices entertained against Richard of Gloucester in Shakspeare's time led to his being charged by the dramatist in his earlier days with crimes in which, from his youthful age, he could, by no possibility, have participated; and those scenes in which he did take part, and which are considered to cast so dark a shade over his character, were rather incident to the period in which he lived than to any savage ferocity peculiar to himself. For example,* perjury then was common, and selfish ambition prevailed to an almost inconceivable degree; even bloodshed, also, was characteristic of the times,† which was made up of events in which treasonable plots, personal malice, bitter revenge, and unblushing perfidy were the principal features. From the time of the Norman conquest to the close of the Plantagenet race—that is to say, through the entire of what is ordinarily termed "the middle ages," political expediency was the prevailing incentive to action. It may be alleged, and perhaps justly, that in the present, as in the former age, expediency is often substituted as a rule of action for

* In confirmation of this it will be sufficient to direct attention to the perjury of Edward IV., not only at York, (*Warkworth's Chronicle*, p. 14,) but on two other memorable occasions: this unworthy act, conjoined to a spirit of revenge, having caused the murder of Lord Welles and Sir Thomas Dymock, before his expulsion from the throne, (see *Excerpta Historica*, p. 282,) and led to the execution of the Duke of Somerset and fourteen other Lancastrian leaders after his restoration, and in the face of his solemn pledge of safety at Tewkesbury.—*Warkworth's Chronicle*, p. 19. The perfidiousness of the Duke of Burgundy to the Count St. Pol, whom, under the mask of friendship, he inveigled into his power by promises of safe conduct, merely at the end of his journey to deliver him up to his enemy, Louis XI., for execution, is equally well known, (*Habington*, p. 179;) while the mercenary and selfish treachery displayed by the heads of so noble a family as the Talbots, who, in conjunction with Sir John Tempest, captured, by the aid of a renegade monk, their meek and afflicted monarch, Henry VI., solely for the reward, in which they conjointly shared, (*Warkworth's Chronicle*, p. 41,) will sufficiently portray the moral turpitude of the age, and depict the abject state of society in that corrupt and lawless period.

† See Stow's Annals, p. 422.

the immutable moral standard. Admitting this to be the fact, it must, nevertheless, be allowed, that although we may not actually be less immoral or less vicious, yet our manners are more refined, and our understandings are more enlightened. Shakspeare flourished at the dawn of this more enlightened period; and the career of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, whose death terminated the dark and corrupt era which ushered in so bright an order of things, was a theme too rich in variety of subject, too fertile in harrowing scenes, to be overlooked by the dramatist; the more so, as his royal mistress, who distinguished him with her favour and patronage,* rejoiced at the public debasement of a monarch whose ruin had elevated her grandsire to the crown,† and laid the foundation of that dynasty of which she was so bright an ornament.

"Never had poet a better right to use freely the license allowed to poets," observes one of his learned commentators,‡ "or less necessity for drawing upon unpoetical stores for any portion of his fame;"§ yet he adds, "either he or his more ancient author has taken such liberties with facts and dates, and has omissions so important, as to make the pieces, however admirable as a drama, quite unsuitable as a medium of instruction to the English youth." All farther investigation of this point, however, would greatly exceed the space that could be awarded to it in these memoirs. Suffice it to say, that the chronological errors of Shakspeare must be attributed to the dramatic spirit in which he wrote; and his misconception of events purely historical, to the difficulty of testing history with mere tradition, at the period when he produced his incomparable works. If the all-absorbing nature of his pursuits led Shakspeare, in some instances, to pursue it to the sacrifice alike of fact and justice, yet the insuperable obstacles that presented themselves, even to such as were willing and anxious to consult original authority, completely exonerates the bard from all imputation of intentionally misrepresenting persons or events; while it as fully exculpates the old chroniclers from wilful departure from truth, and also satisfactorily explains the cause of those contradictory, erroneous and perverted statements which influenced Shakspeare in his historical details.

In truth, misled as the poet was by bad authorities, but yet making a correct dramatic use of them, Shakspeare's tragedy of Richard III., so long considered as a just representation of that prince's mind, person and actions, ought rather to be viewed in the light of a masterly delineation of the all-absorbing passion of ambition, when pursued in defiance of duty, both moral and religious, and regardless alike of all restraint imposed by divine or human laws.

It is, however, it should be distinctly observed, the materials used by Shakspeare in his play, and not his management of the character of Richard

* Queen Elizabeth distinguished him with her favour; and her successor, King James, with his own hand, honoured the great dramatist with a letter of thanks for the compliment paid in Macbeth to the royal family of the Stuarts.—*Symmon's Life of Shakspeare*, p. x.

† "It is evident from the conduct of Shakspeare," says Lord Orford, in his philosophical inquiry connected with this point, "that the House of Tudor retained all their Lancastrian prejudices even in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In his play of Richard III., the bard seems to deduce the woes of the House of York from the curses which Queen Margaret had vented against them; and he could not give that weight to her curses without supposing a right in her to utter them."—*Hist. Doubts*, p. 114. Malone, also, in his comment upon this tragedy, says, "That the play was patronised by the queen on the throne, who probably was not a little pleased at seeing King Henry VII. placed in the only favourable light in which he could have been exhibited on the scene."—*Courtenay's Commentaries*, vol. ii. p. 116.

‡ Courtenay's Commentaries, vol. i. p. 8. § Ibid.

III. derived from them, that have formed the subject of the present inquiry; and it must be apparent to all who will calmly consider the point, that an imposing representation, founded on the generally received story of this monarch, together with an eager desire to grasp the entire subject as a whole, was the main object of the bard, and not a close adherence to facts, or a chronological arrangement of such events as he considered fitting for scenic exhibition. He thought as a dramatist, and made mere matter of fact subservient to the powerful delineation of such characters as presented themselves to his comprehensive mind. He cast from him those bonds which would have fettered the antiquary and the historian; and many an admiring audience has thronged to revel on scenes which would have probably lived but for a brief period had they been less poetically, but more truly depicted. Nevertheless, however winning and fascinating the productions of Shakspeare may be, as transporting his readers to the times which his graphic description seems to revivify and people with living actors, it cannot fail to be lamented by the historian, and by all who desire that truth and not fiction should characterize the national archives of England, in the delineation of the lives and characters of British sovereigns, that Richard III., the last monarch of the chivalrous Plantagenets, should have been selected by their national bard as the individual on whom to exercise his fertile genius and to display his transcendent powers as a dramatist, since the incorrect authorities to which alone he had access, and by which he was consequently misled, were the cause of his depicting Richard of Gloucester unfaithfully, according to genuine historical record. The "Lancastrian partialities of Shakspeare," Sir Walter Scott observes,* "and a certain knack at embodying them, have turned history upside down, or rather inside out."

* Rob Roy, vol. i. p. 231.

CHAPTER IX.

Popularity of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, in the northern counties.—Extensive powers with which he was invested in that district.—Edward Plantagenet, his eldest son, born at Middleham Castle.—Richard's honourable conduct and high character at this period of his career, shown by extracts from the northern historians.—He accompanies King Edward in his projected war with France.—Gloucester's indignation at the inglorious result of that enterprise.—Causes that led to the quarrel between the king and the Duke of Clarence.—Death of Clarence.—Gloucester exculpated from all participation either in the dispute or in the death of his brother.—Gloucester assists at the marriage of his infant nephew, the Duke of York.—Obtains a license to found and endow a collegiate church at Middleham.—Gloucester's eldest son created Earl of Salisbury.

From the period when Richard, Duke of Gloucester, assumed the vice-regal command of the northern parts of the kingdom, for such term may justly be applied to the extensive powers with which he was invested, he appears to have taken little or no part in political affairs, as far at least as relates immediately to his brother's court and general administration, but to have devoted himself, with the energy and zeal that formed so striking a feature in his character, to the wants of that district which was intrusted to his government. He directed his attention towards healing the divisions that had long distracted that part of King Edward's dominions,—the abode of the Cliffords, the Percys, the Nevilles, the Montagues, the rallying point, indeed, of the Lancastrian nobles, and of the most chivalrous yet turbulent spirits in the kingdom,—and rendering his brother's government popular and acceptable even to the very enemies of their house, by the justice, vigour and clemency which characterized his proceedings during the period in which he presided over the northern division of the country. Setting aside many minor appointments, he was justiciary of North Wales, warden of the west marches of Scotland, keeper of all the king's forests beyond Trent, chief seneschal or steward of the duchy of Lancaster in the northern parts, lord admiral and lord high constable of England, and proprietor, in right of the Lady Anne Neville, his wife, of half of the enormous possessions appertaining to her late father, which were increased tenfold in value, as well as in extent, by the gifts of the king, and the rewards which he bestowed upon his brother, in that particular district with which his name will henceforth be chiefly associated.

Gloucester's career, then, from the probable period of his marriage in the year 1472, must be chiefly sought for through the medium of local historians: and it is happy for this prince, towards rescuing his memory from the unqualified and sweeping charges that after times have brought against him, that documents still exist amongst the municipal and collegiate records of many ancient places and provincial towns that were immediately under his jurisdiction, associating his name and his acts altogether with those localities, and thus rendering untenable the tradition that fixed him without intermission about the person and incorporated him with all the proceedings of his royal brother's court. These records exhibit not only his talents and his virtues in a clear and indisputable form, but also bear testimony to the

wisdom and ability for government which even at this period gave such conclusive evidence of his vigorous mind, but which, from being so early and prominently called into action, fomented that passion for sovereign power which was inherent in his race, and which proved his bane in after life, although it led to the establishment of his fame at this the brightest period of his career.

The Castle of Pomfret was not the only abode of Richard, Duke of Gloucester. This fortress, indeed, appears to have been his state residence in virtue of his extensive offices; but Middleham, which he is said to have ever regarded with such warm interest, was his domestic home.* This castle and lordship was bestowed upon him by King Edward IV., probably at his earnest request, shortly after the death and attainder of the Earl of Warwick; and its association with every leading point of interest connected with the spring-time of his life, and that of the Lady Anne, explains fully, when taken in conjunction with his energetic temperament, the cause of his predilection for the spot, and of its being selected after their marriage as their fixed home and private dwelling-place.

In the year 1473, their happiness was rendered more complete by the birth of an heir to their vast possessions. "Edward, the eldest son of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was born at Middleham, near Richmond, 1473;"† and in that favourite abode of his parents—the scene of their youthful pleasures and early attachment—this infant scion of a noble race appears to have passed not merely his infancy, but the chief portion of his life.

The final division of lands awarded to Warwick's co-heiresses was not decided until after the birth of this child, viz., 1474;‡ but the rich portion which became at length vested in Gloucester, by right of his wife, appears to have added fresh vigour to Richard's operations in the north of England, judging at least from his alternate residences after the decision, in so many and in such various places, and all apparently with the view of repairing the ruin which civil warfare had brought upon the castellated mansions which were now either under his government, or entailed upon himself and his offspring.

"The employment of this duke" (observes the historian of Durham§) "was, for the most part, in the north; and there lay his appanage and patrimony, with a great estate of the duchess, his wife, of which the seignory of Penrith, in Cumberland, was part, where he much resided, and built or repaired most of the castles, all that northern side generally acknowledging and honouring his magnificent deportment." But it was not alone the restoration of castles and strongholds that occupied Gloucester's attention and called forth his zeal and munificence; to his honour let it be recorded, that religion and the worship of God in temples consecrated to His service was fully as much the object of his active zeal and attention as the repair of those defensive fabrics that suited his warlike temperament. Whitaker states, in his most interesting History of Richmondshire, that that county abounds with memorials of this prince's bounty to chantries and religious houses.‖ "He seems," adds this able writer, "to have divided his residence for a considerable time between his castle here [Middleham] and that of Skipton. He bestowed liberally on the monks of Coverham and the parish of Skipton for the repair of their respective churches; but under the walls of his own castle, 'his favourite Middleham,' he meditated greater

* Whitaker's Hist. of Richmond., vol. i. p. 99. † King's Vale Royal, p. 33.
‡ Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 100. § Surtees's Hist. of Durham, p. 67.
‖ Vol. i. p. 99.

things."* And greater he did, indeed, accomplish; for although it may appear somewhat premature to anticipate the events of so lengthened a period as ten years, yet any evidence that can bear honourable testimony to the temperate conduct and peaceable character of Richard of Gloucester during that interval, and on a point so important as that of healing the domestic feuds which had so long distracted the kingdom, is invaluable towards rescuing his memory from the odious and hateful associations that have, for ages, been affixed to his name. One more quotation, then, in corroboration of this fact, must be permitted from the historian of Durham, who was so well qualified to judge, and to ascertain by diligent local research, the important truths which he asserts and substantiates by indisputable records relative to this prince. "He was at least," says Surtees,† "whilst Duke of Gloucester, popular in the north, where he was best known." . . . "He followed the fortunes of his brother Edward with unshaken fidelity through many a bloody field; and when the title of York was established, his conduct won the affection of those northern counties in which, from the united influence of the great houses of Percy, Neville and Clifford, the influence of the Lancastrian interest had been most prevalent."

How different is this portraiture of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, from that which is ordinarily given of him! How dissimilar was the active, useful, peaceable life which he really led, when reposing, for a brief interval, from the warlike duties of his martial profession, from that "malicious and wrathful" career which, unqualified by any one redeeming point, has been usually considered to have characterized the actions of this prince from the period of King Edward's restoration to the throne until the end of that monarch's reign!

Innumerable instances may be gathered from the local and provincial histories already referred to, as well as from other works connected with the northern counties, of Gloucester's attention to his domestic duties, his kindness to his attendants, his prudence and economy in the regulation of his household, and his bounty and munificence to the church; these, together with his justice to the poor and his hospitality to the rich, endeared him to all ranks throughout the extensive district which was intrusted to his charge. "It is plain," observes Drake,‡ in his valuable History of York, "that Richard, represented as a monster of mankind by most, was not so esteemed in his lifetime in these northern parts;" and the very terms of the grant by which King Edward conveyed to his brother the castle and manor of Skipton, above named, add force to the evidence of these northern historians, of the straightforward and highly honourable conduct pursued by the prince who was appointed to preside over their rights and their privileges:—"The king, in consideration of the laudable and commendable service of his dear brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, as for the encouragement of piety and virtue in the said duke, did give and grant to him, &c. &c. the honour, castle, manor and demesnes of Skipton, with the manor of Marton."§

Clearly, however, as these facts portray his temperate and judicious policy as regards his public administration, there is a document extant which yet more strongly evinces his generosity and kindness of heart towards his kindred, and illustrates, by a pleasing example, the nature of that influence which he possessed over the king, and the manner in which he exercised it, to soften his royal brother's revengeful spirit, and to preserve for the male line of the House of Neville a remnant at least of that vast inheritance which had been,

* Whitaker's Hist. of Richmond., vol. i. p. 335.
† Hist. Durham, p. 66.
‡ Drake's Eboracum, p. 123.
§ Parl. Rolls, 15 Ed. IV.

by the attainder of their race, alienated from them. On the 23d February, 1475, an act was passed which recites that the king, considering the treasons and other offences committed by John Neville, late Marquis Montague,* had intended by the authority of the present parliament to have attainted him and his heirs for ever; "which to do, he, at the humble request and prayer of his right dear brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and other lords of his blood, as of other his lords, spareth, and will no further proceed in that behalf." But to guard against the possibility of Gloucester's being himself, by reason of this act, dispossessed of any lands and possessions that the Lord Montague's son, from the abandonment of the attainder, might hereafter claim, as the heir at law to his late uncle, the Earl of Warwick, this same act most carefully secures Richard from any such contingency,† the award to the Lord Montague being limited to such possessions only as had belonged to his father, and not such as would, under other circumstances, have accrued to him, as the heir at law, and head of the House of Neville.

The legislative enactment tends greatly to exonerate Gloucester from those mercenary feelings and from that malicious and covetous disposition which neither consanguinity, it was believed, could soften, or friendship qualify or subdue.

It likewise certainly weakens the imputation cast upon this prince by Rous,‡ but evidently without authority,§ that he "imprisoned for life the Countess of Warwick, who had fled to him for refuge." The probability is rather that he aided to restore her to liberty, and to release her from the religious sanctuary which she had been compelled to adopt upon her own and her husband's attainder; for in the Paston Letters, bearing date 1473, it is stated that "the Countess of Warwick is out of Beaulieu sanctuary, and that Sir James Tyrrel conveyeth her northwards: men say, by the king's assent; whereto some men say, that the Duke of Clarence liketh it not."‖ Now, as she was removed to her native county and restored to her kindred by the "assent" of the king, although in avowed opposition to the wishes of the Duke of Clarence, the inference is, that a third party petitioned for her release: and who so likely to do so as Richard of Gloucester, who had recently been united to her youngest child, the companion and participator, nay, in one sense, the cause of all of her parent's late trials and misfortunes? while the opposition made by Clarence to the restoration of his mother-in-law to freedom was only in accordance with the same ungenerous spirit that made him covet the whole of her vast possessions, and even rendered it necessary for his royal brother to strip the hapless countess altogether of her rich inheritance before the quarrel could be appeased between that avaricious prince and Richard, Duke of Gloucester. There exists, indeed, not a single record to fix upon this latter prince either severity or persecution towards the unfortunate countess; neither could she, by any possibility, have "fled to him for refuge," as stated by Rous, for she was not at large at the period named; besides, the religious asylum which had protected her from the period of her

* Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 124.
† "The king, remembering the great and laudable services that his said right dear brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, hath dyvers tymes done to his highness, ordaineth and enacteth that his said brother shall have and hold to him and the heirs of his body so long as there should be any heir male of the said marquis' numerous honours, castles, lordships and manors (which are enumerated) in the county of York, which lately belonged to Richard Neville, late Earl of Warwick." If the issue male of the said marquis died without issue male during the duke's lifetime, he was to hold the estate for his life.—*Rot. Parl.*, vol. vi. p. 124.
‡ Hist. Reg. Anglica, p. 215.
§ Historic Doubts, p. 111.
‖ Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 145.

husband's death was far greater security than any protection that could have been given her by Richard of Gloucester.

The division of her lands—if after attainder they could any longer be considered as hers—was commanded by the king in council in 1472.* She was not released from sanctuary until 1473, and then it was openly, not covertly done, and with the express consent of the sovereign. Suitable escort was also provided by the king to ensure her safety during her progress northwards: and this circumstance must not be overlooked; for it is essential to the exculpation of Gloucester, to call attention to the fact, that Sir James Tyrrel, though associated in after years with Richard, was at this time in the service of Edward IV., being master of the horse and a considerable officer of the crown,† and not in the slightest degree under the control of the Duke of Gloucester, or connected with his household.

In 1474, the act of Parliament specified that the Countess of Warwick was no more to be considered in the award of her inheritance than "if she were naturally dead;"‡ but this cruel decision, be it remembered, was the act of the legislature, not that of Richard, Duke of Gloucester. He had, indeed, no object after this decision for incarcerating the relict of the attainted Warwick; and no prison under his control is named as the scene of her captivity, no fortress has ever been associated with Richard's tyranny to his wife's mother, whilst his intercession for Montague's children affords ample ground, in conjunction with the above fact, to warrant the supposition that he also exerted himself to soften the condition of the venerable countess by restoring her to her kindred and to liberty, although he had no power to re-invest her either with lands or possessions.

Whatever motives may be attributed to Richard, either as connected with the acquisition of wealth for mere personal aggrandizement or authority, to forward his ambitious views and increase his sway in the extensive district intrusted to his charge, one thing, at all events, is apparent, viz., that he exercised his vast power for the benefit of the community at large, and that he won universal popularity throughout a district embracing the most turbulent portion of King Edward's dominions, by the active zeal and well-tempered judgment that made him the defender of the oppressed,§ and the advocate of justice, without any respect to persons, and without recourse to those severities which were common to the fierce and unsettled times in which he lived. On this point all the northern historians are fully agreed, and their local testimony is amply corroborated by various public documents bearing on the period, and connected with the acts that thus tend to retrieve Gloucester's memory from the unjust and untenable imputations which have so long obtained respecting him. Nor were his acts of bounty and munificence confined wholly to the north; many other examples from various sources might be adduced, showing his zeal generally for the advancement of religion and learning. Of these, perhaps, no stronger instance could be selected than his founding, about this time, four fellowships at Queen's College, Cambridge, and his gift to the same academic institution of the rectory of Foulmire in Cambridgeshire, the great tithes to be appropriated to the use of the president.‖

But peace and its accompanying blessings were not destined, for any length of time, to smile on Richard's career, or call forth such exercise of the powers of his energetic mind as have just been adduced. From his very

* Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 90.

† See Horace Walpole's reply to the president of the Society of Antiquaries, published in the Archæologia for 1770.

‡ Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 100.

§ See Plumpton Correspondence, p. 26.

‖ Cooper's Ann. of Cambridge, p. 225.

childhood he was educated for war, and the royal Edward felt and duly appreciated his brother's peculiar talents for aiding him, either by policy or generalship, in the more stormy paths of life.

This monarch had never forgiven Louis XI. for supporting the Duke of Clarence, and aiding him and the Earl of Warwick in their too successful rebellion.

He felt that the insurrection which drove him from his kingdom, and which had well nigh cost him his life, as it did his liberty, was fomented by the French king; and an exhausted treasury alone had kept Edward passive from the time when he was reinstated in his dominions, together, indeed, with a jealous apprehension of the Scottish monarch, arising from the open support this latter court had given to the Lancastrian fugitives. By means, however, of commissioners appointed in such cases to settle certain disputed border claims, a more friendly feeling had been gradually induced between Scotland and the House of York; and King Edward, still brooding over the injuries which he had received from the French monarch, and thirsting for revenge, bestowed his anxious attention towards settling the quarrel between Clarence and Gloucester, "lest their disputes might interrupt his designs with regard to France."*

It was at this critical juncture, and immediately following the termination of his domestic troubles, that Edward was solicited by his brother-in-law, Charles, Duke of Burgundy, to return in kind the assistance which he had formerly given him towards regaining the throne of England, by aiding him in making war on Louis XI., whose crafty policy had disgusted all the adjacent principalities, but especially those of Burgundy and Bretagne. Edward seized with avidity an occasion which he had so long desired of retaliating on the French monarch; and, cementing an amicable truce with Scotland, by the betrothment of the Princess Cecily of York, his second daughter, to the Duke of Rothsay, the heir apparent of that crown,† he summoned the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester, as well as all the chivalry of England, to aid him in carrying warfare into France, under the plea of regaining the lost possessions in that kingdom.

The particulars connected with the extensive preparations that ensued, and the motives that actuated the different parties concerned in carrying into execution this romantic design, belong too exclusively to the reign of Edward IV. to permit of any farther notice in these pages, excepting only such points as bear on the career of Richard, Duke of Gloucester. This prince, in common with the feudal lords of that period, held many of his estates by military tenure, and it would appear, from subsequent payments‡ awarded to him, that he carried to his brother a force suited alike to his influence in the north and to the chivalrous spirit of the Plantagenet race. In June, 1475, King Edward proceeded to Sandwich with the flower of the English nobility, and landed at Calais with an army consisting of 15,000 archers on horseback, and 1500 men at arms.§ With the hardihood which was peculiarly his characteristic, he had, on his embarkation, dispatched a herald to demand of Louis the crown of France; that monarch, however, with the keen subtlety that made him invariably overreach his enemies, by attacking them on their

* Chron. Croy., p. 557.

† Pinkerton's Hist. Scotland, vol. v. p. 1.

‡ An. 15 Ed. IV., 1475. Paid to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, for the wages of 116 men at arms, including himself as duke, at 13*s.* 4*d.* per day, 60*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*; six knights, at 2*s.* per diem each, 54*l.* 12*s.*; and to each of the remainder of the said 116 men at arms, 12*d.* per day, and 6*d.* per day as a reward, 743*l.* 18*s.* 6*d.*; and to 950 archers in his retinue, to each of them 6*d.* per day.—*Issue Roll of the Exchequer*, p. 498.

§ Philip de Comines, vol. i. p. 329.

weak points, being well aware of the impoverished state of the English treasury, first corrupted the herald,* and then clandestinely bribed not only the immediate followers but the actual counsellors of the English monarch, who scrupled not to accept gifts and pensions, and to barter their own and their sovereign's high military fame for the treasure which Louis profusely distributed, and which he could better spare than risk a renewal of those fierce wars which had formerly devastated his country and driven his ancestors from the throne.

And who alone withstood this general defection from the hitherto proud and noble spirit of English knighthood? Not the king; for he preferred a return to luxurious ease, with a pension, and an uncertain treaty securing its payment, from an adversary who had so often deceived him,† to realizing the high hopes of his chivalrous warriors, and maintaining the lofty position which he had assumed when entering France a claimant for her crown. Not the ministers of England; for even the chancellor of the realm, the master of the rolls, and the lord chamberlain scrupled not to accept that bribe, which the latter, however, refused to acknowledge by a written document.‡ Not the lordly peers and the proud barons, whose costly preparations for this renewal of the ancient wars with France had attracted the attention of all Europe; for the receipts for money and plate distributed to the most influential, says Philip de Comines, "is to be seen in the chamber of accounts at Paris!"§

It was Richard, Duke of Gloucester, alone!—the youngest prince of the Plantagenet race, and the one to whom, of all that race, covetousness and mercenary motives have been mostly imputed. He alone, of the three royal brothers, nay, of all the noble and the brave in King Edward's court, withstood the subtlety of Louis, and disdained the gold that was to sell the honour of his country,‖ and to sacrifice, at the shrine of bribery and corruption, the renown and greatness of England's chivalry.

"Only the Duke of Gloucester stood aloof, off on the other side," observes the biographer of King Edward IV.,¶ "for honour frowned at the accord, and exprest much sorrow, as compassionating the glory of his nation blemished in it. He repeated his jealousy of the world's opinion, which necessarily must laugh at so chargeable a preparation to attempt nothing, and scorn either the wisdom or courage of the English, when they shall perceive

* King Edward sent before him his herald to demand the crown of the King of France, who, having read his letters, returned a plausible and courteous answer. "Commend me to thy master," said the wily monarch; which the herald promising to do, was, with an honourable reward of 300 crowns and a rich piece of crimson velvet for himself, and a present of a stately horse, a wild boar, and a wolf for the king, graciously dismissed.—*Sandford's Geneal. Hist. of England*, book v. p. 389.

† Edward consented to withdraw his army from France, and forthwith to return to England, on the immediate payment of 75,000 crowns, and 50,000 crowns as an annual tribute: and to render more binding the treaty of peace between the two countries, it was ratified by an engagement entered into by the monarchs, that the Dauphin of France should espouse the Princess Royal of England, as soon as the parties were of age to fulfil this part of the contract.—*Rymer*, vol. xii. p. 14.

‡ See Appendix HH.

§ Philip de Comines, who was at this period confidentially employed in this negotiation by the French monarch, states, that 16,000 crowns were distributed to the chancellor, master of the rolls, lord chamberlain, Sir Thomas Montgomery, Lord Howard, Lord Cheney, Marquis of Dorset, &c. &c. To the Lord Howard the king gave 24,000 crowns in money and plate; to Lord Hastings, 1000 marks in plate; and he granted pensions to many of the highest nobles, in addition to the yearly tribute secured to the English monarch and the annuities settled on his ministers.—*Philip de Comines*, vol. ii. lib. vi. p. 6.

‖ Lord Bacon's Life of Hen. VII., p. 3.

¶ Habington, p. 147.

them in so full numbers and so well armed to pass the sea, after a defiance sent and challenge to a crown, to return back without drawing a sword."

But the single voice of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, availed little with leaders so degenerate and so easily corrupted; although the army in general, and many noble knights, responded to his patriotic feelings. His individual opposition, however, much as it redounded to his own credit, had no effect in weakening the issue of the French monarch's more subtle policy; nevertheless, even Louis himself respected the feelings and honoured the principle* that made Gloucester reject those degrading mercenary overtures which were accepted not only by the royal Edward and his ministers, but also by his brother of Clarence.

The crafty Louis, moreover, well understood the influence which strong minds exercise over those of less powerful intellect, and, despite of Richard's avowed opposition to his insidious policy, he paid the young duke the greatest respect, quickly perceiving the power which he possessed over his royal brother, and hoping to make it available in forwarding his own views.† But Gloucester, "jealous of the honour of the English nation,"‡ was neither to be allured from his faith to his sovereign or duty to his country; consequently, at the celebrated meeting at Picquiny, in which the two monarchs met personally to interchange friendly salutations, after the amicable treaty that had been effected between them, "the Duke of Gloucester was absent on the English side, in regard his presence should not approve what his opinion and sense had heretofore disallowed:"§ yet, on the other hand, when all points were definitively settled, and that farther opposition was fruitless, he is to be found watching over his brother's interests, and witnessing the validity of those political agreements which were to cement this most extraordinary alliance.

Louis, estimating the motives that had on these two occasions so exemplified Richard's character, by evincing in the one his love for his country, and in the other his attachment to his brother, invited him to Amiens before the departure of the English from France,‖ and there forced upon him, as a testimony of regard, some valuable horses and other presents, which the prince before had absolutely rejected when offered as a bribe. The attestation of Lord Bacon, Richard's bitter calumniator, is, perhaps, the most valuable authority that could be adduced on this point, prone as was that able biographer of Richard's rival and successor to magnify every evil report that malice had propagated to his discredit: "At Picquiny, as upon all other occasions," says the learned chancellor,¶ "Richard, then Duke of Gloucester, stood ever upon the side of honour, raising his own reputation to the disadvantage of the king his brother, and drawing the eyes of all, especially the nobles and soldiers, upon himself." In less than two months, without loss of life, but with grievous loss of reputation, King Edward's army, which had been assembled with such pompous display and such chivalrous pretensions, quietly prepared to return to England, without unsheathing the sword or bending the bow.

Richard signed the document** that betrothed the Princess Royal of Eng-

* Philip de Comines, lib. vi. ch. 2.
† Hutton, p. 53.
‡ Bacon, Hen. VII., p. 2.
§ Habington, Ed. IV., p. 155.
‖ Ibid., p. 163.
¶ Lord Bacon's Hen. VII., p. 3.

** On the 13th August, 15 Ed. IV., 1475, the Duke of Gloucester, with other nobles, being with the king "in his fielde beside a village called Seyntre, within Vermondon, a little from Peron," signed an agreement, by which it was stipulated, under certain conditions, (one of which was that the dauphin should marry the first or second of the king's daughters, and endow her with 60,000 livres,) he would abstain from war and withdraw his army.—*Cal. Rot. Pat.*, vol. xii. p. 15.

land to the heir apparent of the French crown; and, bitterly bemoaning the inglorious result of their enterprise, as did most of the knightly warriors who had followed his banner, he returned with King Edward to England on the eleventh day of September, 1475,—the one brother to give himself up to those enervating scenes of pleasure and luxury which clouded the end of a reign so propitiously commenced; the other to renew those active and useful labours which have outlived even traditionary libels, and which, to this day, incorporate the name of Richard of Gloucester in the north with those benefactors to mankind, who, bravely courting danger in time of need, can succour the oppressed, and be the agents of justice and mercy in more tranquil and peaceable seasons.

But the expenses attending this expedition could not be liquidated by the French king's profuseness to its leaders. The English nation had been taxed to a fearful degree to meet the demands made upon them, and, with the romantic spirit of the age, they had cheerfully met these demands when so much of glorious enterprise presented itself to their imagination; but when, at the expiration of three months, the army was disbanded and sent back to their homes, the mass of whom were full of indignation at the avarice of the king and his counsellors, and of discontent at the poverty which it had entailed upon themselves, a spirit of disaffection gradually arose, and Edward, though sanctioning the most severe measure, found it impossible to meet the difficulties resulting from his exhausted finances.

A statute, therefore, was passed in the following year, 1476, whereby it was enacted that all the royal patrimony, to whomsoever it had been granted, should be resumed and applied to the support of the crown.* This appears to have given great umbrage to the Duke of Clarence, whose sordid and avaricious disposition could ill brook the loss of any portion of his vast wealth, although he had been so recently enriched by the division of the lands of the Earl of Warwick, and by many high and lucrative offices bestowed upon him afterwards by the king.† Notwithstanding the reconciliation of the brothers after Edward's restoration to the throne, and the impartiality which that monarch had displayed when mediating between Clarence and Gloucester, no genuine affection or confidence appears afterwards to have subsisted between the restless and covetous duke, and his much-injured sovereign. The former was perpetually taking offence and creating disturbance by his quarrelsome and tenacious disposition, which could only be appeased so long as his jealous and irascible nature was softened by fresh honours, or appeased by additional wealth; while Edward could never forget, although he had forgiven, the injuries, the indignities and treachery which he had so little merited from his ungrateful brother. The Act of Resumption, to which the king was compelled to have recourse in his great necessities, not merely to stop the threatened insurrection, but to carry on the government, the Duke of Clarence considered a personal affront, since by it he lost the lordship of Tutbury, together with many other lands which he had previously obtained by royal grant; "and this," observes the chronicler of Croyland, "appears to have given rise to those dissensions between Edward and Clarence, which ended so fatally for the latter prince."‡ "It was remarked," adds that historian, "that the duke by degrees withdrew himself more and more from the royal presence, that he scarcely spoke a word in council, and would not willingly eat or drink in the king's house;" and he, at length, retired altogether from the court, and joining the Lady Isabel in the vicinity of Tewkesbury, there brooded over

* Chron. Croy., p. 559.
† Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 164.
‡ Chron. Croy., p. 561.

the discontent which he had so unwisely and intemperately displayed. The repose, however, which he had hoped to find in his domestic circle, was destined to be of short duration; and to the irritability of political annoyance was speedily added acute sorrow at the death of his wife, who had been some time in a declining state, and expired within a brief period of the birth of their second son, Richard of Clarence.

As was almost invariably the case with every illustrious personage who died suddenly, or whose health gradually failed, at this period of English history, the decease of the duchess was attributed to poison; and this conviction afforded fresh ground for the indulgence of her husband's impetuous temper, and for the display of his most injudicious conduct. Not satisfied with procuring the illegal condemnation and execution of Ankaret Twynhyo,* a female attendant of the deceased Lady Isabel, against whom no proof beyond what arose from the superstitions of the period could be alleged, the misjudging prince likewise made it an occasion of giving vent to the anger previously excited against the king, to impute the languor and debility which followed his wife's confinement, and ended in her dissolution, to sorcery practised against her by the reigning queen,† to whom, it will be remembered, he had ever been jealously opposed, and against whose family he had continually exercised the most unprovoked opposition. On this occasion, his royal brother's forbearance appears to have been severely tried; still, Edward did forbear, although Clarence continued to excite and provoke him. At length a combination of unhappy circumstances so conspired to feed the discord that had gradually weakened the slender tie which bound the brothers to each other, after what must be styled their political rather than their fraternal re-union, that Clarence's impeachment was resolved upon by the king as the only means of ridding himself of a most turbulent spirit that had goaded him beyond farther endurance. It appears that, not long after the death of the Duchess of Clarence, Charles, Duke of Burgundy, the husband of the Lady Margaret of York, was slain at the siege of Nanci, leaving as heiress to his vast possessions an only child, a daughter by a former marriage.‡

An inordinate love of wealth was the besetting sin of George, Duke of Clarence, and he immediately sought the assistance of his widowed sister, between whom and himself the strongest affection had ever existed, to aid him in furthering proposals of marriage with her richly-endowed daughter-in-law. But King Edward had too frequently experienced the unprincipled and treacherous conduct of his brother, to countenance an alliance that might again have led to his aiming at the English crown; and which, from the vast power as well as wealth with which it would invest Clarence, might, eventually, have proved the destruction of himself and his offspring.

His opposition to the alliance was fomented by the queen, who, in addition to her hatred of the duke, secretly indulged hopes of securing the rich heiress for her accomplished brother, the Lord Rivers. Both her views, however, and those of Clarence were frustrated by King Edward's unremitting exertions to promote a union between Maximilian, son of the Emperor

* About three months after the decease of the duchess, Ankaret Twynhyo was seized in her dwelling house, at Cayford, in Somerset, by a band of armed retainers, sent thither by the Duke of Clarence, and by them conveyed to Warwick Castle, where she was immediately tried, condemned and executed within three hours, on the charge of administering to the Duchess of Clarence "a venemous drink of ale mixed with poison, on the 10th of October, of which she sickened and died ten weeks after."—*Rot. Parl.*, vol. vi. p. 173.
† Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 174.
‡ Chron. Croy., p. 561.

of Austria, and the Princess of Burgundy; which alliance, chiefly through his means,* was at length successfully accomplished.

The anger of the Duke of Clarence against his royal brother now exceeded all bounds. He was no less rash and intemperate than violent and misjudging, and, within a brief period, under the plea of exculpating two of his retainers, who had been condemned to death on frivolous pretences, he proceeded to the council-chamber, and before the Lords there assembled in conference, publicly accused the king of injustice, and upbraided the conduct both of himself and his ministers.

The king, who was at Windsor, on receiving information of this outrage, commanded the prince to be arrested and committed to the Tower; his proceedings having been previously denounced by the monarch "as subversive of the law of the realm, and perilous to judges and juries."†

Most interesting are the minute details given by the cotemporary chronicler respecting the termination of an event which has for ever disgraced the memory and tarnished the lustre of the reign of King Edward IV. With the exception, however, of the appalling result, they are altogether irrelevant to this memoir, in which it is unnecessary to say more than that the imprisonment of Clarence was shortly followed by his trial, that the king himself appeared as a witness against his oft-offending and oft-forgiven brother, who, being attainted‡ and convicted of high treason,§ was sentenced to suffer death. "The duke was placed in confinement, and from that time never recovered his freedom," says the Croyland historian.‖ "What followed in the next parliament," he adds, "the mind shuns to relate, so sad seemed the dispute between two brothers of so great ability; for no one argued against the duke but the king, no one answered the king but the duke."

The accusations being deemed sufficient,¶ sentence of death was pronounced against him. The king, however, appears to have hesitated in ordering his brother's execution, for the chronicler states that "judgment was deferred." But the Commons, headed by their speaker, appeared at the bar of the House of Lords and prayed that the sentence might be carried into effect; which was delivered to the prince by Henry, Duke of Buckingham, he being specially appointed, for the time being, to the office of high steward of England, to the intent that he might not only pass upon him the awful judgment of the Peers, but superintend the accomplishment of the sentence. Accordingly, "within ten days of his condemnation, Clarence was executed, whatever was the mode of death, secretly within the Tower of London, on the 18th of February, 1478."**

How or in what manner this death was effected will probably ever remain a mystery; nor would it require notice in these pages, were it not that the act itself forms one of the many accusations brought against Richard, Duke of Gloucester, although he was resident in the north during the entire period of the fatal dispute that terminated in his brother's death; and although the most explicit statement is given by the cotemporary narrator, that the trial of Clarence was public, his condemnation desired and sought for by the king, and that his execution was not only sanctioned by the peers of the realm, but also demanded by the speaker of the House of Commons.

* Chron. Croy., p. 561. † Ibid., p. 561.

‡ The bill of attainder, so illustrative of the rude state of society at that period, and of the bitter feelings entertained by the king towards his erring brother, may be seen at length in Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 193; but the defence of the duke has not been preserved, although he is reported to have replied with great determination to the charges brought against him.

§ Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 193. ‖ Chron. Croy., p. 561.

¶ See Appendix II. ** Chron. Croy., p. 561.

There is, indeed, no single document existing that connects Gloucester with the quarrel,* whether in taking part with Edward, or in extenuating the conduct of Clarence, although the bill of attainder is still preserved; and that the Croyland writer appears himself to have been present at the trial. The differences that gradually increased between the two brothers had resolved themselves finally into a state question; consequently, the warrant for Clarence's death was delivered to that prince in all due form, by the lord high steward of England.

It was not until very many years after Richard's death that this serious crime was laid to his charge. Even the Tudor chroniclers, bitterly as they inveigh against him on most points, have not included this deadly act amongst the fearful crimes imputed to him: on the contrary, Hall, Holinshed and Stow unite in saying he openly denounced the extreme rigour of the sentence;† and Fabyan, Polydore Virgil, indeed all the older as well as cotemporary historians, are altogether silent as relates to Gloucester's participation in any manner in the dispute. Nearly the whole of these writers agree in ascribing the arraignment and execution of the misjudging prince to the instigation and influence of the queen and her aspiring and mercenary kindred: and of this fact there can exist little doubt, if consideration is duly bestowed not alone on the parties who at this time surrounded and possessed the greatest influence over the king, but on such as were most hostilely opposed to the ill-fated duke, and who were chiefly benefited by his death and attainder.‡ These were almost exclusively the queen and her connections.

So palpably, indeed, was the Lord Rivers enriched by his execution, that in the grant§ which conveyed to him such vast wealth, it was insinuated that Clarence had made a nuncupative will in his favour; while the wardship and marriage of the duke's heir, the infant Earl of Warwick, aged but three years, was granted to the queen's son, the Marquis of Dorset;‖ it being one of the most lucrative gifts that the crown could bestow upon a subject. Neither must the fact be overlooked as completing the chain of evidence that links the untimely end of Clarence with the queen and her kindred, that Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, he who, as temporary high steward, conveyed the sentence to the prince and was bound to see that it was carried into execution, was espoused to the Lady Katharine Wydville, the queen's sister, and nominated to that important office expressly for the occasion that on him might devolve the task of pronouncing judgment of death upon the royal prisoner.¶

Sir Thomas More is the first writer who intimates that the Duke of Gloucester acted with subtlety to Clarence, although even he admits that he protested against his execution. "Some wise men," says this learned author, "also ween that his drift covertly conveyed, lacked not in helping

* Dr. Lingard considers that the principal cause of Edward's jealousy against Clarence arose from his having been declared the next heir after Edward, the son of Henry VI., in which case, supposing the validity of that act, he was even then the rightful heir. The king was careful to have it repealed.—*Rot. Parl.*, vol. vi. p. 191. See *Lingard*, vol. v. p. 229.

† Hist. Doubts, p. 13.

‡ Bayley's History of the Tower, Part III., p. 335.

§ The grant which conveyed to Lord Rivers the rich possessions which probably provoked the fate of the unfortunate prince, is preserved in the Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 95; and Laing, in his comments upon it, says, "The hypocritical language of this donation is curious, and seems to fasten the murder indisputably on Rivers. The grant insinuates that Clarence at his death made a nuncupative will in Rivers' favour; a proof that his conduct required exculpation."—*Laing, Appen. Hen. Hist. Eng.*, vol. xii. p. 400.

‖ Cal. Rot., p. 325. ¶ Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 195.

forth his brother of Clarence to his death, which he resisted openly, howbeit somewhat (as men deemed) more faintly than he that were heartily minded to his weal."*

Who, however, after perusing this insidious accusation, can fail to be struck with the chancellor's personal comment upon the report? It is more conclusive, as regards the refutation of the charge, than the most laboured efforts, from a less virulent foe, to disprove it. "But of all this point," he adds, "is there no certainty; and whoso divineth upon conjecture, may as well shoot too far as too short." Yet upon this conjecture, upon the acknowledged uncertainty of this random accusation, has Richard of Gloucester been transmitted to posterity as the murderer of his brother; and this, too, in defiance of innumerable testimonies from his bitterest enemies, that he protested against so harsh a sentence, and likewise of positive proof that he benefited in no degree either by his brother's death or attainder.

But tales that savour of the marvellous or the horrible seldom lose by repetition; least of all can this be expected when they are founded in the first instance upon conjecture alone. The insinuation conveyed by Sir Thomas More, that Gloucester's efforts to save Clarence were but feeble and grounded on subtlety, were magnified by the Lord Chancellor Bacon into—"that prince being the contriver of his brother's death."† Shakspeare improves on the tradition, by representing him as the bearer of the warrant, nay, the associate of the murderers;‡ while Sandford, whose "Genealogical History of the Kings of England" has been considered a standard authority for nearly two centuries, completes the fearful picture by making Richard the actual perpetrator, in his own person, of the dark and terrible deed. "After he had offered his mass penny in the Tower of London," says the Lancastrian herald, "he was drowned in a butt of malmsey, his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, assisting thereat with his own proper hands."§

Thus has Richard's character been gradually defamed. Thus has the career of a young, energetic and highly-gifted prince, steering his own course in most troubled times with singular judgment and discretion, and prominent only amongst scenes of treachery and corruption by his acts of fidelity to his sovereign and of devotion to his country, been so distorted and misrepresented, to feed the malice of political rivals, that, to quote the words of Horace, Lord Walpole, the keen examiner into the traditions of this period, "the reign of Richard III. has so degraded our annals by an intrusion of childish impro-

* More's Rych. III., p. 110. † Lord Bacon's Hen. VII., p. 2.

‡ (*Enter two Murderers.*)

Gloster. But soft, here come my executioners.—
How now, my hardy, stout resolved mates?
Are you now going to dispatch this thing?
1*st Mur.* We are, my lord; and come to have the warrant,
That we may be admitted where he is.
Gloster. Well thought upon, I have it here about me.
(*Gives the warrant.*)
When you have done, repair to Crosby Place.
But, sirs, be sudden in the execution,
Withal obdurate, do not hear him plead;
For Clarence is well spoken, and, perhaps,
May move your hearts to pity, if you mark him.
* * * * *
I like you, lads;—about your business straight;
Go, go, dispatch.

Richard III., Act I. Sc. III.

§ Sandford, book v. p. 413.

babilities, that it places that reign on a level with the story of Jack the Giant-killer."*

Foremost among these "childish improbabilities" (so designated by that sagacious writer) may most assuredly be placed the popular report that Clarence was drowned in a butt of malmsey wine.† Excepting from its connection with Gloucester's alleged participation in the unnatural deed, it would not be necessary here to allude to a tradition well-suited to the marvel-loving period of the 15th century, the age of necromancy‡ and of reputed miracles, but which can scarcely require serious refutation§ in these days of more enlightened inquiry. The king, it was evident, shrank from the public execution of his brother, which, setting aside all kindlier feelings, would, indeed, have been too bold a measure even for the daring and revengeful spirit of Edward IV., considering that Clarence was but twenty-eight years of age, much beloved in private life, and remarkable both for his accomplishments and for his personal attractions. It is also evident, however, that the king had firmly resolved upon his destruction: and looking to the custom of those times, in which death was perpetually hastened by or imputed to poison, there is nothing improbable in the belief, that the prince was doomed to suffer death in that form, or that the fatal drug was conveyed to him in a beverage so universal as was "Malvesie"‖ or malmsey wine at the tables of the great and the opulent of that period.¶ But even this admission is, after all, but conjecture; for although the marvellous tale is reported by all the old chroniclers, yet no cotemporary record exists either for connecting the murder of Clarence with the popular belief of his having selected this singular mode of death, or for the still more idle and absurd tradition, that Gloucester in that manner participated in the execution of his brother. All that is positively known respecting the matter is simply this: that he was put to death "secretly within the Tower,"** by command of Edward IV.; and that his body was afterwards removed for interment to Tewkesbury, there to be deposited beside the remains of his late deceased wife, the Lady Isabel, of Warwick.††

Richard, moreover, has been charged with not interceding for Clarence,

* See Supplement to Historic Doubts, in Lord Orford's works, vol. ii. p. 184.

† Fabyan, p. 510, and Hall, p. 326.

‡ Of this there can scarcely be adduced a stronger example than the alleged cause of Clarence's condemnation, which forms a fitting companion to the mode in which his death for so many ages has been reputed to have been accomplished. "It is generally received among the vulgar," (says Habington, pp. 190, 191,) "and wants not the approbation of some chroniclers, that the chief ground of the king's assent to his death was the misinterpretation of a prophecy, which foretold that one, the first letter of whose name was 'G.' should usurp the kingdom, and dispossess King Edward's children. Of which there is much of probability; however, by his other actions, I should not judge the king easy to believe in such vanities..... Yet this served for the present, and carried a strong accusation against the duke: for this prophecy was alleged to be spoken by some of his servants, who *by necromancy had understood this from the devil.*" Shakspeare avails himself of this popular report, and incorporates both that and the alleged mode of his death in those striking scenes which fix the murder of Clarence upon the much-calumniated Gloucester.—See *Rich. III.*, Act. I. Scenes I. and IV.

§ Dr. Lingard says, "The manner of his death has never been ascertained, but a silly report was circulated that he had been drowned in a butt of malmsey wine."—Vol. v. p. 229. Bayley observes, in his valuable History of the Tower, (Part II. p. 337,) "It was the vulgar report that he was drowned in a butt of malmsey; a tale which, in all probability, owed its origin to the duke's great partiality for that liquor." Mr. Sharon Turner and Mr. Laing merely report the popular opinion, without attempting to refute so utterly incredible a tale.

‖ Chaucer.

¶ Leland's Collect., vol. vi. p. 5.

** Chron. Croy., p. 561.

†† Vincent on Brooke.

and his reputed influence over the king has been made another source of accusation against him, from his not seeming by the result to have exerted that influence in extorting a pardon for his brother. But no proof warrants the assumption either that Gloucester did not strive to save Clarence, or interfere to prevent the monarch from staining his memory and name with so foul a blot as that of fratricide.

If conjecture is in any way to be admitted, let it be asked whether it was probable that the Lady Cecily, their venerable parent, would have remained callous when her son was threatened with an ignominious death? Was it likely that, when on a former occasion of contention between the brothers, their widowed mother and attached sisters united with Gloucester in striving to bring about a reconciliation at a time when Clarence's life was in danger only, they would all be passive now, when that prince was imprisoned as a state criminal, and actually condemned to death? The probability is rather that every exertion was privately made to save the unhappy prince; and contemporary authority infers this fact from the statement recorded, that "judgment was deferred." But Edward was by nature inexorable; and Clarence had fearfully provoked and goaded him to extremities.* The queen, too, and her kindred,—the duke's bitter enemies,—were at hand to subdue in the king every kindly feeling of affection; and even the legislature, it appears, demanded his death. The private execution of his brother, however, and the secrecy with which the unnatural act was perpetrated all tend to warrant the supposition that efforts were made by the duke's kindred to save his life; while the expressive words of the Croyland chronicler, "the king, however, was (as I think) very often repentant of the deed,"† fix it exclusively on his mandate, and exonerates the Duke of Gloucester equally with the other members of the House of York, from tamely and inhumanly beholding the destruction of the ill-fated Clarence, who, it must also be remembered, though privately executed by command of his sovereign, was nevertheless openly condemned to death by the lords spiritual and temporal in Parliament assembled. There is not a single circumstance, moreover, whether founded on fact or based merely on tradition, that gives any ground to warrant the assumption that Richard was implicated in anywise with the dissensions that led to his brother's arrest, or that he was present even at the trial that ended in his death. A justifiable inference is, that he was far removed from the scene of so tragical an event; for, on the return of King Edward with his army from France, Gloucester proceeded direct to the north, and rejoined the Lady Anne and his infant son, at their chosen abode of Middleham Castle. From that period a variety of trivial local notices, either relative to the repair of fortresses under his charge, to the issuing of mandates in virtue of his appointments, or the payment of money, either in the way of debts, or for almsgiving, or the repair of churches, connect his name uninterruptedly with the northern counties; where he seems to have resided with little intermission during the three years that intervened between his return from France and the execution of the Duke of Clarence. Many of these documents — which, though in themselves and from their nature uninteresting, are valuable as establishing Richard's absence from the scene of strife, and fixing his residence in the

* Not content with imputing the death of the Lady Isabel to sorcery practised by the reigning queen, the unwise and misjudging Clarence included his royal brother in the charge of "negromancie;" for it is stated in the indictment, amongst other accusations brought against Clarence, that he publicly reported "our Soverayne Lord wrought by nygromancie, and used craft to poison his subjects such as he pleased." —*Parl. Rolls*, vol. vi. p. 193.

† Chron. Croy., p. 561.

north—are dated from Sheriff-Hutton Castle,* one of the ancient strongholds of the powerful Nevilles, in whose family it had remained for 300 years, until forfeited to the king by Warwick's attainder after the battle of Barnet. It was then given by Edward as a reward to Gloucester in 1471,† and that prince bestowed so much attention in repairing and beautifying this magnificent structure, and in improving the demesne altogether, that the lordship and manor were within a brief period from the time now under consideration‡ purchased by the king from his brother for the sum of 500*l.*

The only well-attested fact that connects the Duke of Gloucester with the court of Edward IV. after that monarch's return from France, was one which is peculiarly characteristic of the fraternal affection which, on every occasion saving the one instance of the ignoble treaty with Louis XI., united the two brothers, and one which wholly acquits Richard of having participated in the offence at the act of resumption, which was so unwisely resented by Clarence. The public event now alluded to was the solemnization of the marriage of King Edward's second son, the infant Duke of York, with his cousin, the Lady Anne Mowbray,§ the heiress of the House of Norfolk; and the active part taken in the ceremony by Richard of Gloucester is quite consistent with the warmth of feeling and affectionate energy which he invariably testified upon all matters connected with the interests of his family. He attended as chief mourner the obsequies of his deceased father. He followed his brother into exile and poverty. He accompanied his young sister on her state progress, preparatory to her marriage. He was the chief mediator in reconciling his elder brothers when hostilely arrayed against each other. He attested the betrothment of his niece to the dauphin of France, although opposed to the treaty that led to the contract; and on this present occasion he is found supporting his infant nephew, in virtue of his near relationship, in a marriage sanctioned by the church‖ and earnestly desired by the king.

This latter event—rendered remarkable from the great splendour of the ceremony, and yet more so from the youthful ages of the parties concerned, the bridegroom being but five, and the bride not three years of age—led to one of those domestic re-unions which, proclaiming as they do the unanimity and affection which—in all but one instance—bound the several members of the House of York to each other, contrast so singularly with the unnatural dissensions between the king and the Duke of Clarence, which embittered the whole of that monarch's reign, and terminated at length in his brother's untimely death. Every branch of this noble race was assembled on the joyful occasion, with the exception of the discontented Clarence; and he, as has been before stated, had withdrawn himself from court a few months previously, and was openly at this time displaying his ill-will against the king, and his rancorous feelings of malignity towards the queen; while the prominent part which, as the elder brother, was naturally to have been expected from him at the royal wedding, devolved, as on all previous occasions of domestic interest it had done, upon the Duke of Gloucester. "The Bishop of Norwich proceeded to the marriage, and

* Castellum Huttonicum, pp. 2. 4.

† Cott. MSS., Julius B. xii. fol. 111.

‡ Issue Rolls of the Exchequer, p. 499.

§ Anne, daughter and heir of John Mowbray, the last Duke of Norfolk of that name, was married in 1477 (being quite a child) to Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, second son of Edward IV., who was on this marriage created Duke of Norfolk, &c. &c. This prince dying without issue, the great possessions and honours of this noble family came to Sir John Howard, knight, Lord Howard, whose mother was a sister and co-heir of Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk. Anne, Duchess of Norfolk, the infant bride of the royal duke, died in her early years.—*Paston Letters*, vol. ii. pp. 46. 187. 194.

‖ Appendix JJ.

asked who would give the princess to the church and to him? and the king gave her.* Then there was great number of gold and silver cast among the common people, brought in basins of gold, cast by the high and mighty prince, the Duke of Gloucester; and from St. Stephen's Chappel the Duke of Gloucester led the bride on the right hand." This marriage occurred on the 15th of January, 1477, about a month after the demise of the Lady Isabel,† and at the identical period when the inconsiderate Clarence had ascribed her death to sorcery practised by the queen consort. It also immediately preceded the time when the duke aspired to the hand of the Princess Mary of Burgundy;‡ the loss of whose principality, together with her rich inheritance, was the foundation of that open hostility to the king, which, pursued with equal violence as had been the duke's contention on an almost similar occasion with his brother of Gloucester, ended at length in his premature and violent death.

Richard appears to have returned to the north after the festive scene which induced his visit to the court of Edward IV.: for various important documents are extant which fix his residence at Middleham during the ensuing year; and his occupation there, which led to those documents, forms a striking contrast to the unnatural dissensions between his elder brothers, which reached their climax during the same period. This fact is invaluable, not only in disproving Richard's participation in the dispute, but in displaying also how different was the bent of his mind from that mischievous spirit with which it has so long been the fashion to invest him.

The strong attachment of this prince to Middleham has been before noticed; and this he evinced in the most laudable and praiseworthy manner when it became his own baronial hall,§ the great object which engaged his attention at the period under consideration being a desire to amplify the parish church of Middleham,‖ and to found and incorporate a college there for a dean and twelve secular priests. The advowson of the rectory of Middleham, by his marriage with the heiress of the Nevilles, vested in himself; but as the additional expense of maintaining six chaplains and several clerks would bear heavy upon the incumbent, he sought to provide for this inconvenience by a license of mortmain, empowering the new foundation to acquire lands to the amount of 100 marks per annum.¶

Nothing can be couched in stronger language, or give a more generally amiable view of the motive which influenced Gloucester, or the light in which he was viewed by his northern partisans, than the manner in which the instrument conveying the rector's consent is worded;** and the prince

* Sandford's Geneal. Hist., book v. p. 394.

† Isabel, Duchess of Clarence, died on the 12th December, 1476.

‡ Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, was slain in battle, 5th January, 1477, leaving only one daughter, Mary, by his first wife. This princess, being heir of his opulent and extensive dominions, was courted by all the potentates in Christendom. She married Maximilian of Austria, son of the emperor Frederick.—*Paston Letters*, vol. ii. p. 121.

§ Leland says, "Middleham Castle joineth hard to the townside, and is the fairest castle of Richmondshire next Bolton;" and Whitaker, describing it after its glory had yielded to the ravages of time, says, "As it is, majestic in decay, Middleham Castle as an object is the noblest work of man in the county of Richmond."—*Hist. of Richmondshire*, pp. 341, 342.

‖ Ibid., vol. i. p. 335.

¶ See Whitaker's Hist. of Richmondshire, vol. i. p. 335.

** "Whereas, among other remedies, &c., the solemnities of mass are deservedly esteemed to be grateful to the Divine mercy manifested by the sacrifice of our Saviour for the salvation of the living and the repose of the dead; the petition lately exhibited to me on behalf of the most excellent prince, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, Lord of Middleham, contained that the said most excellent prince proposed and intended to amplify the said parish church of Middleham, to the praise of Almighty God, his most excellent mother, and all saints, and the continual increase of divine worship, and the same to endow with greater rights and possessions; and also to increase the number of ministers in the same, devoutly dwelling with God, if the said church were erected into a collegiate church, by the most reverend father in God, Laurence Booth, Archbishop of York, primate of England, &c."—See an Abstract of *Beverley's Consent, in Whitaker's Richmondshire*, vol. i. p. 335.

appears to have followed up the matter with his accustomed zeal, until he succeeded in obtaining from Parliament a license to found and endow the college* at his own expense and at his sole cost.† This first step towards the advancement of a project which he had so much laboured to effect, received the sanction of the legislature on the 16th January, 1478;‡ but as the step was not complete without the consent of the rector, William Beverley, the probability is, that Gloucester returned to Middleham to secure that consent; the more so, as the wording of the instrument displays such keen anxiety respecting the legality of the measure. "In witness of which," says the reverend incumbent, "as I have not an authentic seal, I have therefore procured the seal of the reverend the official of the court of York, to be put to these presents, January 20th, A. D. 1478."§ Now, this date is just one month previous to Clarence's murder, which took place on the 18th February, 1478: and as no mention is made by the cotemporary historian relative to Gloucester's connection with the trial, or to his having been present at it, or having spoken in Parliament on the subject, the probability is, that, finding all remonstrance ineffectual either towards subduing the violence of King Edward's indignation, or arresting the fate of Clarence, he remained absent from the painful scene; and returning to Middleham, pursued "the laudable and meritorious plan," and carried into effect "the pious desires" which, says the rector, "the said most excellent prince" had in view in his proposition.‖ That he continued in favour with the king, notwithstanding, as asserted by Sir Thomas More, that he "resisted openly" the condemnation of his brother of Clarence, is evinced by a signal mark of favour conferred upon him within a few days of the duke's secret execution:—"Edward Plantagenet, eldest son of Richard, Duke of Gloucester," being "created Earl of Salisbury, to him and the heirs of his body," by patent dated 15th February, 1478.¶

Thus, by a singular coincidence, were the renowned titles of Earl of Salisbury and Earl of Warwick revived at the same period in the persons of the elder sons of Warwick's co-heiresses, and the grandsons of that Duke of York for whom the preceding occupants of those noble titles had so devotedly fought and bled; that of Salisbury** being bestowed on Edward of Gloucester by

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

† See Appendix KK.

‡ Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 172.

§ Whitaker's Richmondshire, vol. i. p. 335.

‖ "The Duke of Gloucester, not content with founding the college, by another deed, bearing date December 20, anno 19 Ed. IV., actually grants the dean and college the advowson of the church and parish of Middleham. Clouds and darkness rest on the remaining steps in the history of this foundation, which neither wholly took effect nor wholly fell to the ground. For as to the dean, his jurisdiction, privileges and exemption, they remain unimpeached and undiminished to this day; but though the college were never dissolved, the advowson never passed, according to the founder's grant, to the dean and chaplains. . . . A book of statutes was framed for the college, anno 18 Edw. IV.; yet we hear no more of them, and the probability is, that on the death of Richard III., and the annihilation of his interest, Beverley, as his successor, silently permitted the foundation to relapse into a rectory for his own emolument."—*Whitaker*, vol. i. p. 338.

¶ Rymer, Add. MSS., No. 4615, art. 5.

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

favour of the king on the 15th instant, and that of Warwick* inherited by Edward of Clarence upon the execution of his parent on the 18th of the same February, 1478. The titles seemed as ominous to the youthful possessors of these honours as was the more familiar appellation of EDWARD; a name borne by the elder sons of all three brothers, and probably bestowed in their baptism from the same motive—compliment to the reigning sovereign, the head of the House of York. Few tales of fiction, conceived in the very keenest spirit of romance, could depict more disastrous fortunes, or portray more fatal careers, than those of Edward, Prince of Wales, Edward, Earl of Warwick, and Edward, Earl of Salisbury, the eldest sons of Edward IV., George of Clarence, and Richard of Gloucester, and the last male heirs of the royal line of Plantagenet, the very name of which was destined to pass away with these ill-starred and unfortunate princes.

But the age in which their short but eventful lives were passed was one in which all the horrors of romance were realized in actual life; it was the era of the dark and the terrible—the epoch of mysterious and unhallowed deeds—the period in which conspiracy and murder were things of every day occurrence, and in which the most appalling acts were accomplished with such facility, that they excited comparatively little terror, and seldom elicited more than feeble inquiry.

The most turbulent and daring spirits, when called upon to account for their actions, if moving in an elevated station of life, found a ready shield in the prevalent belief of the influence of necromancy and magic; and if an early death or a violent end was supposed to be the result of prophecy, or to be accelerated by supernatural agency,† the whole multitude were excited and subdued by commiseration for the offender; while every previous misdeed in him was palliated or forgotten. On the other hand, those who were conscious of possessing qualities which lead to greatness, and had sufficient moral courage to resist the evil passions of those degenerate times, were viewed with jealousy, suspicion and mistrust; their actions were misconstrued, their motives calumniated, and the most generous intentions and wisest measures were attributed to hypocritical deception, to deep-laid schemes of personal aggrandizement, and little less than superhuman foresight as to the successful result of the wildest plots, and of wholesale plans of death and destruction to their fellow men.‡

* Sandford, book v. p. 414.

† This fact is well exemplified in the current report already noticed, that the accelerating cause of the Duke of Clarence's death was his supposed connection with the obnoxious prophecy that related to the letter G. "And because there was a prophecy," says Rous, the cotemporary historian, "that after E., that is, after Edward IV., G. should reign, meaning thereby George, Duke of Clarence, he was on that account slain; and the other G., namely, Gloucester, preserved until the fulfilment of the prophecy."—*Hist. Regum Angliæ*, p. 215. Holinshed repeats the tale, but converts it into a romance by the addition of the after report that the hapless prince was drowned in malmsey wine. "Finally, the duke was cast into the Tower, and therewith adjudged for a traitor and privily drowned in a butt of malmsey." . . . "Some have reported," he proceeds to say, "that the cause of this nobleman's death rose of a foolish prophecy, which was, that after King Edward, one should reign whose first letter of his name should be a G."—*Holinshed*, p. 346.

‡ The application of the alleged prophecy to after events and after circumstances has reference equally to the undeserved stigma which it attached to Richard's name, as to the positive evil it brought upon Clarence; for Sandford, in his "Geneal. Hist. of the Kings of England," when reciting the many charges brought against this unhappy prince, says, that the belief of his ambitious designs against the reigning family was confirmed "by the misapplication of a certain prophecy, that a G. should reign after an E., to be meant of this George," when, adds the historian (who lived many years after both the brothers were laid at rest,) "Gloucester more craftily lay in wind for the game."—*Sandford, Geneal. Hist.*, book v. p. 413.

Such, in the year 1478, as may be gathered from the preceding details, was, in a degree, the position of King Edward's brothers. The one, rushing headlong to his own destruction by a series of misdeeds, embracing treachery, covetousness, rebellion and unjustifiable hostility to his sovereign and the laws of the realm, has ever been looked upon as a martyr and a political victim, on account of the supposed misapplication of a vague prophecy to his Christian name of George; while the other, although openly and honourably practising deeds of virtue and piety,* and making himself conspicuous only by acts of fidelity and obedience to the constituted authorities, and of devotion to his sovereign and his family, has, in consequence of his title of Gloucester chancing to realize the same prognostic that accelerated his elder brother's destruction, been selected as the object on which to engraft every evil action either covertly or openly performed by Edward IV. and the Duke of Clarence, because he preceded in intelligence the corrupt times in which he lived; and, perceiving the dangers that characterized that period, was enabled to meet the difficulties by which he was surrounded, and by temperate and conciliating conduct to escape the misfortunes which befell his elder brothers when pursuing a less discreet and less creditable policy.

* An indenture for the composition of tithes in the parish of Middleham, signed by "the right high and mighty prince Richard, Duke of Gloucester, great chamberlain, constable and admiral of England, and Lord of Middleham, on the one party; and Sir William Beverley, the dean and the chaplains of the college of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, of Middleham, on the other party," furnishes another relic of the praiseworthy transactions of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, with the dean and prebendaries at a very early period after the foundation.—*Whitaker's Richmond.*, p. 348.

CHAPTER X.

Richard, Duke of Gloucester, occupies Barnard Castle.—He rebuilds a portion of that fortress.—His cognizance, the White Boar, still preserved in the ruins there.—Brackenbury attached to Gloucester's service, as the Lord of Barnard Castle.—The characters of Edward IV. and Richard of Gloucester at this era contrasted.—Fresh honours are bestowed upon the duke by the king.—Gloucester inherits the ancient mansion, "The Erber," and leases "Crosby Place."—Description of this prince's household, administration and economy.—James, King of Scotland, breaks his truce with England.—The Duke of Gloucester appointed lieutenant-general of the kingdom.—He besieges Berwick.—Marches to Edinburgh.—Agrees to a cessation of hostilities on the most honourable terms.—Louis XI. violates the treaty of Picquiny.—Indignation of Edward IV.—He resolves to invade France.—Preparations for war.—King Edward's illness.—His death.

Amongst the very small portion of the Duke of Clarence's confiscated lands which were bestowed upon Richard of Gloucester, after the death of his brother, was the undivided possession of Barnard Castle,* in the county of Durham; a moiety of which rich demesne had been enjoyed by Clarence as the husband of Warwick's elder co-heiress; but, becoming vested in the crown after the attainder of this prince, the remaining part was given to Richard by the king, as the consort of the younger and sole surviving sister.

To this rich inheritance of the Beauchamps, which had been conveyed to the House of Neville at her marriage by the ill-fated Countess of Warwick,† the Duke of Gloucester appears to have removed immediately after it had become exclusively his own; and this superb building, the abode of the Lady Anne's maternal ancestors, seems henceforth to have shared with Middleham Castle the peculiar attention and interest of Gloucester, and is distinguished even above that favoured abode, or indeed any other of his dwelling places, for the variety and value of the personal memorials which connect it with his long residence there. The situation of the fortress was one of surpassing beauty, embracing as it did some of the finest points of view connected with the wild and picturesque vale of the Tees;‡ which river guarded one side of the high and precipitous rock on which the castellated mansion was erected, while the ancient town, which derived its name from the fortress, was situated at its base, on the southern acclivity of an eminence rising with a steep ascent from the river; its old market cross and antiquated buildings, together with its romantic situation, harmonizing well

* Surtees, vol. iv. p. 66.

† Anne, Countess of Warwick, was the sole heir of the noble Beauchamps, and Barnard Castle, their occasional abode, formed a portion of her rich dower. King Henry VII., on his accession to the throne, took immediate possession of the castle, "having a mind himself thereto;" but as the hapless countess had survived both her daughters, and also her sons-in-law, the monarch caused an act to be passed restoring to her all her hereditary estates, that she might convey the fee to the king; who coveted her rich possessions of which she had been so cruelly deprived, and restored them only to appropriate them to himself with greater show of legality.—See *Dugdale*, vol. i. p. 166.

‡ Surtees, p. 90.

with the rich scenery commanded from all parts of the castle across the river and along the bishopric of Durham.

It was a truly royal abode, and well suited to the immense power which, as lieutenant of the north, Gloucester enjoyed, being second only in authority to the sovereign* himself, as is rendered apparent by documents yet preserved in the archives of the palatinate of Durham; while the taste and judgment which he displayed in such parts of the building as were exclusively his own architecture, exhibited the same delicacy and refinement, united to boldness and grandeur of design, which so peculiarly characterized every work undertaken by the magnificent Plantagenets.

At the period under consideration, when Barnard Castle was at the height of its grandeur, it must have been a place of vast magnitude and importance, for even at the close of the last century its ruins were reputed to cover nearly seven acres of ground. Its foundation was coeval with the Norman conquest,† but its renovation and embellishment were the work of Richard of Gloucester.‡ Here may be found the earliest trace, and, perhaps, the best preserved specimen of his badge, "the silver boar."§ Here this prince's name in the antiquated letters of the period is still preserved, which, united to the frequent recurrence of his cognizance in the town, attests his popularity there; and by perpetuating the work of his own hands, transmits almost the only actual memento of Richard's private life, and portrays the nature of his peaceful occupations. Here, too, commenced that connection with Brackenbury, whose faithful and devoted attachment to the duke, even unto death,‖ has been the probable means of darkening that warrior's fame, and of associating his name with revolting acts and fearful traditions, which, when separated from mere hearsay reports, and impartially traced to the times in which the individuals themselves flourished, will be found to have as little solid foundation as the many other unjustly imputed crimes which it became a sort of fashion, after Richard's death, to attach both to his memory and that of his warmest friends and supporters. Surtees, in speaking of Barnard Castle, says, "The walls of the two inner areas are still most magnificent;" and such, indeed, his elaborate description portrays them to be. "Further northwards," he adds, "a beautiful mullioned window, hung on projecting corbeils, still exhibits withinside on the soffit of its arch the boar of Richard, with some elegant tracery, plainly marking the latest portion of the castle to be the work of Gloucester;"¶ and perhaps no better exemplification of this prince's badge, in which a fanciful analogy may be traced to the savage disposition unjustly fixed upon him, can be selected than a copy of the remarkable specimen, coeval with Richard himself, which ornamented his state chamber; the oriel window from which he may be supposed so often to have gazed, and with which the historian of Durham illustrates his most valuable and interesting description.

* Commissions of array were three times issued under Bishop Dudley, for calling out the armed force of the palatinate of Durham, to join the royal troops under the Duke of Gloucester against the Scots; and it is observable that one of these commissions is directed by the king to the duke himself, as lieutenant of the north, without reference to the episcopal authority.—*Surtees*, p. lx.

† Barnard Castle received its name from Barnard de Baliol, who came into England with the Conqueror, and whose great grandson was afterwards King of Scotland. Edward I. having dethroned him, he seized the manor and castle, and retained possession of them until his death.

‡ Surtees, p. 67.

§ See Gray's Ode on "The Bard."

‖ "Sir Robert Brackenbury adhered faithfully to Richard, and died with his sovereign on Bosworth Field."—*Surtees*, p. 71.

¶ Ibid., p. 90.

The badge, impress, or cognizance, as certain heraldic figures in general use at this period of English history were indifferently styled, "was an emblematical device adopted," says Camden, "by noble and learned personages to notify some particular conceit of their own,"* and were altogether distinct from coats of arms, "which were used to distinguish families, and usual among the nobility in wars, tilts or tournaments;"† or from the crest, the highest armorial distinction, which was worn in the helmet by the knight himself, as an especial mark of nobility. The badge, in short, was the household or livery cognizance‡ worn by the retainers of princes and powerful barons, to declare visibly the liege lord to whose service they were attached, and it consisted of an emblematic figure sewn or fastened to the shoulders, breast, or some other prominent portion of the dress, in the same manner that the badge of watermen is fixed to their sleeves in the present day; which humble illustration constitutes almost the only existing trace of this once important symbol of fealty and of vassalage.

Many of the most remarkable associations relating to the feudal times are connected with this ancient appendage,§—the very name of Plantagenet, itself, for example,—distinguishing, as it did, that chivalrous race of English monarchs, the last of whom is the subject of this memoir, being derived from the cognizance of their progenitor, a sprig of the Planta-genista (the yellow broom), adopted by him as a symbol of humility when performing a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.‖

King Edward IV. bore his white rose and the fetterlock as the particular device of the House of York; and after the battle of Mortimer Cross, he adopted the white rose en soleil¶ as his *especial* cognizance, from the parhelion that preceded that important battle, "in which three suns were seen immediately conjoyning in one." The cognizance of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was a rose supported on the dexter side by a bull, a badge of the House of Clare, and on the sinister side by a boar, which boar he had found among the badges of the House of York. This latter device was the one he selected as his own personal badge,** the cognizance of his retainers and household, and its preservation at his mansion of Barnard Castle is the more valuable from being sculptured under his own direction and associated with a portion of his life, of which so little notice has hitherto been taken, and on which the breath of slander could attach neither stain nor censure.

* Camden's Remains, p. 447. † Ibid.

‡ In the reign of Edward III. family badges were used with profusion to decorate the dresses, caparisons, furniture and utensils; and although the tournament sometimes presented a device fancifully adapted for the particular ceremony, still the principal houses, in imitation of the royal family, had a distinctive mark for their retainers, which secondary and menial tokens of family distinction were no doubt at that time better known to their dependents than the personal arms or crest of their liege lord. There are now very few of our nobility who continue the use of the badge distinctly; but they are still retained by some charitable foundations, and the yeomen of the guard wear them as in the time of Henry VIII.—*Collectanea Topog. et Geneal.*, vol. iii. p. 50. See also *Edmondson's Heraldry*, p. 189.

§ Appendix LL. ‖ Buck's Richard III., p. 6.

¶ Camden's Remains, p. 454.

** "The white boar was the badge of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and was retained by him after he ascended the throne. His arms were sometimes supported by two of them. In Sandford's time, there remained over the library gate at Cambridge, carved in stone, a rose, supported on the sinister side by a boar; which boar, the same author informs us, Richard had found among the badges of the House of York, being of silver, with tusks and bristles of gold, inscribed 'Ex Honore de Windsor.' The badge of the white boar is said to have been derived from the honour of Windsor."—*Retros. Review*, 2d Series, vol. ii. p. 156.

Hutchinson, in his account of the borough of Barnard Castle, observes that the cognizance of Richard is scattered all over the town in houses built of the stones obtained from the ruins of the castle; and Surtees, in bearing similar testimony, says, "In the wall of a low ancient dwelling, with mullioned windows, is a stone inscribed Ricardus in a bold raised letter; and on a house at a little distance is a stone coarsely sculptured with the boar passant."*

But in this favourite abode, as well as at Middleham Castle, Gloucester bestowed not his attention exclusively in embellishing his own dwelling-house, but exerted himself strenuously, as he had previously done at the former place, to obtain a license for founding a corresponding collegiate church for a dean, twelve secular priests, ten chaplains and six choristers, in honour of the Virgin, to be called "The College of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, at Barnard Castle;"† and that he succeeded in his praiseworthy and munificent design is made apparent by letters patent‡ still extant, in which the king grants license to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, "to found and incorporate a college at Barnard Castle."§

What a contrast do these domestic and commendable occupations present to those usually ascribed to this prince! How singular does it appear, that for three centuries one unqualified charge of depravity, in its most appalling sense, should have been affixed to the memory of a British monarch, commencing from the moment of his birth, and continued up to the very period of his decease, when so many documents actually existed, both legislative and local, that of themselves, and without requiring either comment or observation, negative the utterly incredible tales which have so long disgraced our regal annals, proving, beyond all power of contradiction, how bountiful, peaceably disposed, and well conducted was Richard, as Duke of Gloucester, at the identical period when his name has been branded with crimes and deep-laid schemes, which only the most depraved of human beings could have conceived, and the most heartless have put in execution.

Yet such is the case; and so deep-rooted, so firmly fixed are the prejudices entertained against Richard of Gloucester, from the impression having been conveyed in childhood, and confirmed both by dramatic exhibitions and graver studies in after years, that, in all probability, no proof, however strong, could wholly eradicate, in the present generation at least, the stain, the traditional imputation of Richard's guilt:—no; not even though the records of the land prove them unworthy of credit, and cotemporary evidence completely invalidates the fables of a later and credulous period.

Grievous, indeed, as affecting the truth of our national history, was the error, so long pursued by historical writers, of consulting and copying only such statements as had been already printed, and thus perpetuating and too frequently exaggerating, the misrepresentations and erroneous impressions of the early chroniclers. It is true that the extreme difficulty attendant upon the examination of original documents, arising equally from their obsolete character and from their wild dispersion, affords ample explanation, if not sufficient excuse, for the first compilers of so laborious a work as a complete national history for adopting the testimony of such writers who preceded them as were renowned for learning and estimated for integrity; still the misinterpretation, by an individual, however erudite of a single fact, much more of a continuous series of events, may for ever destroy the character and unde-

* Surtees, p. 79. † Tanner's Notitia, p. 117.

‡ Cal. Rot. Pat., p. 322.

§ "A license appears for such a foundation in 1477, but the design was probably left incomplete, or perished with its founder."—*Surtees*, vol. iv. p. 67.

servedly blight the reputation of a monarch, who, the victim of misconception in the first instance, becomes eventually the object of positive calumniation to future generations and to all ages.

Nor does this unhappy result imply either, in the writers themselves, a wilful or deliberate perversion of truth. Far from it: but it is human nature to judge of persons and things by preconceived notions, and to be biassed by personal feelings; and there is nothing more remarkable in the study of history than the fact so constantly made apparent to such as are engaged in the pursuit, that the sincerity of even the most impartial writers becomes affected when their prejudices, whether religious or political,* are called into play, or how completely the false colouring thus given by them to persons or things perverts the truth which they seek to establish, and from which, indeed, they have no intention of departing.

Unless the motives that led to certain actions are taken into consideration, —unless the moral condition of society at a given period forms the standard by which individuals who then flourished are judged,—unless the religion, laws, customs and manners of the country and the times are carefully weighed and properly estimated,—the truth can never become known. All views, opinions and conclusions, therefore, should be cautiously received, unless they are derived from the accounts of cotemporary writers; because these latter, from being acquainted with the causes that produced unforeseen results, and comprehending, in a great measure, the agency by which such results were brought about, are more likely to come to a right conclusion than those who have to canvass the motives of human actions, and to form an estimate of individual character, at a remote period, and under a state of things altogether distinct from the more civilized age in which the modern historian writes, and under the influence of which he is called upon to pronounce, at least, his own judgment.

There is no part of English history to which these observations are more applicable than that portion which comprises the brief career of Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Almost every matter in which he was concerned is enveloped in mystery; the most important events, as well as the most unimportant persons, all, if connected with him, partake of the same uncertainty, the same shadowing out of evil, with no more solid foundation than the ignis fatuus that deceives the unwary traveller, and defies all approach, all tangibility, because based only on delusion.

Amongst the number of those followers who have shared in the posthumous odium which for three centuries has been attached to the Duke of Gloucester, is Sir Robert Brackenbury, whose name, from its association with Barnard Castle, requires especial notice here; and the more so, because he appears to have been fully as much the victim of unfounded aspersion as the prince to whose service he was probably first attached by military tenure at this period of his history.

* Richard III. is not the only instance in our regal annals that could be adduced in corroboration of this fact. Queen Mary, melancholy as was her reign, resulting from the bigotry of her ministers and the fury of religious persecution at that period, was far from being the cruel and unfeminine character usually described. On the contrary, she was mild and amiable in private life, and her letters and literary productions which are yet extant (see *Hearne's Syllogi Epistolarium*, and *Strype's Hist. Memorials*) prove her to have been not only a right-minded as well as a very learned woman, but altogether the victim of the unhappy times in which she flourished, rather than the willing agent of those savage deeds which procured for her in after years the opprobrious term of "Bloody Queen Mary,"—an epithet resulting from the same factious spirit which bestowed on Gloucester the epithet of "Crook-backed Richard."

The family of Brackenbury was one of great respectability, and of very ancient date,* having been settled at Selaby, in the immediate vicinity of Barnard Castle, from the end of the twelfth century. One of the main bulwarks of this latter fortress was called, and indeed is still designated as "Brackenbury's Tower," probably, says Surtees,† "from the tenure of lands held by castle-ward;" or, it may be, from some distinguished warrior of the family having earned the distinction by his brave defence of the portion so named, during its siege under Edward I. The Robert Brackenbury, whose name is as inseparably interwoven with that of Richard of Gloucester, as

"Brackenbury's gloomy, weed-capt Tower,"‡

is with the fortress in which that prince so long sojourned, and on which his cognizance remains carved on buttress and window within sight of the ruined tower itself, was a junior member of this ancient family.§

When, therefore, the custom of the time is taken into consideration, of young men of high descent being invariably attached to the household and retinue of the great feudal lords in their neighbourhood, it is a fair inference, that upon Gloucester fixing his abode at Barnard Castle, a cadet of the Brackenbury family should be numbered among his retainers, as the vassal of his princely superior; even were he not compelled to do him service by some military tenure, binding his race to the fortunes of the lord of Barnard Castle, whoever he might be; and which it is more than probable was the case in this instance, by the name of his ancestors being attached to a portion of the fabric itself.

Richard of Gloucester appears to have possessed qualities that won the greatest confidence from such as surrounded him, and inspired the most devoted attachment in those on whom he bestowed his friendship. He distinguished Brackenbury with marks of the highest favour, and there is no existing document, or even tradition, to prove him undeserving of the prince's regard; while the firmness and fidelity with which that faithful knight followed Gloucester's fortunes to the very close of his life, even at the sacrifice of his own, as has been before observed, sufficiently explain the length and nature of their military connection, and account for Brackenbury's name suffering from being so intimately associated with a prince whose testimonies of regard were interpreted into bribery for crime, and whose rewards for faithful services were considered as designating only his co-partners in guilt.

It would be premature to follow up this subject farther at present; but in describing an abode so peculiarly associated with Richard's memory, and that of Brackenbury, as was Barnard Castle, it becomes essential to notice the simple and natural cause which probably led to the connection of the latter with the prince when sojourning there, and which was so likely to produce the friendship that has been the means of coupling their names in unenviable celebrity even to the present day.

For some years Richard appears to have pursued the same even and tranquil career; for although many local notices are extant, which, as regards

* Amongst the metrical legends of the county of Durham is one that perpetuates the ancient descent of the Brackenburys:—

"The black lion under the oaken tree
Made the Saxons fight, and the Normans flee."

This distich is one of the oldest of those which Sir Cuthbert Sharpe has collected in his pleasing little work on the traditions of this county. He explains its meaning by the crest of the family, which was a tree vert, under which is a lion couchant sable. —See *Bishoprick Garland*, p. 4.

† Hist. of Durham, p. 71.

‡ Layton's Poem of Castle Barnard.

§ Surtees, p. 91.

data, serve to keep him from year to year alive in public remembrance, and prevent his ever being entirely lost sight of, yet they chiefly relate to matters of the same import as those already described, viz., the preservation of peace in the northern counties by his promptness and energy in checking the inroads of the border chiefs, and allaying the first indication of discontent evinced in the extensive district intrusted to his charge; and, when not thus actively employed in a military capacity, bestowing his undivided attention towards beautifying or repairing various religious edifices in the north, and keeping in order the important fortresses requisite for guarding King Edward's English dominions against any sudden irruption from the Scottish frontier. In the Issue Roll of the Exchequer upwards of a thousand marks are assigned to Gloucester,* at this period, in payment of repairs to the walls of Carlisle, besides a farther grant of fifty marks allotted to him for the same purpose;† other sums, too, are awarded to Richard "as keeper of the marches of England near Scotland for the safe custody thereof." Penrith, where he frequently resided, and which, in their young age, had been the favourite abode of his parents,‡ was greatly indebted to him for its repair and restoration:§ and it is by no means improbable that the ancient portraits in stained glass of the Duke of York and the Lady Cecily, which are still to be seen in the south window of the chancel of Penrith church, were there placed through the filial affection of their youngest son. To the chapel at Pontefract, and the parish churches of Skipton, Coverham, Middleham and others, he was a great benefactor; and he bestowed considerable sums in embellishing and renovating the monastery of Carlisle.‖

It is scarcely possible to imagine a stronger contrast to the active and praiseworthy career pursued by Richard, Duke of Gloucester, than was afforded by the inert and luxurious life led by King Edward IV. His indolence increased with his years, and his love of pleasure and personal gratification gained strength by excessive and unlawful indulgence. The tribute-money, which continued to be regularly paid by Louis XI. after the treaty of Picquiny, afforded him ample means for indulging to satiety those enervating habits which weakened his talents for government fully as much as they paralyzed his naturally active and energetic character. His passion for dress was so unbounded, that he would constantly appear in a variety of the most costly robes;¶ some made of a form altogether new, but such, as he thought, would display to the greatest advantage the singular beauty of his person; while the splendour and luxury which marked the festivities of his court were more in accordance with eastern customs than the more rational and sober enjoyments of an English sovereign.** The sole object which called off his attention from himself and his vain pursuits was an inordinate ambition in regard to the aggrandizement of his offspring by marriage. In this he succeeded to his entire satisfaction; for independent of the betrothment of the Princesses Elizabeth and Cecily to the heirs of the French and the Scottish

* Issue Roll of Exchequer, p. 501. † Ibid., p. 499.
‡ Surtees, p. 67. § Ibid.
‖ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 191.
¶ Cont. Croy., p. 563.
** Philip de Comines, who knew him well, and was frequently employed on missions to the English court, says, that he indulged himself in a greater share of ease and luxury than any prince of his time. His thoughts were wholly absorbed by hunting, dress and licentious pleasures. And so devoted was he to the fair sex, that even in hunting his custom was to have tents erected for ladies, whom he entertained with unparalleled splendour and magnificence.—See *Phil. de Comines*, p. 252; *Sharon Turner*, vol. iii. p. 363.

crowns, he had arranged for his other children* alliances equally advantageous, whether considered with reference to connection or riches.†

Secure, then, in the peaceful possession of his own dominions, and undisturbed by foreign enemies, King Edward yielded himself wholly to a life of frivolous amusements, to the celebration of feasts and pageants, and the unrestrained indulgence of the most dissolute habits,‡ leaving the entire charge of the kingdom, as relates to its military affairs, to Richard, Duke of Gloucester.§ "The king," observes that monarch's biographer, "desired to live to the best advantage of his pleasure; Gloucester, of his honour:"‖ and most just was this observation; for the wise, prudent, but firm government of this prince in the north preserved the whole of that part of the kingdom tranquil; while his well-known military prowess awed the malcontents in other parts of the realm.

His increasing importance throughout the country at large, as the only prince of the House of York capable, by age or by inclination, for active exertion, kept pace with his popularity in the north: while his unblemished reputation in public life, together with the submissive and consistent deportment to King Edward which had ever characterized his actions, increased his influence with that monarch, and strengthened the attachment which had ever bound the brothers to each other. As a natural result, Richard perpetually received fresh proofs of the king's confidence and affection.

In the 17th Edward IV. he was reappointed great chamberlain of England for life,¶ which office, it will be remembered, he had relinquished in favour of the Duke of Clarence,** by whose death it became vacant, and was again in the gift of the crown. In the 18th Edward IV. he was constituted admiral of England, Ireland and Aquitaine,†† having previously been invested with the maritime command of England. And in the 20th of Edward IV. he was nominated lieutenant-general of the kingdom,‡‡ in consequence of threatened hostilities with Scotland.

He was likewise appointed (to quote the quaint language of the times) "one of the triers of petitions" for England, Ireland and Scotland, in the Parliament which met in the painted chamber at Westminster, 16th of January, 1478:§§ an appointment which attests his judgment and integrity, and is proof, also, that he was accustomed to give his attention to the actual business of the state. In addition to these and many other honours of less

* Habington, p. 106.
† The princess royal was contracted to the Dauphin of France; the Princess Cecily to the heir of the King of Scotland; the Princess Anne was destined for the son of Maximilian, Archduke of Austria: and the Princess Katherine for the Infanta of Spain; Edward, Prince of Wales, was betrothed to the eldest daughter of the Duke of Bretagne; and Richard, Duke of York, in his fifth year, as already shown, was united to the heiress of the Duke of Norfolk, by which alliance he succeeded to the immense estates and enormous riches of that princely house.
‡ Habington, p. 177. § Lingard, p. 234.
‖ Habington, p. 202.
¶ Rymer's Add. MSS., 4615, art. 16. ** Ibid., 4614, art. 70.
†† Cal. Rot. Pat., p. 323. ‡‡ Ibid., p. 325.
§§ Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 167. "In the beginning of the existence of the House of Commons, bills were presented to the king under the form of petitions. Those to which the king assented were registered among the rolls of Parliament, with his answer to them; and at the end of each parliament the judges formed them into statutes. Several abuses having crept into that method of proceeding, it was ordained that the judges should in future make the statute before the end of every session. Lastly, as even that became in process of time insufficient, the present method of framing bills was established; that is to say, both Houses now frame the statutes in the very form and words in which they are to stand when they have received the royal assent."—*De Lolme's Constitution of England*, p. 234.

note, he was appointed high sheriff of Cumberland and of Cornwall, the latter for "term of his life."*

As the number and importance of Richard's high offices accumulated, his occasional presence in the metropolis became necessary; the more so, as the king's increasing indolence rendered the judicious advice and active assistance of his brother not merely essential to his own individual ease, but important to the kingdom as regarded its internal government. Up to this period, however, no fixed abode in the capital appears to have been appointed to the Duke of Gloucester. Nor was this by any means remarkable, for his extreme youth, before the expulsion of King Edward from the throne, rendered it probable that he then dwelt at Baynard's Castle, the metropolitan abode of his widowed parent,—that renowned mansion in which the Lady Cecily, on all momentous occasions, assembled her offspring around her; and from the time of his royal brother's restoration to the throne, his life, as before noticed, was passed altogether in the north. There was his home; for, at this early period of English history, the abiding place of the great feudal lords was their baronial halls. They rarely visited the metropolis, and when they did so, it was with a great retinue, and purely on matters of business, to attend the great councils of the nation, to assist at the coronation of their monarchs, to take part in allaying civil commotions, and to afford support or offer opposition to the reigning sovereign and his ministers. The princely mansions in London of such lordly peers as chanced to possess them by inheritance, were denominated hostels or inns: and when attention is directed to the fact that the Earls of Salisbury and of Warwick, with retainers to the amount of 500, lodged at the ancient habitation of the Nevilles on Dowgate Hill, in 1458,† (within twenty years of the period under consideration,) some faint and general idea may be formed of the enormous size and accommodations of these city palaces. This celebrated abode of the Nevilles was termed "the Erber," or "Herber," an abridgment, it has been considered, of the French word "auberge," or lodging-house; but more probably it was a corruption of its locality, "the Harbour," from being situated on a hill overlooking the ancient port of the city of London, and immediately adjoining the water-gate,‡ or ferry. After the death of the Earl of Warwick, King Edward bestowed this mansion on the Duke of Clarence,§ at the same period that he invested him with the titles of his attainted stepfather, to whom it had belonged; and upon the execution of this latter prince, this hereditary abode of the race of Neville appears have formed one amongst the few portions of Clarence's confiscated lands that were conferred on Gloucester, arising from his union with the surviving co-heiress of the Lord of Warwick. The Erber, however, would seem to have been in a dilapidated state, and was probably, at this time, become altogether uninhabitable; for not only is Richard's name associated with repairs, commenced after the decease of the Duke of Clarence, but he is also at this time found occupying a newly-erected mansion in its immediate vicinity, late belonging to Sir John Crosby, an alderman of London, from whose widow the prince probably leased it, while the ancestral abode of his

* Anglo. Spect., pp. 128. 140. † Pennant's London, p. 334.

‡ In very early periods of British history, vessels discharged their cargoes at Walbrook, then a considerable stream, passing through the most populous part of the city, and affording means of water conveyance to the merchants who dwelt in the vicinity. Dow-gate, a corruption of the ancient term "*Dwr*," signifying *water-gate*, on an eminence overlooking which, "the Erber" was built, was contiguous to a ferry, which continued in use for foot passengers up to a late period of history.

§ Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 162.

duchess in the capital was undergoing a similar renovation to that which Richard had bestowed on the castellated dwellings attached to her northern patrimony, and which, on his accession to the throne, procured, in after years, for this her metropolitan possession, the appellation of the "king's palace."*

Of the precise year in which the Duke of Gloucester took possession of Crosby Place, no certain record exists; but its original owner, the wealthy merchant who constructed it, and whose name it still perpetuates, died in the year 1475, as appears by the massive tabular monument which yet attests the fact in the adjoining priory church of great St. Helen's.

The subject of this memoir is recorded as its next possessor,† and it was an abode in all respects befiting the sovereign's brother.

Erected in a style of princely grandeur, it was completed both within and without with that gorgeous splendour which peculiarly characterized the buildings of the 15th century; and Crosby Place, with its embowered oriels, its superb hall and matchless roof, so famed as perpetuating, in this present day, the only specimen now remaining in the metropolis of the domestic architecture of the middle ages,‡ is as interesting from its association with the last monarch of the Plantagenet race as is Barnard Castle, the abode of Richard of Gloucester in early and less troubled times, from the preservation there of his household cognizance, "the bristled boar."

These habitations, together with provincial records of his laudable proceedings in the northern counties above related, constitute almost the only traces of Richard's private life after his marriage. His public acts, however, are most numerous. They are registered in the archives of the land, and establish his high reputation as a warrior, and yet more his character as a patriot, and his dignified conduct as a prince of the blood royal of England. Still in the prime of life, for he had not attained his twenty-sixth year on the death of Clarence, and surrounded as he was by temptations, such as to one of his aspiring nature can scarcely be understood, in the existing order of things, Richard of Gloucester merited, in its fullest sense, the eulogium extorted by a sense of justice, even from the prejudiced pen of Lord Bacon: "a prince in military virtue approved, jealous of the honour of the English nation; and likewise a good law-maker for the ease and solace of the common people."§ Such, indeed, was the character which he bore universally in the extensive district in which his career as Duke of Gloucester must chiefly be sought for and judged,‖ and where so many records yet exist¶ to bear testimony of his bounty, his generosity and his justice. A trifling memorial connected with his private life affords evidence, likewise, that this latter qualification was considered by his kindred to influence his conduct in all situations; for the Lady Elizabeth Latimer,** by her will dated 28th of September, 20th Ed. IV., appointed "the high and mighty prince, Richard, Duke of Gloucester," one of the "surveyors" of her will;†† thus evincing her confidence in his integrity, and giving a manifest proof of the sense generally entertained of his rectitude and ability.

* Pennant, p. 334. † Carl. Hist. Crosby Hall, p. 14.

‡ Carl. Hist. Crosby Hall, p. 26. § Bacon's Hen. VII., p. 2.

‖ "The northern parts were not only affectionate to the House of York, but particularly had been devoted to King Richard III."—*Bacon's Life of Hen. VII.*, p. 17.

¶ Drake's Ebor., p. 117.

** The Lady Elizabeth Latimer was aunt by marriage to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, having espoused George, Lord Latimer, brother to Cecily, Duchess of York, and third son of Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, by the Lancastrian princess, Joan Beaufort.

†† Testamenta Vetusta, vol. i. p. 359.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 242. † Ibid., p. 269.

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

§ See Appendix MM. ‖ Harl. MSS., 433, p. 118. ¶ Habington, p. 200.

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

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

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

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

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

* Lingard, vol. v. p. 230.
† Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 173.
‡ Habington, p. 223.
§ Ibid.

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

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

* Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 115.

† King Edward devised the most despotic and novel measures for exacting sums of money from his subjects. At one time he sent his privy seal through England, to move men to give liberally to him.—*Baker's Chron.*, p. 216. At another time he gathered money upon penal statutes, levied severe contributions on the clergy, and heavily fined those who had omitted to fulfil their feudal tenures. But the most obnoxious levy, and that which bore heaviest on the whole country, was the exacting large sums by means of what was termed "a benevolence," (*Cont. Croy.*, pp. 563. 558,) which consisted of plate and money demanded from the people as a gift, or extorted from them on various pretexts without legislative authority; by which his agents gathered vast sums to replenish the regal coffers at the expense of his impoverished subjects.

‡ Issue Roll of Exchequer, pp. 499. 501.
§ Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 168.
‖ Issue Roll of Exchequer, p. 501.
¶ See Appendix NN.
** Habington, p. 205.

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

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

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

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

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

† Habington, p. 204.

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

§ Habington, p. 205. ‖ Ibid., p. 206.

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

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

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

* Habington, p. 207.

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

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

§ Cont. Croy., p. 563.

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

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

** More, p. 5.

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

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

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

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

† Philip de Comines, vol. ii. p. 62.

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

§ Chron. Croy., p. 563.

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

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

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

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

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

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

* Habington, p. 223.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ Chron. Croy., p. 564.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CHAPTER XI.

The Duke of Gloucester in the north at the period of his brother's decease.—Edward V. proclaimed king.—State of affairs at the accession of the young monarch.—Gloucester takes the oath of allegiance, and exacts the same from all under his jurisdiction.—Divisions in the council.—Effect of these divisions on the conduct of Gloucester.—He hastens southward.—Seizes the person of the young king.—Imprisons the Lords Rivers and Grey.—Escorts Edward V. in state to London.—The queen and her family take sanctuary at Westminster.—The Duke of Gloucester chosen "protector and defender of the realm" by the unanimous voice of the council and the senate.

Richard of Gloucester was with the army in the marches of Scotland, adjusting finally the differences in that district, previous to removing the soldiery for the contemplated invasion of France, when intelligence of King Edward's death was forwarded to him. Although that event so unforeseen, and, in the ordinary course of things, so little to have been anticipated, considering the age of the deceased monarch, was likely to produce a vast change in Gloucester's political position and future personal career, yet there is no reason to suppose that the sorrow which he evinced at the announcement of the mournful occurrence, was otherwise than genuine; for it was altogether consistent with the affection and fidelity which he had, under adverse as well as prosperous circumstances, invariably testified for his royal brother.*

But, not only has the sincerity of his feelings on this occasion been called in question, and the respect which he immediately showed for the memory of the deceased monarch, in the strict observance of the religious offices enjoined by the church, been imputed to hypocrisy and the most hateful deception; but, as if no death could occur from natural causes during the reign of Edward IV., or be otherwise than hastened by the murderous hands of Richard, Duke of Gloucester,† even that of his royal brother, whom he had loved and served with a devotion altogether remarkable, has been attributed to poison administered by him. "They who ascribe it to poison," observes King Edward's biographer, "are the passionate enemies of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who permit not nature at that time to have been obnoxious to decay, but make the death of every prince an act of violence or practice; and in regard this cruel lord was guilty of much blood, without any other argument, condemn him for those crimes for which he was actually most innocent." From this iniquitous deed, the which has not, however, been generally enumerated among the list of enormities laid to Gloucester's charge, he is fully exculpated; not alone from his absence in the north during the period of the late king's illness and death, and from the true cause of his dissolution being clearly established, but because unusual pains were taken to prove to the civic authorities and the lords spiritual and temporal, that neither violence nor unlawful means had accelerated their sovereign's unlooked-for decease. Immediately after his death he was placed on a board, naked from the waist upwards; and partially unrobed, was so exposed to the view both of friendly and of suspicious eyes for the space of twelve

* Buck, lib. iii. p. 83.

† Habington, p. 222.

hours*—a precaution rendered the more imperative from his demise occurring in the prime of life, and likewise from the charge of poisoning being so common in those evil and turbulent times.

The funeral of the deceased monarch was most sumptuous, and befiting, in all respects, the splendour and magnificence which had characterized his proceedings during life. He was interred at Windsor, in a chapel which he had there erected;† and his eldest son, aged twelve years and six months,‡ was forthwith proclaimed his successor by the name and title of King Edward V.

Almost the last act performed by the deceased king had been to assure to Gloucester, "to him and the heirs of his body," by the authority of Parliament,§ the wardenship of the west marches of England,‖ together with the castle, city, town and lordship of Carlisle,¶ 10,000 marks in ready money, and such an extent of territory, and consequent increase of authority, in the north, where he was already so popular, that this fact evinces, far beyond any mere allegation or surmise, the absence of all jealousy on the king's part, and the deserts of a prince who could be thus fearlessly entrusted with almost unlimited power.

The amicable terms on which the two brothers had ever continued may, in great measure, be attributed to the pacific conduct which Gloucester observed towards the queen and her relatives.

A keen discernment of character, with the talent of adapting that faculty to his own particular circumstances, as well as those of the times, was a leading feature in Richard of Gloucester. It was, indeed, the union of those valuable qualities, foresight and prudence, that preserved this prince in all likelihood from the violent death of Clarence and the untimely fate of Warwick; for Gloucester possessed, in a remarkable degree, the power of suppressing a display of hostile feelings in matters where opposition would have been futile. Nevertheless, he had been no unobservant spectator of the undue influence exercised by the royal Elizabeth and the House of Wydville over the council and actions of the king. He participated in the indignation felt by the ancient nobility at the elevation of a race who, having no claims for preferment but that of consanguinity to the queen, had been raised to the highest offices in the state, and permitted to occupy the chief seat in the council chamber. He viewed, too, with mistrust and misgiving, the blind policy of his royal brother, who had removed the heir apparent from all intercourse with the proud and noble kindred of their illustrious line, and placed him under the direct tuition and immediate influence of his mother's family, in a remote part of the kingdom.** These feelings, which had been wisely concealed during the lifetime and reign of Edward IV., wore a far different aspect when the unlooked-for death of that sovereign, and the

* Sandford, book v. p. 391.

† The full particulars of this imposing ceremony, together with a description of he royal chapel at Windsor, are given by Sandford,—copied from the original document preserved in the College of Arms,—in his Geneal. Hist., book v. p. 392.—See also *Archæologia*, vol. i. p. 348.

‡ Edward, Prince of Wales, was born in the Sanctuary at Westminster, 4th Nov., 1470; proclaimed king April, 1483.

§ Rol. Parl., vi. p. 204. ‖ See Appendix A.

¶ Sir George Buck states, on the authority of an old MS. in the possession of Sir Robert Cotton, that Gloucester had the "earldom of Carlisle." "But whether he were Comes thereof, after the ancient Roman understanding, that is, governor; or Comes, or count, after the common taking it by us English, or others; that is, for a special titular lord, I will not take upon me to determine, but affirm I have read him *Come Carliolensis*."—*Buck*, lib. i. p. 8.

** More, p. 19.

minority of his successor tended, in all probability, to place Richard in the identical position which he had grieved to see so neglected and abused by the deceased monarch. As the sole surviving brother of Edward IV., and first prince of the House of York—with the exception of the youthful offspring of that king—his situation became one replete with difficulty; and judging from the fate of the princes who had been similarly placed, one beset with danger also. But Gloucester's mind was not constituted to shrink from difficulties however great; rather was he fitted to shine when energy and promptitude were requisite. Abandoning, therefore, the furtherance of his personal interests, and relinquishing his ardour for military fame in the plains of France, he hastily prepared to quit the north, and assume that lead in the direction of public affairs which the minority of his nephew had imposed upon him.

Meanwhile he wrote most soothing letters to the queen: he promised "advent, homage, fealty and all devoir to the king and his lord, eldest son of his deceased brother and of the said queen."* Proceeding to York with a retinue of 600 knights and esquires, "all attired in deep mourning,"† he commanded the obsequies of the deceased king to be performed at the cathedral with the splendour due to his regal station, and the solemnity befiting the mournful occasion, assisting himself at the ceremony "with tears,"‡ and every apparent demonstration of sorrow. He then constrained all the nobility of that district, as the late king's viceroy in the north, "to take the oath of fealty to the king's son, he himself setting them the example by swearing the first of all."§

The youthful monarch was residing at Ludlow when his father expired, under the immediate charge and tutelage of his maternal uncle, the Lord Rivers, and his half brother, the Lord Richard Grey;‖ to whom intelligence was forthwith sent of the demise of Edward IV., accompanied by letters from the queen to her son, urging his immediate return to London.¶

To make somewhat more clear the very startling circumstances that occurred after the young king's departure from Ludlow and before his arrival in the metropolis, it becomes necessary to explain, that, during the late king's life, the court was divided into two distinct parties—the queen's relatives and supporters, together with those who coveted honour and official distinction without claim of high birth or lineage; and the ancient nobility and proud kindred of the House of York, attached either to the king's household or his administration. A perpetual rivalry and constant collision of interests existed between parties so jealously opposed to each other; and the king, on his death-bed, foreseeing the disastrous consequences which were likely to arise from his son's minority and the prospect of a regency—that fruitful source of intrigue and evil ambition—used his expiring efforts to effect a reconciliation between the factious opponents.** He is even alleged to have nominated the Duke of Gloucester as protector†† and guardian‡‡ during the young Ed-

* Chron. Croy., p. 565. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid., and Drake's Ebor., p. 111.

‖ The widowed queen of Edward IV., by her first husband, Sir John Grey of Groby, had two sons, viz., Sir Thomas Grey, created by her royal consort, in the eleventh year of his reign, Earl of Huntingdon, and four years after Marquis of Dorset; and the Lord Richard Grey, an appointed counsellor of the young Prince of Wales, and associated with the Lord Rivers in the important charge of his personal safety. Of the queen's brothers two only survived at the death of Edward IV., viz., Anthony, Earl Rivers, governor of Prince Edward's household, and Lionel Wydville, Bishop of Salisbury.—See *Dugdale's Bar.*, 719, vol. ii.; *Cal. Rot.*, 313.

¶ More, p. 23. ** Ibid., p. 13.

†† Drake's Ebor., p. 111.

‡‡ "The nobles at London and in the south parts speedily call the duke home by their private letters and free approbation, to assume the protection of the kingdom and two princes committed unto him by the king. 'Rex Edwardus IV. filios suos Richardo Duci Glocestriæ, in tutelam moriens tradidit;' as Polydor testifieth."—*Buck*, lib. i. p. 11.

ward's nonage; and considering the high esteem with which he had ever distinguished his brother, and the neutral conduct observed by that prince, such a recommendation to his council in his dying hours, at least appears far from improbable. One thing, at all events, is most certain, viz., that the two dissentient parties who were present at their monarch's dissolution, united in testifying their affection and respect for his memory, by co-operating at the solemnization of the last sad rites*—his funeral being attended by the Lord Hastings, the Lord Stanley, the Lord Howard and other leaders of the ancient nobility; and by the Marquis of Dorset, the Lord Lyle, and other near relatives and warm supporters of the queen's authority.†

Very brief, however, was the unanimity thus formally displayed. Immediately after the funeral the council assembled to fix a day whereon Prince Edward should receive the ensigns of his coronation; and the queen's ambitious views are made known, not merely by her desire that the young king should be conducted to London with a powerful army, commanded by her brother and son, but yet more from information supplied by the annalist of that period,‡ who states that, though all parties united in wishing due regal state should be observed in the progress of the young monarch to the capital of his kingdom, yet that the more prudent of the council thought that the custody of the king's person, until he became of age, ought not to be entrusted "to the uncles and brothers on the mother's side; which they considered could not be prevented if they were permitted to attend the coronation otherwise than with a moderate number of followers."§—The very expression "moderate number" displays, in a remarkable manner, the spirit of the times and the character of the people. Little knowledge, indeed, of the condition of England at the accession of Edward V. is necessary to perceive that physical strength was the chief agent employed to acquire and maintain authority; that justice was measured out in proportion to the force which could command it; and that the most clear and legitimate claims were sacrificed to the bad passions of such as could oppose the decision of the sword to the legislative enactments of the realm. The 4th of May was the day fixed upon by the council for the coronation of the young king;‖ and after much consideration, bestowed by the assembled lords, relating to the peculiar position of Edward V.,—"every one as he was nearest of kin unto the queen, so was he planted next about the prince"¶—and due attention having been given to the suggestion that he should enter the metropolis with an armed

* Harl. MSS., No. 6. fol. 111.

† William Lord Hastings was chamberlain of King Edward's household, and so great a favourite with his royal master, that he was styled by him his "beloved servant, William Hastings."—*Dug. Bar.*, vol. i. p. 580. Thomas Lord Stanley was high steward, and was another of the deceased king's chief and most esteemed counsellors.—*Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 248. John Lord Howard was high in the confidence of Edward IV.: he bore the royal banneret at the king's funeral.—*Fœdera*, xii. p. 50. Thomas Lord Grey, Earl Huntingdon, Marquis Dorset, was the queen's eldest son by her first husband. He had been appointed governor of the Tower with extensive privileges by Edward IV., who had bestowed upon him the marriage and wardship of Edward, Earl of Warwick, son of the late Duke of Clarence.—*Dug. Bar.*, vol. i. p. 719; *More*, p. 169; *Cal. Rot.*, 325. The Lord Lyle, so created by Edward IV., was a brother of Sir John Grey of Groby, the queen's first husband.—*Dug. Bar.*, vol. i. p. 179.

‡ Chron. Croy., p. 564. § Ibid.

‖ Ibid. ¶ More, p. 19.

force, "in manner of open war,"* the result of this latter question, upon which the council had met more especially to determine,† confirms the opinion generally entertained, that his royal parent aspired to be regent, and to govern in concert with her own family during the minority.‡

It also portrays the evil which was anticipated by the counsellors of the late king, should the Wydville family continue to exercise over the actions of Edward V. the unpopular influence which they had exerted over the mind of his deceased parent. But the wisdom of their decision in limiting the retinue of the young prince to 2000 horsemen, can only be comprehended by taking into consideration the fact, that the Lord Rivers was possessed of almost unlimited power at the critical period of the death of Edward IV. The youthful monarch was in his hands, and under his entire control as governor of his household. Invested, too, as was this nobleman, with the supreme command of South Wales, and of the royal forces in the surrounding district,§ he had only to summon the army in the king's name, and forthwith march in triumph to the metropolis; the military command of which he knew to be already in the hands of his kinsman, from his nephew, the Marquis of Dorset, being governor of the Tower.

With access to the royal treasury there deposited, and with the entire command of the soldiery connected with this important stronghold, there was nothing wanting to complete the aspiring views of Elizabeth and the Wydville family than possession of the young king's person, and effecting a junction with Earl Rivers and the overwhelming force, which was available by him in the west country. This dangerous collision was defeated by the far-seeing sagacity of those prudent counsellors who aimed at limiting the authority of the queen without an open and positive rupture. By indirectly diminishing the power of the Wydvilles and the Greys, it gave time, also, for communication with a third party in the state, on whom the attention of the great mass of the people, but above all the ancient nobility, were intently fixed‖ as likely to secure their young sovereign and his administration from the factious spirit which had so long agitated the council and embittered the last days of King Edward IV.

This third party consisted of the surviving members of the Plantagenet race and the powerful kindred of Cecily, Duchess of York; the latter of which, although disgusted at the preference given by their late sovereign to his newly-created nobles, were firmly attached to the House of York, with which through her they were so closely allied.

The persons who may be designated as the heads of this illustrious and influential party were Richard, Duke of Gloucester, Henry, Duke of Buckingham, and Cecily, the widowed parent of Edward IV.

As first prince of the blood royal, the laws and usages of the time pointed out the Duke of Gloucester as most fit for the responsible situation of regent during the minority of his nephew; and the amicable terms on which he had invariably lived with the late monarch, his shining abilities, his talent for ruling, and his invaluable services in the council as well as in the state, rendered him eminently qualified to guide the youthful king, and preserve undisputed his lawful succession to the throne.

Henry, Duke of Buckingham, although possessing no claim to be associated

* More, p. 22.
† Chron. Croy., p. 564.
‡ Hist. Doubts, p. 22.
§ Cott. MS., Vitel. C. fol. 1.
‖ A retinue not exceeding two thousand, which number was satisfactory to Lord Hastings, because he calculated that the Dukes of Gloucester and Buckingham, on whom he chiefly confided, would not bring with them a less number."—*Chron. Croy.*, 565.

in the guardianship of Edward V. by reason of near consanguinity, was, nevertheless, a member of the royal House of Plantagenet, being the lineal descendant of Thomas of Woodstock, the youngest son of King Edward III., and consequently one in a direct line of succession to the crown, although at the present time far removed from it by nearer and legitimate heirs belonging to the elder branch. He, however, as thus allied to their royal ancestor, made common cause with Richard, Duke of Gloucester, whom he felt to be the representative of the Plantagenet interests during the minority of Edward V.

Cecily, Duchess of York, had retired altogether from public life after the decease of her illustrious consort; but although refraining from political interference, and resisting the temptation afforded by means of her powerful kindred to balance the intolerable power which was exercised by Elizabeth Wydville over her late son, was yet keenly alive to every species of danger that threatened the stability of a race of which she was the common parent, although, by an unlooked-for calamity, she had never been "queen by right" of the Yorkist dynasty. Her anxious wishes for the aggrandizement of her sons had been early crushed by King Edward's marriage, in direct opposition to her remonstrance,* and likewise by the preference which he immediately and invariably gave to his new relations over the interests and claims of his own family.† All her hopes had long centred in her youngest son, Richard of Gloucester, whose enlarged and statesmanlike views, together with his courage and zeal, had mainly contributed for some years to uphold his brother's authority, and to keep the country well ordered and in obedience. Both herself, therefore, and her connections are found, as might be expected, supporting this prince in his just pretensions to the protectorate, and in firmly opposing the rapacity and inordinate ambition of the young sovereign's maternal relatives.

Such was the state of affairs when Edward V., after waiting at Ludlow to celebrate St. George's Day,‡ quitted that ancient abode of his ancestors for the capital of his kingdom on the 24th of April, 1483—just a fortnight after the dissolution of his royal parent. Richard, Duke of Gloucester, it must be here observed, had been in no position to take any part either in the resistance made to the queen's assumed authority, or to the decisive measures adopted by the council as regards the mode and means of conducting the young monarch to the metropolis.

The interval thus occupied in dissensions at court, and by divisions in the cabinet,§ had been passed by this prince in travelling from the Scottish borders

* "The Duchess of York, his mother, was so sore moved therewith, that she dissuaded the marriage as much as she possibly might, alleging that it was his honour, profit and surety also to marry out of his realms, whereupon depended great strength to his estate by the affinity and great possibility of increase of his possessions."—*More*, p. 93.

† In addition to the chagrin felt by the Duchess of York, when King Edward bestowed her granddaughter on his son-in-law, Sir Thomas Grey, contracted as she had long been to a member of the House of Neville, he greatly offended his mother by uniting the heiress of the Lord Scales to Anthony Wydville, afterwards Earl Rivers, the Lady Cecily having wished to promote a union between her and Prince George of Clarence, then just entering into life. The young Duke of Buckingham, too, and the old Duchess of Norfolk, the one matched with the queen's sister, the other married to her young brother, were both nearly connected with the House of Neville, which increased the indignation felt by that haughty race at the Wydvilles being so closely allied to them.

‡ Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 179. The first instrument in this collection, which issued in the name of King Edward V., is tested on the 23d of April, 1483.

§ "Hastings, captain of Calais, declared that he would betake himself thither

to York, in commanding requiems to be solemnized there and in other large towns* for the repose of the soul of Edward IV., and in exacting allegiance from all under his dominion towards his brother's youthful successor.

Gloucester's conduct was open and honourable throughout, consistent in every respect with the deference which he had invariably paid to his sovereign, and the love he had shown him as his brother, and such, too, as was best calculated to insure the peaceful succession of his nephew to the throne.

There was no undue assumption of power; no assembling of the army, of which he had the entire control, to enforce his authority as nearest of kin to the royal minor; no tarrying in his viceregal territories to ascertain the feeling of the populace, or to induce the most remote suspicion that he contemplated usurpation of the sceptre. He had long possessed the sole command of one half of the kingdom, and had been the means of dissipating in the north many of the factions which had disturbed the peace of the realm. He was lord high admiral and chief constable of England, and lieutenant-general of the land forces; and his administration in these different capacities, maritime, civil and military, were allowed by all to have been just, equitable and prudent.

So long as Gloucester pursued the dictates of his own unbiased feelings, his conduct was irreproachable: his progress through his district being characterized only by affectionate respect for the memory of the deceased monarch, by setting an example of fealty and loyalty to the young king,† and by the most temperate use of his own unlimited authority and elevated station.

At York, however, the aspect of affairs assumed a very different hue ;‡ and Richard found himself called upon to assume the lead, and forcibly to seize that authority§ which his behaviour, up to this time, would seem to imply he hoped to have entered upon in tranquillity, and maintained without opposition.

Throughout his remarkable career, this prince, it cannot be denied, was the victim of unhappy consequences induced by the bad passions of weaker minds and of ill-concerted designs; but in no one instance was the path he pursued more decidedly forced upon him than at this great crisis of his fate, when the exigences of the case and the deep-laid schemes of his opponents compelled him to act with the promptitude and determination which were inherent in his nature.

A private messenger from Henry, Duke of Buckingham, appears to have placed before Richard, during his stay at York,‖ full particulars of the aspiring views of the queen and her family; and farther communication from the Lord Hastings¶—such, at least, may be surmised from his conduct in the metropolis—unveiled to the penetrating Gloucester the deep plot formed by the

rather than await the coming of the new king, if he came not with a moderate number; for he feared that if the supreme power fell into the hands of those of the queen's blood, they would avenge upon him the injuries which they had received."—*Chron. Croy.*, p. 564.

* Harl. MSS., 433. fol. 176. † Chron. Croy., 565.

‡ "It was here," observes Drake, "that the Duke of Buckingham sent a trusty servant, one Percivall, says Hall, to instil those notions of ambition into him which afterwards proved of such dire effect to his nephews as well as himself."—*Drake's Ebor.*, p. 111.

§ Buck, lib. i. p. 11.

‖ Drake's Ebor. p. 111, and More, p. 135.

¶ "The Lord Hastings, whose trouth toward the king no man doubted nor needed to doubt, persuaded the lords to believe that the Duke of Gloucester was sure, and fastly faithful to his prince; and the Lord Rivers and Lord Richard, with the other knights, were, for matters attempted by them against the Duke of Gloucester and Buckingham, put under arrest for their surety, not for the king's jeopardy."—*More*, p. 32.

Wydvilles, and the total overthrow designed by them of his claims to the regency, provided strong measures were not immediately undertaken for securing the person of Edward V., and crushing the designs of his mother, his uncles, and his step-brothers, to obtain possession of him.

Impressed with these ideas, he quitted York for Northampton, so as to intercept the royal progress; and that he must have been possessed of some authority to act, either derived from the expressed wishes of the deceased monarch, as asserted by Polydore Virgil,* or arising from the guardianship being actually conferred upon him in King Edward's will,† and communicated possibly to Richard by the executors at York, seems certain from a passage contained in the Croyland Chronicle, to the effect, "that, when the Duke of Gloucester reached Northampton, there came there *to do him reverence*, Anthony Earl Rivers, the king's uncle and Sir Richard Grey, the king's uterine brother, and others sent by the king his nephew, that they might submit *all things to be done to his decision.*"‡

The Lords Rivers and Grey were of no temperament to make this submission to Richard of Gloucester, unless necessitated so to do; neither was that prince likely to have received them "at their first coming," as the annalist proceeds to state, "with a pleasant and joyful countenance, and sitting at supper, at table, to have passed the time in agreeable conversation,"§ unless each party had been mutually satisfied with the performance of duties required from the one, and the deference due to the other: for, although Gloucester was endowed with an insinuating address and great flexibility of manners, that proud asperity of look so peculiarly his own when thwarted or displeased, could scarcely have softened into a "joyful countenance," had indignation characterized his first meeting with the obsequious lords. A vast change, however, appears to have occurred before the close of this eventful day.

In the evening, Richard and his associates were joined by Henry, Duke of Buckingham, accompanied by 300 horsemen;‖ "and because it was late, they went to their several abodes," Rivers and Grey well pleased with their reception, and the success which had attended designs they believed to be unsuspected; for only four days intervened between the time appointed by the council for the coronation of Edward V., and he was already some miles advanced towards the metropolis, whither they intended, "on the morrow, to follow the kyng, and bee with hym early ere hee departed."¶ Gloucester and Buckingham to assemble a few of their most chosen friends in

* Poly. Virg., lib. iv.

† From certain documents published in Nichol's valuable collection of Royal Wills, p. 345, and communicated by Dr. Ducarel from the registers at Lambeth, it appears that Edward IV. left a will that is not now known to be extant, and which, it has been conjectured, was intentionally destroyed. A will of Edward IV., transcribed by Rymer from the Rolls' Chapel, and dated at Sandwich, 20th June, 1475, was printed in the "Excerpta Hist.." p. 366; but as the executors therein named differ from those enumerated by Dr. Ducarel, it may justly be concluded that the published will was not the last will, although where this latter document is now deposited is unknown. In the will dated at Sandwich, "Elizabeth the Quene" is the first executor named; in the Lambeth registers her name is altogether omitted; and four only of the executors associated with her in the published will are contained in the list there recorded. From motives which remain unexplained, the executors of the last will refused to act; consequently, the nature and contents of King Edward's final testament have never been divulged. But that such an instrument was executed is indisputable, from the fact of the executors who are enumerated in the Lambeth registers having placed the royal property under ecclesiastical sequestration within a few weeks of the monarch's decease; and it is by extracts from these registers that the important information is furnished of there having been a second will.

‡ Chron. Croy., p. 565. § Ibid.

‖ Ibid. ¶ More, p. 28.

council, where they spent a great part of the night, revolving, as proved by the result, the extraordinary proceedings of the queen's family in the metropolis, and the sinister conduct of Earl Rivers and the Lord Grey, in greeting the Duke of Gloucester, unaccompanied by the young king, to whom, as his paternal uncle, HE was the natural, if not the appointed guardian,* and from whom THEY, as his delegated counsellors and governors of his household, were bound not to have separated. Momentous, indeed, was the intelligence received from the capital, and made known, as it would appear, by Buckingham, or by some of the secret messengers, who had communicated with Gloucester on his progress to Northampton;† for the Marquis Dorset had taken possession of the king's treasure,‡ and had already commenced equipping a naval force; thus usurping a power altogether unprecedented as regards the appropriation of the royal funds, and personally offensive to Richard of Gloucester as relates to the mode of its expenditure, that prince having the entire control, as admiral of England, over the maritime affairs of the country. The subtle part acted by Lord Rivers in sending the young king to Stoney Stratford, a day's journey in advance of his illustrious uncle, although the duke§ was hourly expected at Northampton, and thus withdrawing him on the very verge of his coronation from all intercourse or interview with his father's brother, was by this information explained; and the intolerable and premeditated usurpation of authority thus early exercised by the young king's maternal relatives, so fully confirmed the suspicions entertained by the late king's advisers as to the Wydvilles' aspiring to the regency, and their resolution of detaining, in their own hands, the person of the young monarch, until he was irrevocably invested with the symbols of royalty,‖ that it roused every indignant feeling in Richard, and induced measures which, but for these crafty proceedings, might never have been resorted to, either in his own mind or that of the nobles attached to his party. Their little council sat in deliberation until near the dawn of day, and the nature of their conference may be judged from the exigency of the occasion, and the strong measures which resulted from it; before entering upon which it is fitting, however, to observe, that these measures, harsh as they may appear, and attributed as they have been, by most historians, solely to the ambition, tyranny and individual act of Gloucester alone, were, in effect, the result of a general council. Small, it is true, and not legally constituted as such, but fully justified in their deliberations and the degree of responsibility which they assumed, considering that they were assembled under the auspices of the late king's only brother, in a city especially under his jurisdiction as seneschal of the duchy of Lancaster, and driven to adopt hasty but firm resolutions, in consequence of the artifice exhibited in removing the young monarch, under a flimsy pretext, to an unimportant town, incapable of accommodating, in addition to the royal suite, the duke and his retinue,¶ and altogether unsuited for the kingly progress. The town of Northampton, whence Edward V. was hurried,

* If the duke aspired to nothing more than the protectorate, his ambition was not to be blamed. It was a dignity which the precedents of the two last minorities seemed to have attached to the king's uncle.—*Lingard*, vol. v. p. 241.

† More, p. 135. ‡ Ibid., p. 27.

§ "Now was the king in his way gone from Northampton, when these Dukes of Gloucester and Buckingham came thither: where remayned behynd the Lord Rivers, the king's uncle, intending, on the morrow, to follow the king, and be with him at Stony Stratford."—*More*, p. 23.

‖ One important fact appears always to have been overlooked, viz., that after the coronation, however young the sovereign, there could no longer be a protectorate, that office being expressly instituted to protect and defend the realm until such time as the minor was solemnly anointed king.—See *Turner, Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 2.

¶ "It was too streighte for both companies."—*More*, p. 26.

was but thirteen miles from Stoney Stratford, and the castle, in the former place, where parliaments had been heretofore held, appertained, by virtue of his office, to his uncle, who was hastening thither expressly to meet, and receive with all loyalty and affection, his youthful and illustrious kinsman, when he found him clandestinely removed to favour designs which it required but little penetration to fathom.

Richard of Gloucester was as firm in purpose as he was resolute in action. Discerning in the estimation of character, and master of the politics of the times—if mere political expediency and selfish ambition may deserve such a name—his experience and judgment were all sufficient for the difficult part which he was called upon to sustain; and before the day had dawned, or his rivals were stirring, every avenue of the city was guarded, and horsemen stationed on the high road to intercept all communication with the king and his escort.*

Astonished at their rising to find the gates closed, and "the wayes on every side besette," and satisfied that proceedings which offered so remarkable a contrast to the courtesy of the duke on the preceding day were not "begun for nought," and most probably foreboded evil to himself and his companion, the Lord Rivers resolved on neither offering opposition nor expressing surprise, lest, by betraying suspicion, "he should seem to hyde himselfe for some secret feare of his own faulte."† The uncle and nephew were, in fact, caught in their own net; but having brought themselves into this difficulty by proceedings equally disingenuous as that now practised upon themselves, the Lord Rivers farther determined, "sithe hee could not get awaye, to keep himself close;" and when opportunity offered, "to goe boldly" to his detainers, and "enquire what thys matter myghte mean."‡ Accordingly, all the lords departed together, and in seeming amity, to present themselves to the new king;§ but when they had nearly approached the entrance of the litle town where he was sojourning, Earl Rivers and Richard his nephew, with certain others who came with them, were suddenly arrested, by command of the Duke of Gloucester. Continuing their route, Richard, Buckingham, and their companions proceeded with all speed to Stoney Stratford where the wily scheme concerted by the young king's attendants for hurrying him to the metropolis, and separating him from his uncle of Gloucester, became still more evident; for "they founde the kinge with his companie readye to leape on horsebacke;"‖ and this, too, be it remembered, at a very early hour, the lords having quitted Northampton at dawn of day, so as to frustrate designs which Richard's sagacity had penetrated, and for whose promptitude his adversaries were unprepared, "many of Lorde Rivers' servantes being unreadye."¶

Entering Prince Edward's abode, to whom the apprehension of his maternal relations was as yet unknown, the Duke of Gloucester arrested Sir Thomas Vaughan, his chamberlain, Dr. Alcock, Bishop of Worcester, his chief preceptor, and other of his personal advisers.** For it was the duke's conviction that the young monarch was a party to the deception sought to be practised upon him; and his indignation at the insincere part which he had acted, in sending the Lord Rivers to Northampton ostensibly to submit "all things to his decision," but in reality to gain time, and to blind Richard to the scheme at which his royal nephew seems to have connived, is made apparent by the following remarkable passage, with which the Croyland historian

* More, p. 24.
† Ibid.
‡ More, p. 25.
§ Chron. Croy., p. 565.
‖ More, p. 26.
¶ Ibid., p. 24.
** Rous, p. 212.

terminates his brief account of these most singular proceedings:—"The Duke of Gloucester, who was the chief of this faction," (herein he plainly intimates that the duke did not act merely on his own responsibility,) "made no obeisance to the prince, by uncovering, bowing or otherwise. He merely said that he would take heed for his safety, since he knew that those who were about him conspired against his honour and his life. This done, he caused proclamation to be made, that all the king's servants should forthwith withdraw themselves from the town, and not approach those places whereunto the king should remove, under pain of death.—These things were done at Stoney Stratford the 31st April, 1483."*

This chronicler and Rous, the antiquary of Warwick, are the only two cotemporary writers of this period, although Sir Thomas More's history, as before explained, is considered to have been derived, also, from co-existent authority. The diffuse narrative of More, despite of the romance with which it is tinctured, helps frequently to explain many facts which the Croyland annalist leaves obscure by his conciseness; and when More's explanations are confirmed by the testimony of Rous, the evidence of the three writers forms a clear and connected chain in the confused and disjointed accounts which have so long been received as the history of one of the most momentous epochs in English annals.

The whole of these authors agree upon the leading facts of Richard's junction with Edward V. at Stratford, the arrest of the royal attendants, and the possession taken of the young king's person by the Duke of Gloucester. But here "Rous" becomes invaluable; for he states, in addition, the cause of the duke's so acting, "and being, by his own authority, made protector of Edward, as protector he took the new king, his nephew, into his own keeping;"† thus clearly implying that he was possessed of some power to act definitively and upon his own judgment. In this step he was borne out by ancient usage, being first prince of the blood royal, and the only member of the House of York capable by age, or entitled by near affinity, to be guardian to his brother's heir. But Rous follows up his account by explaining farther the *cause* of Gloucester's assuming the protectorate on his own authority, and the reason for his removing the queen's kindred from their abuse of that ascendency which they had acquired over the prince, and had cunningly devised to appropriate to their own purposes. "They were accused of having compassed the death of the protector," he says; and this, not on the uncertain medium of public report, not from the casual hints of mercenary informers or nameless eavesdroppers, but, as positively asserted by Rous,‡ on no less authority than that of the "Earl of Northumberland!"§ He was "their chief accuser."‖ This coeval testimony of an historian so bitterly opposed to Richard of Gloucester is most important, as it fully justifies that prince in his proceedings, and exonerates him from premeditated tyranny.

* Chron. Croy., p. 565.
† Rous, p. 212.
‡ Rous, p. 213.
§ By indenture, dated 1st May, 1483, Henry, Earl of Northumberland, was appointed warden of the east and middle marches, towards Scotland.—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 228. This was the second instrument issued by Edward V., and the first after Richard had so abruptly assumed the protectorate; and its occurring the very day following the seizure of the young king's person, would certainly imply that it was under the duke's auspices that a power corresponding with the last conferred upon him by his deceased brother, Edward IV., was bestowed in reward on a nobleman who was the means of divulging a plot which, if credit is to be attached to the unanimous testimony of each cotemporary writer, had been formed, and was ripening, for destroying Gloucester and the leading members of his race.
‖ Rous, p. 214.

He was possessed of the affection of the army, and was by royal appointment their chief commander; yet he proceeded southward accompanied merely by 600 of his own retainers. With the small addition of 300 horsemen, added to this little band the day previously by Buckingham, he nevertheless boldly seized upon the person of the young king; no opposition being made to his will, no attempt at rescue from the 2000 horsemen appointed to guard their prince, and who, as picked men, can scarcely be imagined so pusillanimous as to have tamely abandoned their trust, if unprovoked insult or unlawful violence had been exercised against their royal charge; considering, too, that their force was double that which arrested their progress, and under the influence of which they were commanded to disperse on pain of death.

Power is seldom attained by violence. Much as it may be misused when possessed, yet it is almost always voluntarily yielded. When, therefore, the startling events of the brief fortnight following the death of King Edward are dispassionately considered, and the whole tenour of the conduct pursued by the rival parties impartially compared, it cannot but favour the surmise, that Gloucester, acting under such disadvantages as arose from inadequate force, and from his ignorance of much that had occurred, in consequence of his absence from the conflicting scenes which led to such stern measures when they were fully made known to him, would never have so immediately attained the mastery, had not a sense of right given nerve to his actions, and a consciousness of error and duplicity awed and enfeebled his opponents.

Sir Thomas More's account corroborates the statement both of Rous and of the Croyland writer; but he narrates, in addition, that the rival lords began to quarrel on the road, when Rivers was accused by Gloucester and Buckingham of intending "to sette distance between the kynge and them;"* and that when that nobleman "beganne in goodly wish to excuse himself, they taryed not the end of his answer, but shortly tooke hym and put hym in warde;"† that on entering the king's presence, before whom the Duke of Buckingham and his attendants prostrated themselves with respectful homage, they communicated to Edward the arrest of the Lords Rivers and Grey, accusing them of conspiring, with the Marquis of Dorset, "to rule the kynge and the realm, to sette variance among the states, and to subdue and destroy the noble blood of the realm,"‡ informing him likewise that the marquis "hadde entered into the Tower of London, and thence taken out the kynge's treasure and sent menne to sea."§

The astonished prince expressed his ignorance of the part pursued by the Lord Dorset, but sought to establish his conviction of the innocence of Lords Rivers and Grey. The Duke of Buckingham, however, assuring him that his kindred "had kepte their dealings from the knowledge of his grace,"‖ the remainder of the retinue, supposed to have been leagued with Rivers and Grey, were seized in the royal presence, and the king himself taken "back unto Northampton," where Gloucester and the nobles by whom he was supported "took again further counsyle."¶ And truly they had need so to do; for although the day approached in which Edward V. was to be solemnly invested with the insignia of royalty, no regency had been nominated to guide the helm of state; no protectorate appointed to watch over the interests

* More, p. 25.
† Ibid.
‡ More, p. 26.
§ Ibid.
‖ This assertion goes far to prove that Buckingham was the agent who infused into Gloucester's mind the conviction he entertained respecting the insincerity of the Lord Rivers; neither must it be forgotten, that Buckingham having married the sister of this latter nobleman, (and of the royal Elizabeth also,) may have had substantial grounds for making this accusation against the Wydville family.
¶ More, p. 26.

and aid the inexperience of the royal minor; no measures taken to provide for his safety, to guard the capital from insurrection, or to secure the co-operation and attendance at the approaching ceremony of those lordly barons whose support and allegiance could alone insure stability to his throne; but a self-constituted council, at variance among themselves, and possessing, in reality, no legitimate authority to act after the decease of the monarch to whose administration they had belonged—a sovereign unfettered in his minority by restraining enactments—a faction long hated and jealously viewed by the ancient nobility, who, having obtained possession of their young prince, sought to retain it, and to exclude the surviving members of the House of York from all intervention or communion with their future ruler, until Edward should be irrevocably anointed king; these were the discordant materials, these the unpromising auspices, with which, on the approaching 4th of May, the acts of Edward V. would have been ushered in, had not his royal uncle, with the firmness and decision which the occasion justified and his own position rendered imperative, changed the whole face of affairs, and delegated to himself the office of protector, until the three estates of the realm could meet to legislate at so important a crisis. Time was requisite to mature further proceedings; but a state of things like that above described was not tolerable to a mind constituted like Richard of Gloucester, when the end of April had arrived, and four days only intervened before that appointed for the coronation. With the fixed resolution, then, and the self-possession which so peculiarly characterized this prince's actions, he hesitated not, in this case of direful emergency, to act as became the brother of Edward IV., and as befited the natural protector of Edward V.

On their return to Northampton, he dispatched a messenger to the assembled lords in the metropolis, informing them, through the Lord Chamberlain Hastings, of the decisive measures he had taken, the which were fully approved by that most devoted partisan of the late king.* He likewise wrote to the leading nobles of the realm, explaining the motives by which he had been actuated, viz., "that it neyther was reason, nor in any wise to be suffered, that the young king, their master and kinsman, should be in the hands and custody of his mother's kindred; sequestered in manner from theyr companie and attendance;"† the which, "quod he, is neither honourable to hys majestie, nor unto us."‡ Gloucester, nevertheless, is represented as treating the young monarch with honour and reverence, and as behaving to his captive friends with courtesy and kindness,§ until himself and his council could meet in further deliberation relative to matters which had been privately communicated to them. The nature of this information is indicated by the result. On the following day, the royal duke consigned to imprisonment those lords whose conduct gave proof of the unworthy motives imputed to them; sending the Lord Rivers, the Lord Richard Grey and Sir Thomas Vaughan to Pomfret Castle and other fortresses in "the north parts,"‖ and taking upon himself "the order and governance of the young king,"¶ whom the said lords, his counsellors, had sought to mislead, and over whom they had obtained such dangerous ascendency. And here it is important to show that this monarch was not at his accession a mere infant—not "a child in his little

* "Now there came one not longe after midnight from the lord chamberlayn unto the Archbishop of York, then chancellor; and after communicating to his grace the arrest of the king and his attendant lords, adds, 'Notwithstanding, sir,' quod hee, 'my lorde sendeth your lordship worde, that there is no fear; for he assureth you that all shall be well.'"—*More*, p. 29.

† More, p. 19. ‡ Ibid. § Ibid., p. 28.

‖ Rous, p. 212. ¶ Chron. Croy., p. 565; More, p. 28.

tunic—a babe habited in loose robes," as represented in many a fanciful engraving designed to elucidate his obscure history—but a youth almost arrived at man's estate, certainly old enough to exercise judgment, and competent to discriminate in most matters in which he was personally concerned. Indeed, he had been early prepared by able preceptors for that position to which he would probably be one day elevated; and had well nigh attained, at his father's demise, that age of discretion* which would have entitled him, in accordance with the common law of the land, to claim participation in the affairs of state, however, duly controlled by the preponderating wisdom of a regency.

Edward V. was in his thirteenth year when he was proclaimed king; and the education which was ordinarily bestowed on the heir-apparent of the throne, but more especially in those heroic and momentous times, removed him at that age far beyond mere childhood, although he may still be considered as of "tender years."† The guardianship of Henry VI. was limited by his valiant parent to the age of sixteen; the office of protector of the realm ceased when he was nine; and, in his fourteenth year, this monarch was advised to remonstrate with the council of regency at being too much excluded from public business.‡

Richard II. was two years junior to Edward V. when he was crowned king; and the age of this sovereign, when, with a self-possession and determined courage that betokened a more efficient reign, he dispersed the infuriated mob assembled by Wat Tyler, was only two years beyond that which Edward had attained when his progress was stayed, and his attendants dispersed, by the authority of his uncle of Gloucester.§

But the temperament of this young prince is affectingly demonstrated in the sequel of Sir Thomas More's narrative of the proceedings at Northampton: "At which dealing hee wepte, and was nothing contente; but it booted not."‖

Rous states that he had been "virtuously educated, was of wonderful capacity, and, for his age, well skilled in learning:"¶ and learned and virtuous he may have been; for Sir Thomas More bears similar testimony both as regards himself and the young Duke of York;** although he qualifies his evidence by intimating that Edward was "light of belief, and soon persuaded."††

Nevertheless, judging from the few verified details of this ill-fated monarch, together with the impression conveyed by Shakspeare,‡‡ doubtless that which then generally prevailed of his calm and submissive deportment, he would seem to have been tender, affectionate and docile, warm in his attachments,§§ confiding and unsuspicious, resembling Henry VI. in the gentle virtues that would have graced domestic life, and giving such promise of future excellence as regards erudition‖‖ as might have rendered him the "Beauclerc" of his time. But he was clearly deficient in the hereditary manhood of his

* "A male at twelve years of age may take the oath of allegiance; at fourteen he is at discretion; and if his discretion is actually proved, may make his testament of his personal estate."—*Blackstone's Com.*, vol. i. p. 463.

† More, p. 51. ‡ Turner's Middle Ages, vol. iii. p. 34.

§ "They sente awaie from the kynge whom it pleased them, and sette newe servantes about him, such as lyked better them, than hym."—*More*, p. 27.

‖ More, p. 27. ¶ Hist. Ang., p. 212.

** "Having in themselves also as many gifts of nature, as many princely virtues, as much goodlye towardness, as their age could receive."—*More*, p. 5.

†† More, p. 20.

‡‡ See Rich. III., Act III. Sc. I. §§ More, p. 64.

‖‖ Rous, p. 212.

race,* and sympathized not in the fierce and stormy passions which marked the age. Devoid of energy,† of "weak and sickly disposition,"‡ meek rather than courageous, studious rather than enterprising,§ the reign of Edward V. thus bade fair to revive those fearful calamities which had characterized that of Edward II., owing to the intrigues of the queen mother, a factious administration, an irritated and discontented nobility, and the ascendency exercised over a too yielding disposition by unpopular and unworthy favourites.

The accounts at this period are, at the best, too obscure and too concise to afford a clear exposition even of the leading events by which it was distinguished; but sufficient may be gathered to form a tolerable estimate as to the true cause of Richard's proceedings, and to comprehend many startling facts which resulted from his conduct. Ardently devoted to his country, and politically, if not personally, opposed to the queen and her kindred, it was Gloucester's object to save the one from the threatened evils likely to ensue from the uncontrolled ambition of the other; but he acted towards the young prince, his nephew, with the greatest tenderness and compassion,‖ and is represented as having besought him on his knees to banish fear and apprehension, to place confidence in his affection, and reliance on the necessity of those summary measures which occasioned him such deep affliction.

Had the young Edward so acted, had he confided in his father's brother, his natural guardian, and possessed sufficient moral courage and energy of character to co-operate manfully with one so fitted to guide, and so implicitly trusted by his deceased parent, instead of affectionately but effeminately weeping¶ for those who had misdirected the inexperience of his youth, the unhappy but amiable successor of King Edward IV. might have ascended in tranquillity and retained quiet possession of that throne which his father had won in his minority, and twice secured by his valour; and thus have perpetuated a dynasty, which, from the brilliancy of its commencement, bid fair to shine as one of the most glorious of any recorded in British history.

But so peaceful a state of affairs was neither in accordance with the unruly passions which hastened the downfall of the Plantagenets, nor the turbulent era in which that kingly race flourished, and at last became utterly extinct.

The annalist of that epoch will best narrate, in his own brief manner, the result of the proceedings at Stoney Stratford, and the miserable state of disunion into which the metropolis was already plunged, owing to the kingdom being without a head, and the realm without an acknowledged leader. On the following night after the capture of the Lords Rivers and Grey, rumours having reached London of "the king's grace" being in the hands of the Dukes of Gloucester and Buckingham, Queen Elizabeth betook herself to the Sanctuary at Westminster, with her children. "You might have seen, on that morning, the fautors of one and the other party, some truly, others feignedly, as doubtful of the events, adhering to this or that side; for some congregated and held their assemblies at Westminster, in the queen's name; others at London, under the shadow of Lord Hastings,"** who was the leading adviser of the late king, and the member of his council most inimical to the queen and her kindred.

The Marquis of Dorset, awed by the determination which was evinced at this critical juncture by the Duke of Gloucester, abandoned the Tower, and the unjustifiable assumption of authority which he had there exercised as its governor, and fled for refuge to the same sacred asylum whither his mother had again sought refuge, and where both herself and her infant progeny were secure from personal violence, and the evils that had already overtaken a portion of their race. "After the lapse of a few days," continues the annalist,* "the aforesaid dukes brought the new king to London," conveying him thither with every testimony of respect; and on the 4th of May, the ill-omened day originally fixed for his coronation, the youthful prince entered the metropolis in state, escorted by Gloucester, Buckingham, and a suitable retinue, all habited in deep mourning, except the monarch himself,† who was clothed in his kingly mantle of blue velvet. A short distance from the city, the royal cavalcade was met by the civic authorities, and 500 citizens sumptuously attired;‡ followed by whom, and preceded by the Duke of Gloucester,—who, uncovered, rode before his nephew, and in passing along said with a loud voice to the people, "Behold your prince and sovereign"—the king was conducted to the bishop's palace at St. Paul's; where he was lodged with every accompaniment of regal state and etiquette. There his uncle, acting as his guardian, forthwith compelled the lords spiritual and temporal, and the mayor and aldermen of the city of London, to take the oath of fealty to their lawful and legitimate sovereign;§ which, it is recorded, "as the best presage of future prosperity, they did most willingly."‖

Perfect tranquillity was the consequence of this unanimous feeling; and the legislature and municipal powers fully co-operated with Gloucester in carrying out measures which had restored confidence to all parties, and allayed the feverish excitement of the populace.¶ "The laws were administered," says Rous,** "money coined, and all things pertaining to the royal dignity were performed in the young king's name, he dwelling in the palace of the Bishop of London from his first coming to London." The exigences of the state required the immediate assemblage of a general council, which was as speedily summoned by the protector, to give sanction to proceedings which had been already carried into effect, and to guard against future embarrassment arising from the king's minority; some executive power, legally constituted, being essential, not merely up to the period of his coronation, but until such time as he should be of age to govern on his own responsibility. "This council assembled daily at the bishop's palace, because there the young Edward was sojourning; but as this imposed upon the prince unnecessary restraint, it was suggested that he should be removed to some more free place of abode."††

Various dwellings were proposed. "Some recommended the Priory of St. John, others the Palace of Westminster; but the Duke of Buckingham naming the Tower, it was agreed to, even by those who disliked it."‡‡ Pre-

* Sir Thomas More states, that when Edward V. was told that his uncle was crowned king, he began to sigh, and said, "Alas! I would my uncle would let me have my life, though I lose my kingdom."—*More*, p. 130.

† "After which time the prince never tyed his points, nor ought wrought of himself, but with that young babe hys brother lingered in thought and heaviness."—*More*, p. 130.

‡ Buck, lib. iii. p. 85.

§ More, p. 27.

‖ Lingard, vol. v. p. 240.

¶ More, p. 27.

** Chron. Croy., p. 566.

* Chron. Croy., p. 566.

† More, p. 34.

‡ Buck, lib. i. p. 11.

§ Chron. Croy., p. 566.

‖ Ibid.

¶ "Then was there greate commotion and murmur, as well in other places about, as specially in the city."—*More*, p. 31.

** Rous, p. 212.

†† Chron. Croy., p. 566.

‡‡ Ibid.

judice has been unduly exercised against this decision, from the Tower of London being better known in modern times as a state prison than as the ancient palace of the English sovereigns, which it really was during the middle ages;* and also because at an epoch a full century removed from the period under present consideration, a feeling of undefinable terror was associated with this gloomy pile, in consequence of the dark and terrible deeds said to have been perpetrated therein. But, as regards Edward V., this idea is erroneously entertained. In his day, it was the king's palace, the metropolitan citadel, which guarded alike the treasure of the kingdom, and protected the person of its monarch, whenever the safety of the latter was likely to be endangered. Examination into the history of this ancient national fortress will show that, from the accession of Henry III., who first made it the regal abode and almost exclusively dwelt there, the Tower of London was the dwelling-place, during some portion of their reign, of every succeeding monarch who intervened between that king and the youthful Edward V.;† the unsettled state of the kingdom at this period of its history rendering a fortified abode as indispensable for the security of the monarch, as of the great feudal barons their subjects.

Within the precincts of the Tower, Joanne, Queen of Scotland, eldest daughter of King Edward II., was born ;‡ and Elizabeth, sister to the young prince under present consideration, and eventually the queen of Henry VII., died within its walls in giving birth to the Princess Katherine of the line of Tudor.§ The father of Edward V. resided there before he was driven from his throne, and in that stronghold his mother was left for protection when her royal consort was compelled to fly the kingdom.‖

Whatever, then, may have been the after consequences as regards his youthful successor, it is a most mistaken notion to suppose that, when it was suggested by his council that Edward V. should be removed to "some more free abode,"¶ one apart from the necessary business of state, the Tower was selected either as a place of captivity, or because it was less accessible to his partisans than the bishop's palace at St. Paul's, the priory of St. John's, Clerkenwell, the regal dwelling at Westminster, or any other metropolitan abode.

The Tower of London was, moreover, by ancient usage, the ordinary abiding place of English monarchs preparatory to their coronation: and as the chief point for which the council had been assembled was to deliberate and determine upon the earliest fitting day for the celebration of that important ceremony, not only were those counsellors who proposed the Tower as the temporary residence of Edward V. justified in their selection of it, but it was the abode established by precedent,** as well as, under the embarrassing circumstances in which the son of Elizabeth Wydville ascended the throne, the one best calculated to insure his personal safety, and inspire confidence in the citizens. Both these points were objects of great importance; for all ranks in the metropolis had betrayed extreme agitation at the rumours which had preceded the public entry of the young prince; and it required the most strenuous exertions on the part of the Lord Hastings to appease the multitude, and to justify the strong measures that had occasioned so much apprehension.

* See Bayley's Hist. of the Tower.
† See Appendix PP.
‡ Sandford, book iii. p. 155.
§ Holinshed, p. 709.
‖ Sandford, book v. p. 387.
¶ Chron. Croy., p. 566.
** "It had for a long while been the custom of the king or queen to take up their residence at the Tower for a short time previous to their coronations, and thence they generally proceeded in state through the city, to be crowned at Westminster."—*Bayley's History of the Tower*, vol. ii. p. 263.

The wavering conduct of Rotheram, Archbishop of York, and lord chancellor, tended greatly to increase the fears which were entertained by the populace* of impending evil; for on receiving private intelligence, about midnight, of the arrest of the Lords Rivers and Grey, he "thereupon caused, in all haste, his servants to be called up, and so, with his own household about him, and every man weaponed, he tooke the great seal with him, and came yet before day unto the queen,"† delivering unto her hands this important badge for the "use and behoof of her son.‡

Repenting him, however, of the imprudence which he had committed in voluntarily resigning the signet of state to the queen, "to whom the custody thereof nothing pertained without especial commandment of the king,"§ he secretly sent for the seal again on the ensuing day, and brought it with him to the council chamber, when summoned by his compeers in the late administration to assist them in allaying the public ferment, which had assumed so alarming an aspect that the citizens went "flock-mele in harness,"‖ and open insurrection was hourly apprehended.

The appearance, however, of Edward V. in royal progress at this crisis, and the respectful homage displayed by the Duke of Gloucester, when, bareheaded, he pointed out their young king to the multitude, set all fears at rest;¶ and the great council of state, assembled by this prince in his sovereign's name, forthwith commenced their deliberations in tranquillity, and carried out their measures without interruption.

Their first act was to appoint the Duke of Gloucester protector of the king and his realm. "He was fallen in so great trust," observes Sir Thomas More,** that he was "the only man chose and thought most mete" to be nominated to this responsible office; and the Chronicler of Croyland,†† corroborating this fact, adds, that "Richard received the same power as was conferred on Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, during the minority of Henry VI., with the title of Protector;" and likewise that "this authority he used by the consent and good pleasure of all the lords, commanding and forbidding in every thing like another king, as the case required."‡‡ A meeting of the senate, as constituted under the late reign, was convened for the immediate dispatch of business; and a new parliament was summoned for the 25th of the ensuing month, (June,) as shown by an ancient document preserved in the Lambeth register.§§ On the 16th of May, the Archbishop of York, after being severely reproved for having delivered up the great seal to the queen, the which act had spread such alarm in the city, was deprived of his office; and Dr. Russel, late privy seal and Bishop of Lincoln, was appointed high chancellor in his place; "a wise manne and a good, and of much experience,"‖‖ as testified by Sir Thomas More, "and one of the best learned men, undoubtedly, that England had in hys time."¶¶ Divers other lords and knights were displaced, and new councillors appointed in their stead; but the Lord Hastings, late chamberlain of the household, the Lord Stanley, the Bishop of Ely, and other personal friends of the deceased monarch, kept still "theyr offices that they had before."***

Various grants were issued by the youthful Edward; the functions of government were orderly and wisely executed; and the feast of St. John the Baptist (22d June) having been fixed as the day whereon the king's coronation was without fail to take place, all now hoped and expected the peace and prosperity of the realm.†††

* More, p. 29.
† Ibid., p. 31.
‡ Ibid.
§ Ibid.
‖ Ibid., p. 31.
¶ Ibid., p. 34; and Fabyan, p. 513.
** More, p. 34.
†† Chron. Croy., p. 566.
‡‡ Ibid.
§§ Royal Wills, p. 347.
‖‖ More, p. 35.
¶¶ Ibid.
*** Ibid.
††† Chron. Croy., p. 566.

The 19th of May was decided upon for the presentation of the new monarch to the estates in Parliament assembled, when, being conducted by his uncle to Westminster, he delivered a speech from the throne,* claiming their fealty and asserting his royal prerogative and right of succession. "First to you, right noble lords spiritual and temporal; secondly to you, worshipful syres, representing the commons, God hath called me at my tender age to be your king and sovereign."†

He then appeals to their liberality to make the usual grants for the "sure maintenance of his high estate,"‡ and after eulogizing "the right noble and famous prince, the Duke of Gloucester, his uncle, protector of the realm, in whose great prudence, wisdom and fortunes restyth at this season the execution of the defence of his realm," and noticing the dangers to be apprehended from the opposing party, "as well against the open enemies as against the subtle and faint friends of the same," the royal speech concludes by urging "thys hygh court of Parliament" to confirm the Duke of Gloucester in the protectorate, to which he had been previously nominated by the council of state.§ "The power and authority of my lord protector is so behoffull and of reason to be asserted and established by the authority of this hygh court, that among all the causes of the assemblyng of the Parliament in thys tyme of the year, thys is the greatest and most necessary to be affirmed."‖

And truly it was so, as regards the necessities of the state, and the factious spirit that pervaded the court. This Richard felt; and he wisely desired that the kingly authority, which, as lord protector, had temporarily devolved upon him, should be confirmed, beyond all controversy, by legislative enactment.

His title to be so confirmed was admitted by all parties. The early death of the young Edward's natural parent had left his uncle, as stated in the speech from the throne, "next in perfect age of the blood royal to be tutor and protector"¶ to his royal nephew; and his unblemished character up to this unlooked-for exaltation is demonstrated by his being proposed to the young monarch at the ratification of his protectorate by the assembled peers, as an example of "majoral cunning [mature wisdom,] felicity, and experience."**

Gifted as he was with the distinguishing merits of his time, invincible courage and profound military sagacity and skill, it had been better, perhaps, for Richard of Gloucester had circumstances not conspired to elevate him to so lofty a position in the government of his country; for he was endowed with qualifications that led to greatness, and he was superior to the times in which he lived—times, be it remembered, when morality was at a very low ebb, and when the virtues of private and domestic life were little estimated, in comparison with brilliant exploits, daring courage, and warlike renown.

But the Duke of Gloucester had no competitor for the kingly office to which he was elected. He stood alone in his just pretensions to the uncontrolled exercise of that dangerous power which had so suddenly dawned upon him: and the sole guardianship of Edward V. having been committed to his charge by the unanimous voice of the legislature, he yielded to the lofty feelings of his race and henceforth issued the vice-regal mandates under the high-sounding titles of "Duke of Gloucester, brother and uncle of kings, protector and

* Sharon Turner, vol. iii. p. 419.
† Cott. MSS., Vitel. E. 10.
‡ Ibid.
§ Ibid.
‖ Ibid. The whole of this interesting document, a copy of which was preserved by Sir Robert Cotton in his invaluable collection of MSS., is still extant, although much defaced by the great fire which, in the commencement of the last century, destroyed so many records in his ancient library then deposited at Westminster.
¶ Cott. MSS., Vitel. E. 10.
** Ibid.

defender of the realm, great chamberlayne, constable and Lord High Admiral of England."* It is, however, but justice to this prince to observe, that in adopting a style so invariably adduced as a proof of his vain-gloriousness and intolerable pride, that Richard only adhered to the precedent afforded by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, who held the same office in a former reign and whose protectorate was the example given when the same power with which he was invested was now conferred upon the uncle of Edward V.†

The removal of this monarch from the bishop's palace, at St. Paul's, to the regal apartments occupied by his predecessors in the Tower, appears, by his signature to certain instruments,‡ dated from both those places, to have occurred somewhere between the 9th and the 19th of May; during which brief period many weighty appointments were made by the young king, the most remarkable of which was the nomination of the Duke of Buckingham to those high military commands in South Wales and the English counties adjoining§ which had so recently been possessed by his uncle, the Lord Rivers, and which it must have caused Edward extreme pain to have bestowed upon another.‖ This fact, however, joined to the circumstance before named, of the Earl of Northumberland's investiture with corresponding authority in the north,¶ clearly demonstrates who were the parties that incited the Duke of Gloucester to the severe measures he adopted; owing to the alleged plot for the destruction of himself, which is detailed by all cotemporary writers, and the particulars connected with which, there can be no doubt, were communicated to Richard by the two lords, thus speedily recompensed with such powerful and honourable offices. One thing connected with these is remarkable: that although the appointments above named, and all others, indeed, that were made by Edward V. after his removal from Stoney Stratford,—the very day subsequent to which, it should be noticed, Northumberland's indenture is dated, viz., 1st of May, 1483,**—must have been executed by the advice, if not at the instigation, of his uncle of Gloucester; and although Richard's assumption of the protectorate was confirmed within a few days by the council of state, and the election of these councillors ratified before the close of the month by the higher authority of Parliament, yet his name never appears in any of the official documents issued by his royal nephew,†† until after his formal introduction into that high preferment by the lords spiritual and temporal duly convened for that purpose by Edward V.‡‡ From that day, however, all and each instrument issued in the young king's name§§ concluded with the words "by the advice of our dearest uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, protector of our realm of England during our youth,"‖‖ and the almost despotic power which

* Chron. Croy., p. 566; also Fœdera, xii. p. 184, and Drake's Ebor., p. 115.
† The titles used by the uncle of King Henry VI., after his nomination to the protectorate, were "Humphrey, by the grace of God, son, brother and uncle to kings, Duke of Gloucester, Earl of Henault, &c., Lord of Friesland, great chamberlain of the kingdom of England, protector and defender of the said kingdom and church of England."—*Sandford*, book iv. p. 308.
‡ See Harl. MSS., 435, p. 221.
§ Rymer's Add. MSS., 4616, art. 6.
‖ Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 180.
¶ Drake's Ebor., p. 111.
** Harl. MSS., 433, p. 228.
†† See Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 179, 180.
‡‡ Royal Wills, p. 347.
§§ Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 184.
‖‖ Whatever difference of opinion may have prevailed relative to the motives or conduct of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, he has ever been considered a fast and steady friend. This is curiously instanced in the first occasion on which he signed himself protector. By an instrument bearing date the 19th of May, 1483, his early companion and associate in arms, the Lord Lovell, was appointed to the valuable office of chief butler, which had been bestowed by Edward IV. on the Lord Rivers. The nomination is thus expressed in the original grant:—"Viscount Lovell, appointed

centred in him after his title was thus confirmed past all dispute—power, as states the annalist of that period, "used by the consent and good pleasure of all the lords"—was such, "that it empowered him," he adds, as has been before stated, "to command and forbid in every thing like another king."*

Richard of Gloucester was now in effect the ruler of the kingdom, its sovereign all but in title: and the regal authority which thus so unexpectedly devolved upon him—changing his condition, in the short space of five weeks, from the dependent station of the sovereign's younger brother to a position so elevated that it entitled him to govern the monarch himself as well as to wield the destinies of the nation, as sole arbiter of the acts and actions of a minor prince—rekindled, there can be little doubt, in his heart the germs of that hereditary ambition which had lain dormant since his earliest infancy.

Formed by nature for command, and possessing clear and enlarged views of the exigences of the times, and the wants of the country over whose interests he was called upon to preside, Richard felt himself qualified to regulate, with zeal and ability, the complicated machinery of that government which was now entrusted to his guidance. But, however much he may have been fitted by temperament as well as ability to control and to direct an executive so complex and involved as that which his consanguinity to Prince Edward entailed upon him, it must surely be admitted that the dangerous power which Gloucester so unhappily attained was the result of no illegal measures pursued by himself, but was the voluntary gift, first of the privy council, and finally, of the whole legislature itself assembled in Parliament. The council of state convened for this purpose, before the dissolution of the old Parliament and the assembling of the new one, was sufficiently powerful to have resisted the duke's assumption of the high office which he claimed as his birthright, had the haughty nobles in that age of baronial dignity considered it to have been unjustifiably seized and unlawfully exercised. The young king was securely lodged in his royal citadel; he had been there placed expressly to admit of free discussion, so that his person was no longer subject to his uncle's detention, when Parliament confirmed Richard in the protectorate: neither had this prince an army in the metropolis, nor resources either civil or military sufficient to intimidate his opponents, even had he evinced such a disposition to violence. But he rested his pretensions on ancient usage, he based his claims on a character free from stain and reproach; and the result of the solemn assembly of the land, which met to consider the policy of investing the brother of King Edward IV. with the sole guardianship of his heir and successor in his non-age, attests their belief at that crisis of Richard's fate, of the just, prudent and upright manner in which, as quaintly expressed in the language of that day, "my said lord protector will acquit himself of the tutele and oversight of the king's most royal person during his years of tenderness,"† thus giving the most convincing proof of the injustice which has been exercised for three centuries against the character, actions and motives of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, up to the critical period, when, by universal consent and unfettered by restraint, he was entrusted with the helm of state and appointed "protector and defender of the realm."

chief butler of England by the advice of our most entirely beloved uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, protector of our realm: anno 1 Edw. V."—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 221, b.

* Chron. Croy., p. 566.

† Cott. MSS. Vitel. E. fol. 10.

CHAPTER XII.

Richard, Duke of Gloucester, enters upon the duties of the protectorate.—State of the realm during the minority of Edward V.—Demoralization of the English nation at this corrupt period.—Divisions in the council.—Preparations for the coronation of Edward V.—Richard's difficult position induces him to aim at a prolonged protectorate.—Conspiracy for his destruction.—Arrest and execution of the Lord Hastings, and of the Lords Rivers and Grey.—The young Duke of York withdrawn from sanctuary.—Placed in the Tower with his royal brother.—Gloucester aspires to the crown, in consequence of the discovery that the late king's marriage was illegal.—The offspring of Edward IV. declared illegitimate.—The citizens of London tender the crown to Richard.—Edward V. formally deposed by the legislature.—Richard, Duke of Gloucester, proclaimed king by the title of Richard III.

The eyes of the whole nation were now fixed upon the Duke of Gloucester. Upon his wisdom hung the fate of the empire, upon his integrity the welfare of its monarch. In the very face of a political convulsion, more formidable than any which had threatened the peace of the kingdom since the disastrous feuds which terminated in the elevation of his brother to the throne, he had secured the tranquil accession of Edward V., quelled the divisions in the late king's council, revived the sinking spirits of the people, and restored faith and confidence in the government. And all this without striking a blow, without causing the death of one human being, or sullying the efforts of his vigorous mind by acts of cruelty, vengeance or retaliation.*

At no period of his life was Richard of Gloucester so truly great as when he thus achieved a moral victory over powerful adversaries, whom he awed not more by his military renown than he subdued by his sagacity and self-possession. Civil war must inevitably have ensued had no legitimate claimant for the protectorate existed. A succession of insults inflicted by the Wydville family,† and of jealousies long endured by the ancient nobility of the realm, rendered an appeal to the sword unavoidable; and the fear of this impending collision, there can be little doubt, led to Gloucester's being so unanimously confirmed in the protectorship by the friends of both parties, after he had forcibly seized that dignity, whether in virtue of former precedents, or, as asserted by Buck,‡ in pursuance of the deceased king's command.

In consequence, however, of the embarrassing circumstances which arose almost immediately after this event, and which so completely disorganized the whole state of public affairs, attention has never been sufficiently directed to the threatened evils and miserable feuds that must inevitably have deso-

* "Without any slaughter, or the shedding of as much blood as would issue from a cut finger."—*Chron. Croy.*, p. 566.

† Buck, in noticing "the insolency of the queen's kindred," states, that they "stirred up competitions and turbulencies among the nobles, and became so insolent and public in their pride and outrages towards the people, that they forced their murmurs at length to bring forth mutiny against them." Again, "they extended their malice to the princes of the blood and chief nobility, many times by slanders and false suggestions, privately incensing the king against them."—Lib. i. p. 12.

‡ Buck, lib. i. p. 11.

lated the land, had the youthful monarch, in conjunction with his mother and her family, been opposed to the ancient lords of the realm;* at an era as remarkable for the insufficiency of the regal prerogative as for the preponderating influence of the nobility. Gloucester, by his constitutional calmness, and his experience in the civil government of men, saw the dangers which threatened the destruction of his royal house, and the heir of the Yorkist dynasty. Bold in design, and enterprising in spirit, his ready genius discerned, and his prudence selected, a middle path between open rebellion to his sovereign† and ignoble submission to the queen mother; and seizing upon the opportunity which the actions of Dorset and Rivers afforded of crushing these impending hostilities, without either party having recourse to arms, he entered with alacrity and zeal upon the daring career which he had seen the urgent necessity of adopting, and from which he never withdrew until he had secured to himself the power of carrying into effect, under the sanction and authority of Parliament, those resolute measures which he had boldly commenced on his own responsibility.

And so far not a shadow of blame can attach to the memory of Richard of Gloucester. In his ambition to rule the state during his nephew's minority he was borne out by the usage of the times, and by that pride of birth inherent in every branch of the Plantagenets; but there is nothing in this desire to indicate that Gloucester had formed any sinister design for usurping the throne, or that he contemplated the death of the Lords Rivers and Grey when he caused these nobles to be arrested and imprisoned until such time as he had thoroughly investigated the reports‡ which were generally circulated against them.§ There can scarcely, indeed, be a greater proof that the severities subsequently practised against the prisoners were not the mere result of casual reports, than the fact of the young monarch's preceptor, Dr. Alcock, Bishop of Worcester, who was seized at the same time with the other royal attendants,‖ being released from captivity and set at large in the metropolis within a fortnight¶ of his arrest at Stratford: added to this, that the treasurer of the young prince's household, Sir Richard Croft, was speedily rewarded for his services by a pension for life;** and that no imputation of any kind was ever cast upon King Edward's chancellor, upon his lord steward, or any other members of his establishment†† who remained behind at Ludlow, although Sir Thomas Vaughan‡‡ and Sir Richard Hurst, arrested

* If the queen's kindred "should assemble in the king's name much people, they should give the lords (atwixt whom and them had been sometime debate) to fear and suspect lest they should gather this people, not for the king's safeguard, whom no man impugned, but for their destruction. . . . . For which cause they [the nobles] should assemble on the other party much people again for their defence," "and thus should all the realm fall on a roar."—*More*, p. 22.

† Ibid.

‡ The Lord Hastings assured the council that Rivers and Grey should no longer remain under arrest "than till the matter were (not by the dukes only, but also by all the other lords of the king's council) indifferently examined, and by other discretion ordered, and either judged or appeased."—*More*, p. 32.

§ "They were accused of having conspired the death of the protector."—*Rous, Hist. Reg. Ang.*, p. 217.

‖ These were Dr. Alcock, preceptor and president of his council; Sir Thomas Vaughan, lord chamberlain; Sir Richard Hurst, treasurer of the household.

¶ Royal Wills, p. 345. ** Harl. MSS., No. 433. fol. 58.

†† The other members of the prince's establishment were, the Bishop of St. David's, chancellor; Sir William Stanley, steward of the household; Sir Richard Croft, treasurer.—*Sloane MSS.*, No. 3, 479; and *Harl. MSS.*, No. 433, fol. 655.

‡‡ Sir Thomas Vaughan was nearly related to the Wydville family, and through the interest of the queen he had been appointed by Edward IV. treasurer of the king's chamber, and master of his jewels.—*Cal. Rot.*, p. 311.

at Stratford with the Lords Rivers and Grey, were detained in prison, and eventually executed with those noblemen.

The conduct, indeed, of the Duke of Gloucester up to this period, considering the temper and character of the times, was irreproachable. His proceedings, though startling, from the stern decision which they indicated, were not acted in the dark; not clandestinely pursued, but openly, before the gaze of the people.*

There was, moreover, no necessity for plotting or intrigue, inasmuch as his interposition at Stratford was forced upon him by the noblest in the land, and sanctioned by the highest in authority. And that honourable position which Gloucester so speedily attained, owing to the jealousies of other and less noble minds, was never, it ought to be remembered, made a reproach to him until the same spirit of jealousy and craving for power, the same conflicting interests in the rival lords,† who, to promote their own selfish ends, had rekindled that inordinate ambition which was the evil genius of Richard's house, made them seek to enslave the victim whom they had exalted, solely to advance their own aspiring views. Thus embarrassed and surrounded with difficulties, keenly alive to the important charge confided to his care, but unable, from the rivalry and envy of his compeers, to follow the dictates of his own better judgment, Gloucester was gradually tempted to adopt measures so offensive to the young king, that he soon found his personal safety had become compromised,‡ in consequence of which he was led to depart from that virtuous and honourable path which had characterized his youth and his manhood, and to enter upon a course which probably he never would have attempted had he not been swayed by evil counsellors, and made the tool of treacherous and time-serving allies.

Succeeding ages have dwelt on this epoch as one of the most corrupt in English history, and justly so. "The state of things and the dispositions of men were such," writes Sir Thomas More, "that a man could not tell whom he might trust, or whom he might fear;"§ and almost similar sentiments are expressed in a letter written by one high in office at this identical time,—"every man doubts the other."‖ It has been already shown that, from the period of the birth of Richard of Gloucester up to the date of his elevation to the protectorate, the worst passions had disgraced, and the most unworthy motives influenced, the highest in rank and station.

The Duke of Gloucester well remembered that the leading members of the very council who were now associated with him in carrying out the measures of government were those peers and prelates who had been bribed by the wily monarch of France,¶ Louis XI., who had sacrificed honour to gold, and in whom the love of wealth was stronger than the love of their country. He well knew, also, that their unanimity, when raising him to be "defender

* Polydore Virgil, lib. i. p. 11; and More, p. 29.

† "In especial twayne, Henry, Duke of Buckingham, and William Lord Hastings . . . . . these two not bearing eche to other, so much love, as hatred both, unto the queen's party."—*More*, p. 21.

‡ "The matter was broken unto the Duke of Buckingham by the protector," who declared unto him "that the young king was offended with him, for his kinsfolk's sake, and that if he was ever able, he would revenge them."—*More*, p. 64.

§ Ibid. ‖ Excerpt. Hist., p. 17.

¶ Jean Tillet, with Phil. de Comines, tells us that the Lord Howard, in less than two years, had the value of 24,000 crowns in plate, coins and jewels, over and above his annual pension: the Lord Hastings at one time to the value of 2000 marks in plate, besides his pension; and Dr. Rotherham, Bishop of Lincoln, Lord Chancellor of England, and Dr. Morton, Bishop of Ely, master of the rolls, with other noblemen and councillors of special credit with the king, had 2000 crowns apiece per annum.—*Buck*, lib. i. p. 29.

of the realm," arose more from hatred to the queen and her family than from respect to himself, or devotion to their youthful sovereign; and with his keen perception of human character, he could entertain little doubt that the support which they now gave him, and the loyalty they professed towards their prince, had no more solid basis than the wavering and time-serving policy that had twice elevated his royal brother to the throne, and twice deposed his unhappy rival.

In selecting the Duke of Gloucester, then, as a peculiar object of execration, and as seeming to concentrate in himself, in an extreme degree, the evil principles which characterized an age so selfish and demoralized, great injustice has been done to this prince; no mention ever being made of his nobler qualities, as a palliative to those vices which have been alone perpetuated, or attention drawn to the particular merits of his character, his fidelity, his patriotism and his integrity, in the many offices of trust and importance which he had filled with equal honour to himself and benefit to his country. He did not, it is true, escape the infection of the corrupt times in which he lived, or remain untainted by the love of power, which, in that day, seemed to supersede all other feelings saving the desire of wealth alone. And who, imbued from infancy with these the leading features of his age, stimulated by a father's example, strengthened by a brother's precepts, could have passed through life uninfluenced by the pernicious education which, from his very cradle, had taught him to covet a crown?—not the imperious Plantagenets, whose ascendency was characterized by violence, usurpation and homicide*—not the race of York, "greedy and ambitious of authority"†—not the sole surviving brother of a fraternity, "great, stately," "impatient of partners!"‡

Had Richard of Gloucester died after his elevation to the protectorate, and before he had tasted the sweets of sovereignty, coupled with what different associations would his name have descended to posterity! Evil, there can be little doubt would equally have befallen his ill-fated nephew; but Richard would have been commemorated as the prince who had stayed the demon of war at the accession of young Edward, and blunted the arrows of discord when the bow was bent, and the shaft had well nigh winged its flight at the victims of ambition, of hatred and of revenge. Then would his motto, "loyalty bindeth me," have been strictly realized by his actions;§ then would his memory have been united with that of Edward V. in the literal manner in which, by a singular coincidence, the only specimens of their autographs combined have been transmitted to posterity,—the protector's name beneath that of his youthful sovereign, followed by the words "Loyaultè me liè."

The want of confidence that pervaded the highest in rank, both temporal and ecclesiastical, is strikingly displayed by the refusal of the late king's executors to carry into effect the provisions of their royal master's will.

As a contrast, however, to this melancholy picture, a pleasing instance is afforded of the high estimation which, at this corrupt period, Cecily, Duchess of York, still maintained in public estimation;‖ for Baynard's Castle, her

* Biondi's Civill Warres, vol. i. lib. iv. p. 1.
† More, p. 7. ‡ Ibid.
§ "His loyalty bearing a most constant expression in his motto," says Sir George Buck, "'Loyaultè me liè' (loyalty bindeth me); which I have seen written by his own hand, and subscribed Richard Gloucester." The autograph here mentioned is still extant, having been preserved in the Cott. MSS., Vesp. F. xiii. fol. 53.
‖ Although the name of the Duchess of York seldom occurs in connection with the political events of Edward the Fourth's reign, yet there are not wanting a few brief notices of this illustrious lady that carry on her personal history up to that

metropolitan abode,* and the place where she was at this time sojourning, was selected by the two archbishops and eight other prelates, for holding the meeting which placed her late son's property under ecclesiastical sequestration,† and for depositing also the king's jewels,‡ which were thenceforth entrusted to his mother's charge, as it would seem, because the executors were mutually distrustful of each other.

The Duke of Gloucester was present at this meeting;—another cause for believing that he must, in some measure, have been connected with, or interested in, the contents of his brother's last testament. The length of time which separates this distant period from the present age precludes the possibility of ascertaining precisely how far Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and the Lady Cecily participated in the same sentiments: but it appears that, on reaching London, he repaired at once to the abode of his venerable parent, and continued for some days an inmate with her; which circumstance affords reason for surmising that the Lady Cecily approved of the measures he had pursued, and was, in all likelihood, a party concerned in instigating him to adopt them, from the frequent messengers which are said to have met him upon his arrival at York, and on the road to Northampton.§ This fact is important, for as this illustrious lady had recently become a member of the Benedictine order,‖ her religious vows¶ would seem a sufficient surety that she would not lend herself to any nefarious projects, either for disinheriting her grandchild, or for unjustly elevating her son to the throne; although there can be little doubt that the death of the Duke of Clarence, promoted, as it had been, by the queen and Lord Rivers, still rankled deeply and painfully in the heart of every member of the House of York, at an era more remarkable for retaliation and revenge than for the Christian virtues of mercy and forgiveness.

Unhappily for all parties, this rancorous feeling was constantly fed by the knowledge that the enormous wealth of the deceased and attainted prince, together with the person, guardianship and marriage of his youthful heir, the Earl of Warwick, instead of enriching his own kindred, had been conferred upon, and was still in the hands of, a Grey, the Lord of Dorset.** Neither, indeed, could Gloucester or the Lady Cecily entertain a doubt that if the same aspiring and not over-scrupulous race who had ruined the fame of one brother and procured the execution of the other, could but secure the

monarch's decease. Among the Tower records is preserved a privy seal bill (temp. 8th. Edw. IV.,) conveying to the Lady Cecily a grant of certain lands in the vicinity of the monastery of St. Benett, "for so moche as our dearest lady mother hath instantly sued unto us for this matter, and for so much also as our very trust is in her." At the back of the instrument, written in the king's own hand, are these words:—"My Lord Chauncellor, this must be done." (Dr. Stillington was at that time lord chancellor of England.) During King Edward's invasion of France, in 1475, the following mention is made of the Lady Cecily in the Paston Letters (vol. ii. p. 181:) "My Lady of York and all her household is here at St. Benett's, and purpose to abide there still, till the king come from beyond the sea, and longer if she like the air there as it is said." (St. Benett's was a mitred abbey at Holm, in the parish of Horning, county of Norfolk, then a structure of great importance, now a mere ruin in the midst of a dreary level marsh.) In 1480, (20th Edw. IV.,) it appears that Cecily, Duchess of York, and her sister Anne, Duchess of Buckingham, both professed themselves religious, at Northampton, on the same day.—See *Nichol's Hist. and Antiq. of Fotheringay.*

* Archæologia, P. xiii. p. 7.
† Royal Wills, p. 345. ‡ Ibid.
§ More, p. 35, and Drake's Eborac., p. 111.
‖ Cott. MSS., Vitel. L. fol. 17. ¶ See Appendix QQ.
** Cal. Rot., p. 325.

ear of the new sovereign,* himself likewise, the late monarch's only surviving brother, would speedily fall a victim to their hatred and ambition.†

Thus on the demise of Edward IV., or rather at the accession of Edward V., a struggle for pre-eminence, altogether apart from all merely political questions, arose between the young monarch's royal kindred and his maternal relatives. The natural consequence was, that the protector was instigated and supported in his resolute measures by every branch of his own princely house;‡ but chiefly by his mother, whose heart had ever inclined to Richard, the youngest but most judicious of her sons: and that her own kindred, the lordly Nevilles, were equally zealous in espousing his cause,§ is shown by one of the first acts of his protectorate being to endow the Lord Neville with the constableship of the Castle of Pontefract,‖ in reward for his faithful adherence.

The month of May, ushered in so ominously by the seizure of Edward V. and the dispersion of his attendants, and rendered, afterwards, so remarkable by its comprehending, in the brief space of days, acts that, in the ordinary course of things, it would take months, if not years, to carry into effect, glided on more tranquilly towards its close than the portentous events which heralded its dawn would have seemed to prognosticate. Richard presided with his characteristic energy at the helm of state, assisted, there is reason to suppose, by a council appointed at the time when he was nominated to the protectorate; and although no document is known to be extant recording the names of such nobles as were deputed, according to ancient precedent, to assist Gloucester in his arduous duties, yet the connection of the most firm of King Edward's friends, and of the most zealous of Gloucester's supporters, with the measures of the protector enables a tolerable judgment to be formed as to who were his political associates in the administration.¶

The new acts of the young monarch being attested at Westminster, as well as at the Tower,** intimates, also, that the council assembled at both of these places; and, trivial as it may appear, this circumstance conveys an important fact, inasmuch as it proves that the youthful monarch was under no undue restraint, but that he occasionally joined his council at West-

* "Howbeit, as great peril is growing, if we suffer this young king in our enemies' hand, which, without his willing, might abuse the name of his commandment, to any of our undoing, which thing God and good provision forbid."—*More*, p. 20.

† "As easily as they have done some other, already as near of his royal blood as we."—*Ibid.*

‡ The Duke of Buckingham, as already shown, was a Plantagenet by descent from Thomas of Woodstock, the fifth son of Edward III.; and the Lord Howard, whose fidelity to Richard is a subject of historical notoriety, was also a Plantagenet, being lineally descended from Thomas of Brotherton, younger son of King Edward I.

§ Sir George Neville, Lord Bergavenny, and Henry Neville, his son, nephews of the Duchess of York, were also among his zealous partisans, and were rewarded with proofs of his gratitude. Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, his chief supporter, was likewise allied to the Nevilles, that nobleman's brother having married Ellinor, the Lady Cecily's sister.

‖ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 223.

¶ The names of these nobles are—Hastings, lord chamberlain to Edward IV.; Stanley, lord steward of the late king's household; Rotherham, Archbishop of York, and Morton, Bishop of Ely. These servants of the late king were also his executors. (See *Royal Wills*, p. 347.) Of Gloucester's peculiar and especial party may be named, Buckingham, created constable of the duchy of Lancaster; Northumberland, warden of the North; Howard, seneschal of the duchy of Lancaster; and Lovel, chief butler of England. The neutral party were, Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury; Russel, Bishop of Lincoln, the new lord chancellor; and Gunthorp, Dean of Wells, his successor in the office of privy seal.

** See Fœdera, xii. p. 180; and Harl. MSS., 433, p. 221.

minster, or was visited by its members at his apartments in the Tower, after "the court was removed to the castle royal and chief house of safety in the kingdom;"* thus proving him to have been accessible to his lordly subjects, and by no means under the restraint generally reputed to have been imposed on him by the protector.

A state of things so tranquil and harmonious could not, however, long continue, taking into consideration the secret views entertained by the different parties of which the council was composed, and the discordant feelings which influenced the advisers of young Edward's administration. They had all united in opposing the queen and her family, when they had reason to dread their aiming at the regency;† and both had joyfully elevated Gloucester to the guardianship of the king, the more effectually to crush his rivals in power.

But in so doing they had not designed to invest this prince with the absolute power conferred on him by the senate, "commanding and forbidding in every thing like another king!"‡ and could ill brook the haughty independence, the proud decision and the regal superiority which Gloucester immediately assumed, both in the councils of state and in the style of his decrees. They felt that nothing more had been done than the transfer of the government of the realm from the "queen's blood to the more noble of the king's blood;"§ and that the benefit and patronage anticipated by the opposing parties, instead of being neutralized, as they had hoped, by the protector, was now altogether concentrated in his hands. Peaceably, therefore, as Richard had obtained the ascendency, it was an office too much bordering on despotic authority to be viewed otherwise than with distrust and envy by his compeers; and occasions speedily occurred for making this feeling apparent. The first symptom of discontent, says the annalist of Croyland, arose from "the detention of the king's relatives and servants in prison, and the protector not having sufficiently provided for the honour and security of the queen."‖ For the late monarch's servants, although opposed to the royal Elizabeth when, in her prosperity, she abused the indulgence of her illustrious consort, had relented towards their widowed mistress in this her hour of adversity; and the more so, as their own jealous feelings had now become excited against a rival whom they suspected to be fully as aspiring, and felt to be far more powerful than either the queen or her obnoxious kindred. These sentiments, at first slowly admitted, gained strength as it was seen that all vacant offices of profit or trust were bestowed on Gloucester's adherents; and a visible disunion in the council was the natural result. This disunion was displayed in various ways, but chiefly by secret meetings held at the private dwelling-house of the Duke of Gloucester: and that, too, not unfrequently at the same time when such members of the council as favoured the young king and his mother were formally and officially assembled elsewhere.¶

Richard had quitted Baynard's Castle upon the removal of his nephew to the Tower, and had established himself at his metropolitan abode** in Bishopsgate Street;†† whither, says Sir Thomas More, "little by little, all folk withdrew from the Tower, and drew to Crosbie's Place, where the protector kept his household."‡‡

* Buck, lib. i. p. 11.
† Ibid.
‡ Chron. Croy., p. 566.
§ Ibid.
‖ Ibid.
¶ More, p. 66.
** "Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and lord protector, afterwards king by the name of Richard III., was lodged in Crosby Place."—*Stowe's London*, p. 106.
†† Fabyan, p. 513.
‡‡ More, p. 67.

This open display of pre-eminence and strength on the part of Gloucester increased the mistrust and doubt which had already taken possession of the minds of his adversaries;* and it is related that the Lord Stanley, in particular, between whom and the Lord of Gloucester there was little love,† "said unto the Lord Hastings, that he much misliked these two several councils; for while we (quod he) talk of one matter in the tone place, little wot we whereof they talk in the tother place."‡ Nevertheless, for a time the important affairs of state continued to progress without serious interruption, and the month of June was ushered in by active preparations for the coronation of Edward V. This ceremonial was officially announced as definitively fixed for the 22d inst.; and letters were addressed to numerous persons, in the king's name,§ charging them "to be prepared to receive the order of knighthood at his coronation, which he intended to solemnize at Westminster on the 22d of the same month."‖ Costly robes¶ were ordered for this "honourable solemnitie,"** of which the time appointed "then so near approached that the pageants and subtleties†† were in making day and night at Westminster, and much victuals killed, therefore, that afterwards was cast away."‡‡ The

* More, p. 67.

† In an old MS. poem, written by Robert Glover, Somerset herald in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, there is a quaint description of two quarrels between the Lord Stanley and Richard of Gloucester when in the north, both of which were decided by force of arms. In the last encounter, Stanley's men defeated Richard's forces near Salford Bridge; and the poem says,—

"Jack o' Wigan, he did take
The Duke of Gloucester's banner,
And hung it up in Wigan church,
A monument to his honour."

‡ More, p. 67.

§ See Appendix RR.

‖ Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 185.

¶ See Appendix SS.

** The entry in the wardrobe accounts, setting forth that robes were ordered for "the Lord Edward, son of Edward IV., for his apparel and array," the which entry Lord Orford first brought to notice in his "Historic Doubts," (p. 64,) there can exist no doubt, formed part of the preparations mentioned by Sir Thomas More as devised by the lords in council for "the honourable solemnitie" of the young king's coronation. By the annexed entry, preserved among the Harl. MSS., (No. 433, art. 1651,) these preparations appear to have been carried on almost up to the very day fixed upon for the ceremonial. "Warrant for payment of 14*l.* 11*s.* 5*d.* to John Belle, in full contentacion of 32*l.* 2*s.* 7*d.*, for certain stuff of wildfowl of him bought by Sir John Etrington, ayenst that time that the coronation of the bastard son of King Edward should have been kept and holden." Now the marked distinction in the wording of these two memoranda show at once that one was inserted *before*, and the other *after*, the illegitimacy of the prince had been established; and removes all doubts as to the robes having been ordered for the young king's coronation, at the time when the letters announcing the ceremony as fixed for the 22d June were issued. Preparations for the coronation of Richard III. were not commenced until after the illegitimacy of the young princes had been admitted. From that time all notices relative to the deposed sovereign are couched in the same language as the entry above quoted from the Harl. MSS., the epithet, "bastard son of King Edward," being invariably affixed, because from this defective title of his nephew arose the Protector's elevation to the crown.

†† Subtleties or sotilties signified paste moulded into the form of figures, animals, &c., and grouped so as to represent some scriptural or political device. At the coronation of King Henry VI., "a sotiltie graced every course;" a description of one of which will suffice to exemplify the nature of the emblematical confectionary that was so much estimated at this period. "At the third course was exhibited," states Fabyan, "a sotiltie of the Virgin with her Child in her lap, and holding a crown in her hand: St. George and St. Denis kneeling on either side, presenting to her King Henry with a ballad in his hand."—*Fab. Chron.*, p. 419.

‡‡ More, p. 76.

nobles and knights from all parts of the realm were summoned by the Duke of Gloucester,* and came thick to grace that ceremonial; and the Duchess of Gloucester, having been sent for by the protector, "reached the metropolis on the aforesaid 5th instant,"† and joined her husband at Crosby Place.

Meanwhile the difficulties of Gloucester's position daily increased. He feared to release the Lords Rivers and Grey, yet he knew that each day's captivity alienated the young king's affection farther from himself. The royal youth had been too early and too strenuously imbued with affection for his mother's kindred, whose interest it had been from childhood to conciliate his love, not to bemoan deeply and bitterly their continued separation from him: their "imprisonment," we are told, "was grievous to him!"‡ Whether it was that the mild and gentle Edward V. was deficient in that moral energy and daring spirit which formed the chief, nay, sole recommendation of the period, in which he lived, or that he betrayed a physical incapacity for exercising the regal prerogative in such troubled times, cannot, at this distant period, be determined; but the assertion of Sir Thomas More, that the increased popularity of Gloucester "left the king in manner desolate,"§ would seem to indicate that there must have been some stronger motive for this palpable desertion of the young king, and for the deference paid to Richard, than could have arisen merely from the power attached to an office which the latter had exercised but a few weeks, and which all men knew, in a yet shorter period of time, would cease altogether.

The high dignity of protector of the realm always lapsed after the coronation of the monarch, whose regal authority, during infancy, it was the peculiar province of that office to maintain;‖ and setting aside the knowledge that such had been invariably the case in all minorities preceding that of Edward V., the legislature, in nominating Richard as protector, expressly restricted him to "the same power¶ as was conferred on Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, during the minority of Henry VI."

The disastrous fate of this excellent and noble prince was of too recent occurrence for all matters connected with his lamentable end to be forgotten; and Richard well knew that the Lancastrian monarch, whom his brother had deposed, was crowned in his eighth year, with the express design of terminating the office and power of his uncle, the lord protector; neither was he likely to forget that the murder of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester,** resulted from the jealous and determined malice of his political enemies. The subject of these memoirs flourished in an age of dark superstition—one in which omens and presages, soothsaying and necromancy held an unbounded influence over the minds of all men; and the uncle of Edward V., beset, as he was, with perplexities of no ordinary kind, became feelingly alive, there can be little doubt, to the ill-omened title which he bore,†† and the presage of evil which seemed especially to attach to its being conjoined to that of lord protector.‡‡ Had the brother of Edward IV. been nominated regent instead of protector, or had the disturbed state of the realm led to the extreme measure of a prolonged protectorate until his nephew was of age to govern in his own person, Richard of Gloucester, in all likelihood, had never aspired to be king; but his proud spirit could ill brook the prospect that awaited him of sinking into a mere lord of council,§§ after having ruled for some months in the capacity of protector of the realm; and life possessed too many charms at the age

* More, p. 66.

† Excerpt. Hist., p. 17.

‡ More, p. 64.

§ Ibid., p. 66.

‖ Rot. Parl., vol. iv. p. 326.

¶ Chron. Croy., p. 566.

** Hall, p. 209.

†† See Appendix TT.

‡‡ Holinshed, p. 211.

§§ Parl. Roll, vol. iv. p. 338.

of thirty, for him calmly to reflect on the more than probability that he would fall a victim to the same dangerous elevation which had proved the death-warrant of preceding Dukes of Gloucester.

Two paths alone seemed opened to him; either to conciliate the young king by releasing Rivers and Grey, and acting thenceforth in conjunction with the queen and her kindred, or boldly to form a distinct interest for himself under the hope of its leading to some more permanent authority. In the former case he must sacrifice Hastings,* Buckingham, Northumberland† and his noblest supporters, and sink into one of the Wydville train,—a degradation from which his pride of birth as a Plantagenet recoiled;—and in the latter case he was so much beholden to the above-named nobles, that his honour was, as it were, pledged to them; although he was already convinced, from the jealousy which they had evinced in the executive deliberations, that it was doubtful whether he would be enabled to carry out any measures of farther aggrandizement. With his usual sagacity, then, and a keen perception of the desperate character of the times, he resolved on being prepared for either extreme; accordingly, on the eighth instant, by the hand of one of his faithful adherents, Thomas Brackenbury, he renewed his former connection with the city of York, by writing to the authorities of that place,‡ in reply to "letters of supplication which they had recently addressed to him, preferring some request to which he promised speedy attention;"§ and when accused of "cajolery," in thus keeping himself alive in the remembrance of his friends in that city, it seems always to have been forgotten that York and the northern towns had been for nearly ten years under Richard's immediate jurisdiction; that he was warmly and firmly beloved in that part of England; and that the letter which he has been charged with writing "artfully to curry favour," was, in effect, an official answer to an earnest appeal sent by a special messenger from the mayor and commonalty of the city of York, who evidently rested their hopes of success "on the loving and kind disposition" shown to Gloucester in former times, and which that prince, in his letter, acknowledges that "he never can forget."‖—Scarcely, however, was this pacific dispatch transmitted than some intimation of approaching danger appears to have reached Gloucester's anxious and susceptible ear. Of the exact nature and extent of this threatened evil no minute details remain; but that it was some plot to compass Richard's destruction appears certain, from a second letter written by this prince, and addressed to the citizens of York,¶ praying them to send armed men to town to assist in "guarding him against the queen" and "her affinity, which have intended, and do daily intend, to murder and utterly destroy us and our cousin, the Duke of Buckingham, and the blood of the realm." This communication was not conveyed secretly to the mayor, but addressed to him from his post as "protector of the realm;"

* "Hastings feared that if the supreme power fell into the hands of those of the queen's blood, they would avenge upon him the injuries which they had received."—*Chron. Croy.*, p. 564.

† Buckingham and Northumberland were the chief accusers of the Wydvilles, and the instigators of the arrest of the Lords Rivers and Grey; who "would prick him (the king) forward thereunto if they escaped; for they wolde remember their imprisonment."—*More*, p. 64.

‡ See Appendix UU.

§ Drake, who has published this letter from the original MS. preserved among the records of the city of York, states that "York and the northern parts were his strongest attachment; and, in order to make the city more in his interest, a remarkable letter was sent from him and delivered to the lord mayor by Thomas Brackenbury."—*Drake's Ebor.*, p. 111.

‖ Ibid.

¶ See Appendix VV.

and that this fresh outbreak decided the fate of the prisoners in the north seems certain, from Sir Richard Ratcliffe, the bearer of the above,* being, also, charged with commands from Gloucester to the Earl of Northumberland to proceed to the Castle of Pontefract, there to preside at the trial of Lord Rivers,† and from his also carrying a warrant for the immediate execution of Grey, Vaughan and Hurst.‡

The following day (11th of June) Gloucester further addressed an earnest appeal for support to his kinsman, the Lord Neville; and as this is conveyed in a private letter, and that such confidential communications form the most authentic source for biographical memoirs, a document so materially affecting Richard's actions at this important and mysterious period of his life demands unabbreviated insertion.

"To my Lord Nevylle,§ in haste.—

"My Lord Nevylle, I recommend me unto you as heartily as I can, and as ye love me, and your own weal and surety and this realm, that ye come to me with that ye may make defensibly arrayed in all the haste that is possible; and that ye will give credence to . . . . . Richard Radclyff, this bearer, whom I now do send to you instructed with all my mind and intent.

"And, my lord, do me now good service, as ye have always before done, and I trust now so to remember you as shall be the making of you and yours. And God send you good fortunes.

"Written at London, the 11th day of June, with the hand of

"Your heartily loving cousin and master,

"R. Gloucester.‖

"London, Wednesday, 11th June, 1483.
(1 Edw. V.)"

Notwithstanding the merciless feeling so invariably imputed to him, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was not cruel by nature.¶ Circumspect and wary he undoubtedly was; but the habit of concealing his designs resulted more from prudence and a lively sense of the perfidious character of the age than from deliberate hypocrisy and hardness of heart. Up to this period no accusation of homicide, either as prince or protector, has been laid to his charge by cotemporary writers, which is the more remarkable considering that he flourished at an epoch singularly ferocious, and pre-eminently distinguished for the infliction of summary vengeance, and utter disregard of the value of human life.** Consistently, therefore, with his temperate and watchful habit, although he wrote both officially and privately, on the 10th and 11th of June, providing for his safety by requiring his northern partisans to assemble at Pontefract, and as speedily as possible to be conducted to London by the Lords Northumberland and Neville, he appears to have carefully concealed from those around him his apprehension of danger—or rather that he had received any direct intimation of it—until he was enabled to test the fidelity of Hastings, and other members of the council implicated, by report in the scheme for his destruction. Unhappily for all the parties con-

* Cont. Croy., p. 567. † Rous, Hist. Reg. Ang., 214.

‡ Drake's Ebor., p. 111.

§ It does not clearly appear who this Lord Neville was. Sir George Neville, Lord Abergavenny, attended the coronation of Richard III. as a baron, but he was never called Lord Neville.

‖ Paston Letters, vol. v. p. 303.

¶ "There were instances enough of his bounty and humanity, but none of his cruelty, till, being protector, he was pushed on by Buckingham and Hastings to put the queen's brother and son to death; and which involved Hastings himself in the same ruin."—*Carte's Hist. Eng.*, vol. ii. p. 819.

** Turner's Middle Ages, vol. iv. p. 398.

cerned, Richard had admitted to his councils and confidence one of those plausible but wretched instruments of treachery and dissimulation, who, sheltered by their own insignificance, are, nevertheless, often the active agents for producing moral and political convulsions. Catesby, "a man well learned in the laws of this land," and by the especial favour of the lord chamberlain, "in good authority,"* had so far insinuated himself into the protector's regard as to assist at his private deliberations. In addition to the fact stated by Sir Thomas More, that "no man was so much beholden to Hastings as was this Catesby,"† it appears that a brotherly affection and close intimacy had long subsisted between them. He was "of his near secret council," he adds, "and whom he very familiarly used, and in his most weighty matters put no man in so special trust."‡ Now the Lord Hastings was but the echo of Stanley, Rotheram and Morton. The annexed words, therefore, of Sir Thomas More§ on this point are very important, when it is considered that his information was almost certainly derived from Morton himself; and the conviction consequently resulting is, that Catesby, by his subtlety and hypocrisy, had discovered and divulged the treasonable designs which led to the foregoing letters,—"but surely great pity was it, that he (Catesby) had not had either more truth, or less wit; for his *dissimulation only* kept all that mischief up."

The unsuspecting frankness of the lord chamberlain proved, indeed, his destruction; yet it seems that Richard struggled hard to save Hastings' life: "the protector loved him well, and loath was to have lost him, saving for fear lest his life should have quailed their purpose."‖ "For which cause he moved Catesby, whether he could think it possible to win the Lord Hastings into their party," and to consent, neither to the death of young Edward, nor even to that prince's deposition, but (as admitted by the Duke of Buckingham himself to Morton) to the taking "upon him the crown till the prince came to the age of four-and-twenty years, and was able to govern the realm as an able and sufficient king."¶ Little opposition was likely to arise on this matter from the Lord of Buckingham. He had too closely allied himself to his cousin of Gloucester to hope for aggrandizement from the opposite faction; and his vanity was fed by a proposed marriage** between Richard's "only lawful son" and his eldest daughter.††

But Hastings was not so easily managed. He hated Rivers, indeed, and he loved not the queen; but he was devotedly attached to the late king, and faithfully espoused the interests of his offspring. He well knew that power once obtained is very seldom voluntarily relinquished; and he also knew that Gloucester, by ambition as well as by lineage, was a Plantagenet and a Yorkist.

Unfortunately for the protector, as well as for Hastings, Catesby, the perfidious spy on the actions of both his patrons, on both the friends whom he feigned to serve,‡‡ was the agent employed "to prove with some words cast out afar off"§§ the true state of the Lord Hastings' mind towards the protector. "But Catesby, whether he essayed him, or essayed him not,

* More, p. 68. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. § Ibid.
‖ Ibid.
¶ Grafton, Cont. of More, p. 153. ** More, p. 65.
†† The Duke of Buckingham had two daughters whose ages agreed with either being the wife of the young prince.
‡‡ From this despicable character was lineally descended that Catesby in whom originated the Gunpowder Plot. Other members of the family, too, were notorious for the same intriguing and unprincipled habits which cast so deep a shade over this period of Gloucester's career.
§§ More, p. 69.

reported that he found him so fast, and *heard him speak so terrible words*, that he durst no further break: and of truth the lord chamberlain of very trust showed unto Catesby the mistrust that others began to have in this matter."*

Alas, for the too confiding Hastings! this imprudent openness, confirming, as it did, the alleged conspiracy to destroy the lord protector, effectually sealed the fate of the queen's kindred, decided the death of the lord chamberlain himself, and stimulated Richard to the desperate course he henceforth resolved on pursuing.

Catesby, in his double capacity of friend and betrayer, appears, indeed, to have possessed himself of some plans and schemes that involved either the destruction of Gloucester or of his foes:—"On my life, never doubt you (quod the Lord Hastings"), when warned to be circumspect; "so surely thought he that there could be none harm toward him in that counsel intended, where Catesby was,"†—"for while one man is there, which is never thence, never can there be thing once minded that should sound amiss toward me, but it should be in mine ears ere it were well out of their mouths." "This meant he by Catesby."‡ But honour and integrity, and trust between man and man, had little influence on this degenerate age; for, as emphatically stated in a remarkable letter written at this precise period, and describing the state of the metropolis as it was then constituted, "With us is much trouble, and every man doubts the other."§ Catesby reported to Gloucester "the so terrible words" he had heard the lord chamberlain speak;—and having, through the misplaced trust of this nobleman, ascertained or feigned so to do, the evil intended and the extent of the mischief, the arrest and condemnation of Hastings was decreed; the which strong measure was probably taken, fully as much in consequence of the danger likely to ensue from the hints thrown out by Catesby to the lord chamberlain as from the treasonable designs unfolded by that perfidious lawyer,‖ "in whom, if the Lord Hastings had not put so special trust, many evil signs that he saw might have availed to save his life."¶

But the die was cast, and Richard's decision was made! Accordingly, on the 13th of June, "the protector having with singular cunning divided the council, so that part should sit at Westminster and part at the Tower, where the king was, Hastings, coming to the Tower to the council, was, by his command, beheaded. Thomas, Archbishop of York, and John, Bishop of Ely, although, on account of their order, their lives were spared, were imprisoned in separate castles in Wales."**

Such is the brief account given by the faithful historian of that time. Fabyan, the city chronicler, repeats, almost verbatim, this statement, only in less concise terms; but he gives no farther particulars, excepting that "an outcry, by Gloucester's assent of treason, was made in the outer chamber;"†† and that "the lord protector rose up and yode himself to the chamber door, and there received in such persons as he had before appointed to execute his malicious purpose." "In which stirring the Lord Stanley was

* More, p. 69. † Ibid. p. 67. ‡ Ibid.
§ See Excerpta Historica, for two valuable letters from Simon Stallworth, one of the officers of the Bishop of Lincoln, to Sir William Stoner, knight, giving an account of the state of London, and the political news, shortly before the accession of Richard III.—*Excerpt. Hist.*, p. 17.
‖ "He, fearing lest their motions might with the Lord Hastings minish his credence, (whereunto only all the matter leaned,) procured the Protector hastily to rid him."—*More*, p. 69.
¶ Ibid., p. 68. ** Chron. Chroy., p. 566.
†† Fabyan's Chron., p. 514.

hurt in the face, and kept awhile under hold."* Sir Thomas More, in the spirit of romance which pervades his work, embellishes this portion of his narrative, as he does all the descriptive parts, by a display of his oratorical powers; and by making his rhetoric available towards incorporating with the admitted facts of cotemporaries the marvellous tales of a wonder-loving age. But these descriptions, graphic as they are, and attractive as they proved, unhappily for Richard, both to the dramatist, the Tudor chroniclers, and the mere copyist of later times, can no longer pass current for, or be received as, authentic history. Without attempting to handle arguments, and to reiterate discrepancies which have been exposed and examined by writers† of repute and superior abilities, it must surely be sufficient, in this enlightened age, to ask any reasonable person with reference to Sir Thomas More's additions, whether a prince, who was distinguished as the ablest general of his time, a time in which the mode of warfare was remarkable for ponderous armour and weapons of almost gigantic size,‡ could have had from his birth "a werish withered arm," when that arm at Barnet was opposed to the mighty Warwick himself, and by its power and nerve defeated Somerset, the most resolute warrior of the age, at the desperate battle of Tewkesbury?

Still more improbable is the statement that the Lord Chamberlain of England should have been made to suffer death, and led out to instant execution without trial, because Jane Shore, the unhappy victim of King Edward's passion, was alleged to have leagued with the widowed queen whom she had so irreparably injured, "in wasting the protector's body by witchcraft and sorcery;"§ yet these traditions have been gravely perpetuated for ages; and no portion of Shakspeare's tragedy more completely develops the corrupt source from which he drew his information than the literal manner in which the dramatist has rendered this part of Sir Thomas More's narrative.

Perhaps, as far as it is possible, at this distant period of time, to remove the extraneous matter which has so long cast an air of distrust over the records of this confused era, the real facts of the case may be summed up in the words applied to the protector's father by his great political antagonist, Edmund, Duke of Somerset, under somewhat parallel circumstances, "that if York had not learned to play the king by his regency, he had never forgot to obey as a subject."‖

Richard, as has been before observed, was peculiarly fitted for sovereignty; his legislative abilities were of a very high order; and, having once inhaled the intoxicating fumes of absolute power, he resolved upon continuing his rule at any cost. The Lords Hastings, Rivers and Grey would never have sanctioned his accession to the throne, either temporarily

* Fabyan's Chron., p. 514.

† See Sir George Buck, lib. i. p. 13; Walpole's Hist. Doubts, 47; Laing, (in Henry,) xii. p. 415; together with Carte, Rapin, Lingard, Turner and many others.

‡ Specimens of the armour worn in the reign of Richard III., the age in which that suit termed "ribbed" had arrived at the greatest perfection, may be seen in the present day in the armoury at the Tower, together with the helmet then used, and its weighty oreillets, the rondelles and jambs for protecting the arm-pits and legs, and several of the weapons which, had they been models, instead of actual relics of the fifteenth century, might have made many sceptical as to the possibility of their having been wielded by persons of ordinary size and strength.

§ "Then said the Protector, 'Ye shall all see in what wise that sorceress, and that other witch of her counsel, Shore's wife, with their affinity, have by their sorcery and witchcraft wasted my body.' And therewith he plucked up his doublet sleeve to his elbow upon his left arm, where he showed a werish withered arm and small, as it was never other."—*More*, p. 72.

‖ Echard, vol. i. p. 214.

or definitively; and that the latter were concerned in some league to get rid of the protector, and, therefore, afforded him some show of justice for their execution, seems to have been admitted even by Hastings himself; for Sir Thomas More states,* that these nobles "were by *his assent before devised* to be beheaded at Pontefract this self-same day, in which he was not aware that it was by others devised that himself should be beheaded in London."†

The news of the lord chamberlain's execution, together with the imprisonment of the bishops, the Lord Stanley, and others "suspected to be against the protector," quickly spread throughout the metropolis, and caused extreme consternation; but Gloucester, in anticipation of this result, sent a herald, within two hours, through the city, "in the king's name," proclaiming the fact that "Hastings, with divers other of his traitorous purpose, had before conspired that same day to have slain the lord protector and the Lord Buckingham sitting in the council; and after to have taken upon them to rule the king and the realm at pleasure, and thereby to pil and spoil whom they list uncontroulled."‡

How far this charge was well founded, it would be vain to argue: although Sir Thomas More's positive implication of Catesby—as regards "the terrible words" which he asserts that he reported to Gloucester—affords reasonable ground for supposing that there was at least some foundation for the reported conspiracy. Moreover, as the information of this historian was derived from Bishop Morton himself, who was implicated in the plot, and one of the conspirators accused and imprisoned for it, it accounts for the marvellous tales which he gave out,§ and for his concealment of facts that would possibly have held the protector fully justified in his promptitude and stern decision.

Whatever was the true cause of Hastings' death, however, the effect produced was such as his enemies desired; for it is recorded by the Chronicler of Croyland, that, "being removed, and the king's other adherents intimidated, the two dukes did from henceforth what they pleased."‖

The precipice on which Gloucester stood was one that might have well daunted a less daring spirit; but, courageous and determined by nature, he felt that he had now advanced too far to admit of the possibility of retreat; and with the desperation common to aspiring minds, he gave the full reins to that ambition which had already mastered his better feelings.

As a prelude to the views that he now began to entertain of securing the crown altogether, he felt it advisable to remove the young Duke of York to the Tower, so that, the princes being together, he might be better enabled to mature his plans and carry them into effect.¶ Without testing the ultimate

* More, p. 74.

† "He was brought forth into the green beside the chapel, within the Tower, and his head laid on a log of timber, and there stricken off; and afterward his body, with the head, was interred at Windsor, beside the body of King Edward IV."—*Fabyan*, p. 513.

‡ More, p. 80.

§ "The artificial glare with which the whole is surrounded generates a suspicion that some treason was detected and punished,—a conspiracy in which Morton had participated with Hastings, and was therefore desirous to remove from view."—See *Laing*, (*Appendix to Henry*,) vol. xii. p. 417.

‖ Chron. Croy., p. 566.

¶ "Wherefore incontinent at the next meeting of the lords at the council he proposed unto them that it was a heinous deed of the queen, and proceeding of great malice towards the king's councillors, that she should keep in sanctuary the king's brother from him, whose special pleasure and comfort were to have his brother with him. And that, (by her done,) to none other intent but to bring all the lords in obloquy and murmur of the people; as though they were not to be trusted with the

designs of Richard, or drawing conclusions resulting from subsequent events, it must be admitted, that by virtue of his responsible office as lord protector of the realm, he was, in some degree, justified in striving to obtain possession of the person of the infant Duke of York, as heir presumptive to the crown;* the more so since the king desired, as was, indeed, natural, the companionship of his brother;† and also because a report had been circulated that it was intended to send the young prince out of the kingdom.‡ Now Richard was not so advanced in years as to forget the almost parallel case when himself, at the very age of the Duke of York, was, with his brother of Clarence, privately conveyed to Utrecht, owing to the anxiety and misgivings of his mother; neither was he ignorant of the fact that the Marquis Dorset, the Lord Lyle and Sir Edward Grey, his young nephews' maternal relatives, had already effected their escape,§ although Lionel Wydville, Bishop of Salisbury, yet remained in sanctuary to counsel and aid his royal sister.

Resolute, however, as was the protector in his determination to withdraw, if possible, the young prince from Westminster, the strongest test and greatest surety for the lawfulness of his proceedings up to this time rest upon the fact that he was supported in his design by the heads of the church and the chief officers of the crown, "my lord cardinale, my lord chauncellor, and other many lords temporal."‖

Sir Thomas More's elaborate account of the transaction, together with the lengthened orations of the queen and Cardinal Bourchier, have long been considered as the effusions of his own fertile imagination;¶ but the simple statement of the Croyland Chronicler, the soundest authority of that day, embraces, there can be little doubt, the entire facts of the proceeding. "On Monday, the 15th of June, the Cardinal-Archbishop of Canterbury, with many others, entered the sanctuary at Westminster for the purpose of inducing the queen to consent to her son Richard, Duke of York, coming to the Tower for the consolation of the king, his brother. To this she assented, and he was accordingly conducted thither by the archbishop."

Fabyan's account is even more laconic; but the silence of both these cotemporaries, as well as that of the writer of the above-named letters,** exonerates Richard from the alleged violence imputed to him by More; and proves beyond dispute that the young prince was removed by the consent of his mother, who was his natural guardian, and not by any exercise of Richard's authority as protector. It is worthy of remark, that the city chronicler confirms two assertions of Sir Thomas More which tell greatly in the protector's favour; namely, the one that Cardinal Bourchier, the Archbishop of Canterbury, pledged his life for the young prince's safety,* so implicitly did he rely on the honour and integrity of the Duke of Gloucester; and the other, that if their royal parent would voluntarily quit the sanctuary, her sons should not be separated from her:—but he adds, "the queen, for all fair promises to her made, kept her and her daughters within the foresaid sanctuary."†

king's brother, that by the assent of the nobles of the land were appointed, as the king's nearest friends, to the tuition of his own royal person."—*More*, p. 36.

* More, p. 43.
† Chron. Croy., p. 566.
‡ More, p. 36.
§ Rous, Hist. Reg. Ang., p. 212.
‖ Stallworth Letters, Ex. Hist., p. 15.
¶ Lingard, vol. v. p. 244.
** Simon Stallworth, the writer of these coeval letters, was one of the officers of the lord chancellor, into whose hands, he states, the young duke was placed; and, consequently, had personal violence been intended, he must have known it. But, although he relates that there were "at Westminster great plenty of armed men," the natural consequence of the troubled state of the metropolis which he had just been describing, he in no way couples them with what he terms "the deliverance of the Duke of York." He mentions the princely reception given to the royal child; and in this *particular point*, which is one of great importance, he agrees with Sir Thomas More, viz., that the Duke of Buckingham met the young prince in the middle of Westminster Hall, and that the lord protector received him at the door of the star-chamber "with many loving words, and in the company of the cardinal took him to the Tower." The armed men, there can be little doubt, were intended to guard this public procession; for the soldiers in the fifteenth century would have shrunk from forcibly violating a sanctuary.

Had Elizabeth yielded, how different might have been the fate of Edward V.! Had she but possessed sufficient moral energy to risk her own life for her sons, as did the parents of Edward IV. and Henry VII., how far brighter might have been her own lot and that of her infant progeny? "Here is no man (quod the Duke of Buckingham) that will be at war with woman. Would God some of the men of her kin were woman too, and then should all be soon at rest."‡

But both the princely brothers were now in the protector's power; and those friends who had conspired against their uncle's life, and who would have opposed his elevation, were either dead or in close imprisonment. Only seven days intervened before that fixed for young Edward's coronation; only one short week remained, in which to aim at sovereignty, or to sink back into the position of a subject.

Richard, in an evil hour, yielded to the worldliness of a corrupt age and a pernicious education; and by this dereliction of moral and religious duty, he cast from him the glory of being held up to the admiration of posterity as an example of rigid virtue and self-denial, instead of being chronicled as an usurper and the slave of his ungovernable ambition.

From this day, the 15th of June, the two Dukes of Gloucester and Buckingham no longer concealed their designs. The dispatch forwarded to York by Sir Thomas Radcliff on the 10th did not reach that city for five days; but on the 19th its contents were acted upon by a proclamation§ requiring as many armed men as could be raised to assemble at Pontefract by the 22d instant; and on the following day, the 23d, Lord Rivers, having been removed from his prison at Sheriff-Hutton, was there tried and executed by the Earl of Northumberland, that peer acting both as judge and accuser.‖ However harsh this proceeding may appear, it is clear that this unfortunate nobleman was himself satisfied that his sentence was conformable to the proceedings of the age, and had been merited by his own conduct.¶ That he had confidence also in the protector's justice, although he entertained no hope of awakening his mercy, is likewise shown by the annexed conclusion to his will dated at Sheriff-Hutton 23d of June, 1483,** "Over this I beseech humbly my Lord of Gloucester, in the worship of Christ's passion and for the merit and weal of his soul, to comfort, help and assist, as supervisor (for very trust) of this testament, that mine executors may with his pleasure fulfill this my last will."††

* "He durst lay his own body and soul both in pledge, not only for his surety, but for his estate."—*More*, p. 79.
† Fabyan, p. 513.
‡ More, p. 41.
§ Drake's Ebor., p. 111.
‖ Rous, Hist. Reg. Ang., p. 213.
¶ The historian, who has recorded the particulars of his execution, has preserved a ballad written by Earl Rivers after he was condemned to death: it breathes a spirit of resignation and firmness that is very pleasing, but contains no expression either of injustice at his sentence or reproach to the protector.—*Rous*, p. 214.
** Excerpt. Hist., p. 248.
†† The commiseration ordinarily expressed at the violent end of Anthony, Earl Rivers, has arisen in great measure from the lamentations bestowed upon him by Caxton; whose first book, (from the English press,) with the date and place sub-

The Duke of Gloucester, renowned as he was for bravery and military skill, was wholly averse to civil war; and, in the present instance, although he was firmly resolved on displacing his nephew, and ruling the empire as king actually, and not merely by sufferance, yet his energies were altogether directed towards accomplishing this end by means the most speedy and the least turbulent. An opening had presented itself to his calculating sagacity for securing the crown, not only without bloodshed, but even with some appearance of justice, arising from an important secret with which he had been intrusted some years antecedent to this period.

The marriage of Edward IV. with Elizabeth Wydville was not valid,* inasmuch as that monarch had before been privately married† to the Lady Elinor Butler.‡ Not only was this fact well known to Gloucester,§ and to the Duke of Buckingham, who was the Lady Elinor's cousin,‖ but Dr. Stillington, Bishop of Bath and Wells, (the prelate by whom the parties had been united,¶ and through whose means the circumstance had become known to the protector,) yet lived to attest the fact; and so likewise did Cecily, Duchess of York, who had exerted herself both by entreaties and remonstrances** to

joined, was a work of this nobleman's, entitled "Dictes or Sayings of Philosophers," the MS. of which, elaborately illuminated, represents Edward IV., his son and the queen, and Earl Rivers in the act of offering his work to the king, accompanied by Caxton.—See *Oldy's Brit. Lib.*, p. 65; and *Ames' Typ.*, p. 104. But this accomplished nobleman, although learned, chivalrous, and excelling his compeers in the more graceful attainments of the age, was by no means free from the vices which characterized his family and the times in which he lived. He was universally unpopular, from the selfish and covetous ambition which marked his political conduct during the ascendency of his royal sister. He was the cause of King Edward's committing to the Tower his "beloved servant" Lord Hastings. He instigated the queen to insist on the Duke of Clarence's execution.—See *Fœdera*, xii. p. 95. He grasped at every profitable or powerful appointment in King Edward's gift; and would, there can be no doubt, have sacrificed the Duke of Gloucester to his insatiable ambition, had not that prince, from intimation of his designs, felt justified, in accordance with the relentless custom of that period, in committing him to prison, and commanding his execution.

* Rot. Parl., vol. vi. fol. 241.

† "The lady to whom the king was first betrothed and married was Elinor Talbot, daughter of a great peer of this realm, of a most noble and illustrious family, the Earl of Shrewsbury; who is also called, in authentic writings, the Lady Butler, because she was then the widow of the Lord Butler; a lady of very eminent beauty and answerable virtue, to whom the king was contracted, married, and had a child by her."—*Buck*, lib. iv. p. 122. Sir Thomas More, by some oversight, substitutes the name of Elizabeth Lucy for that of Elinor Butler: the former was King Edward's mistress, and mother of his illegitimate son Arthur Lord Lisle; the latter was his affianced and espoused wife.—See *More*, p. 96.

‡ Milles's Cat. of Honour, p. 743.

§ On the authority of Philip de Comines, (lib. v. p. 202,) Buck states that Dr. Stillington was induced by the Lady Butler's family, to inform the Duke of Gloucester of King Edward's marriage, "as the man most inward with the king" during that monarch's life; who, upon the matter being mentioned to him by Gloucester, became so incensed against the bishop, saying, he had "not only betrayed his trust, but his children, that he dismissed him from his council, and put him under a strict imprisonment for a long time; which at length Stillington redeemed himself from by means of a heavy fine paid shortly before the king's death, as testified by Bishop Goodwin in his Catalogues Episcoporium."—*Buck*, lib. iv. p. 122.

‖ Elinor Talbot, daughter of John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury; her mother was the Lady Katherine Stafford, daughter of Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham; and she was the widow of Thomas Lord Butler, Baron of Sudely.—*Buck*, lib. iv. p. 116.

¶ "This contract was made in the hands of the bishop, who said that afterwards he married them, no person being present but they twayne and he, the king charging him strictly not to reveal it."—*Phil. de Com.*, lib. v. p. 151.

** More, p. 93.

prevent the second marriage,* entered into by her son in direct violation of a sacramental oath, and in open defiance of the law, ecclesiastical as well as civil.† Here, then, was solid ground on which to base his own pretensions, and to invalidate his nephew's right of succession. Nor was Richard slow to profit by it.

The lord mayor, Sir Edmund Shaw, together with the sheriffs of London, were well inclined towards the protector; and Dr. Raaf Shaw, and ecclesiastic of eminence and brother to the mayor, in conjunction with Dr. Penker, the superior of the Augustin friars, undertook to advocate the Duke of Gloucester's claims publicly from the pulpit. They were "both doctors of divinity, both great preachers, and both greatly esteemed amongst the people."‡

When attention is directed to this point, together with the eagerness which had been so recently shown by the mayor and sheriffs above named to testify their loyalty to Edward V. on his entrance into the city,§ and their promptitude in taking the oath of allegiance to him, it cannot but suggest the conviction that Richard's claims must have been better founded and his conduct less flagitious than are ordinarily reported, if he could thus speedily, and without force of arms enlist both the clergy and the city magistracy in his cause.

Political expediency—the alleged source of all the miseries connected with these direful times—may have operated with Richard, as an individual, in accelerating the death of his opponent, Hastings, or his rival, the Earl Rivers; but it can scarcely be supposed to have had sufficient weight to influence the clergy and the city authorities publicly to advocate what must have appeared open perjury and usurpation. The bonds of social union, it is well known, were dissevered, and the national character had become grievously demoralized by the civil wars; but it is beyond all belief that one individual, even were he as vicious and depraved as the protector has long been represented, could have corrupted a whole nation—peers, prelates and legislators, in the brief span of fifty days; much less have obtained sufficient mastery over the people to induce them to advocate the deposition of their acknowledged sovereign, and to seek his own advancement, unless there were palpable grounds for so strong a measure.

Little doubt can remain that many more facts must have been known to the community at large than have been perpetuated in the ex-parte statements that have alone been transmitted to posterity; a few concise notices,

* "The duchess, his mother, who, upon the secret advertisement of his love to this Lady Gray, used all the persuasions and authority of a mother to return him to the Lady Elinor Talbot, his former love and wife, (at least his contracted,) to finish and consummate what he was bound to by public solemnity of marriage."—*Buck*, lib. iv. p. 119.

† Buck states that the announcement of the king's second marriage "cast the Lady Elianora Butler into so perplext a melancholy, that she spent herself in a solitary life ever after."—Lib. iv. p. 122. The same historian also states, that the king's "remembrance of his pre-contract after a time moved him by such sensible apprehensions, that he could not brook to have it mentioned; which was the cause of his displeasure against his ancient chaplain, Dr. Stillington, because he did what his conscience urged to God and the kingdom in discovering the marriage."—*Ibid.* The Lady Eleanor did not long survive the king's infidelity: retiring into a monastery, she devoted herself to religion, and dying on the 30th of July, 1466, was buried in the Carmelites' church at Norwich. She was a great benefactress to Corpus Christi College in Cambridge, as she was likewise to the University.—*Weaver*, p. 805.

‡ More, p. 88.

§ Chron. Croy., p. 566.

unfortunately, being all that is left, in the present day, whereby to guide the historian in his efforts to unweave that mass of fiction and deceit in which the period under consideration is enveloped.

As a prelude to the stigma which he was about to affix on Edward IV. and his offspring, Richard determined upon delivering over to the ecclesiastical power Jane Shore, his brother's favourite mistress, who was said to have been living in the same unlawful manner* with the Lord Hastings up to the very period of his execution.

She was arrested by the Lord Howard, or, as some say, the sheriffs of London, immediately after the lord chamberlain's death, on suspicion of being implicated in the conspiracy for which he suffered; and her vast wealth was also seized, "less," says Sir Thomas More, "from avarice than anger."†

It is by no means improbable that Jane's attachment to the late king may have led to her being a party concerned in schemes for securing the well-being of Edward V.; and that her house, in consequence, was the chosen resort of the young king's friends: but it was her immorality, not her political offences, that it best suited Gloucester at this crisis to make apparent. Consequently, after being imprisoned and examined on the latter accusation, she was delivered over to Dr. Kempe, the Bishop of London, for punishment on the former charge; and by him sentenced to perform open penance on the Sunday following the Lord Hastings' execution. Her saddened look and subdued manner, united to her rare beauty and accomplishments, excited general commiseration; but as a native of London,‡ and well known to the citizens as the unfaithful partner of one of their eminent merchants, a goldsmith and banker,§ she was a notable instance of the late king's licentious habits, and therefore a fitting instrument to prepare the minds of the people for the desperate measure which her public degradation was intended to strengthen.

On the ensuing Sunday, the 22d instant, Dr. Shaw, whose high reputation, perpetuated by Fabyan, seems strangely irreconcilable with the part which he is said to have acted on this occasion,‖ ascended St. Paul's Cross,¶ "the lord protector, the Duke of Buckingham, and other lords being present,"** and selecting an appropriate text from the Book of Wisdom†† (ch. iv. v. 3), he directed the attention of his mixed congregation to the dissolute life which had been led by the late king. After dwelling forcibly on the evils resulting to the state from his indulgence in habits so derogatory to his own honour and the well-being of the kingdom, he "there showed openly that the children of King Edward IV. were not legitimate, nor rightful inheritors of the crown;" concluding his discourse by pointing out the preferable title of the lord protector, disannulling that of the young king, and urging the immediate election of Richard as the rightful heir to the throne.*

Such is the brief account given by Fabyan, a cotemporary, a citizen,† and most probably an auditor, respecting this celebrated sermon, which, after being distorted and exaggerated to a degree almost inconceivable, (unless the additions of succeeding annalists are compared with the plain testimony of such as were coeval with the event,) makes Gloucester perform a part better befiting a strolling player‡ than the lord protector of the realm, and even act in so revolting a manner as that of instructing§ the preacher to impugn the reputation of his own mother!‖ fixing the stain of illegitimacy on all her sons but himself; and he, be it remembered, was her youngest and eleventh child!¶

Monstrous, indeed, is the charge! a fitting accompaniment to the common story of Clarence's death, and Gloucester's "wrish and withered arm."

All reply to this gross accusation against the protector may be summed up in the simple fact, that every cotemporary writer is silent on the matter; making no allusion whatever to the Lady Cecily, or the unnatural and uncalled-for part said to have been acted by her son.

The Prior of Croyland and Rous of Warwick seem to have considered Dr. Shaw's sermon too unimportant even to call forth remark. Fabyan's account merely shows it to have been the means employed to prepare the citizens of London for the claims that were about to be legally submitted to the council of lords at the approaching assemblage of Parliament; and Sir Thomas More, the next writer in chronological order** (and the first who relates the calumny),†† "which the worshipful doctor rather signified than fully explained,"‡‡ not only certifies that Richard was acquitted of all share in the transaction, but also that the entire blame was laid on the over-zeal of the time-serving, obsequious Dr. Shaw,§§ assigning this outrage on the pro-

* More, p. 80. † Ibid., p. 81.

‡ "This woman was born in London, worshipfully friended, honestly brought up, and very well married, saving somewhat too soon; her husband, an honest citizen, young and goodly, and of good substance."—*More*, p. 83.

§ Graph. Illust., p. 49.

‖ "And the more he was wondred of, that he could take upon him such business, considering that he was so famous a man both of his learning and his natural wit."—*Fabyan*, p. 514.

¶ A pulpit in form of a cross which stood almost in the middle of St. Paul's churchyard, raised in an open space before the cathedral; the which, says Pennant, "was used not only for the instruction of mankind by the doctrine of the preacher, but for every purpose ecclesiastical or political; for giving force to oaths, for promulgating laws, and for the defaming of those who had incurred the royal displeasure."

** Fabyan, p. 514.

†† "'Spuria vitulimina non agent radices altas;' that is to say, Bastard slips shall never take deep root."—*More*, p. 100.

‡ "Now was it before devised, that in the speaking of these words, the protector should have come in among the people to the sermon, to the end that those words, meeting with his presence, might have been taken among the hearers as though the Holy Ghost had put them in the preacher's mouth, and should have moved the people even there to cry 'King Richard! King Richard!' that it might have been after said that he was specially chosen by God, and in manner by miracle. But this device quailed either by the protector's negligence, or the preacher's over-much diligence."—*More*, p. 102. § Ibid., p. 99.

‖ "The tale of Richard's aspersing the chastity of his own mother," says Horace Walpole, "is incredible; it appearing that he lived with her in perfect harmony, and lodged with her in her palace at that very time."—*Hist. Doubts*, p. 125.

¶ See Archæol., xiii. p. 7; Hist. Doubts, p. 42; and Buck, lib. iii. p. 82.

** The Prior of Croyland wrote his Chronicle in 1484. Rous, of Warwick, wrote his history in the year 1487. Fabyan's Chronicle was compiled somewhere about 1490. Sir Thomas More wrote his Life of Richard III. in 1508. Polydore Virgil was sent to England by Pope Innocent VIII. to collect the Papal tribute in the year 1500. He commenced his history shortly after his establishment at the English court, and completed it in 1517.

†† More, p. 99. ‡‡ Ibid., p. 111.

§§ "That the preacher attacked the chastity of the protector's mother to put the late king's legitimacy in doubt, is scarcely credible, because it was unnecessary; and if this were done, it did not originate with Richard. It was one of the articles of Clarence's attainder, (Rot. Parl., vi. p. 194,) that he accused his brother, Edward IV., of being a bastard."—*Turner*, vol. iii. p. 456.

tector's mother as the cause of that disgrace* which Fabyan, as well as himself, perpetuates.

It is from Polydore Virgil, the annalist of Henry VII., whose history was compiled under the auspices† of the rival and bitter enemy of Richard III., and from which corrupted source have sprung those calumnies which, for ages, have supplied the stream of history, that we must look for the source of those accusations which so long have darkened the fame of Richard of Gloucester. He it was who affixed on the protector this most uncalled-for infamy. He makes the aspersions on the Lady Cecily's honour to comprise the whole of the offensive portion of Dr. Shaw's sermon, even denying that he attacked the legitimacy of King Edward's children, although admitting that such a report was spread at the time.‡ But Polydore Virgil was not cotemporary with that time, as were Fabyan and the Croyland doctor. He wrote what he had heard at the court of Henry VII., many years after Richard's death, while they testified that which they had seen and known during the reign of Richard III. Polydore Virgil undertook his history at a period when one of those very children, whose legitimacy had been admitted by Parliament, was Queen of England and mother of the heir apparent, and, likewise, after the reigning monarch had commanded the obnoxious statute to be expunged from the rolls, "annulled, cancelled, destroyed, and burnt,"§ fine and imprisonment being threatened to all possessed of copies, who did not deliver them to the lord chancellor‖ for destruction."¶

The Croyland writer, however, had previously inserted in his chronicle the purport of the bill that was presented to the assembled lords; and Fabyan, uninfluenced by the political changes which rendered it expedient in Polydore Virgil to remove the stigma of illegitimacy from the queen consort, and fix the imputation on the children of the deceased Duchess of York,** recorded from his own knowledge the exact substance of Dr. Shaw's

* "This drift had been too gross for King Richard ..... and to quit him of it Sir Thomas More, Richard Grafton and Mr. Hall say that he was much displeased with the doctor when he heard the relation, which the Duke of Buckingham also affirmed in his speech to the Lord Mayor of London, viz., 'That Dr. Shaw had incurred the great displeasure of the protector, for speaking so dishonourably of the duchess his mother.' That he was able of his own knowledge to say he had done wrong to the protector therein, who was ever known to bear a reverend and filial love unto her."—*Buck*, lib. iii. p. 82.

† Laing, (in Henry,) vol. xii. p. 450.

‡ Polydore Virgil says that Dr. Shaw attacked the chastity of the mother of Edward IV., and alleged the want of resemblance between that monarch and his father in proof of his accusation. He proceeds to state (after commenting upon the astonishment of the people at the impudence and wickedness of this libel), that it was reported that he had attacked the legitimacy of the sons of Edward IV., but in proof that such was not the accusation of Dr. Shaw, adds that immediately after the sermon, "Cecilia, the mother of Edward, before many noblemen, of whom some are yet alive, complained that so great an injustice should have been done to her by her son Richard."—*Pol. Virg.*, p. 454.

§ Year Book, Hilary Term, 1 Hen. VII.

‖ "The statute was abrogated in Parliament, taken off the rolls, and destroyed; and those possessed of copies, were directed, under the penalty of fine and imprisonment, to deliver them to the chancellor, "so that all things said or remembered in the bill and act be for ever out of remembrance and forgotten."—See *Henry*, vol. xii. App. p. 409; *Carte*, vol. ii. p. 824.

¶ Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 289.

** Cecily, Duchess of York, survived her illustrious consort thirty-five years, and, after outliving her royal sons, Edward IV. and Richard III., she died in retirement at her castle of Berkhampstead in the year 1495, (10th Henry VII.,) and was buried by the side of her husband in the collegiate church of Fotheringay.—*Sandford*, book v. p. 369.

sermon; at the delivery of which, as one of the civic authorities, he was, in all probability, present.* Resident in London, and one of its aldermen and merchants, he had ample means of knowing the terms on which the protector lived with his venerable parent. He could not be ignorant of the remarkable scene at Baynard's Castle, which almost immediately followed the proceedings at St. Paul's Cross—that important assemblage of the Lords and Commons, the prelates and great officers of state, at the Lady Cecily's mansion; in the audience chamber appertaining to which, those overtures were made which raised her son to the throne, and whither, says Sir Thomas More, "the mayor, with all the aldermen, and chief commoners of the city, in their best manner appareled, assembling themselves together resorted—an honourable company, to move a great matter to his grace."† There can, indeed, remain no doubt that he would have noticed a proceeding so utterly revolting as the attack, had it been made by the protector upon his mother's honour, if there had been any just ground for the accusation, when he particularly states that the announcement of the illegitimacy of the young princes, by Dr. Shaw, "and the dislanderous words in the preferring of the title of the said lord protector and in disannulling of the other," was "to the great abusion of all the audience except such as favoured the matter."‡

It would be vain to attempt following up the alleged effect of this sermon, or refuting the groundless calumnies which have sprung from it. The result of the revolution it was intended to prelude is well known. Discarding, then, the irreconcilable discrepancies of a later period, and adhering scrupulously to the coeval accounts transmitted by Fabyan and the Prior of Croyland, from whose original and then unpublished manuscript Sir George Buck copied and first made known§ the existence of a bill which, at the expiration of nearly three centuries, was corroborated by the discovery of the identical roll of Parliament which confirmed the facts the Croyland doctor had recorded,‖ the change of government which elevated Richard of Gloucester, and excluded his nephew from the throne, may be thus briefly summed up in the concise terms of the city chronicler. "Then upon the Tuesday following Dr. Shaw's address, an assembly of the commons of the city was appointed at the Guildhall, where the Lord of Buckingham, in the presence of the mayor and commonalty, rehearsed the right and title that the lord protector had to be preferred before his nephews, the sons of his brother, King Edward, to the right of the crown of England. The which process was so eloquent-wise shewed, and uttered without any impediment," he adds,—thus implying that he was present and heard the discourse,—"and that of a long while with so sugred words of exhortation and according sentence, that many a wise man that day marvelled and commended him for the good ordering of his words, but not for the intent and purpose, the which thereupon ensued."¶

It is traditionally reported that in consequence of this powerful address, the mayor and civic authorities, accompanied by Buckingham and many knights and gentlemen, proceeded direct from the Guildhall to Crosby Place,**

* Fabyan was a member of the Drapers' Company, and actively employed in the city on many public concerns. He was sheriff of London in the 9th year of the reign of Henry VII., and resigned his aldermanic gown in 1502, to avoid the mayoralty.—*Biog. Dict.*

† More, p. 117.

‡ Fabyan, p. 514.

§ Buck, lib. i. p. 23.

‖ Hist. Doubts, p. 43.

¶ Fabyan, p. 514.

** See Harrison's Survey of London, p. 124.

the private dwelling-house of the protector, and there formally solicited him to assume the regal dignity.

A room in this venerable structure, which still exists, retaining as it has done for nearly four centuries the name of the "council chamber,"* together with one immediately above it, bearing the appellation of the "throne room,"† gives weight to the supposition that the city council may have assembled in the one, and that the throne was offered and accepted in the other.

Neither is it altogether unworthy of record, in substantiating this tradition, that Bishopsgate Street thenceforth bore the name of King Street,‡ in commemoration, doubtless, of the residence of Richard III. within its precincts, although it has long since returned to the primitive appellation§ which it to this day retains.

Certain it is, that on the following day, the 25th instant, for which Parliament had been legally convened‖ by Edward V., a supplicatory scroll was presented to the three estates assembled at Westminster,¶ although not "in form of Parliament,"** in consequence of the question which had arisen respecting the legality of the young king's title to the throne.

"There was shown then, by way of petition, on a roll of parchment, that King Edward's sons were bastards, alleging that he had entered into a precontract with Dame Alionora Butler, before he married Queen Elizabeth; and, moreover, that the blood of his other brother, George, Duke of Clarence, was attainted, so that no certain and incorrupt lineal blood of Richard, Duke of York, could be found but in the person of Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Wherefore it was besought him, on behalf of the Lords and Commons of the realm, that he would take upon him his right."†† Such is the clear and explicit account of the cotemporary historian; and "here," observes Horace Walpole, "we see the origin of the tale relating to the Duchess of York—nullus certus et incorruptus sanguis: from these mistaken or perverted words, flowed the report of Richard's aspersing his mother's honour;"‡‡ a report the calumnious nature of which is rendered more apparent by the fact, that the protector owed his elevation to the throne solely to the effect produced by the contents of the above-named petition.§§ "Whereupon the Lords and Commons, with one universal negative voice, refused the sons of King Edward,"‖‖ not for any ill-will or malice, but for their disabilities and incapacities, the opinions of those times holding them not legitimate.¶¶ For these and other causes the barons and prelates unanimously cast their election upon the protector."***

Importuning the Duke of Buckingham to be their speaker, the chief lords,

* Carlos, Hist. of Crosby Hall, p. 36. † Ibid.

‡ Blackburn's Hist. and Antiq. of Crosby Place, p. 14.

§ Bishopsgate, the ancient name it had borne from St. Erkenwold, Bishop of London, founder of the gate by which the street was formerly divided into "within and without," and which was ornamented by his effigy.—*Harrison's Survey of London*, p. 435.

‖ Royal Wills, p. 347. ¶ Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 240.

** "From which I should infer that the Parliament was summoned, but that it was not opened in due form; Richard not choosing to do it as protector, because he meant to be king, and for the same reason determining that Edward should not meet it."—*Turner*, vol. iii. p. 458.

†† Chron. Croy., p. 566. ‡‡ Hist. Doubts, p. 43.

§§ Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 240. ‖‖ Buck, lib. i. p. 20.

¶¶ The king might have avoided the inconveniency of the post-contract, or later marriage, that gave the imputation of bastards to his children, and so have avoided all the ensuing calamities, if first he had procured a divorce of the former contract with the Lady Elinor from Rome.—*Ibid.*, lib. iii. p. 123.

*** Ibid., lib. i. p. 20; More, p. 110.

with other grave and learned persons, having audience granted to them at the Lady Cecily's mansion "in the great chamber at Baynard's Castle,* then Yorke House, addressed themselves to the lord protector; and after rehearsing the disabilities of Edward V., and reciting the superiority of his own title, petitioned him to assume the crown.

The result of this solemn invitation is thus narrated in the parliamentary report,† which attests this remarkable fact,—"Previously to his coronation, a roll containing certain articles was presented to him on behalf of the three estates of the realm, by many lords spiritual and temporal, and other nobles and commons in great multitude, whereunto he, for the public weal and tranquillity of the land, benignly assented." This corroboration of the plain account given by the cotemporary chroniclers, both as regards the cause that led to Richard of Gloucester being elected king, and the mode of proceedings observed on the occasion, exonerates this prince altogether from two of the odious charges brought against him by subsequent historians, viz., his alleged unnatural and offensive conduct to his venerable mother, disproved not alone by her mansion being selected for the audience that was to invest him with the kingly authority, but also from the aspersion of the Lady Cecily's character being totally uncalled for, when valid grounds‡ existed for displacing and excluding his brother's children, without calumny or injustice to her. And, secondly, that although the principles and feelings which operate at this present time may lead to Richard's being considered, to a certain degree, in a moral sense, as an usurper, since fealty had been sworn to Edward V., both as Prince of Wales, and subsequently as king, yet, in a legal and constitutional sense, he has been undeservedly stigmatized as such, inasmuch as he neither seized the crown by violence, nor retained it by open rebellion in defiance of the laws of the land.

The heir of Edward IV. was set aside by constitutional authority,§ on an impediment which would equally have excluded him from inheritance in domestic life; and Richard, having been unanimously elected‖ by the three estates of the realm, took upon him the proffered dignity by their common consent.

Hereditary succession to the crown,¶ at this period of English history, was

* Some confusion has arisen from four places being indifferently mentioned by cotemporary historians, as associated with the meetings of the council and protector during this memorable period, viz., the Tower, Westminster, Baynard's Castle and Crosbie Place. The two former would seem to have been selected for public discussion, and the latter preserved for private deliberation. Richard choosing his mother's abode at St. Paul's Wharf for general consultation with his kindred and supporters, but giving audience, on matters of personal interest, at his own private abode in Bishopsgate Street.

† Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 240.

‡ The doubts on the validity of Edward's marriage were better grounds for Richard's proceedings than aspersion of his mother's honour. On that invalidity he claimed the crown and obtained it; and with such universal concurrence that the nation undoubtedly was on his side.—*Hist. Doubts*, p. 40.

§ "The jurisprudence of England," says Archdeacon Paley, "is composed of ancient usages, acts of Parliament, and the decisions of the courts of law; those, then, are the sources whence the nature and limits of her constitution are to be deduced, and the authorities to which appeals must be made in all cases of doubt."

‖ Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 240.

¶ The grand fundamental maxim upon which the *jus coronæ*, or right of succession to the throne of Britain depends, Sir Wm. Blackstone takes to be this: that the crown is, by common law and constitutional custom, hereditary, and this in a manner peculiar to itself; but that the right of inheritance may from time to time be changed or limited by act of Parliament, under which limitations the crown still continues hereditary.

but feebly recognized,* and the right of Parliament† to depose one monarch and elevate another had been admitted, not only in the previous reign of Edward IV.,‡—whose election to the throne took place in the identical chamber of the Lady Cecily's mansion, in which the crown was now offered to his brother,—but also in the case of Edward III. and Henry IV., examples grounded on far less valid pretences than that which led to the deposition of Henry VI. and Edward V. The indignation, therefore, which has been heaped on Richard's memory for centuries, even if merited in a moral sense, ought rather to have fallen on the Peers, prelates and "noted persons of the Commons," who raised him to the throne. They, as well as himself, had taken§ and broken the oath of allegiance to his nephew, but in them as a body was vested a power, which Gloucester, as an individual, could not possess—that of deposing the prince whom they had sworn to protect and serve, and of naming as his successor the person whom they considered to be more lawfully entitled to the throne. The crown, therefore, assumed by the protector was consequently not a crown of usurpation, but one that, having become void by alleged failure of legitimate heirs, was legally proffered to him.

Richard of Gloucester must have been born in another era than that in which he flourished, and have been imbued with feelings altogether distinct from such as characterized the nobles of England in the fifteenth century, could he have resisted such an appeal, or rejected a throne which, under such plausible circumstances, he was unanimously called upon to fill. Kings do but exemplify the character of the times in which they live, and the spirit of the people whom they rule. In them are reflected the prevalent virtues or vices of their age; and those princes who have either risen up or been chosen by the nation to contest the sceptre, will be generally found to have been imbued in more than a usual degree with the predominant passions of their epoch, and such as influenced chiefly the actions and conduct of their compeers.

The Duke of Gloucester was neither more vicious nor more virtuous than the great body of the people who chose him for their ruler. True—ambition was the predominant passion of his race, but a craving for power influenced alike all ranks, and was exercised in all stations: it was the fruit of that pernicious education in which the seeds were sown, and the natural result of the haughty independence which, at this era, had attained its climax.

Richard was petitioned to ascend a throne which had been previously

* "We must not judge of those times by the present. Neither the crown nor the great men were restrained by sober established forms and proceedings as they are at present: and from the death of Edward III. force alone had dictated. Henry IV. had stepped into the throne contrary to all justice. A title so defective had opened a door to attempts as violent; and the various innovations introduced in the latter years of Henry VI. had annihilated all ideas of order. Richard, Duke of York, had been declared successor to the crown during the life of Henry and of his son Prince Edward, and, as appears by the Parliamentary History, though not noticed by our careless historians, was even appointed Prince of Wales."—*Walpole's Hist. Doubts*, p. 30.

† If the throne becomes vacant or empty, whether by abdication or by failure of all heirs, the two Houses of Parliament may, it is said by Blackstone, dispose of it.

‡ Compare Mr. Sharon Turner's account of the election of Edward IV., together with his hesitation at accepting the crown he had fought to obtain, on account of his oath to Henry VI., with Dr. Lingard's description of King Richard's election—his scruples in ascending a throne he too had laboured to secure, from motives of delicacy to his nephew—and the ambition which led both brothers to surmount all obstacles that risked the loss of a kingdom they so much coveted to possess.—*Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 240; *Lingard*, vol. v. p. 250.

§ Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 234.

declared vacant. Assenting, therefore, to a choice freely made by the constituted authorities of the realm, he assumed the proffered sovereignty on the 26th of June, 1483.*

"The said protector," says Fabyan,† "taking then upon him as king and governor of the realm, went with great pomp unto Westminster, and there took possession of the same. Where he, being set in the great hall in the seat royal, with the Duke of Norfolk,‡ before called the Lord Howard, upon the right hand, and the Duke of Suffolk§ upon the left hand, after the royal oath there taken, called before him the judges of the law, exhorting them to administer laws and execute judgment, as the first consideration befiting a king."‖ Addressing himself forthwith to the barons, the clergy, the citizens and all gradations of rank and professions there assembled, he pronounced a free pardon for all offences against himself, and ordered a proclamation to be openly made of a general amnesty throughout the land.¶

Having thus taken possession of the regal dignity amidst the acclamations of the multitude, he proceeded in due state to Westminster Abbey, there to perform the usual ceremonies of ascending and offering at St. Edward's shrine; being met at the church door by the leading ecclesiastics, the monks singing "Te Deum laudamus," while the sceptre of King Edward was delivered to him by the abbot.** From thence he rode solemnly to St. Paul's, "assisted by well near all the lords spiritual and temporal of this realm, and was received there with procession, with great congratulation and acclamation of all the people in every place and by the way, that the king was in that day."†† After the customary oblations and recognition in the metropolitan cathedral, the protector "was conveyed unto the king's palace within Westminster and there lodged until his coronation,"‡‡ being that same day "proclaimed king throughout the city, by the name and style of Richard III.,"§§

* Chron. Croy., p. 566.

† Fabyan, although usually correct in all matters that occurred in London and its vicinity, is evidently in error respecting the date of King Richard's accession, which he fixes on the 22d June. The Croyland continuator, and Buck, on his authority, fix it on the 26th June, and their testimony is confirmed by the instructions forwarded, by command of King Richard himself, to the Governor of Calais and Guisnes two days after his accession.—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fo. 238. Hall, Sir Thomas More, Grafton and the continuator of Hardyng's Chronicle, state that Richard III. ascended the throne on the 19th; Rapin, on the 22d; Hume, about the 25th; Laing, the 27th; Sharon Turner and Lingard, with their usual correctness, on the 26th. "These discrepancies," observes Sir Harris Nicolas, "are not surprising, considering that Richard himself states that 'doubts' had existed on this point."—*Chronology of Hist.*, p. 326.

‡ John, Lord Howard, "one of the fairest characters of the age," and the most devoted of Richard's friends, was raised to the peerage by Edward IV. On the decease of Anne, only child and heiress of John, Duke of Norfolk, he became the legal heir to her vast possessions; the which, however, together with the title, had been previously conferred, by a royal grant, on the infant Duke of York when he espoused the Lady Anne in 1477.—*Rot. Parl.*, vol. vi. p. 168. The Lord Howard coveted the ducal rank, which had heretofore accompanied the lands that now reverted to him by heirship; consequently, on the illegitimacy of King Edward's offspring being admitted, Richard deprived his youthful nephew of the dignity he had to that period enjoyed, and bestowed the dukedom of Norfolk on the Lord Howard, and on his son the earldom of Surrey.

§ The Duke of Suffolk was brother-in-law to the protector, having espoused the Lady Elizabeth, his eldest surviving sister.

‖ Fabyan, p. 514.

¶ More, p. 125.

** Buck, lib. i. p. 24.

†† Kennet, vol. i., note to p. 522.

‡‡ Buck, lib. i. p. 24.

§§ Fabyan, p. 515.

just two months and twenty-seven days after the demise of Edward IV., and from the period when that monarch's hapless child succeeded to a crown which he was destined never to wear, although his name survives on the regnal annals of England as the second monarch of the Yorkist dynasty and the last Edward of the Plantagenet race.

CHAPTER XIII.

Richard takes possession of the throne, not as an usurper, but as a legitimate sovereign.—His conduct greatly misrepresented.—Commencement of his reign.—Preparations for his coronation.—State progress through the city.—Richard's election analogous to the change of dynasty in 1688.—Coronation of King Richard and Queen Anne at Westminster.—Peculiar magnificence of the ceremony.—The banquet which followed.—Early measures of Richard III.—His wisdom, justice and attention to his domestic duties.—Commences a progress through his dominions.—Flattering reception at Oxford.—Liberality to the city of Gloucester.—Holds a court at the castle at Warwick.—Is there joined by the queen.—Receives letters of credence from foreign princes.—Embassy from Ferdinand and Isabella.—Resumes his regal progress.—Decides on a second coronation.—Is joined by his son, the Earl of Salisbury, at Pontefract.—Enthusiastic reception at York.—King Richard and his queen crowned a second time in that city.—His son created Prince of Wales.—Dismissal of the foreign envoys to their respective courts.

Richard of Gloucester was now king of England—king, by the common consent of the nation, by the unanimous choice of the nobles, the clergy and the people.* For upwards of four centuries he has been designated as an usurper; but has consideration ever been duly bestowed on the literal acceptation of the term, or of its application to this monarch? It would appear not! as, if attention is directed to the one leading point, that Richard neither deposed Edward V., nor forcibly seized the crown, but that the regal dignity was tendered to him voluntarily and peaceably† by that branch of the constitution whose peculiar province it is to mediate between the monarch and the people, and to examine into the just pretensions of the new sovereign before he is irrevocably anointed ruler of the kingdom, it must be admitted that in this point, at least, Gloucester has been most unjustly accused. To quote the words of a modern eminent writer, who minutely examined every available document connected with this momentous inquiry, "Instead of a perjured traitor, we recognize the legitimate sovereign of England; instead of a violent usurpation, we discover an accession, irregular according to modern usage, but established without violence on a legal title."‡ Whatever difference of opinion may prevail respecting the disability alleged against Edward V., there can exist none as to his having been dethroned by the "Lords and Commons of the realm,"§ whose assent had alone rendered valid his former accession to the crown.‖ If, then, Parliament may settle so important a question as the right of succession to the throne of these kingdoms, Parliament assuredly may unsettle and reform the same; but the laws of inheritance, like the moral laws, are framed on mental obligations which cannot be infringed, even by

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‡ Laing, App. to Henry, vol. xii. p. 414.
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‖ "The power and jurisdiction of Parliament," says Sir Edward Coke, "is so transcendent and absolute, that it cannot be confined either for causes or persons within any bounds. It can regulate or new model the succession to the crown. It can change and create afresh even the constitution of the kingdom, and of parliaments themselves."—*Coke, quoted by Guthrie*, p. 26.

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Parliament, without raising a sense of injustice. Consequently, the fruitful source of that odium which has ever been attached to Richard's memory as king, may be traced to the early suppression, by Henry VII.,* of that statute which admitted the disqualifications of Edward V., and also to want of sufficient attention having been given to the fact that the young prince was rejected by his subjects on the ground of disqualification alone, and his uncle elected to the throne in his place because that throne was about to be vacated.

The peers and prelates of England felt themselves aggrieved at fealty having been exacted for a prince against whose legitimacy doubts might be entertained, and who had, therefore, no legal claims to their oath of allegiance, either as heir apparent or as king, owing to the irregularity of his father's marriage. It was this conviction that proved the great support of the lord protector's cause when the matter was formally submitted for discussion to the assembled peers, and was confirmed to them by the production of competent witnesses and authentic legal documents.†

The presumed rights of Edward V. being thus impugned, the constituted authorities elected his uncle their king, less from any notion that Gloucester had been wronged by his nephew's accession than because they were impressed with the conviction that what Parliament had sanctioned under false premises Parliament had a right to nullify when legitimate cause was shown for thus exercising their prerogative. This momentous question rests, not upon any present consideration of justice or injustice, but upon the view then taken of the matter by the Lords and Commons of the kingdom; and even admitting that they acted under mistaken impressions, one deduction can alone be made as regards King Richard himself, viz., that instead of usurping the crown, it was bestowed upon him by others,—a gift which, it is true, little doubt can exist as to its having been obtained chiefly by his keen sagacity, and that seducing eloquence and insinuating address which were peculiar to Richard when his abilities were called forth on any favourite project.

The youth of the hapless Edward, his innocence, his gentleness, have led to many accusations being heaped on Richard that must vanish whenever they are tested by the standard of justice; for however much sympathy may be elicited, or indignation be roused, for the calamities of a prince so roughly handled, the victim of error not his own, yet the mere act of his deposition and the elevation of his uncle to the throne, which is the sole point under consideration, was the decree of the nobles, the decision of the people, and therefore, it must be admitted, not the act of the lord protector himself.

Richard III. ascended the throne of England on the 26th of June,‡ 1483,

* "Henry's policy in suppressing that statute affords additional proof of Edward's marriage with Elenor Butler," observes Mr. Laing; who adds:—"The statute would have been destroyed without the ceremony of being reversed, but an act was necessary to indemnify those to whose custody the rolls were intrusted."—See *Year Book, Hilary Term*, 1 Hen. VII. "The statute was abrogated without recital in order to conceal its purport, and obliterate, if possible, the facts it attested; and a proposal for reading it—that Stillington, Bishop of Bath, might be responsible for its falsehood—was overruled and stifled by the king's immediate declaration of pardon."—*Ibid.* "Its falsehood," continues Mr. Laing, "would have merited and demanded detection, not concealment; and Stillington, whose evidence had formerly established the marriage, was, if perjured, an object of punishment, not of pardon."—*Laing's Dissertation, Appendix to Henry's England*, vol. xii. p. 409.

† "He then brought in instruments, authentick doctors, proctors, and notaries of the law, with depositions of divers witnesses, testifying King Edward's children to be bastards."—*Grafton, Cont. More*, p. 153.

‡ Sir Harris Nicolas, in his Chronology of History, (p. 326,) says: "As scarcely any two authorities agree respecting the date of the accession of this monarch, it is fortunate that he himself should have removed all doubt on the subject by an official

aged thirty years and eight months. The last known signature of Edward V. bears date the 17th of that same month;* and the first instrument attested by Gloucester after his accession is dated the 27th of June,† on which day the great seal was delivered to him by the Bishop of Lincoln, who was re-appointed chancellor, and "received the seals from the new king in a chamber near the chapel in the dwelling of the Lady Cecily, Duchess of York, near the Thames, called Baynard's Castle, in Thames Street, London;"‡ a fact which seems, even more decisively than all which have hitherto been alleged, to disprove the charge of impugning the character of his venerable parent, or of her having openly expressed indignation at her son's unfilial conduct. Before entering on the proceedings which occupied the brief interval between Richard's accession and his coronation, two points of some importance towards the justification of his character require particular notice at this crisis, resting as they do upon cotemporary authority: the one, that Lord Lyle, closely allied to Edward V. and his mother's family, and who had openly opposed the Duke of Gloucester upon his elevation to the protectorate, now joined his party and espoused his cause;§ the other, that the followers of the late Lord Hastings entered the service of the Duke of Buckingham: thus affording a decisive proof that a portion, at least, of the deposed monarch's kindred‖ were satisfied with the justice of Richard's conduct; and likewise, that the partisans of the late king's most favoured adviser, so far from resenting the execution of their master, actually joined themselves to one of the two dukes who are charged with having so unjustly compassed the Lord Hastings' death. Neither must another fact, derived from the same source, be overlooked, from its connection with the alleged usurpation, as it affords evidence that the armed men sent for from York were indeed required as a protection to Richard and a safeguard to the metropolis, and were not summoned, as has been asserted, under a false plea to aid him in forcibly seizing the crown. "It is thought," writes Stallworth to Sir William Stoner, after describing the disturbed state of the city, "there shall be 20,000 of my lord protector's and my Lord Buckingham's men in London this week, to what intent I know not, but to keep the peace;"¶ yet Stallworth's letter, whence the above is extracted, was dated the 21st of June—the day previous to Dr. Shaw's sermon, and before any attempt had been made

communication. On the memoranda rolls of the exchequer in Ireland the following letter from Richard III. occurs, which fixes the date of the commencement of his reign to the 26th June, 1483:—

"'Richard, by the grace of God, King of England and of France and Lord of Ireland. To all our subjects and liegemen within our land of Ireland, hearing or seeing these our letters, greeting. Forasmuch as we be informed that there is great doubt and ambiguity among you for the certain day of the commencing of our reign, we signify unto you for truth, that by the grace and sufferance of our blessed Creator, we entered into our just title, taking upon us our dignity royal and supreme governance of this our royaume of England, the 26th day of June, the year of our Lord 1483: and after that we will that ye do make all writings and records among you.

"'Given under our signet, at our Castle of Nottingham, the 18th day of October, the 2d year of our reign.'"

(Printed in the report of the commissioners of the records of Ireland, where a facsimile of this letter may be seen.)

* Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 187. † Ibid., p. 189.

‡ Ibid.

§ "The Lord Lyle is come to my lord protector, and awaits upon him."—*Stallworth Letters, Excerpt. Hist.*, fol. 15.

‖ "The Lord Lyle was brother-in-law to the widowed queen of King Edward IV., and consequently uncle to the Marquis of Dorset and to the Lord Richard Grey, recently executed at Pontefract."—*Dugd. Bar.*, vol. i. p. 719.

¶ Excerpt. Hist., p. 560.

to promote Richard's accession, or to oppose the coronation of his nephew; consequently, the disturbed state of the metropolis arose not, it is very evident, from revolt instigated by the protector, the very letter in question making express mention of preparations for Edward's coronation,—a fact altogether at variance with the supposition that measures had been ripening for weeks to dispossess him of the crown. Stallworth's attestation is confirmed by Fabyan, who, after narrating the particulars of Richard's elevation to the throne, adds: "Soon after, for fear of the queen's blood, and other, which he had in jealousy, he sent for a strength of men out of the north, the which came shortly to London a little before his coronation, and mustered in the Moorfields, well upon 4000 men."* These two accounts, the one written by an officer in the lord chancellor's household, the other narrated by a citizen of London cotemporary with him, confirm the truth of Richard's assertions to the citizens of York, that a conspiracy had been formed to compass his destruction.†

This desperate state of things, and the severe measures consequent upon its discovery, decided Richard, there can be little doubt, to aspire to the crown, and also led to the counter-revolution which raised him to the throne instead of removing him from the protectorate,—a change in affairs which was effected actually before sufficient time had elapsed for his northern partisans to have reached the metropolis.

Not an effort, indeed, seems to have been made in favour of Edward V.—not a voice raised, even by the rabble, in behalf of the youthful king. The nobles, the clergy, the citizens, the people at large, hailed the accession of Richard III. with as much earnestness and unanimity as if Edward V. had died a natural death, and the crown had, of necessity, reverted to his uncle. Popular feeling, however, was too fleeting to be trusted by one so wary as Richard beyond the shortest possible period. The barons and knights who had elected him king were still remaining in the metropolis, whither they had been summoned to assist at the coronation of his royal nephew; and the preparations and festivities, so nearly completed for the deposed monarch, were in readiness for the immediate solemnization of his uncle's enthronement.‡ Richard resolved on availing himself of so happy a coincidence, the more so, as the trusty followers whom he had summoned from the north for other purposes, and who were hourly expected, would, he knew, be at hand, either to swell the procession, or to repress tumult and prevent disorder. Assembling, then, the lords of the council, and the great officers of state, the day for the coronation of himself and his queen was definitively fixed, and the usual preliminaries forthwith commenced.§ The following day, June 28th, instructions were dispatched to Lord Mountjoy and others, the governors of Calais and Guisnes, commanding them to make known to the garrison of these important fortresses "the verrey sure and true title which our sovereign lord that now is, King Richard III., hath and had to their fealty;"‖ and to exact from them anew the oath of allegiance, which had become void by the dethronement of his nephew.¶ He presided in person at the judicial courts, declaring it to be "the chiefest duty of a king to minister to the

* Fabyan, p. 516.

† Polydore Virgil (p. 540) distinctly asserts that Lord Hastings speedily repented of the share he had taken in advocating the part pursued by Gloucester relative to the young king; and that he privately convoked a meeting of the deceased monarch's most attached friends to discuss the proceedings most expedient for the future.

‡ "And that solemnity was furnished for the most part with the self-same provision that was appointed for the coronation of his nephew."—*More*, p. 126.

§ Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 190.

‖ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 238.

¶ See Appendix WW.

laws."* He withdrew his personal enemies from sanctuary,† that he might openly pardon their offences before the people; and, calculating on the effect which courtesy produces, more especially when emanating from princes to their subjects, he followed the example set by Edward IV. on his accession, of mingling familiarly with the populace, addressing to the noble and opulent fair words and speeches, and acknowledging, with urbanity and condescension, the homage even of the most lowly.‡ On the 30th of June, the Duke of Norfolk, who, upon Richard's accession, had been created earl marshal, was appointed steward of England for the approaching coronation;§ and the honourable offices and high distinctions consequent upon that solemnity were dispensed with a liberal and impartial spirit, being alike distributed on the avowed enemies as upon the warm friends of the protector.

On the 4th of July, Richard proceeded in state to the Tower‖ by water, accompanied by his royal consort; and, after creating several peers, he invested many gentlemen and esquires with the order of knighthood. He released the Lord Stanley from confinement, pardoned his reputed connection with the conspiracy of Lord Hastings, and, with a generosity and disregard to personal danger that seem little in accordance with the evil deeds imputed to him, sought to bury the past in oblivion, and to make him his friend, by appointing him lord steward of his household.¶ He likewise set at liberty the Archbishop of York,** and, confirming him in his primacy, permitted him to depart to his diocese. Morton, Bishop of Ely, whose after career fully confirmed the reports of his having conspired for Richard's destruction, although also liberated from the Tower,†† was committed to the charge of the Duke of Buckingham, that a nominal restraint in that nobleman's hereditary abode at Brecknock might be placed upon the turbulent prelate until such time as he evinced less violent opposition to the newly-elected king.

It is probable that the greater indulgence shown to the archbishop arose from an urgent appeal addressed to Richard on his behalf by the University of Cambridge. This monarch was much attached to that seminary of learning, to which he had shown himself a great benefactor; and he was, in consequence, generally beloved and estimated by its members; their earnest entreaties, therefore, in favour of their chancellor, whose munificent acts attested alike his piety and his goodness, were not likely to pass unnoticed by the king when the fitting time arrived for his enlargement, the more so as the language of the petition‡‡ did full justice to his own beneficence, and

* More, p. 244.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid., p. 245.

§ Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 191.

‖ Harl. MSS., No. 293, fol. 208.

¶ Grafton, p. 799.

** Buck, lib. i. p. 26.

†† Grafton, p. 797.

‡‡ "Right high and mighty prince, in whom singularly resteth the politic governance, peace and tranquillity of the realm of England. Your humble orators commend them to your good grace. And forasmuch as we have felt in times past your bountiful and gracious charity to us your daily bedemen, not only in sending by your true servant and chancellor, Master Thomas Barrow, to his mother the University a great and faithful lover, your large and abundant alms; but as well founding certain priests and fellows, to the great worship of God and to the increase of Christ's faith in the Queen's College of Cambridge; we, upon that comfort, make our writing to your good grace, for such things concerning the weal of the University, beseeching your noble grace to show your gracious and merciful goodness, at this our humble supplication, to the Right Reverend Father in God the Archbishop of York, our head and chancellor, and many years hath been a great benefactor to the University and all the colleges therein, and, through the help of God and your gracious favour, shall long continue. Most Christian and victorious prince, we beseech you to hear our humble prayers, for we must needs mourn and sorrow, desolate of comfort, until we hear and understand your benign spirit of pity to him-ward, which is a great prela

testified, most pleasingly, the estimation in which he was held at that university.

On the 5th of July, Richard, accompanied by the queen, rode from the Tower through the city in great state,* attended by all the chief officers of the crown, the lord mayor, the civic authorities, and the leading nobility and commons, sumptuously arrayed,†—the king, as it is related, "being robed in a doublet and stomacher of blue cloth of gold, wrought with netts and pine-apples, a long gown of purple velvet furred with ermine, and a pair of short gilt spurs;‡ and the queen in a kirtle and mantle of white cloth of gold, trimmed with Venice gold and furred with ermine, the mantle being additionally garnished with seventy annulets of silver and gylt."§ During the procession not the slightest disturbance occurred, nor was any indication given by the populace, either of compassion for Edward V. or disapprobation at the accession of his uncle; and although Richard took the precaution of issuing a proclamation‖ tending to preserve peace, yet the undisturbed state of the metropolis seemed to render the edict unnecessary, unless in accordance with ancient usage or political expediency. Surely this very extraordinary unanimity in all classes of the community must cast a doubt upon the imputation of hatred towards Richard which has been so long entertained, more especially when the national character of the English people is taken into consideration, and due weight attached, not only to the difficulty with which they are persuaded to adopt a new order of things, but also to the innate generosity of spirit which induces them as a body invariably to side with the oppressed, and fearlessly to oppose both king and nobles, if tyranny is exercised or despotism evinced. But the utmost indifference to the position of Edward V. seems universally to have prevailed; and that masterly scene of the immortal Shakspeare, which so forcibly depicts the hapless position of Richard II., from whose disastrous reign may be dated the calamities which fell so heavily on the innocent young princes of the House of York, is as applicable to the dethroned and forsaken Edward, and to his uncle, the monarch of the nobles, as it was to Henry of Bolingbroke, when he, like Richard of Gloucester, rode in triumph through the city, and received the homage of the multitude.¶

"The duke, great Bolingbroke,
Mounted upon a hot and fiery steed,
Which his aspiring rider seemed to know,
With slow but stately pace kept on his course,
While all tongues cried, 'God save thee, Bolingbroke!'
You would have thought the very windows spake,
So many greedy looks of young and old
Through casements darted their desiring eyes
Upon his visage; and that all the walls
With painted imag'ry had said at once,
'Jesu preserve thee! Welcome Bolingbroke!'
Whilst he, from one side to the other turning,
Bare-headed, lower than his proud steed's neck,
Bespake them thus: 'I thank you, countrymen;'
And thus still doing, thus he pass'd along."

Richard II., Act V. Scene II.

A more peaceful or tranquil accession can scarcely be adduced from the regnal annals of England than that of King Richard III. But if wonder is excited at the undisturbed manner in which this prince obtained possession of the throne, still greater astonishment must be felt at the unanimity which prevailed at his coronation; the celebration of which solemnity is not only perpetuated as one of the most gorgeous pageants on record, but as, perhaps, the most magnificent ceremonial which can be adduced from our national archives. It was alike remarkable for the vast attendance of the aristocracy, and for the extraordinary magnificence* displayed by the influential leaders of the Lancastrian and Yorkist factions.

"The great regularity with which the coronation was prepared and conducted," observes Lord Orford, "and the extraordinary concourse of the nobility at it, have not at all the air of an unwelcome reception, accomplished merely by violence; on the contrary, it bore great resemblance to a much later event, which, being the last of the kind, we term 'the Revolution.'"† And a revolution truly it was, in its extreme sense, although not an usurpation; and, considering that it was accomplished without bloodshed, without the aid of an armed force,—for the description of Richard's "gentlemen of the north," as given by Fabyan,‡ is little in keeping with desperate or determined rebels,—and that a fortnight was occupied in calm and deliberate preparations for solemnizing the ceremony, with the most minute attention to regal splendour, court etiquette and the observance of ecclesiastical and judicial forms, the question with which Lord Orford concludes his examination into this remarkable event cannot fail to recur to the mind of every reflective person: "Has this the air of a forced and precipitate election? or does it not indicate a voluntary concurrence in the nobility?"§ The circumstances of Richard's election were, indeed, singularly analogous to those which took place on the change of dynasty in 1688. Upon that great occasion, states Blackstone, "the Lords and Commons, by their own authority, and upon the summons of the Prince of Orange, afterwards King William, met in a convention, and therein disposed of the crown and kingdom."‖ Blackstone goes on to remark that this assembling proceeded upon a conviction that the throne was vacant, and "in such a case," he says, "as the palpable vacancy of the throne, it follows *ex necessi-*

in the realm of England. And we to be ever your true and humble orators and bedemen; praying to him that is called the Prince of Mercy for your noble and royal estate, that it may long prosper to the worship of God, who ever have you in His blessed keeping.

"Your true and daily orators,
"The University of Cambridge.

"To the right high and mighty prince, Duke of Gloucester,
"Protector of the realm of England."
(Printed in Cooper's Annals of Cambridge, p. 226.)

* Buck, lib. i. p. 26.

† "But the Duke of Buckingham carried the splendour of that day's bravery, his habit and caparisons of blue velvet, embroidered with golden naves of carts burning, the trappings supported by footmen habited costly and suitable."—*Buck*, lib. i. p. 26.

‡ Brit. Costume, Part 2, p. 212. § Ibid., p. 218.

‖ See Appendix XX.

¶ "He rode from the Tower through the city," says Buck, "with three dukes and nine earls, twenty-two viscounts and simple barons, eighty knights, esquires and gentlemen not to be numbered."—Lib. i. p. 26.

* Appendix YY.

† "The three estates of nobility, clergy and people, which called Richard to the crown, and whose act was confirmed by the subsequent Parliament, trod the same steps as the convention did which elected the Prince of Orange; both setting aside an illegal pretender, the legitimacy of whose birth was called in question: in both instances it was a free election."—*Historic Doubts*, p. 45.

‡ ...."In their best jackes and rusty salettes, with a few in white harness not burnished to the sale."—*Fabyan*, p. 516. Hall and Grafton speak even more opprobiously: "Evil apparelled, and worse harnessed," they say, "which, when mustered, were the contempt of beholders."—*Drake's Ebor.*, p. 115.

§ Hist. Doubts, p. 17. ‖ Blackstone's Comm., vol. i. p. 152.

tate rei that the form of the royal writs must be laid aside, otherwise no parliament can ever meet again."* And he puts the possible case of the failure of the whole royal line, which would, indisputably, vacate the throne: "In this situation," he says, "it seems reasonable to presume that the body of the nation, consisting of Lords and Commons, would have a right to meet and settle the government, otherwise there must be no government at all." It was upon this principle that the conventions of 1483 and 1688 both proceeded. Both presumed the throne to be vacant; the former by reason of the illegitimacy of the children of Edward IV., the latter on account of the abdication of James II. Both met without writ, as they must do if they assembled at all, on account of the vacancy of the throne; both declared the throne to be vacant; both tendered the crown to sovereigns selected by themselves; and both procured a subsequent parliamentary ratification of their proceedings. So far, therefore, as relates to strict legal form, the proceedings on the election of Richard III. were exactly similar to those adopted on the transfer of the throne from James II. to William and Mary.

Copies of the oath of allegiance to Richard III., taken by the lords spiritual and temporal,† are still in existence; as also are the names of the individuals who were created knights by this monarch on the Sunday before his coronation.‡

Many other very minute particulars are preserved in the Heralds' College, and also in the Harleian manuscripts,§ relative to the gorgeous ceremony which finally invested Richard of Gloucester and "Warwick's gentle daughter" with the regal honours;‖ but as they embrace many obsolete customs and observances that are more curious than interesting in the present day, it will, perhaps, be deemed sufficient to give merely a general outline of the proceedings from the above-named cotemporary documents.¶

On the 6th of July, King Richard and Queen Anne, with the royal household and great officers of the crown, preceded by trumpets, clarions and "heralds with the king's coat-armour," passed from the Tower, through the city, to Westminster Hall, where they were met by the priests, abbots and bishops, with mitres and crosiers, who conducted them to the Abbey. The Bishop of Rochester bare the cross before Cardinal Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury; two earls following, the one bearing the golden spurs and the other "with Saint Edward's staff for a relic."** The Earl of Northumberland carried the pointless sword of mercy; the Lord Stanley the mace of constableship (an arrangement that ought not to pass without comment on account of its impartiality, considering that the one nobleman had been chiefly instrumental in promoting Richard's present elevation, and that the other had been but a few days released from imprisonment in the Tower for conspiring to effect his destruction); the Earl of Kent and the Viscount Lovel carried the naked swords of justice, ecclesiastical and temporal, on the right and left hand of the king; the Duke of Suffolk* bare the sceptre, and his son, the Earl of Lincoln,† the ball and cross; the Earl of Surrey carried the sword of state in a rich scabbard, followed by his illustrious parent, the Duke of Norfolk, earl marshal of England, bearing the crown. Immediately after this nobleman came the king himself, under a canopy borne by the barons of the Cinque Ports, sumptuously habited in robes of purple velvet furred with ermine; his hose, coat and surcoat of crimson satin, and his sabatons (shoes) covered with crimson tissue cloth of gold. On one side Richard was supported by the Bishop of Bath,‡ on the other by the Bishop of Durham; his train being borne by the Duke of Buckingham, holding his white staff of office as seneschal or hereditary Lord High Steward of England.

The queen's procession succeeded to that of her royal consort, the Earl of Huntingdon bearing the sceptre, the Viscount Lyle the rod with the dove. Here, also, another instance of strict impartiality is remarkable, the Lord Huntingdon§ being, by betrothment, the destined son-in-law of King Richard, and the Lord Lyle,‖ the brother to the dowager queen, and, until within a brief period, one of the most violent and bitter enemies of the new monarch. The Earl of Wiltshire carried the crown; and next to him followed the queen herself under a gorgeous canopy corresponding with that of her royal consort, but with the addition of a bell of gold at every corner. Like him, too, she was habited in robes of purple velvet, furred with ermine, her shoes of crimson tissue cloth of gold. Her head was adorned with "a circlet of gold, with many precious stones set therein," and her train was upheld by Margaret of Lancaster, Countess of Richmond, followed by the Duchess of Suffolk, the Duchess of Norfolk, and a retinue of twenty of the noblest ladies of the land. According to the accounts that have been transmitted to posterity, nothing could exceed the grandeur and magnificence of the procession.¶ Entering the west door of the Abbey, the royal pair proceeded direct to their chairs of state, and

† Blackstone's Comm., vol. i. p. 152.

† Rymer's Add. MSS., No. 4616, art. 17, 18.

‡ Harl. MSS., No. 293, art. 208. § Ibid., No. 433, art. 211.

‖ The termination of the MS. in the Harleian library is defective, but the corresponding instrument deposited in the College of Arms enables it to be completed. A literal transcript of the whole has been published in the Excerpta Historica, p. 380; and Sir George Buck has likewise given a correct programme of the ceremony.

¶ They are thus entitled: "Here beginneth the coronation of King Richard III. and Queen Anne, in the year of our Lord God 1483, and in the 6th day of July, the first year of his noble reign; and of the royal service that was done at the said coronation at Westminster. In the year and date aforesaid the king and queen coming out of the Whitehall to Westminster Hall, unto the King's Bench, the king and the queen going upon red cloth barefoot; and so they went, until time they came to St. Edward's shrine, with his noble lords before him, both spiritual and temporal, every lord in his estate, according as ye shall have hereafter written."

** St. Edward's staff is of pure gold; on the top is an orb and a cross, and it is shod with a steel spike: a fragment of the real cross is said to be deposited in the orb.

* The Duke of Suffolk was Richard's brother-in-law, having married the eldest surviving sister of that monarch and of the deceased king.

† The Earl of Lincoln was King Richard's nephew, his sister's eldest son.

‡ This prelate was Dr. Stillington, formerly chaplain to King Edward IV., whose testimony of that king's former marriage led to the deposition of Edward V. and to the elevation of Richard III.

§ The Lord of Huntingdon was betrothed to the Lady Katharine Plantagenet, King Richard's illegitimate daughter.

‖ The Lord Lisle, or Lyle, so created by the deceased monarch, was a Grey; he was brother by marriage to the widowed queen, and uncle to her sons by the Lord Grey.

¶ A full description of the coronation robes worn by the king and queen, by the chief officers of state, the principal nobility, and the henchmen or pages, together with the silks of various colours given as liveries and perquisites, has been preserved in the wardrobe accounts for the reign of Richard III.; to which is prefixed an indenture, witnessing "that Piers Curteys, the king's wardrober, hath taken upon him to purvey by the 3d of July next coming the parcels ensuing, against the coronation of our sovereign lord." The materials furnished for the ceremony were of the most costly description: velvets, satins and damasks of every hue; purple, crimson and scarlet cloths of gold, richly embroidered; ermine, minever pure, and other costly furs; mantles trimmed with Venice gold; stuffs of the most dazzling appearance for canopies, banners and pennons; horse furniture wrought in gold and silver, together with every appurtenance of dress; shoes, vests, kirtles, hose, bonnets, feathers with jeweled stems, cauls (or caps) of gold net, and transparent veils, paved or checkered with gold, all of corresponding magnificence, whether as regards richness of texture, variety of colour, or costliness of material.

there rested until "divers holy hymns were sung;" then ascending the high altar, and being divested of their surcoats and mantles of velvet, they were solemnly anointed from a vessel of pure gold* by the bishop. New robes of cloth of gold were in readiness for the concluding scene; being arrayed in which, they were both crowned with great solemnity by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the king being supported by two bishops, as also by the Dukes of Buckingham and Norfolk, the Earl of Surrey upholding the sword of state upright before him. The queen was, likewise, supported by two prelates, the Bishops of Exeter and Norwich, and having a Princess of York† on her right hand, a Princess of Lancaster‡ at her left, and the Duchess of Norfolk kneeling behind. High mass was performed by the cardinal archbishop, and the holy communion administered by him. "The king and queen," states the cotemporary MS., "came down to the high altar and there kneeled down, and anon the cardinal turned him about with the holy sacrament in his hand and parted it between them, and there they received the good Lord and were absolved both." Yet this venerable ecclesiastic, this high dignitary of the Church of Rome, the primate of all England, who thus absolved Richard from his sins and sealed his pardon with the most holy symbol of Christ's passion, was the same lord cardinal who had pledged "his own body and soul" to the widowed queen, when receiving the infant Duke of York from sanctuary scarcely three weeks before, not only for "his surety, but also for his estate."§ Can there, then, remain any longer a doubt that some just cause existed for young Edward's deposition, or that Richard's election to the throne was free and unbiased?

The character of the archbishop who set the crown on Richard's head has never been impeached.‖ He was not raised to that high office for the occasion, or in reward of former services to the lord protector, but had been a bishop nearly forty years, and primate of Canterbury even before the accession of the House of York.¶ Venerable by age and eminent for his talents and virtues, lineally descended from Edward III.,** nearly allied to Edward IV.,†† whom he had also anointed king and invested with the regal diadem, and pledged to his youthful heir, Edward V.,‡‡ to whom he had twice sworn allegiance,—any remonstrance from such a quarter could scarcely have passed unheeded; not to mention the power of a cardinal, which was in those days so great that their persons were sacred, and their high office considered inviolate.§§ Yet Cardinal Bourchier, with the appeal to his God yet fresh

* The "ampullæ, or golden eagle," containing the oil with which the sovereigns of England were anointed, is of great antiquity, as likewise the "anointing spoon," used for the same purpose.

† The Duchess of Suffolk, second daughter of Richard, Duke of York, and the Lady Cecily.

‡ Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond, was the great granddaughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, fourth son of Edward IV.

§ More, p. 59.

‖ Hist. Doubts, p. 55.

¶ Thomas Bourchier, son of William Bourchier, Earl of Essex, was, in 1434, elected chancellor of Oxford. From the see of Worcester he was translated to Ely, and enthroned Archbishop of Canterbury in 1453.

** Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury and cardinal of St. Cyrac, was the third son of the Lady Anne Plantagenet, by her second husband, William Bourchier, Earl of Essex; she was the eldest daughter of Thomas, Duke of Gloucester, fifth son to King Edward III.

†† Richard, Earl of Cambridge, the grandsire of Edward IV. and Richard III., left two children, viz., Richard, Duke of York, father of the above-named monarchs, and Isabel, married to Henry Bourchier, Earl of Essex, brother to the cardinal.—*Sandford*, book iii. and v., chap. xv. p. 365.

‡‡ Rot. Parl., vi. p. 234; and Chron. Croy., p. 566.

§§ "Our reverend father here present, my lord cardinal, who may in this matter (alluding to the removal of the Duke of York from sanctuary) do most good of any man, if it please him to take the pains."—*More*, p. 36.

upon his lips, that "the estate as well as safety" of the young princes should be required at his hands, consecrates Richard of Gloucester ruler of the kingdom, and absolves him from all sin. But one conclusion, surely, can result from this extraordinary proceeding, sanctioned, as it was, by the whole body of the clergy,* by the judges and by the knightly representatives of the people; viz., that the nobility met Richard's claim to the throne at least half way,† from their hatred and jealousy of the queen-mother's family, and their conviction of the fact of King Edward's former marriage. Perceiving the calamities that would probably ensue from this defective title during a long minority,‡ and appreciating the high talent for government evinced by the lord protector, they hailed a legitimate plea for quietly deposing the youthful son of Elizabeth Wydville, and elevating for their ruler one of the popular race of York, whose abilities they had tried, whose firmness they had witnessed, and whose military reputation would alike conduce to peace at home, and, should the honour of the kingdom require it, command respect for the English arms abroad.

To return, however, from this necessary digression, to the gorgeous pageant of Richard's coronation. The religious ceremonies terminated by the king's going to St. Edward's shrine, and offering up St. Edward's crown, with many relics; after which devotional acts, being invested with the regal tabard,§ and the sacred coif of fine lawn, and assuming the regal coronet, the illustrious pair, bearing their insignia of sovereignty in their hands, returned to Westminster Hall in the same state and in the same order of procession as they had entered the Abbey. Mounting the raised dais,‖ the splendid cortège dispersed, the king and queen leaving thereon their regal mantelets, and retiring for a brief period to their private apartments. The banquet which followed was conducted with the same magnificence and grandeur that had characterized the performance of the morning's solemnity. During the short interval in which the king and queen "retired themselves for a season," the Duke of Norfolk, riding into the hall with his horse trapped with cloth of gold down to the ground, cleared it of the vast concourse of people who had thronged to witness the spectacle. Yet, with all this multitude,—this indiscriminate assemblage of all ranks,—no tumult, no murmuring is recorded; all was peaceable and joyous. The turbulent spirit mentioned by Stallworth, as agitating the metropolis not a fortnight before, was now altogether hushed; and the trouble and anxiety which then filled men's hearts with fear, were turned into unanimity and concord, and a universal display of cordiality, confidence and loyalty.

About "four of the clock," Richard and his royal consort are described as having entered the hall, "arrayed in fresh robes of crimson velvet, embroidered with gold, and furred with minever pure," and advancing to the

* "And anon came up to the king two bishops kneeling before him, and so rose and went up to the king, and kissed him, one after another, and so stood before the king, one on the right, and one on the left hand."—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 2115.

† Hist. Doubts, p. 45.

‡ "And that the great wise man well perceived, when he sayde, 'Veli regno cujus rex puer est,'—Woe is that realme that hath a child to their king."—*More*, p. 113.

§ "Like unto a dalmatica, or upper garment of white sarsnet."—*Brit. Cost.*, Part 2, p. 212.

‖ The dais was the place of honour in banqueting rooms, and signified a raised platform on which the king, or the noble in his baronial halls, dined apart from their retinue or vassals, who were seated at tables somewhat removed from their illustrious chief.

high dais, there sat down to dinner, under canopies supported by peers and peeresses; the king in the centre of the table and the queen on his left hand: there being present the Archbishop of Canterbury, the lord chancellor, the lord mayor, the lord marshal, the lord steward, the bishops, the chief judges of England, and an immense assemblage of the nobility and the most illustrious ladies of the English court. All was in keeping with the passion for splendour and the spirit of magnificence which so especially characterized the age. Nothing was omitted that could grace or dignify the entertainment. The royal couple were waited upon by the noblest persons in the realm, and the king was served "with one dish of gold and another of silver, the queen in gilt vessels, and the cardinal-bishop in silver." At the second course, Sir Robert Dymoke, the king's champion, came riding into the hall, "his horse trapped with white silk and red, and himself in white harness," and inquired "before all the people, if there be any man will say against King Richard III. why he should not pretend to the crown; and anon all the people were at peace awhile." Then making proclamation that "whosoever should say that King Richard III. was not lawfully king, he would fight with him with all utterance," the champion threw down his gauntlet for gage thereof, "when all the people cried, King Richard! God save King Richard!" Eighteen heralds, four of them wearing crowns, forthwith advanced before the king, and, after garter king-at-arms had proclaimed his styles and title, the remainder cried, "a largesse"* three times in the hall,† when, "the day beginning to give way to the night," wafers and ippocras were served, and anon the king and queen rose up and went to their chambers. "Great light of wax torches and torchets" speedily illumined the hall, and "every man and woman," the cotemporary chronicle, in conclusion, states, "departed and went their ways where it liked them best."‡

Such was the inauguration of the last monarch of the Plantagenets, a fitting close to the most powerful, magnificent, and chivalrous dynasty that ever filled the English throne. No personal fear was evinced by Richard, no deception practised on the multitude: bold and decisive, gorgeous, magnificent and wholly unopposed, the enthronement of Richard III. is the best reply to all the calumnies that proclaimed him a dark and a stealthy usurper. Friends and foes were marshalled, side by side, and the kindred of the deposed sovereign§ shared with the relatives of the new monarch the most dignified and honourable places, both in the procession and the banquet.

A daughter of the House of York,‖ the sister of the late and aunt of the rejected king, occupied with her husband and son the most prominent places about the persons of Richard and his queen; while the heads of the royal House of Lancaster, the Duke of Buckingham and Margaret, Countess

* "Largesse, a free gift or dole, signifying, in this particular instance, coins scattered among the people."

† The following entry is preserved in the Harl. MSS.: "To garter king-at-arms, and to other heralds and poursuivants, 100*l.* for the king's largesse the day of his coronation."—No. 433, fol. 22.

‡ Excerpt. Hist., 383.

§ The Earl of Kent, as also the Duke of Buckingham, were, by marriage, brothers to the widowed queen, and uncles to the deposed sovereign; these two noblemen having espoused Jaquetta and Katherine Wydville, the royal Elizabeth's sisters: and it cannot but be considered as a striking circumstance that not one of the noble peers thus closely allied to the ex-queen as the husbands of her five sisters—and the greater proportion of whom had been enriched or received honourable appointments through her influence with Edward IV.—were absent from King Richard's coronation.

‖ Elizabeth, Duchess of Suffolk, sister of Edward IV. and Richard III.

of Richmond,* were selected to fill the most favourite positions, and upheld the trains of the illustrious pair. No single observance was disregarded that could give effect or add weight to the ceremony, neither was there any display of despotism or partiality that could convert the solemn rite into a compulsory act, or one of abject servility to a tyrant; peers and prelates, judges, knights and citizens, all united, with one accord, in honouring the choice of the legislature, and in confirming the elevation of King Richard III.

There is one circumstance connected with this monarch's coronation which must not pass unnoticed; viz., the absence of Richard's heir, the youthful Earl of Salisbury, who had no place apportioned to him either at the solemnity in the Abbey or the festive banquet which succeeded. Whether the omission arose from a feeling of delicacy to the young princes in the Tower, or from the apprehension that the sight of Edward of Gloucester might call to remembrance his deposed cousin, and thus excite sympathy in the populace for the reverse of fortune which had so blighted his seemingly high destiny, cannot, of course, be determined; but certain it is, that none of the ill-omened offspring of Edward IV., of George of Clarence, or Richard of Gloucester, graced the pageant which fixed the crown of England on the head of the youngest of three brothers whose joint history and career are, perhaps, unparalleled.

King Richard being irrevocably seated on the throne, and fully invested with that sovereign power for which, by nature and by education, he was so peculiarly fitted, speedily showed his capacity for government, and his peculiar talents for the high office to which he had been raised, by the wisdom of his measures, and the vigour and resolution which characterized the opening of his reign. Mystery hangs, indeed, over his early days, and few and widely scattered are the memorials of his youth. Not so his career as monarch of this realm. No testimony that could be given by historian or biographer, no panegyric that could be passed by follower or friend, on his talents, vigilance and energy, could so truly depict his actual character, or develop the wonderful powers of Richard's masterly mind, as the evidence of his own acts both as lord protector and king, which have, fortunately, been transmitted to posterity. Amongst innumerable documents connected with the history of the Plantagenet monarchs, there is preserved, in the Harleian library a most curious folio volume in manuscript, formerly belonging to the Lord Treasurer Burleigh,† containing a copious register of the grants and public documents which passed the privy-seal or sign-manual during the reigns of Edward V. and Richard III., consisting of no less than *two thousand three hundred and seventy-eight articles!*"‡ When it is remembered, that these entries commemorate the proceedings of little more than two short years, and that, apart from mere official edicts, they abound in instances of generosity and benevolence, together with proofs of his just, equable and

* Margaret, Countess of Richmond, was the relict of Edmund Tudor, half-brother of King Henry VI., and the mother of King Henry VII. This illustrious lady, as also Margaret, Countess of Stafford, the parent of Henry, Duke of Buckingham, were great granddaughters of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster.

† Sir Harris Nicolas, whose authority on these points is indisputable, and who obligingly favoured the authoress with his opinion, considers that this work of Lord Burleigh's was probably what is called a "docket," and that it may have passed into Lord Burleigh's hands out of some public office, or by purchase, by plunder, or by gift. There cannot be any doubt that the book is cotemporary with Richard III.; its authenticity, too, is equally removed from all suspicion; and, whether compiled officially, or collected to serve some official purpose, its contents are invaluable, as throwing new light on Richard's true character and that of his remarkable reign.

‡ See Catalogue Harl. MSS., preface.

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

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

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

On the 9th of July (three days after he was anointed king) Richard, by letters patent, appointed the "right high and mighty prince Edward,†† his first-begotten son," to be lieutenant of Ireland,‡‡ dispatching a special messenger to that portion of his dominions to show that "the king, after the establishing of this his realm of England, principally afore other things, intendeth for the weal of this land of Ireland,"* and appointing Gerald, Earl of Kildare, "the young prince's deputy."† His sense of justice in the liquidation of debts duly incurred is strikingly evinced in the next instrument which passed the royal signet, letters patent, bearing date the 18th of July anno 1mo Richard III., being issued "for the payment of 52*l.* and 20*d.*, resting due to divers persons for their services done to his dearest brother, the late king, and to Edward bastard, late called Edward V."‡

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

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

† Harl. MSS., No. 293, p. 208.

‡ Buck, lib. i. p. 27.

‖ Fabyan, fol. 154.

** Fabyan, fol. 154.

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

§ Rymer's Add. MSS., 4616, art. 26.

¶ Drake's Eborac., p. 115.

†† Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 242.

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

† Ibid., 433, fol. 243.

‡ Ibid., 433, fol. 104.

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

‖ Dugdale's Bar., vol. i. p. 168.

¶ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 107.

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

†† Ibid., art. 6.

‡‡ Rymer's Add. MSS., 4616, art. 6.

§§ Ibid.

‖‖ See Harl. MSS., No. 433.

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

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

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

* See Appendix ZZ.
† Harl. MSS., 433, p. 269.
‡ Ibid., p. 118.
§ Banks, Dormant and Extinct Baronage, vol. ii. p. 273.
‖ Harl. MSS., No. 258, fol. 11; and No. 433, fol. 211.

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

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

* Dated at Reading, 23d July, anno 1 Richard III.
† Harl. MSS., 433, p. 108.
‡ Magdalen College is required by its statutes to entertain the kings of England and their eldest sons, whenever they come to Oxford.—*Chalmers' Hist. of Oxford*, p. 211.
§ Gutch's Hist of Oxford, p. 638.
‖ Ibid.
¶ See Appendix AAA.
** Wood's Hist. and Antiq. of Oxon., vol. i. p. 233.
†† Gutch, p. 638.
‡‡ Ibid., p. 639.
§§ Ibid.
‖‖ Elizabeth Woodville, consort of Edward IV., obtained his license, in the sixth year of his reign, to complete the foundation of Queen's College, Cambridge, begun by her predecessor, Margaret of Anjou, but left incomplete, owing to her exile and the deposition of Henry VI.—*Sandford*, book iii. p. 385.

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

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

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

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

* Gutch, 639.

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

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

‡ Rous, p. 216.

§ Buck, lib. v. p. 138.

‖ Lingard, vol. vi. p. 349.

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

** More, p. 9.

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

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

* Buck, lib. i. p. 28.

† Lingard, vol. vi. p. 349.

‡ Heylin, p. 326.

§ Harl. MSS., No. 433, p. 110.

‖ Gutch, p. 639.

¶ See Royal Wills, p. 347.

** Sloane MSS., No. 3479.

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

‡‡ Rous, p. 215.

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

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

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

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

* Rous, p. 216.

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

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

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

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

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

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

§ Rous, p. 216.

‖ Appendix BBB.

¶ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 235.

** Rous, p. 216.

†† Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 109.

in that town, commanding "2000 Welsh bills or glaives" to be made for him in all haste, and authorizing one of the officers of his household "to impress as many smiths" as were requisite for the completion of the order.* Official documents were also dispatched from the same city to "seventy knights and esquires of Yorkshire, and the neighbouring counties,† commanding them to await his coming at the Castle of Pontefract by a given day:‡ and, previous to his departure, he wrote a letter in French to the Duke of Burgundy, dated "at the Castle of Leicester, 18th of August, 1843."§

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

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

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

† Ibid., fol. 111.

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

§ Ibid., fol. 237.

‖ Drake's Eborac., p. 116.

¶ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 118.

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

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

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

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

* Harl. MSS., 433, p. 118. † Rous, p. 216.

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

§ Drake's Eborac., p. 116. ‖ Ibid.

¶ See Appendix CCC. ** Drake, p. 116.

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

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

‡‡ Drake, p. 117.

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

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

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

† Drake, p. 117.

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

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

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

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

** Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 200. †† Ibid.

‡‡ Drake's Eborac., p. 118. §§ Pol. Virg., p. 547.

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

* Ord. Vitel., p. 503. † Turner's Middle Ages, vol. i. p. 171.

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

§ Ibid., book iv. p. 289.

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

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

** Ibid.

†† "These inferences," observes Sir Harris Nicolas, (in refuting the arguments of Mr. Sharon Turner,) "with respect to the character of Richard III., are, it is submitted, drawn from a mistaken estimate of evidence, rather than from erroneous data; and they prove the necessity of an historian, not merely using research but of being able to attach a proper value to his materials. The grounds upon which the opinion of Richard's vanity is built are, the account of the articles delivered out of the wardrobe for his coronation; the descriptions of chroniclers of his pompous appearance on public occasions; and the clothes for which he sent from York. Viewed without reference to similar accounts, in previous and subsequent reigns, the conclusion is natural that the sovereign to whom they relate was "a vain coxcomb," especially if the opinion be correct that that list was prepared by the monarch himself. But when records of this nature are compared with others, and it becomes evident that the splendid dresses worn by Richard formed the general costume of persons of rank of the age; and when the minuteness of detail, which is ascribed to his own taste, is proved to be the usual form in which wardrobe keepers and their officers entered the articles entrusted to their custody, the error of supposing that the splendour or the accurate description of the robes is in any degree indicative of Richard the Third's character, is manifest. A reference to these wardrobe accounts, or to any other list of apparel or jewels in the 14th or 15th and 16th centuries, will prove that there is not a single circumstance connected with Richard which justifies the opinion that he was more fond of splendour than his predecessors, much less that he was either 'a fop' or 'a coxcomb.' "—*Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York*, edited by Sir Harris Nicolas, p. 4.

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

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

* Drake, p. 117. † Ibid., p. 116.

‡ Chron. Croy., p. 567.

§ Drake, p. 116.

‖ The example set by King Henry I. of making a progress into the remote parts of the land for the administration of justice, was followed by most of his successors. —*Harl. MSS.*, No. 980, fol. 34.

¶ Ibid., 433, p. 118. ** Fœdera, xii. p. 200.

†† Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 246.

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

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

* Drake, p. 117. † Ibid.

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

CHAPTER XII.

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

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

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

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

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

tenant of the town and marches of Calais, to discharge a portion of the garrison on account of the expense, and because, as asserted, "the season of any great danger of adversaries is, of all likelihood, overpast for this year,"* would seem to imply that Richard's mind was thoroughly at ease before he left that city; and the nature of his edicts from Pontefract, at the fortress of which he remained for a brief period, conveys no symptoms of alarm either from foreign or domestic enemies. He addressed a letter on the 22d inst., dated from "Pomfret Castle," to the mayor of Southampton, assuring him, in reply to some official communication, that he would not allow "his dearest son, the prince, to deal or intermeddle with their franchises."† He also wrote to the Earl of Kildare from the same place, acquainting him that he had appointed the Lord of Lincoln, his nephew, to be lieutenant of Ireland, and the said earl to be his deputy,‡ requesting him to accept the office, which office, it will be remembered, was conferred upon the Earl of Kildare on the 9th of July, when King Richard had nominated his young son, now Prince of Wales, to the command of that country. Various communications to different individuals in Ireland,§ some high in rank, others in a humbler station‖ of life, thanking them for their assistance against his enemies, or acknowledging past kindnesses, either to himself or his kindred, may, also, be found in this portion of Richard's diary, together with instances of his impartial administration of the laws, in cases where proof was given that persons had been oppressed or wrongfully treated.¶ No portion, indeed, of Richard's singularly eventful life more thoroughly disproves the accusation of his being destitute of natural affection, callous to the ties of kindred, the endearments of "household love," than the actions which perpetuate his brief sojourn at Pontefract, the only period of repose which occurred during his short and troubled reign. He sent instructions to the Bishop of Enachden empowering him to receive the allegiance of the Earl of Desmond, also to thank that nobleman for his offers of personal service, and to accept them "in consideration of the many services and kindness shown by the earl's father to the Duke of York, the king's father, the king then being of young age."** These instructions were accompanied with munificent gifts, together with a letter from the king himself to the Earl of Desmond, dated the 29th of September, wherein he says, "It is our intent and pleasure for to have you to use the manner of our English habit and clothing; for the which cause we send you a collar of gold of our livery and device, with our apparel for your person†† of the English fashion, which we will ye shall receive in our name, trusting, that at some convenient season hereafter we shall have you to come over to us hither, and be more expert both in the manners and conditions of us, and our honourable and goodly behaving of our subjects."‡‡ King Richard also confirmed the annuity granted by Edward IV. for ministering divine service in the chapel which was erected on the bridge at Wakefield,§§ in memory of his father and brother slain in the vicinity of that town. He commanded payment of 40*l.*,

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 113. † Ibid., fol. 115. ‡ Ibid., p. 267.
§ Ibid. ‖ Ibid. ¶ Harl. MSS., 433, p. 267.
** The debt of gratitude to his father here acknowledged has reference to the shelter afforded the Duke of York in Ireland, when, with his son, the Earl of Rutland, he escaped from Ludlow, and sought refuge in that country. King Richard was at that time about six years of age. In another part of this document allusion is made to the Earl of Desmond's father having suffered a violent death arising from his devotion to the House of York, for which the king says he has always felt great "inward compassion."
†† See Appendix DDD.
‡‡ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 265. §§ Ibid., fol. 116.

of the king's gift,* towards the building of the church at Baynard's Castle, and issued a "warrant to the auditors of Middleham to allow Geoffrey Frank, receiver of the same, the sum of 196*l.* 10*s.* in his accounts, for monies laid out upon several occasions," the particulars whereof are specified, and are mostly "the expences of my lord prince,"† which remarkable payment, so often quoted in these pages, has furnished to posterity almost the only known records of Richard's illustrious child. Offerings to religious houses,‡ charitable donations,§ and the disbursement of all just debts, not alone for himself, his offspring, and his household,‖ but even those incurred by his political enemies,¶ might be adduced with advantage, to exemplify the consideration which Richard bestowed equally on the private duties of life as on the important functions of royalty. But these minute details, though important in themselves from displaying the true nature of Richard's disposition, could not be followed up without tedious prolixity. Nevertheless, it is due to this monarch to state that the closest examination of the register that has recorded his acts at this period, will show, that numerous as are the documents associated personally with him, and varied as are the edicts that bear the sign manual, and mark his progress from town to town, yet no one entry can be produced that convicts King Richard of being "dispitious** and cruel."†† He was bountiful to the poor, indulgent to the rich, and generous in all his transactions, whether in recompensing the friends of his family,‡‡ or seeking to appease the animosity of his enemies. To the widow of Earl Rivers, who had "intended and compassed his destruction," he ordered the payment of all duties accruing from the estates which had been settled on her as her jointure.§§ He presented the Lady Hastings with the wardship and marriage of her son, and intrusted her with the sole charge of his vast estates after taking off the attainder;‖‖ a boon that might have been greatly abused, and which would have been a munificent recompense to many of his faithful followers. But the most remarkable instance that could, perhaps, be adduced of Richard's kind and forgiving disposition, was the commiseration he felt for the destitute state of the unfortunate Countess of Oxford, the wife of the bitterest enemy of himself and his race, on whom he settled a pension of 100*l.* a year¶¶ during the exile of her noble lord, notwithstanding he was openly and avowedly arrayed in hostility against him.

The last instrument which received his signature prior to his departure from Pontefract is singularly illustrative of the religious scruples and sense of justice which formed so leading a feature in Richard's character. "The king, calling to remembrance the dreadful sentence of the church of God given against all those persons which wilfully attempt to usurp unto themselves, against good conscience, possessions or other things of right belonging to God and his said church, and the great peril of soul which may ensue by the same, commands that twenty acres and more of pasture within the park at Pontefract, which was taken from the prior and convent of Pontefract,

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 119. † Ibid., fol. 118.
‡ "The king's offerings to religious houses," observes Whitaker, "appear to have been very liberal."—*Whit. Hist. Richmondshire*, vol. i. p. 346.
§ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 118. ‖ Ibid., fol. 58. 118. 120.
¶ "For money paid to Sir Thomas Gower, by him laid out for the expenses of the Lord Rivers."—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 118.
** Dispitious—full of spite. †† More, p. 9.
‡‡ In the register of Richard's acts at this particular period is "a grant of an annuity of 60*l.* to Thomas Wandesford, for his good service done to the right excellent prince of famous memory, the king's father, whom God pardon."—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 117.
§§ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 166. ‖‖ Ibid., fol. 27.
¶¶ Ibid., fol. 53.

about the tenth year of King Edward IV., be restored unto them."* Sentiments such as these, emanating from himself, attest, better than any inferences drawn by others, that Richard considered he had been legally and lawfully elected to the throne. The man who feared God's judgments, if he withheld twenty acres of land which had been unjustly taken "against good conscience," would surely have paused before usurping a crown!—calling to remembrance, as he did, the dreadful sentence of the church, and the great peril of soul which might ensue from such an act of injustice; or have risked his eternal salvation by wilfully perpetrating the most heinous crimes to secure possessions thus unlawfully obtained. Happy would it have been for this monarch had he been judged by his own acts rather than by the opinions of others: his reign would not then have been represented in the annals of his country as alike disgraceful to himself and to the land over which he ruled.

Richard departed from Pontefract early in October,† and from mention being made of alms having been bestowed at Doncaster,‡ he probably rested at that town on his progress to Gainsborough, where the regal party were abiding on the 10th of October, as appears by Richard's signature to two instruments bearing that date both of time and of place.§ Widely different, however, was the aspect of affairs during this portion of the monarch's tour, compared to the peaceful and unruffled state of things which his welcome reception at Oxford, Gloucester and York had seemed to portend at the commencement of his progress. The clouds, which for many weeks had begun to shadow the brightness of his sunny path, now more darkly obscured the political horizon, and gave presage of that coming storm which was about to burst so heavily over the head of Richard: nor was he altogether unprepared for the change, being too well acquainted with the workings of the human heart to overlook any indications, however trivial, that betokened ill, whether arising from jealousy in friends or hostility in enemies. Symptoms both of personal and political enmity had become apparent to the king at an early stage of his proceedings; but he was too wise to accelerate the impending evil by any premature or injudicious disclosure of his suspicions, until compelled to do so in self-defence. Many circumstances, however, prove that from the time he quitted York until he arrived at Lincoln on the 14th of October, he had been preparing himself to meet the exigency whenever it should occur. This exigency, and its momentous occasion, involve the most important consideration associated with Richard's career; not alone from the spirit of disaffection which it raised, and which was never afterwards subdued, but because it implicates this monarch in a transaction of the blackest dye, the truth of which, up to the present time, continues to be wrapt in the most impenetrable obscurity. So interwoven indeed with fable, with errors in date and discrepancies in detail, are the alleged facts of this mysterious occurrence, that perplexed as is the general tenour of King Richard's eventful life, yet this one point in particular has baffled effectually the labours of the antiquary, the historian and the philosopher, to unravel the tangled web of falsehood and deceit in which it is enveloped. It need scarcely be said that these observations have reference to the ultimate fate of Edward V. and his young brother,

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 121. † Ibid.

‡ "iij^{s}. iiij^{d}. to a wyff (a poor woman) besides Doncaster, by the king's commandment."—*Ibid.*, fol. 118.

§ Warrant for the payment of 500 marks "for the expenses of our household at our castle of Carlisle," and of 5*l.* to the prior of the monastery of Carlisle, which the king had given towards the making of a glass window therein. Given at Gainsborough, 10th October, anno 1 Richard III., 1483.—*Ibid.*, fol. 120.

the Duke of York, which is so completely veiled in mystery, that notwithstanding tradition has long fixed on their uncle the odium of their deaths, yet no conclusive evidence has ever been adduced which can fasten upon him so revolting an act, or convict Richard the Third as a murderer or "a regicide."

The progress of public opinion, on which alone the imputation rests, will be best illustrated by examining the cotemporary accounts, which are limited to three writers, the Croyland historian, Rous, the Warwick antiquary, and Fabyan, the city chronicler. Fabyan, though the last in order as regards the time of the compilation of his work, is best fitted to describe the earliest indication of popular feeling, not only because he was resident in London at the time of Richard's election, but because he makes known the sentiments of the populace from the very earliest period of that monarch's regal career.

After narrating his accession to the throne, he says: "Then it followeth anon, as this man had taken upon him, he fell in great hatred of the more party of the nobles of this realm, insomuch that such as before loved and praised him, and would have jeoparded life and good with him, if he had so remained still as protector, now murmured and grudged against him in such wise, that few or none favoured his party, except it were for dread, or the great gifts that they received of him."*

In this account, three strong points present themselves to notice: 1st, That Richard, up to the period of his accession, was so beloved and estimated, that his cotemporaries would have risked life and fortune in his cause; which admission very materially weakens the imputation of after ages, that he was innately cruel, vicious and depraved. 2dly, That "he fell in hatred" because the turbulent nobles, who had elevated him to the throne, forthwith grudged him the exalted position which they had invited him to fill: it was not, let it be observed, the abuse of his newly-acquired power which made Richard unpopular, but the power itself with which the nobles had invested him. 3dly. That from his accession he was treacherously dealt with, and surrounded by time-servers, who enriched themselves by his liberality, and after courting his favour, rewarded him with deceit. Such is the statement of Fabyan, writing under the Tudor dynasty, and with a strong Lancastrian bias. No allusion is made by him of public indignation at the injustice committed against Edward V., or of detestation at the cruelty practised against him. Envy and jealousy at Richard's being *king*, instead of continuing "*still as protector*," are the reasons assigned by Fabyan why the lordly barons of England murmured and grudged against him."

The Croyland writer, after briefly relating his coronation at Westminster, his progress and his second enthronement at York, thus concludes his concise account:—"Whilst these things were passing in the north, King Edward's two sons remained under certain deputed custody, for whose release from captivity the people of the southern and western parts began very much to murmur."† Thus it appears that up to the period of Richard's departure from York no apprehensions were entertained for the safety of the young princes; and moreover, from the expression "certain deputed custody," it would seem as if they had been officially consigned to some person or persons well known or fitted for the charge, in accordance with the usual custom observed on similar occasions;‡ the murmurs of the people,

* Fabyan's Chron., p. 516. † Chron. Croy., p. 567.

‡ By reference to a former chapter of this work it will be seen that Henry IV., after he had deposed Richard II. and usurped his crown, imprisoned the legitimate heirs to the throne, (the two young princes of the House of March,) for many years in Windsor Castle, placing them under "continued and safe custody" there: and also, that

be it remarked, arising solely from their captivity. These murmurs would, in all probability, have yielded gradually to the popularity which Richard gained during his state progress, by his wise and temperate exercise of the kingly prerogative, if the commiseration for his nephews, thus recorded by the Croyland writer, had not been fomented into open rebellion by the treachery of those disaffected nobles, who, Fabyan states, "grudged" King Richard the regal authority that they had been the means of conferring upon him. "And when at last," continues the Croyland chronicler, "the people about London, in Kent, Essex, Sussex, Hampshire, Dorsetshire, Devonshire, Wilts, Berkshire and other southern counties, made a rising in their behalf, publicly proclaiming that Henry, Duke of Buckingham, who then resided at Brecknock, in Wales, repenting the course of conduct he had adopted, would be their leader, it was spread abroad that King Edward's sons were dead, but by what kind of violent death is unknown."* That plots and conspiracies would be formed in favour of the deposed prince was a result which Richard must have anticipated: it was also a natural supposition that the partisans of the widowed queen, and the friends of the deceased king, would rally by degrees, and seize any diminution of Richard's popularity to reinstate their deposed sovereign. But that Buckingham, the most zealous of the new monarch's supporters, the active agent by whom his elevation was effected,† should be the first to rebel against the kinsman to whom he had so recently vowed fealty and allegiance, affords, perhaps, one of the most remarkable instances on record of the perverseness of human nature. Yet such was the case; and, judging from the testimony of the Croyland historian, the report which has so blackened King Richard's fame may be traced also to this unstable and ambitious peer: but whether considered to be made on just grounds, or propagated purely from malevolence and political animosity, must depend on the view taken of his general conduct, and the degree of credit to be attached to his alleged assertions.

If the young princes, through the agency of their friends, were secretly conveyed out of the kingdom upon their uncle's elevation to the throne, as was currently reported in the succeeding reign,‡—a circumstance by no means improbable, considering the disturbed state of the country, and the peculiar position of the respective parties,—the rising of their friends, and the defection of Buckingham, may possibly have induced King Richard himself to assert that his nephews were dead, with the view of setting at rest any further inquiry concerning them. The greater probability, however, is this: that the Duke of Buckingham, aware of their disappearance from the Tower,

the infant Duke of York, who was next to them in lawful succession to the crown, was similarly incarcerated by King Henry V.; who sent the orphan prince to the Tower, after the execution of his parent, the Earl of Cambridge, placing him under "the custody and vigilant care" of Robert Waterton.—See ch. ii. p. 24.

* Chron. Croy., p. 568.

† "By my aid and favour, he of a protector was made king, and of a subject made a governor."—*Grafton*, p. 154.

‡ "Neither wanted there even at that time (anno 1 Henry VII.) secret rumours and whisperings, which afterwards gathered strength, and turned to great troubles, that the two young sons of King Edward IV., or one of them, which were said to be destroyed in the Tower, were not indeed murdered, but conveyed secretly away, and were yet living."—*Bacon's Henry VII.*, p. 4. "And all this time (anno 2 Henry VII.) it was still whispered everywhere that at least one of the children of Edward IV. was living."—*Ibid.*, p. 19. "A report prevailed among the common people that the sons of Edward the king had migrated to some part of the earth in secret, and there were still surviving."—*Pol. Virg.*, p. 569. "Whose death and final infortune hath natheless so far comen in question that some remain yet in doubt whether they were in his (King Richard's) days destroyed or no."—*More's Rycharde III.*, p. 126.

but not made acquainted with the place of their exile, spread the report with a view of irritating the populace against the new monarch, and thus advancing more effectually his own selfish and ambitious views; and that King Richard, unwilling, and, indeed, unable, to produce his nephews, was driven to sanction the report,* as his only defence against their friends, and the surest method of keeping secret from his enemies their actual place of concealment. Hence, in all probability, the origin of the tale; for it cannot be denied that the words of the ecclesiastical writer with reference to Buckingham are very remarkable, and tend more strongly to fix the report on that nobleman and his party than any allegation afterwards brought forward by tradition as evidence of the fact against Richard III.:—"Henry, Duke of Buckingham, repenting the course of conduct he had adopted, would be their leader," are the words of the chronicler; and he immediately follows this statement by the assertion, that "it was reported," as if in consequence of the change in Buckingham's views, "that King Edward's sons were dead, but by what kind of violent death was unknown."†

Richard, indeed, was ill prepared for opposition from such a source, for so implicitly had he relied on Buckingham's honour and fidelity, that he had intrusted to his custody his most violent enemy, Morton, Bishop of Ely; and it is more than probable that the active eloquence of this crafty prelate,‡ working on an envious, jealous and fickle temperament, roused into action in Buckingham those rebellious feelings which otherwise might have rankled secretly in his own discontented bosom. King Richard might well style him "the most untrue creature living,"§ for he remained firm to no party and to no cause beyond that which fed his rapacity and insatiable ambition. He espoused the sister of the royal Elizabeth when the Wydville connection was the road to preferment,‖ and he was the first to desert the widowed queen¶

* A precisely similar report was spread in the reign of Henry VII., with the view of making that monarch produce the young Earl of Warwick, or acknowledge what had become of him. He had not been seen or heard of since his close imprisonment in the Tower; and "a fame prevailed," states Polydore Virgil, p. 69, "and was everywhere spread abroad, that Edward, Count of Warwick, had met with his death in prison." Lord Bacon likewise states (p. 19) that it was generally circulated "that the king had a purpose to put to death Edward Plantagenet, closely in the Tower; whose case was so nearly paralleled with that of Edward the Fourth's children, in respect of the blood, like age, and the very place of the Tower, as it did refresh and reflect upon the king a most odious resemblance, as if he would be another King Richard." In order to disabuse the public mind, the king commanded the young prince "to be taken in procession on a Sunday through the principal streets of London to be seen by the people."—P. 27.

† Chron. Croy., p. 568.

‡ "This man," writes Sir Thomas More, p. 139, "had gotten a deep insight into political worldly drifts. Whereby perceiving now this duke glad to commune with him, fed him with fair words and many pleasant praises." Sir Thomas More's "History of Richard III." terminates abruptly in the midst of the conversation held between Morton and Buckingham. The narrative is, however, resumed by Grafton, who, it has been conjectured, had access to the same sources of original information which were open to Sir Thomas More.—*Singer*, p. 145.

§ In a letter addressed to his chancellor, which is preserved among the Tower records, and will be inserted at length in a future chapter, when considering the circumstances that led to its being written.

‖ "When King Edward was deceased, to whom I thought myself little or nothing beholden, although we two had married two sisters, because he neither promoted nor preferred me, as I thought I was worthy and had deserved; neither favoured me according to my degree or birth: for surely I had by him little authority and less rule, and in effect nothing at all; which caused me the less to favour his children, because I found small humanity, or none, in their parent."—*Singer's Reprint of More*, p. 152.

¶ "I remembered an old proverb worthy of memory, that often rueth the realm,

and her now powerless kindred, when he fancied it would be to his interest to accelerate the advancement of Richard, Duke of Gloucester.* He proclaimed the illegitimacy and advocated the deposition of Edward V.,† when he wished to place Richard III. on the throne, and he circulated a report of the murder of the princes,‡ when he coveted their uncle's position and entertained the presumptuous hope of becoming king in his stead.§ He aimed at being a second Warwick—another "king maker,"‖ but, possessing only the frailties of that lordly baron, unaccompanied by the vigorous intellect and those chivalrous qualities which fling such a romantic colouring over the career of the renowned and illustrious Richard Neville, he rushed headlong to his own destruction; equally with Warwick, the victim of ungovernable pride, and affording another but far less interesting example of the haughty and turbulent spirit which characterized the English nobles at this strange, eventful era.

But as the alleged cause of the rebellion which sealed Buckingham's fate, and put so sudden a stop to the king's peaceful progress, was ostensibly to avenge the young princes' death,¶ it becomes necessary to pursue the investigation into the reputed circumstance of that tragedy, before continuing the history of the Duke of Buckingham's revolt, in order that it may be shown how vague and unsatisfactory is the source whence sprang these accusations which have affixed to the memory of Richard III. a crime that has made him for many ages a subject of universal horror and disgust. Fabyan, in addition to the passage before quoted, says, after describing the accession of the lord protector, "King Edward V., with his brother, the Duke of York, were put under sure keeping within the Tower, in such wise that they never came abroad after."** And again, that "the common fame went, that King Richard put into secret death the two sons of his brother."†† Rous of Warwick is the next cotemporary authority; but, although coeval with King Richard, it must not be forgotten that he, like Fabyan, wrote the events which he records after that monarch's decease; and the fact of his having dedicated his work to King Henry VII. is alone sufficient to demonstrate his Lancastrian bias, even if proof did not exist that his character of King Richard, when exercising sovereign power, was altogether opposed to that which he afterwards gave, when writing under the auspices of his rival and successor.‡‡

where children rule and women govern. This old adage so sank and settled in my head, that I thought it a great error and extreme mischief to the whole realm, either to suffer the young king to rule, or the queen, his mother, to be a governor over him."—*Ibid.*

* "I thought it necessary, both for the public and profitable wealth of this realm, and also for mine own commodity and better stay, to take part with the Duke of Gloucester."—*Ibid.*

† More, p. 112. ‡ Chron. Croy., p. 567.

§ "I phantasied, that if I list to take upon me the crown and imperial sceptre of the realm, *now* was the time propitious and convenient."—*More*, p. 155.

‖ "I began to study and with good deliberation to ponder and consider how and in what manner this realm should be ruled and governed."—*Ibid.*, p. 152.

¶ "But when I was credibly informed of the death of the two young innocents, his own natural nephews, contrary to his faith and promise, (to the which, God be my judge, I never agreed nor condescended,) O Lord! how my veins panted, how my body trembled, how my heart inwardly grudged! insomuch, that I so abhorred the sight, and much more the company of him, that I could no longer abide in his court, except I should be openly avenged. The end whereof was doubtful, and so I feigned a cause to depart; and with a merry countenance and a despiteful heart, I took my leave humbly of him, (he thinking nothing else than that I was displeased,) and so returned to Brecknock to you."—*Grafton, Cont. of More*, p. 155.

** Fabyan's Chron., p. 515. †† Ibid., p. 516.

‡‡ Whatever Rous chose to say of Richard, in compliment to Henry VII., he gave a very different account of him in his roll, which he left to posterity as a monument of the earls and town of Warwick, to which he was so much attached. Here is the inscription as it was written by Rous's own hand: "The most mighty Prince Richard, by the grace of God, King of England and of France, and Lord of Ireland: by very matrimony, without discontinuance, or any defiling in the law, by heir male lineally descending from King Harry the Second, all avarice set aside, ruled his subjects in his realm full commendably, punishing offenders of his laws, especially extortioners and oppressors of his commons, and cherishing those that were virtuous, by the which discreet guiding he got great thank of God and love of all his subjects, rich and poor, and great laud of the people of other lands about him."

(From the original MS. roll, now in the College of Arms, published in Lord Orford's Works, vol. ii. p. 215.)

"The Duke of Gloucester, for his own promotion, took upon him to the disinheriting of his lord, King Edward V., and shortly imprisoned King Edward with his brother, whom he had obtained from Westminster, under promise of protection; so that it was afterwards known to very few what particular martyrdom they suffered."* This writer, however, places the death of the princes during the protectorate: "Then ascended the royal throne of *the slain*, whose protector during their minority he should have been, the tyrant Richard;" an assertion so utterly at variance with every cotemporary,† that it materially weakens the effect of his other assertions.

Bernard Andrews, the historiographer and poet laureate of Henry VII., states that "Richard ordered the princess to be put to the sword,"‡ a fact that must have been known to the cotemporary annalist, had a positive order to that effect been given;§ and Polydore Virgil, who compiled his work under the immediate patronage and at the express desire of the same monarch, after intimating the uncertainty of the manner of their death, states that it was generally reported and believed *that the sons of Edward IV. were still alive, having been conveyed secretly away, and obscurely concealed in some distant region.*‖ Thus it appears that neither the cotemporary writers of the period, nor those who wrote by royal command in the ensuing reign, give any distinct account of the fate of the young princes: the former all agree that they were imprisoned, and that it was "commonly reported" that they were dead; but when or how the event occurred, or whether there was foundation for the report, has never been sought to be established, excepting by Sir Thomas More. This historian was not coeval with Richard, he was a mere infant at the time of that monarch's death;¶ but, being educated, as before observed,

* Rous, Hist. Reg. Ang., p. 213.

† See the recently quoted statement of Fabyan and the Chronicler of Croyland. Sir Thomas More's narrative is even more conclusive:—"The prince," says that historian, in allusion to Edward V., "as soon as the protector left that name, and took himself as king, had it showed unto him that he should not reign, but his uncle should have the crown; at which words the prince, sore abashed, began to sigh, and said, 'Alas! I would my uncle would let me have my life yet, though I lose my kingdom.' Then he that told him the tale used him with good words, and put him with the best comfort he could. But forthwith was the prince and his brother both shut up, and all other removed from them, only one called Black Will, or William Slaughter, except, set to serve them, and see them serve. After which time the prince never tied his points, nor aught wrought of himself; but with that young babe, his brother, lingered in thought and heaviness, till this traitorous death delivered them of that wretchedness."—*More*, p. 130.

‡ Cott. MSS., Dom. A. xviii.

§ Bernard Andrews could only narrate matters connected with this period from the reports of others, as he was a Breton by birth, and did not reside in England until after the accession of Henry VII., to whose suit he was attached, and whose fortunes he followed. ‖ Pol. Virg., p. 569.

¶ Sir Thomas More was born in 1482, the year preceding King Richard's accession; he was therefore three years of age at that monarch's decease, and in his nineteenth year when Bishop Morton expired in 1500.—*Turner*, vol. iii. p. 373.

in Bishop Morton's house, he is supposed to have derived the materials of his history from that personage. But Morton, although coeval with the events related, gloried in avowing himself Richard's bitter enemy. He united with Hastings in conspiring against him as the lord protector,* and he goaded Buckingham to open rebellion after Richard was anointed king.† He deserted the latter nobleman as soon as he had weaned him from his allegiance; and escaping to the continent,‡ within a few weeks of Richard's coronation, there remained an exile and an outlaw during the rest of his reign. It must, therefore, be apparent, that any information derived from him relative to affairs in England during that period could only be by report; and the colouring which his own prejudice and enmity would give to all rumours spread to the disadvantage of King Richard, would render his testimony not only doubtful, but most unsatisfactory, unless confirmed by other writers or proved by existing documents. Sir Thomas More himself seems to have felt doubtful of the facts which he narrates, for he prefaces his account of the murder of the princes by these remarkable words: "whose death and final infortune hath natheless so far come in question, that some yet remain in doubt whether they were in Richard's days destroyed or no;"§ and in detailing the commonly received tradition of their tragical end, he admits that the reports were numerous, and certifies that even the most plausible rested on report alone.‖ "I shall rehearse you the dolorous end of those babes, not after every way that I have heard, but after that way that I have so heard by such men and by such means as me thinketh it were hard but it should be true." If by these words Sir Thomas More meant Morton,¶ that prelate, in consequence of his imprisonment at Brecknock, must have gained his information from the Duke of Buckingham, whose unprincipled conduct** and double dealing, even by his own admission,†† would rather be the means of acquitting Richard than of convicting him.

* "Thomas, Archbishop of York, and John, Bishop of Ely, although, on account of their order, their lives were spared, were imprisoned in different castles in Wales."—*Cont. Croy.*, p. 560.

† "But now, my lord, to conclude what I mean toward your noble person, I say and affirm, if you love God, your lineage, or your native country, you must yourself take upon you the crown and diadem of this noble empire; both for the maintenance of the honour of the same (which so long hath flourished in fame and renown) as also for the deliverance of your natural countrymen from the bondage and thraldom of so cruel a tyrant and arrogant oppressor."—*Grafton, Cont. More*, p. 149.

‡ The bishop, being as witty as the duke was wily, did not tarry till the duke's company was assembled, but, secretly disguised, in a night departed (to the duke's great displeasure) and came to the see of Ely, where he found money and friends, and he sailed into Flanders, where he did the Earl of Richmond good service, and never returned again till the Earl of Richmond, after being king, sent for him, and shortly promoted him to the see of Canterbury.—*Ibid.*, p. 163.

§ More, p. 126. ‖ Appendix EEE.

¶ "Could More," inquires Lord Orford, "have drawn from a more corrupted source? Of all men living, there could not be more suspicious testimony than the prelate's, except the king's (Henry VII.)."—*Hist. Doubts*, p. 18.

** "Outwardly dissimuling that I inwardly thought, and so with a painted countenance I passed the last summer in his company, not without many fair promises, but without any good deeds."—*Grafton, Cont. More*, p. 155.

†† The conversation between Buckingham and Morton, commenced by Sir Thomas More and continued by Grafton, is so explicit as to leave little doubt of its authenticity; many circumstances related could only have been known to the bishop,—his dexterous management of Buckingham, the particulars of his imprisonment at Brecknock, and his escape from the duke; these, and many other leading points in their reported conference, confirm the assertion of Sir George Buck, (whose work was printed in 1646,) that the reign of King Richard was written by Bishop Morton. "This book in Latin," he says, "was lately in the hands of Mr. Roper of Eltham, as Sir Edward Hoby, who saw it, told me."—*Buck*, lib. iii. p. 75.

The narrative of the murder, as given by Sir Thomas More, is as follows:*—During the royal progress to Gloucester, King Richard's mind misgave him that "men would not reckon that he could have right to the realm" so long as his nephews lived. Whereupon he sent John Green, "whom he especially trusted," unto Sir Robert Brackenbury, the constable of the Tower, with a letter, "and credence also," commanding him to put the two children to death. Green rejoined the king at Warwick, acquainting him that Brackenbury had refused to fulfil his commands. Greatly displeased at this result, the king gave vent to his discomfiture, by complaining to the page in waiting that even those he had brought up and thought most devoted to his service had failed him, and would do nothing for him. The page replied, that there was a man upon a pallet in the outer chamber, who, to do him pleasure, would think nothing too hard, meaning Sir James Tyrrel, "a man of right goodlye personage, and, for nature's gifts, worthy to have served a better prince." He was, however, it is intimated, jealous of Sir Richard Radcliffe and Sir William Catesby; which thing being known to the page, he, of very special friendship, took this opportunity of "putting him forward" with his royal master, hoping to "do him good." Richard, pleased with the suggestion, and well aware that Tyrrel "had strength and wit," and an ambitious spirit, he called him up, and, taking him into his chamber, "broke to him, secretly, his mind in this mischievous matter." Sir James undertook the revolting office, whereupon, on the morrow, the king sent him "to Brackenbury with a letter, by which he was commanded to deliver to Sir James all the keys of the Tower for one night, to the end that he might there accomplish the king's pleasure in such thing as he had given him commandment." . . . "After which letter delivered and the keys received, Sir James appointed the night next ensuing" to destroy the princes. "To the execution thereof, he appointed Miles Forest, one of the four that kept them," a known assassin, and John Dighton, his own groom, a big, broad, square, strong knave." All other persons being removed, the ruffians entered the chamber, where the princes were sleeping, at midnight, when, wrapping them up in the bed-clothes, and keeping them down by force, they pressed the feather-bed and pillows hard upon their mouths, until they were stifled and expired. When thoroughly dead, they laid their bodies, naked, out upon the bed, and summoned Sir James Tyrrel to see them; who caused the murderers to bury them at the stair-foot, deep in the ground, under a great heap of stones. "Then rode Sir James in great haste to the king, and showed him all the manner of the murder, who gave him great thanks, and, as some say, there made him a knight." "But it was rumoured," continues Sir Thomas More, "that the king disapproved of their being buried in so vile a corner; whereupon they say that a priest of Sir Robert Brackenbury's took up the bodies again, and secretly interred them in such place as, by the occasion of his death, could never come to light."

The more closely this statement is examined, the more does its inconsistency appear, from the very commencement of the narrative. For example: as King Richard had been solicited to accept the crown, because his nephews' illegitimacy was admitted, and, as he had been successively elected, proclaimed and anointed king with an unanimity almost unparalleled, he could have had no reason, at this early period of his reign, to

Mr. Roper was an immediate descendant of Sir Thomas More's (see preface to Singer,) his eldest and favourite daughter, the estimable Margaret Roper, having left a numerous offspring.

* More, p. 127.

dread the effects of his nephews' reassumption of their claims; still less cause had he for apprehension, when journeying from Oxford to Gloucester, at which university he had been so honourably received, that, even allowing that his mind misgave him when he first entered upon his kingly career, his popularity during his royal progress was alone sufficient to set all doubts at rest. Again: if so revolting a deed as murdering the princes to insure the stability of his throne had gained possession of Richard's heart, was it probable that he would not have taken measures to effect his purpose before quitting the Tower, or whilst sojourning at Greenwich or Windsor, instead of delaying his commands for the perpetration of the dark deed until he was necessitated to commit the order to paper, and thus intrust a design so destructive to his reputation to the care of a common messenger, on the chance of its falling into his enemies' hands? King Richard was proverbially "close and secret," being upbraided by his enemies as "a deep dissimular;"* traits, however, which, to the unprejudiced mind, will rather appear a proof of his wisdom when the subtlety of the age is taken into consideration. Would, then, a wise and cautious man, a prince evidently striving for popularity, and desirous, by the justice of his regal acts, to soften any feeling of discontent that might attach to his irregular accession —would such a person be likely to lay himself open to the charge of murder?—and this, after he had peaceably attained the summit of his ambition, and was basking in the very sunshine of prosperity, and when the oath had scarcely faded from his lips, by which he pledged himself to preserve the lives of the princes, and maintain them in such honourable estate that all the realm should be content?† Would any one, indeed, endued with common foresight have risked two letters, which innumerable casualties might convert into positive proof of an act that would bring upon him the hatred of his own kindred and the detestation of the kingdom at large,—the one sent by an ordinary attendant, "one John Green," to Brackenbury, with "credence also," commanding that "Sir Robert should, in any wise, put the two children to death," the other, by Sir James Tyrrel, to Brackenbury, commanding him to deliver to Sir James the keys of the Tower, that he might accomplish the very crime which that official had previously refused himself to perform? It is scarcely within the bounds of probability, unless the letter and "credence" were extant, together with the formal warrant which was sent to Brackenbury, justifying him as governor of the Tower in delivering up the keys of the fortress committed to his charge.‡ "And has any trace of such a document been discovered?" asks the historian of the Tower.§ "Never," he adds: "it has been anxiously sought for, but sought in vain; and we may conclude that Sir Thomas More's is nothing but one of the passing tales of the day."‖

* More, p. 9.

† "He promised me, on his fidelity, laying his hand on mine, at Baynard's Castle, that the two young princes should live, and that he would so provide for them and so maintain them in honourable estate, that I and all the realm ought and should be content."—*Grafton, Cont. More*, p. 164.

‡ "King Richard, having directed his warrant for the putting of them to death to Brackenbury, the lieutenant of the Tower, was by him refused. Whereupon the king directed his warrant to Sir James Tyrrel to receive the keys of the Tower from the lieutenant for the space of a night, for the king's special service."—*Bacon's Henry VII.*, p. 123.

§ This valuable work, "The History and Antiquities of the Tower," was compiled, as stated by the author, Mr. Bayley, from state papers and original manuscripts there deposited, and which he had peculiar facilities for examining as "one of her majesty's sub-commissioners on the public records."—*Bayley's Hist. of the Tower*, part i.

‖ Bayley's Hist. of the Tower, part i. p. 64.

If this assumption is warranted by the inconsistencies and contradictory statements which mark the tradition generally, still more will such a conclusion appear to be well grounded if the several statements connected with the chief individuals named are strictly examined. Sir Thomas More says, that King Richard took "great displeasure and thought" at Sir Robert Brackenbury's refusal. Is this borne out by the monarch's subsequent conduct as proved by existing records?* Did he remove him from the honourable office of governor, or even tacitly and gradually evince his anger against him? On the contrary, he not only continued him in the command of the Tower, but renewed the appointment, with the annual fee of 100*l.*, some months after this reputed contumacy;† and throughout the whole of his reign, he bestowed upon him places and emoluments that are perfectly consistent with his desire of providing for a favourite follower, but are altogether opposed to indications either of dissatisfaction or annoyance. There would be nothing surprising in the grants here alluded to, had Brackenbury been guilty; because the king would naturally favour him under such peculiar circumstances: but both Sir Thomas More and Lord Bacon expressly state that he was innocent of all participation in the crime, that he spurned the royal command, and that the king was, in consequence, greatly displeased with him.

King Richard was not a man to shrink from making apparent his displeasure, if just grounds of offence had been given to him; at least so his enemies would make it appear. "Friend and foe was muchwhat indifferent where his advantage grew: he spared no man's death whose life withstood his purpose."‡ Neither was he so weak and unreflective as to have sent an order to the constable of the Tower of so fearful an import as the destruction of two princes committed to his custody, unless well assured of the manner in which his design would have been received and carried into execution. Sir Thomas More implies that he early adopted Brackenbury himself, brought him up, and, also, that he thought he would surely serve him." And he did serve him, even unto death; for he fought and died for his patron: but it was gloriously, honourably, and as became a true knight on the battle-field,§ and not as a midnight assassin in the secret chamber. Sir Robert was a member of a very ancient and distinguished family‖ in the north;¶ and if, from his trusty qualities, early evinced, he acquired the confidence of the Duke of Gloucester, it is most clear that other features in his character must also have been equally well known to his patron. Green is stated to have found Brackenbury at his devotions.** If, then, he was religious and humane,—firm in rejecting evil commands, though emanating from his sovereign,†† and faithful in the discharge of the trust reposed in him by the state,—braving death with cheerfulness and alacrity when called upon to defend the king to whom he had sworn allegiance, but shrinking from the cowardly act of murdering imprisoned and defenceless children,—such a man was not the agent to whom Richard, without previously sounding him, would have made known his detestable project, or have selected for

* Appendix FFF. † Harl. MSS., No. 433, fol. 56. ‡ More, p. 9.

§ Surtees's Durham, p. 71. ‖ Ibid.

¶ Two other brothers of the same family as Sir Robert are named by Drake as attached to Richard's service; viz., John and Thomas Brackenbury: the first sent to London upon a confidential mission by the mayor of York; the other dispatched to that city with the protector's reply.—*Drake's Ebor.*, p. 3.

** "This John Green did his errand unto Brackenbury, kneeling before our Lady in the Tower."—*More*, p. 128.

†† "Who plainly answered, that he would never put them to death to die therefore."—*Ibid.*, p. 128.

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 hengemen 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.

†† Hist. Doubts, p. 55.

‡‡ More, p. 128.

§§ Walpole's Reply to Milles.

‖‖ Harl. MSS., No. 642, fol. 196.

¶¶ 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 countermine. 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 subpœnaed 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 "tragedyous 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.
‖ Ibid., pp. 23. 247.
¶ More's Rycharde III., p. 127.
** 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 Fœdera‖ 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."

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‡ Bacon, p. 123.
‖ More, p. 131.
** More, p. 132.
† Buck, p. 84.
§ Sandford, p. 404.
¶ Sandford, p. 404.
†† Bacon, p. 123.

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 Fœdera‖ 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."

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the young princes' tragical end, was, in their days, merely a porter's lodge,* and not likely to be, in the smallest degree, connected with the dark deed which its particular appellation is believed to have perpetuated. Nay, so far from the gateway being thus designated in consequence of the alleged murder within its narrow precincts, the very epithet itself, originating from other causes nearly a century after the disappearance of the princes, seems to be the sole origin of a rumour which gained strength in consequence of certain peculiarities in its structure appearing to coincide with Sir Thomas More's description.† Hence, towards the close of the Tudor dynasty, it began to be reported as the scene of the dark transaction; and surmise passing current with the multitude for fact, it has long since‡ been confidently pointed out as the actual site of the tragedy.§ "In the careful and minute survey which was taken of the Tower of London," observes its elaborate historian, "in the reign of Henry VIII., this building is called the Garden Tower, by reason of its contiguity to the constable's or lieutenant's garden, which now forms a part of what is termed the Parade."‖ In the year 1597, another survey was made of the fortress by order of Queen Elizabeth, and it was then known by its present appellation; which it is generally supposed to have derived from the circumstance of the two young princes, Edward V. and his brother, Richard, Duke of York, having, as it is said, been put to death in this particular spot, by order of their uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, afterwards King Richard III. "The whole story of the two royal brothers," continues this writer, "having been destroyed in the Tower, comes to us in so questionable a shape, that it can never be entertained without some serious doubts." If we admit, however, that the young princes really came to a violent death in the Tower, the idea of this place having been the scene of their destruction rests on no authority; and the story which the warders, whose trade it is "to tell a wondrous tale," so gravely propagate respecting the discovery of these bones under the little staircase above alluded to (in the Bloody Tower), is still more glaringly false. Bones, it is true, were found in the Tower in the reign of Charles II., and they were looked upon to be those of children corresponding with the two princes; but it is most decidedly known that they were discovered in a very different part of the fortress to that in which tradition reports them to be interred, viz., on the south side of the White Tower, and at the foot of the staircase which leads to the chapel in that building.¶

* "This gateway was erected in the time of Edward IV. It is about thirty-four feet long and fifteen wide. Each end of the entrance was originally secured by gates and a strong portcullis, and on the eastern side, between these defences, was a small circular stone staircase, leading to the superstructure which formed the lodging or watch, and consisted of two gloomy apartments, one over the other, and a space for working the portcullis."—*Bayley's Hist. of the Tower*, vol. i. p. 262.

† "At the end, towards the south, both the gates and the portcullis still exist: they are extremely massive, and carry with them every appearance of high antiquity. The staircase leading to the porter's lodge, though not now made use of, also remains; but the gates, as well as the portcullis, which were at the northern end, have long since been removed."—*Bayley*, vol. i. p. 262.

‡ "All the domestic apartments of the ancient palace within the Tower were taken down during the reigns of James II. and William and Mary."—*Bayley's Londiniana*, vol. i. p. 109.

§ "It is a very general opinion that the building called the 'Bloody Tower' received its appellation from the circumstance of the royal children having been stifled in it, and it is commonly and confidently asserted that the bones were found under a staircase there; yet both of these stories seem wholly without foundation."—*Bayley*, vol. ii. p. 64.

‖ Bayley's History of the Tower, p. 264.

¶ This chapel, which is within the White Tower, and altogether distinct from the sacred edifice wherein divine service has been for many years performed, is now called the Record Office.—*Bayley*, vol. i. p. 263.

Few traditions propagated on such high authority as Sir Thomas More and Lord Bacon—men eminent for their learning, and yet more for their exalted stations as lord chancellors of England—would bear such strict scrutiny, with a view of disproving the rumour on which both admit that the tradition sprung. Thus it appears that the legend of the Bloody Tower, as connected with the murder of the princes, vanishes, by testing its validity on the sole basis on which it was reported to rest,*—the appellation supposed to commemorate the dreadful act not having been assumed until 100 years after the murder was reported to have been perpetrated;† and the bones, the discovery of which was considered to confirm the tradition, were found in another staircase, and in a part of the fortress far removed from that gateway, which, nevertheless, to this day continues to be shown as the place of their death and burial, notwithstanding the royal interment of the remains found elsewhere. Had Sir Thomas More and the biographer of Henry VII. ended their tale by the mere relation of the massacre and hurried interment, then, indeed, there might have appeared some ground for belief that the remains were those of the young princes: for the stairs leading from the royal apartments—a far more probable abode for the royal children than the porter's lodge‡—would have seemed a natural place for the assassins to have chosen for the concealment of the desperate act, and therefore conclusive evidence of the truth of the tale. But both these eminent men distinctly report that the bodies were removed by Richard's order, and buried "in a less vile corner;" "whereupon, another night, by *the king's warrant renewed*," (such are the strong words of Lord Bacon,§) "their bodies were removed by the priest of the Tower, and buried by him in some place which, by means of the priest's death soon after, could not be known;" and Sir Thomas More's‖

* "A stronger proof we need not have that the name of the building did not originate in the circumstance in question, is its not having assumed the appellation till upwards of a century after the supposed act."—*Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 264.

† "Between the reign of Henry VIII., when this building was called the Garden Tower, and the year 1597, when it was known as the Bloody Tower, the Tower was crowded by delinquents of all descriptions; and as the structure in question was no doubt then frequently used as a prison, it more probably derived its present name from some of the horrid deeds which distinguished that era."—*Bayley*, vol. i. p. 264.

‡ It may be alleged that King Richard took possession, in all likelihood, of the royal apartments after his coronation, and removed his nephews to the Bloody Tower. In the absence of proof on that point, the fact can only be judged by analogy. King Edward IV. continually resided at the Tower, and for many years held his court in the palace there, where his predecessor was imprisoned; yet no mention is made of Henry VI. having been immured in apartments unbecoming his high estate; and notwithstanding this latter monarch is reputed to have been murdered in the Tower, neither history nor tradition commemorates menial apartments as the site of that dark and mysterious event. Even Sir Thomas More, who perpetuated the lamentation of Edward V., when informed of his uncle's coronation, makes no mention whatever of any removal from the place usually appointed to the royal prisoners. Richard III. was much too reserved, cautious and reflective to have prematurely laid himself open, by unnecessarily degrading the royal children to subsequent suspicion as regards his conduct towards them. "Is it to be supposed," asks Mr. Bayley, "whatever might have been the protector's design as to the ultimate fate of his nephews, that the princes were not lodged in royal apartments, and paid all the respect due to their rank? Is it likely that Richard should have had them shut up in the dark and wretched dwelling of one of the porters of the gates? If he had wanted in humanity, would policy have dictated such a course? No: it must at once have betrayed some foul design, without adding a jot to the facility of the perpetration."—*Bayley*, vol. i. p. 264.

§ Life of Henry VII., p. 123.

‖ Life of Rycharde III., p. 132.

expression is, "whither the bodies were removed, they could nothing tell." If, therefore, credit is given to their having been first interred in or under the stairs, some credit must attach to the assertion, from the same source, of their having been removed from those stairs, and their remains fitly deposited by the governor's chaplain in consecrated ground, and in a spot suitable to their noble birth. He was not commanded to remove the bodies from apprehension of discovery or suspicion of treachery, but, as asserted, from Richard's considering their burial at a "stair-foot," derogatory to the former exalted position of his nephews, "being too base for them that were king's children,"* an important consideration in testing the validity of these relics, because it coincides with Richard's general character, and with the religious feeling of the times. Apart, however, from this view, it would be preposterous to suppose that they would be exhumed from one stairs to be interred in another; or that if exhumed, their remains would be otherwise than laid at rest with the ordinary attentions to the illustrious dead, however secretly performed or scrupulously concealed.† Although the ecclesiastic, who is reputed to have undertaken the office, was dead, and that the place was known only to himself, yet Sir George Buck states that Dighton and Tyrrel's reputed confession was followed up by the examination of the spot where their victims were said to have been buried.‡ But nothing was discovered, although the digging at a "stair-foot," when the precise spot was pointed out, was as practicable in the reign of Henry VII. as that of Charles II. Little consideration seems to have been bestowed on the friable condition to which, in this latter reign, the remains would probably have been reduced after the interment of centuries, or that the detached bones would have crumbled into dust on exposure to the air. Decomposition almost immediately follows a violent death, above all, such an one as is reputed to have terminated the existence of the royal brothers, that of suffocation; "the feather-bed and pillows" being kept down by force "hard into their mouths, that within a while smothered and stifled them;"§ and a situation so damp as that of the Tower of London, erected on the banks of a river, would scarcely have favoured their preservation. Although relics carefully secured might possibly continue to a distant era sufficiently entire to admit of discussion with reference to identity if forthwith commenced, yet it is contrary to the ordinary course of nature that either the mortal remains of the young princes, or the chest into which they were hurriedly thrown could endure for the space of 200 years in the same state in which they were deposited under the peculiar circumstances stated. These mutilated remains were long exposed to the air, and subjected to the violence of the labourers, before even a rumour began to prevail respecting their probable identity with the missing princes. "The skull of one was broken, and many of the bones likewise," we are told; and also that "the workmen cast them and the rubbish away together."‖ Yet these broken, scattered and decomposed remains,—to collect which labourers were obliged to sift this refuse when the report gained ground as to their connection with Sir Thomas More's tradition,—were definitely recognized as the skeletons of the young princes, and gravely pronounced to be the remains of adults, precisely of the ages required.

On a discovery thus vague and inconclusive has Richard the Third's guilt

* Bacon, p. 123.

† "They might have added, it was done *sub sigillo confessionis*, which may not be revealed."—*Buck*, lib. iii. p. 85.

‡ "For true it is, there was much diligent search made for their bodies in the Tower: all places opened and digged, that was supposed, but not found."—*Ibid.*

§ More, p. 131. ‖ Sandford, p. 404.

been considered incontestably proved, despite of the untenable legend of the "Bloody Tower," the absence of all proof of Tyrrel and Warbeck's reputed confessions,* and the admitted fact that the revolting personal portrait so long given of this monarch has as little foundation in truth as the asserted removal of the bodies by the king's command, if, indeed, these were the remains of the royal youths said to be murdered by their uncle. "The personal monster whom More and Shakspeare exhibited, has vanished," states a powerful writer of the present day,† "but the deformity of the revolting parricide was surely revealed in the bones of his infant nephews!" Had these been the only bones which the credulity of later times transformed into the murdered remains of one or both of the princes, the power which a favourite hypothesis, once established, possesses to warp the judgment even of the most reflective, might, in this instance, be admitted as the cause why evidence so weak, and identity so vague, were overlooked in the plausibility which seemed to attach to the discovery. But the case of the relics found in the time of Charles II., and by him honoured with a royal interment, is not a solitary instance of remains coming to light which were fully believed to substantiate the tradition of King Richard's criminal conduct; and however ludicrous the statement may appear, yet it is an historical fact, that bones discovered years before these that are now under discussion in a lofty and unoccupied turret, and which were, at the time, generally believed to be the remains of the unfortunate Edward V., were afterwards allowed to be the skeleton of an ape! who, escaping from the menagerie, had clambered to the dangerous height, and too feeble to retrace his steps, had there perished.‡

So ready were the occupants of the Tower to appropriate every suspicious appearance towards elucidating a mystery, which, beyond all others of the startling events connected with the remarkable history of this national fortress, cast an air of melancholy interest and romance over its gloomy towers. Is it

* "King Henry's great and culpable omission in this instance," (the alleged confession of Warbeck,) "as in the case of the examination of Tyrrel and Dighton, was, in not openly publishing a statement, signed and verified by competent authorities, which would have been far more satisfactory than 'the court fumes,' which, adds Bacon, 'commonly print better (*i.e.*, more strongly impress themselves on the public mind) than printed proclamations.'"—*Documents relating to Perkin Warbeck, Archæologia*, vol. xxvii. p. 153.

† D'Israeli, "Amenities of Literature," vol. ii. p. 105.

‡ "The weak constitutions and short lives of their sisters may be a natural proof to infer it probable enough that this prince died in the Tower; which some men of these times are brought to think, from certain bones, like to the bones of a child being found lately in a high desolate turret, supposed to be the bones of one of these princes; others are of opinion it was the carcass of an ape, kept in the Tower, that in his old age had happened into that place to die in, and having clambered up thither, according to the light and idle manner of those wanton animals, after, when he would have gone down, seeing the way to have been steep and the precipice so terrible, durst not adventure to descend, but for fear stayed and starved himself; and although he might be soon missed, and long sought for, yet was not easily to be found, that turret being reckoned a vast and damned place for height and hard access, nobody in many years looking into it."—*Buck*, lib. iii. p. 86.

"The identity of the bones," observes Mr. Laing, "is uncertain; the Tower was both a palace and a state prison, the receptacle of Lollards, heretics and criminals, within which those who died by disease or violence were always buried; the discovery, therefore, of bones is neither surprising nor, perhaps, uncommon; but we must guard against the extreme credulity perceptible in the officers, who, persuaded that the princes were secretly interred in the Tower, appropriated every skeleton to them. Bones found at a former period in a deserted turret, were regarded as the remains of one of the princes; though some entertained a ludicrous suspicion that they belonged to an old ape who had clambered thither and perished."—*Laing*, (*in Henry*,) vol. xii. p. 419.

just, however, to convict a monarch of England,—a Plantagenet by birth and descent, the last of a noble and gallant race, — of crimes which the mind shrinks from contemplating, on no more solid basis than mere rumour, the alleged proofs of which are so inconclusive, that even the lowest and most hardened criminal in this present day would pass unscathed through the ordeal? Has any other of our English sovereigns been convicted on such shallow evidence? Has King Henry I., the usurper of his brother's rights, and the author of his fearful sufferings, or King John, who wrested the throne from his nephew, and has been suspected even of putting him to death with his own hand, been vituperated with equal rancour? Does odium attach, except in a very modified degree, to Edward III., Henry IV., Edward IV., Henry VII., and Queen Elizabeth, all more or less implicated in the cruel execution of dethroned rivals or princely opponents? Whence then, is it, that to Richard III. has been applied every invective that can be heaped on the memory of the basest of men and the most ruthless of kings? It arose from the simple cause, that he was succeeded by the founder of a new dynasty,—a sovereign whose interest it was to load him with the vilest calumnies, and to encourage every report that could blacken his memory.* Hence, later chroniclers, to court the favour of Henry VII. and his posterity, adopted as real facts those reports which were at first raised merely to mislead, or at least satisfy the populace. Desirous of transmitting Richard III. to future ages in the most detestable light, from mental depravity they passed to personal deformity—"representing him as crooked and deformed, though all ancient pictures drawn of him show the contrary."† Succeeding sovereigns sanctioning these accusations, so implicit became the belief in his guilt, that at length it mattered little whether it was the recent skeleton of a starved ape, or the decomposed remains of sifted bones, that aided to increase the odium, and still deeper to blacken the character of a prince prejudged as a ruthless murderer—condemned as an inhuman parricide. The mass of mankind are so prone to suspicion, that oft-repeated and long-received accusations will at length prevail even with the most ingenuous; and so feelingly alive is each individual to the frailty and weakness of human nature, that however noble may have been the career or honourable the actions of the character vituperated, if once the poisoned tongue of malice has singled out its object, neither purity of heart nor consciousness of innocence will protect the unhappy victim of malevolence from the stigma sought to be established, either to gratify private pique or further the views of political animosity.

Such was the position of Richard III. as regards the murder of his nephews. He may have been guilty, but this cannot be authenticated, for no evidence is on record, and no more substantial basis even for the accusation exists than the envenomed shaft of political malice. Although the plague raged many times fearfully within the metropolis,‡ precluding alike regular interments, and explaining irregular burials;§ although that greater scourge to mankind,

* Carte, vol. ii. book xiii. p. 818. † Ibid.

‡ Shortly after the accession of King Henry VII., a fearful pestilence denominated "The Sweating Sickness," almost depopulated the metropolis; and the execution of the young Earl of Warwick, in 1499, was followed by so devastating a plague, that the king, the queen and the royal family were obliged to leave the kingdom, and were resident at Calais for many weeks. During the "Great Plague" of 1665, the weekly bill of mortality amounted to 8000; and so awfully did it rage in the heart of the city, that between 400 and 500 a-week died in Cripplegate parish, and above 800 in Stepney.—*Brayley's Londiniana*, vol. iii. p. 220.

§ "The numbers of dead in the outposts were so great that it was impossible to bury them in due form or to provide coffins, no one daring to come into the infected houses."—*Ibid.*, p. 216.

religious persecution, together with civil warfare, led to deeds of such fearful import, that many a tale of horror might be unfolded if the walls of the Tower could divulge the tragical scenes acted within them,—and which are now only in part suspected, or remain altogether unknown,— yet no one cause has ever been suggested to account for the broken chest and scattered remains found in the passage leading to the chapel, but that grounded on such slight foundation as the allegation against King Richard III.

Mysterious, indeed, is the fate of the young princes, and so it is likely to remain, unless future discoveries should bring to light some more conclusive cause for Richard's condemnation than "one," out of "many rumours," not promulgated until he, like his nephews, slumbered the sleep of death, and which took its rise in times when the reputation of the noblest characters was attacked with a disregard to truth and bitterness of feeling that are truly appalling. But those times have passed away, and the feuds that gave rise to such discordant passions being no longer in operation, however strongly appearances may seem to favour the imputation cast upon Richard III.; yet, as it is already admitted that "the personal monster whom Sir Thomas More and Shakspeare exhibited, has vanished," it behoves all advocates for historical truth to suspend judgment in a case which has so long darkened the royal annals of England.

From the researches which are actively pursued in the present day, it is by no means impossible that some fresh documents may yet come to light which will lead to a knowledge of the facts, and thus afford legitimate cause for condemning or acquitting a monarch who, if not altogether free from the vices which pre-eminently marked his turbulent age, was not devoid of those nobler qualities which equally characterized the same chivalrous period, and which afford substantial ground for discrediting reports that are wholly at variance with the prudence and generosity of his youthful days, and are yet more strongly opposed to the discretion and wisdom which marked his kingly career.

CHAPTER XV.

Insurrection of the Duke of Buckingham.—Origin of his disaffection: the reputed cause shown to be unfounded.—Compact between the Duke of Buckingham, Bishop Morton, the Queen Dowager and the Countess of Richmond to place Henry, Earl of Richmond, on the throne, and to unite him in marriage with the Princess Elizabeth.—Nature of the connection of the Earl of Richmond with the House of Lancaster.—Jealousy entertained towards the earl by the House of York.—Projected invasion of Richmond.—Open rebellion of Buckingham.—Strong measures taken by the king to subdue the conspiracy.—Untoward events lead to the capture of Buckingham.—He is delivered unto King Richard's hands and beheaded at Salisbury.—The king proceeds to Exeter.—The leading insurgents flee the country.—Many are captured and executed, the remainder outlawed.—King Richard returns to London in triumph.—Is met and conducted thither by the citizens.—He summons a parliament.—Various important grants.—Richard's generosity to the families of the outlawed.—His moderation, clemency and justice.—Celebrates the Christmas festivities.—Observations on the close of the year 1483.

The entire reign of King Richard III. is composed of such startling events, each succeeding the other so rapidly, and all more or less wrapt in impenetrable mystery, that it more resembles a highly-coloured romance than a narrative of events of real life. Perhaps no scene in the remarkable career of this monarch is more strange, more irreconcilable with ordinary calculations, than the insurrection of the Duke of Buckingham; characterized as it was by perfidy and ingratitude of the blackest dye, and involving purposes as deep and results as momentous as the basis on which it was built was shallow and untenable. No one appears to have been more thoroughly ignorant of the deep game playing by his unstable kinsman than the king himself; for, however strongly his suspicions of some outbreak might have been excited as regards local or general disaffection, yet that his confidence in Buckingham remained unchanged, and his friendly feelings towards him undiminished, is evinced by one of the last official instruments issued by the monarch from York, his assent being affixed to "Letters from Edward, Prince of Wales, to the officers and tenants of his principality in North Wales and South Wales, commanding them to make their recognizances, and pay their talliages,* to Humfrey Stafford, the Duke of Buckingham, and his other commissioners." That Richard had not merited the enmity which led to Buckingham's revolt is apparent from many documents which attest his generosity, and prove the honourable fulfilment of his promises to that nobleman. Setting aside several of these that were instanced as among the first acts of his reign, the historian Rous, the cotemporary both of Richard and of Buckingham, states that the king conferred on the duke such vast treasure, that the latter boasted, when giving livery of the "Knots of the Staffords,† that he had as many of them as Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, formerly had of ragged staves."* Simple as is this anecdote, yet few could better have portrayed the feeling which occupied Buckingham's mind of assimilating himself in all respects to that mighty chief.

That vanity, indeed, and the most inordinate ambition were the true causes of the Duke of Buckingham's perfidious conduct to his royal kinsman admits of little doubt, for although Sir Thomas More asserts that "the occasion of their variance is of divers men, diversely reported;"† yet he sums up the detail of these several rumours by this important admission—"very truth it is, the duke was an high-minded man, and evil could bear the glory of an other, so that I have heard of some that said they saw it, that the duke at such time as the crown was first set upon the protector's head, his eye could not abide the sight thereof, but wried [turned aside] his head another way."‡

The ordinarily reputed cause of his rebellion is evidently devoid of truth, as shown by instruments that effectually disprove the allegation. The Duke of Buckingham is stated to have taken offence at King Richard's refusing him the Hereford lands,§ whereas complete restitution, and in the fullest manner that was in the power of the crown, was almost the opening act of this monarch's reign: nothing can be more forcibly worded than were the letters patent‖ "for restoring to Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, the purpartie of the estate of Humfrey Bohun, late Earl of Hereford, at present till the same shall be vested in him by the next Parliament, as fully as if no act of Parliament had been made against King Henry VI."¶

This was followed by "a cedule, or particular of this purpartie, amounting to a great sum yearly."** Sir Thomas More narrates, that up to the last moment of the duke's departure, although his discontent was apparent to Richard, yet that "it was not ill taken, nor any demand of the duke's uncourteously rejected, but he with great gifts and high behests, in most loving and trusty manner, departed at Gloucester."††

Neither could indignation have been kindled in his heart, arising, as is generally believed, from the murder of the princes; for at the time that he is asserted to have united with Bishop Morton in deploring their death, the cotemporary chronicler testifies that they remained "under certain deputed custody;"‡‡ and it is also recorded by Fabyan, that conspiracies were beginning to form in the metropolis for effecting their release.§§ Sir Thomas More, the sole narrator of the reputed manner of their destruction, distinctly relates that the assassins were not dispatched to destroy them until the king arrived at Warwick:‖‖ nevertheless, Buckingham, who left Richard at Gloucester some days before the king's departure from that city, informs the bishop that the fearful event was communicated to him during his attendance on the king. "When I was credibly informed of the death of the two young innocents, his own natural nephews, contrary to his faith and promise, (to the which, God be my judge, I never agreed nor condescended,) O Lord, how my veins panted, how my body trembled, and how my heart inwardly grudged! inso-

* Harl. MSS., No. 433. fol. 3.

† This observation refers to the Duke of Buckingham's badge. The cognizance of the Earl of Warwick, "the bear and ragged staff," was one of the most celebrated heraldic devices of the middle ages. The Stafford knott, however, was of great antiquity; and the Dacre's knott, the Bourchier's knott, the Wake's knott, and the Harrington's knott were all distinguished as badges of high repute, and as denoting the retainers of ancient and honourable houses.

* Rous, p. 216. † More, p. 135.
‡ Ibid., p. 137. § Ibid., p. 136.
‖ Harl. MSS., 433. fol. 107.

¶ On the death of King Henry VI., who died without issue, all the estates of Lancaster (especially those of the royal family of Lancaster) escheated to King Edward IV., and from him they came to King Richard, as heir to his brother upon the deposition of Edward V. and the elevation of himself to the throne.—*Buck*, lib. i. p. 35.

** Harl. MSS., 433. fol. 107. †† More, p. 136.
‡‡ Chron. Croy., p. 567. §§ Fabyan, p. 515. ‖‖ More, p. 128.

much that I so abhorred the sight, and much more the company of him, that I could no longer abide in his court, except I should be openly revenged."*

If this was, indeed, the case, then Sir James Tyrrel's reputed confession is still more completely negatived; and Sir Thomas More's statement becomes nullified altogether. Without, however, renewing discussions on this point, or dwelling on the suspicions that might fairly be pursued of Buckingham's connivance in the princes' destruction, if they were indeed so early murdered as he implies, or indulging in conjectures arising from his seeming knowledge of a crime that formed the alleged basis of his weak and wayward conduct, still ambition as regards himself, and envy as relates to King Richard, are apparent throughout that remarkable dialogue held by the duke and his prisoner, Cardinal Morton, the substance of which† there can be no doubt was reported by that prelate to Sir Thomas More, and hence narrated by him and by Grafton, the continuator of his history.‡

That the Duke of Buckingham coveted the regal diadem is evident from his entire conduct, but whether Bishop Morton indirectly fed his vanity with the ultimate view of restoring the sceptre to King Edward's offspring, or that Buckingham was in reality so blind as to believe himself capable of founding a new dynasty, is difficult of decision, from the contradictory and altogether incredible circumstances with which the details are involved.§

The leading points of the occurrence, as popularly received, are as follows:—Disgusted at the death of the young princes, and abhorring the presence of their uncle, Buckingham feigned a cause to leave King Richard at Gloucester, and departed, as it is said, with "a merry countenance but a despiteful heart."‖ As he journeyed towards Brecknock his angry passions had so far gained the ascendency over him, that he began to contemplate whether it were practicable to deprive the king of his crown and sceptre, and even fancied that if he chose himself to take upon him the regal diadem, now was "the gate opened, and occasion given, which, if neglected, should peradventure never again present itself to him."¶ "I saw my chance as perfectly as I saw my own image in a glass," he states, "and in this point I rested in imagination secretly with myself two days at Tewkesbury."** Doubting, however, how far his title to the throne would be favourably received if acquired by conquest†† alone, he resolved upon founding his pretensions on his descent from the House of Lancaster, the legitimate branch of which having become extinct in Henry VI., the descendants of the "De Beauforts," John of Gaunt's illegitimate offspring, considered themselves the representatives of their princely ancestor. Pleased with this scheme, and sanguine as to its result he made it known to a few chosen friends; but while pondering within himself which was the wiser course to pursue, whether publicly and at once to avow his intentions, or "to keep it secret for a while,"‡‡ as he rode between Worcester and Bridgenorth he encountered his near kinswoman, the Lady Margaret, Countess of Richmond, wife to the Lord Stanley, and the descendant of the eldest branch of the above-named "De Beauforts." This illustrious lady, to whom, in conjunction with the Duke of Buckingham, had

* Grafton's Cont. of More, p. 135. † Turner, iii. p. 505.
‡ Singer's More, p. 145.
§ Buck, lib. iii. p. 76; Laing, in Henry VI., p. 415; Walpole, p. 18.
‖ Grafton, p. 155. ¶ Ibid., p. 156. ** Ibid.
†† "I mused, and thought that it was not convenient to take upon me as a conqueror, for then I knew that all men, and especially the nobility, would with all their power withstand me for rescuing of possessions and tenures, as also for subverting of the whole estate, laws and customs of the realm."—*Grafton*, 155.
‡‡ Ibid., p. 157.

been allotted so favoured a position at the recent coronation of Richard and Queen Anne, being well acquainted with the influence which her kinsman possessed at court, and the favour with which he was regarded by the king, availed herself of this opportune meeting to intreat his good offices in behalf of Henry, Earl of Richmond, who, escaping into Brittany on the total defeat of the House of Lancaster, was attainted by Edward IV., and had been, for the space of fourteen years, an exile and a prisoner in that country. She prayed the duke for "kindred sake" to move the king to "license his return to England," promising that if it pleased Richard to unite him to one of King Edward's daughters,* (in conformity with a former proposition of the deceased monarch,) that no other dower should be taken or demanded, but "only the king's favour."† This was a death-blow to Buckingham's aspiring views, arising from his Lancastrian lineage. An elder branch lived to dispute with him any claims which he might urge on that ground, the Countess of Richmond being the only child "and sole heir to his grandfather's eldest brothers, which," he states, "was as clean out of my mind as though I had never seen her."‡ All hopes of the crown being thus at an end as regards his descent from John of Gaunt, the duke revolved his other possible chances of success. "Eftsoons I imagined whether I were best to take upon me, by the election of the nobility and commonalty, which me thought easy to be done, the usurper king thus being in hatred and abhorred of this whole realm, or to take it by power which standeth in fortune's chance and hard to be achieved and brought to pass."§

But neither of these plans gave promise of a happy result; the sympathy of the country was too much excited for the offspring of King Edward IV. for any fresh claimants to anticipate aid either from the nobles or commons of the realm, while the resources and alliances of his cousin, the Earl of Richmond, "which be not of little power," would, as Buckingham felt, even if he were elected to the throne, keep him ever "in doubt of death or deposition."‖ With a reluctance which only served to increase his hatred to King Richard, he found himself compelled to abandon all hope of obtaining that sovereign power to which he had been the chief means of elevating his kinsman.

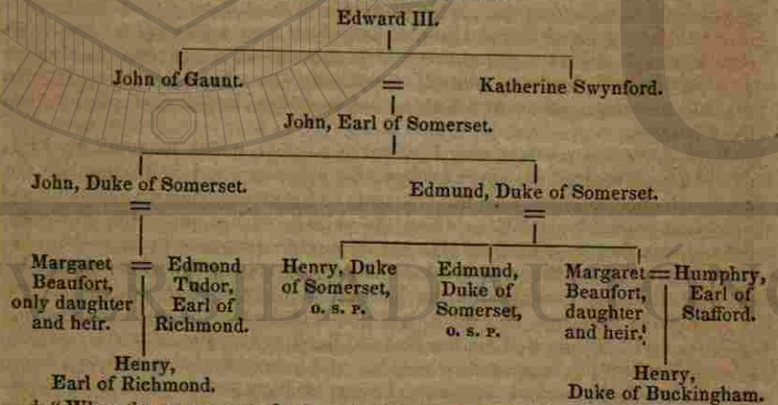
Bent, however, on depriving Richard of a crown which he could not himself obtain, Buckingham again changed his purpose; and improving on the modest request preferred by the Countess of Richmond, determined to devote his "power and purse"¶ to effect the release of her son: not, however, through the favour of Richard III., nor through measures of peace and amity, but in avowed hostility, as a rival to the reigning monarch, whose throne he decided should be promised to the Earl of Richmond, on condition that he espoused the Princess Elizabeth, and thus united the long-divided Houses of York and Lancaster. That the Duke of Buckingham should have aspired to the regal dignity, or imagined it possible, from mere personal malice, to effect a counter-revolution within a few weeks of an election and coronation so seemingly unanimous as that of Richard III., seems utterly incomprehensible: but that he could, by any possibility, have forgotten that he was descended from the youngest branch of a family so remarkable as the House of Somerset, arising from the feuds which their struggle for power had occasioned for half a century, in turbulent but unavailing efforts to be recognized as legitimate**

* Cott. MSS., Dom. A. xviii. † Grafton, p. 159.
‡ Ibid., p. 157. § Ibid.
‖ Ibid., p. 158. ¶ Ibid., p. 160.
** The De Beauforts had been legitimated by act of Parliament, February, 1397, and enabled to enjoy all lands and hereditary seignories; but the charter, it was gene-

branches of the royal line of Lancaster,* is altogether incredible, and casts an air of fable over the entire narrative that professes to relate his motives. Pride of birth, of lineage, and of kindred ties, was one of the leading characteristics of the age; and family intermarriages, arising from this pride of ancestry, constitute one of the most difficult features in the biography of those early times. The continued captivity of the Earl of Richmond had been too favourite a scheme both with Edward IV. and King Richard himself for the rivalry which existed between the House of York and the collateral branch of the House of Lancaster to have remained unknown to their cousin of Buckingham: and, had such been the case, the simple fact of himself and the Countess of Richmond having been selected to fill so prominent a position as that of upholding the trains of the king and queen at the coronation, in virtue of their Lancastrian descent, was of itself sufficient to have refreshed his memory. This unfortunate position, indeed, was, in all probability, the true cause of converting the envious Buckingham from Richard's devoted friend to his bitterest foe.† He had been the active instrument in raising him to the throne; and, as the joint descendant with himself from King Edward III.,‡ he could ill brook to bear the train of a prince for whom he had secured a crown. It might be deemed a favoured place, and it certainly was one that implied confidence and friendship: but Buckingham was by descent a Plantagenet, and he above all things loved display and coveted distinction. Moreover, he considered himself entitled to the office of high constable of

rally considered, conferred on them no pretensions to the crown, there being a special exception when the act was confirmed in the reign of Henry IV. with respect to the royal dignity.—*Life of Margaret Beaufort*, p. 80.

* Table showing the descent of Margaret, Countess of Richmond, and Henry, Duke of Buckingham, from John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster.

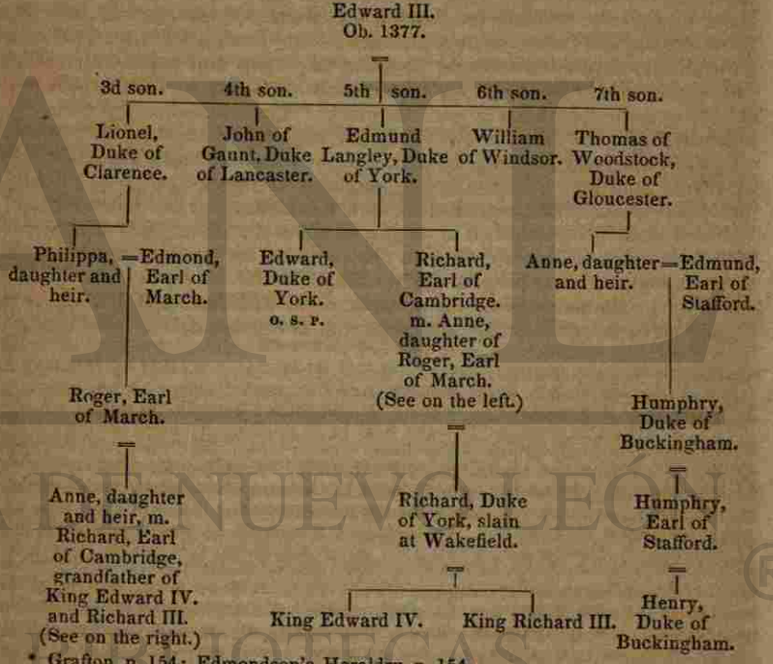


† "When the protector rode through London towards his coronation, he [Buckingham] feigned himself sick, because he would not ride with him. And the other, taking it in evil part, sent him word to rise, and come ride, or he would make him be carried! Whereupon he rode on with evil will; and that notwithstanding, on the morrow rose from the feast, feigning himself sick: and King Richard said it was done in hatred and despite to him. And they say, that ever after continually each of them lived in such hatred and distrust of other, that the duke verily looked to have been murdered at Gloucester; from which, natheless, he in fair manner departed."—*More*, p. 136.

‡ Table showing the descent of Richard III. and Henry, Duke of Buckingham, from King Edward III. (See next page.)

England in virtue of his descent from the De Bohuns, Earls of Hereford,* whose lands he had so urgently claimed of Edward IV.; and he was mortified at the ensigns of that honourable office being borne by the Lord Stanley, though but temporarily, on the day of the coronation;† and yet more at the newly-created Earl of Surrey occupying its allotted position when carrying before the king the sword of state.

It is true that, as a descendant of the House of Lancaster, the Duke of Buckingham bore his wand of office as hereditary seneschal, or lord high steward of England, anciently the first great officer of the crown. But although his consanguinity to that royal line was thus made apparent, yet Buckingham felt humbled at displaying it as the appendage of a train-bearer to the rival dynasty, when the Duke of Norfolk carried the crown, the Earl of Surrey the sword of state, and the Lord Stanley the much-coveted mace of constableship. True, this high office was secured to him immediately after the coronation, together with the lands of the De Bohuns;‡ but the canker-worm of envy and mortified vanity had previously turned the selfish love of Buckingham to hatred,—as selfishly and unworthily indulged.



* Grafton, p. 154; Edmondson's Heraldry, p. 154.

† Buck, lib. i. p. 26.

‡ On the 13th of July, in the first year of Richard III., Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, had livery of all those lands whereunto he pretended a right by descent as cousin and heir of blood to Humfrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford and constable of England; and within two days after was advanced to the high and great office of constable of England, as also constituted by the king constable of all the castles and steward of all the lordships lying within the counties of Salop and Hereford, and likewise chief justice and chamberlain of all South Wales and North Wales.—*Edmondson's Constables of England*, p. 30.

Obscure as may be the ostensible cause, nevertheless, the compact between the duke and his prisoner, Bishop Morton, admits not of doubt; neither, indeed, does the fact that, at its final ratification, the southern countries were on the eve of open rebellion to release the young princes from the Tower.* The two conspirators at Brecknock felt assured, therefore, that no sooner could a report be circulated that the princes were dead than the insurgents would readily fall into the plot which was about to be formed in favour of the Earl of Richmond, and of which Buckingham determined to propose himself as the captain and leader;† while King Richard could scarcely fail to be caught in the net thus doubly prepared to ensnare him by being compelled either to produce his nephews, and thus accelerate the operations of the insurgents, or be overwhelmed by the yet more formidable league which would unite both parties in supporting the pretensions of the Earl of Richmond, if the belief gained ground of the murder of the princes.‡ Violently opposed to King Richard, and personally attached to his former royal masters, Henry VI. and Edward IV., Morton hailed with delight any proposition that would shake the stability of the newly-created monarch, and give ultimate hope of uniting the lineages of York and Lancaster;§ consequently, the most resolute but cautious measures were speedily adopted by the duke and the bishop to carry their scheme into immediate execution. As a necessary preliminary, a trusty messenger, Reginald Bray, was sent to the Countess of Richmond, informing her of the high destiny contemplated for her son, and requiring her co-operation in the conspiracy. Transported with joy at intelligence so far exceeding her most sanguine expectations, the Lady Margaret willingly undertook to break the matter to the widowed queen and the young princess,‖ both still immured in the sanctuary at Westminster; which difficult office was ably accomplished through the medium of Dr. Lewis, a physician of great repute attached to the household of the Countess of Richmond, who was instructed to condole with the queen on the reported death of her sons, and forthwith to propose the restoration of the crown to her surviving offspring by the marriage of the princess royal with Henry of Richmond.¶ Oppressed with grief, as the dowager-queen is represented to have been,**

* Chron. Croy., p. 567. † Ibid.

‡ The imposture of Lambert Simnell, in the succeeding reign, is attributed by Lord Bacon to a corresponding scheme for compelling King Henry to produce the person, or avow the death, of Edward, Earl of Warwick. A report generally prevailed that that monarch had put to death, secretly within the Tower, this hapless prince, the last male heir of the line of Plantagenet. With the view of ascertaining this fact, and the better to advance his interest if alive, a youth of corresponding age and appearance was brought forward by the partisans of the House of York to counterfeit the person of the Earl of Warwick, with a report of his having escaped from his murderers; it being agreed that if all things succeeded well, he should be put down and the true Plantagenet received. King Henry, alarmed for the safety of his throne, caused "Edward Plantagenet, then a close prisoner in the Tower, to be showed in the most public and notorious manner that could be devised unto the people; in part," continues Lord Bacon, "to discharge the king of the envy of that opinion, and bruite [report] how he had been put to death privily in the Tower, but chiefly to make the people see the levity and imposture of the proceedings." The part pursued by the ecclesiastic at Oxford and the Earl of Lincoln, the chief supporters of Simnell and the bitter opponents of Henry VII., bears a singular analogy to the conduct of Bishop Morton and the Duke of Buckingham as regards King Richard III. and the young princes.—See *Bacon's Henry VII.*, pp. 19. 36.

§ "The bishop, which favoured ever the House of Lancaster, was wonderfully joyful and much rejoiced to hear this device; for now came the wind about even as he would have it; for all his indignation tended to this effect, to have King Richard subdued, and to have the lines of King Edward and Henry VI. again raised and advanced."—*Grafton*, p. 160.

‖ Grafton, p. 162. ¶ Ibid. ** Ibid., p. 164.

when informed of the untimely end of her two sons, she yet hailed with great thankfulness a suggestion that gave promise of brightened prospects for her daughters; and, entering with alacrity into the scheme, she promised the entire aid of her late husband's friends and her own kindred, provided always that the Earl of Richmond would solemnly swear "to espouse and take to wife the Lady Elizabeth, or else the Lady Cecily, if her eldest sister should not be living."*

For the more speedy accomplishment of the project, the Countess of Richmond had returned to the metropolis, and taken up her abode at her husband's dwelling-place within the city of London,† so that daily communication passed between the countess and the queen in sanctuary, through the intervention of Dr. Lewis, the physician; and a powerful ally of the Duke of Buckingham, Hugh Conway, Esquire, with Christopher Urswick, the Lady Margaret's confessor, were speedily sent to Brittany "with a great sum of money,"‡ to communicate to the Earl of Richmond the fair prospect that had dawned for terminating his captivity, and ensuring his honourable reception in England. In the west country, Buckingham and Bishop Morton exerted themselves with equal zeal and determination: but the wily prelate, whether through apprehension of the duke's stability, or from a desire of effectually securing his own safety by flight, took advantage of the trust reposed in him by his noble host, and stealthily departing from Brecknock Castle, proceeded secretly to his see of Ely. There securing both money and partisans, he effected his escape into France, and, joining the Earl of Richmond, devoted himself to his interest during the remainder of King Richard's troubled reign."§

The Duke of Buckingham, although greatly discomfited and mortified by the treacheryof Morton, who acted towards him the same disingenuous part which, in a greater degree, he was pursuing towards his sovereign, was nevertheless too deeply involved in the conspiracy to shrink from prosecuting his scheme, even after he had been abandoned by his coadjutor, and that at a time "when he had most need of his aid."‖

He steadfastly persevered in his object, communicating with the Yorkist leaders, enlisting on his side the disaffected of all parties, and gaining over to his cause the chief supporters of the late king, together with many ancient partisans of the fallen House of Lancaster, who had slumbered but not slept over the calamitous events which marked the extinction of their party. Thus gradually, but guardedly pursuing his design, the Duke of Buckingham soon collected sufficient force to enable him to co-operate with Henry of Richmond, when the plot should be sufficiently ripened to admit of his projected invasion of the realm.¶ All these proceedings and secret schemes were planned and carried out during King Richard's progress from Warwick to York: but whether the confederacy had wholly escaped detection before his second coronation, or whether the monarch dissembled his knowledge of the league until such time as he could trace the object of the conspiracy and ascertain who were its leaders, is not altogether clear. Thus much is certain: that on the 24th of September, a few days after Richard's return to Pontefract, the Duke of Buckingham sent to the Earl of Richmond, directing him to land in England on the 18th of October,** on which day the conspirators had arranged to

* Grafton, p. 166.

† Derby House, on the site of which the College of Arms now stands; a princely abode, erected on St. Benett's Hill, by the Lord Stanley, shortly before his marriage with the Countess of Richmond.—*Edmondson*, p. 143.

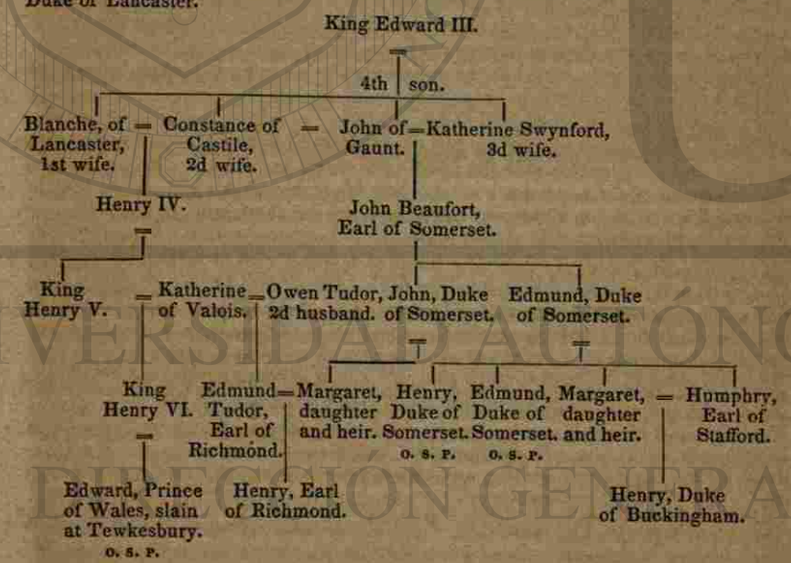
‡ Grafton, p. 166. § Ibid., p. 163. ‖ Ibid.

¶ Ibid., p. 169. ** Rot. Parl., vi. p. 245.

rise simultaneously in anticipation of his arrival. That Richard betrayed no suspicion of the impending danger is evident from the whole tenour of his conduct at York; neither were any measures adopted at Pomfret that could admit of just inference that he apprehended the landing of a rival. It may be that he despised the pretensions of Richmond, arising as they did from an illegitimate source, or that he was too much engrossed with preparations for his second coronation to examine into the vague reports that reached him. This latter surmise, however, is scarcely consistent with Richard's active and wary character. If he felt the danger, it is more probable that his tranquillity was assumed, that it was a mere veil to conceal knowledge which it was not politic to disclose to the world: but the former view is on the whole the most likely, considering the slender claim which a spurious branch of the usurping House of Lancaster could have upon the throne.

The history of the Earl of Richmond is briefly told.* His connection with the extinct dynasty has been already detailed in a note at the commencement of this memoir, when treating of the rivalship between the Lords of York and Somerset: but a brief recapitulation at this crisis will serve to render more apparent the shallow grounds on which he asserted a claim to the crown. John of Gaunt, fourth son of Edward III., had three wives. By his first, the heiress of the House of Lancaster (from marriage with whom he acquired that title,) he had two daughters† and one son, afterwards King Henry IV., the founder of the Lancastrian dynasty. By his second wife, a Castilian princess, he had an only child, a daughter:‡ and by his third wife, who was

* Table showing the descent of Henry, Earl of Richmond, from John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster.



† Philippa, the eldest daughter, was united to John, King of Portugal, and her descendants, for seven generations, governed that kingdom. Elizabeth, the second daughter, married John Holland, Duke of Exeter.

‡ This princess, Katherine, espoused Henry, Prince of Asturias, the eldest son of the King of Spain. Their posterity continued sovereigns of that realm until the year 1700.

previously his mistress, he had four children,* born before marriage, and surnamed De Beaufort, from the place of their birth. These children were eventually legitimated by act of Parliament,† although a special reservation was made (in the letters patent‡), excluding them from succession to the crown.§ From this corrupt source sprang the Duke of Somerset, father of the Countess of Richmond. She was united at the early age of fourteen to Edmond Tudor, Earl of Richmond, half-brother of King Henry VI.,‖ and one child, a son, was the fruit of this union. Immense riches had centred in the Lady Margaret, herself an only child;¶ and her husband's near relationship to the Lancastrian monarch conferred upon their offspring at his birth a very distinguished position. This was increased by the premature death of the Earl of Richmond, and likewise from King Henry VI. being reputed to have prognosticated great things of his infant heir, the young earl,** who thenceforth became an object of jealousy to the House of York, and of corresponding interest to the line of Lancaster. At the brief restoration of King Henry VI., Henry of Richmond was in his fourteenth year. His prospects at that time were most promising, and he was completing his education at Eton,†† when the fatal battle of Tewkesbury having re-established the race of York on the throne, and effectually ruined the Lancastrian cause, he was secretly conveyed from England through the affectionate solicitude of his uncle, the Earl of Pembroke, himself also a half-brother of Henry VI.‡‡ A furious storm cast the fugitives upon the shores of Brittany,§§ where, being treacherously dealt with

* These children were—
1. John, afterwards created Earl of Somerset.
2. Henry, the renowned Cardinal Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester.
3. Thomas, created Duke of Exeter, and eventually chancellor of England.
4. Joan, married to Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmoreland. She was the parent of Cecily, Duchess of York, the mother of Edward IV. and Richard III.

† Rot. Parl., vol. iii. p. 343. ‡ Excerpt. Hist., p. 152.

§ Rot. Parl., vol. v. p. 343.

‖ Katherine of Valois, only daughter of Charles VI. of France, and the widowed queen of King Henry V., as also mother of his successor, King Henry VI., selected for her second husband a private gentleman, of ancient lineage but slender fortune; to whom she was clandestinely married when her son, Henry VI., was about seven years of age. The issue of this ill-advised union was three sons and one daughter: Edmond Tudor, the eldest, was the father of Henry of Richmond, afterwards King Henry VII., by marriage with the Lady Margaret Beaufort, heiress of John, Duke of Somerset. Jasper Tudor, the second son, was a remarkable character during the rule of the House of York, and the chief agent in the preservation of the life of his nephew, Henry of Richmond, and of his subsequent elevation to the throne. Owen Tudor, the third son, and Katherine Tudor, their sister, died in the prime of life.

¶ John, first Duke of Somerset, (grandson of John of Gaunt,) died in the fourth year after his marriage, at the age of 39. His title, from default of male heirs, passed to his next brother, Edmond de Beaufort; but in all else, his daughter and only child, then not quite three years old, became sole heiress to his vast possessions.—See *Life of Margaret Beaufort*, p. 17.

** "One day, when King Henry VI., whose innocency gave him holiness, was washing his hands at a great feast, and cast his eye upon Richmond, then a young youth, he exclaimed, 'This is the lad who shall possess quietly that we now strive for.'"—*Bacon's Henry VII.*, p. 247.

†† Sandford's Geneal. Hist., vol. vi. ch. 10.

‡‡ Buck's Richard III., p. 16.

§§ The wind being contrary, and its violence extreme, they were driven far out of their course, and after having been placed in imminent peril, and preserved by little less than a miracle, they were at length cast upon the shores of Brittany. They gained St. Maloes with some difficulty, and were resting there to recruit their exhausted energies, when information having been forwarded to Francis, the reigning duke of that state, he forthwith ordered them to be arrested and conveyed as prisoners to the Castle of Vannes.—*Life of Margaret Beaufort*, p. 85.

by the reigning duke of that principality, the young earl was made captive, and detained a state prisoner, in which hapless position he had continued a victim to hopeless captivity up to the period when his mother so earnestly besought the intercession of the Duke of Buckingham towards effecting his release, and obtaining his pardon from Richard III.

Considering that a special reservation of the royal dignity had been inserted in the patent of legitimation exemplified and confirmed by Henry IV,* at the earnest request of his kinsmen, the De Beauforts,† the Yorkist sovereign would appear to have needlessly apprehended danger from the captive earl: but the deadly feud which had ever existed between Richard, Duke of York, father of Edward IV., and John, Duke of Somerset, grandfather to Henry, Earl of Richmond, the two great leaders of the rival factions, had rendered the illustrious exile a subject of suspicion and hatred to the House of York.‡ The affection with which Henry VI. regarded his half-brothers, and the distinguished position which the young Richmond held as the nephew§ of the reigning monarch, linked him so closely with the Lancastrian dynasty, that it strengthened the apprehension inspired by his being the heir male of the House of Somerset, after the battle of Tewkesbury had rendered the royal line extinct. Innumerable were the efforts made by Edward IV. to obtain possession of the attainted earl. Costly presents were sent to Francis, Duke of Brittany, and great sums offered to ransom his victim:‖ these overtures failing, King Edward, at the expiration of a few years, adopted a different course; and under the plea of sympathy for the young earl, and a desire to bury past differences in oblivion, he sent ambassadors to sue for his release, and to proffer him the hand of his eldest daughter, the Princess Elizabeth.¶ This subtle device had well nigh cost Richmond his life; for the Duke of Brittany, deceived by the well-dissembled protestations of King Edward, consented to release his captive. Happily, however, for the earl, the plot was made known to him, and escaping into sanctuary,** he eluded and defied the malice of his enemies. Francis of Brittany was a wary prince. The custody of Henry of Richmond was a constant source of emolument to himself and his principality, from the bribes sent by Edward IV. in the hope of obtaining the earl's release; and, moreover, from the evident importance attached to his prisoner, his continued safety rendered him always a hostage for unbroken and friendly alliance with the English. Under these considerations, Francis again tendered his protection to Richmond, who quitted the sanctuary on receiving a pledge that, although he must still be considered as a state prisoner, he should no longer be subjected to rigorous confinement. At the death of Edward IV., the attainted earl had been thirteen years an exile and a captive: nevertheless, the decease of his persecutor made no change in the

* The patent of legitimation which was exemplified and confirmed by Henry IV. on the 10th of February, 1407, at the request of the Earl of Somerset, is to this effect:—"We do, in the fulness of our royal power, and by the assent of Parliament, by the tenour of these presents, empower you to be raised, promoted, elected, assume and be admitted to all honours, dignities, (*except to the royal dignity,*) pre-eminences, estates, and offices, public and private, whatsoever, as well spiritual as temporal."—*Rot. Parl.*, vol. iii. p. 343.

† Excerpt. Hist., p. 152.

‡ One of the earliest proceedings of Edward IV. was to attaint the young Earl of Richmond, (*Rot. Parl.*, 1 Edw. IV. p. 2.,) by letters and patent he stripped him of his territorial possessions, and bestowed them upon his brother George, Duke of Clarence.—*Report on the Dignity of the Peerage*, p. 130.

§ "In the act of attainder passed after his accession, Henry VII. calls himself nephew of Henry VI."—*Historic Doubts*, p. 100.

‖ Philip de Comines, p. 516.

¶ Cott. MSS., Dom. A. xviii.

** Lobineau, l'Histoire de Britagne, vol. i. p. 751.

conduct pursued by his captor. True, his misfortunes, his gentleness, his noble bearing, and entire submission to his cruel lot, had gradually gained him many powerful friends at the court of Brittany; still the reigning duke kept a vigilant watch over his proceedings, and any faint hope of liberation in which he may have indulged during the brief reign of Edward V. was effectually crushed by the decisive measures pursued by Richard III. immediately after his accession to the throne. One of this monarch's first acts was to dispatch Sir Thomas Hutton to renew the existing treaty with Francis,* and to stipulate for the continued imprisonment of Richmond;† and with the view of securing this latter desirable object, the most costly presents were sent, not alone to the duke himself, but also to his councillors and the leading persons of his court. Such was the position of Henry, Earl of Richmond, when the prospect of the English crown, together with the proffered hand of the princess royal,‡ gave promise of future honours that contrasted very remarkably with the forlorn situation which had characterized his early youth and manhood.§ The presence and counsels of the Bishop of Ely inspired him with confidence, and the vast sums of money sent him by his mother enabled him privately to enlist in his cause many persons of high military reputation, exiled followers of Henry VI., who had for years lingered in the extreme of poverty. Richmond's next measure was frankly to make known his bright prospects to the Duke of Britanny,‖ of whom he earnestly besought assistance; but the recent compact between Francis and Richard precluded the possibility of his sanctioning his enterprise. Nevertheless, touched with compassion for one who had so meekly submitted to the restraints imposed upon him for so many years, he so far yielded as to pledge himself not to oppose his undertaking; and under that assurance, Richmond exerted himself so strenuously, and was supported by so powerful a band, both of Yorkist and Lancastrian exiles, that he was enabled to respond to the call of Buckingham, and to pledge himself to arrive in England by the day fixed upon for the general rising, viz., the 18th of October.

However scrupulously the commencement of this formidable league was concealed, it had evidently reached King Richard's ears before its final ratification. "The conspiracy," says the Croyland historian,¶ "by means of spies was well known to Richard, who, in manner as he executed all his designs, not drowsily, but with alacrity and with the greatest vigilance, procured, as well in Wales as in all the marches there, in the circuit of the said Duke of Buckingham, that as soon as he set foot out of his house, esquires should be in prompt readiness, who, animated by the duke's great wealth, which the king for that purpose conferred upon them, should seize upon the same, and by all means impede his progress; which was done. For on that side of the castle towards Wales, Thomas, son of Sir Roger Vaughan deceased, with his brethren and relatives, most strictly watched all the circumjacent country; and the bridges and passages leading to England were partly broken down, and partly closed under strict guards by Humphrey Stafford."

It cannot but tell greatly in Richard's favour, that these last-mentioned

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 241.

† Grafton, p. 169.

‡ "The Duke of Buckingham, by the advice of the Bishop of Ely, his prisoner at Brecknock, sent to him to hasten to England as soon as he could, to have to wife Elizabeth, elder daughter of the deceased king, and together with her, possession of all the realm."—*Cont. Croy.*, p. 568.

§ Philip de Comines, who was well known to the Earl of Richmond, states, that he told him, even from his birth, he had scarcely known the blessings of liberty, having been either a fugitive or a captive from the age of five years.—*Philip de Comines*, vol. v. p. 514.

‖ Grafton, p. 168.

¶ Chron. Croy., p. 508

individuals, the grandchildren of old Sir Thomas Vaughan, whom he has been reproached with unjustly executing, and Sir Humphrey Stafford, the near relative of Buckingham himself, should have so decidedly espoused the king's cause as to be willing agents for entrapping the rebellious duke; neither can it escape observation, that the reputed avenger of the princes' alleged murder, instead of bringing forward the Earl of Warwick, or advocating exclusively the rights of the Princess Elizabeth, lawfully the inheritor of the crown,—if, indeed, proof existed that her brothers were really dead,—should have selected as the successor to their throne an illegitimate scion of the extinct House of Lancaster, and by making the Princess Elizabeth a secondary consideration, have thus perpetuated to the House of York the very act of injustice for which they condemned King Richard.

It is more than probable from the wording of Dr. Hutton's instructions,* on his mission to the court of Brittany, that the plot for restoring the Lancastrian dynasty in the person of Henry of Richmond had been contemplated before the deposition of Edward V., and that the report of the alleged death of the royal brothers was spread by the Lancastrian agents† to further views which had been contemplated at the accession of the young king, arising out of the disturbed state of the realm at that period, but which had been promptly dissipated by the firm and vigilant government of Richard, both as protector and king. That the Duke of Buckingham should have risked the uncertain favour of a kinsman to whom he was personally unknown,—one that had been long estranged from his country, and was an alien to its laws and customs,—when the monarch whom but a few weeks previously he had aided to elevate to the throne was manifesting on all occasions his gratitude, and showering down his gifts most liberally upon him, is a mystery that defies solution! How keenly Richard felt his treachery, and how bitterly he resented it, is not, however, subject of surmise, being recorded in his own hand-writing, in a confidential postscript to a letter,‡ addressed to the lord chancellor, a document so replete with interest as portraying the true nature of the king's sentiments and feelings on this momentous occasion, that it demands unabbreviated insertion in this memoir of his life.

"By the King.

"Right reverend Father in God, and right trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well, and in our heartiest wise thank you for manifold presents§

* In instructions given to Dr. Thomas Hutton, who was sent to the Duke of Brittany for the ostensible purpose of renewing a commercial treaty, which "*by diverse folks of simple disposition*" was supposed to have expired in the death of Edw. IV., is the following passage:—"Item, He shall seek and understand the mind and disposition of the duke, anenst Sir Edward Wydville and his retinue, practising by all means to him possible, to unsearch and know if there *be intended any enterprise out of land*, upon any part of this realm, certifying with all diligence all the views and depositions there from time to time."—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 241.

† The Croyland historian, after stating that "it was reported that King Edward's children were dead," adds, "all those who began this commotion, seeing that they could not find a new captain, they called to mind Henry, Earl of Richmond, who had now for many years dwelt an exile in Brittany."—*Cont. Croy.*, p. 568.

‡ This letter from Richard III. to Russel, Bishop of Lincoln, was extracted from the original in the Record Office in the Tower by Strype. It was printed in a note to Buck's History of Richard III., in Kennet's Complete History of England; and was also published by Singer in an Appendix to his revised and corrected edition of Sir Thomas More's History of Richard III. The postscript is in the king's own hand, and is most interesting for the earnestness with which it dwells on Buckingham's treachery.

§ The Bishop of Lincoln, at this time, filled the office of lord chancellor, and these words allude to Richard's abode in his see, and probably also to his residence at the ecclesiastical palace at Lincoln.

that your servants in their behalf have presented unto us at this our being here, which we assure you we took and accepted with good heart, and so have cause. And whereas, we, by God's grace, intend to advance us towards our rebel and traitor, the Duke of Buckingham, to resist and withstand his malicious purpose, as lately by our other letters* we certified you our mind more at large; for which cause it behoveth us to have our great seal here, we being informed that for such infirmities and diseases as ye sustain, ye may not in your person to your ease conveniently come unto us with the same: Wherefore we will, and natheless charge you, that forthwith, upon the sight of this, ye safely do cause the same our great seal to be sent unto us; and such of the office of our chancery as by your wisdom shall be thought necessary, receiving these, our letters, for your sufficient discharge in that behalf.

"Given under our signet, at our city of Lincoln,
the 12th day of October."

Then follows the postscript in the king's own hand-writing.

"We would most gladly ye came yourself, if that ye may; and if ye may not, we pray you not to fail, but to accomplish in all diligence our said commandment to send our seal incontinent upon the sight hereof, as we trust you, with such as ye trust, and the officers pertaining [appertaining] to attend with it: praying you to ascertain us of your news there. Here, loved be God, is all well, and truly determined, and for to resist the malice of him that had best cause to be true, the Duke of Buckingham—the most untrue creature living: whom with God's grace we shall not be long 'till that we will be in that parts, and subdue his malice. We assure you there was never falser traitor purveyed for; as this bearer Gloucester† shall show you."

This remarkable letter, as appears by its date, was written at Lincoln on the 12th October, a few days after the king is stated to have received from Buckingham an avowal of his perfidy, arising out of a refusal to attend the royal summons,‡ the monarch having invited his personal attendance with the view of ascertaining the truth or falsehood of a report which he could not bring himself to believe without such substantial proof.

Richard's character was one of determined resolution; and although it can scarcely be said that he was devoid of suspicion, yet every record favours the belief that he unwillingly credited reports to the disadvantage of his friends, and placed in all who were personally attached to his service a confidence that in many cases was shown to be miserably abused.§

Once roused, however, Richard was as firm in resisting his opponents as he was generous in recompensing his followers; and Buckingham, having openly avowed himself "his mortal enemy," and hoisted the standard of rebellion, the monarch adopted the most rigorous measures for defeating the insurgents, and crushing the conspiracy. He dispatched a letter‖ to the authorities of York, requiring their aid in this emergency, and desiring that such troops as they could furnish should meet him at Leicester on the 21st inst. This was followed by a proclamation, dated likewise at Lincoln, declaring

* This expression justifies the inference that King Richard knew of the conspiracy before his arrival at Lincoln.

† Richard Champney, the favoured king-at-arms of Richard III. This office was founded because it had been the name of Richard's ducal honour, a practice then usual; Edward IV. before, and Henry VII. after, making their heralds kings-at-arms giving them the names of the titles they bore.—See *Noble's College of Arms*, p. 65; likewise *Edmondson's Heraldry*, p. 99.

‡ Grafton, p. 171. § More, p. 9.

‖ See Appendix GGG.

the Duke of Buckingham a traitor; and he was proclaimed as such at York, as appears by the municipal records of that city, "on the 16th October."* This same day, the lord chancellor continuing too ill to attend the king, he delivered up the great seal "at the Old Temple, London, in a great chamber near the garden."† It was intrusted to the keeping of one of the clerks in chancery, and was by him restored to the king himself‡ three days afterwards, "at Grantham, in a chamber called the kynge's chamber, in the Angel Inn, in the presence of the Earls of Northumberland and Huntingdon, and of Sir Thomas Stanley."§ From Grantham, where Richard is thus shown to have rested on the 19th inst., he proceeded to Melton Mowbray, leaving that town on the 21st for Leicester. By this time the greater part of the kingdom was in open rebellion. The Marquis of Dorset, escaping from sanctuary, had gathered together a formidable band of men in Yorkshire. The Bishop of Exeter, and his brother, Sir Edward Courtney, raised another army in Devonshire and Cornwall; in Kent, Sir Richard Guildford,‖ heading a company of soldiers, had openly begun the war,¶ and Henry, Earl of Richmond, having collected "an army of 500 manly Bretons, and forty well-furnished ships," sailed from Brittany on the 12th inst., hoping to land at Plymouth, as instructed by the confederates, on the 18th of October.** But King Richard was by no means dismayed. Intrepid bravery was a leading feature in his character; nevertheless, his valour was always tempered with judgment. He met danger promptly, fearlessly, resolutely; yet he calmly revolved every auxiliary measure that might best secure to him final success; and with a singular mixture of energy and coolness, would, within the same hour, direct military movements and issue civil processes, and this with a rapidity of thought, keen foresight and calm deliberation that awed his opponents, and inspired confidence in his partisans.

Rous†† states that he forthwith hastened with a large army into the south: other cotemporary documents show how little he trusted to mere force of arms alone, and with what a master mind he grasped the extent of the evil with which he was so suddenly encompassed. During his stay at Leicester he put forth a proclamation,‡‡ offering 1000*l.*, or 100*l.* a-year for life, on the capture of the Duke of Buckingham; 1000 marks for the Marquis of Dorset, or his uncle Lionel, Bishop of Salisbury, the son and brother of the widowed queen; and 500 on the arrest of other leading insurgents, who are therein specified.§§ The following day a vice-constable‖‖ was nominated, and invested

* Drake's Eborac., p. 119. † Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 203.

‡ The king retained the great seal until the 26th November, and sealed with it numerous writs, commissions, &c., and on that day returned it to the chancellor.—*Fœdera*, vol. xii. p. 203.

§ This nobleman, who filled the most confidential situation about the person of the king, was the father-in-law of Henry, Earl of Richmond, having espoused Margaret, Countess of Richmond, whose exertions in behalf of her son have been recently described. The trust thus reposed in one so closely connected with the rebels, is perhaps one of the strongest instances that could be adduced of Richard's unsuspicious disposition; it also induces the belief that the Lady Margaret, whose wisdom and strength of mind were very remarkable, anxious for the restoration of her son, but unwilling to compromise the safety of her husband, had carefully concealed from him all knowledge of the league to which she was lending her aid.

‖ The Guildfords were a distinguished family, seated at Hempsted in Kent. Sir Edward Guildford, son of the above-named Sir Richard, was father-in-law to the celebrated John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, whose son was united to Lady Jane Grey.

¶ Grafton, p. 171. ** Ibid., p. 177. †† Rous, p. 216.

‡‡ See Appendix HHH. §§ Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 204.

‖‖ This appointment was rendered necessary, because the Duke of Buckingham

with extraordinary powers to judge and execute, without delay, such of the rebels as were captured or betrayed into his hands.* The marches of Wales, the bridges, fords and ordinary passes,† were guarded by trusty bands of soldiers, well acquainted with that part of the country, as well as with the person of the Duke of Buckingham; men altogether opposed to his rebellious views, and well affected towards the king. Vessels of war were stationed in the channel to keep a careful watch, not alone on any ships that were advancing to England, but also on all boats that approached the coast, or were observed departing from its shores.‡

Thus prepared at all points, the monarch quitted Leicester on the 23d of October, and arrived at Coventry on the 24th, proceeding thence to Salisbury, in consequence of information that the coalition sought to be effected between Buckingham and Richmond was to take place in the southern counties.

Decisive and ably concerted as had been the king's arrangements, yet these were so evenly balanced by the vigilant and determined measures of the conspirators,§ that the issue would probably have been doubtful, had not a series of misadventures brought to a speedy close the turbulent and undisciplined career of the capricious Buckingham. On the 18th of October,‖ in conformity with his pledge to the Earl of Richmond, the duke assumed the command of the Welsh rebels, proceeding from Brecknock Castle to Weobly, the seat of Walter Devereux, Lord Ferrers,¶ enlisting on his route, either by violence or bribery, a strong addition to his force. He thence marched rapidly through the Forest of Dean, and reached the confines of the city of Gloucester by the time the king had advanced within two days' journey of Salisbury,** intending to cross the Severn at the former city, and thence to march southward and form a junction with the army raised in the west by the Courtneys;†† which "if he had done," says Grafton, "no doubt but King Richard had been in great jeopardy, either of privation of his realm, or loss of his life, or both."‡‡

But during the duke's progress through Wales, violent storms and a continual rain of ten days had caused the Severn to rise and overflow its banks,§§ producing a sudden inundation so extensive, that the bridges were broken down, the fords impassable; and the cattle being drowned in their pastures, a scarcity of provisions ensued, which increased the privations that his followers had already endured from the inclemency of the weather during their toilsome march to Gloucester. Unable to join his confederates, or to communicate with them, and destitute of the means of appeasing the soldiery, who murmured at being "without money, victual, or wages,"‖‖ Buckingham

filled the office of constable of England, to which, it will be remembered, that he preferred an hereditary claim, and to which high office he was nominated immediately after King Richard's coronation.—*Edmondson's Heraldry*, p. 30.

* Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 205. † Chron. Croy., p. 568.

‡ Chron. Croy., p. 568. § Grafton, p. 169.

‖ Rot. Parl., vi. p. 245. ¶ Chron. Croy., p 568.

** Grafton, p. 172.

†† "So great was the influence of the Courtney family at this period, that the inhabitants both of Devon and Cornwall flocked to their standard."—*Jenkins' Hist. of Exeter*, p. 88.

‡‡ Grafton, p. 172.

§§ "Insomuch that men were drowned in their beds, and houses with the extreme violence were overturned; children were carried about the fields swimming in cradles, beasts were drowned on hills; which rage of water lasted continually ten days, insomuch that in the country adjoining they call it to this day the Great Water, or the Duke of Buckingham's Great Water."—*Grafton*, p. 173.

‖‖ Ibid., p. 173.

was reluctantly compelled to yield to their clamours, and return back to Weobly.* Dispirited at the failure of the enterprise, which they superstitiously viewed as an ill omen, the Welshmen dispersed, and departed to their homes; and for all the duke's fair promises, threatenings and enforcements, they would "in no wise neither go farther nor abide."

Thus deserted by his followers, the peril of the Duke of Buckingham became extreme. His own castle was in the hands of the Vaughans, who immediately after he had departed from Brecknock, seized and plundered it, making captive his daughters† and their attendant gentlewomen.‡

The proclamation issued by the king, offering so large a reward for his apprehension, and threatening such severe penalties for his concealment, completed the measure of his misfortune, and rendered his situation so desperate that, finding himself closely watched, even by his own kindred, and that he could "on no side make his egress with safety,"§ he suddenly quitted his associates, and departed from Weobly in disguise; first, however, providing with fond affection for the concealment of his infant heir, the Lord Stafford, whose preservation and wonderful escape from captivity form a fitting companion to the romantic history of Lord Clifford's son, "the shepherd lord."‖ The duke having effected his flight in so secret a manner, that few or none of his household suspected his design,¶ he sought shelter in the dwelling of Humphrey Banastre, at Lacon near Shrewsbury, hoping to find a sure but temporary asylum with a follower "whom he, above all men, loved, favoured and trusted."** But the search after the "proscribed traitor" had become too active and unceasing to leave any probability of Buckingham's escape. "One thousand pounds, or one hundred a-year for life," was a stimulus that urged numbers to the most unwearied efforts to discover his retreat: "whereof hearing," states Fabyan, "the foresaid Banastre, were it for need of the same reward, or fear of losing of his life and goods, discovered the duke unto the sheriffs of the shire, and caused him to be taken, and so brought unto Salisbury, where the king then laid."††

How far Banastre merits the obloquy which has attached to his memory, as the treacherous and mercenary betrayer of a kind and indulgent master, it is hard to say; certainly the accounts transmitted by the chronicler of Croyland, whose cotemporary authority on all points is so greatly esteemed, render it doubtful whether, at least, in the first instance, he was accessary to the capture of his patron: "The duke," as that historian states, "was at

* Chron. Croy., p. 568.

† The Duke of Buckingham had two daughters, both older than his sons. Grafton states (p. 65.), that a compact was made during the brief reign of Edward V., that Buckingham should aid Richard's elevation to the throne, on condition that he pledged himself to ally his only son, Edward, Earl of Salisbury, to one of the duke's daughters. Buck farther asserts, that the Duke of Buckingham felt himself aggrieved at the breach of promise in the king for not joining the prince his son in marriage with the Lady Ann Stafford, his daughter.—*Buck*, lib. i. p. 35. If this was the case, Buckingham's jealousy must have been aroused by the favourable reception given by Richard to the Spanish ambassador, at Warwick, who sought an alliance with the youthful heir of the English crown and the eldest of the princesses of Spain; but it must not be forgotten that Buckingham left the king in anger at Gloucester, which was previous to and altogether unconnected with the monarch's visit to Warwick.

‡ "Or ever my Lord of Buckingham departed out of Weobley, Brecknock was robbed, and [the assailants] fetched out the younger ladies and gentlewomen, and brought them to Sir Thomas Vaughan's place, the traitor which was captain of the said robbing."—From the *Stafford MSS.*, published in *Blakeway's Shrewsbury*, vol. i. p. 241.

§ Chron. Croy., p. 568.

‖ See Appendix III.

¶ Fabyan, p. 517.

** Grafton, p. 173.

†† Fabyan, p. 517.

length discovered in a cottager's hut, in consequence of provisions of a superior kind being conveyed to him;"*—a cause of suspicion so natural that it contrasts strikingly with the marvellous tales which characterize the relations of later chroniclers.† Without discussing a point which is so replete with contradictions,‡ that it adds another instance to the many already adduced in this memoir, showing how little confidence can be placed in the reports of a period§ that, beyond all others in our national history, abounds in subjects of mysterious and romantic interest: it must suffice here to attest to the fact of Buckingham's speedy capture by Thomas Mytton, the sheriff of Shropshire,‖ and to his delivery into Richard's hands¶ by Sir James Tyler,** at Salisbury, on All Souls Day, the 2d November, 1483.

Whatever commiseration may be excited for the duke, arising from calamities which he could neither foresee nor control, yet his heartless and unfaithful conduct to the widowed queen, his sister-in-law, to his nephew Edward V., and to his friend and kinsman Richard III., proves him to have been so utterly bereft of principle, and so strongly actuated by feelings of wild and selfish ambition, that few will hesitate to admit that his premature death was well merited, and altogether of his own seeking. If any doubt prevails on this subject, the last act contemplated by Buckingham would suf-

* Chron. Croy., p. 568.

† "Whether this Banister betrayed the duke more for fear than covetousness, many men do doubt; but sure it is, that shortly after he had betrayed the duke his master, his son and heir waxed mad, and so died in a boar's sty; his eldest daughter, of excellent beauty, was suddenly stricken with a foul leprosy; his second son very marvellously deformed of his limbs and made lame; his younger son in a small puddle was strangled and drowned; and he, being of extreme old age, arraigned and found guilty of a murder, and by his clergy saved."—*Grafton*, p. 176.

‡ Blakeway's Shrewsbury, vol. i. p. 256.

§ Ralph, or Humphrey Banastre, as he is variously termed, was not, as generally supposed, a humble servitor of the Duke of Buckingham, but a gentleman of ancient family and plentiful estate, who had been brought up in the duke's house, (see *Grafton*, p. 173,) in accordance with the usage of those times; and to whom his patron presented himself as a guest, although an unhappy fugitive.

The Rev. J. B. Blakeway, in his valuable history of Shrewsbury, (vol. i. p. 236,) has entered minutely into the details of this interesting topic, and after proving that Banastre merited at first (and possibly as long as it was in his power) the confidence reposed in him, refutes the long-received tradition of retribution having speedily followed his treachery; arising from the fulfilment of curses reputed to have been invoked upon the traitor by the unhappy duke upon his knees, in the orchard in which he had placed him at work the better to ensure his betrayal. He also adds—after pointing out the contradictory and erroneous statements of the early chroniclers—"that no one has remembered the extreme peril of sheltering a traitor, which would have been punished in that age by loss of life." There can, indeed, be little doubt, after a careful review of the whole matter, that Buckingham sought Banastre's protection too late for any human being to shelter him; and that Banastre, to save himself and his family from destruction, was compelled eventually to sanction the capture of one too well known to admit of long concealment, and whose retreat, according to the chronicler of Croyland, was already tracked, owing to the hospitality of the individual whose life the duke had periled to save his own.

‖ Fabyan, p. 517; Hall, p. 395; Grafton, p. 175.

¶ Stafford MSS., (in Blakeway,) p. 241.

** From the large share of the Duke of Buckingham's wealth bestowed upon Sir James Tyrrel so immediately after the execution of the illustrious captive, it is probable that he was the individual who delivered him into the king's hands; and that the carelessness of the early writers, who misrepresented the Christian names both of Banastre and the sheriff, occasioned Sir James Tyrrel's name to be misspelt Tyler, and that he was one "of the two knights of our lord the king" who were deputed to receive the rebel from the authorities at Shrewsbury, as shown by the bailiff's accounts for that year, extracted from the town records by its reverend historian.

ficiently expose the deadly malice and spirit of revenge which influenced his conduct to the king. He reached Salisbury on a Sunday; notwithstanding which, Richard, in conformity with the usage of those times, commanded his immediate execution. The duke earnestly besought, as his dying request, a personal interview with his royal master,* who has been condemned in no measured terms for denying to his captive this last earnest desire. But Richard knew Buckingham too well to doubt that some sinister motive existed for a boon so strenuously urged; and his apparent severity was amply justified by the result, it being admitted in after years by the duke's own son, that his father had secreted a knife about his person, and that he had sought this conference with the king, intending to spring upon his victim† when in the act of prostrating himself to sue for pardon, and thus to deprive him by assassination of a crown which he had failed to effect by conspiracy and rebellion. From this act of vindictive deliberate treachery King Richard's sagacity protected him, and Henry of Buckingham, within a few hours of his arrival at Salisbury,‡ was beheaded without trial, and "without speech or sight of the king," on a new scaffold erected for the purpose,§ in the market-place of that city. His remains, deprived of the head and right arm, the customary sentence of rebellion at that period, are said to have been recently

* Fabyan, p. 517.

† "The duke being, by certain of the king's counsel diligently upon interrogatories examined, what things he knew prejudicial to the king's person, opened and declared frankly and freely the conjuration, without dissimulating or glozing, trusting, because he had truly and plainly revealed and confessed all things that were of him required, that he should have license to speak to the king; which, whether it were to sue for pardon or grace, or whether he, being brought to his presence, would have sticked him with a dagger, as men then judged, he sore desired and required."—*Grafton*, p. 176. This prevalent belief was fully confirmed in a subsequent reign, by the voluntary admission of Buckingham's heir and successor, the Lord Stafford,—whom, when an infant, his father had so strenuously exerted himself to save from his own perilous position; for this nobleman, having contemplated similar treachery towards Henry VIII., confessed to the Duke of Buckingham's design, before he, like his unworthy sire, perished in the prime of his days by the hand of the public executioner.—*Herbert's Henry VIII.*, 110.

‡ The oft-disputed point as to whether the Duke of Buckingham was executed at Salisbury or Shrewsbury, is set at rest by two important entries in the archives of the latter place, connected with the capture of the rebel, viz., "Money paid for divers costs and expenses incurred, touching the custody of the Duke of Buckingham when he was taken and brought to the town, 6*s.* 4*d.* and for reward." Also, "Money paid for wine given to two knights of our lord the king, and to other gentlemen by command of the king, at the delivery of the said duke from the town, 16*s.* 6*d.*" "These entries prove," observes the historian of Shrewsbury, (who has published a literal transcript from the original entries,) "that the duke was brought hither, but sent away to some other place for execution;" and he farther adds, (after adducing other items from the same roll of accounts, together with strong facts stated in the Stafford MS.,) "as it is thus certain that Shrewsbury was not, it is equally certain that Salisbury was, the scene of this execution."—*Blakeway's Shrewsbury*, vol. i. p. 240. The venerable topographer of Wiltshire states, that the similarity of the names of Salisbury and Shrewsbury has led to many historical errors; and after citing several examples, he traces the origin of the supposition of Buckingham having suffered death at Shrewsbury, to Grafton, who says that King Richard kept his court at that town when the duke was captured. As this chronicler, however,—together with Polydore Virgil and Hall,—agrees with the earlier writers, the Croyland annalist, and Fabyan, in placing his execution at Salisbury, the above statement was probably accidental, the one town being inserted by mistake for the other; nevertheless it served to mislead Holinshed; and, after him, Echard and Rapin were induced to represent the execution as having occurred, not at Salisbury, but at Shrewsbury.—*Sir R. C. Hoare's Hist. of Wiltshire*, p. 207.

§ "Without arraignment or judgment, he was, in the open market-place, on a new scaffold, beheaded and put to death."—*Hall*, p. 395.

discovered in digging to some depth on the site of a very ancient inn, which tradition has handed down was built on the spot where the execution took place.*

The defeat, capture and summary punishment of their chief leader inspired the other insurgents with terror and dismay, the more so as the fearful storms which had led to his destruction had proved equally disastrous to Henry of Richmond. Scarcely had he sailed from Brittany, ere his fleet was scattered and threatened with destruction, and after being himself exposed for many days to the fury of the waves, and narrowly escaping capture from the emissaries of King Richard, he was compelled to seek refuge in France, carrying with him the appalling news of Buckingham's death, and the total defeat of his adherents.† But although the rebellion had thus received so severe a check, yet Richard felt that the league itself was by no means broken.‡ Remaining, therefore, at Salisbury only sufficiently long to fulfil his pledges to those individuals who had aided him in capturing the deceased Duke of Buckingham,§ and to divide among such of his followers as had most faithfully and zealously supported him in the late perilous emergency, the vast riches of the attainted rebel,‖ he broke up his camp, and proceeded towards Exeter, hoping to encounter Richmond if he had effected a landing at Plymouth, or to intercept the numerous detachments which were marching thither to assemble under his banner.

The monarch reached Exeter on the 10th of November, at which city he

* Sir Richard Colt Hoare, in his History of Wiltshire, says, "that a stone is still pointed out in the city of Salisbury as that on which Buckingham suffered. It is in the yard adjoining the house which formerly belonged to the Blue Boar inn." This eminent antiquary and topographer adds, with reference to this subject, "The most remarkable circumstance connected with this locality is the recent discovery of a skeleton, found under the pavement in making some alterations in a kind of kitchen or out-house belonging to the Saracen's Head, which is close to the site of the Blue Boar. It was that of a person apparently above the middle size, and had been deprived of the head and right arm. The workmen by whom it was found omitted to notice whether or not the bones of the neck had been separated by a sharp instrument, but could remember that the bone of the arm appeared to have been cut off, just below the shoulder, as if with a saw. These remains were destroyed without proper examination. Of itself the discovery would prove nothing: but if the fact of Buckingham's execution at Salisbury be considered as indisputably established, we shall not be guilty of too great a stretch of imagination in supposing that these were his mutilated remains, interred clandestinely, or at least without ceremony, near the spot where he suffered."—*Sir R. C. Hoare's Hist. of Wiltshire*, p. 207.

† Chron. Croy., p. 570.

‡ Fabyan, p. 517.

§ King Richard was so well satisfied with the conduct of the burgesses of Shrewsbury on this critical occasion, that he pardoned, remitted, and released for ever twenty marks of the fee-farm yearly.—*Blakeway*, vol. i. p. 239.

‖ To the Lord Stanley he granted "the castle and lordship of Kimbolton, late belonging to the great rebel and traitor, Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham," on the very day of his execution, being given "at Sarum the 2nd day of November, anno. 1^mo."—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 433, p. 120. At the same city, and bearing a corresponding date, is a "commission to the Earl of Huntingdon, Sir James Tyrrel (who is in this instrument styled "the king's full trusty knight for his body"), and Morgan Kidwelly, to enter into all the castles of the Duke of Buckingham and other traitors in North Wales, South Wales, and in the marches, and to seize all his goods."—*Ibid.*, p. 121. Corresponding commissions were directed for other counties; and in addition to these, a warrant was issued, commanding all rents belonging to such rebels and traitors as were therein named to be paid "to the king's full trusty squire, Thomas Fowler, gentleman usher of his chamber," whom he appoints to seize, for his use, certain castles, manors, &c. forfeited to the crown, "with the proceeds of which, Richard most bountifully remunerated all who had served him faithfully in this conspiracy."—*Ibid.*, p. 121.

learnt the extent of his own good fortune, and of the calamities which had befallen his opponents. The recent tragedy at Salisbury, and the disastrous dispersion of Richmond's fleet and auxiliaries, had utterly dismayed even the most sanguine of his friends; but these dismal tidings being followed up by reports of the rapid advance of the king, supported by a powerful force, and holding out great rewards for the apprehension of the other chief confederates,* so utterly dispirited them, that ere Richard entered the metropolis of the west, the conspiracy was altogether at an end, its leaders being either in sanctuary, in concealment, or escaped in vessels bound for the Continent.† The few that were captured experienced no mercy. Richard felt that the stability of his throne depended upon the firmness of his present proceedings. He was in consequence unrelenting and inexorable, sparing no one who had instigated or headed the revolt; not even the husband of his own sister, who was one of the most violent of his opponents, and for whose life great sums of money were tendered.‡

Little commiseration, however, can be felt for Sir Thomas St. Leger, in the just retribution which had overtaken him for the ungenerous part he had acted towards the high-minded Henry Holland, Duke of Exeter; whose miseries, when outlawed and proscribed for his fidelity to his lawful sovereign and kinsman, Henry VI., were bitterly aggravated by a divorce being sued for and granted to Anne, his unfeeling wife, that she might be united to Sir Thomas St. Leger. She lived not to lament the violent death of her second husband; but King Richard, as shown by a subsequent instrument,§ was no stranger to the heartless depravity of the man who now sought that mercy from him, which, without even a shadow of offence, he had denied to his noble but unfortunate brother-in-law. The most influential of the rebels fled to Brittany,‖ amongst whom were the Bishops of Exeter and Salisbury, the Marquis of Dorset, Sir Edward Courtenay, the Lord Wells, and many other noblemen of distinction; but several individuals of high reputation were apprehended in London, Kent,¶ Surrey, and other counties implicated in the revolt, all of whom were immediately executed, as were, likewise, some of the king's household,** whom Buckingham perfidiously denounced,†† before his death, as traitors to their royal master.‡‡ The anxiety experienced by Richard, from the extent of this formidable league, was pleasingly softened by the manner in which his prerogative was upheld at

* A proclamation was issued on the king's departure from Salisbury for the taking of Sir John Guildford and several other of the king's rebels and traitors, offering 300 marks, or 10*l.* of land, for capturing any of the six first mentioned in the proclamation, and a proportionate reward for any of the remaining individuals there specified; showing the king's intent to administer strict justice to all his subjects, the same instrument forbidding several evil practices under pain of death and other penalties.—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 433, p. 128.

† "Then all such gentlemen as had appointed to meet with the said duke were so dismayed, that they knew not what to do, but they that might fled the land, and some took sanctuary places, as they might win unto them."—*Fabyan*, p. 517.

‡ Chron. Croy., p. 569.

§ See Appendix KKK.

‖ Chron. Croy., p. 569.

¶ Grafton, p. 182.

** Fabyan, p. 517.

†† Pol. Vir., p. 554.

‡‡ It is somewhat remarkable, that, circumstantial as are the details of the Duke of Buckingham's confession, when he hoped by that means to procure an interview with King Richard, and indignant as he is reported to have been after the failure of his dark design, yet he is accused by no chronicler, or even by report, much more on authority, of having certified to the death of the princes, or implicated their uncle of the murder, although preparing to suffer death upon the scaffold for striving to dethrone him.

Exeter, and the loyalty with which he was greeted on entering that city; the authorities of which met him arrayed in their official robes, the recorder congratulating him in an eloquent oration, and the mayor presenting him with a purse containing 200 gold nobles.* The maces and keys of the city gates were then delivered to him, and he was conducted with great pomp to the bishop's palace, where he lodged during his stay, and where he was sumptuously entertained at the cost of the city, as were, also, the chief personages of the royal suite in the dwelling-houses of the principal citizens.†

A special commission, under Lord Scrope, having been held at Great Torrington, in the north of Devon, such rebels as were captured were executed, and all such as had found means to escape, to the number of 500, were outlawed, including the bishop of the diocese, and his brothers, Sir Edward and Walter Courtney. Thus satisfied that all present danger was at an end, the monarch disbanded, at Exeter, a great portion of his army,‡ and sending home those who had been summoned from the north, with substantial recompense for their service, he quitted the west country in triumph, to pursue in peace through the southern counties his regal progress to the metropolis, where he purposed celebrating the Christmas festivities with marked solemnity, in gratitude for the success which had attended his late proceedings.

He reached Winchester on the 26th of November, as is shown by two remarkable instruments§ which received his signature in that city, and which evince the principle of justice which influenced his actions even to the humblest of his subjects; it being a warrant to discharge a chief clerk from the office of the privy seal, who, by bribery, had been placed in that position, to the great discouragement of the under clerks, which, adds the record, "have long continued therein to have the experience of the same," and who were greatly mortified to see a stranger "never brought up in the said office put them by of their promotion."‖ The vacancy which accrued from this mandate was awarded by the king to the oldest and most diligent of the subordinate clerks "for his experience and long continuance in the same."¶ Original memorials such as these, affording, as they do, incontestable proofs of King Richard's genuine sentiments and actions, are invaluable, considering how little cotemporary evidence exists to refute the mass of fable and misstatements, from which hasty and wrong conclusions have so long been drawn to the disadvantage of this monarch.** Certain it is, that the odium in which he is reputed to have been held, is not borne out by the few well-

* Jenkins' Hist. of Exeter, p. 88.

† Ibid.

‡ King Richard visited the chief places of this city, and was greatly struck with the beauty of its situation, as well as with the strength and elevated site of the castle. Chroniclers relate, that on the king's inquiring the name of this fortress, he was answered "Rougemont." This greatly alarmed him, as he had been warned by a soothsayer that his days would not be long after he had seen Richmond; and, mistaking the similarity of sound in the names, he hastily left Exeter on his return to London: but 'tis likely, adds the local historian, that this story was invented after his death.—*Jenkins' Exeter*, p. 88.

§ See Appendix LLL.

‖ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 123.

¶ Ibid.

** Amongst other accusations, Richard is upbraided with cruelty by the early chroniclers, (see *Holinshed*, p. 746,) and stigmatized as a tyrant for his summary execution of the Duke of Buckingham and other of the rebels, and for the long list of such as are proscribed as outlaws. A very brief review of the reigns of his immediate predecessors will show how unfounded is this charge. In executing the chief conspirators without trial, Richard acted only in accordance with the practice of those times, and the very small number who really suffered the penalty of death contrasts strikingly with the sanguinary proceedings both of Edward IV. and Margaret of Anjou on similar occasions.

attested facts which have descended to posterity. Wherever he went he was welcome, and the marked respect and affection which were shown him by the municipal authorities at York, at Exeter, at Gloucester and in London, cannot but lead to the conclusion, either that the dark deeds imputed to him in after years were not laid to his charge during his lifetime, or, if charged, were not credited by the respectable portion of his subjects. As he approached the metropolis, "the mayor and citizens having knowledge thereof,"* made great preparations for receiving him. A body of horsemen, gorgeously attired in "violet clothing,"† were dispatched to meet and conduct him in triumph to the city, which he entered on the 1st of December, amidst such cordial acclamations as effectually set at rest all apprehension of danger to himself or his crown.

Much, however, remained to be done, before Richard could carry out the wise measures which he had contemplated upon his accession to the throne. One of his first acts, during this present period of repose, was to convene a Parliament; and, on the 9th of December, the chancellor issued writs of summons for its meeting at Westminster on the 23d of January "next ensuing."‡ Active measures were taken for ensuring domestic tranquillity, by largely recompensing all those who had been chiefly instrumental in terminating the recent disturbance, and crushing the remaining power of such of the exiled leaders as yet retained wealth or authority in England. The temporalities of the bishopric of Ely, "now in the king's disposition," together with the vast possessions of many others who had fled, were bestowed by Richard on the firmest of his supporters. To Sir Thomas Mytton, the high sheriff of Shropshire, who had captured the Duke of Buckingham, was awarded "to him and his heirs for ever," one of the princely fortresses appertaining to that peer on the confines of Wales;§ and the manor and lordship of Ealding, in Kent, was granted to Ralph Banastre, Esq.,‖ "in consideration of the true and faithful service which the said Ralph hath lately done for and about the taking and bringing the said rebel unto the king's hands." This entry effectually implicates Banastre as accessary to the delivering up to the authorities the person of the Duke of Buckingham, although the fact of his having previously conveyed him to many and distant estates which he enjoyed, for greater concealment, favours the belief that circumstances alone led to his being the unwilling agent of an unavoidable result.¶

But measures of stern severity to his enemies, or those which common

* Fabyan, p. 517. † Ibid.

‡ Rymer's Add. MSS., 4616, art. 17.

§ "Grant of the lordship and castle of Cawes, within the county of Salop and marches of Wales, to Thomas Mittone and his heirs male for ever. Given the 11th day of Decr. ao primo."—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 130.

‖ "Given at London the 14th day of Decr. ao primo."—*Ibid.*, fol. 133.

¶ The above recorded grant affords convincing proof of the Lancastrian origin of many long-received imputations brought by the early chroniclers against King Richard, who is accused of having refused to Banastre the promised reward. "And as for his 1000*l.*, King Richard gave him not one farthing, saying that he which would be untrue to so good a master, would be false to all other; howbeit some say that he had a small office or a farm to stop his mouth withal."—*Hall*, p. 395; *Grafton*, p. 176. This *small office or farm* is shown by one entry in the Harl. MSS. (fol. 130) to have been a lordship and manor of *value*, part of the forfeited property of the late Duke of Buckingham; and by another entry in the MSS. the position in life and character of Banastre are rendered apparent by the terms on which he held the estate, viz., "To Ralph Banastre, Esq., the manor of Ealding, in the county of Kent, to hold by *knight's service*," (fol. 74.) So little dependence can be placed on chroniclers, who, influenced by party persecution, misrepresented every act of King Richard, to convert them into evidences of his injustice, his tyranny and his avarice!

justice required at his hands, were not the only feelings which influenced King Richard at this momentous crisis of his fate. Gratitude for his recent delivery from imminent peril was demonstrated, conformably with the religious custom of his age;* and acts of generosity and mercy were mingled with the harsher decrees that were rendered imperative by the warlike spirit and the stern usage of the times.

On the 19th of December, scarcely six weeks after the Duke of Buckingham had sought openly to hurl him from the throne, and devised clandestinely to deprive him of his life, Richard awarded to the widow of this his treacherous kinsman an annuity of 200 marks:† and although she was the sister both of the dowager-queen and of Lionel, the outlawed Bishop of Salisbury, —the chief agents in fomenting the designs of the rebels,—he signed a warrant granting permission for herself, her children and her servants to come from Wales to London, where her royal sister was abiding in sanctuary.‡ To Florence Cheyney, whose husband and brother had "compassed and imagined the king's death at Salisbury," he evinced a tenderness and chivalrous compassion that contrast so strongly with the "spiteful, cruel and malicious feelings" so long imputed to him, that a literal copy of the record is added in justice to his memory. "Safeguard for Florence, wife of Alexander Cheyney, whom, for her good and virtuous disposition, the king hath taken into his protection, and granted to her the custody of her husband's lands, &c.; though, being of late confounded with certain rebels and traitors, he had intended and compassed th' utter destruction of his person, and the subversion of this realm."§ He paid the Duke of Buckingham's debts,‖ gave considerable sums to the distressed families of many individuals who were outlawed, and settled annuities even on the relicts of others who had died openly opposing his regal prerogative.¶ He confirmed charitable grants that had been made by his father,** renewed others that had been conferred by his brother,†† and rewarded with the most princely munificence those nobles who had remained faithful to his cause, by bestowing upon them either important offices or valuable possessions, forfeited by the attainder of their former owners. The Lord Stanley, who, it would appear, had been kept in ignorance (or satisfied the monarch that such had been the case) of the coalition which existed between his illustrious consort and the conspirators, was appointed constable of England for life;‡‡ and to the Earl of Northumberland was awarded the great estate of Lord Powneys, who had joined the Earl of Richmond.§§ The Duke of Norfolk he nominated master forester, in the room of the Duke of Buckingham, deceased.‖‖ Sir James Tyrrel had the stewardship of Wales and the adjoining marches;¶¶ Sir Robert Brackenbury, who had loyally guarded the Tower during a period of such extreme importance, he appointed receiver-general of all demesnes in the king's hands by reason of attainder or forfeiture, being not by the king given;*** while the Lords

* On the 16th of December, 1st Richard III., (1483,) a writ was issued to the collectors of the customs of Southampton, stating that the king had granted an annuity of 10*l.* to John Bury, clerk, for performing divine service in the chapel of St. George, in the castle of Southampton, for the souls of the king, of Anne his consort, and of Prince Edward their son; and commanding them to pay the same.—*Rymer's Add. MSS.*, 4616, art. 37.

† Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 77.
‡ Ibid., fol. 135.
§ Ibid., fol. 126.
‖ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 136. 200.
¶ Ibid.; see various items from fol. 37 to 174.
** Ibid., fol. 130.
†† Ibid., fol. 205.
‡‡ Fœdera, xii. p. 209.
§§ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 127.
‖‖ Ibid., fol. 52.
¶¶ Ibid.
*** Ibid., fol. 74.

Dudley,* Lincoln,† Surrey,‡ Huntingdon,§ and others of high birth, together with Sir Richard Ratcliffe‖ and Sir William Catesby,¶ were proportionably rewarded for their zeal; and Kendale,** who had been King Richard's private secretary throughout this important period, was made keeper of the princes' wardrobe within the city of London.

It would not be practicable, in the brief limits of this memoir, to enumerate separately the various edicts, grants, warrants and rewards which are comprised in the valuable diary that records so circumstantially King Richard's transactions at this period. Sufficient has been adduced to demonstrate the energy, decision and judgment which characterized this monarch's proceedings. So evenly, indeed, did he balance the claims of justice and friendship, so judiciously mingle acts of clemency with a rigid observance of the laws, that brief as was the period since half the kingdom had been openly arrayed in rebellion against him, yet, on the arrival of Christmas, which festival he celebrated with extraordinary pomp and ceremony, Philip de Comines states, "that he was reigning in greater splendour and authority than any king of England for the last hundred years."††

So terminated the eventful year 1483! which had dawned upon Richard as Duke of Gloucester, and whose changeful seasons—a fitting emblem of his own varied career—had successively marked his progress from the position of lord protector to that of monarch of the realm. Its brief cycle chronicles three sovereigns of England, two princes of Wales, two queen-consorts, and a double coronation! The same fleeting period commemorates the summary execution of the lordly Hastings, the gifted Rivers, "the deep, revolving, witty" Buckingham, the base and despicable St. Leger! A year so fraught with stirring scenes, with events of wondrous import, can scarcely be paralleled in the life of any individual, or in the regal annals of this or any other land.

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 60.
† Ibid., fol. 61.
§ Ibid., fol. 66.
¶ Ibid., fol. 74.
†† Philip de Comines, vol. i. p. 514.
‡ Ibid., fol. 72.
‖ Ibid., fol. 72.
** Ibid., fol. 133.

CHAPTER XVI.

King Richard opens his first Parliament.—Confirmation of his title to the throne, and settlement of the crown on his heir, Edward, Prince of Wales.—Bill of attainder.—Strong measures adopted by Parliament to preserve the peace of the realm.—Convocation of the clergy, and their eulogium of Richard III.—Richard's humane conduct to the female relatives of his opponents.—He prevails on the queen of Edward IV. to quit the sanctuary with her daughters.—The princesses are honourably received at court.—Further proceedings of Parliament.—King Richard's beneficial and politic laws.—He founds the Heralds' College.—His character as a sovereign.—Threatening aspect of affairs in Scotland.—The king quits London to quell the disturbances in the north.—He visits the University of Cambridge.—Sudden death of the Prince of Wales.—Grief of his royal parents.—Edward, Earl of Warwick, declared heir-apparent.—The king continues in the north.—The Earl of Lincoln displaces the Earl of Warwick as successor to the crown.—Causes that led to this change.—Richard's embassies to Bretagne.—Negotiation with Scotland.—Letter from the king to his mother.—Other letters from this monarch.

THE opening of 1484 was serene in proportion to the tranquillity which had characterized the close of the eventful preceding year; and King Richard was in consequence enabled to meet the Lords and Commons of his realm on the day appointed for the assembling of the Parliament, well prepared for any discussion bearing on his remarkable position, or having reference to past scenes; whether connected with his deposed nephew, his deceased brother, or the formidable league which had brought forward Henry of Richmond as a competitor for the throne. The brief interval which elapsed before the time appointed for the assembly of the legislature was passed by the king in making a progress into Kent. He was at Canterbury on the 10th of January,* and at Sandwich on the 16th; and with a celerity of movement for which he was remarkable, had returned to London by the 22d instant. The Parliament, which had been convened for that day, met at Westminster, and King Richard opened it in person.† The Bishop of Lincoln, as lord chancellor, made the customary oration, exhorting the assembly to unity and peace, temperance and moderation: allusion was made by him to the many distinguished persons who had perished from evil counsellors, and the recent fall of the Duke of Buckingham was held up as a warning against further incitement to rebellion.‡ On the following day the Commons elected Sir William Catesby as their speaker,§ and an act was forthwith passed for the settlement of the crown upon the king and his heirs, with a recapitulation of his title. It recites that, previously to his coronation, a roll containing certain articles was presented to

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 141.
† Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 237.
‡ "It is too heavy to think and see what care and dangers, by some one person, lately a right and great member of this body, many other noble members of the same have been brought to. The example of his fall and righteous punishment should not be forgotten. Whoso taketh upon him, being a member under the head, with that to which his office and fidelity appertaineth not, setting the people into rebellion or commotion against the prince, he never is great or noble in his estate; he is, as it were, a rotten member of the body."—*Cott. MSS.*, Vitel. E. x. p. 139.
§ Rot. Parl., vi. p. 237.

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CHAPTER XVI.

King Richard opens his first Parliament.—Confirmation of his title to the throne, and settlement of the crown on his heir, Edward, Prince of Wales.—Bill of attainder.—Strong measures adopted by Parliament to preserve the peace of the realm.—Convocation of the clergy, and their eulogium of Richard III.—Richard's humane conduct to the female relatives of his opponents.—He prevails on the queen of Edward IV. to quit the sanctuary with her daughters.—The princesses are honourably received at court.—Further proceedings of Parliament.—King Richard's beneficial and politic laws.—He founds the Heralds' College.—His character as a sovereign.—Threatening aspect of affairs in Scotland.—The king quits London to quell the disturbances in the north.—He visits the University of Cambridge.—Sudden death of the Prince of Wales.—Grief of his royal parents.—Edward, Earl of Warwick, declared heir-apparent.—The king continues in the north.—The Earl of Lincoln displaces the Earl of Warwick as successor to the crown.—Causes that led to this change.—Richard's embassies to Bretagne.—Negotiation with Scotland.—Letter from the king to his mother.—Other letters from this monarch.

THE opening of 1484 was serene in proportion to the tranquillity which had characterized the close of the eventful preceding year; and King Richard was in consequence enabled to meet the Lords and Commons of his realm on the day appointed for the assembling of the Parliament, well prepared for any discussion bearing on his remarkable position, or having reference to past scenes; whether connected with his deposed nephew, his deceased brother, or the formidable league which had brought forward Henry of Richmond as a competitor for the throne. The brief interval which elapsed before the time appointed for the assembly of the legislature was passed by the king in making a progress into Kent. He was at Canterbury on the 10th of January,* and at Sandwich on the 16th; and with a celerity of movement for which he was remarkable, had returned to London by the 22d instant. The Parliament, which had been convened for that day, met at Westminster, and King Richard opened it in person.† The Bishop of Lincoln, as lord chancellor, made the customary oration, exhorting the assembly to unity and peace, temperance and moderation: allusion was made by him to the many distinguished persons who had perished from evil counsellors, and the recent fall of the Duke of Buckingham was held up as a warning against further incitement to rebellion.‡ On the following day the Commons elected Sir William Catesby as their speaker,§ and an act was forthwith passed for the settlement of the crown upon the king and his heirs, with a recapitulation of his title. It recites that, previously to his coronation, a roll containing certain articles was presented to

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 141.
† Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 237.
‡ "It is too heavy to think and see what care and dangers, by some one person, lately a right and great member of this body, many other noble members of the same have been brought to. The example of his fall and righteous punishment should not be forgotten. Whoso taketh upon him, being a member under the head, with that to which his office and fidelity appertaineth not, setting the people into rebellion or commotion against the prince, he never is great or noble in his estate; he is, as it were, a rotten member of the body."—*Cott. MSS.*, Vitel. E. x. p. 139.
§ Rot. Parl., vi. p. 237.

him on behalf of the three estates of the realm, by many lords spiritual and temporal, and other nobles and commons in great multitude, whereunto he "for the public weal and tranquillity of the land benignly assented:* that forasmuch as neither the said three estates nor the persons by whom the said roll was presented, were assembled in form of Parliament, by occasion whereof divers doubts, questions and ambiguities had arisen in the minds of many persons. It was thereof enacted, that the tenour of the said roll should be recorded,† and should be of the same virtue and force as if the said things had been so said, affirmed, specified, desired, and remembered in a full parliament." The bill to which the Commons gave their assent, concludes by the declaration, "that the high and excellent Prince Edward, son of our said sovereign lord the king, be heir-apparent to succeed to him in the above said crown and royal dignity, with all things appertaining thereunto, after the decease of our said sovereign lord, the king, to him and to his heirs of his body lawfully begotten."‡ This most important matter being thus definitely settled, the attention of the legislature was next directed to the late insurrection, "whereby, as asserted, both the king's highness and his peace, and also the politic rule and common weal of this his realm, have been greatly inquieted and troubled;§ they [the conspirators] intending thereby—as much as in them was—the universal subversion and destruction of the same, and also of the king's most royal person." An act was forthwith passed,‖ in which, after stating that the king, being "moved with benignity and pity, and laying apart the great rigour of the law, hath granted to divers persons culpable in the said offences, his grace and pardon, yet, nevertheless, it being contrary to reason and all policy that such heinous treason should go utterly unpunished," the leaders of the conspiracy (who are therein enumerated¶) were pronounced rebels and traitors, and being convicted of high treason, their estates were forfeited to the crown.

The Earl of Richmond and his uncle, Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke, were likewise attainted;** but "Margaret, Countess of Richmond, (mother of the king's great rebel and traitor, Henry, Earl of Richmond,") by an act which recited that she had committed treason against the king, by sending messages, writings, and tokens to the said Henry, desiring him to come to this realm and make war against him; and had also raised great sums of money, as well in London as elsewhere, to be employed for the same purpose; yet, nevertheless, the king,†† considering the good service which Thomas Lord Stanley had done, and intended to do, and for the good trust and love that the king had in him, for his sake remitted to her the great punishment of attainder, which was death! She was, however, declared to be disabled from inheriting any estate or dignity, and to have forfeited her estates to the crown; but a life interest in them was given to Lord Stanley, with the reversion to the king.‡‡

Similar clemency was extended to the Bishops of Ely, Salisbury, and Exeter; another act of the same date declaring that, although on account of their treason they deserved to lose life, lands and goods, yet, "considering that they be bishops of great estate in the church of God, and the king preferring mercy and pity before rigour, forebore such rigorous punishment; they were, however, adjudged to be disabled from holding any possessions

* Rot. Parl., vi. p. 240.
‡ Rot. Parl., vi. p. 242.
‖ Ibid., p. 245.
¶ Appendix NNN.
†† Rot. Parl., vi. p. 250.
† Appendix MMM.
§ Ibid., p. 244.
** Parl. Rolls, vol. vi. p. 224.
‡‡ Ibid.

temporal, or any possessions of their respective sees, so long as they should remain bishops thereof."*

The internal peace of the realm being thus effectually secured, by the confirmation of Richard's title, and the stern resolution evinced by the legislature to uphold his power, and put down with the strong arm of justice the rebellious feelings recently shown, Parliament next adopted measures for preventing a recurrence of similar evils. This circumspection was the more imperative, as notwithstanding the calamities which had overwhelmed the insurgents, and the rigid means adopted to crush their league, yet the festival of Christmas, the magnificent solemnization of which in England was designed to mark the stability of the king's possession of the throne, was selected by his enemies to render yet more sacred the oath they took to compass his deposition, and accelerate the advancement of his rival. The refugees, gradually assembling from all points of the French coast, met Henry of Richmond at his former place of captivity, Vannes,† where he had again fixed his abode, and where, after discussing their recent defeat and congratulating their chief on his escape from such imminent peril, they proceeded in solemn state to the cathedral of Rennes,‡ before the high altar of which, on Christmas day, 1483, the Earl of Richmond solemnly renewed his pledge to marry Elizabeth of York;§ and the assembled warriors bound themselves with equal fervour to support him in every emergency, until they had secured his accession to the English crown.‖

In consequence of this re-union of the confederates, the Cinque Ports¶ were ordered to send out ships to watch the movements of the Bretagne vessels; and a strong fleet under Sir Thomas Wentworth was stationed in the Channel to guard every approach to the English coast, and to be prepared to act on the defensive.** The Commons granted a subsidy, "called Tonnage and Poundage," for the safeguard and keeping of the sea.†† Letters were sent to the magistrates of the chief towns in the southern counties, charging them not to suffer any livery, signs, or recognizance whatever, except the king's livery, to be worn or distributed;‡‡ and commissions were dispatched to various parts of the kingdom, empowering the high sheriffs of their several counties to call before them "all the temporal inhabitants being between sixteen and sixty years of age,§§ and there cause them to swear to be true to the king, according to the tenour of the oath of allegiance.‖‖ The services of John Bramburgh, "a stranger born," who had covenanted with the king to make for him "certain great stuff of gunpowder," were accepted, and warrants were issued¶¶ for affording him all aid and assistance in the preparation thereof; ships were purchased from the Spaniards to increase the naval force*** and extend its operations to the coasts of Scotland and France. John Lord Scrope of Bolton was nominated captain and governor of the fleet,††† and commissioners

* Rot. Parl., vi. p. 250.
† Grafton, p. 180.
§ Ibid., p. 181.
¶ Harl. MSS., 433, p. 135.
†† Rot. Parl., vi. p. 238.
§§ Ibid., p. 141.
‡ Ibid.
‖ Ibid.
** Ibid.
‡‡ Harl. MSS., 433, p. 138.
‖‖ Appendix OOO.
¶¶ "Warrrant to aid and assist John Collingham, yeoman of the crown, whom the king deputed to take in his name all manner of stuff necessary for the making of certain great stuff of gunpowder, which John Bramburgh, a stranger born, had covenanted with the king to make for him, and for the same to agree and make prices with the owners."—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 145. This early notice of the introduction of gunpowder is very interesting, destined as was that invention to supersede the use of those warlike implements which had gained for the English such high renown in the chivalrous ages to which they belonged.
*** Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 146.
††† Rymer's Add. MSS., 4616, art. 62.

were appointed "to take mariners in the king's name, for the furnishing of the ships, and to do service upon the sea."* Equally vigilant were the measures adopted for guarding the coast: orders were issued for the arrest, in the king's name, of artificers and soldiers, with carriages and horses for the conveyance of the same:† and the constable of the Tower was commanded to deliver from that fortress a strong supply of cross-bows and long-bows, with 400 sheafs of arrows, 10 gross of bow-strings, and 200 bills.‡

As far, then, as peaceable possession of the throne could be secured by the most determined resolution on the part of the government to uphold the prerogative "of their sovereign lord the king," to preserve him from personal danger, and protect his dominions from open revolt or secret invasion, Richard's prospect of a long and flourishing reign seemed fairer than that which usually falls to the lot of princes whose accession is effected by civil or political revolution. But a convocation of the clergy, which followed this meeting of Parliament, has greater weight, with reference to his moral character than the support thus voluntarily afforded him by the laity. Not that the petition addressed to him by the dignitaries of the church, setting forth the grievances under which they had long laboured, and their conviction that he would enforce stricter attention to religious offices, and restore to them the power of duly and reverently performing the duties of their sacred calling, could itself, in any degree, affect King Richard's reputation; for the privilege of seeking the protection of their monarch was alike open to the ecclesiastical as to the civil members of the community. But it is scarcely credible—nay, hardly reconcilable with the most degraded state of society—that the whole body of the English clergy, embracing so many individuals of piety, learning and independence, could have so far departed from their sacred profession as to address, in the following language, a monarch whom they considered to be a usurper, and looked upon as the murderer of two innocent children, his unoffending orphan nephews, the only sons of his deceased brother!

"SEEING YOUR MOST NOBLE AND BLESSED DISPOSITION IN ALL OTHER THINGS, we beseech you to take tender respect and consideration unto the premises; and of yourself, as a most Catholic prince, to see such remedies, that under your most gracious letters patent the liberties of the church may be confirmed and sufficiently authorized by your high court of Parliament,—rather enlarged than diminished."§

Is it possible to imagine that "Russel," Bishop of Lincoln,‖ Lord Chancellor of England, "a wise man and a good;"¶ "Waynfleet," Bishop of Winchester, honoured by the personal regard of King Henry VI., and distinguished for "piety, learning and prudence;"** or "Fisher," the friend of Erasmus, elected to the bishopric of Rochester by Henry VII. "for his great and singular virtue," and afterwards beheaded by his son and successor for

* This edict constitutes one of the earliest instances of *seamen being pressed* into the king's service: commissioners being appointed to take mariners in the king's name for the furnishing of the ships called the "Andrew," the "Michael," the "Bastion," and the "Tyre," to do service of war upon the sea in the north parts.—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 168.

† "A commissioner was appointed to arrest, in the king's name, carpenters called wheelers and cartwrights; other carpenters, smiths, plumbers, and other artificers; also bombards, cannon, culverines, fowlers, serpents, powder and other munitions, and carriages and horses for the conveyance of the same."—*Rymer's Add. MSS.*, 4616, art. 63.

‡ Harl. MSS., fol. 157.

§ Wilk. Concil., vol. iii. p. 614.

‖ More's Rych. III., p. 35.

¶ Chalmers' Oxford, vol. i. p. 192.

** Archæologia, vol. xxv. p. 2.

his uncompromising integrity, virtue and incorruptible morality,* with many other churchmen equally eminent and estimable, would have appealed to the "blessed and noble disposition" of one whose hands had been imbrued in the blood of his nearest kindred? The mind shrinks from such sweeping condemnation of the whole body of the English clergy, headed as the convocation was by the aged lord primate, and the venerable Archbishop of York, both pledged before God and man for the safety of the royal children! Coupled, however, as is the remarkable language of their petition with the absence of all inquiry relative to the position of the young princes, all allusion to their reported decease, the confidence reposed in their uncle by the lords spiritual and temporal, and by the laity and clergy in their respective convocations assembled, cannot fail to modify, in a great measure, the evil reports of a later period, which seem alike disproved by the conduct as by the language of his cotemporaries.

King Richard acceded to the petition of his clergy: he confirmed them in their former privileges,† redressed many of their grievances, and extended to them the protection which they required, arising from the recent lawless state of society.

He addressed a letter to the pope,‡ extenuating himself for not having sooner informed him of his having assumed the crown and government of the realm; which he had intended to do, but had been stopped by certain unexpected occurrences (alluding to the insurrection of Buckingham); and he sent the Bishop of St. David's to Rome to do homage to his holiness.§ In addition to these ecclesiastical ceremonials, he further gave practical evidence of his sincerity in upholding the church by a munificent grant for the rebuilding of the Abbey of Fakenham in Norfolk, which had been recently destroyed by fire;‖ by a grant of stone "out of the king's quarry," for building and repairing the steeple church at Towcester,¶ in the county of Northampton; and other works of a similar magnitude. He released the clergy in the north from heavy impositions imposed by Edward IV.,** and founded at York a college†† for one hundred priests!‡‡—acts of piety, the nature of which can be so little appreciated in the present day, arising from the change in manners, customs and religious observances, that it renders it almost unfair to King Richard, merely to record deeds that at the time must have been considered so altogether irreconcilable with alleged depravity of heart, without drawing a comparison between the actions which were then considered indicative of religion and virtue, and those which, in after times, have succeeded to the more outward formularies observed by our ancestors.

Nevertheless, it is but justice to this monarch to state, that although the historian of his rival and successor has expressed apprehension that remorse, not probity,§§ led to the acts of piety and wisdom which influenced these, his proceedings, yet no foundation exists, beyond the prejudice which gave rise to that observation, either to justify the surmise or to bear out the assumption; while the emphatical language used by the convocation has descended to the present day, as incontestable and coeval evidence of the sentiments which were entertained for King Richard by the dignified representatives of

* Fuller's Church History, p. 205.

† Harl. MSS., 433, p. 44.

‡ Fœdera, xii. p. 214.

§ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 121.

‖ Ibid., p. 153.

¶ Ibid., fol. 165.

** Ibid., p. 42.

†† Ibid., p. 72.

‡‡ "He founded in the cathedral church of York, a noble chantry of one hundred chaplains, and erected a college at Middleham beyond."—*Rous*, p. 215.

§§ Pol. Vir., p. 548.

the whole body of the English clergy, and becomes, observes Mr. Sharon Turner, "a kind of sacred testimony to his character."* To quote the strong language of this able and popular historian, "it must either have been a phrase of consummate hypocrisy, or it must be allowed to counterbalance, in no small degree, the defamation that has pursued him."†

The last important state question which occupied the attention of the king and the Parliament was the withdrawal of the queen and the princesses from sanctuary. Upwards of six months they had been strictly watched in their conventual prison, in consequence of reported designs for conveying the latter out of England, and the compact afterwards made by their mother for uniting the royal Elizabeth with Henry of Richmond. But all present danger from the latter source seeming at an end, by the dispersion of the rebels and the vigilant efforts of the legislature to preserve domestic peace, King Richard yielded to the humane and generous feelings which, on every occasion, marked his conduct towards the gentler sex, even when their sufferings resulted altogether from the bitter hostility with which he was pursued by their nearest connections.‡ The daughters of Edward IV. were just entering upon womanhood; they were bound by ties of relationship to the queen consort as well as to the king; and, although the same act of Parliament which recognized his title to the throne, arising from the illegitimacy of his brother's offspring,§ had of necessity reduced them from their royal estate to the mere rank of private gentlewomen, yet their uncle had no wish to deprive his nieces of their liberty, or to debar them from advantages suitable to their age. He well understood the intriguing spirit of their mother;‖ and that she would detain her daughters in sanctuary as the most probable means of winning back some portion of that authority to which she so tenaciously clung and had so grievously abused. The calamitous position of the widowed queen, by calling forth those feelings of sympathy and commiseration which are naturally excited for the victims of adverse fortune, has considerably blinded the generality of writers to the true character of Elizabeth Wydville, and to that cold calculating policy which was the incentive to all her actions, and the true cause of her misfortunes. Many years older than Edward IV., she married him clandestinely,¶ (and, as asserted, even with the knowledge of his former marriage,)** not from personal affection, not from attachment to his race or his cause, but from ambition to be queen of England. Callous to all other motives, she sacrificed alike her husband's popularity and the

* Turner's Middle Ages, vol. iv. p. 79. † Ibid.

‡ "The register of his official acts shows many personal civilities to the ladies of his political enemies, from which, as they have never been noticed, he has not had his deserved praise."—*Turner*, vol. iv. p. 81.

§ After King Richard's election to the throne, Edward V. was always designated as "Edward bastard, late called King Edward V.," or words to the same effect; and a warrant for payment of 14*l.* 11*s.* 5*d.* was issued about the period under present consideration, "for certain stuff of wild fowl, bought by Sir John Elrington against that time that the coronation of the bastard son of King Edward should have been kept and holden."—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 22 and 138.

‖ "The said pretensed marriage betwixt the above-named King Edward and Elizabeth Grey was made of great presumption, without the knowing or assent of the lords of this land, and also by sorcery and witchcraft, committed by the said Elizabeth and her mother, Jacquetta, Duchess of Bedford, as the common opinion of the people and the public voice and fame is throughout this land."—*Rot. Parl.*, vi. 240.

¶ "And here also we consider how that the said pretensed marriage was made privately and secretly, without edition of banns, in a private chamber, a profane place, used not openly in the face of the church, after the law of God's church, but contrary thereunto and the laudable custom of the Church of England."—*Rot. Parl.*, vi. p. 240.

** Buck, lib. iv. p. 122.

weal of his country to those aspiring views which first led to her own elevation, and subsequently to the aggrandizement of her family;* and this at the expense of the honour,† the integrity, and those just claims of gratitude and affection to his kindred and his friends which ought to have influenced her youthful husband, and, indeed, did influence him until, in an evil hour, at the age of twenty-two, he espoused the widow of a Lancastrian rebel,‡ ten years his senior.

Possessed of great personal attractions, which her phlegmatic temperament aided to preserve undiminished from the inroads of time,—too prudent to reproach the king, and too cautious to merit reproach herself,—the queen of Edward IV., notwithstanding the notorious gallantries of that monarch, continued to maintain undiminished that ascendency over her royal consort which first led to his elevating her to the throne. Deprived, by his early death, of the power she had so fondly prized, and had exercised so uncontrolledly, her princely son became the next victim to those arrogant, vainglorious views which led to her aiming at a continuance of that sovereign authority which she no longer enjoyed as queen consort. To the machinations indeed of herself and her kindred surreptitiously to obtain possession of the young king's person, and thus set at defiance his father's family by exercising over him that baneful influence which had gradually weaned from the deceased monarch the affections of his own race, and induced feelings of avowed discontent and hostility in the ancient nobles of the land,§ may be traced those events which led to the execution of the Lord Hastings, Lord Rivers, Sir Richard Grey, and Sir Thomas Vaughan, as also the deposition of Edward V. and the election of Richard III.

Secure from molestation in the religious asylum whither, with evident preparations for a long continuance therein,‖ she had removed with her children on the arrest of King Edward V., the widowed queen, bereft of both her sons, and full of indignation at hearing they had been, as she must have conceived, supplanted by their uncle, and were closely imprisoned in the Tower, next turned her attention to accomplishing her views through the agency of her daughters, who would, in the interim, she well knew, be equally pledges for her own safety as for their uncle's good will, if advantageous overtures were made for their leaving the sanctuary.

Her projects seemed likely to be realized even earlier and far more effectu-

* "Her brethren and her first children, although they were not extract of high and noble lineage, took more upon them, and more exalted themselves, by reason of the queen, than did the king's brethren, or any duke in his realm; which, in conclusion, turned to their confusion."—*Grafton*, p. 152.

† "King Edward himself, albeit he was a man of age and of discretion, yet he was in many things ruled by that bend, more than stood either with his honour or our profit, or with the commodity of any man else, except only the immediate advancement of themselves."—*More*, p. 20.

‡ "Her husband was Grey, a knight of Groby, who became a very vehement Lancastrian, revolting from the House of York, and therefore the more hateful to those of that family and the well-wishers thereof."—*Buck*, lib. iv. p. 117.

§ "In effect, every one, as he was nearest of kin unto the queen, so was he planted next about the prince. That drift, by the queen not unwisely devised, whereby his blood might of youth be rooted in the princes' favour, the Duke of Gloucester turned unto their destruction, and upon that ground set the foundation of all his unhappy building."—*More*, p. 19.

‖ "The archbishop came yet before day unto the queen, about whom he found much heaviness, rumble, haste and business; carriage and conveyance of her stuff into sanctuary, chests, coffers, packs, fardells, trusses, all on men's backs, no man unoccupied, some lading, some going, some discharging, some coming for more, some breaking down the walls to bring in the next way, and some yet drew to them that help to carry a wrong way."—*More*, p. 30.

ally than she had contemplated, in consequence of the opening afforded by Dr. Lewis's negotiation. It mattered not to Elizabeth that her probable restoration to courtly honours would be brought about by the union of her daughter with Henry of Richmond, the avowed enemy of her race and of her father's house. The summit of her ambition was to be restored to regal state, either as queen-regent or queen-mother. From the first position, she was irrecoverably removed by the deposition of her young son, and the revolution which had placed a new monarch on his throne; but the other alternative was now open to her acceptance, and she hesitated not in her decision.* The queen's consent was joyfully given to the projected union, and after the young princess was formally affianced to the Earl of Richmond, neither threats nor promises could withdraw her from that abiding place, where she could safely watch the progress of those schemes that bid fair to restore herself and her offspring, in some degree, to the exalted position they had lost.

But the defeat of the belligerents, and the hopeless prospect of Henry of Richmond, produced a material alteration in "the mutable mind of Queen Elizabeth:"† and, notwithstanding her solemn pledge to the exiled earl, to his attainted mother, and to the gallant band who had suffered outlawry and confiscation of lands for her sake and that of her children, she again wavered; and again changing her views,‡ with a tergiversation which is as inexplicable as it was certainly indefensible, consented to deliver the daughter whom she had betrothed to Henry of Richmond into the hands of Richard III.; and agreed to quit sanctuary with her and the other princesses, on condition that the safety of herself and her offspring was secured on oath before competent witnesses.§

In conformity with this exaction, on the 1st of March, 1484, just ten months after they entered the sanctuary, the king solemnly bound himself, in the presence of the "lords spiritual and temporal, and the mayor and aldermen of the city of London," on the word of a king and the security of a written agreement, that "if the daughters of Dame Elizabeth Grey, late calling herself Queen of England, would quit their place of refuge and submit to his direction, their lives and honour should be secured to them; that they should not be imprisoned, but be supported in a manner suitable to his kinswomen; and that he would marry them to gentlemen of birth, giving to each an estate in lands of the yearly value of 200 marks; and that he would strictly charge their husbands to treat them as his relations upon pain of his displeasure. He moreover promised to allow their mother 700 marks a-year [466*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*], and to discountenance any reports circulated to their prejudice."‖

* "For certain it is she was a busy, negotiating woman, and in her *withdrawing-chamber* had the fortunate *conspiracy* for the king [Henry VII.] against King Richard III. been hatched; which the king knew and remembered, perhaps, but too well."—*Bacon's Henry VII.*, p. 21.

† Grafton, p. 199.

‡ "Surely the inconstancy of this woman was much to be marvelled at."—*Ibid.*, p. 199.

§ "And so she, putting in oblivion the murder of her innocent children, the infamy and dishonour spoken of the king her husband, the lying in adultery laid to her charge, the bastarding of her daughters; forgetting, also, the faithful promise and open oath made to the Countess of Richmond, mother to the Earl Henry, blinded by avaricious affection, and seduced by flattering words, first delivered into King Richard's hands her five daughters, as lambs once again committed to the custody of the ravenous wolf."—*Grafton*, p. 199.

‖ See Appendix PPP.

It is admitted by all parties that Richard honourably and conscientiously fulfilled this pledge. "He caused all his brother's daughters to be conveyed into his palace with solemn receiving, and by "familiar and loving entertainment" strove to efface from their minds their recent adverse position:* and the generous treatment both their parent and themselves experienced from King Richard and Queen Anne, together with the marked distinction lavished upon the young and beautiful Elizabeth, justifies the surmise that the king projected a union between her and her cousin, Edward, Prince of Wales;† that by so doing the machination of the Lancastrian exiles might be defeated, and peace eventually secured to the divided House of York, as well as to the kingdom at large, upon his decease.

The future aggrandizement of his child seems, indeed, to have been an all-absorbing feeling with Richard III.; so much so that, notwithstanding the act of settlement recently passed, he again exacted from the nobles, before the offspring of Edward IV. emerged from sanctuary a solemn oath recognizing him as heir-apparent. "It happened one day after midday in February," states the annalist of that period, "that nearly all the lords of the realm, spiritual and temporal, and greater knights and esquires of the king's household, the chief of whom was John Howard, who had recently been created by the king, Duke of Norfolk, being assembled by the king's special command, in a certain lower room near the passage which leads to the queen's chambers, a certain new oath, framed by whom I know not, of adhering to Edward, the king's only son, as their superior lord, in case ought ill should befall his father, was administered to, and subscribed by them."‡

Thus ended the momentous proceedings which characterized King Richard's first parliament; the time necessarily occupied in the discussions and considerations connected with which was not fruitlessly spent. Full of energy, mental and bodily; ardently desirous for the prosperity of the kingdom, which now acknowledged him as its ruler; and feelingly alive to the evil consequences of those divisions which had resulted from the indiscretions of Edward IV., the minority of Edward V., and his own irregular accession to the throne; Richard directed his attention earnestly and strenuously to the framing those salutary laws,§ and carrying into execution those useful projects which, in an interval of tranquillity inconceivably brief, supplied to his subjects the loss which they had sustained in former years. He devised and perfected many regulations for the advancement of trade;‖ and with a view of rendering more profitable the rich resources of England, he granted to foreign manufacturers of cloth valuable privileges,¶ and liberty of settlement in any part of England, Ireland, or Wales.** While he protected the industrious English artisan by politic and wholesome restrictions,†† he also gave encouragement to the opulent merchants of distant lands to extend their traffic to his shores, inspiring them with confidence by the justice which marked his enactments, and animating them by the liberality which characterized his transactions.‡‡ Several affluent foreigners settled in the metropolis, were made freemen, that their wealth and lavish expenditure might enrich the land of their adoption;§§ and with a love of honour and noble care for the conserva-

* Grafton, p. 200.

† Lingard, p. 262.

‡ Chron. Croy., p. 570.

§ Bacon's Henry VII., p. 2.

‖ Harl. MSS., 433, pp. 71. 76. 99. 104.

¶ Buck, lib. v. p. 138.

** "To the workers of cloths of strange countries, a confirmation of their liberties, to dwell in Wales, Ireland or England."—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, p. 64.

†† Stat. of Realm, vol. ii.

‡‡ Harl. MSS., 433, pp. 85. 101.

§§ Ibid., p. 85.

tion of nobility, chivalry and gentry,"* he founded that most valuable and important establishment, the Heralds' College:† an act that must for ever immortalize his name, from the benefit it has conferred on posterity.‡ To the industry and erudition, indeed, of the earlier officers of the College of Arms, succeeding generations have been mainly indebted for authentic memorials of past transactions: and the mere mention of such names as Camden, Dugdale, Vincent, Sandford, Ashmole, and Anstis,§ selected as they are from a host of other learned and celebrated writers belonging to that collegiate body, will alone afford evidence of the invaluable assistance rendered to chronologists, historians and antiquaries by the society thus incorporated by Richard III. "The genealogical tables and authentic pedigrees by them regularly deduced," states one of their distinguished members,‖ "have operated to the detection of frauds, forgeries and impostures; cleared up doubts and difficulties; established marriages; supported and defended legitimacy of blood; ascertained family alliances; proved and maintained affinity and consanguinity; vindicated and corroborated the titles of lands to their possessors; and been of essential use in settling claims and rights of inheritance by furnishing effectual evidence." "Such," the same writer adds, "hath been, and ever must be, their utility and authority, whilst they are framed with integrity and correctness, and authenticated by references to proper vouchers. Time must indubitably stamp a still further value on such labours, and their value cannot fail of daily increasing more and more."¶

The royal charter** which made the officers of arms a body corporate, is dated the second of March, 1483. It granted them many privileges, freed them from subsidies and tolls, with exemption from all troublesome offices, and empowered them to have and to use a common seal.††

* Buck, lib. v. p. 138. † Fœdera, xii. p. 215.

‡ "No one who is conversant in our national history can be ignorant of the high esteem in which noble and illustrious descent was held by our ancestors, and of the strict attention that was paid to the observance of a just and exact distinction between the different ranks or classes of the people. The ignoble never presumed to arrogate a participation in the rights which were incommunicably annexed to eminence of parentage, or to claim honours to which their superiors alone were entitled. On the other hand, the nobility and gentry, cautiously jealous of their dignity and honour, avoided mixing with the vulgar, and were sedulous for the preservation on all public and solemn occasions of that priority of rank and precedence which was due to their birth and stations in life. Family arms becoming the external criterion which distinguished the gentleman from the peasant, and no persons being respected, or suffered to enter the lists to tourney, or exercise any feats of arms, unless they could, to the satisfaction of the heralds, prove themselves to be gentlemen of coat-armour, our ancient gentry took particular care in having their arms embroidered on their common wearing surcoats, and would not bear that any person among the lower class, although gotten rich, should use such tokens of gentilitial distinction; nay, so jealous were they of any infringements of the armorial rights to which they were entitled, that whenever the arms which they and their families had borne happened to be claimed by any other gentleman, they vindicated their rights even by duel. For these reasons, therefore, and for the guidance of the heralds in the proper and regular discharge of the duties of their functions, it necessarily became incumbent on them to draw out with accuracy and exactness the authentic genealogies of noble and gentilitial families, to continue from time to time and preserve their pedigrees in direct and collateral lines, and to have a perfect knowledge of all hereditary arms, ensigns, armorials, badges of honour, and the outward marks as well of personal as of family rank and distinction."—*Edmondson's Heraldry*, p. 89.

§ Camden, Clarenceux king-at-arms in 1597. Dugdale, Norroy king-at-arms in 1660. Vincent, Windsor herald in 1624. Sandford, Lancaster herald in 1676. Ashmole, Windsor herald in 1660. Anstis, Garter king-at-arms in 1714.

‖ Edmondson, Mowbray herald in 1764. ¶ Edmondson, p. 89.

** This charter, unabbreviated, may be found in Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 215.

†† Noble's College at Arms, p. 35.

King Richard further granted to them and their successors, for the use of the twelve principal officers of the said corporation, a large mansion with its appurtenances, then called "Colde-harbor," "without compte, or any other thing thereof, to us or to our heirs to be given or paid,"* wherein the four kings at arms and the rest of the heralds should lodge, live, and common together; where the rolls, muniments and writings appertaining to the office and art of heraldry and armoury should be kept;† giving also lands and tenements for the maintaining of a chaplain, with an annual stipend of 20*l.*, to say and sing service every day, and to pray for the good estate of the king, the queen, and Edward their son,‡ during their lives, and for their souls when they were dead.§

How strongly opposed are deeds such as these to the acts of a tyrant—the conduct of a despot! How utterly irreconcilable with the heartless, selfish, sanguinary career of a depraved monster, whose very name has been associated with the subjugation of the liberties rather than with the emancipation and enlightenment of his subjects. But the reputed virtues and vices of rulers are far more intimately connected with the manners, principles and usages of their age than those who pass judgment upon their actions are apt to consider: and Richard III. was too great a king to be also popular with his nobles as a man.

The period had not then arrived when princes were to be commended for personally examining into the comforts of their people, and descending from their high estate to inquire into the wants of their subjects. In proportion as Richard III. gave practical evidence of the enlarged and statesmanlike qualities which proved him "jealous of the honour of the English nation," and led him to make laws "for the ease and solace of the common people,"‖ so did he alienate the affections of the nobility of the realm, whose haughty independence could ill brook the slightest innovation on the unqualified despotism in which they had been nurtured, and which they hoped Richard would have extended rather than curtailed. They could not appreciate the brilliancy, the strength and versatility of his talents—the bold, quick and enterprising genius which made him so truly great when measured with his compeers. Accustomed to view him only as an able general, and to admire the impetuosity of his physical courage, they comprehended not designs which filled the heart of the patriot, and occupied exclusively the consideration of the sovereign; consequently, the calamities which thickened around Richard III. after he was elevated to the throne—which destroyed his peace when living, and blighted his fame when dead—may, in great measure, be summed up in the words of Polydore Virgil, "the disaffection of his nobles:"¶ a disaffection not induced by his assumption of the crown, for that act emanated from and was confirmed by themselves, but disaffection caused by their having elected as their ruler a monarch of principles too liberal and views too enlarged for the comprehension of an aristocracy whose ideas were formed in times when the privileges of their order were upheld with almost sovereign power.

Short, however, were the periods of repose allotted to this monarch, either to contemplate or to carry into effect the beneficial regulations which promised, at this early stage of his regal career, as much advantage to the real interests of the kingdom as honour to himself. Scarcely had he completed the foundation of his noble work, the College of Arms, and secured to the corporate body by act of Parliament, the immunities and privileges so muni-

* Rot. Parl., 1 Rich. III., p. 3. † Buck, lib. v. p. 139.

‡ Buck, lib. v. p. 139. See also Edmondson, p. 142, and Noble, p. 55.

§ See Appendix QQQ. ‖ Bacon's Henry VII., p. 2.

¶ Pol. Virg., p. 565.

ficently awarded to them,* than he was again compelled to turn his attention to warlike preparations, and lay aside the further prosecution of his peaceful projects.

By an instrument dated the 5th of March, it appears that the king had received intimation that divers rebels and foreigners intended to invade various parts of the realm, near the coasts, with an armed force, and that he was about to proceed to those parts for the defence thereof.† Accordingly, on the 6th of March, accompanied by his illustrious consort, he quitted the metropolis, not on a mere regal progress, as on the previous occasion, with all the accompaniments of sovereign state and power, but slowly to wend his way to the disturbed districts, while the commission issued for preserving peace, and more effectually guarding against the threatened evil, was being carried into effect.

Nevertheless, on this his second departure from the capital of his kingdom, King Richard gave another and a signal proof of his interest in the welfare and well-being of those great national seminaries of learning, the two universities; Cambridge being honoured by him on this occasion, as Oxford had been chosen at the period of his former journey, for his first resting-place. Although the particulars of his reception and sojourn at Cambridge are not commemorated with the same minuteness that records his entrance into and stay at the sister university, yet the charge in the proctor's accounts for "carrying the cross on King Richard's coming,"‡ shows him to have been received in procession by the clergy; and his recorded liberality to the burgesses and commonalty of the town§ attests his satisfaction generally at the treatment he received. The king entered Cambridge on the 9th inst.‖ He remained there the two following days; and a decree of the university,¶ agreed to at a unanimous assembly "of the regents and non-regents" immediately after his departure, viz., 10th March, acknowledging his liberality and that of his illustrious consort, and decreeing an annual mass during the life of that "most renowned prince and pious king, Richard, after the Conquest, the Third," manifests, in the most striking manner, the degree of attention he must have given to the interests of the several colleges, and the high estimation in which he was held by the members of the university. He seems to have especially distinguished King's College, "the unparalleled ornament of all England," by his bounty;** for, independent of "founding and erecting buildings there," as perpetuated in the above-named decree, among the entries in his diary†† are several grants for "churches at King's College, Cambridge:" and in addition to his former liberality to Queen's College, — which, as before related, he greatly augmented and endowed on his accession to the throne,—he, on this occasion, "devoutly founded there an exhibition for four priests," and acceded to expressed wishes of his queen that she might further enrich this college with some valuable rents.‡‡ He ratified the privileges of the university, and

* It was confirmed by the Parliament, and dated "2° die Martii anno regni primo, apud Westmonasterium, Baron;" and underneath was written, "Per breve di privato sigillo de dato predicto autoritati Parliamenti."—*Buck*, lib. v. p. 139.

† Rymer's Add. MSS., 4616, art. 63.

‡ Cooper's Annals of Cambridge, p. 227.

§ "King Richard III. remitted for ever to the bailiffs, burgesses and commonalty of the town of Cambridge, the annual sum of 10*l.*, part of the fee farm payable by them."—*Harl. MSS.*, fol. 63.

‖ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 251. ¶ See Appendix RRR.

** "The king appears to have given altogether 700*l.* towards the completion of King's College Chapel."—*Cooper's Annals of Cambridge*, p. 230.

†† Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 190. 209, 210.

‡‡ King Richard III., at the request of his queen, gave to Queen's College the manors of Covesgrave and Buckby in Northamptonshire, lands and tenements in several towns in Lincolnshire, the manor of Newton in Suffolk, and of Stanford in Berks, together with 60*l.* per annum from the fee-farm of Aylesbury in Bucks, and 50*l.* per annum from the fairs of St. Ives in Huntingdonshire.—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 68. 87.

brief as was his sojourn there, spent much money in advancing its interests in various ways. He bestowed upon Queen's College a seal whereon was engraved his cognizance, the Boar; and the substance of letters patent have been preserved by Rymer,* dated 25th March, 1483, "in favour of Margaret College, Cambridge, founded by Anne, the queen consort,"—an act of munificence that proves her worthy to have been associated with her royal partner in the solemn service commanded to be celebrated annually on the 2d of May, "by the whole congregation of regents and non-regents of the aforesaid university, for the happy state of the said most renowned prince and his dearest consort Anne."†

By charges which occur in the accounts of the treasurers of the town, for presents connected with the royal visit,‡ it is apparent that the king was accompanied by the lord chief justice and the Duke of Norfolk; and it is probable that the royal pair were met and received at Cambridge by the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Durham; for, independently of the signature of the former ecclesiastic being attached to the above-named decree as chancellor of the university, both these great dignitaries of the church were munificent benefactors to that seat of learning. The lord primate founded the famed university library,§ and furnished it with choice books;‖ and King Richard's esteem for the latter prelate is evinced by his request to Pope Sextus IV., dated at this period, that his holiness would confer upon him the dignity of a cardinal.¶ King Richard's visit to this university was preceded by a circular letter, addressed to all the prelates of the realm, calling their attention to the particular duty incumbent upon them to repress vice, however high might be the estate of the offenders: since their evil example induced similar vicious propensities in "persons of lower degree."** He expresses his determination to purify the land from the impiety and immorality which had of late prevailed, and to encourage a more virtuous and devotional feeling. "We, therefore, desire and require you, that, according to the charge of your profession, ye see within the authority of your juris-

* Rymer's Add. MSS., 4616, art. 63.

† Cooper's Ann. Cam., p. 228.

‡ "For a present to the lord the king, in fishes - - - - £ 6 s. 6 d. 0
In a present given to the chief justice of the lord the king, viz., in wine, spice, fish and bread - - - - - 0 5 0
In a present given to the Bishop of York, - - - - 0 8 8
For a present given to the Duke of Norfolk - - - 0 6 8"

Cooper's Annals of Cambridge, p. 230.

§ "On the 13th of May, the university, in grateful acknowledgment of the benefaction of their chancellor, Thomas Rotheram, then Bishop of Lincoln, (subsequently Archbishop of York,) who had completed the new schools, with a library above, which he had enriched with many valuable books, decreed that he should be for ever enrolled amongst their benefactors, and that his name should be for ever recited by the priest who visited each school to pray for the benefactors of the university."—*Cooper's Annals of Cambridge*, p. 221.

‖ "The number of books given by Archbishop Rotheram is said to have been 200. He is considered in the light of a founder of the library, (although the university possessed a public library before his time,) and his arms, impaled with those of the see of Rochester, which he occupied from 1468 to 1471, appear on the book-plate now used by the university."—*Ibid.*, p. 222.

¶ Fœdera, xii. p. 216. ** Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 281.

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°."
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°."
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 Britany,—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

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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

waning. The citizens of London had been too long accustomed to, and had too fully revelled in, the pleasurable and luxurious habits promoted by Edward IV.* not to feel keenly their changed position under the severe rule of his successor. Edward, that gay and gallant monarch, had sacrificed health, fame, dignity, even his love of glory, to his still greater love of ease. "But," observes Sir Thomas More,† "this fault not greatly grieved the people," although it irritated his warlike nobles, and weaned from him their respect and affection; for the community at large had imperceptibly reaped the benefit of that commercial prosperity‡ which resulted from "the realm being in quiet and prosperous estate,"—no fear of outward enemies, and among themselves "the commons in good peace."§ Richard, on the contrary, notwithstanding his desire of pursuing a similar course of domestic policy,—one which was altogether in accordance with his own enlightened views, and to perfect a system which had produced such beneficial results, was, from the distracted state of the country, which led to his elevation to the throne, speedily called upon to withdraw his attention from pacific and tranquillizing measures, and from the time of his accession, to make warlike and martial preparations the leading object of his government. The caprice and instability of many of his nobles being the existing cause of the renewal of civil discord, Richard had not the advantage of their undivided support to counterbalance the spirit of insubordination which generally prevailed among the middling classes, or the satisfaction of acting in concert with this powerful body of his subjects; while the discomfort which had resulted from the revival of internal feuds, united to the total cessation of commercial intercourse with France and Scotland, and the heavy cost of keeping up armaments by sea and land, had gradually fostered in the citizens of London a spirit of tumult and disorder very unfavourable to the views of the monarch, and very distressing to himself individually. Various causes of less import tended to increase this feeling of discontent. The court had been stationary at York for six months; and the evident partiality which Richard publicly testified for his northern subjects, added to the extensive repairs and embellishments which he had commanded at the royal palace in that city,‖ made the inhabitants of the southern portion of the island fear the possibility of the regal abode being eventually removed to the scene of the new king's second coronation, and of his early popular rule, or, to say the least, that he might be induced to divide, between his northern and southern capitals, those great privileges which had, hitherto, been exclusively enjoyed by the ancient seat of government. But King Richard was too able a statesman, too wise a ruler, to be ignorant of the fatal consequences which must ensue to the governor of a divided kingdom, and he was proportionably desirous to return to London, that by his presence among his former supporters he might allay their apprehension, and inspire them with renewed confidence towards himself. The monarch quitted Nottingham¶ on the 1st of August,

* "In the summer, the last that ever he saw, his highness being at Windsor, hunting, sent for the mayor and aldermen of London to him, for none other errand than to hunt and make merry with him."—*More*, p. 5.

† More's Rich. III., p. 5.

‡ The twelve years succeeding the restoration of Edward IV. are reckoned by political economists the most prosperous ever enjoyed by the English people.

§ More, p. 5.

‖ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 183.

¶ The document which fixes King Richard at Nottingham on the 30th of July is sufficiently curious to merit insertion. "Commission to Thomas Fowler, squire for the body, John Whitelocke, William Lok and Richard Austin, to make search for certain treasure, which, as the king was credibly informed, is hid in a ground called Sudbury, or nigh thereabouts, within the county of Bedford."—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 186.

and appears to have reached the palace at Westminster about the 6th instant, as, on that day, "letters of safe conduct" were granted to the ambassadors from Scotland,* appointing the 7th of September for a desired conference, and fixing Nottingham, from its central position, as the place in which the king would receive them. A letter, also, was delivered from James III. to Richard, expressing his intention of sending commissioners to England, to treat not only "of truce and abstinence from war, but likewise of marriage, between those of the blood of both kings."† To this letter an official answer was returned, which fixes King Richard at Westminster on the 7th of August, 1484.‡ He continued there during the remainder of the month, which was characterized by one of the most interesting ceremonies connected with his reign—that of the removal of the body of Henry VI. from his place of interment at Chertsey Abbey to the collegiate church of Windsor, in order that the ashes of the deposed monarch might be placed beside those of his royal predecessors. Richard's every action has been so suspiciously viewed, all his measures, whether prompted by policy or generosity, have been so perverted and misrepresented, that it can scarcely excite surprise that this act of respect to the memory of the amiable but unfortunate rival of the House of York should be reported to Richard's disadvantage, after he himself became the sport of adverse fortune and political contumely. "He envied," it is stated by the partisans of the House of Tudor, "the sanctity of King Henry," and translated him from Chertsey "to arrest the number of pilgrimages made to his tomb,"§—a tomb admitted by the same authority, to have been unfitting for the resting-place of a crowned head, and situated in so retired a spot‖ that the few devotees who there resorted could never have procured for the deceased king that revival of compassionate feeling which was called forth by his public disinterment, and the removal of his body to the regal mausoleum of his ancestors. If any positive fact could weaken the mere report of King Richard having himself assassinated the Lancastrian monarch, this proceeding might well be cited in his favour. The mortal remains of the hapless prince had reposed in their last resting-place upwards of thirteen years. His exhumation was neither caused by the murmurs of the populace, nor required as an act of justice for any former absence of accustomed ceremonial.¶ The people flocked to King Henry's tomb because his saintlike habits during life, united to the severity of his sufferings, had gradually invested his memory with superstitious veneration; yet did Richard voluntarily, openly, without fear of any popular ebullition of feeling for the unfortunate Henry, or the dread of evil consequences to himself, which a consciousness of guilt invariably produces, transfer the relics of the deceased sovereign to a more fitting place of interment—one of such distinction and notoriety, that visits to his tomb, if offensive to the reigning house, would thereby have been rather increased than diminished.

The words of the historian Rous,** through whom the event has been recorded, and whose political enmity to King Richard exonerates him from

* Fœdera, xii. p. 230.

† Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 263. ‡ Ibid.

§ Wilk. Concil., iii. p. 635. ‖ Ibid.

¶ "Many writers have committed the error of affirming that Henry VI. was buried without honours," observes the editor of Warkworth's Chronicles (p. 67); but reference to Devon's Issue Rolls of Exchequer, (p. 491,) wherein are specified sums paid for the expenses of that monarch's interment, will, he further observes, "prove that every respect was paid to his funeral obsequies."

** Rous, p. 217.

all supposition of undue praise, will better tend to place the act itself in its true light than any arguments that can result from a mere reviewal of it: "And in the month of August following, the body of King Henry was dug up, and translated to the new collegiate church of Windsor, where it was *honourably received*, and again buried with *the greatest solemnity* on the south side of the high altar."

This simple detail, by a cotemporary writer of acknowledged Lancastrian prejudices, an ecclesiastic by profession, and a warm partisan of Henry VI., joined to the fact that King Richard's motives were not impugned on this head until that monarch had been dead for many years, and not until it was in contemplation "to canonize King Henry VI. for a saint,"* arising from miracles reputed to be performed at his tomb, fully exposes the malignity with which Richard has been, on all points, defamed. The very document, indeed, which impugns his motives, and charges him with envying King Henry the fame that attached to him after death, assists in exculpating Richard from the unsupported tradition of having deprived the Lancastrian sovereign of his life. "He had yielded to a pitiable death by the order of Edward, who was then king of England," are the words used by the English clergy in an address to the see of Rome. This address was written long after Richard's death, and at a time when King Edward's daughter was the reigning queen.†

Had there been solid foundation for the rumour that afterwards prevailed of Henry of Lancaster having been murdered by Richard, who can doubt that these ecclesiastics would, unhesitatingly, have substituted the words "by the hands of the Duke of Gloucester," when no reason existed for sparing the memory of one so maligned, and which would have saved them the necessity of fixing the crime on the sire and grandsire of the queen consort and the heir-apparent of the throne?

Brief as was King Richard's stay in London, it was characterized by acts of bounty and munificence similar to those which had marked his former sojourn there. He then commenced many public works of great importance; those he now continued, and also carried out other designs, which had been interrupted by his sudden departure for the north. He founded a college of priests in Tower street, near the church called "Our Lady of Barking."‡ He commanded the erection of a high stone tower at Westminster,—"a work," states Sir George Buck, "of good use, even at this day."§ He caused substantial repairs to be commenced at the Tower of London, erecting new buildings, and renovating the older portions; "in memory whereof," narrates the above-quoted historian, "there be yet his arms, impaled with those of the queen, his wife, standing upon the arch adjoining the sluice gate:"‖ and both Windsor Castle,¶ the palace at Westminster,** Baynard's Castle,†† and the Erber, or King's Palace,‡‡ as it was then designated, evince, by the additions and improvements undertaken by his command, the desire which Richard entertained of giving employment to the industrious portion of the community, and of exciting the more wealthy citizens, by his own example, to undertake works of useful design. He desired thus to divert their minds from sedition and insurrection to the

* Bacon's Henry VII., p. 227.

† A petition was presented to Pope Alexander VI., in the year 1499, praying that the remains of King Henry VI. might be removed to Westminster Abbey.—*Wilk. Concil.*, iii. p. 635.

‡ Rous, p. 215; Buck, lib. v. p. 138.

§ Ibid.

‖ Buck, lib. v. p. 139.

¶ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 211.

** Ibid., fol. 204.

†† Ibid., fol. 175.

‡‡ Ibid., fol. 187.

encouragement of peaceful occupations, and the promotion of acts that would reflect honour on themselves, and confer lasting benefit upon their country.* Most opportunely for the king, as affording him additional means for checking the growing discontent, messengers arrived in London from the French monarch, craving letters of protection for ambassadors appointed to treat for peace.† The required letters were issued by Richard on the 1st of September; and this important step towards the procurement of that peace, so much desired by the citizens, was rendered more effective by its having so immediately succeeded a corresponding application from Scotland, with which country an amicable league was on the eve of being cemented. An opening was thus afforded for a renewal of commercial intercourse with both kingdoms.

The immediate causes of his unpopularity, or at least a portion of them, being in some degree modified, the monarch again departed for Nottingham, which he reached on the 12th of September,‡ and on the 16th he gave audience to the deputies from Scotland, who were there most honourably received in the great chamber of the castle,§ the king being seated under a royal canopy, and surrounded by his court and the chief officers of state. The noble commissioners‖ sent by James III. were accompanied by his secretary and orator, "Master Archibald Quhitlaw," who, stepping before the rest, addressed an eloquent oration to the English sovereign in Latin, panegyrizing his high renown, noble qualities, great wisdom, virtue and prudence. "In you, most serene prince, all the excellent qualities of a good king and great commander are happily united, insomuch that, to the perfection of your military and civil accomplishments, nothing could be added by the highest rhetorical flights of a most consummate orator."¶

This address, although couched in the extravagant language of the times, confirms three facts connected with King Richard of no small importance, viz., his mildness of disposition: "You show yourself gentle to all, and affable even to the meanest of your people." His beauty of feature—"In your face, a princely majesty and authority royal, sparkling with the illustrious beams of all moral and heroical virtues;" and, lastly, that his stature, though small, was unaccompanied by deformity, since the Scottish orator made it the vehicle of his chief eulogy: "To you may not be unfitly applied what was said by the poet of a most renowned prince of the Thebans,** that Nature never united to a small frame a greater soul, or a more powerful mind."†† The conference ended, the ambassadors delivered to King Richard a letter from their sovereign; to which the English monarch returned a brief

* "This King Richard is to be praised for his buildings at Westminster, Nottingham, Warwick, York, Middleham; and many other places will manifest."—*Rous*, p. 215.

† Fœdera, xii. p. 235.

‡ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 187.

§ Buck, lib. i. p. 33.

‖ "The embassy consisted of the Earl of Argyle, Chancellor of Scotland, the Bishop of Aberdeen, the Lord Lisle, the Lord Dramonde of Stobhall, Master Archibald Quhitlaw, Archdeacon of Lothian and secretary to the king, Lion, king-at-arms, and Duncan of Dundas."—*Buck*, lib. i. p. 33.

¶ Buck, lib. v. p. 140.

** "So great a soul, such strength of mind,
Sage Nature ne'er to a less body joyn'd."
Translation in Kennet, p. 573.

†† "If Richard had not been short," observes Mr. Sharon Turner, "the prelate who came ambassador to him from Scotland would not, in his complimentary address delivered to him on his throne, have quoted these lines; nor would he have made such an allusion, if it had not been well known that Richard cared not about it."—*Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 476.

but dignified reply.* They, likewise, inquired his pleasure relative to the reception of commissioners, then on their progress from Scotland to negotiate a marriage between the Duke of Rothesay, eldest son of King James, and the Lady Anne de la Pole, daughter of the Duke of Suffolk, and sister of the Earl of Lincoln, whom the English monarch had nominated his successor to the throne.

This important proposition, intended as a means of establishing peace between the two countries,† was finally decided upon on the 20th of September,‡ when the contract of marriage between the heir of the Scottish crown and King Richard's niece was signed by the Scotch commissioners and the great officers of state attached to the English government;§ and on the same day a truce with Scotland for three years was concluded,‖ and duly ratified by commissioners nominated for that purpose by their respective sovereigns.¶ It will be fresh in the mind of the reader, that the faithless performance of a corresponding matrimonial engagement entered into some years previously between the above-named Duke of Rothesay and the Princess Cecily was the origin of the war in which King Richard, before his accession to the throne, acquired such high military reputation; and it is somewhat remarkable, as a proof of the vicissitudes consequent on those mutable times, that this second contract with the line of York, now entered into as the means of terminating warfare, and cementing peace and amity between the two kingdoms, was destined to terminate in a manner similar to the former betrothment, and to entail equal mortification on another of Richard's nieces.

The Lady Anne de la Pole, like her fair cousin Cecily, became the victim of the inconstancy of the age. The pledge solemnly plighted at Nottingham was but lightly regarded in after years. "Upon the breach thereof," states Sir George Buck, "the young affianced, resolving to accept no other motion, embraced a conventual life, and ended her days a nun in the monastery of Sion,** while the Scottish prince was reserved for marriage with the daughter of the rival and enemy of their house and race, Henry of Richmond;†† although, as the daughter of his consort, Elizabeth of York, the Princess Margaret of Tudor was the niece of his first betrothed, and the cousin of the Lady Anne, whose marriage has been just detailed.

The aspect of political affairs continued to brighten during Richard's prolonged stay at Nottingham; another treaty of peace and amity was sought for by Francis, Duke of Brittany, or, rather, a ratification of former negotiations; and as soon as the Scotch ambassadors had fairly departed, shipping was ordered to convey an English mission‡‡ to that principality, which sailed§§ on the 13th of October, and succeeded in establishing so friendly an alliance between the two countries‖‖ that all apprehension of Richmond's receiving aid from that quarter was entirely set at rest. Architectural improvements on an enlarged scale at Nottingham Castle,¶¶ and at the royal palace at York,*** a warrant for rebuilding, at the king's cost, a

* See Appendix SSS.
† Fœdera, xii. p. 232.
‡ Ibid., p. 244.
§ Buck, lib. i. p. 33.
‖ Fœdera, xii. p. 235.
¶ Buck, lib. i. p. 33.
** Ibid.
†† James IV. of Scotland was united to the Princess Margaret, the eldest daughter of King Henry VII. and of his Queen Elizabeth of York, on the 8th of August, 1503.—*Lel. Coll.*, iv. fol. 205.
‡‡ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 189.
§§ Ibid., fol. 192.
‖‖ Fœdera, xii. p. 255.
¶¶ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 193; see also Leland's Itin.
*** Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 187. 218.

chapel at Pontefract, and the house adjoining of Dame Margaret Multon, an anchorite,* together with other of those acts of piety and munificence† which so endeared King Richard to his northern subjects, attest the fact of this monarch's sojourn at Nottingham for the remainder of the autumn, with the exception of a brief visit from thence at the close of October to his lordship and castle at Tutbury.‡ Having at length restored peace within the realm, and cemented amicable leagues between Scotland, France and Brittany, Richard made preparations for returning to London for the winter, where he was welcomed by the citizens with demonstrations of popularity and joy, fully as great, if not greater than those which had characterized his triumphant entry into the metropolis at the same period a twelvemonth before. "In the beginning of this mayor's year, and the second year of King Richard," retails the city chronicler,§ "that is to mean the 11th day of the month of November, 1484, the mayor and his brethren being clad in scarlet, and the citizens, to the number of five hundred or more, in violet, met the king beyond Kingston, in Southwark, and so brought him through the city to the Wardrobe,‖ beside the Black Friars, where for that time he was lodged."

Thus reinstated in public favour, and bemoaning the demoralizing effects which had resulted from the disturbed state of the kingdom since his accession, the king essayed to promote kindlier and gentler feelings amongst all classes of his subjects, by encouraging and patronising such sports and pastimes as were consonant with the spirit and habits of the age. Falconry and hawking especially engaged his attention. He had nominated John Grey of Wilton to the office of master of the king's hawks, and the keeping of a place called the Mews,¶ near Charing Cross,** in the preceding year; and he now issued warrants for securing, at a reasonable price, such hawks and falcons as should be necessary for the "king's disport," following up this command by the appointment of a sergeant of falcons for England, and a purveyor of hawks for parts beyond the seas.†† Hunting, also, the sport to partake of which King Edward had so frequently invited the civic authorities of London, a condescension which had told so much in his favour, was not overlooked by his politic brother. It was an amusement to which Richard had been early inured, and to which he was much attached: and the minute particulars in his register of the payments awarded to the chief officers of the royal establishment, as well as the distinct enumeration of the several appointments connected with the inferior departments,‡‡ together with the provision allotted to the horses and dogs, evince his determination to uphold a recreation which the disturbed state of the kingdom had, for a time, interrupted. Nor were the amusements of the humbler classes forgotten by the monarch; the exploits of the bearward, the appellation given

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 193.
† Ibid., fol. 191.
‡ Ibid., fol. 193.
§ Fabyan, p. 518.
‖ On Bennet Hill, in the neighbourhood of the Herald's College, a little to the west, anciently stood the royal wardrobe, kept in a house built by Sir John Beauchamp, who made it his residence. It was sold to King Edward III., and in the fifth year of Edward IV. it was given to William Lord Hastings; it was afterwards called Huntingdon House, and became the lodging of Richard III. in the second year of his reign.—*Pennant's London*, p. 356.
¶ The term "Mew" signified moulting; and the range of buildings which once stood near Charing Cross, called the King's Mews, and which were converted into stables by King Henry VIII., derived the appellation from the royal hawks being kept there during the time of their moulting.—*Old Sports of England*, p. 28.
** Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 53.
†† Ibid., 433, fol. 103. 214.
‡‡ Ibid., 433, fol. 49. 175. 195.

to the keeper of dancing bears, together with the grotesque antics of apes and monkies, by which the former animals were usually accompanied, was a rude pastime greatly estimated at this period by all ranks; and the king, shortly after his accession, had appointed a "master guider and ruler of all our bears and apes within England and Wales"*—the greater part of the animals thus exhibited being the property of the crown; and letters were sent to the several mayors and sheriffs throughout the kingdom, requiring them to protect the "said game," as well as the master and subordinate keepers whom the king licensed, "reasonable money paying," to travel through the country with them. But the recreation to which Richard himself seemed most devoted was that of music. Innumerable grants to minstrels† were bestowed from the royal funds, and foreign musicians received from him the greatest encouragement.‡ He kept a band of trumpeters at a yearly payment,§ and promoted a royal choral assemblage upon a very enlarged scale, having empowered "John Melynek, one of the gentlemen of the chapel royal, to take and seize for the king all such singing men and children, being expert in the science of music, as he can find, and think able to do the king's service within all places in the realm, as well cathedral churches, colleges, chapels, houses of religion, and all other franchised and exempt places or elsewhere, the college royal of Windsor excepted;"‖ an act which singularly illustrated the despotism of the period, and the little personal freedom enjoyed by the people of England, but which might have been highly beneficial in advancing the art of music in this country, had King Richard been permitted sufficient leisure and tranquillity to carry into effect the enlarged views which he entertained on all matters connected with the improvement or benefit of his country.

But Richard's peaceful days were few in number and of short duration. His earnest desire was to quell discord, and to ensure a period of repose by exertions the most praiseworthy and unceasing. Nevertheless, he was too wise to slumber or to be lulled into security while any symptom existed for alarm; and so long as Richmond was at large, and his supporters unsubdued, just cause for apprehension remained that peace was by no means settled.

The treaties with France, Brittany and Scotland had, indeed, tempered any present suspicion of danger; nevertheless, rumours and reports reached King Richard's ears from time to time which induced him to fix his attention warily upon the movements of his enemies, even when seemingly engaged in promoting such amusements and recreations as were fitted for a season of tranquillity. So early after his return to London as the 6th of December,¶ intelligence was communicated which led him to doubt the good faith of the French nation, and to compel him to issue a strong proclamation to that effect. "Forasmuch as we be credibly informed that our ancient enemies of France, by many and sundry ways, conspire and study the means to the subversion of this our realm, and of unity amongst our subjects, as in sending writings by seditious persons with counterfeit tokens, and contrive false inventions, tidings and rumours, to the intent to provoke and stir discord and disunion betwixt us and our lords, which be as faithfully disposed as any subjects can suffice. We, therefore, will and command you strictly, that in eschewing the inconveniences aforesaid, you put you in your uttermost devoir of any such rumours or writings come

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 139.
† Ibid., fol. 46.
§ Ibid., fol. 78. 96. 104.
¶ Ibid., 787, fol. 2.
‡ Ibid., fol. 190. 210.
‖ Ibid., 189.

amongst you, to search and inquire of the first showers or utterers thereof; and them that ye shall so find ye do commit unto sure ward, and after proceed to their sharp punishment, in example and fear of all other, not failing hereof in any wise, as ye intend to please us, and will answer to us at your perils."* The result of this strong edict was the arrest of Sir Robert Clifford at Southampton, who, being sent to the Tower of London, was arraigned and tried at Westminster, and, being found guilty, was from thence drawn unto the Tower Hill upon "a hurdle," where he suffered the death of a traitor.†

Whether he was the bearer of private instructions to his accomplices in England, or whether King Richard obtained, by means of his own emissaries, more direct information respecting the views of the rebels in France, does not plainly appear; but the fact was speedily ascertained that Harwich was the point where the insurgents intended to land, and measures for resisting their attempts were instantly adopted. Instructions were issued on the 18th of the same month to the commissioner of array for the counties of Surrey, Middlesex and Hertford, "to call before them all the knights, squires and gentlemen within the said counties, and know from them what number of people, defensibly arrayed, every of them severally will bring at half a day's warning, if any sudden arrival fortune of the king's rebels and traitors."‡ Sir Gilbert Debenham and Sir Philip Bothe were dispatched with a strong force to the protection of Harwich, a commission being sent to the bailiffs, constables and inhabitants to assist them in keeping the said town, and to resist the king's rebels if they should arrive there. These precautions had the desired effect. The conspirators were either intimidated by the resistance which they understood would await them, or their projects were defeated by finding that the king was not thrown off his guard by the recent truce with France, and was well acquainted with their designs, and fully prepared to subvert them.

Whatever occasioned the delay, the threatened danger was again dispelled, and King Richard was left to celebrate his Christmas in undisturbed tranquillity. He solemnized this festival with pomp and splendour, corresponding to that which had characterized its anniversary in the preceding year, encouraging the recreations usual at the season, presiding himself at the customary feasts, and so attentively observing even the most trivial customs, that a warrant is entered for the payment of "200 marks for certain New-Year's gifts, bought against the feast of Christmas."§ The festivities continued without interruption until the day of the Epiphany, when they appear to have terminated with an entertainment of extraordinary magnificence, given by the monarch to his nobles in Westminster Hall,—"the king himself wearing his crown," are the words of the Croyland historian,‖ "and holding a splendid feast in the great hall similar to that at his coronation."

* Harl. MSS., 787, fol. 2.

† That Sir Robert Clifford was strongly and strenuously supported by the disaffected party in London is evident from the measures taken to prevent his execution, the detail of which is thus quaintly given by the city historian. "But when he came fore St. Martin-le-grand, by the help of a friar which was his confessor, and one of them that was next about him, his cords were so lowered or cut, that he put him in devoir to have entered the sanctuary; and likely it had been that he should have so done, had it not been for the quick help and rescue of the sheriffs and their officers, the which constrained him to lie down upon the hurdle, and new bound him, and so hurried to the said place of execution, where he was divided into two pieces, and after his body, with the head, was conveyed to the Augustine friars, and there buried before St. Katharine's Altar."—*Fabyan*, 518.

‡ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 198.
§ Ibid., fol. 148.
‖ Chron. Croy., p. 571.

Widely different, however, were the results of the two entertainments—the one giving promise of a peaceful and popular reign, from the seeming unanimity which then prevailed, the other being destined to usher in that period of anarchy and feud which was alike to deprive Richard of his crown and of his life; for, "on the same day," continues the chronicler,* "tidings were brought to him by his seafaring intelligencers that, in spite of all the power and splendour of his royal estate, his enemies would, beyond all doubt, enter, or attempt to enter, the kingdom during the approaching summer." Little did Richard imagine that this would be the last feast at which he would preside—the last time he would display his crown in peace before his assembled peers! Strongly imbued with the innate valour of his race, he hailed with satisfaction the prospect of terminating a system of petty warfare, which ill suited the daring and determined spirit of a prince of the line of York; he ardently longed for the period when he should encounter his rival hand to hand, and, by one decisive blow, crush his aspiring views, and relieve himself from those threatened invasions, the guarding against which was more harassing to a mind constituted like his than the most desperate conflicts on the field of battle. Measures were forthwith taken to provide for the defence of the town and marches of Calais, and a warrant was sent to the collectors of customs at the port of Sandwich,† commanding them to pay the mayors and bailiffs of the Cinque Ports, whereat they should take shipping, for the expenses which they might incur for the same.‡

Similar precautions were taken for the preservation of the castle and county of Guisnes, of which Sir James Tyrell was appointed governor, "to have the charge, rule and guidance of the same during the absence of the Lord Mountjoy, the king's lieutenant there."§ The knights, squires, gentlemen, &c. of the county of Chester were commanded by an edict "to obey the Lord Stanley, the Lord Strange, and Sir William Stanley, who had the rule and leading of all persons appointed to do the king service, when they shall be warned against the king's rebels;"‖ and a like commission to the knights of other counties was issued, "to do the king's grace service, against his rebels, in whatsoever place within the realm they fortune to arrive."¶ Richard, in fact, neglected no precaution that could secure his personal safety, or insure tranquillity to his kingdom; but such a continual system of warfare, or rather provision against its anticipated occurrence, could not be met by the ordinary resources of the country in those troubled times; and the enormous expenditure to which he had been subjected almost from the period when he ascended the throne had so exhausted

* Chron. Croy., p. 571.

† This document contains, amongst other items, an article that is somewhat remarkable, and one which cannot fail of interesting those who consider that Perkin Warbeck was indeed the true Duke of York, and conveyed secretly into Flanders by the friends and supporters of his family, and not surreptitiously by command of King Richard III., viz., "Warrant to the privy seal in order towards the repaying the mayor, &c. of Dover, four marks, by them advanced for defraying the passage, &c., of Sir James Tyrell, the king's councillor, and knight of his body, who was of late sent over the sea, into the parties of Flanders, for divers matters concerning greatly the king's weal." If one or both of the young princes were privately conveyed to Flanders, as both Sir Thomas More and Lord Bacon assert was current yreported at the accession of Henry VII., there can scarcely be a doubt that their uncle would strive to discover their retreat; and Sir James Tyrrel, though by no means likely to have been "their employed murderer," would, as the king's councillor and "squire of the body," be a fitting agent for dispatching to the continent on so delicate and important a mission as seeking out the princes, if alive.

‡ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 200.
§ Ibid., fol. 201.
‖ Ibid., fol. 202.
¶ Ibid., fol. 203. 205.

the treasury, and dissipated the funds amassed by King Edward IV.,* that Richard, in spite of his repugnance to adopt, by compulsion, a measure he had resolutely refused when it was voluntarily offered to him,† was necessitated at length to fall back upon the despotic and unpopular system entitled "Benevolences,"‡—a mode of taxation which he had not only condemned at his accession, but had afterwards abolished by act of Parliament; one which excited so much anger against his brother, by whom it was first devised,§ and one to which Richard had proved he never would have had recourse but from a necessity which admitted of no alternative. To this obnoxious proceeding, indeed, there can exist little doubt, may be traced those accumulated evils, and the origin of most of those malignant accusations which have cast so deep a shade over the latter part of this monarch's reign, that even time itself has failed to soften its ill effects, and justice has been powerless in withdrawing the veil which anger, discontent and popular excitement at so odious a measure cast over every subsequent act undertaken by this sovereign.

Tumult and insurrection speedily followed,‖ when Edward IV., in all the fulness of prosperity, had descended from his high estate to distrain his subjects, under this misapplied term of "Benevolence," for bounty despotically extorted from them.¶ King Richard had not only despised such regal beggary, but had rendered a renewal of similar exactions illegal by act of Parliament.** Tenfold, therefore, was the public indignation increased against him, when, unsupported by his brother's more favoured position, and with the partisans of that brother's offspring arrayed in hostility against him, he revived a measure which even King Edward's popular manners, united to his stern and unrelenting rule, could with difficulty carry into effect.††

It was, indeed, the death-blow to Richard's waning popularity; and reference to the strong language of the Croyland historian, and Fabyan, the city annalist, will sufficiently prove that, from the time this king sanctioned the imposts, religious and secular, to which he was driven, in this his great strait, (for the sum was specified which the clergy as well as laymen were required to give,)‡‡ he was subjected to the united enmity of the church, which had recently lauded him to the skies, of the citizens of London, who had conducted him twice in triumph to their city, and of the many wealthy and richly-endowed commoners, who had hitherto remained neutral amidst the political distractions which had terminated one dynasty and elevated another to the throne.

The ecclesiastical writer, after detailing the immediate cause that led to this mode of replenishing the royal coffers, viz., the impending invasion of the Earl of Richmond, says:§§ "Herewith he (King Richard) was not displeased, thinking it would put an end to all his doubts and troubles;" "cunningly, however, remembering that money, of which he had now so little, was the nerve of war, he resorted to the exactions of King Edward,‖‖

* Chron. Croy., p. 571.
† Rous, p. 215.
‡ "This tax, called a Benevolence, was devised by Edward IV., for which he sustained much envy. It was abolished by Richard III., by act of Parliament, to ingratiate himself with the people, and it was now revised by King Henry VII., but with consent of Parliament, for so it was not in the time of King Edward IV."—*Bacon's Henry VII.*, p. 100.
§ See ch. 10, p. 183, note.
‖ Lingard, vol. v. pp. 221. 225.
¶ Buck, lib. v. p. 134.
** Stat. of Realm, vol. ii. p. 478.
†† Hab. Edw. IV., p. 131.
‡‡ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 275.
§§ Chron. Croy., p. 571.
‖‖ Fabyan (p. 694) states that King Edward demanded from the wealthiest of his commoners "the wages of half a man for the year," or 4*l.* 11*s.* 3*d.*, and that he got

which he condemned in full Parliament benevolences—a word hated by all: and he sent chosen men, sons of this age, more prudent in their generations than the sons of light, who, by prayers and threats, extorted from the chests of almost all ranks very large sums of money."*

Fabyan not only corroborates this account, but so forcibly depicts the distressed state of mind to which the king was reduced before having recourse to the measure, that his emphatic description of the treachery and ingratitude which evidently aggravated the king's most trying position at this crisis, affords a melancholy picture of the degenerate state of the nobility at this most important period of English history. "And in the month of February following," he writes, "King Richard, then leading his life in great agony and doubt, trusting few of such as were about him, spared not to spend the great treasure which before King Edward gathered in, giving of great and large gifts. By means whereof he alone wasted, not the great treasure, but also he was in such danger that he borrowed many notable sums of money of the rich men of this realm, and especially of the citizens of London, whereof the least sum was forty pounds, for surety whereof he delivered to them good and sufficient pledges."†

With such guarantee for repayment, and it is well known that Richard pledged even his plate‡ and jewels to raise money in this emergency, it can scarcely be said that he revived, in its extreme sense, the obnoxious system of "Benevolences;" the tax so designated being absolutely required as a gift by King Edward. "The name it bore," observes that monarch's biographer,§ "was a benevolence, though many disproved the signification of the word by their unwillingness to the gift." Whereas King Richard is allowed by one of the citizens of London, who was cotemporary with him,‖ to have given "good and sufficient pledges," as surety for the sums which he sought as a temporary loan. The official record which perpetuates the tax, yet further certifies to this fact: "Commissioners were appointed to borrow money for the king's use;"¶ and the same register demonstrates, also, most conclusively, the cause for which these loans were made, viz., "for such great and excessive costs and charges as we must hastily bear and sustain, as well for the keeping of the sea as otherwise for the defence of the realm."** Although no mention is made of the assembling of Parliament during this second year of his reign, yet the letters delivered by the above-named commissioners afford undeniable proof that Richard adopted this strong measure by the consent and sanction of his privy council; and these credentials†† being prefaced with the words—"to be delivered to those from whom the commons requested loans in the king's name," together with their embracing also this strong expression—"for that intent his grace *and all his lords* thinking that every true Englishman will help him in that behalf," it justifies the inference that King Richard neither acted tyrannically nor unadvisedly in this important matter, but rather followed the advice of certain leading members of both Houses, whom he had probably summoned to aid him with their counsel in so momentous a crisis.

from the lord mayor 30*l.*, and from each alderman 20 marks, or at least 10*l.* Before exacting these contributions, as "a present for the relief of his wants," the clergy, the lords, and the commons had separately granted this monarch a tenth of their income. —*Lingard*, vol.. p. 220.

* Chron. Croy., p. 571.

† Fabyan, p. 518.

‡ His want of money appears from the warrants in the Harl. MSS., "for pledging and sale of his plate."—*Turner's Middle Ages*, vol. iv. p. 29.

§ Hab. Edw. IV., p. 131.

‖ Fabyan, 518.

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** Ibid.

†† See Appendix TTT.

But vain were his efforts to stem the tide of adverse fortune! Domestic trials, mingled with the cares of state; and the hand of death was already pressing heavily on another of his house, threatening to sever the only remaining tie of home affection which had soothed and softened the anxious cares of Richard's regal career. His gentle consort, the companion of his childhood, and the loved one of maturer years, had never recovered the shock which she sustained from the sudden death of her only child. The king was, indeed, compelled to struggle with his grief, being speedily called upon to take part in stirring scenes, which afforded little time or opportunity for indulging in that anguish which the chronicler of Croyland graphically paints as approaching almost to insanity:* not so the afflicted and distressed queen; she had both time and leisure to dwell upon her irreparable loss.† To all the tenderness of the fondest parent she united that pride of ancestry which was inherent in her lofty race, and which was so strikingly exhibited at York as she led by the hand in triumph her princely child, his fair young forehead graced with the golden circlet of heir-apparent to the throne. The anguish of the bereaved mother, the blight which had prematurely withered her fondest hopes, and left her childless at the very period when maternal love and maternal pride most exultingly filled her heart, produced so disastrous an effect on a frame which was never robust, and of late had been subjected to excitement of no ordinary kind, that it gradually produced symptoms which presaged a dissolution as premature, arising from a disease similar in its nature to that which had consigned her sister, the Duchess of Clarence, to an early grave.‡ Consumption,§ there seems little doubt, was the true cause of the "gradual decay" which is stated, in both instances, to have wasted the strength of the daughters of the Earl of Warwick. If, however, the state of debility consequent on that incurable disease, and into which the Lady Isabel fell for two months preceding her death, was publicly imputed to poison,‖ and if the impetuous Clarence not only procured the execution of one of her attendant gentlewomen on that charge, but even accused King Edward's queen of accelerating the dissolution of his duchess by means of necromancy,¶ it can scarcely be wondered at that Richard, accused of the murder of his nephews, and to whom even the death of his royal brother by poison had been imputed by the malice of his enemies,** although he was widely separated from him at the time the event occurred, it can scarcely, I repeat, excite astonishment that motives were industriously sought for to account for Queen Anne's declining health, or that her death, following so immediately as it did upon that of the young Prince of Wales, was imputed to the king's desire of ridding himself of a consort, now weak in health and subdued in spirit.†† Poison was the vague instrument to

* Chron. Croy., p. 570.

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‖ Rot. Parl., vi. p. 173.

¶ Ibid., vi. p. 174.

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which it was the custom of the times to attribute all cases of sudden or unexpected death, and the accusers of Richard acted upon a custom at once so common and so convenient.

But nothing can be more cruel or more unreasonable than this base insinuation, for which there exists no sort of foundation, even on the ground of expediency as in the case of the murder of the young princes. From infancy the cousins had lived on terms of amity and affection. No record exists, either positive or implied, as in the preceding and succeeding reigns to intimate that the royal pair, after their union in marriage, were unhappy or led a life of cold indifference. In every public ceremony, in every state banquet, on every momentous occasion, Richard III. was accompanied by Queen Anne. She is to be found supporting her part with becoming splendour and dignity at both his coronations; she was the companion alike of his regal progress and of his sojourn in more troubled times in the north; and it was the queen, and not the king, who exhibited to the delighted multitude at York, young Edward of Gloucester as the future monarch of England. They were resting together at Nottingham Castle when intelligence arrived of his death; and the harmony and affection in which they were living at the time that this fearful stroke of domestic bereavement fell upon them can scarcely be better illustrated than by the fact that the cotemporary annalist, in his forcible description of the bitterness of heart which overwhelmed both parents, sinks the dignity of their regal state in the appellation which most pathetically painted the union of home affections thus severed and broken: "Then might you have seen the father and mother, having heard the news at Nottingham, where they then dwelt, almost mad with sudden grief."*

There is not, in fact, the slightest basis for imputing to Richard a crime as far exceeding all charitable belief as it was unnatural and uncalled for; nor, indeed, have his calumniators advanced any stronger proof to convict him of the monstrous charge than that inferred from suspicions excited by the simple fact that the youthful Princess Elizabeth, who, after the reconciliation of her uncle and her mother, was placed about the person of her aunt, the queen consort, appeared in robes of a similar form and texture to those worn by Queen Anne. On this interpretation of a circumstance, in itself so unimportant that the "only rational conclusion to be drawn from the coincidence," justly observes one of the ablest writers of the present day,† is the proof it affords that Richard strictly fulfilled his engagement, that his nieces should be supported as became his kinswomen, has this last and most appalling of this monarch's reputed crimes been fastened upon him; and, to heighten the fearful picture, his object in destroying the wife whom he had struggled to obtain in youth amidst the severest difficulties is inferred to have arisen from the desire of elevating to the throne his own niece! the sister of the young princes whom he is reputed to have slain, the daughter of his own brother, and, as surmised, the destined spouse of his deceased child! It is too monstrous to be credited; and the insinuation is rendered more doubtful from the prejudiced source whence it springs.

This most heinous and revolting crime is not hinted at by the ecclesiastical historian, who has perpetuated the report, until Richard had incurred the anger of the church by his renewal of "Benevolences," which tax, — from their great wealth, — fell with peculiar severity on the religious fraternities of which this writer was a member; and because the amusements and

* Chron. Croy., p. 570.

† See Sir Harris Nicolas' Memoir, prefixed to the "Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York," fol. 42.

festivities which immediately preceded the levying of that tax, and with which the king had thought fitting to modify the discomfort that had hitherto characterized his reign, afforded them an opening for ascribing the king's pecuniary wants to unnecessary profuseness. "It is not to be concealed, that during the feast of the Nativity he was over much intent upon singing and dancing and vain changes of dress," is the strong language of the ecclesiastical chronicler,* "which were given of the same colour and form to Queen Anne and to the Lady Elizabeth, daughter of the deceased king, whereat the people were scandalized, and the peers and prelates marvellously wondered; for it was said by many, that the king, either in expectation of the queen's death, or by divorce, for the procuring of which it was conjectured that he had sufficient cause, applied his mind in all ways to contracting a marriage with the said Elizabeth; he did not otherwise see that the realm would be confirmed to him, or his competitor deprived of hope."

That King Richard should strive to the utmost of his power to cancel the betrothment between Henry of Richmond and the Princess Elizabeth, whose stipulated marriage was alike the condition, as it formed the sole ground of hope, for his rival being supported in his attempts upon the crown, is a conclusion not only reasonable in itself, but one which can admit of no doubt.

Far different, however, is the surmise that Richard's own union with his niece could confirm to him the realm, or in the remotest degree strengthen his regal position. To have elevated her to the throne, in virtue of her illustrious descent, as King Edward's eldest daughter, in which position alone she could have given weight to his disputed title, would at once have impeached his own right to the throne, would have impugned the validity of the decree of Parliament which confirmed that assumed right, and would have made him a self-convicted usurper, by disproving not alone the charge of Queen Elizabeth's marriage being invalid, but rendering informal also the Act of Settlement by which her offspring were declared illegitimate, and himself the true, just, and rightful heir to the throne, arising from the stigma attached to the birth of young Edward V., and the legal impediments which excluded the offspring of the Duke of Clarence from the throne, by reason of their parents' attainder, which had never been reversed. The learned biographer of Elizabeth of York, in his most interesting memoir of that princess,† has devoted so much attention, and evinced such ability in his keen and searching examination into this disputed, and, as it would appear, most groundless accusation, that little opening is left for any more conclusive arguments than those which that eminent writer advances, after testing the charge insinuated by Richard's political enemies, and weighing their evidence by other and more valid documents.‡ Convincing, however, as are the reasons which Sir Harris Nicolas brings forward to invalidate a charge which rests, as he most distinctly proves, on no more solid basis than surmise, yet being there advanced with a view of exculpating the youthful daughter of Edward IV., and not King Richard III., they can only be referred to in this memoir. Nevertheless, the learned writer, in defence of the niece, has adduced causes that equally tend to exonerate the uncle from a project in which both parties are alike implicated: for it is beyond all credibility to suppose that this young and singularly exemplary princess, who had not attained her nineteenth§ year, and had been subdued by trials and

* Chron. Croy., p. 572.

† Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York, fol. 42. 46.

‡ See Appendix UUU.

§ Elizabeth of York, eldest daughter of King Edward IV., was born at Westminster, 11th of February, 1466.—*Sandford*, book v. p. 395.

mortifications,* more than sufficient to blunt the most buoyant and elastic spirit, could calmly insult the feelings of the reigning queen by appearing publicly in the character of her successor,† could unblushingly present herself to the assembled multitude as the affianced of their sovereign during the lifetime of his wife,‡ or that she should eagerly watch, as asserted,§ for the decease of her aunt, which, whether resulting from natural causes,‖ or from poison said to be administered by her husband,¶ was to be the means of raising her kinswoman to the throne as the consort of her own uncle, and that too the same person who was accused of having murdered her brothers! for by admitting the certainty of their deaths only could she have been the heiress of Edward IV., or have possessed any claim to that inheritance, the admitted title to which, as giving stability to Richard's alleged unlawful seizure of it, was the cause assigned by his cotemporary,** for his selecting Elizabeth of York as his future consort. The supposition is, indeed, too monstrous for belief, and justifies the conclusion of the above-quoted most able historian, that King Richard "never contemplated a marriage with his niece," but "that the whole tale was invented with the view of blackening his character, to gratify the monarch in whose reign†† all the cotemporary writers who relate it flourished."‡‡ This conclusion is also strengthened by the fact that all these writers agree in exculpating the princess (then the royal consort of Henry VII.) from all participation in the scheme, whereas those who were cotemporary with the rumour, and give it as such only,§§ make no reservation, but, on the contrary, assign as the foundation for the surmise a circumstance which, if true, implicates her fully as much as her uncle; if false, exculpates both, and invalidates the report altogether. In addition to the arguments thus drawn from the untenable and unsatisfactory character of the rumour itself there exist many positive facts, which tend still further to weaken this aspersion of King Richard.

These ought to have their due weight in rescuing that monarch from an imputation which, it has been shown, originated with unscrupulous political assailants, but which has since too long passed and been received as an historical fact. It appears that, after the widow and children of King Edward IV. were induced to leave the sanctuary at Westminster, they were received "with honourable courtesie"‖‖ by Richard and his royal consort, especially the Lady Elizabeth, who "ranked most familiarly in the queen's favour, and with as little distinction as sisters."¶¶ This admission alone would satisfactorily account for any coincidence in the form or texture of their dresses.*** The young princess was placed by the queen on an equality

* This young princess had early been promised in marriage to the Dauphin of France, and in the court of France was called Madame la Dauphine; but Louis, the reigning sovereign of that kingdom, broke his solemn pledge to Edward IV.: indignation at which not only led to the death of that king, but was the exciting cause of the severe misfortunes which afterwards overwhelmed his offspring.

† Chron. Croy., p. 572.

‡ Ibid.

§ Buck, lib. iv. p. 123.

‖ Ibid.

¶ Rous, p. 218.

** Chron. Croy., p. 572.

†† Grafton, Hall and Holinshed, with other chroniclers who perpetuate the rumour, or rather record it as an acknowledged fact, not only penned their works during the Tudor dynasty, but commenced them very many years after King Richard's death.

‡‡ Memoir of Elizabeth of York, p. 46.

§§ Chron. Croy., p. 572.

‖‖ Buck, lib. iv. p. 127.

¶¶ Chron. Croy., p. 571.

*** It was not until a later period of history that sumptuary regulations were issued for the "reformation of apparel for great estates or princesses, with other ladies and gentlemen." These statutes, with the "orders for precedence," yet extant in the Heralds' College, were drawn out by the Countess of Richmond, by command of her son Henry VII., in the eighth year of his reign. It is therefore evident that at this time there existed no impediment to preclude the queen and the princesses from wearing corresponding dresses on general occasions. Had such an edict prevailed, subsequent laws would not have been required.

with herself; and since no statement is made of Elizabeth being arrayed in the vestments of royalty, but simply that at feasts, in which "dancing and singing and vain changes of dress" were made a reproach to her uncle, she was attired in robes similar to those of her aunt, nothing can be more reasonable than the supposition that the queen should soften the painful position in which her young relative now appeared at court, as the daughter of Dame Elizabeth Grey, instead of, as heretofore, the princess royal of the line of York, by attiring her as became the niece of the reigning monarch, and one whom the queen loved and distinguished "as a sister." Moreover, the peculiar degree of favour which was quickly lavished upon the Lady Elizabeth, gave occasion for the surmise that she was destined to be the bride of the young Prince of Wales.* If such were, indeed, the case, she would become yet more an object of interest to her afflicted aunt; and the similarity in their dresses would be still more satisfactorily accounted for from the pleasure, melancholy but natural, which the queen would feel in arraying the contemplated bride of her deceased child as befited the exalted station which she would probably have filled had his life been spared. The words which follow the passage recently quoted from the cotemporary chronicler, for the purpose of demonstrating the terms of familiarity on which the queen and the princess lived, seem to imply that it bore some connection to the deceased prince; "but neither society that she loved, nor all the pomp and festivity of royalty, could cure the languor or heal the wound in the queen's breast for the loss of her son."† As the consort of the Prince of Wales, Elizabeth would, indeed, have destroyed all hope of Richmond's attaining the crown; equally expedient, also, in regard to policy, would have been the alliance between the two cousins, with reference to its strengthening the position of King Richard: since, without in any degree compromising the justice of the plea by which he was elected to the throne, or repealing the act that made his brother's offspring illegitimate, the union of a daughter of Edward IV. with the heir of Richard III. would have softened the resentment of the opposing party, by the prospect which it held out of restoring the sceptre to King Edward's race in the person of his eldest child. But the demise of the Prince of Wales occurring so immediately after the reception of Elizabeth and her sisters at court, and before any such measure, if it were contemplated, could be adopted by the king for carrying into effect a scheme so desirable for restoring peace to the realm, this circumstance left his niece still the betrothed of Henry of Richmond, and, as such, an object of anxious and unceasing solicitude to her uncle. Hence arose the real cause of her close companionship with the queen, by being placed in personal attendance upon whom the young Elizabeth was kept in real though honourable captivity.‡ As far as the investigation of this, the darkest of King Richard's reputed crimes, has yet been pursued, the imputation has rested on conjecture alone; but as the question of whether he did actually wish to marry his niece is as important to his character as the allegation that he hastened the death of his wife to further that intention is altogether destructive of it, it is requisite to state, that Sir George Buck gives the substance of a letter said to have been written by the Lady Elizabeth to the Duke of Norfolk, which, if the fact could be substantiated, would fully support the injurious accusation as regards the king, and implicate his niece in the

* Lingard, p. 262.

† Chron. Croy., p. 571.

‡ Lingard, vol. v. p. 262.

heinous charge of seeking to further her uncle's unhallowed and most criminal design. The Croyland writer unhesitatingly asserts that Richard contemplated a union with the Princess Elizabeth: but this assumption, it has been shown, was gratuitous, and based only on common rumour. Fabyan, another cotemporary writer, is altogether silent on the subject; so likewise is Rous, the only remaining historian coeval with the monarch, although, in summing up the catalogue of his imputed crimes, he includes the poisoning of his wife.* This catalogue, it may be necessary to remark, is compiled with such an evident party feeling towards the House of Lancaster, and so unreservedly includes every accusation advanced against King Richard without adducing proof in support of any single allegation, that it cannot be regarded as possessing a shadow of historical authority. Nothing, indeed, approaching to evidence has ever been adduced, with the exception of the letter above named, as cited by Buck; and his notice of so important a document appears in so questionable a form, that it goes but very little way towards establishing the point.

"When the midst and last of February was past," writes Sir George Buck,† "the Lady Elizabeth, being more impatient and jealous of the success than every one knew or conceived, wrote a letter to the Duke of Norfolk, intimating, first, that he was the man in whom she most affied, in respect of that love her father had ever bore him. Then she congratulates his many courtesies, in continuance of which she desires him to be a mediator with her to the king in behalf of the marriage propounded between them, who, as she wrote, was her only joy and maker in this world; and that she was his in heart and thought: withal insinuating that the better part of February was passed, and that she feared the queen would never die." "All these be her own words, written with her own hand; and this is the sum of her letter," continues the historian,‡ "which remains in the autograph or original draft, under her own hand, in the magnificent cabinet of Thomas, Earl of Arundel and Surrey."§

If Sir George Buck had himself seen the letter, and spoken of its contents from his own knowledge,—if either himself or any other writer had inserted a copy of it, or even a transcript from the "original draft," then, indeed, it would have been difficult to set aside such testimony. But considering that every search has been made for the alleged autograph,—that no trace of such a document has ever been discovered, or even known to have existed,—that no person is named as having seen it, or is instanced in support of its validity,—and, moreover, that Sir George Buck, throughout his history of Richard III., inserts, at full length, copies‖ of almost every other instrument to which he refers, or gives marginal references to the source whence his authority was derived, but, in this instance, contents himself with merely stating the fact, and giving the substance of a letter which he appears to have received from rumour or hearsay information, the conviction cannot but arise that the letter in question was either not the production of Elizabeth of York, or, if so, that the insinuations referred to in it were misconstrued, and that its contents had reference to some other individual, and not, as was supposed, to her uncle.¶

* Rous, p. 215.

† Lib. iv. p. 128. ‡ Buck, lib. i. p. 128.

§ The valuable collection of MSS. made by Thomas, Earl of Arundel, now termed "The Arundelian Library," has been most carefully examined, with reference to the present work, but no trace appears of this extraordinary letter.

‖ See pp. 23. 31. 48. 119. 121. 137. 139.

¶ "If the letter cited by Buck really existed, its purport may perhaps be reconciled with other facts, by supposing that he mistook, or assigned to it a wrong date, and that, in fact, the person for whom she expressed so eager a desire to marry was Henry instead of Richard. Many parts of the abstract would agree with this hypothesis, for the allusion to February and Queen Anne, Buck calls an 'insinuation;' and a passage of doubtful import becomes doubly so when construed by so suspicious a reporter. The only thing which renders this surmise unlikely is, that the letter is said to have been addressed by the Duke of Norfolk, who perished at Bosworth Field: but may not its address, too, have been only inferred, arising from its being in the possession of the duke's descendant?"—*Memoirs of Elizabeth of York*, fol. xlix.

Although Richard III. is described by his enemies as being destitute of all principle, moral and religious, it was not so with his gentle niece; and the piety and virtue for which she was pre-eminently distinguished throughout a life of peculiar trial and vicissitude* materially lessen the effect of the slight evidence just produced, though it sufficiently accounts for the "sisterly" affection with which she was beloved by the queen, her intimate companionship with whom was, in all likelihood, the cause of the injurious rumour which has alike darkened her own fame and that of the king. Her widowed parent likewise shared in the odium which attaches to all the parties concerned in promoting this unnatural union, it being stated that she was so overjoyed at the proposed alliance of King Richard with her daughter, that she sent over to France to withdraw her son, the Marquis of Dorset, from attendance on the Earl of Richmond,† soliciting his return to England to participate in the advancement and favour which Richard had promised to show him. Considering that Queen Anne was living at the time the alleged union was proposed, and that some length of period must have elapsed before the dispensation could be procured from Rome, which was necessary to legalize the marriage of an uncle with his niece, it is very improbable that so circumspect and politic a woman as the widowed queen of Edward IV. would risk the life of her only surviving son, by withdrawing him from the service of the prince, who was the betrothed of his sister, to place him in the power of a monarch who was reported to have slain his brothers. It is, indeed, altogether beyond belief that a mother should promote the marriage of her daughter with the reputed murderer of her other children,—the uncle who had deprived her sons of their birthright, and degraded herself and her daughters from their high estate to the rank of private gentlewomen, in order to possess himself of their inheritance. One of the charges must be false; and either the widowed Elizabeth was satisfied that King Richard had not destroyed her offspring, or, otherwise, she must, in common with her daughter and the king, have suffered unjustly from rumours based on shallow foundations, or inferences drawn from false premises to suit the degraded and deceitful policy of the times. It is, nevertheless, due to her to state, that the chroniclers who narrate the circumstances of her endeavouring to detach the Marquis of Dorset from Richmond's interest, place it as occurring at the time when she quitted sanctuary‡ with her daughters, and, consequently, before the queen's illness or the death of the young prince gave an opening for Richard to propose an alliance with the youthful Elizabeth.

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* "From her youth, her veneration for the Supreme Being and devotion to Him were admirable. Her love to her brothers and sisters was unbounded. Her affection and respect to the poor and to religious ministers were singularly great."—*Bern. Andreas, Cotton. MS.*, Dom. xviii.

† Buck, p. 127.

‡ "Wherefore the king sent to the queen, being in sanctuary, divers and often messengers, which first should excuse and purge him of all things before against her attempted or procured, and afterwards should so largely promise promotions innumerable and benefices, not only to her, but also to her son Lord Thomas Marquis Dorset, that they should bring her, if it were possible, into some wanhope, or, as men say, into a fool's paradise."—*Grafton, Cont. More*, p. 198.

If, then, amidst such contradictory accounts, any opinion can be hazarded on the probability of a fact so involved in mystery, the natural conclusion to be drawn from this last statement would be that the queen-dowager was induced to quit the sanctuary from the prospect of her daughter being allied to King Richard's heir, and that she wished, from this circumstance, to detach her son from the Earl of Richmond, and, in consequence, made the attempt at the period mentioned, it being a proposition, under her peculiar and very trying circumstances, that would justify her saying, without compromising her own or her daughter's honour, "that all offences were forgotten and forgiven," and that she was "highly incorporate in the king's heart."*

It appears that the severe illness which threatened the life of Queen Anne occurred a few days after the Christmas festivities. From the period of her child's decease a report certainly prevailed of her languid and precarious state of health;† and the fatigue resulting from the entertainments which ushered in the new year of 1485 may, very possibly, have increased the disease which originated in "pining grief" and desponding of heart at her severe domestic bereavement. But the charge of King Richard having poisoned his wife, which fills up the measure of this monarch's alleged crimes, is not only negatived by the fact of her slow but gradual decline, and the duration of her illness for a period infinitely too long to have seemed likely to result from sinister means or violent measures, but is still further disproved by the testimony of the Croyland historian, who expressly avers that, from the commencement of her attack, the queen was under the care and control of physicians; and that the king abided so implicitly by their advice, that he withdrew from the society of his consort‡ when this separation was rendered necessary in consequence of her increasing illness. Even this act, however, which was the result, and not the cause, of her sufferings, has been made a further cause of reproach to her husband, who, by the Tudor chroniclers,§ has been accused of hastening her death by neglect and unkindness, nay, of even spreading a report that she was actually dead, in the hope that indignation at such heartless indifference for her fate would more speedily terminate her existence. If, indeed, King Richard had recourse to such an expedient, and if the rumour designed for the queen's ears was rendered more painful to a wife's feelings by being accompanied by the most harsh and inhuman reflections on her enfeebled state,‖ his behaviour, as detailed by the same writer to his declining queen, when with tearful eyes, and in sorrowful agony, she repaired to his presence to inquire "why he had judged her worthy to die,"¶ is very singularly opposed to the merciless conduct which led to so affecting an interview. "The king answered her with fair words," he soothed her grief, comforted her with smiling and tender caresses, "bidding her be of good cheer, for to his knowledge she should have no other cause."** Nor is there, indeed, the slightest proof on record to show that Queen Anne had other cause for death than the gradual but certain effects of the lingering consumption which was surely, but slowly, consuming her. From the fact of the court removing to Windsor†† on the 12th of January, shortly after the first symptoms of danger appeared, it would seem as if every means was adopted that human skill could devise for checking the progress of the disease, and such as were consistent with

* Grafton, p. 199.
† Buck, lib. ii. p. 44.
‡ Chron. Croy., p. 570.
§ Pol. Virg., p. 557; Grafton, p. 201; Hall, p. 407.
‖ Ibid.
¶ Ibid.
** Grafton, p. 201.
†† Harl. MSS., 433, pp. 200, 201.

the assertion that Richard was "affectionately inclined to his wife,"* and had the commendation of a "loving and indulgent husband."† But, in truth, from the very commencement of her seizure, the physicians had pronounced the queen's case to be hopeless, and even considered it unlikely that she would survive the month of February.‡ She lingered, however, until March, "about the middle of which month," says the Croyland writer, "on the day of the great eclipse of the sun, she died, and was buried at Westminster, with all honour befiting a queen."§

So terminated, in the spring of the year 1485, the life of Queen Anne, the only surviving daughter of the Earl of Warwick, and the partner, for twelve years, of the last monarch of the princely race of York; the accession of which dynasty to the throne, and its subsequent deposition, had mainly contributed to fix upon her father his title of "the king-maker." She sank to rest in the 31st year of her age, after wearing the crown as queen consort for the limited space of twenty months—a period, notwithstanding its short duration, that commemorates her as the only instance in our regal annals of a twice crowned and twice enthroned queen, a period which was characterized by the elevation of her husband to the throne, although, at the time, far removed from the direct line of succession, and which chronicles her child as bearing the title of Prince of Wales,—which had been so ominous to his race,‖—for an interval as brief as that which commemorates her own betrothment to the heir-apparent of the House of Lancaster; by virtue of which political contract she forms one out of the six¶ illustrious individuals who alone have borne the high and ancient appellation of Princess of Wales. This early and transient prospect of succeeding to the exalted rank to which she eventually attained, and which Rous her cotemporary has perpetuated by surmounting her portrait with two mystic hands, the one tendering to her the crown of Lancaster, the other that of York, adds another to the many remarkable events which procured for her the epithet of "the pageant queen,"** that of receiving homage as Princess of Wales from one branch of the race of Plantagenet, although the one which was never destined to elevate her to the throne,—and attaining the dignity of queen through a union with the youngest member of the rival house, him in whom the race as well as the dynasty became altogether extinct, but who, as neither heir-apparent nor heir-presumptive, could hold out no prospect at the time of bestowing upon her that regal coronet which, wreathed with the red rose, she had indeed once been led to expect as her marriage portion. Its after-possession brought with it but little of peace, and still less of happiness, arising from the rival broils and domestic trials which marked the brief interval that elapsed before the white rose of York withered on the brows of the last of the Plantagenet queens, the gentle and amiable consort of Richard III.

Her decease, occurring on a day rendered remarkable by a total eclipse of the sun, an event viewed with superstitious feelings and gloomy forebodings

* Buck, lib. iv. p. 129.
† Ibid., p. 130.
‡ Ibid., p. 128.
§ Chron. Croy., p. 571.
‖ Richard, Duke of York, the father of Richard III., (created prince by the Parliament, which admitted his claim to the throne,) was killed at Wakefield; Edward, Prince of Wales, the heir of King Henry VI., was slain at Tewkesbury; Edward, Prince of Wales, eldest son of Edward IV., (and who, for a few months, bore the title of King Edward V.,) is reputed to have been murdered in the Tower; and Edward, Prince of Wales, the only child of Richard III., died suddenly a few months after he was advanced to the title.
¶ Strickland's Lives of the Queens of England, vol. iii. p. 362.
** Lawrence's Mem. of the Queens of England, p. 440.

at this early period of history, doubtless added force to the rumours which had long prevailed to the disadvantage of the king, and contributed to raise fresh reports, which, being based on compassion for the deceased queen, were eagerly adopted as facts by Richard's political enemies, and thence found their way into the pages of history by succeeding prejudiced annalists. The gorgeous manner, however, in which the obsequies of the deceased queen were solemnized, the magnificence* of the funeral, the solemnity† by which it was characterized, the tears‡ which her husband is allowed to have shed when personally attending her remains to St. Peter's, Westminster,§ near the high altar of which she was interred, with all honour befiting a queen‖ —not only give proof that her decease "added not a little to the king's sufferings and sorrows,"¶ but fully justify the biographer of her reputed rival in stating (after defending Richard from the calumnious accusation of poisoning his wife to espouse his niece), that it is a charge which is deserving of attention for no other reason than as it affords a remarkable example of the manner in which ignorance and prejudice sometimes render what is called history little better than a romance.**

* Buck, lib. iv. p. 129.
‡ Baker's Chron., p. 232.
‖ Chron. Croy., p. 571.
** Memoirs of Elizabeth of York, p. 46.
† Grafton, p. 201.
§ Grafton, p. 201.
¶ Buck, lib. ii. p. 44.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Richard III. disclaims all intention of marrying the Princess Elizabeth.—The forced loans the true cause of his unpopularity at this period.—Elizabeth of York sent to Sheriff Hutton.—Injustice to King Richard.—Prejudices of his accusers.—His wise and beneficial laws.—His efforts to redress grievances and reform abuses.—Advantage to the country from his foreign and domestic policy.—Report of the Earl of Richmond being concealed in Wales.—His narrow escape from being captured by Richard's soldiery.—His re-appearance at the French court.—Sir James Blount releases the Earl of Oxford.—They join the Earl of Richmond at Paris.—Richard III. quits London and fixes his abode at Nottingham.—Strong measures taken to repel the impending invasion.—Predilection of the House of York for Nottingham Castle.—Richard's proclamation and Richmond's reply.—The earl obtains assistance from the French king.—Perfidy of Richard's counsellors.—Suspicious conduct of Lord Stanley.—Secrecy of Richmond's measures.—He lands at Milford Haven.—Passes rapidly through Wales.—Arrives at Shrewsbury, and enters Litchfield.—King Richard quits Nottingham and marches to Leicester to intercept his progress.—The two armies meet near Redmore Plain.—Disposition of the hostile forces.—Battle of Bosworth Field.—Treachery of the Lord Stanley, the Earl of Northumberland, and Sir William Stanley.—The king performs prodigies of valour.—Challenges Richmond to single combat.—Is perfidiously dealt with, overpowered by numbers, and mortally wounded.—Death of King Richard III.

If the exigences of the state at the period of his son's decease allowed King Richard but little leisure to indulge in the anguish consequent upon a stroke as poignant as it was irreparable, still less time or opportunity was permitted him to brood over the loss of that gentle consort who, from childhood, was associated in the vicissitudes that characterized the fortunes of his race. The kingdom, indeed, was on the eve of a rebellion;* perfidy within his household† had destroyed Richard's confidence in those that surrounded him;‡ and rumour from without, with her hundred tongues, by rendering him odious to his subjects at large, had completed the measure of his misfortune. Little is it then to be marvelled at that the monarch was altogether subdued by a state of things so disheartening, or that he felt keenly the loss of that faithful partner with the remembrance of whom must have been associated the recollection of days of unmingled happiness and prosperity. Many trifling anecdotes, indeed, although in themselves unimportant, demonstrate the affection which Richard III. entertained for the companion of his youth. One of his last acts prior to the queen's decease, and at the time when her dissolution was hourly expected, was a grant of 300*l.* to that university which in the preceding year had decreed an annual mass for "the happy state" of the king and "his dearest consort, Anne;"§ and one of the first instruments which bears his signature after her demise affords proof also of the disinclination which he felt to take part in those pageants which heretofore he had considered it a duty to promote, and in the celebration of

* Fabyan, p. 518.
† See Sharon Turner's Middle Ages, vol. iv. p. 57.
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§ Cott. MS. Faustina, c. iii. 405.; see also Cooper's Ann. of Cambridge, p. 229.

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which he had invariably been accompanied and assisted by his queen. The document here alluded to is a commission addressed to Lord Maltravers, appointing him his deputy at the approaching festival "of the glorious martyr, and patron of England, St. George," which solemn feast the king could not, at this time, "in his own person, conveniently keep."*

There can be little doubt, indeed, from the superstition which characterized those times, that the astronomical phenomenon which marked the day of Queen Anne's decease was pregnant with evil consequences to her husband. The ignorance of the age, which construed even the most natural events into good or evil omens,† considered the eclipse of the sun to be an unequivocal proof that some unhallowed means had been used to accelerate her dissolution, and regarded it as affording additional evidence of the truth of the rumour that her illness had originated in the king's desire of elevating his niece to the throne.

In vain was every pains taken by the monarch to prove the groundlessness of such a charge, in vain his efforts to show, by his actions, that whatever seeming foundation there might have been for the report, arising from the coincidence in the dresses of the aunt and the niece, yet that it was so judged of by others on the ground of political expediency alone. It was sufficient for his enemies that he carefully guarded the young Elizabeth from collision with the partisans of Henry of Richmond, and that his queen, shortly after she was left childless, followed her offspring to the tomb, and left an opening for King Richard to elevate to the throne the affianced of his much-hated rival.

Whatever may have been the nature of King Richard's views with reference to the Lady Elizabeth,—whether in accordance with the dissembling policy of the age, he tacitly permitted the report to gain ground from the wish to mortify and thwart the hopes and expectations of the Earl of Richmond,—yet this one fact is incontrovertible,—Richard neither sought a divorce during the life of the queen, notwithstanding his niece was betrothed to Henry of Richmond long before apprehensions were excited for the safety of his royal consort, neither did he profess himself the suitor of his young kinswoman, nor give any pretence for asserting that he entertained so unnatural a design after death had severed the only tie that interposed against its accomplishment: on the contrary, the king promptly adopted measures to exculpate himself from a charge equally at variance with policy and religion.

Immediately after the remains of the deceased queen were "honourably" laid at rest, Richard summoned a council of state for the express purpose of distinctly repelling the calumnious report relative to his proposed union with his niece.

He solemnly protested, "with many words, that such a thing had never entered into his mind;"‡ and it must be admitted that if he were guiltless of the charge he could not have adopted a more manly course than this speedy denouncement of an act of which he felt himself unjustly accused. Not

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 213.

† See Warkworth's Chronicle for an account of the comet,—"the most marvellous blazing star,"—that appeared in the eleventh year of the reign of King Edward IV.; and also for many examples of the superstition which characterized that age—"tokens of death, of pestilence, of great battle, of war, and of many other divers tokens" which have beeen showed in England "for amending of men's living," the which "note of prognosticating prodigies" are the more valuable from being penned in the same year in which they happened.—*Warkworth's Chronicle, printed by the Camden Society*, pp. 22. 24. 70.

‡ Chron. Croy., p. 572.

satisfied, however, with this explicit denial before his great officers of state, the king further resolved on making his abjuration yet more public and decisive. Accordingly, "a little before Easter," in the great hall of St. John's Priory, Clerkenwell, Richard, "in the presence of the mayor and citizens of London, with a clear and loud voice repeated the aforesaid disavowal;"* contradicting most unreservedly the invidious rumour before the assembled multitude, and protesting his innocence of having ever contemplated a marriage so repugnant to the habits and usages of the English nation. The promptitude with which the king executed the strong measures he had thus resolved upon, cannot but add considerable weight to his distinct and emphatic refutation of the charge. He allowed himself no time for considering the possible advantages that might result from a union with his niece, or even of ascertaining the probability of reconciling his subjects to such an alliance, in case, "as a disciple of the Church of Rome, he had sought to fortify his throne, and prevent a civil war, by availing himself of an indulgence† which then, as now, is tolerated in Roman Catholic countries as legal;"‡ but as soon as he was at liberty to select a fresh partner to his throne, he summoned a council of state to negative a report so offensive: and within the shortest possible period that decency admitted after this more private abjuration, he called before him, not only the civic authorities of London, but "the most sad and discreet persons of the same city in great number, being present many of the lords spiritual and temporal of our land, and the substance of all our household,"§ to reiterate his denial of having ever contemplated—for such are his own words—"acting otherwise than is according to honour, truth, and the peace and rightfulness of this our land."‖

Such, in effect, is the testimony of the Croyland chronicler, who, after stating that the queen expired about "the middle of March," specifies the king's interview in the great hall of St. John, as occurring "a little before Easter," seasons so closely approximating that the ceremonial of the queen's funeral obsequies could scarcely have terminated ere the king presented himself before the citizens of London, publicly to refute an accusation eagerly seized upon by his opponents to render him yet more unpopular with the great mass of the people. But words and deeds were alike ineffectual towards reinstating the king in the affections of his subjects. The rumours that took their rise in those festivities, the alleged profuseness attending which was considered as the immediate cause of the hated tax he had been compelled to levy, fell in too well with the discontent of the multitude to afford due chance of belief in an asseveration which was imputed, not to choice, but to necessity. "The king was compelled to excuse himself," says the before-named chronicler,¶ "because his proposed marriage had become known to those who would not that it should occur."

And again, "Sir Richard Ratcliffe and Sir William Catesby, whose opinions he scarcely ever dare resist, brought forward twelve doctors in theology,

* Chron. Croy., p. 572.

† The legality or illegality of a marriage of relations must depend upon the rules of the church to which the parties belong. It was undoubtedly forbidden by the canon law; but the same law forbade a marriage between persons within the fourth degree of kindred. The pope was, however, considered to possess a dispensing power; and though, as a matter of feeling, there is a material difference between the union of first or second cousins and the marriage of a niece to her uncle, each alliance was illegal without the exercise of that power. The pontiff not only might, but often did, authorize the marriage of uncles and nieces.—*Memoir of Elizabeth of York*, p. 42.

‡ Memoir of Elizabeth of York, p. 42.

§ Drake's Ebor., p. 119.

‖ Ibid.

¶ Chron. Croy., p. 572.

who asserted that the pope could not grant a dispensation on such a degree of consanguinity."* That the supreme head of the Romish church could, and frequently has, exercised that power, and that he continues up to the present day to sanction corresponding alliances in kingdoms under his immediate ecclesiastical control, is an historical fact that cannot be denied or refuted;† but that Richard would attempt, by such an extreme measure, to accomplish a purpose which would bring him in collision with his subjects of all ranks, by setting at defiance the usages of his country, and striking at the root of its prejudices, both civil and religious, is too improbable to admit of its being placed in opposition with the recorded fact of his fervent and solemn denial of the charge, even if the ecclesiastical chronicler himself had not summed up his account by the admission, that "it was thought by many that the king's advisers, alarmed lest there should be foundation for the rumour, had started these objections, from fear that if the Princess Elizabeth attained the royal dignity she would avenge the death of her relatives, the Lord Rivers and Sir Richard Grey, upon such as had counselled the deed."‡

Most justly has it been observed, with reference to this occurrence, that "if a statement which stands on very dubious authority cannot be believed without assigning to him to whom it relates conduct directly at variance with that which the public records show he pursued, and if credence on that statement can only be given by imputing to the person an inconsistency so great, and a change of opinion so flagrant, that his political existence must have been endangered, there is just cause for rejecting every thing short of positive proof."§

It is very clear that King Richard left no legitimate means untried to stem the torrent of undeserved calumny, and to testify, by his actions, how grievously he had been defamed. He addressed a letter‖ to the citizens of York on the 11th of April, bitterly complaining of the "false and abominable language and lies," the "bold and presumptuous open speeches,"¶ spread abroad to his disadvantage, requiring the magistrates of that city to repress "all such slanders and take up the spreaders of it:" but the strongest proof that he gave of his wish to discountenance so injurious a rumour was his removing the Princess Elizabeth to an asylum far distant from himself or his court. The regal palace, indeed, was no fitting abode for his young niece, now that her aunt was no longer an occupant of its silent halls. To place her again under the care of her mother was at once to give her into the hands of his rival. Richard, therefore, chose a middle path, and sent her to share the nominal captivity of the youthful Earl of Warwick at Sheriff Hutton, "a goodly and a pleasant house of his own in Yorkshire, where he had liberty, large diet, all pleasure, and safety."** The monarch neither imprisoned the young Elizabeth, nor acted with cruelty towards her; he neither committed her to a solitary dungeon, nor concealed her place of abode from her friends or from the world: he kept her still in "honourable" captivity,†† although the evil reports which prevailed, no longer permitted him to do so under his own immediate eye. But if that were imprisonment which she shared with young Edward of Warwick, then, indeed, it was "a

* Chron. Croy., p. 572.

† Marriages between uncles and nieces have been very frequent, and allowed in other countries by the church. In the House of Austria, marriages of this kind have been very usual, the pope dispensing them.—*Buck*, lib. iv. p. 129.

‡ Chron. Croy., p. 572.

§ Memoir of Elizabeth of York, p. 46.

‖ See Appendix VVV.

¶ Drake's Ebor., p. 119.

** Buck, lib. v. p. 135.

†† Lingard, vol. v. p. 262.

prison courteous," as John Froisard saith,* for every latitude and indulgence were permitted consistent with the vigilant watch that was of necessity kept over the two members of his family, whom faction would gladly have seized upon as the individuals best suited to further the ends of the disaffected, and to insure the downfall of their uncle.

There is nothing, however, so hard to disabuse as the public mind — nothing so difficult to overcome as popular prejudice. Perhaps no stronger instance of this can be adduced than the degree of credit which has been attached for ages to every idle and vague rumour propagated to the disadvantage of Richard III., and the slight attention which has been directed to those really excellent and imperishable acts which rest not on report alone, but are indelibly connected with his name. His just and equitable laws,† his wise and useful statutes, his provident edicts, and bold enactments, have, indeed, been eulogized by the soundest lawyers,‡ and called forth the admiration of the most profound politicians.§

Brief as was the period during which he was permitted to rectify the abuses, and meet the exigences of those troubled times, he not only revived the substance of many obsolete Saxon laws in all their original purity, but he instituted fresh ones, based on such solid ground, and framed with such legislative wisdom and ability, that to this day many of the statutes of Richard III. remain in full force, and justify the encomiums which his enemies have passed upon them. "In no king's reign," states Sir Richard Baker, the chronicler of the English monarchs, "were better laws made than in the reign of this man:" "he took the ways of being a good king if he had come to be king by ways that had been good."‖ Even Lord Bacon, the biographer of his rival, bears testimony to "his politic and wholsome laws,"¶ an admission of no small importance, as emanating from the highest legal authority in the realm, and from one of the most learned men who are numbered amongst the lord chancellors of England; notwithstanding which, so firmly established was the belief in this sovereign's malpractices that Lord Bacon felt himself obliged to modify (in accordance with the prejudices of the age) the statement which his own sense of justice drew forth, by adding that "these laws were interpreted to be but the brocage of a usurper, thereby to woo and to win the hearts of the people."** "He was a good law-maker for the ease and solace of the common people," further testifies this profound philosopher and statesman; yet in summing up the "virtues and merits" of King Richard, he could not forbear adding that "even those virtues themselves were conceived to be feigned:"†† so hard is it to banish early impressions, so difficult to remove prejudices which have been long and steadily rooted in the minds even of the most discerning and erudite judges. Richard III. did, indeed, merit more generous treatment from his subjects, for amidst the turmoils and vexations, the mortifications and disappointments, which fell so thickly and so heavily upon him, his attention was unceasingly directed to one point — that of emancipating the great body of the people from the many oppressions under which they had so long and so painfully laboured, and diffusing a nobler and better spirit among all ranks, by the soundness of his edicts, and the high principles of justice, religion and morality on which they were based. "The king's highness is fully determined to see administration of justice to be had throughout

* Buck, lib. v. p. 135.

† Bacon, pp. 2, 3.

‡ See Sharon Turner, vol. iii. p. 72.

§ Buck, lib. v. p. 136.

‖ Chron. of Kings of England, p. 234.

¶ Bacon's Henry VII., p. 3.

** Ibid.

†† Ibid., p. 2.

his realm, and to reform and punish all extortion and oppression," were the words of the proclamation in which, during a brief progress into Kent, Richard invited the humblest of his people, who had been unlawfully wronged, to make his petition "to his highness; and he shall be heard, and without delay have such convenient remedy as shall accord with the laws:" for, finally concludes this important document, "his grace is utterly purposed that all his true subjects shall live in rest and quiet, and peaceably enjoy their lands and goods according to the laws."* As a means of checking the unjust verdicts which had of late years prevailed, bringing the courts of law into contempt, and frustrating the benefit designed by that noblest of our institutions — trial by jury, he struck at the root of the evil by decreeing that no individual but such as possessed freehold property to the amount of forty shillings a year should be deemed eligible to be chosen a juror;† he also granted to every justice of the peace power to bail such persons as were arrested for felony on suspicion alone:‡ but the most beneficial of his enactments, and that which afforded the greatest relief to the community at large, was a law prohibiting the seizure of property belonging to persons imprisoned on a charge of felony before conviction§—a measure which was loudly called for in consequence of the opening which a contrary usage had long afforded to the powerful to oppress the poor, their weaker opponents, and by false indictment to set at defiance all principles of justice and humanity. He framed most admirable laws for the better regulation of the temporary courts held during fairs‖—courts which in themselves, indeed, were insignificant,¶ but which, as instituted to do justice to buyers and sellers, and summarily to redress disorders committed during these chartered meetings, were invested at this time with very considerable power, arising from the importance that attached, in the middle ages, to those periodical marts, which were founded as the only medium of bartering with the merchants of other lands, and diffusing generally throughout the kingdom the various manufactures and staple commodities of its most distant provinces. The protection, indeed, which was afforded by King Richard to commerce and trade has been already partially detailed; it may, however, be further observed, that although he had reigned but twenty months up to the period under consideration, yet the nation had already extended its commerce towards the North Pole as far as Iceland,** and was peaceably trafficking with Denmark††, Germany, Flanders and the Netherlands,‡‡ as also those rich republics in the south of Europe, Genoa§§ and Venice,‖‖ which were then in the zenith of their prosperity. His attention to the maritime interests of the country are abundantly shown by edicts tending to the safety and protection¶¶ of those whose enterprising spirit led them to brave the perils which, in these early days of navigation, were inseparable from long and distant voyages; while the permission which he at this time granted for English wool being transported beyond the straits of Morocco*** was scarcely less beneficial to the realm than the restriction which was judicially imposed on the importers of foreign products, to dispose of their commodities wholesale, or otherwise to take them back within a given and limited period.†††

* Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 128.
† Stat. of Realm, vol. ii. p. 479.
‡ Ibid., p. 478.
§ Ibid., p. 479.
‖ Ibid., p. 480.
¶ These courts were entitled "Pie-poudre," a corruption of pied-poudre, dusty-foot.
** Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 88. 159.
†† Buck, lib. i. p. 33.
‡‡ Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 86.
§§ Ibid., fol. 30.
‖‖ Ibid., fol. 71.
¶¶ Ibid., fol. 159. 180.
*** Ibid., fol. 104.
††† Stat. of Realm, vol. ii. p. 508.

The register, in short, which so minutely details the public acts of this monarch, affords innumerable examples of the salutary results of his legislative ability, if deduced only from the vast sums which, in an incredibly brief space of time, enriched the country, arising from money received on imports from Spain alone;* while the abuses which he rectified in fines, feoffments and tenures, and the admirable regulations which he introduced on these and other modes of transferring landed property, together with his edicts against gambling,† and his encouragement of the truly English pastimes of archery and shooting, when legally exercised,‡ justify the observation,§ that "the proclamation of Perkin Warbeck in the ensuing reign, being addressed to popular feeling, may be considered as expressing the general estimate of Richard's reign: although desire of rule did blind him, yet in his other actions he was noble, and loved the honour of the realm, and the contentment and comfort of his nobles and people."‖ In carrying out and perfecting measures thus worthy of a great monarch, one who coveted the affection of his people, and sought to obtain it by devoting the energies of a powerful mind towards redressing their grievances, and correcting abuses so detrimental to the welfare and peace of the realm, did Richard III. pass the period that elapsed after the decease of his queen, and while anticipating the threatened invasion of the Earl of Richmond — a period the beneficial occupation of which procured for him the ungracious admission, in after-years, of "beginning to counterfeit the image of a good and well-disposed person,"¶ but which bid fair, had he lived sufficiently long to reap the fruits of a soil so judiciously cultivated, to have secured lasting advantages to his country, and proportionate renown to himself.

These pacific occupations did not, however, lessen the king's watchfulness over the motives of the insurgents, or lead him to relax in his vigilance against the threatened invasion. Various reports had reached him from time to time relative to the intentions of the rebels, but the movements of their leader were enveloped in a degree of mystery and uncertainty that caused the king considerable anxiety. From the time that Henry of Richmond had been so courteously received by the French monarch after the earl's flight from the principality of Bretagne, or rather from the period when a truce had been sought for by Charles VIII., and a league of amity been agreed to by Richard III., no satisfactory information had been received respecting his rival. Under the plea of strengthening his cause, by seeking out the exiled supporters of the House of Lancaster, the representative of that fallen dynasty had abruptly quitted Paris and the asylum there afforded to himself and his partisans, and had subsequently eluded the vigilance of King Richard's spies to ascertain or gain intimation of his retreat. Respecting his subsequent movements, the continental historians, together with the English chroniclers are altogether silent; not so, however, the Welsh bards: their cotemporary metrical lays abound with such marked allusions to the Earl of Richmond and to King Richard, under the emblems of the eagle and the lion, in conformity with the allegorical style of the poetry of that age, that there is every reason to believe that Richmond passed privately from France into Wales;** and that many wild and allegorical compositions which are yet extant refer to his perilous adventures when concealed for many months among the fastnesses of his native Cambria, wandering in various disguises

* Harl. MSS., 433, p. 99, 100.
† Ibid., fol. 219.
‡ Ibid.
§ Turner's Middle Ages, vol. iv. p. 93.
‖ Bacon, p. 155.
¶ Grafton, p. 200.
** Pennant's Tour in Wales, vol. i. p. 9.

among the haunts of his youth, partly to ascertain the sentiments of the populace as regards King Richard, and partly to judge how far he himself might venture to renew an invasion which, on the former occasion, had terminated so disastrously for himself and his supporters.

By what means the king's suspicions were excited, it is not possible to say; but the fact of some intimation having been made of the probability of his rival being concealed in Wales is evident from the circumstance of a tradition having been handed down in the Mostyn family, that the earl's retreat was actually discovered by Richard's emissaries, and that, while sojourning with the chief of that ancient race, the house was surrounded by soldiers, and Richmond, escaping with difficulty through an open window in the rear of the house, lay concealed in an obscure spot, which, under the epithet of the "King's Hole,"* yet perpetuates the romantic tale, and favours the belief that the future fortunes of the Tudor dynasty were greatly influenced by personal communication with his correspondents and allies in the west. It is certain Richmond was in full possession of all that was passing at the English court; he had both heard, and gave credit to, the rumour of King Richard's design of espousing the Princess Elizabeth: and if the reputed report of the alliance was really propagated from political views, and with the design of counteracting the schemes of the disaffected party, the device had well nigh succeeded, for the earl, trusting to the indignation which he foresaw would be excited against so unpopular a measure, resolved on strengthening his own cause by seeking to ally himself in marriage with one of the most powerful and influential families in Wales, that of Sir Walter Herbert,† whose parents had been entrusted with his guardianship in childhood, and to whom they had hoped to have united their eldest daughter.‡

The Earl of Northumberland, firmly attached to King Richard's service, had married this lady; and it was a stroke of consummate policy that led Richmond to decide on making, at this crisis of his fate, proposals to her sister, and thus, possibly, to pave the way by a renewal of early ties for interesting in his cause two chiefs now openly opposed to his schemes, but whose overwhelming influence in the north and in the west would give such weight to his future movements.

The reappearance of the Earl of Richmond amongst his exiled friends was as abrupt as had been his disappearance. Full of hope, and confident of success, bringing with him vast sums of money, and captains of known experience to aid him with their councils, he did not present himself either to his partisans or at the French court until measures were sufficiently matured to admit of his being welcomed by the former with enthusiasm, and received by the latter with that courteousness which is generally extended to those on whom fortune smiles, and over whose prospects the sun of prosperity is shining.§ Keen and observant as was the English monarch on all points connected with his own interest, or the safety of the realm, it may be supposed that he was not slow to observe the increasing strength and well-organized schemes of the rebels, notwithstanding the mystery that veiled the individual movements of their leader. Had he, however, been lulled into fancied security by the seeming inactivity of his opponent, the uncertainty of his own position could not but be painfully forced upon him

* Pennant's Tour in Wales, vol. i. p. 9.
† Grafton, p. 208. ‡ Life of Margaret Beaufort, p. 73.
§ "When the earl was thus furnished and appointed with his trusty company, and was escaped all the dangers, labyrinths and snares that were set for him, no marvel though he was jocund and glad of the prosperous success that happened in his affairs."—*Grafton*, p. 194.

by the continual defection of many wealthy commoners and influential men, in all ranks of society, who, despite his vigilance and conciliatory measures, were perpetually reported to him as having passed over to the enemy.* Still no positive imminent danger appeared to menace the kingdom, and Richard continued to reside at Westminster for the remainder of the spring, 1485, exerting himself to ameliorate the condition of his people, and bestowing earnest attention upon all works of charity and beneficence, as is instanced by the last document which received his signature prior to quitting the metropolis—that of empowering the "Hermit of Reculver," by royal commission, to collect alms for the purpose of restoring an ancient church "consecrated to the sepulture of shipwrecked mariners, and those who have perished by casualty of storms."†

But the crisis which was to decide the destinies of England, as well as the fate of her monarch, was fast approaching. Sir James Blount, the governor of Hammes, a veteran soldier in whom Richard had reposed the greatest confidence, not only abandoned his trust and deserted to the Earl of Richmond, but released from captivity the Earl of Oxford,‡ a state prisoner of known experience in martial acquirements, and who had been placed under his charge as a determined enemy of the House of York.

This dereliction, it is considered, was owing to the machinations of Bishop Morton; but the act itself was rendered more mortifying to Richard by its being accompanied with the information that Richmond's reappearance had been concomitant with this most important addition to his forces.§ It is true that prompt measures were forthwith taken for recapturing the castle and town of Hammes, and that the success which attended them, in some degree, reassured the English monarch;‖ nevertheless, the fact itself, and the desertion of Sir John Fortescue and some of the garrison at Calais, which immediately followed, could not fail to convince him that some powerful agent was tampering with the troops of his most important strongholds. It must, also, have impressed upon him the conviction that repose no longer befited him, but that his personal presence had become imperatively necessary to check the tendency to revolt, which was thus fearfully apparent, and to nullify the seditious spirit which it was the object of his enemies to excite throughout his dominions. Accordingly, "a little before Pentecost," King Richard once more quitted the metropolis, and "proceeded to the north."¶

Each day added strength to the current rumour that the rebels were hastening their approach to England, yet Richard could obtain no decisive information as to where they intended to land;** and as he slowly, but steadily, passed on from town to town, he perceived little indication of internal revolt, or of those symptoms of disaffection and anarchy which generally presage civil war. He reached Coventry towards the end of May,†† and there rested for many days, when he departed for Kenilworth, at which castle he appears to have been sojourning on the 6th of June."‡‡ He finally fixed his temporary abode at Nottingham,§§ the strength of its fortress rendering it a desirable post in the event of any sudden outbreak, while the central situation of the country made its capital a convenient spot whence Richard, without delay, could direct his steps to encounter his

* Fabyan, p. 218.
† Harl. MSS., No. 433, fol. 213.
‡ Fabyan, p. 518.
§ Buck, lib. ii. p. 58.
‖ Hall, p. 408; Grafton, p. 203.
¶ Chron. Croy., p. 572.
** Ibid.
†† Harl. MSS., No. 433, fol. 200.
‡‡ Ibid., 219.
§§ Ibid., 220.

enemies as soon as decisive information was obtained of the point where they purposed landing. To his faithful chamberlain and devoted follower, Francis Lord Lovell, the companion and friend of his youth, he committed the charge of his naval forces, leaving him at Southampton in command of the fleet* which was there stationed to resist any invasion of the southern coasts.

Before quitting London, Richard had adopted all available and politic measures for securing the peace and safety of the capital; and immediately upon his arrival at Nottingham, he followed up these salutary precautions, by apprising the authorities in his northern metropolis of the impending invasion, demanding assistance from the loyal citizens of York, and soliciting from them substantial aid in the forthcoming crisis.†

Corresponding intelligence was sent to the commissioners of array in every county throughout England, accompanied by "instructions"‡ so explicit as regards reviewing the soldiers and seeing "that they be able persons, well horsed and harnessed"—so decided in commands that their captains, "lords, and noblemen, do lay apart all ancient grudges, quarrels, rancours, and unkindness"—and so peremptory, with reference to the frequent muster of "all knights, esquires, and gentlemen," that they, "in their proper persons," may be prepared to do the king service "upon an hour's warning, whenever, by proclamation or otherwise, they shall be thereunto commanded," that Richard, although fully alive to the forthcoming storm, was equally prepared to encounter its evil consequences, and enabled calmly to await the result of the inquiries he had set on foot, and to pass the remainder of June and the greater part of the month of July in comparative tranquillity. The Castle of Nottingham had always ranked high in favour with the princes of the House of York.

Apart from its commanding situation, its natural advantages rendered it a station of vast importance during the sanguinary wars of the Roses; and many are the notices in its local history of times when the banner of England waved proudly from its castellated battlements. Under the direction of King Edward IV., this ancient fortress, which had sheltered him in some of the most remarkable vicissitudes of his reign, received many additions, important as regards strength, and admirable as specimens of architectural taste. Richard III., who yielded to none of his race in natural genius, or in the patronage of science and art, not only carried out the noble works commenced by his royal brother, but yet further enlarged and beautified this princely structure, "so that surely," writes Leland in his interesting description of it, "that north part is an exceeding piece of work;" indeed, to this very day, the site of its principal bulwark—the sole remnant of its former magnificence—bears the appellation of "Richard's Tower," in consequence of its having been erected by Richard III.

The Castle of Nottingham is in fact associated intimately and inseparably with almost all the leading events of that monarch's remarkable career. It was his frequent abode during his wardenship of the north; there he rested on his bridal progress to Middleham, and there he took upon himself the custody of young Edward V., assumed the office of lord protector and made that compact with the unstable Buckingham which led to Richard's subsequent elevation to the throne. It was within its walls that he issued commands for his second coronation, and there also were his brightest and fondest hopes laid prostrate by the announcement of the decease of his son; there he passed the last days of healthful companionship with his departed

* Chron. Croy., p. 572. † See Appendix WWW. ‡ Appendix XXX.

queen, and thither he now returned preparatory to renewed struggles for that crown which had yielded him so little of peace or enjoyment.

The nature of King Richard's feelings with reference to this favoured provincial palace of the monarchs of the House of York, may be estimated by the appellation which he bestowed upon it; he called it the "Castle of Care."*

Nevertheless, at this crisis, having secured himself against immediate danger, and adopted the most strenuous measures for the defence of the realm, the king kept his court within its walls with his usual magnificence and liberality; and so sedulously cultivated the friendship of the surrounding gentry, that he won many over to his cause, amongst whom was Sir Gervoise Clifton, whom at his coronation he had created a knight of the Bath,† and whose devotion to Richard, even unto death, has been made the subject of historical record.‡ The edicts which the king had issued, and the ordinances that had been circulated requiring each shire to furnish its contribution of troops at an hour's notice,§ were followed up by strong letters addressed to the sheriffs‖ of every county, furnishing them with copies of the instructions sent to the commissioners of array, and enjoining their "continual abode within the shire town of their office," to the intent that it might be openly known, "where they might be found," in the event of increased danger.

To prove the necessity of these precautions, and still further to secure the co-operation of his subjects in resisting the invaders, Richard summed up his various manifestos by a proclamation¶ of considerable length, denouncing "Henry Tudor" as a traitor, his supporters as exiles and outlaws, "enemies to their country, and subverters of the peace of the realm." The assumed pretensions of Richmond were fully detailed, to prove that his illegitimate descent gave him no lawful claim to the throne, or justified his invasion of the realm to contest it; and that his league with the ancient enemies of England was purchased by a pledge, "to give and release to the crown of France such continental possessions as appertained to the English nation, and all right, title and claims that her monarchs have, and ought to have, to the sovereignty of that kingdom." The miseries that must ensue from open rebellion, and from the admission of mercenary troops into the country, were depicted in strong language; and an earnest and energetic appeal made to the feelings of all classes, that, "like good and true Englishmen, for the defence of their wives, children, goods and inheritance, they furnish themselves with all their powers;" promising in requital that their sovereign lord, "as a well-willed, diligent, and courageous prince, will put his royal person in all labour and pain necessary in their behalf, for the resistance and subduing of his said enemies, rebels and traitors."**

Thus nothing was left undone that policy, foresight and courage could

* Hutton's Bosworth, p. 40. † Buck, lib. i. p. 26.

‡ Sir Gervoise Clifton and Sir John Byron were friends and neighbours in Nottinghamshire; the former joined King Richard's standard, the latter fought with the Earl of Richmond. They had mutually agreed, that whichever party conquered, the supporter of the victor should intercede for his friend's life, and procure the estate for the benefit of their family. In the heat of the conflict at Bosworth, Sir John Byron saw Clifton fall, and rushing to the enemy's ranks, came to his friend, supported him on his shield, and life not being extinct, implored him to surrender. But the wound was mortal. Sir Gervoise faintly exclaimed, "All is over," and expired while reminding Byron of his pledge, that he would use his utmost efforts to procure the restitution of his land to his children, in the event of Richmond's party gaining the day. Sir John Byron gave the promise and fulfilled his pledge; the estate was preserved to the Clifton family.—*Hutton's Bosworth*, p. 117.

§ Harl. MSS., fol. 221. ‖ Appendix YYY.

¶ See Appendix ZZZ. ** Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 319.

devise, to prevent a recurrence of domestic feud, or to save the already impoverished land from the evils attendant on the substitution of martial for civil law.

This determined resolution and statesmanlike vigilance on the part of King Richard, urged on the progress of the Earl of Richmond and those who had sworn to depose the reigning sovereign; it served to bring matters to a crisis, by showing the necessity of the most prompt measures. Richmond's purposed attempt upon the English crown was too widely promulgated, and had been too fully matured to be abandoned, and both the insurgents and their leader felt that prolonged delay might possibly frustrate their schemes, and lead, as upon the former occasion, to unlooked-for defeat and ruin.

The proclamation issued by the English monarch was met by a decisive and powerful reply from the earl.* He avowed his intention of contesting the throne, and branded King Richard as a "homicide and unnatural tyrant;" pledging himself to pass over the seas with such forces as his friends were preparing for him, "so soon as he was advertised of the names of the leaders who would co-operate with him on his arrival in England."

Courteously, however, as Henry of Richmond had been received by Charles VIII. on his re-appearance at Paris, he failed in obtaining from him the full and efficient aid on which he calculated.† Political dissensions at the court of France‡ had greatly curtailed the power of its monarch, who consequently was in no position to break his faith with Richard, although otherwise well disposed to lend a helping hand to his rival. He welcomed him with professions of regard, but shrank from openly committing himself to the encouragement of attempts upon the British sceptre.

This cautious policy was a source of considerable exultation to Richard,§ although but of short duration; for the security which it seemed to promise was quickly dispelled by information that the earl had obtained as a loan those succours which were refused on the score of friendship, or as the compact of a political alliance, the advantages to result from which rested on such uncertain grounds. Nevertheless, Charles VIII. yielded at last to the importunate Richmond, and advanced him a considerable sum of money, besides furnishing him with 3000 men,‖ an accession of strength which speedily enabled him to quit Paris, and proceed towards Harfleur, the present rendezvous of his troops.¶ Bidding farewell to his friends at the French court, he left there as hostages for repayment of the assistance which had been afforded him, Sir John Bourchier and the renegade Marquis of Dorset;** who, doubting the success of the earl's application to Charles, had suddenly abandoned the cause of the insurgents from considering their prospects as hopeless, and fleeing to Flanders, was overtaken at Campeigne, in his progress to ally himself with King Richard.

To give time for mustering his forces and provision his shipping, the Earl of Richmond rested for a brief period at Rouen: there he was joined by his chief commanders, whose indignation at the rumour, now universally spread, of Richard's determination to espouse the Princess Elizabeth, decided him on carrying into effect, although without their knowledge, his project of a Welch alliance, and of privately dispatching messengers to Sir

* Appendix AAAA.

† "The Earl of Richmond was with his suite in the court of France sore wearied, and desiring great aid could obtain small relief."—*Grafton*, p. 204.

‡ Grafton, p. 206.

§ Ibid.

‖ Buck, lib. ii. p. 57.

¶ Ibid., p. 78.

** Grafton, p. 207.

Walter Herbert, with proposals of marriage to his sister,* and likewise to the Earl of Northumberland, hoping to prevail upon him to advocate his views.

Here, also, to his surprise and joy, he received a considerable reinforcement of troops from Francis, Duke of Brittany,† who, repenting his former refusal, now sent, unsolicited, the seasonable and efficient aid of 2000 Bretons; so that no obstacle remained to prevent the earl from carrying into immediate execution his long-threatened and projected invasion. It is true that, judging from Philip De Comines, few auxiliary forces could have been more contemptible than the band of soldiers furnished by France,‡ but their inefficiency in military skill was more than counterbalanced by their reckless hardihood, while the prospect of advancement and of requital for services which stimulated them to zealous exertions, rendered these children of desperate fortune more valuable, as a body, than the better disciplined troops of the English monarch, commanded by time-serving courtiers, who, after having been enriched and ennobled by the bounty of the prince, whom two years previously, with shouts and joyful acclamations, they had elevated to the throne, were now ripe to betray him. The great secret, indeed, of King Richard's downfall was the defection of his miscalled friends, and the duplicity of those who, for more selfish purposes, had insinuated themselves into his confidence, the more readily to carry on that system of complicated intrigue which was designed to throw him off his guard, that he might the more surely be entangled in the snares which were laid for his destruction. Most justly did Sir Thomas More depict this fact, when, after admitting the generosity which formed so striking a feature in his character,§ "he was above his power liberal,"‖ he further added, "with large gifts he gat him unsteadfast friendship, for which he was fain to pil and spoil in other places, which gat him steadfast hatred."¶ This was, indeed, unhappily the case. Had Richard been more avaricious and mercenary, had he been less frank and generous, more tyrannical, more suspicious of those that surrounded him, less chivalrous and gallant in the treatment of his nobles, neither Henry of Richmond nor the combined tributaries of France and Brittany could have vanquished him. One of the ablest generals and wisest legislators of his age was the victim of the stealthy and systematic treachery which peculiarly marked this era in other European courts; and although forming, comparatively speaking, a new feature in English policy, the monarch had been too early initiated into the crafty proceedings of Louis XI. and the wily counsellors of Francis of Brittany, to be altogether blind to the true cause that was gradually accelerating his own ruin. Many members of his court pierced him to the heart by their open ingratitude; but foremost amongst those whose concealed perfidy contributed to his destruction was Morgan Kydwelly,** the attorney-general,†† who, ranking high in the king's favour,‡‡ was not only in a position to watch the arrangements of his sovereign, but, in virtue of his high office, could contrive the means of conveying clandestinely to the enemy that intelligence which alike counteracted the designs of the English monarch and strengthened the projects of

* Grafton, p. 208.

† Buck, lib. ii. p. 58.

‡ Philip de Comines, p. 356.

§ More, p. 9.

‖ Ibid.

¶ Ibid.

** Grafton, p. 209.

†† See the Harl. MSS., No. 433, p. 79.

‡‡ King Richard's liberality to Morgan Kydwelly is shown by the various entries in the Harl. MSS., which contain the grants of several rich manors, the stewardship of the lordships in the duchy of Lancaster, and other acts of bounty of a similar nature.—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 433, fol. 49. 69. 73. 79.

his rival.* He it was who warned the Earl of Richmond to avoid a landing on the southern coasts, which were so carefully watched by sea, and vigilantly guarded on shore by the trusty Lovell.† He also advised him to direct his course to Wales,‡ and to "hasten his departure" while that portion of the kingdom was less rigidly watched, although most ripe for the furtherance of his scheme. It was Kydwelly who placed Richmond in possession of the names of those powerful chieftains§ who were disposed to abandon King Richard, and espouse the cause of his opponent; he who informed him that Reginald Bray awaited his landing, with vast sums of money collected for the payment of "his mariners and soldiers"‖ out of the rich possessions in England and Wales belonging to the earl's mother, the Countess of Richmond, which Richard generously forbore to confiscate¶ when applied to a similar purpose under Buckingham's rebellion. But the treacherous Kydwelly being unsuspected, caused his royal master no uneasiness. There was, however, one illustrious member of his household, high in his confidence, and possessing powerful influence in the west, whose ambiguous and suspicious conduct occasioned the king deep and unceasing anxiety, and that was the Lord Stanley.** Nor was this without reason, for as the head of one of the most powerful families in the west of England, his extensive connections, vast resources, and unbounded influence over his vassals and retainers could not but impress Richard with the conviction, that on his fidelity would greatly depend the probable issue of the approaching contest. Although decidedly opposed to him when lord protector, yet Richard as king had acted most generously to this nobleman. He had released him from prison, had pardoned his reputed connection with Lord Hastings' conspiracy, had advanced him to the highest offices in the government, as well as the most trustworthy places about his royal person; and on the discovery of the agency of his wife in fomenting the Duke of Buckingham's rebellion, had abstained from involving him in the consequences of her known dereliction of fidelity, nay, had even softened the severity of the sentence so justly her due, in consideration of her husband's integrity.†† It is but just to add, that, up to the present crisis, the Lord Stanley had continued faithful to the trust reposed in him; but whether in accordance with the dissembling policy of those degenerate times, he merely temporized until the fitting period arrived for a counter-revolution—whether the anticipated elevation to the throne of his son-in-law, joined to his proposed alliance with King Edward's daughter, had weakened his loyalty to King Richard—or that the influence of his illustrious consort, which is asserted by the cotemporary chronicler,‡‡ had overcome the nobler feelings inherent in his race, and tempted him to desert his post and swerve from the oath of allegiance twice vowed to the reigning sovereign, cannot of course be determined.

Thus much, however, is very certain, that King Richard for some time had entertained just reason to doubt the stability of this nobleman, the "lord steward of his household" and the "high constable of the realm;" and a request preferred at this momentous crisis for leave to quit the presence of his sovereign, and to return to "his country to visit his family and to recreate his spirits,"§§ not only confirmed his royal master in the belief of his wavering policy, but so convinced him that his departure was to the intent to be in perfect readiness to receive the Earl of Richmond,‖‖ that although Richard

* Grafton, p. 209.
‡ Ibid.
‖ Grafton, p. 209.
** Grafton, p. 202.
†† Rot. Parl. vi. pp. 240. 251.
§§ Ibid.
† Ibid.; Pol. Virg., p. 559; Hall, p. 410.
§ Ibid.
¶ Rot. Parl., vi. p. 240. 251.
‡‡ Chron. Croy., p. 573.
‖‖ Grafton, p. 203.

was too wise to accelerate disaffection by premature and possibly uncalled-for suspicion, he would in no wise suffer him to depart until he consented to send* as an hostage the Lord Strange, his "first begotten son and heir." The result proved the monarch's discretion on this point, and removes likewise all doubt as to the fact, that the attorney-general and the Lord Stanley were certainly leagued together—the one as the organ of communication with the rebels in France, and the other as carrying into effect the well-concerted plan that was to end in the junction of the exiles with their English supporters. For about the same period that the Lord Stanley left the court, the Earl of Richmond hoisted his standard at Harfleur, and was admonished by the crafty Kydwelly "to make quick expedition, and shape his course directly for Wales;" in the north part of which principality Sir William Stanley held the responsible situation of chamberlain;† and consequently, in virtue of his office, could leave any portion of the coast unguarded, and prevent even all hostile opposition to the invaders from the royal forces there stationed by King Richard, and which, in the preceding winter, had been placed by that monarch under the sole command of himself and his brother for the protection of the west country.‡ By no possibility, indeed, could Kydwelly otherwise have communicated to the earl matter so intimately connected with the domestic policy of the Stanleys, or have known the sums of money that awaited him from his mother (the Lord Stanley's consort), or have been in a position to have intimated the propitious moment for Richmond's departure, or the unsuspected point at which to direct his course. And equally, too, does the result prove, that this league was well understood and responded to by the earl; for, in strict conformity with the instructions sent, he made "all convenient haste," set forward and carried to his ships "armour, weapons, victual and all other ordinances expedient for war,"§ and exerted himself so strenuously, that he was in a position to embark on the 26th of July,‖ and had actually sailed from Harfleur before King Richard could obtain any further knowledge of his movements than that his fleet had assembled at the mouth of the Seine. This information, however, was made known to the king within so brief a period after the departure of the Lord Stanley, that it added considerably to the misgivings which had been before excited by his absenting himself from the court at so critical a period. He therefore quickly dispatched fresh precautionary instructions to those who were engaged in guarding the sea-ports, and established relays of cavalry on all the high roads for the more rapid communication of intelligence.

He sent also to the lord chancellor "for the great seal," as on the previous insurrection of Buckingham; the which, in consequence of the king's mandate, "was surrendered to him by the Bishop of Lincoln in the Old Temple, London, on the 29th July."¶

But Richard's vigilance was vain! So prosperous was the wind,** so favourable the weather, that the earl reached the Welsh coast on the seventh day after his departure from France; and having been apprised that a garrison, which was unfavourable to his cause, and which had been awaiting him at Milford Haven throughout the winter, was removed, he made direct for that port,†† and there disembarked, without opposition, on the evening of the 1st August, 1485.‡‡ He forthwith commenced his march, and before sunrising the following day had reached the town of Haverfordwest, to the great

* Chron. Croy., p. 573.
‡ Harl. MSS., No. 433, fol. 200.
§ Grafton, p. 209.
¶ Fœdera, xii. p. 271.
†† Ibid.
† Ibid., p. 575.
‖ Blakeway's Shrewsbury, vol. i. p. 242.
** Grafton, p. 209.
‡‡ Chron. Croy., p. 573.

astonishment of the inhabitants. They welcomed him with joy, his descent from their native princes seeming to realize a prediction that had long prevailed, and was superstitiously believed, viz., that the sceptre which had been usurped from the ancient British kings by the Saxons, the Danes and the Normans, would be restored to them by a native of Wales, a descendant of the renowned Prince Arthur.* Availing himself of a tradition so well calculated to advance his interests, he caused a banner, displaying the insignia of Cadwallader, the last of their kings, to be carried in front of his troops; and marching direct to Cardigan, he passed through Wales by rough and indirect paths.† Choosing the most unfrequented tracks, and the wildest mountain passes, he bent his course to the northern part of the province, hoping to increase his strength by winning to his cause many of the Welsh chieftains, and to join Sir William Stanley before the fact of his landing became generally known. Thus the Earl of Richmond was in the heart of the kingdom before Richard knew of his having sailed from Harfleur; and his landing being effected at a point where no regular communication had been established with the court, he had made considerable progress before the fact even of his disembarkation could be known to the king. His central position, however, as he had foreseen, was singularly favourable to the promptitude which had ever characterized his movements. The Duke of Norfolk, who had been guarding the eastern counties, was commanded forthwith to join the monarch with his full strength at Nottingham.‡ The Earl of Northumberland was summoned from the north, and the Lord Lovell and the Lord Stanley from the south and from the west, were also required to repair to his presence with their respective forces.§

Mandates were sent to the Tower, enjoining the attendance of the faithful Brackenbury,‖ and placing under his command "divers other knights and esquires, in whom the king placed less confidence;"¶ while letters were dispatched to every county, "forbidding all who were born to any inheritance in the realm to withdraw from the ensuing conflict on pain of forfeiture of life, and goods, and possessions."**

Prompt was the obedience of the Lords of Norfolk, Northumberland and Lovell, but not such that of Lord Stanley; he excused himself on the plea of sickness;†† but the pretence was too shallow, too customary at this era, not to confirm the king in his conviction that, like the excuses of the faithless Buckingham, the illness of Lord Stanley was merely a feint to conceal his traitorous designs. This was soon confirmed by an attempt at escape made by the Lord Strange. He was arrested, and when in danger of his life, confessed his guilt, and acknowledged that his uncle, Sir William Stanley, as also Sir John Savage and other members of his family, were leagued with the Earl of Richmond, and intended to join him with their forces.‡‡ He exculpated his father, however, from all participation in their disloyalty; pledging himself, that if his life were spared, the Lord Stanley would prove his fidelity by speedily joining the king. In accordance with this compact, he sent letters to his father explaining the peril he was in, and beseeching him to hasten to his relief.§§ He thus saved himself from the death which his perfidious conduct had merited. It is difficult to tell whether he spoke the truth as regards his parent, or whether his assertion was a mere subterfuge, arising from the desperate position in which his treasonable practices had placed him; certain

* Baker's Chron., p. 252.
‡ Grafton, p. 204.
‖ Ibid.
** Chron. Croy., 573.
‡‡ Ibid.
† Chron. Croy., p. 573.
§ Ibid.
¶ Ibid.
†† Ibid.
§§ Ibid.

it is that the Lord Stanley never again returned to Richard's court to bear out the truth of his son's declaration by his subsequent conduct.

The king appears, in this instance, to have acted with great moderation, as although Sir William Stanley and Sir John Savage were immediately denounced as traitors at Coventry and elsewhere,* neither the Lord Stanley nor the Lord Strange was included in the denunciation. Richard's faithful and attached partisans at York, ever foremost in testifying their love for their patron and benefactor, were not behind hand at this crisis in displaying their zeal in his cause. Immediately the citizens heard that the earl had landed, they dispatched their sergeant of mace to Nottingham, to inquire of the king what aid their city should send,† and in obedience to his command six hundred men in harness were required in all haste to join the royal standard."‡ The councils, indeed, that were convened by the mayor, and the strong resolutions unanimously agreed to by the authorities at York,§ sufficiently evince their devotion to their sovereign, and their determination to support his prerogative. Nor does this appear to have been a solitary instance, for even the Tudor chronicler admits that immense multitudes thronged to Richard's standard, "he having continual repair of his subjects to him;"‖ a fact that proves, beyond all dispute, that the country was not opposed to his government, although it suited the views of his political opponents to impute his downfall to that source rather than avow the systematic perjury and falsehood by which it was in reality effected.

Thus loyally supported, and having taken every precaution to repel the invaders, it is by no means astonishing that Richard received with pleasure¶ rather than dismay, the intelligence of Richmond having effected a landing; or that, after having been kept in a state of suspense and watchfulness for so long a period, he should express satisfaction that "the day had at length arrived, when, having easily triumphed over the exiled faction, his subjects would from thenceforth enjoy undoubted peace."** And he was justified in that impression, for no simultaneous rising in the southern counties took place, as was the case when the Duke of Buckingham commenced his march; no part of England betrayed symptoms of riot or insurrection; even in Wales, the land of Richmond's birth, no popular ebullition characterized his appearance. Stealthily and cautiously he pursued his course, keeping along the sea-coast, that in case of a reverse he might be within reach of his shipping,†† subject to a toilsome march in a wild and half-populated country, obliged to contest the mountain passes, and to assault many places opposed to his progress,‡‡ while his slender band of 3000 French and 2000 Bretons was only increased by a few native chieftains, whose small addition to his foreign mercenaries might well lead Richard to despise the insignificant force and inadequate means with which his rival was come to contest the crown. Richmond himself had ample cause to tremble for the result, many circumstances having occurred to damp his ardour before he could join his kindred. Sir Walter Herbert, on whose aid he had reckoned, remained so true to the cause of the king,§§ that the messengers dispatched to him with the earl's proposals for the hand of his sister dared not risk their probable apprehension by venturing within the limits of his territory.‖‖ The Earl of Northumberland, too, was with the king, and on reaching Shrewsbury, the place fixed upon for the insurgents to cross the Severn, they were denied access into the town.¶¶ Hap-

* Chron. Croy., p. 573.
‡ Ibid.
¶ Chron. Croy., p. 573.
†† Blakeway's Shrewsbury, vol. i. p. 244.
§§ Ibid.
¶¶ Blakeway's Shrewsbury, vol. i. p. 245.
† Drake's Ebor., p. 120.
§ Ibid.
‖ Grafton, p. 215.
** Ibid.
‡‡ Grafton, p. 211.
‖‖ Leland's Itin., vi. p. 30.

pily for Richmond the messengers whom he had prudently dispatched on his route to apprise the high sheriff of Shropshire, Sir Gilbert Talbot, as also the Lord Stanley, the Countess of Richmond, and others of his supporters of his approach, and whom he had appointed to meet him at Shrewsbury,* returned so laden with rewards, and so elated with promises,† that their report, there can be little doubt, operated favourably with the authorities,‡ and induced them, after a brief delay, to permit the earl to pass through, on his pledge that he would do so peaceably, and without hurt to the town. Here he was met by Sir Rice Ap-Thomas,§ one of the most powerful of the Welsh chieftains, who, under the promise of being made governor of Wales,‖ in the event of the earl gaining the throne, betrayed the confidence which Richard had reposed in him in consequence of the protestations of fidelity which he had made, and the oath¶ of allegiance he had solemnly sworn when nominated to the command of the royal forces in the south of Wales.** At Newport, where the rebels encamped the following night, they were joined by Sir Gilbert Talbot, "with the whole power of the young Earl of Shrewsbury, then being in ward,†† which were accounted to the number of 2000 men;"‡‡ and at Stafford§§ he was met by Sir William Stanley, with whom he had a confidential interview, and by whose advice he proceeded direct to Lichfield, where "he was received like a prince,"‖‖ his father-in-law, the Lord Stanley, having paved the way for his favourable reception there, although he purposely departed from the city¶¶ on learning the approach of the earl, that he might not sacrifice the life of his son, who had been left with the king as an hostage for his fidelity.

Richard having ascertained that the object of the Earl of Richmond was to proceed direct to London,*** resolved to intercept his progress; but so much time had been lost before he knew of his having landed, or was sufficiently well informed of his movements to regulate his own actions, that notwithstanding the precautionary measures which he had adopted in anticipation of the invasion, he found his opponent was hastening to the capital with a rapidity for which he was unprepared, and was directing his way "day and night right in his face."††† It became necessary, therefore, to move from Nottingham in all haste, although his army was not yet fully mustered, the time not having permitted many of his most trusty commanders to reach the castle as instructed. The king's indignation was greatly kindled‡‡‡ at the defection

* Grafton, p. 211. † Ibid.

‡ The chief magistrate who first opposed and subsequently opened the gates of Shrewsbury to the rebels, was Thomas Mytton, who, when sheriff of the county, had captured and delivered up the Duke of Buckingham to King Richard.—*Blakeway*, vol. i. p. 245.

§ Blakeway's Shrewsbury, vol. i. p. 245. ‖ Pol. Virg., p. 560.

¶ For "the oath Rice Ap-Thomas stood not upon."—See note to *Turner's Middle Ages*, vol. iv. p. 33.

** "On his way from Cardigan, Richmond was joined by an eminent Welshman, who had been dispatched to oppose him, Sir Rice Ap-Thomas, and having settled to meet him at Shrewsbury, Sir Rice diverged to the eastward, and advanced through the heart of the country by Carmarthen and Brecon, collecting on the road his tenantry and partisans, among whom the vassals of the late Duke of Buckingham would not be the least numerous."—*Blakeway*, vol. i. p. 244.

†† This incident affords a striking example of the abuse of wardships at this period; for notwithstanding that the young Earl of Shrewsbury remained true to his sovereign (see *Harl. MSS.*, No. 542, fol. 34) and joined King Richard's banner, yet as a minor he had no command over his tenantry, the whole of whom were carried over to Richmond's army by his uncle and guardian Sir Gilbert Talbot.—*Grafton*, p. 213.

‡‡ Grafton, p. 213. §§ Ibid. ‖‖ Ibid.

¶¶ Ibid. *** Ibid.

††† Chron. Croy., p. 573. ‡‡‡ Grafton, p. 215.

of the Talbots, the perfidy of Ap-Thomas and the welcome given to Richmond at Lichfield; and as his spies* made known to him the private interview which had taken place between Sir William Stanley and the earl, as also the departure of the Lord Stanley for Atherstone the day before the rebels had entered Lichfield, Richard resolved on removing to Leicester, to prevent, if possible, a junction between the earl and his father-in-law, and give battle to his rival before his forces were farther augmented.

By a cotemporary letter, yet extant, from the Duke of Norfolk,† it appears that he would have departed instantly, but it was the eve of the assumption of the Virgin Mary,‡ and the superstition of the age rendered Richard averse to marching on that day. This he communicated to such of his partisans as had been prevented joining him, appointing Leicester as the town to which they should direct their course; and on the day after the festival, he marshaled his troops in the market-place at Nottingham,§ and separating the foot-soldiers into two divisions, five abreast,‖ and dividing his cavalry so as to form two wide spreading wings; he placed his ammunition and artillery in the centre,¶ taking up his own position in a space immediately behind it.** Gorgeously attired in the splendid armour for which the age was remarkable, and his helmet surmounted by the crown, King Richard riding upon a milk-white charger, superbly caparisoned,†† attended by his body guards, displaying the banner of England and innumerable pennons glittering with the "silver boar," with other insignia of his princely race, and surrounded by a gallant band of archers and picked men-at-arms, wended his way, on the morning of the 16th August, 1485, down the steep acclivity on which stood the noble pile where he had so long sojourned, and quitted the castle of Nottingham for ever! He was about to fight his last battle, but he knew it not. His lofty spirit was undaunted, for he dreamed not of the perfidy that was working his ruin, and his invincible courage led him to despise all danger which was openly and honourably incurred in the battle-field. His army, which was very considerable, was so imposingly arranged, that it covered the road for three miles, and must have been "more than an hour in marching out of Nottingham, and as long in entering Leicester."‡‡ He did not reach this latter town until sunset, when so prodigious did his force appear, and so formidable their array, that the ecclesiastical historian states there was found at that town "a greater number of men than was ever before seen in England fighting on one side."§§ The castle of Leicester, the ancient demesne of John of Gaunt, hitherto the resting-place of royalty when sojourning in its vicinity, had become too ruinous for occupation at this momentous period; Richard therefore took up his abode at the chief hostelry in the town, then probably designated after the royal badge,‖‖ although better known in subsequent ages by the appellation of the "Blue Boar." On the 17th, he marched to Hinckley, and fixed his camp at the village of Elmsthorpe; but having ascertained that Richmond had not quitted Lichfield, he altered his route and took up his station on the 18th on some rising ground at Stableton, a situation admirably adapted either for observation or contest, as no enemy could

* "And in all haste he sent out espials to view and espy what way his enemies kept and passed. They diligently doing their duty, shortly after returned, declaring to the king that the earl was encamped at the town of Lichfield."—*Grafton*, p. 215.

† See Appendix BBBB. ‡ Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 334.

§ Hutton's Bosworth, p. 46. ‖ Grafton, p. 215.

¶ Ibid. ** Ibid. †† Ibid.

‡‡ Hutton, p. 47. §§ Chron. Croy., p. 574.

‖‖ "The proud bragging white boar, which was his badge, was violently rased and plucked down, from every sign and place where it might be spied."—*Grafton*, p. 255.

approach unseen.* Here it appears probable that he was joined by the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Surrey and Sir Robert Brackenbury; and at this period he seems, for the first time, to have become alive to the treachery which was shown towards him by many who, having been enriched by his liberality, now deserted his standard for that of his rival. At Stoney Stratford, Sir Walter Hungerford and Sir Thomas Bourchier, both "esquires of the body,"† left Brackenbury, under cover of the night, to join the enemy's ranks, and Sir John Savage, Sir Simon Digby, and very many other individuals, whom gratitude alone ought to have bound to their sovereign,‡ proclaimed themselves openly supporters of the rebels.

Still he was too strong to fear Richmond, unless disloyalty should farther weaken his force; but his suspicions were again painfully excited by learning that the earl had quitted Lichfield, and steadily pursued his course to Tamworth, where he arrived late on the evening of the 18th August,§ by which position not only did the troops commanded by the Lord Stanley and his brother, Sir William, separate the royal forces from the earl's army, but great facility was given by their contiguity to effect secret interviews between Richmond and his kindred. One of such interviews is known to have taken place at Atherstone,‖ and of infinite importance it was. It put the earl in possession of the true sentiments and intentions of the Stanleys, and encouraged him to fall in with King Richard's design of forcing him to take the field before either of the brothers had openly joined his standard. The two following days, the 19th and 20th, appear to have been passed by all parties in collecting their utmost strength, in watching the movements of their opponents, and placing their camps as desirably as circumstances admitted, for by little and little the hostile armies had so closely approximated to each other, that an engagement had become inevitable. Richmond again following the footsteps of his father-in-law, quitted Tamworth and arrived at Atherstone shortly after the departure of the Lord Stanley, who, the better to deceive the king, had marched to within three-quarters of a mile of the royal troops. The Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Northumberland, each with his powerful body of men, were also encamped on advantageous positions, and all parties felt that the fitting time had arrived for bringing to a crisis the long threatened and much desired combat.

A broad extent of uninclosed country separated the rival forces, and the scene of action eventually fixed upon was that portion of it entitled Redmore Plain,¶ since better known as Bosworth Field, from its near vicinity to the market-town which bears that name. Few spots could have been better suited for the desperate encounter that was to immortalize it for ever. It was then a wide, open, uncultivated tract of land,** somewhat of an oval form, about two miles long and one mile broad, intersected by a thick wood, and bounded on the south side by a small river running through a low, swampy country; on the north side partly by rising ground and partly by a boggy flat, locally denominated "Amyon Lays."†† Such a field afforded advantages

* Hutton, p. 50. † Harl. MSS., No. 433. pp. 16. 27. 142.

‡ For the grants bestowed on Sir John Savage, see *Harl. MSS.*, No. 433. pp. 28. 102. 131 and 141.

§ Hutton, p. 195.

‖ Grafton, p. 218; Pol. Virg., p. 562; Hall, 413.

¶ "Redmore, or Red-moor, so named from the colour of the soil, as the meadows in the west are called white-moors for the same reason."—*Hutton*, p. 68.

** "Bosworth Field, which was one piece of uncultivated land without hedge or timber, is now so altered with both, that nothing remains of its former appearance but the shape of the ground."—*Ibid.*, p. 71.

†† Hutton, pp. 245. 248.

seldom combined for the distribution of hostile troops. An acclivity designated Amyon Hill, which generally rose to the northward from the centre of the plain, not only gave unusual facility for the disposal of an army, but, as the result proved, its more elevated portion afforded certain opportunities for observation to encampments stationed on the high grounds which in various points overlooked the valley, and who could thus communicate by signal,* without seeming to act in concert with each other. These points were speedily occupied by the great commanders most deeply interested in the result, for it was soon perceived that in the plain below the battle would inevitably occur. Richard's camp consisted of two lines. It is stated to have covered about eighteen acres,† and to have been fortified by breast-works of considerable skill and labour, 300 yards long and about 50 broad.‡ Richmond was equally indefatigable, for although seven acres sufficed for the disposition of his small band, yet the experience of the Earl of Oxford, Sir James Blount, and other renowned warriors who undertook to direct his movements, fully compensated for the insignificant force he ostensibly brought to the field. Lord Stanley and his brother had so craftily placed themselves on two of the eminences just named, the one to the extreme left, a little in advance, and the other to the extreme right, but somewhat to the rear of the royal camp, that though seemingly attached to King Richard, by reason of their contiguity to his forces, they were in the best position for accelerating his downfall when the fitting moment arrived for joining the enemy's ranks. During the night of the 20th§ the celebrated interview‖ between the Earl of Richmond and the two Stanleys is said to have taken place, in which they made known to him their intentions, and also, as it would appear by the result, intimated to him the probable defection of the Earl of Northumberland. On the 21st instant, at day-break, Richmond broke up his camp at Atherstone, and marching thence crossed the Tweed, the small rivulet before named, and encamped on the confines of Bosworth Field. The same day King Richard, receiving intelligence of the earl's movements, advanced to meet him; for although he had sent away his army, and had well and judiciously encamped his forces so as to preclude Richmond's farther advance towards London, he appears to have made Leicester his head-quarters.

Accompanied by the Duke of Norfolk, the gallant Earl of Surrey, the Lord of Lincoln, the Lord Lovell, and most of his personal friends, as well as by a vast concourse of people, he rode out of Leicester in the same royal state in which he made his entry into that town. With his regal crown upon his helmet, and borne on a noble war-steed of uncommon size, whose costly trappings accorded with the rich suit of polished steel armour, worn by its accomplished rider fourteen years before at the battle of Tewkesbury,¶ Richard presented himself before his soldiers as became a conquering prince, a defied and insulted monarch, omitting none of those external attributes of royality, for the conservation of which he was on the eve of engaging in deadly strife — a strife which, although he knew it not, was to effect so wondrous a change in the constitution of England, and in the habits, position and policy of its people. Both armies were in view of each other the greater part of the 21st; but it was the Sabbath,** and as if by mutual

* Hutton, pp. 245. 248. † Ibid., p. 50.

‡ Hutton, in his "Battle of Bosworth," (p. 62,) states that, on his first visit to the scene of this memorable conflict, the vestiges of the camps were yet visible.

§ Hutton, p. 57. ‖ Grafton, p. 218.

¶ Hutton, p. 82.

** "Upon Sunday they heard mass; and to a fair field took the way."—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 542. fol. 34.

consent, each party remained inactive until towards evening, when the king broke up his encampment, and removing to the brow of the hill overlooking Bosworth plain, there he took up his position for the night, that his soldiers might be refreshed and ready for the morning's conflict. That rest, however, which the monarch desired for his troops, and which was even more requisite for himself as their leader, was incompatible with the conflicting feelings that agitated his mind. His temperament was too sensitive not to be deeply afflicted at the faithlessness already evinced by many whom he had trusted, and from whom he had merited a more generous requital;* but open defalcation was more easy to be borne than the perfidy which his keen foresight and acute penetration could not help anticipating from the powerful but dissimulating Stanley. Sir William had already been proclaimed a traitor; still he had not, like many others, arrayed himself publicly under Richmond's banner; so that doubts were created as to his ultimate intention more harassing than if he had pursued a less neutral course. The Lord Stanley had been so wary in his conduct that, disposed as the king must have been to resent his contemptuous disregard of his summons, yet he could not in justice lay treason to his charge, when possibly the real cause of his mysterious conduct was a natural desire to preserve a neutrality between the conflicting claims of his son-in-law and sovereign.

He had headed his trusty band of Lancashire men, and commenced his march toward the royal forces immediately it was reported that the rebels had crossed the Severn. He had neither avowedly allied himself with Richmond, as did Sir Gilbert Talbot and Sir Price-ap-Thomas, nor had his movements implied designs that corresponded with theirs; on the contrary, he had seemed to avoid the earl, and scrupulously to evade a junction although still pleading severe illness† as his excuse for not appearing at the court of his sovereign.

And now, on the eve of the battle, he had encamped near to Richard's station, and at a considerable distance from that of his opponent. Sir William, too, observing the same policy, and although ranged on the same side of the field occupied by Richard, had intentionally allowed the whole of the royal army to separate his band from that of his brother. Under such circumstances to have concluded perfidy, and to have denounced these chiefs, would, perhaps, accelerate the very evil it was the monarch's wish to prevent. King Richard, however was a keen reader of human character: he had from his very birth been nurtured in the insidious dealings which so peculiarly characterized his era, and been inured to the stealthy proceedings that were unblushingly adopted to accelerate party views. By nature endowed with unusual sagacity, he was, moreover, gifted with a degree of forethought that enabled him to arrive at a conclusion less from the actions than the probable motives of the parties prejudged. The Lord Stanley had espoused the mother of Henry of Richmond. Sir William had been admitted to be faithless even by his own nephew! The events of the last few months had taught the king how transient was popular favour; and those even of the last few days had brought still more painfully home to his conviction the little dependence to be placed on vows of fealty, which were as easily broken as they had been enthusiastically proffered. Perplexed, harassed, scarcely knowing whom to trust and whom to suspect, Richard became a prey to those excitable feelings — that distressing restlessness

* The king "was sore moved and broiled with melancholy and dolour, and cried out, asking vengeance of them that, contrary to their oath and promise, had so deceived him."—*Grafton*, p. 215.

† Harl. MSS., 542, fol. 34.

which so often results from the union of two vigorous mental powers with a corporeal frame of little bodily strength. Weak in constitution, and subject to that nervous irritability which is its invariable accompaniment,* with so much, too, of real anxiety to distract his thoughts, so much of paramount importance to absorb the attention of a mind peculiarly susceptible and anxious, it is no marvel that, as the monarch sought repose upon his couch on the eve of the approaching contest, fearful dreams and harrowing thoughts should have interruped a rest which, under the most favourable auspices, could scarcely have been tranquil and unbroken. He awoke agitated, dispirited, unrefreshed, "before the chaplains were ready to officiate, or the breakfast was prepared."† Prostrated in mind and body, bemoaning the direful consequences which must result to the realm from the approaching struggle, whichever party might gain the victory,‡ and acting under the influence of that morbid feeling which results from over-wrought nervous excitement, he unhesitatingly communicated to his trusty attendants, who, on entering his tent, found him agitated, pale§ and depressed, the simple cause of that lassitude which superstition quickly exaggerated into the appearance of supernatural visions, and subsequent chroniclers, with more indulgence of their imagination than became the simplicity of their task, recorded as a visitation of ghastly forms, forerunners of his death, or evil spirits sent to reproach him with curses for his alleged crimes.‖ The only effect which, in reality, sleeplessness appears to have had upon the mind or intentions of the king, judging from the statement of cotemporary writers, was his determination to ascertain beyond doubt the sentiments of the Lord Stanley, whose personal attendance at his camp he forthwith required by a special message, sent by the trusty Brackenbury.

To this determined measure he was further actuated by a warning which had been affixed during the night to the Lord of Norfolk's tent; a warning ambiguously worded, but which confirmed King Richard in his misgivings that he was, indeed, as the distich pronounced, perfidiously "bought and sold."¶ That the nefarious plot, although it had bafiled his utmost power to penetrate, was suspected by him is clear, and that suspicion must have opened his mind to a danger greater than any that could arise from Rich-

* That such was the fact is made apparent by Sir Thomas More, who states that "he took ill rest a-nights, lay long waking and musing, sore wearied with care and watch, rather slumbered than slept, troubled with fearful dreams."—*More*, p. 134.

† Chron. Croy., p. 573.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid.

‖ Grafton, p. 209; Pol. Virg., p. 562; Hall, p. 414.

¶ John Howard, Duke of Norfolk, was warned by divers to refrain from the field, insomuch that, the night before he should set forward toward the king, one wrote on his gate:

"Jocke of Norfolk, be not too bold,
For Dickon thy master is bought and sold."

Grafton, p. 230.

There can be little doubt that what Grafton ambiguously terms "the gate" signified the door-way or entrance to the duke's tent; for that nobleman did not rest at his own house "the night before he should set forward toward the king," but at Bury, where, by appointment, he was joined by his entire force. (See *Paston Letters*, vol. ii. p. 334.) His encampment prior to the battle of Bosworth was far removed from that of the monarch, being on a heath considerably to the rear of the royal troops, and about midway between the camps of Lord Stanley and his brother. This fact sufficiently explains the meaning of Grafton's expression—"the night before he should set forward toward the king," which he did on the morning of the battle, and thus afforded a marked contrast to the part pursued by the two Stanleys; it also justifies the view taken by Mr. Sharon Turner (vol. iv. p. 31) and other writers, that the warning was fixed to the Duke of Norfolk's tent on the eve of the engagement.

mond's trivial band of 7000 men, the very utmost which has ever been asserted to have been openly arrayed against his own powerful force of more than double that number. In his midnight survey of his outposts, too, he had found a sentinel asleep* (or feigning to be so); and that this was not a solitary instance of negligence was evident by the warning hand that vainly strove to shake the honour of the noble Norfolk; and was afterwards more effectually proved, from the fact of Sir Simon Digby penetrating as a spy into the centre of the royal camp,† and communicating to Richmond much valuable intelligence, obtained by so perilous and dangerous a step.

Fable and misrepresentation have added greatly to the horrors of Bosworth Field; but the sole point which may be relied upon is this, that on Stanley's refusal to obey the royal summons, the king commanded the immediate execution of the Lord Strange, his life having been given as a surety for his father's fidelity.‡ But the day had long dawned, both armies were on the alert, and Richard was again prevailed upon§ to spare his illustrious captive, or at least to suspend his execution until the battle was terminated.‖ Recovering his ordinary self-possession, he arranged his forces with the military skill and precision for which he had ever been remarkable. His entire force appears to have amounted to about 16,000 men; these he spread out so as to make them appear to the greatest advantage, occupying and covering entirely the eminence which rose from the centre of the plain from its base to its summit.¶ The earl's troops were ranged in the valley beneath, his small band being protected by the wood, and the marshy swamp which intervened between that and the rivulet.** The two Stanleys had so placed their companies—the one consisting of five, the other three thousand men—that the four bands may be considered to have formed an irregular square, although those of the Stanleys ranged more immediately on the side of Richard than on that of his rival. Both armies were drawn up in similar order of battle, each in two lines, the archers in the front, the bill-men in the rear, and the horse forming the wings.†† King Richard entrusted his front line to his faithful friend the Duke of Norfolk, to whom was united the aid of the chivalrous Earl of Surrey.‡‡ The second line appears to have been commanded by the Lord Ferrers, in conjunction with the Earl of Northumberland. The centre, composed of a dense square of "seven score of sergeants, that were chained and locked in a row, and as many bombards and thousands of morrispikes, harquebusses, &c. &c.,"§§ the king commanded in person. The Earl of Richmond's front was under the entire charge of the Earl of Oxford, supported on his right by Sir Gilbert Talbot, on the left by Sir John Savage, while his second line, although ostensibly apportioned to himself, was in effect commanded by his uncle, the Earl of Pembroke, a veteran warrior of great wisdom, experience and skill.‖‖

Disdaining the slender pretensions of "Henry Tudor," and spurning his insignificant force—outrageous at the duplicity of the Stanleys, and still more at the base and avowed defection of many persons whom his former bounty had fed—Richard advanced to the battle with that fierce and fearless deportment which characterized his undaunted race, and marked his own conduct at Barnet, at Tewksbury and at Berwick.

* Issuing from his tent by twilight, he observed a sentinel asleep, and is said to have stabbed him, with this remark: "I found him asleep, and have left him as I found him."—*Hutton's Bosworth*, p. 78.

† Hutton, p. 79.

§ Grafton, p. 283.

¶ Hutton, pp. 87, 88.

†† Hutton, p. 81.

§§ Harl. MSS., 542, fol. 34.

‡ Chron. Croy., p. 574.

‖ Ibid., 284.

** Ibid.

‡‡ Grafton, p. 220.

‖‖ Grafton, p. 220.

Previous to the battle, according to subsequent writers, each of the princely leaders is said to have addressed an energetic and powerful oration to his forces, although no mention is made of the circumstance by either of the cotemporary historians,* neither is it named in the manuscript detail of the battle, preserved in the Harleian Library, and which appears to have been written by some person present at the conflict.†

Eloquent appeals, there can be little doubt, were made on both sides to rouse those vigorous efforts which each commander felt himself called upon to require when the crown of England was at stake; and its ultimate possession was the stimulus and the reward of his own individual prowess: but the speeches‡ attributed to the rival princes are clearly the compositions of a writer long subsequent to the period—some person ignorant of the situation and feelings of the monarchs, and swayed by prejudices which were confirmed by subsequent events, if they did not originate in them. The Earl of Richmond occupied a less prominent position in the field than that which King Richard apportioned to himself. Rendered yet more conspicuous by the regal diadem,§ which, as in the instance of the Lancastrian hero, Henry V., when he headed his troops at Agincourt, surmounted his helmet, he led on his army as became a monarch of England, a prince who scornfully repelled the invader of his realm. As Richmond's army slowly advanced, the royal archers bent their bows, and, from the moment that the trumpets sounded, and the strife of actual conflict commenced, the most daring heroism marked King Richard's course. Alternately he encouraged his troops by appeals to their fidelity, and stimulated them by the example of his own invincible courage.

Had he been adequately supported, Henry of Richmond, and not Richard III., would probably have fallen on Bosworth Field:‖ but in the heat of the battle the Lord Stanley passed over to the earl,¶ and thus neutralized the advantage which the devoted and magnanimous Norfolk had obtained over the Earl of Oxford. The monarch, still and ever undismayed, strove to counteract the ascendency thus gained by his rival, who, invigorated by fresh troops, made a desperate attack upon the yet unbroken front of the royal forces; but the Earl of Northumberland, commanding the second line, instead of supporting his sovereign—with feelings more despicable than open revolt—stood aloof: with a stoicism past comprehension, in one who had been the

* The chronicler of Croyland, the historian Rous, and Fabyan, the city annalist.

† Harl. MSS., 542, fol. 34.

‡ These speeches rest solely on the authority of Grafton and Hall; and, considering that these chroniclers wrote their works many years after the battle occurred, and that they frankly admit that the lengthened addresses which they give, occupying "150 lines in folio," were "in these or like words following," there can be no doubt that they were the composition of the earlier of these writers. This is rendered clear by the circumstance that Richard is made to admit the fact of the murder of his nephews, and to have expressed contrition for the deed; a fact so important, if true, that it must have become known to his cotemporaries, who have so minutely described the battle and its results. But who can believe that, at such a moment, Richard would have so stultified himself, and ruined his own cause! This circumstance, united to the little probability of true or faithful versions being reported of verbal addresses made on the field, together with their evident partisanship to the Tudor monarch, incontestably lead to the conclusion that they form a portion of those unauthenticated rumours, fabricated for political purposes, which have so miserably defamed the character of Richard III.

§ Chron. Croy., p. 574.

‖ Where between them was fought a sharp battle, and sharper should have been if the king's party had been fast to him. But many toward the field refused him, and rode unto that other party; and some stood harrying afar off till they saw to which party the victory fell.—*Fabyan*, p. 518.

¶ Grafton, p. 227.

chief instrument, conjointly with Buckingham, in inciting Richard to aspire to the crown, he calmly viewed the distressing position of his royal master, the personal friend who had loaded him with benefits. Richard was thus deprived of aid from the quarter on which he had most relied for support.* Stung to the quick by such base, unmerited perfidy, and furious at witnessing the death of the valiant Norfolk, the capture of the Earl of Surrey, and the slaughter of several other trusty commanders who hastened to their rescue, Richard, in an unguarded moment, quitting the central position in which he was so well protected, rushed down the hill† and made towards the enemy's ranks, determined to seek out Henry of Richmond, and, by challenging him to single combat, at once to terminate the fearful strife.‡ He was followed by the Lord Lovell, Lord Ferrers, Sir Gervoise Clifton, by Brackenbury, Ratcliffe, Catesby, and many other devoted friends, who, seeing their royal master's danger, followed him to victory or to death. As they passed a spring which intervened between them and the enemy's lines, tradition states that the king momentarily checked his steed, and slaked his thirst from that fountain, which yet retains the name of "King Richard's Well." Refreshed by the cooling draught, he re-closed his helmet, and again rushed impetuously towards the spot where Richmond had been pointed out to him, standing, but indifferently guarded.§ He dashed into the midst of the enemy's ranks with a vehemence that nothing could withstand, followed by the chosen band who were about to seal with their lives their devotion to their sovereign, and their zeal for his cause. In spite of opposition the king made his way almost to the spot occupied by his rival before his intention even had become apparent to the earl or his supporters. By almost superhuman strength he maintained his perilous position, slaying with his own hand Sir William Brandon,‖ the earl's standard-bearer, and unhorsing Sir John Cheyney, one of the most powerful men of his time, who had advanced to Sir William's succour.¶ Thus carrying terror, and dealing destruction into the very heart of his enemies' ranks, the king now called upon the earl to meet him in single combat, and so stop a conflict rendered appalling by the numbers of the slain, and the desperate spirit which actuated both armies.

But Richmond's friends knew that he was no match for Richard III., the most accomplished warrior of his age; and, as he advanced to meet his foe, numbers interposed to separate them. They stood, however, no chance against the undaunted prowess of the defied monarch and his devoted followers. He gained so sensibly upon his opponents, and so fearfully diminished the gallant band that opposed his progress, that Richmond's flight or destruction seemed inevitable, and the success of King Richard certain. Sir William Stanley, who, up to this crisis, had remained neuter, observing the peril of the earl,** and aware of the king's invincible bravery, quitted the position whence he had watched the conflict,†† and speedily joining Richmond with 3000 fresh soldiers, he surrounded the king, and enclosing him as in a net, at once cut him off from his own army, or the possibility of flight, and thus decided the fortune of the day.

At this crisis a knight, reputed to be Catesby, who saw Stanley approaching, and comprehended the evident destruction which must follow his move-

* Grafton, p. 251; Hall, p. 419.

† "Being inflamed with ire, and vexed with outrageous malice, he put his spurs to his horse, and rode out of the side of the range of his battle, leaving the avaunt guards fighting."—*Grafton*, p. 218.

‡ Hutton, p. 108.

§ Grafton, p. 228.

‖ Ibid., p. 229.

¶ Ibid.

** Grafton, p. 229.

†† Hutton, p. 112.

ment, brought the monarch a fresh steed, beseeching him to save himself by flight,* while escape was yet practicable: but the race of York were never cravens; to them death on the field of battle was glorious — flight came not within their comprehension. "Not one foot will I fly," was his answer, "so long as breath bides within my breast; for by him that shaped both sea and land, this day shall end my battles or my life; I will die king of England."†

Betrayed, over-reached, vanquished by treachery alone, Richard continued to fight with the desperation induced by his perilous situation. All his friends, all his followers, one by one, were numbered with the dead; his standard bearer alone remained, and he waved the royal banner on high until both his legs "were cut him from, yet to the ground he would not let it go"‡ till life was quite extinct! Still Richard remained undaunted, unsubdued, slaying all who approached within his sword's length, and performing prodigies of valour. At last, overpowered by numbers, weakened by loss of blood, his strength exhausted although his courage was unabated, "in battle and not in flight," states the Croyland historian,§ "the said king, stricken with many mortal wounds, fell on the field like a courageous and most daring prince.

Thus perished Richard III.! thus terminated the Yorkist dynasty! The death of its last monarch on Redmore plain, like that of its founder, his noble and gallant sire at Wakefield Green, being effected by treachery so base, by a compact so perfidious, that it was less honourable to those who conquered than to those who fell under its ignoble influence.

King Richard died the victim of ingratitude and of hypocrisy, so opposed to the English character, that happily no corresponding parallel disgraces our national annals. His death was not occasioned, as it pleased the chroniclers of his rival to insinuate in after years, by open insurrection,‖ by a revolution produced by popular feeling arising from the reputed murder of his nephews; neither was he overcome by generous efforts to restore the sceptre to its lawful owner, or to inflict upon a tyrant that just retribution which is often resorted to by an enslaved people, to extirpate the despot whose savage deeds have driven his subjects to desperation: on the contrary, the last of the Plantagenet monarchs was accompanied to the field, as had been his predecessors, by the flower of the English chivalry; and the list of those gallant knights¶ who on the eve of the combat "swore that Richard should wear the crown," together with the affecting manner in which the intelligence of his death was entered at the time in the register of the city of York** — he "was piteously slain and murdered, to the great heaviness

* "Then to King Richard there came a knight and said, 'I hold it time for ye to fly; yonder Stanley his dynts be so sore, gainst them may no man stand. Here is thy horse, another day ye may worship again."—*Harl. MSS.*, 542. fol. 34.

† Harl. MSS., 542, fol. 34.

‡ Ibid.

§ Chron. Croy., p. 574.

‖ "The nation had no share in the conflict, notwithstanding all that is said about the king's unpopularity; it was an ambush of a few perfidious and disaffected noblemen against the crown, which succeeded by their hypocrisy: and Richard perished by one of those factions in his aristocracy from which, by taking the crown, it seemed likely that he had rescued himself."—*Sharon Turner*, vol. iv. p. 53.

¶ See Appendix CCCC.

** The sentiments expressed by the historian of York on this point are very important to King Richard, founded as they are upon the examination of cotemporary municipal records, and from the convincing evidence resulting therefrom. "These sketches of history," states that learned writer, after giving copies from the original documents, "I bring to light as a taste of those times, rendered dark enough by the writers of the Lancastrian party. Here is subject for an historian to expatiate largely

of this city,"* would alone suffice to show that neither the nation at large nor her nobles as a body, had rejected him from being their king.

Face to face he met his foes, proudly disdaining to shrink from the danger to which he was compelled to expose his faithful adherents. To check the carnage which was exterminating the bravest of his subjects, he challenged his rival to mortal combat, that the life of one man might suffice to stay the slaughter of thousands. Led to believe that Richmond could oppose but seven thousand men to his own gallant force of sixteen thousand, but quickly shown that five thousand more were in reserve, and only awaited, under the Lord Stanley, the fitting time for rendering the combatants of nearly equal strength, he was basely deserted by one-third of his own army, which was withdrawn by the Earl of Northumberland† at the most critical point of the battle, and hemmed in, for the purpose of destruction by the other member of that specious triumvirate, by whose machinations alone he was vanquished,‡ and numbered the chief among the mighty dead who perished on Bosworth Field.

Later ages, misled by partial statements, have given a far different colouring to the events which really led to King Richard's death; but the statement of the other cotemporary historian not only corroborates the eulogium bestowed by the ecclesiastical chronicler above quoted, but most graphically paints the base manner in which, with his dying breath, the monarch proclaimed that his ruin had been accomplished. "If," says Rous,§ "I may speak the truth to his honour, although small of body and weak of strength, he most valiantly defended himself as a noble knight to his last breath, often exclaiming that he was betrayed, and saying — Treason! treason! treason!"

With these words on his lips, King Richard expired on the 22d August, 1485, in the thirty-third year of his age, and after a brief reign of two years and two months — the victim of conspirators who had vowed his destruction, and craftily watched the most favourable moment for carrying it into execution. His death establishes the truth of the degrading fact which was communicated to the faithful and noble Howard the night preceding the battle;— the sovereign of England was indeed "both bought and sold!"

upon; and to such I leave it." "It is plain that Richard, represented as a monster of mankind by most, was not so esteemed in his lifetime in these northern parts. And had the Earl of Northumberland staid and raised forces here, he might have struck Henry's new acquired diadem into the hazard. Wanting that nobleman's personal appearance, our city had nothing to do but with the rest of the kingdom to submit to the conqueror. His policy taught him to show great acts of clemency at his entrance into government, though he must know that neither his title nor his family were recognized or respected in these northern parts of the kingdom."—*Drake's Ebor.*, p. 124.

* Ibid., p. 120.

† Pol. Virg. p. 563; Grafton, p. 234; Hall, p. 419.

‡ Ibid.

§ Rous, p. 217.

CHAPTER XIX.

The royal troops are dispersed after King Richard is slain.—The Earl of Richmond is proclaimed king, and crowned on the field.—Farther comparison between the battles of Bosworth and of Hastings; also between the fate of their leaders, Richard III. and Harold II.—The conduct of the Norman and Tudor invaders contrasted.—Insults offered to King Richard's mutilated remains.—His body conveyed back degradingly, but in triumph, to Leicester.—King Henry departs for London.—The corpse of Richard III. exposed to public view.—It is begged by the nuns of Leicester, and by them obscurely buried.—A monument is erected in after years to his memory.—His epitaph.—Defacement of the tomb at the dissolution of the monasteries.—Local traditions relative to his disinterment.—His appearance after death the probable origin of his alleged repulsive aspect.—His exploits at Bosworth disprove many incredible traditions.—The evil reports of his political enemies afford a fertile theme for poets and the drama.—King Richard leaves two illegitimate children.—Tradition numbers a third child.—Singular history of this latter.—Tragical circumstance that resulted from the discovery of money concealed in King Richard's military chest.—Present appearance of Bosworth Field.—Local appellations perpetuate its leading features.—Reflections arising from the issue of the combat.—King Richard the victim of adverse fortune.—He was no tyrant.—Facts recorded to his praise preponderate over rumours to his disadvantage.—His character briefly reviewed with reference to early and later testimonials.—The presumption that, his personal deformity being disproved, just grounds are afforded for believing that his alleged moral turpitude was equally unfounded—Arguments induced from the foregoing deduction.—Concluding remarks.

The fearful struggles on Bosworth Field terminated with King Richard's life; for the shouts of triumph which rent the air as he sank beneath the swords of countless multitudes,* quickly announced to his own army the direful fate of their illustrious and intrepid leader. Terror-stricken, the royal troops fled in all directions, and were speedily followed by the victorious party, who, unimpeded by the dead and the dying,† which, piled in fearful numbers,‡ formed a dreadful barrier between the hostile armies, they pursued their adversaries with that ferocity, that unrelenting vengeance, which forms one of the most melancholy features of civil warfare. For nearly two miles their route is said to be still marked by "pits or hollows,"§ which are supposed to be the graves of the heaps of slain that fell in the pursuit; and although this appalling result to the tragic scenes enacted on the battle-field occupied less than fifty minutes,‖ it was sufficiently long to secure a complete victory to Richmond, and utter discomfiture to the supporters of the fallen monarch. A steep hill served to check alike the pur-

* "Charged and environed with multitudes, that like a storm came on him, valiant Richard falls the sacrifice of that day under their cruel swords."—*Buck*, lib. ii. p. 61.

† "And many a noble knight then lost theyr life with Richard theyr kynge."—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 542. fol. 34.

‡ There fell in this battle about four thousand of the vanquished.—*Hume*, chap. xxiii. p. 273.

§ Hutton, p. 128.

‖ Ibid., p. 129.

suit of the victors and farther carnage of the vanquished.* Henry, accompanied by the Lord Stanley, the Earl of Pembroke, the Earl of Oxford and others of his most renowned commanders, paused on its summit,† and there received, from the hands of his father-in-law, that diadem which had cost King Richard his life, and was to secure to himself the throne. During the heat of the conflict, and shortly before the monarch's death, the crown which surmounted his helmet was cleft from it.‡ Falling to the ground, it was picked up by a soldier,§ and concealed in a hawthorn bush‖ in the adjoining wood. There it was accidentally discovered by Sir Reginald Bray, who, seizing the precious relic, the possession of which had caused the slaughter of so many gallant warriors, he gained the victors, and presenting it to Lord Stanley,¶ that nobleman placed it on Richmond's head,** and hailed him as monarch of England.

The eminence whereon this occurred still retains the name of "Crown Hill," in perpetuation of the event, and the cheers and acclamations of the conquering hosts as they greeted their leader with cries of "King Harry, King Karry,"†† were wafted across the intervening space, and echoing over Redmore Plain, announced that the pursuit was over, and conquest complete, there remaining "none against whom the victor Henry VII. might renew the fight.‡‡

Bosworth Field not only chronicles the only sovereign of England, save the hero of Agincourt, who went into battle wearing the royal diadem, but it commemorates also the only British monarch who was slain in battle since the Norman conquest, and since Harold II., by a similar death, conferred corresponding celebrity on the field of Hastings. The analogy between these two conquests and the fate of their royal leaders,§§ together with the remarkable epochs in British history which they perpetuate, have been already noticed at the opening of this memoir; but the conduct of the invaders in the fifteenth century affords a painful contrast to the generous and ennobling feeling which marked that of the Norman conqueror four centuries before, although acted in times by comparison rude and uncivilized, and characterized by a far greater degree of popular excitement. They warred with the living, and not with the dead; they fought as became men and Christians, not as ruthless savages.‖‖ Harold fell, vanquished by the victorious bands of the

* "Then they removed to a mountayne hyghe, and with a voyce they cried King Harry."—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 542. fol. 34.

† Ibid., No. 542. fol. 34.

‡ "They hewed the crown of gold from his head with dowtful dents."—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 542. fol. 34.

§ Hutton, p. 132.

‖ To commemorate his being crowned with King Richard's diadem at Bosworth Field, found in a hawthorn bush, Henry VII. bore the hawthorn bush with the crown in it, and these letters K. H., with which the windows of his royal chapel at Westminster Abbey are replenished.—*Sandford's Geneal. Hist.*, book vi. p. 434.

¶ "The crown of gold was delivered to the Lord Stanley, and unto Kynge Henry then went he, and delyvered it."—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 542. fol. 34.

** Grafton, p. 233. †† Ibid. ‡‡ Chron. Croy., p. 574.

§§ Harold, like Richard, died the victim of stratagem, for, states the old chronicler, "as an expert general, he had ordered his men in so firm a body, that no force of the Normans could disorder their ranks, till Duke William used a stratagem, commanding his men to retire and to counterfeit flight, by which he drew the English on, upon a hollow ground covered with earth, whereunto many of them fell and perished; and besides, into an ambush of his horsemen, which unexpectedly fell upon them and cut them in pieces."—*Baker's Chron.*, p. 23.

‖‖ "Richard died by the hands of a multitude, who cut his body in the most shocking and barbarous manner, while he was breathing his last."—*Nicholl's Leicester*, vol. ii. p. 298.

Norman William; but with his death all personal rancour ceased, and the conqueror, honouring the valour of his rival, however much he rejoiced at his overthrow, delivered his body to his mother,* that he might receive the interment befiting a gallant prince, although a vanquished and defeated monarch.

Far different was the conduct pursued towards Richard III. Although his intrepidity and his heroic deeds called forth eulogiums even from the Lancastrian historians, yet neither his bravery nor his misfortunes elicited sympathy from his opponents after death had sealed his fate, and when he was no longer conscious of the insults to which his mortal remains were subjected. Not contented with winning his crown, the great incentive to the combat—not satisfied with his defeat, and his having paid the forfeit of his life by his temerity, the victors searched for his body, and having found it covered with wounds† among a heap of slain, with a barbarity alike discreditable to the age and to the persons directly concerned in the unrelenting deed, they stripped him of his gorgeous apparel, and, in outrage of decency and common humanity, placed the deceased monarch naked across his war steed, "like a hog or a calf, the head and arms hanging on the one side of the horse, and the legs on the other side."‡ Thus all besprinkled "with mire and blood,"§ the inanimate victim of this unexampled barbarity was disposed of behind his pursuivant at arms, "Blanc Sanglier" (he wearing the silver boar upon his coat,‖) and carried back to Leicester as a trophy of the morning's victory,¶ to be presented in the most degrading manner,** which the inhumanity of political malice, hatred and revenge could suggest to the view of such of his subjects as had thronged to greet him on the day previous, gallantly wending his way to battle and to death. "The dead body of King Richard was found among the slain, and conveyed with great ignominy to Leicester," certifies the Croyland writer.†† Yet stronger is the language of the Tudor chronicler—"The dead corpse of King Richard was as shamefully carried to the town of Leicester as he gorgeously the day before, with pomp and pride, departed out of the same town."‡‡

Innumerable, indeed, are the extracts that might be made of corresponding import;§§ and this circumstance alone bespeaks more, perhaps, than all other arguments, the vindictive and personal feelings of malignity which influenced the conduct of Richard's adversaries, and formed the ground-work of those fearful accusations which henceforth were circulated freely and abundantly to brand the memory of the defeated king, and to exalt the merits of his successful opponent. Superstition lent her aid‖‖ to magnify the terrors of the eventful day. The head of the vanquished monarch being crushed against a projecting stone, as the pursuivant threaded his way over a narrow bridge, entering Leicester, there were not wanting soothsayers to protest that his left foot had touched the same spot the preceding day, and thus led to a prognos-

* For the body of King Harold, his mother Thyra offered a great sum to have it delivered to her; but the duke, out of the nobleness of his mind, would take no money, but delivered it freely, and then it was buried at Waltham Abbey, which himself had begun to build, at least repair.—*Baker's Chron.*, p. 23.

† Buck, lib. ii. p. 62.

‡ Grafton, p. 234. § Ibid. ‖ Hutton, p. 141.

¶ While in the possession of a complete victory, Richmond was totally destitute of that mercy and compassion which ennobles man.—*Nicholl's Leicestershire*, vol. ii. p. 381.

** Fabyan, p. 518. †† Chron. Croy., p. 574. ‡‡ Grafton, p. 234.

§§ See Fabyan, p. 518; Pol. Virg., p. 594; Hall, p. 419.

‖‖ See a pamphlet entitled, "Seven several Strange Prophecies," [London, 1643,] for some curious old legends concerning the death of King Richard III.

tication relative to his doom—"even so shall his head, at his return back, hit on the same place"*—of which nothing would have been known, had victory, not defeat, been the result of the conflict on Redmore Plain; for, as the local historian who perpetuates the tale ingenuously admits, "these are but reports."†

King Richard had left his tents standing‡, so that the spoil was immense, and amply were the foreign mercenaries, as well as the less needy English soldiers, repaid by pillage for their great exertions,§ and for the discomforts of their journey through Wales. "The same night, however, in the evening, King Henry with great pomp came to the town of Leicester, and his whole camp removed with bag and baggage."‖ The body of King Richard, brought there at the same time, was lodged at a fortified tower,¶ entitled Newark, one of the chief entrances to the town; and as it would appear by a proclamation, addressed to the citizens of York by King Henry VII. on the 25th inst., certifying to them the death of their late sovereign,** was there "laid openly that every man might see and look upon him," and be satisfied that he was indeed deceased.

The most zealous of the late king's personal friends were slain in battle with himself,†† at the head of which stands the Duke of Norfolk, who, regarding "more his oath, his honour, and promise made to King Richard, like a gentleman and a faithful subject to his prince, absented not himself from his master; but, as he faithfully lived under him, so he manfully died with him, to his great fame and laud."‡‡ "Of captains and prisoners there was a great number."§§ The Earl of Surrey, who, in yielding up his sword to Sir Gilbert Talbot, nobly exclaimed, "Our motto is to support the crown of England,"‖‖ was committed to the Tower of London, where he long remained immured, "because his father was chief counsellor, and he greatly familiar with King Richard;¶¶ but Sir William Catesby, "learned in the laws of the realm," and "the deceased monarch's confidential minister," with divers other were, two days after the battle, beheaded at Leicester.*** At this town King Henry remained for that brief interval, as well for the refreshing of his people as for preparing all things for his journey to London. This afforded time for the escape of many gallant knights who had fled from the engagement,††† when their royal leader, whom they would have supported unto death, no longer existed to require their efforts towards retrieving his evil

* Nicholl's Leicester, vol. i. p. 298. † Ibid.

‡ Hutton, p. 79.

§ Lord Bacon asserts that the "great spoils of Bosworth Field came almost wholly into the hands of Sir William Stanley, "to his infinite enriching," there being found in his castle of Holt, at the confiscation of his property, "forty thousand marks in ready money and plate, besides jewels, household stuff, stacks upon the grounds, and other personal estate exceeding great."—*Bacon's Henry VII.*, p. 133. 135.

‖ Grafton, p. 234.

¶ "They brought King Richard thither that night as naked as ever he was born, and in Newark was he laid, that many a man might see."—*Harl. MSS.*, No. 542, fol. 34.

** "And, moreover, the king ascertaineth you that Richard, Duke of Gloucester, late called King Richard, was slain at a place called Sandeford, within the shire of Leicester, and brought dead off the field into the town of Leicester, and there was laid openly that every man might see and look upon him."—*Drake's Ebor.*, p. 121.

†† The Duke of Norfolk, Sir Richard Ratcliffe, Sir Robert Brackenbury, constable of the Tower of London; John Kendall, secretary; Sir Robert Percy, comptroller of the household; Walter Devereux, Lord Ferrers and others, chiefly north countrymen, in whom King Richard most trusted.—*Chron. Croy.*, p. 574.

‡‡ Grafton, p. 230. §§ Ibid. ‖‖ Hutton, p. 166.

¶¶ Grafton, p. 231. *** Ibid.

††† "Many other nobles and gentlemen got into foreign countries and sanctuaries, obscuring themselves till the storm and smart of that day's memory was past."—*Buck*, lib. ii. p. 64.

fortune. The Lord of Lincoln and the Viscount Lovell were amongst this number, together with the Staffords, who took refuge in sanctuaries at Gloucester,* and whose zealous conduct at Bosworth, when considered with reference to their affinity to the Duke of Buckingham, cannot fail to weaken the imputation of undue severity having been exercised towards their kinsman.

At the expiration of the two days just named, Henry VII. with his army departed for Coventry, on his progress, by easy journeys, to the metropolis, carrying with him the standards won at Bosworth and other trophies of his victory there.† The mortal remains of the deceased king were exposed to the rude gaze of the multitude during the whole of his rival's sojourn at Leicester;‡ and even his triumphant departure from the town did not witness the termination of a spectacle sufficiently protracted to gratify revenge, however deadly, and satisfy the most sceptical, as regards the monarch's decease. Such at least may be gathered from the relation of Lord Bacon,§ who states that, although King Henry gave orders for the honourable interment of his vanquished foe, his commands were neglected to be obeyed; and as if the closing scene of Richard's earthly career was destined to be as singular as had been the leading events of his extraordinary life, he, the last of the Plantagenet dynasty, the sovereign by whose decease that ancient, chivalrous, and munificent race of kings became extinct, was indebted to the compassion of the nuns of Leicester—to the pitying, charitable, humane feelings of a religious sisterhood, for the performance of the last solemn rites of burial, and for receiving at their sympathising hands that decent though humble sepulchre‖ which had been awarded to the meanest of his soldiers, although denied to the mutilated remains of their intrepid commander. "King Richard III., being slain at Bosworth," remarks the county historian, "his body was begged by the nuns at Leicester, and buried in their chapel there."¶ A sense of shame, however, or some compunction for the unchristian spirit which had been manifested towards the deceased king, appears at length to have influenced the conduct of his enemies, and led them, at the expiration of ten years, to bestow on him a more honourable sepulture; for the same writer who has commemorated the fact of his interment by the nuns in their chapel, also states** that, "after revenge and rage had satiated their barbarous cruelties upon his dead body, they gave his royal earth a bed of earth, honourably appointed by the order of King Henry the VII., in the chief church of Leicester, called St. Mary, belonging to the order and society of the Gray Friars, the king in short time after causing a fair tomb†† of mingle coloured marble, adorned with his statue, to

* Grafton, p. 231.

† Bacon, p. 8. ‡ Hutton, p. 142.

§ "Though the king, of his nobleness, gave charge unto the friars of Leicester to see an honourable interment to be given to him, yet the religious people themselves, being not free from the humours of the vulgar, neglected it, wherein, nevertheless, they did not then incur any man's blame or censure."—*Bacon*, p. 2.

‖ "Commanding all the hurt and wounded persons to be cured, and the dead carcases to be delivered to the sepulture."—*Grafton*, p. 232.

¶ Nicholl's Leicester, vol. i. p. 298. ** Ibid.

†† Extract from the privy purse expenses of King Henry VII., September 11th, an. 1495:—

"To James Keyley, for King Richard's tomb, 10*l.* 1*s.*"

This entry is deserving of attention, as it proves the statement of some writers that Henry VII. caused a tomb to be erected to Richard the Third's memory. That prince was meanly buried in the Gray Friar's church of Leicester, where afterwards King Henry caused a monument to be erected for him, with his picture in alabaster, where it remained until the dissolution under Henry VIII., when it was pulled down and utterly defaced."—Vide *Excerpta Hist.*, p. 105.

be erected thereupon;* to which Sir George Buck affirms† "some grateful pen had also destined the following epitaph," which, although never fixed to his stone, he had seen "in a recorded manuscript-book," chained to a table in a chamber in the Guildhall of London:" —

EPITAPHIUM
REGIS RICHARDI TERTII,
SEPULTI AD LEICESTRIAM, JUSSU,
ET SUMPTIBUS ST^{I} REGIS
HENRICI SEPTIMI.

"Hic ego, quem vario tellus sub marmore claudit,
Tertius a justâ voce Richardus eram;
Tutor eram patriæ, patriur pro jure nepotis;
Dirupta, tenui regna Britanna, fide.
Sexaginta dies binis duntaxat ademptis
Ætatesque, tuti tunc mea sceptra, duas.
Fortiter in bello certans desertus ab Anglis,
Rex Henrice, tibi, septime, succubui.
At sumptu, pius ipse, sic assa dicaras,
Regem olimque facis regis honore coli.
Quatuor exceptis jam tantum, quinq. bis annis
Acta trecenta quidem, lustra salutis erant,
Antique Septembris undena luce kalendas,
Redideram Rubræ jura petita Rosæ.
At mea, quisquis eris, propter commissa precarem
Sit minor ut precibus pœna levata tuis."

DEO O. M. TRINO ET UNO,
SIT LAUS ET GLORIA ÆTERNA.
AMEN.‡

* The bed of earth honourably appointed by the order of Henry VII., with the tomb of many coloured marble, and the statue of King Richard by which it was surmounted, is somewhat inconsistent with the proclamation issued before his interment, in which he is simply designated as "Richard, Duke of Gloucester." Still more out of character is it with the bill of attainder, which Henry procured to be passed in his first Parliament, (*Rot. Parl.*, vol. vi. p. 276,) in which, not only are the late king's followers proclaimed traitors, and their lands forfeited to the crown, but Richard himself is attainted on a charge of high treason, for bearing arms against Henry of Richmond; although this latter prince was at the time a claimant only for those regal honours to which Richard had been declared duly and lawfully elected, and which he rightly and justifiably defended.

† Buck, lib. v. p. 147.

‡ This epitaph is also registered in a book in the College of Arms, a literal copy from which source is given by Sandford in his "Genealogical History of the Kings of England, book v. p. 410. It has been thus rendered into English in Bishop Kennet's reprint of "Buck's Life and Reign of Richard III."—See *Complete History of England*, vol. i. 597.

EPITAPH OF RICHARD III., BURIED AT LEICESTER BY THE ORDER AND EXPENSE OF KING HENRY VII.

I who am laid beneath this marble stone,
Richard the Third, possessed the British throne.
My country's guardian in my nephew's claim,
By trust betray'd, I to the kingdom came.
Two years and sixty days, save two, I reign'd,
And bravely strove in fight; but unsustain'd
My English left me in the luckless field,
Where I to Henry's arms was forced to yield.
Yet at his cost, my corse this tomb obtains,
Who piously interred me, and ordains
That regal honours wait a king's remains.
Th' year fourteen hundred 'twas and eighty-four,
The twenty-first of August, when its power
And all its rights I did to the Red Rose restore.
Reader, whoe'er thou art, thy prayers bestow
T' atone my crimes and ease my pains below.

At the suppression of the monasteries by King Henry VIII., Richard's tomb and the "picture of alabaster representing his person" were utterly defaced;* "since when, his grave, overgrown with nettles and weeds, is not to be found."† His body is traditionally reported to have been carried out of the city, and to have been contemptuously thrown over Bow Bridge,‡ the spot already noticed as the scene of the soothsayers' alleged prediction; while the stone coffin which contained his body, "the only memory of the monarch's greatness," is ordinarily reputed to have been given or sold to an innkeeper, in whose possession it remained as a drinking trough for horses,§ till the beginning of the 18th century.‖ For the defacement of his tomb and the sacrilegious use to which his coffin was applied,¶ there may have been and probably was some foundation, considering the desecration to which all royal mausoleums throughout the kingdom were subjected during that direful revolution, which swept away many of the most ancient monuments in the land; but that the ashes of the ill-fated monarch were so degradingly bestowed, as is locally reported, admits of great doubt; indeed, positive proof may be said to exist, and on the high authority of Dr. Christopher Wren,** that his relics, however profanely disturbed, were suffered to rest finally in consecrated ground. "At the dissolution of the monastery where he was interred," states that learned antiquary, "the place of his burial happened to fall into the bounds of a citizen's garden; which, being after purchased by Mr. Robert Heyrick, some time mayor of Leicester, was by him covered with a handsome stone pillar three feet high, with this inscription, 'Here lies the body of Richard III., some time King of England.' This he shewed me walking in the garden, 1612."††

No remains, however, of this or of any other monument now mark the place where the monarch was interred.

His name is inseparably connected with Leicester, but the precise spot where his mouldering remains were at length permitted to rest in peace is no longer known. To the circumstance, however, of his having been exposed to public view in this town so long before his burial, and under such unfavourable auspices, may, in all probability, be traced the source of those extravagant descriptions of his person, which unhappily have so long prevailed. It has been already shown that these descriptions were not derived from cotemporary writers, neither are they borne out by coeval statements, but that

* Nichols, vol. ii. p. 298.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ The Reverend Samuel Carte, who published an account of Leicester in the Bibl. Top. Britannica, and who, as vicar of St. Martin's, resided for many years in that town, says, in 1720, "I know of no other evidence that the stone coffin formerly used for a trough was King Richard's, but the constancy of the tradition. There is a little part of it still preserved at the White Horse Inn, in which one may observe some appearance of the hollow, fitted for retaining the head and the shoulders." The son of this learned divine, Thomas Carte, the eminent historian, was one of King Richard's most zealous defenders, and some very striking arguments, in refutation of his alleged crimes, will be found in his account of this monarch's reign, in his valuable History of England, published in 1754, in 4 vols.

‖ Nichols, vol. ii. p. 298.

¶ Considerable doubt, however, cannot but be entertained, whether the remains of the coffin described by Mr. Carte was that which had belonged to King Richard, inasmuch as stone coffins of that shape and kind were not used so late as the time of that monarch, neither had they been for centuries before.

** Christopher Wren, B.D., at that time tutor at St. John's College, Oxford, to the eldest son of Sir William Heyrick, of Beaumanor, Leicestershire, a near relative of the Mr. Robert Heyrick, who is named in the foregoing quotation.

†† Wren's Parentalia, p. 114.

they had their rise in Tudor times, and were perpetuated by Tudor chroniclers. There can, indeed, be little doubt, that the hideous accounts which were first promulgated by them, and which have invested Richard with such injurious notoriety, originated from the statements of such of his enemies as beheld him in the agonies of death, when, with his limbs distorted and his features convulsed by the desperate struggles which preceded his violent end, he was for "a season exposed to view that all men might see him."* Such an exhibition, it is very certain, would produce a far different effect on the beholder who so looked on their deceased sovereign for the first time, his face livid, his body mangled, and the expression of his countenance altogether disfigured by the contending passions which marked his dying hour, to those which were impressed on the memory of writers who framed their reports in the full tide of his prosperity, when he was an honoured and esteemed prince, not a calumniated and a vanquished monarch.

The physical power which Richard displayed when seeking out Henry of Richmond on Redmore plain, must prove to every impartial mind how great a mixture of fable has been intermingled with the historical facts. A withered arm could not have slain Sir William Brandon, or unhorsed Sir John Cheyney, the most powerful man of his time; neither, if it had been withered from his birth, could Richard have performed corresponding acts of heroism at Barnet to those which have been so eulogized on Bosworth Field!

The reports, however, of his mental and bodily deformity were fully considered in an earlier portion of this work, when weighing the relative merits of cotemporary writers with the historians from whom Shakspeare derived the marvellous tales which he has so graphically depicted. The subject might be pursued with advantage to the memory of the monarch, from the period of his birth up to the very moment of his decease, for there is scarcely an action connected with his memorable career that has not been reported with a political bias, and been represented as springing from motives, designs and prejudices for which there is no authority or foundation.

The momentous events which preceded and succeeded his elevation to the throne were in themselves so important, and necessarily exacted such minute details, and such searching examination into the origin of the erroneous impressions under which many of them have long been viewed, that to renew the subject now, in connection with Shakspeare's tragedy of Richard III., would be to repeat the arguments which were adduced when separately considering the same striking scenes, with reference to history and tradition. One of the most remarkable features in the historical plays of our immortal bard is his close adherence to the statements of those chroniclers whose relations furnished him with the materials he dramatized; and it is by that very fidelity that Shakspeare's rich and incomparable poetry has unhappily fixed upon the traduced monarch "a gloomy celebrity as durable as his own genius."†

The assumption by King Richard of the office of lord protector, his deposition of Edward V., and his subsequent acceptance of the crown, the reported murder of the young princes in the Tower, and the charge of having poisoned his queen in order to espouse his niece,—all presented subjects of too great importance to his character to be otherwise than closely examined and tested by such cotemporary documents as helped to place the transactions themselves in the fairest and truest light. But to these documents, coeval with the monarch, the Bard of Avon had no access: he contented himself with

* Fabyan, p. 518.

† Sharon Turner, vol. iv. p. 60.

adopting the plots presented to him through the medium of the most popular chroniclers* of the day; and the romantic colouring which they gave to many events, in themselves unimportant, and the tragical tales which they incorporated in their narrative, made their relation a far more winning and fitting theme for the poet and the dramatist† than he would have found the concise and meagre details which comprise the only truthful histories of Richard III. Foremost among the embellishments thus literally transferred from Sir Thomas More's pages to Shakspeare's tragedy is the statement of Richard demanding strawberries from the Bishop of Ely, when waiting the fitting time for Lord Hastings' execution,‡ and of the displaying his withered arm to convict the conspirators of witchcraft and necromancy.§

No allusion can be found to this latter astounding accusation in the earlier and cotemporary writers; it rests, indeed, on no firmer basis than rumour: whereas Richard's dauntless courage and military prowess, which he displayed before thousands at his death, are conclusive evidence that the scene, however imposing in the drama,‖ has no foundation in historical truth. The oration delivered before the battle partakes of the same character;¶ and

* Gents. Mag., vol. xvii. p. 498.

† The reign of King Richard III. has not only exercised the talents of our great national bard, but the conflict which commemorates his decease has afforded subject for the muse of many poets greatly distinguished in their day: amongst whom may be enumerated "Michael Drayton," a native of Atherstone, born in 1563, whose "Bosworth Field" ranks among the best of his heroical epistles; Sir John Beaumont, Bart., of Grace Dieu, Leicestershire, born 1582, and Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, whose most popular poem relates to the same subject, and was considered one of the best productions of the age in which he flourished; and Charles Aleyn, (1620,) famed for his "Life of Henry VII.," with the "Battle of Cressy and Poictiers" in heroic verse.—*Winstanley's Lives of English Poets*, pp. 105. 145. 165.

‡ "My lord, you have verye good strawberries in your gardayne in Holborne. I require you to let us have a messe of them."—*More*, p. 70.

"My lord of Ely, when I was last in Holborn,
I saw good strawberries in your garden there;
I do beseech you send for some of them."
Richard III., Act III. Sc. IV.

§ "And therewith he plucked up hys doublet sleeve to his elbow upon his left arm, where he showed a werish withered arme, and small as it was never other."—*More*, p. 74.

"Then be your eyes the witness of their evil,
Look how I am bewitch'd; behold mine arm
Is, like a blasted sapling, withered up."
Richard III., Act III. Sc. IV.

‖ See also the following passage:—

Hastings.—"Certainly, my lord, if they have so heinously done," (alluding to the conspirators, who, acting under evil influence, had withered his arm,) "they be worthy heinous punishment." "What," quod the protector, "thou servest me, I ween, with ifles and andes. I tell thee they have so done, and that I will make good on thy body, traitor!"—*More*, p. 72.

Hast. "If they have done this deed, my noble lord—
Glos. If! . . . .
Talk'st thou to me of ifs? Thou art a traitor."
Richard III., Act. III. Sc. IV.

In allusion to which scene the late lamented author of the "Commentary on the Historical Plays of Shakspeare" judiciously observes, that these "smaller incidents confirm the probability that More's history was derived from Bishop Morton, if not written by that prelate himself."—*Courtenay's Commen.*, vol. ii. p. 87.

¶ "And to begin with the Earl of Richmond, captain of this rebellion, he is a Welsh milksop."—*Grafton*, p. 222.

"And who doth lead them but a paltry fellow,
Long kept in Bretagne at our mother's cost?
A milksop." *Richard III.*, Act V. Sc. III.

very many other examples of a similar nature might be advantageously adduced: but the most destructive scene as regards King Richard's condemnation is that wherein the ghosts of Edward of Lancaster, Henry VI., George, Duke of Clarence, Rivers, Grey, and Vaughan, the Lord of Hastings, the two young princes, Queen Anne and the Duke of Buckingham, are made to visit the doomed monarch, and to flit before him with reproaches for every crime which posthumous calumny and legendary lore have fastened upon him.* Here not Shakspeare's authorities, but Shakspeare's own genius, is brought to bear against the memory of the monarch: what wonder is it, then, that by this terrific scene the mind of the spectator becomes so imbued with a conviction of this monarch's horrible guilt, that it would be difficult to banish the impression, even upon after reference to genuine records, or to be satisfied that the simple and by no means uncommon effect of a fearful dream, was the sole foundation for a scene "made to embody and realize conceptions† which had hitherto assumed no distinct shape."‡ Justly, indeed, has it been observed of King Richard, in an admirable essay exposing the false impressions received of this monarch as he is ordinarily represented on the stage, that "nothing but his crimes, his actions are visible; they are prominent and staring; the murderer stands out; but where is the lofty genius, the man of vast capacity,—the profound, the witty, the accomplished Richard?"§

Where, indeed! for, until within a comparatively brief period, little else was known of this monarch's proceedings than the appalling portraiture of his alleged crimes, thus powerfully delineated by the master hand of the immortal Shakspeare. The danger of confounding moral with personal deformity has likewise been ably depicted by the above-named forcible writer,‖ who most effectively portrays "this humour of mankind to deny personal comeliness to those with whose moral attributes they are dissatisfied."

Perhaps no instance on record better demonstrates the truth of this hypothesis than the unmitigated prejudice which is universally felt with reference to the fallen monarch. Of his merits as Duke of Gloucester — of his brilliant career as a firm, faithful and uncompromising prince, striving to retrieve his brother's evil fortune and to sustain the royal prerogative — of his undeviating fidelity to Edward IV. amidst every reverse and amidst all temptation — of his stern resistance of the French king's bribes, and wise neutrality in the factious proceedings which distracted the English court,— of all this, and yet more, of his shining abilities, his cultivated mind, his legislative wisdom, his generosity, his clemency, and the misfortunes that led to his downfall, but little notice is taken: every bright point in his character has been carefully concealed, every manly virtue scrupulously withheld, as if by common consent; and a monster of depravity, whose very name seemed to typify deformity of the most revolting description, corporeal as well as mental, is the impression that prevailed for ages, and, to a certain degree, still prevails, respecting a monarch whose actions, during his brief reign alone, deserved a more just, a more faithful representation.

If a veil of mystery was thus studiously thrown over his public career, it is not to be marvelled at that still fewer records remain of his private life. That he was the last survivor of "his hearth" has been already shown, and that his short reign was characterized by the remarkable occurrence of the decease of the heir-apparent to the throne, and the reigning queen, has been also related. Little else is known of his domestic history beyond the fact of his having preceded his venerable mother* to the grave, and of his having left two illegitimate, but not unacknowledged children — a son and a daughter both apparently older than the young Prince of Wales, with whom they were probably brought up at Middleham;† as from occasional notices in the oft-quoted registry they would seem to have been educated with great care, and were recognized by the king as his offspring. The eldest, John, sometimes surnamed "of Gloucester,"‡ sometimes "of Pomfret,"§ was knighted, it will be remembered, by Richard after his second coronation at York; and, shortly before the monarch's decease, he appointed him Captain of Calais for life, and governor of the fortresses of Rysbank, Guisnes, Hammes, and all the marches of Picardy belonging to the English crown. It would appear, from the wording of the patent,‖ which conveyed to his son this permanent provision, that the young Plantagenet gave promise of no ordinary degree of excellence: nothing is known, however, of his subsequent proceedings, neither does there appear to be preserved any other document relating to him beyond an entry in the Harl. MSS. of a donation from the king, of "silk clothes,"¶ and other articles of dress suitable to the position in life which his son was about to fill, and bearing date two days before the patent above named.

His other child, a daughter, seems to have ranked high in her father's

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And on a spacious moor, lying southward from the town,
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Their soldiers to refresh, preparing for the fight;
Where to the guilty king, that black fore-running night,
Appear the dreadful ghosts of Henry and his son,
Of his own brother George, and his two nephews done
Most cruelly to death; and of his wife, and friend
Lord Hastings, with pale hands, prepared as they would rend
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favour—judging, at least, from the innumerable grants and gifts bestowed upon her and her husband. She was early married to William Herbert, Earl of Huntingdon, secretary to the young Prince of Wales;* and in the deed of settlement† which conveys the king's consent to the alliance, she is styled "Dame Katherine Plantagenet, daughter to our said sovereign lord, King Richard III." The king undertakes to make and bear the cost of the same marriage, and to endow her with an annuity of 400 marks. He shortly afterwards granted to William, Earl of Huntingdon, a confirmation of the name, state and title of the said earldom;‡ he bestowed upon him the stewardship of many rich demesnes,§ nominated him to various important offices;‖ and in the last year of his reign, further granted to "William Herbert, Earl of Huntingdon, and Katherine his wife, jointly an annuity of 152*l.* 10*s.* 10*d.*, until the king should grant to them and their heirs lands of like annual value."¶ Tradition numbers a third child** with the two that are thus authenticated by history, another son bearing his father's name of "Richard," but who, for some unexplained cause, appears to have been kept in ignorance of his parentage until the eve of the battle of Bosworth, when the monarch is stated to have sent for him, and to have made known his intention of acknowledging him as his offspring if he survived the approaching conflict and gained the victory over his enemies. Prior to the engagement, it is further stated that the king placed him on an eminence, where he could watch the progress of the battle, enjoining him to instant flight, for which he furnished him with the means, in the event of his death. When the fatal result took place, the youth, quite a stripling, precipitately fled, and after enduring great privations, and having no means of subsistence, it is said that he proffered his services to a stone mason at Eastwell in Kent, where he lived obscurely and worked in penury to the age of between seventy and eighty, carefully concealing his name, until circumstances, a few years before his death, led him to make known his history to an ancestor of the present Earl of Winchelsea, who suffered him to erect a cottage in his grounds, and in whose family this tradition has been perpetuated. Singular as this romantic tale may appear, there are not wanting facts which throw over it an air of credibility. The registry of the death and burial of "Rychard Plantagenet," at Eastwell, in 1560, is yet extant;†† the foundation of the little dwelling where he is traditionally reported to have lived and died is also still visible in the park adjoining: these realities, and a well in the same parish, called to this day by his name, furnish strong presumptive proof, if not of the actual truth of the whole story, at least for there being some solid ground for a tradition‡‡ so curious and remarkable. Nevertheless, it is but tradition!

* "To William Herbert, secretary to my lord prince, an annuity of 40 marks, for occupying of the said office."—*Harl. MSS.*, 433, fol. 34.

† See Appendix DDDD.

‡ Harl. MSS., fol. 66.

§ Ibid., fol. 46.

¶ Ibid., fol. 29.

‖ Ibid., fol. 67.

** See "Peck's Desiderata Curiosa;" Seymour's Top.; and Hist. Survey of Kent; Leland's Kent; and Gent.'s Mag., vol. xxxvii. p. 408, vol. lxii. p. 1106.

†† Through the zealous kindness of the Rev. Hans Mortimer, the author has been enabled to procure a certified copy from the ancient register of the parish of Eastwell, relative to the burial of Richard Plantagenet. It runs thus:—

"Anno Domini, 1560.
Rychard Plantagenet was buried the xxii daye of Decembre,
Anno di supra."

Likewise of the truth of the facts mentioned in the text relative to his humble abode, and the well which perpetuates his name.

‡‡ A very interesting letter will be found in the Gentleman's Magazine, dated August 10, 1767, entitled "The Story of Richard Plantagenet authenticated," from the pen of the erudite Rev. Samuel Pegge, under his assumed signature of "T. Row." Likewise another letter of singular import, as regards the tradition, from the rector of the parish of Eastwell, in the same year, who states, with reference to the entry of Richard's burial, "It is also remarkable that in the same register, whenever any of noble family was buried, this ℣ mark is prefixed to the name; and the same mark is put to that of Richard Plantagenet."—*T. Parsons, Rector of Eastwell*, 1767. *July.*

and although in itself a matter of no great importance, it furnishes another example of the mystery, uncertainty, and obscurity, which pervade even the most trivial matters connected with the memoirs of Richard III.

The most ordinary incidents in other men's lives with him seemed fated to be alternately the subjects of romance or of tragedy. Even the inn where he abode during his brief sojourn at Leicester, even the very bed on which he there reposed, are not exempt from the tales of horror which are associated with the memory of this prince. On his departure for Bosworth, it appears, from the result, that he must have left many articles of value, either too cumbersome to be removed, or in themselves ill suited for a temporary encampment, at the house of entertainment where he had been abiding, and which, as being the chief hostelry in Leicester, was distinguished by the appellation of Richard's badge,* "the Silvery Boar:" but on his defeat and death, and the dispersion of his followers, the victorious army, with the infuriated rage which in all ages accompanies any popular excitement, compelled the owner of the inn to pull down the emblem of the deceased king, and to substitute the blue for the white boar.† The apartments which the king had occupied were pillaged and ransacked, and the hangings‡ of the richly-carved bed on which he had slept during his stay in the town were torn off, and either carried away as booty, with other portable articles, or were destroyed on the spot. The bedstead, however, being large and heavy and apparently of no great value, was suffered to remain undisturbed with the people of the house; thenceforth continuing a piece of standing furniture, and passing from tenant to tenant with the inn: for King Richard and his secretary being both slain, and all his confidential friends executed, imprisoned or exiled, it could not be known that the weight of the bulky wooden frame-work left in his sleeping apartment arose from its being in reality the military chest of the deceased monarch.§ It was at once his coffer and his couch. Many years, however, rolled on before this singular fact became known, and then it was only accidentally discovered, owing to the circumstance of a piece of gold dropping on the floor when the wife of the proprietor was making a bed which had been placed upon it. On closer examination, a double bottom was discovered, the intermediate space between which was found to be filled with gold coin to a considerable amount.‖

The treasure thus marvellously obtained, although carefully concealed, helped in time to elevate the humble publican, "a man of low condition,"¶ to the proud station of chief magistrate of his native town.** But at his death the vast riches that accrued to his widow excited the cupidity of menials connected with her establishment; and the wilful murder of their mistress, in 1613, led to the execution of her female servant, and of seven men concerned with her in the ruthless deed:†† thus adding another tragedy to the many of higher import which are inseparably connected with the recollection of this unhappy prince.

* Nichols, vol. ii. p. 381.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ Hutton, p. 48.

‖ Ibid.

¶ Nichols, vol. i. p. 380.

** Ibid.

†† The full particulars of this tragedy are given by Sir Roger Twysden, who had it from persons of undoubted credit, who were not only inhabitants of Leicester, but saw the murderers executed.—*Nichols' Leicestershire*, vol. i. p. 380.

The inn itself, rendered so remarkable as the last abiding-place of the last monarch of the middle ages, "a large, handsome, half-timber house, with one story projecting over the other,"* remained for upwards of three centuries unchanged, an interesting relic alike of the architecture of its period as of the remarkable epoch which it perpetuated. But in the year 1836, although undecayed, uninjured, and defying the ravages of time, this venerable fabric was razed to the ground, to the regret of all who hold sacred such historical memorials, and hallow the relics which link bygone ages with the present time. Its site, with the appellation of an adjoining thoroughfare to which it formed an angle, and which still retains the name of "Blue Boar Lane," together with the description and delineation of its picturesque appearance, is now all that connects King Richard with this interesting memorial of his last days at Leicester.

Not so, however, the bedstead. That appendage to the inn, although three hundred and fifty years have elapsed since it was used by the sovereign, is still in existence, and in the most perfect state of preservation. Richly and curiously carved in oak, with fleur-de-lys† profusely scattered over it, its panels inlaid with black, brown and white woods, the styles consisting of Saracenic figures in high relief, it proves, from the singularity of its construction, the true purpose for which it was designed, every portion of it but the body being fabricated to take to pieces and put up at will; so that for travelling, it speedily became transformed into a huge chest, although ingeniously framed for the twofold purpose which led to its preservation.‡

This relic, insignificant in itself, is the only known memorial connected with the personal history of Richard III. His political career will be forever

* Hutton, p. 47.

† During the Plantagenet era, this royal emblem of France formed a conspicuous feature in the heraldic embellishments of the English crown. The hangings, which were torn from the bed after the monarch's decease, were, in all likelihood, of great value, and richly ornamented with his badge; for there was scarcely any article of domestic use more highly prized during the middle ages than beds, and their costly furniture, the embroidering of which was a frequent occupation of ladies of the highest quality and their attendant gentlewomen. John of Gaunt, at his death in 1399, bequeaths in his will his "large bed of black velvet embroidered with a circle of fetterlocks," the badge of the House of Lancaster; and the Duke of York, killed at Agincourt, bequeaths to his dear wife Philippa "my bed of feathers and leopards, also my white and red tapestry of garters, fetterlocks and falcons." The "Testamenta Vetusta," whence the above examples were selected, abounds in legacies of a similar nature; and very curious behests may also be found in Nichols' "Royal Wills," proving how highly this article of furniture was estimated by its owners.

‡ Through the courtesy of the present owner of this valuable relic, the Reverend Matthew Babington, the author was permitted thoroughly to examine it, and was further favoured with many interesting particulars connected with its preservation, and the peculiarity of its construction. It seems, that after the murder of Mrs. Clarke, in 1613, the bedstead still remained at the Blue Boar Inn, and continued to do so for the space of 200 years, when it came into the possession of a person whose rooms being too low to admit of its transit, the feet were cut off: they were two feet six inches long, and each six inches square. It was purchased some years after by Mr. Drake, an alderman of Leicester, grandfather to the present proprietor, and by him held in great estimation, and very carefully preserved. Two of the richly-carved panels are said to represent the Holy Sepulchre; the tester is carved and inlaid with different coloured woods in various patterns; the posts are very massive in parts, and very taper in others, and their construction is said to be most ingenious. Modern feet have been added; but in all other respects this very remarkable piece of antique furniture remains in its pristine state, excepting that the rich gilding mentioned by Sir Roger Twysden was unfortunately removed by the carelessness of the person employed by Mr. Drake to cleanse it, after it was purchased by him.

perpetuated by Bosworth Field.* Unchanged this memorable spot can scarcely be expected to have continued from so remote a period up to the present time. But although the country has been enclosed, hedges planted and fences have grown up, and the prospect generally is impeded,† still such is the peculiar character of Redmore Plain, that, with the aid of the local appellations by which the sites of the leading events of the day are traditionally commemorated, its ancient appearance may very well be understood, even from its modern aspect. The scene is indeed a still continuing monument of the action by which it is rendered celebrated. The churches of Bosworth and Atherstone in the distance, the heights of Stapelton, where Richard first encamped his army of observation, of Anbeam Hill, whither he removed preparatory to the conflict, and Amyon Hill, where the army were arranged in order of battle, the wood, the rivulet, the marshy ground, which protected Richmond in the disposition of his army, the well‡ from which Richard drank, the eminence on which King Henry was crowned, the alleged position of the

* Deeply it is to be lamented that no memorial has ever been raised upon this celebrated plain; the

"Battle to describe, the last of that long war
Entitled by the name of York and Lancaster."
Drayton.

Or any national monument erected that could perpetuate the era which was to

"Enrich the time to come with smooth-fac'd peace,
With smiling plenty, and fair prosp'rous days!"
Shakspeare.

and yet more to

"Abate the edge of traitors,
That would reduce these bloody days again!
And make poor England weep in streams of blood!"
Ibid.

† Introduction to Nichols' reprint of Hutton, p. 4.

‡ Owing to the learned Dr. Samuel Parr, the site of this memorable spot will be handed down to the latest posterity. Having heard that the well was in danger of being destroyed by cattle from being in dirty, mossy ground, and from the draining of the land, he proceeded to Bosworth Field in the year 1813, accompanied by some gentlemen interested in the preservation of this traditional relic; and having discovered, by means of local information, the identical spot, he took measures to have it preserved by means of the following inscription:—

AQVA EX HOC PVTEO HAVSTA
SITIM SEDAVIT
RICARDVS TERTIVS REX ANGLIAE
CVM HENRICO COMITE DE RICHMONDIA
ACERRIME ATQVE INFENSISSIME PRAELIANS.
ET VITA PARITER AC SCEPTRO
ANTE NOCTEM CARITVRVS.

XI. KAL. SEPT. A. D. M. CCCC LXXXV

In English thus:

With water drawn from this well,
Richard the Third, King of England,
When fighting most strenuously and intensely
With Henry, Earl of Richmond,
Quenched his thirst;
Before night about to be deprived
Alike of his life and sceptre.
11th of the Calends of September, A. D. 1485.

This inscription, deeply cut on white stone, is placed immediately over the spring, and within a small building of unhewn stone of a pyramidal form, and which, although rudely constructed, serves to mark the spot and preserve the very classical memorial by which Dr. Parr has perpetuated the tradition.

camps of the Stanleys, of Norfolk, and of Northumberland, and "Dickons' Nook," the place where King Richard is stated to have addressed his army!—these and many other less memorable sites spread an unfading interest around a spot which, notwithstanding the years that have elapsed, and the cultivation to which it has been subjected, seems by the air of solitude which yet reigns about it, the want of habitations, and the loneliness which pervades the whole district, to harmonize fitly with the tragical and touching exploits, the dark and stealthy deeds, which are inseparably interwoven with Bosworth field, and which have afforded such a fertile theme for poets.*

These associations, however, together with many more which might be adduced, such as the chivalrous scene which ensued between the Lords of Surrey and Talbot, Sir Richard Clarendon, and Sir William Conyers,† the desperate encounter of the faithful Brackenbury with the traitor Hungerford,‡ and the romantic tale already related of the friendship which linked Sir John Byron and Sir Gervis Clifton,§ notwithstanding their political feelings—naturally as they arise when contemplating the present aspect of a site so memorable and deeply interesting—fade into insignificance by comparison when considered with reference to the mighty issue of that brief but decisive conflict.

The battle itself, fiercely as it raged, lasted but two hours;‖ yet those two hours were fraught with the most important results to England. The downfall of King Richard proved the downfall, also, of that overwhelming baronial ascendency which had led to his destruction. From the time that the race of York had presided over the destinies of the realm it had been the aim of their dynasty to curb the inordinate power of its arrogant nobles, and to check the undue influence of the priesthood: but it was reserved for the calculating, the phlegmatic Richmond to bring about that great revolution in the constitution,

* "Here valiant Oxford and fierce Norfolk meet;
And with their spears each other rudely greet;
About the air the shined pieces play,
Then on their swords their noble hand they lay;
And Norfolk first a blow directly guides
To Oxford's head, which from his helmet slides
Upon his arm, and biting through the steel
Inflicts a wound, which Vere disdains to feel,
But lifts his faulchion with a threat'ning grace,
And hews the beaver off from Howard's face;
This being done, he, with compassion charm'd,
Retires asham'd to strike a man disarm'd;
But strait a deadly shaft, sent from a bow,
(Whose master, though far off, the duke could know,)
Untimely brought this combat to an end,
And pierc'd the brains of Richard's constant friend.
When Oxford saw him sink, his noble soul
Was full of grief, which made him thus condole:—
Farewell, true knight, to whom no costly grave
Can give due honours, would my tears could save
Those streams of blood, deserving to be spilt
In better service; had not Richard's guilt
Such heavy weight upon his fortune laid,
Thy glorious virtues had his sins outweigh'd."
Beaumont's Bosworth Field.

These brave commanders had lived in friendship, and were of one family, Oxford's mother being a Howard, and first cousin to the duke. Norfolk knew Oxford by the device on his ensign, a star with rays; and he knew Norfolk by his silver lion.—*Hutton*, p. 101.

† Ibid., p. 104.

‡ Ibid., p. 116.

§ Ibid., p. 117.

‖ Grafton, p. 231.

and to consummate that policy which the Yorkist monarchs, with their shining abilities, had failed in effecting. The temporizing Stanleys were to Richard III. what the imperious Nevilles had been to Edward IV.; and Northumberland, wily and selfish, represented to the fallen monarch the part pursued by the vain-glorious and ambitious Buckingham towards young Edward V. and his kindred. The entire epoch of the Yorkist rule was characterized by one vast and desperate struggle between the sovereign and the aristocracy; and none but a prince so cautious, so mistrustful, so secret in his habits and reserved in his manners* as the founder of the Tudor race,† could have perfected the system which had been so admirably commenced but unavailingly pursued, by his predecessors; and realized their projects by means of that very revolution which, producing their ruin and leading to his own elevation, made him fully alive to the danger which must accrue to every monarch of England so long as the supreme control of affairs rested virtually, although not ostensibly, in her turbulent barons. Early initiated into their deep designing schemes, and from necessity made fully acquainted with the subtle means by which they compassed their ends, the new monarch was well prepared to observe and to resist the earliest indication of attempts similar‡ to those in which, as the exiled Richmond, he had acted so prominent a part; and his execution of Sir William Stanley within ten years of the period when, through his aid, Richard III. had been slain, and himself proclaimed king, affords evidence that he saw the necessity§ of watching his personal attendants, and acting towards his "lord chamberlain" with a stern resolution of purpose, which, had a similar relentless course been pursued by the betrayed monarch to "the high steward of his household," might have preserved to him both his life and his throne. It is certain that this severe measure of King Henry struck a panic into the disaffected that greatly induced to the safety of his throne, on the breaking out of that rebellion of which it was the precursor.

His jealousy of his nobles,‖ and his undisguised dislike to all persons and matters connected with the Plantagenet rule, led him steadily but progressively to loosen the bonds which had long enslaved the humbler classes, and to encourage and protect the growing interests of that great commercial and trading body which had first been made to feel their importance by Edward IV., with the view of balancing the overgrown power of the feudal lords, and had been, from more enlarged views, the peculiar object of the legislative wisdom of their patron and benefactor, King Richard III.

This monarch, by striving to suppress the hosts of military retainers, and, above all, by his prohibitory enactments¶ against the ancient custom of giving badges, liveries, and family devices to multitudes of armed followers, struck at the root of the evil, which arose from each chieftain having a stand-

* "A dark prince, and infinitely suspicious."—*Bacon*, p. 242.

"Full of thought and secret observations, and full of notes and memorials of his own hand, especially touching persons."—*Ibid.*, p. 243.

† "He was of an high mind, and loved his own will and his own way, as one that revered himself, and would reign indeed. Had he been a private man he would have been termed proud; but in a wise prince it was but keeping of distance, which indeed he did towards all, not admitting any near or full approach, either to his power or to his secrets; for he was governed by none."—*Bacon*, p. 238.

‡ Through the agency of secret spies, which he did employ both at home and abroad, by them to discover what practices and conspiracies were against him.—*Ibid.*, p. 240.

§ See Howell's State Trials, vol. iii. p. 366.

‖ "He kept a strict hand on his nobility, and chose rather to advance clergymen and lawyers, which were more obsequious to him, but had less interest in the people, which made for his absoluteness, but not for his safety."—*Bacon*, p. 242.

¶ See Harl. MSS., 433, fol. 111. 138. 188. 230.

ing and well-disciplined army at command, to overawe the crown and perpetually disturb the peace of the realm. But the odium which attached to this daring measure of abridging a power so dangerous to the throne led to King Richard's ruin; while the merit of carrying out a policy which Richard began, doubtless too precipitately and boldly, has been exclusively apportioned to Henry VII., who, treading in the same steps with his predecessor, although circumspectly and with caution, attained the object, and the appellation of the Father of English liberty, from the identical cause, and from pursuing the same measures which laid King Richard in the dust, and procured for him the name and the character of a tyrant!

How far he merited this epithet must depend upon his acts, and the degree of credit which is due to those who have branded him with it. Many of the greatest, wisest and most powerful monarchs in all countries have been usurpers, or ascended the throne irregularly; and the reason is obvious; without rare talents and ability for government, they could not have acquired sufficient ascendency over their fellow-men to break the direct line of succession, and to be invested with the sovereign power. But such political changes, when brought about by the voice of the country, and without having recourse to arms, by no means imply the elevation of a tyrant, although it may denote incapacity in the monarch deposed. If Richard erred in yielding to the evil counsels* of those who knew that ambition was inherent in his race, and formed the predominant feature in his character, he at least proved himself, when called upon to exercise the regal power, a patriotic and enterprising monarch, distinguished for wisdom in the senate and for prowess in the field. His reign was signally advantageous to the realm; and he gave earnest of being disposed to make amends for any imputation of injustice that might be laid to his charge, arising from his irregular accession to the throne.

The nation were indebted to him for provident statutes of lasting good; and he was alike a firm protector of the church, and strict in the administration of justice to the laity.† He was a generous enemy, notwithstanding that he was an ill-requited friend; and that this his clemency and forbearance did not arise from personal fear, is evidenced by the intrepid bravery, undaunted courage, and contempt of danger, which even his enemies have perpetuated:—

> "he did a stately farewell take,
> And, in his night of death, set like the sun;
> For Richard in his West seem'd greater, than
> When Richard shined in his meridian.
>
> "Three years he acted ill, these two hours well
> And with unmated resolution strove:
> He fought as bravely as he justly fell.
> As did the Capitol to Manlius prove,
> So Bosworth did to him, the monument
> Both of his glory and his punishment."‡

A close examination into the earliest records connected with his career will prove that, among all the heavy and fearful charges which are brought against him, few, if any, originate with his cotemporaries, but that the dark

* "Let us speke of Rycharde in his dignitie, and the mysfortune that hym befell; a wicked counsell drew hym."—*Harl. MSS.*, 542, fol. 20.

† "Could this king be brought off from the horrid imputation that lies upon his memory, of much bloodshed, oppression and gross hypocrisy, to gain and keep the crown, one might judge him a good king. For in several passages of his reign, and public declarations by him made, he expressed a care of the good estate of his people, and concern to have sin and wickedness checked, and carried himself with a regard to learning and religion."—*Kennet*, p. 576.

‡ Hist. of Hen. VII., by Charles Aleyn.

deeds which have rendered his name so odious were first promulgated as rumour, and admitted as such by Fabyan, Polydore Virgil, and Sir Thomas More, in the reign of his successor;* that they were multiplied in number, and less unhesitatingly fixed upon him by Grafton, Hall and Holinshed, during the ensuing reign; and that towards the close of the Tudor dynasty, every modification being cast aside, they were recorded as historical truths by Lord Bacon, Sir Richard Baker and many others, and rendered yet more appalling by the moral and personal deformity with which King Richard was by that time invested by the aid of the drama. If, however, by a retrograde movement, these calumnies are found gradually to lessen one by one, and that the progress can be traced to no more copious source than the evil fortune which overwhelmed King Richard at Bosworth, and gave the palm of victory to his rival,—if his administration, though brief, affords evidence of the sound views which influenced his conduct,—and if, apart from fear and from jealousy of the baronial power, he resolutely pursued that system of domestic policy which he felt would ameliorate the condition of his people, and contribute to the prosperity of the country at large, then surely, as was observed at the opening of this Memoir, it is time that justice was done him as a monarch, and that the strictest inquiry should be made into the measure of his guilt as a man. Time, indeed, as was further remarked, may not have softened the asperity with which a hostile faction delighted to magnify his evil deeds; but time, and the publication of cotemporary documents, have made known many redeeming qualities, have furnished proof of eminent virtue, and certified to such noble exemplary deeds as already suffice to rescue King Richard's memory from at least a portion of the aggravated crimes which have so long rendered his name odious, and inspired great doubts as to the truth of other accusations which rest on no more stable authority.

If Lord Bacon† could panegyrize "his wholesome laws," and pronounce him "jealous for the honour of the English nation,"‡—if Grafton could so far eulogize his proceedings as to admit "that if he had continued lord protector, the realm would have prospered, and he would have been praised and beloved,"§—if Polydore Virgil could speak in commendation of his "piety and benevolence," and laud "the good works which his sudden death alone rendered incomplete,"‖—if cotemporary writers testify to his noble conduct in the field, and the treachery that worked his destruction,¶ and certify that before his accession he was so "loved and praised" that many would have "jeoparded life and goods with him,"**—if the universities of Oxford†† and Cambridge‡‡ perpetuate his love of letters, his patronage of the arts, and his munificence to these seminaries of learning,—and if the register of his public acts§§ abounds in examples of liberality to the church, of equity, charity, beneficence and piety, surely every impartial mind, with reference to his long

* The Croyland historian, who terminated his valuable work with the death of King Richard, intimates very plainly the little probability there was of truth prevailing in subsequent narratives of that monarch. "Forasmuch as the custom of those who write histories is to be silent on the actions of the living, lest the description of their faults should produce odium, while the recital of their virtues might be attributed to the fault of adulation, the afore-named writer has determined to put an end to his labour at the death of Richard III." (*Gale*, p. 577.) This he did on the 30th April, 1486, about eight months after King Henry's accession; a period, however, sufficiently long for him to perceive that silence was desirable with reference to his actions, and that odium would be incurred by the admission of his faults.

† Bacon, p. 2.
‡ Ibid.
§ Grafton, p. 235.
‖ Pol. Virg., p. 565.
¶ Chron. Croy., p. 574; and Rous, p. 217.
** Fabyan, p. 517.
†† Gutch's Hist. Oxford, p. 639.
‡‡ Cooper's Annals of Cambridge, p. 228.
§§ Harl. MSS., fol. 433.

imputed but unsubstantiated crimes, must respond to the sentiments of the old poet,—

"Here leave his dust incorporate with mould:
He was a king; that challengeth respect."*

True it is, that from the great distance of time in which he lived, some parts of his history must still rest upon reasoning and conjecture; any mystery will, probably, ever envelop many portions of his career, the destruction of original documents rendering impossible a close examination into several that rest on report alone: yet if so great an advance has already been made as the admission that the "personal monster whom More and Shakspeare exhibited has vanished,"† and that the restless habits resulting from a nervous temperament, and which have been made to indicate a Nero or Caligula,‡ are shown§ to have been, not the result of a demoniacal temper, but the usual accompaniment of those impetuous feelings, and of that vivid rapidity of thought, which, seeing all things clearly, could not brook opposition, or the unmanly subterfuge of double dealing, it is earnestly to be hoped, for the credit of our national history, for the honour of England and of her monarchs, that further discoveries, by throwing yet more light upon the dark and difficult times in which Richard III. flourished, will add to the proofs which already exist of his innocence as regards the great catalogue of crimes so long and so unjustly laid to his charge; and that thus his moral, equally with his personal, deformity may vanish under the bright influence of that searching examination into historical truth, that firm resolution of separating fact from fiction, which peculiarly characterize the present enlightened period.

These philosophical views having already rescued his memory from one portion of the fabulous tales which have made him a byword and reproach to posterity, fair ground is open for belief that the day is not far distant when truth and justice will prevail over prejudice and long-received opinion, and unite in discarding mere rumour and tradition for the recognition of facts that can be fully established; so that, the character and conduct of this prince being displayed in its true light, his actions dispassionately considered, and the verified details of his reign balanced against the unworthy motives attributed to him on no ground but surmise, atonement, however tardy, may at length be made to a monarch who, for three centuries and upwards, has been so unsparingly reviled, so bitterly calumniated, as

RICHARD THE THIRD.

* Aleyn's Henry VII.
† D'Israeli, Amenities of Literature, vol. ii. p. 105.
‡ Pol. Virg., p. 565.
§ Turner's Middle Ages, vol. iv. pp. 54. 84.

APPENDIX.

A.

THE WELL-KNOWN BALLAD OF "THE BABES IN THE WOOD" SUPPOSED TO BE A RHYTHMICAL TRADITION OF THE ALLEGED MURDER OF THE YOUNG PRINCES IN THE TOWER.

(See page 17.)

THAT the popular legend of "The Babes in the Wood" had its origin in, and was a disguised recital of, the reputed murder of his young nephews by Richard III., can scarcely be doubted when a comparison is instituted between that favourite metrical romance and the historical narratives of the Tudor chroniclers. The old editions of this interesting little ballad, which bears evident marks of antiquity, avowedly state that it was founded on fact; and its general resemblance to Sir Thomas More's account of the tragical event, and yet more with Shakspeare's description of the same dark deed, is very striking: many passages in the tragedy, and in the ballad, being couched in such parallel terms as to suggest the idea that both Sir Thomas More and Shakspeare were well acquainted with it, and aware of its true signification.

Throughout the whole of the tale there is a marked resemblance to several leading facts connected with Richard III. and his brother's children; and so singular a coincidence exists between many expressions in the poetical legend, and the historical details of the time, that it greatly favours the idea of the original ballad having been framed at a period when it would perhaps have been dangerous to speak of the event in plainer and more undisguised terms.

The children being placed under the guardianship of their uncle* by their father,—

"Whom wealth and riches did surround,
A man of high estate;"

the uncle's fair speeches to their mother when essaying to give her comfort,—

"Sweet sister, do not feare;"†

and the parting scene between the parent and her children when resigning them to their uncle,—

"With lippes as cold as any stone,
She kist her children small:
God bless you both, my children deare,—
With that the teares did fall;"‡—

cannot fail to recall, almost word for word, the corresponding descriptions of the dramatist and historian, allowance being made for the license permitted in legendary lore, and the disguise in which these traditional allusions to real events were generally conveyed.

Then, the removal of the children from the abode of their parents to one selected by their guardian,—

"The children home he takes;"§

the avarice and ambition that tempted the uncle to commit the crime, and its being

* ——— "his minority
Is put into the trust of Richard Gloster."
Shakspeare, Rich. III., Act I. Sc. III.

† "Sister, have comfort."—*Ibid.*, Act II. Sc. II.

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§ "And then the said duke caused the kyng to be removed up to the Tower, and his brother with him."—*Fabyan's Chron.*, p. 513.

perpetrated in so short a time after their father's decease, and in utter disregard of his oath to him,*—

"He had not kept these pretty babes
A twelvemonth and a daye,
But for their wealth he did devise
To make them both awaye;"—

his hiring two ruffians for a large sum of money to destroy them,—†

"He bargained with two ruffians strong,
Which were of furious mood,
That they should take these children young
And slay them—in a wood;"—

the compunction felt by the two ruffians, as related by Shakspeare, in very similar terms to those in the ballad,‡—

"So that the pretty speeche they had,
Made Murder's heart relent;
And they that took to do the deed
Full sore did now repent;"—

the completion of the "piteous massacre," yet the mystery attending the manner in which it was effected, typified in the ballad by the wandering of the children in the wood,—

"Thus wandered these poor innocents,
Till death did end their griefs;"—

and so cautiously reported by the cotemporary ecclesiastical historian;§ the very attitude in which the children met their death,—

"In one another's arms they dyed,
As wanting due relief,"—

corresponding as it does with perhaps the most exquisite description in the whole of Shakspeare's immortal tragedy;‖ the uncertainty attending their interment,¶—

"No burial these pretty babes
Of any man receives;"—

their uncle possessing himself of their inheritance, and the wretched pangs of remorse which he suffered prior to his death,**—

"And now the heavy wrath of God
Upon their uncle fell;
Yea, fearful fiends did haunt his house,
His conscience felt a hell;"††—

* "For Richard, by nature theyr uncle, by office the protectoure, to their father beholden, to themselfe bounden by oath, without any respect of Godde or the worlde, unnaturallye contrived to bereave them, not only their dignitie, but their lives."—*More's Ryc. III.*, p. 6.

† "To the execution [of the murther] whereof, he appointed Miles Forest, a fellow fleshed in murther beforetime; to him he joyned one John Dighton, a big, brode, square, strong knave."—*Ibid.*, p. 131.

‡ "Dighton and Forrest, whom I did suborn,
To do this piece of ruthless butchery,—
Albeit they were flesh'd villains, bloody dogs,—
Melting with tenderness and mild compassion,
Wept like two children in their death's sad story."
Shakspeare, Rich. III., Act IV. Sc. III.

§ "And it was reported that King Edward's children were dead, but by what kind of violent death was unknown."—*Hist. Chron. Croy.*, p. 568.

‖ "'O thus,' quoth Dighton, 'lay the gentle babes;'—
'Thus, thus,' quoth Forrest, 'girdling one another
Within their alabaster innocent arms.'"
Shakspeare, Rich. III., Act IV. Sc. III.

¶ "And thus were these innocent children privily slain and murthered, their bodies cast God wote where, by the cruel ambition of their unnatural uncle, and his despitious tormentors."—*More's Ryc. III.*, p. 132.

** "He toke ill rest a nights, rather slumbered than slept, troubled with fearful dreams, sodainly sometyme start up, leap out of bed, and run about the chamber; so was his restless herte continually toss'd and tumbled with the tedious impression and stormed remembrance of his abominable deed."—*Ibid.*, p. 134.

†† "My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain."
Shakspeare, Rich. III., Act V. Sc. III.

together with the retribution which followed the crime—the death of his wife—of his sons—and the desertion of his followers,*—

"And nothing by him staid;"—

the confession† eventually of the surviving ruffian, and the premature death of the uncle himself,—all facts in a great measure correct as regards the actual fate of Richard III.,—are very startling coincidences, to say the least, between the nursery legend and the reputed tragedy which is believed to have been thus obscurely perpetuated.

The probable period of the composition of this ballad, on the supposition that it was written with a political design, would seem to have been during the insurrection of the Duke of Buckingham,‡ by whom the report of the murder of the young princes was first circulated, and whose object it was to increase the disaffection that prevailed in consequence of their mysterious concealment. In which case, it was in all likelihood revived, with some additional stanzas, after the death of Richard III., and upon the appearance of Perkin Warbeck, who claimed to be one of the children of Edward IV. alleged to have been murdered in the Tower; for the ballad, if composed during Richard's life, would give force to Dighton's reported confession made after that monarch's decease; while the said avowal of the murderer would add strength to the metrical tradition, if, indeed, it was written and first circulated amongst the people at a time when great caution was requisite in promulgating so serious an accusation. It may be asked, however, why, as Henry VII. himself promulgated the fact of Tyrrel's and Dighton's confession, should there have been any necessity in his reign for the concealment observed throughout the ballad? Had it been first composed at the time of Tyrrel's arrest, there would, indeed, have been no necessity for disguise, much less would there have been any danger in openly declaring Richard as the murderer of his nephews. But as Henry VII. failed in all his efforts to adduce evidence of the murder,§ or to fix the guilt clearly and positively upon King Richard, the mystery in which the tradition was wrapped in the original ballad was better calculated to produce a political effect, than any after, though more positive, accusation. It is certain that even so late as the time of Lord Bacon,‖ doubts were entertained as regards Richard being the murderer of his nephews; and Sir Thomas More, the first historian who narrates the tradition of their death, as perpetuated by Shakspeare, states, "that some remain yet in doubt whether they were in his days destroyed or not."¶ The ballad, therefore, in its mysterious form, if composed in King Richard's life, became singularly effective both in strengthening the tradition which Henry desired to have believed, and, if followed up, in affording a happy medium for that monarch to circulate the facts of Tyrrel's alleged confession; consequently, after detailing the death, and the judgments that befell the uncle, the legend concludes by saying,

"The fellow that did take in hand
These children for to kill,
Was for a robbery judged to dye;—
Such was God's blessed will."

Now Sir James Tyrrel, who is named by Shakspeare,* and described by Lord Bacon, as the person who undertook to slay the children, was arrested by King Henry

* "To his last breath often exclaiming that he was betrayed; saying, 'Treason! Treason! Treason!' and thus tasting what he had made others drink, he miserably ended his life."—*Rous*, p. 217.

† John Dighton and Miles Forrest were the reputed murderers. "Miles Forrest," says Sir Thomas More, "at Saint Martin's piecemeal rotted away." John Dighton confessed the murder in the reign of King Henry VII.—*More*, p. 132.

‡ "Whilst these things were passing, King Edward's two sons remained under sure custody, for whose release from captivity the people of the southern and western parts began very much to murmur. At length the people about London, in Kent and other counties, made a rising, proclaiming publicly that Henry, Duke of Buckingham, who was then residing at Brecknock in Wales, repenting the course of conduct he had pursued, would be their leader; and it was reported that King Edward's children were dead, but by what kind of violent death was unknown."—*Chron. Croy.*, p. 568.

§ Sir Geo. Buck's History of King Richard III., lib. iii., pp. 85, 86.

‖ Lord Bacon's History of King Henry VII., p. 4.

¶ Sir Thomas More's Historie of Kyng Rycharde III., p. 125.

** Richard III., Act IV. Sc. II.

VII. shortly after the landing of Warbeck, and is asserted by Sir Thomas More to have confessed the tale* that has been narrated by all subsequent historians,—

"Who did confess the very truth,
The which is here expresst."†

And what cannot but be considered a very remarkable point as connecting the legend with graver authority, Tyrrel did actually, some years afterwards, end his days on the scaffold (as the old ballad states), and also for another offence than the heinous crime which he is stated to have confessed.‡

The precise lapse of time, too, named in the poem,—

"Ere seven years came about,"—

corresponds exactly with the period of Tyrrel's arrest;§ as does also the fact of that imprisonment producing the alleged confession:—

"And now at length this wicked act
Did by this means come out."

Moreover, the previous death of the guardian being mentioned in the preceding verse,—

"Their uncle having dyed,"

completes the general resemblance, in all leading points, between the ballad and the event it would seem to describe.

King Richard's successor, it is well known, took every possible means to fix the odium of the murder of his brother's children upon their uncle; and his emissaries were not likely to overlook a mode so attractive to the lower classes as the rhythmical odes common to the period. It is most probable, therefore, that the original song, on which was founded the popular tale of "The Babes in the Wood," was written at the time above named: and when it is remembered that the old English metrical romances were the medium, in the middle ages, of handing down to posterity, in rude versification, traditions which it was not safe in that despotic period to narrate in a more explicit manner, an air of more than common interest attaches itself to this tale, which, if deducible from such a source, partakes of the same character as Chevy Chase, Robin Hood, Flodden Field, and those numberless historical ballads transmitted from sire to son by itinerant minstrels, the rude historians of those unrelenting times, and on the basis of which rests much interesting traditionary matter connected with our national annals.

The copy of the ballad whence the preceding extracts were made is the ancient one, in black letter, contained in the "Pepys Collection"‖ in the library at Magdalen College, Cambridge. It differs very little from another old copy preserved in the British Museum,¶ or from the edition, more generally known, which is inserted in Percy's Reliques (vol. iii. p. 171.) Being, however, in black letter, which was not the ordinary type of the era in which Pepys flourished, it sanctions the idea that the copy preserved by that sagacious man was a reprint from one of much earlier date; for most of the chroniclers, whose compilations were originally published in

* "All things grew prepared to revolt and suspicion. There were but two persons that remained alive that could speak upon knowledge to the murther: Sir James Tirrel, the employed man from King Richard, and John Dighton, his servant, one of the two butchers or tormentors. These the king caused to be committed to the Tower."—*Bacon's Hen. VII.*, pp. 122, 123.

† "Very trouthe is it, and well knowen, that at such time as Syr James Tirell was in the Tower, for treason committed agaynste the most famous prince King Henry the Seventh, both Dighton and he were examined and confessed the murder."—*More*, p. 132.

‡ "And as for Sir James Tyrrel, he was soon after beheaded in the Tower Yard, for other matters of treason. But John Dighton (who it seemeth spake best for the king) was forthwith set at liberty, and was the principal means of divulging this tradition."—*Bacon*, p. 124.

§ Perkin Warbeck landed in Ireland, and proclaimed himself the young Duke of York, on the 5th May, 1492; just seven years after King Richard's death, who was slain the 22d August, 1485.

‖ Vol. i. pp. 518, 519, No. 1053.

¶ The ballad preserved by Pepys is entitled "The Norfolk Gentleman his last Will and Testament, who committed the keeping of his Children to his own Brother, who dealt most wickedly with them, and how God plagued him for it.—The tune, Rogero." The copy in the British Museum is similarly entitled, only less concise, it stating in addition, "who did most wickedly cause them to be destroyed, that so he might possess himself and children of the estate; but by the just judgments of the Almighty, himself and all that he had was destroyed from off the face of the earth."

black letter, continued to be reprinted in that character, as is shown by many works of reference yet in use; whereas, the compositions of later date were printed in the large Roman type that belonged to the period in which they were composed. The circumstance of there being no date to the Pepys ballad is rather a proof of its antiquity; for all the most ancient ballads are without dates. According to Ritson, this tale was entered on the Stationers' books in the year 1595, but this fact by no means fixes, as he implies, the date of the composition; it merely shows the year in which it first appeared in print, having probably, from its popularity, and with a view to publication, been then for the first time committed to paper from recitation, as was the case with "Chevy Chase," "Fair Rosamond,"* "Gil Morrice," "Sir Patrick Spens," and, indeed, all of our oldest historical legends.

This method of perpetuating by rehearsal these ancient metrical traditions, accounts for the apparently modern phraseology in which the earliest printed copies extant of this and other ballads are couched; the gradual though slight changes of each generation making the language keep pace with their own times, until it was finally noted down in its black letter form, as sung in the year 1595.

To the same cause, also, may be attributed the trifling variations of metre between the three copies preserved by Pepys, by Bishop Percy, and in the British Museum.

Two very rude woodcuts surmount the black letter copy at Cambridge: one representing the ruffians fighting, with a gallows and a man hanging in one corner, and at the side the children murdered; the other is apparently an heraldic emblematical device. The connection between the first cut, the description in the ballad of the children's beauty,—

—— "framed in beautyes molde,"—

and Shakspeare's account of the murderous scene, is very remarkable; for he distinctly intimates that one ruffian was more merciful than the other;† and the babes, whose beauty he so touchingly narrates, being placed in one corner as actually murdered, together with the ignominious end which terminated the life of their destroyer, is even yet more in accordance with reputed facts. But the emblematical device speaks more forcibly in favour of the true nature and design of the ballad than all argument that can be adduced from similarity of events thus traditionally and historically reported; for it is a rude representation of a stag. Now the badge of the unfortunate Edward V. was a *hind*, or female stag—one of the hereditary badges of the House of York;‡ and Sandford, in describing that prince's shield of arms, states that it is "supported on the right side with the Lyon of March, and on the left with a Hind Argent."§

Dr. Percy's Reliques is a work so well known and appreciated, that it becomes necessary, before concluding the present inquiry, to notice the learned author's surmise, that the ballad was probably derived from an old play, published in 1601, by Yarrington, and founded on an Italian novel. But, independent of the discrepancies between the ballad and the play, in which latter there is but one child, and he is stabbed by a ruffian who lives to bring the uncle to justice, the dramatic scene is laid at Padua, which affords a very strong argument in testing the originality of this popular legend, and its claims to be considered as a genuine English composition. The ballad says,

"Their pretty lippes with blackberries
Were all besmeared and dyed."‖

Now the blackberry¶ is not only unknown in Italy, but this fruit, so abundant in hedges and woods during the autumn, is a native of England only.

* "Fair Rosamond," although of such ancient date as the year 1177, was only first made known in print in 1612.

† "'A book of prayers on their pillow lay,
Which once,' quoth Forrest, 'almost chang'd my mind;
But O, the devil'——there the villain stopp'd:
When Dighton thus told on—'We smothered
The most replenished sweet work of Nature,
That, from the prime creation, e'er she fram'd.'"
Richard III., Act IV. Sc. II.

‡ Archæologia, vol. xvii. p. 226.

§ Sandford's Geneal. Hist., book v. p. 400.

‖ "Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,
Which in their summer beauty kissed each other."
Richard III., Act IV. Sc. V.

¶ Rubus fruticosus. See *Donn's Hortus Cantabrigiensis*, p. 245, and *Withering's British Plants*, vol. ii. p. 527.

Another very conclusive fact must not be overlooked, viz., that after the death of the children, the ballad adds, that

"Robin red-breast piously
Did cover them with leaves."

This bird, though not perhaps exclusively English, is nowhere so commonly found as in this country, where it is so proverbially domestic, so familiar in winter, and so invariably associated with local and pastoral scenes, that it has formed the favourite ornament of some of our sweetest native bards.

That this ballad was founded on actual occurrence, all commentators seem to agree; and although the style is humble, and even mean, yet the very circumstance of its unabated popularity for so many ages bespeaks an air of truth that would aid to establish the fact of its originating in some acknowledged and well-established event.

The few points in which the narrative differs from history, such as the youngest child being a girl, their parents dying at the same time, and the uncle perishing in prison, are only such variations as would be intentionally adopted, when the real event alluded to was, for certain reasons, purposely disguised, and which may be observed in all historical ballads, when they are compared with the facts on which the traditions are based. But the tale corresponds so essentially with the chroniclers; moreover, even the very moral with which it winds up is so similar to the reflections with which Fabyan,* Grafton,† Hall and Holinshed‡ terminate their relation of the event; that it cannot escape the observation of those who will take the trouble to compare the ballad with the historians who have perpetuated the "tragedyous hystory."

The comments upon this tale, contained in the "Spectator,"§ are worthy of attention, and considerably advance its claims to be considered as a national metrical tradition; for, whether perused with reference to the mysterious transaction which it would seem to have been designed to reveal, or admired only as one of those nursery tales which rest on the mind with so sweet a remembrance, it is, as Addison justly observes, "one of the darling songs of the common people, and has been the delight of most Englishmen in some part of their age."‖

B.

CAXTON'S "PICTURE OF LONDON IN 1472."

(See page 20.)

"I HAVE known it in my young age much more wealthy, prosperous and richer than it is at this day; and the cause is, that there is almost none that intendeth to the common weal, but only every man to his singular profit." And in another place Caxton says, "I see that the children that ben borne within the said citye encrease, and prouffitte not like their faders and olders; but for moste parte, after that they ben coming to their perfite years of discretion and ripeness of age, how well that their faders have left to them grete quantity of goods, yet scarcely amonge ten two thryve. O blessed Lord, when I remember this I am all abashed; I cannot juge the cause; but fayrer, ne wiser, ne bet bespoken children in theyre youth ben no wher then ther ben in London; but at their full ryping there is no carnel, no good corn founden, but chaffe for the most parte." Again, in his work entitled "The Boke of the Ordre of Chyvalry or Knyghthood, dedicated to King Richard III. in 1484," he laments in strong and feeling language the decline of chivalry: "O ye knights of England, where is the custom and usage of noble chivalry that was used in those days? What do you now but go to the baynes [baths] and play at dyse? And some, not well-advysed, use not honest and good rule, again all order of knighthood."... "I would demand a question, if I should not displease: How many knyghtes ben ther now in England that have th' use and th' exercise of a knyghte — that is, to wit, that he knoweth his horse, and his horse him? I suppose, an a due serche sholde be made, there sholde be many founden that lacke."

Oldy's Brit. Lib., p. 191.

* Fab. Chron., p. 517.
† Grafton, pp. 232. 235.
‡ Kennet's Complete Hist. of Eng., vol. i. p. 512.
§ Spectator, vol. i. No. 85.
‖ Ibid.

C.

DESCRIPTION OF HENRY VII. CONTRASTED WITH THAT OF RICHARD III.

(See page 23.)

"THE Earl of Richmond," says Hall, in his Chronicle, "was a man of no great stature, but so formed and decorated with all gyftes and lyniaments of nature, that he seemed more an angelical creature than a terrestrial personage. His countenance and aspect was cheerful and courageous; his haire yellow like the burnished golde; his eyes gray, shynynge, and quick; prompte and ready in answering; but of such sobrietie, that it could never be judged he were more dull than quick in speaking, such was his temperance." Grafton, corroborating the above description, and after stating him to be "of a wonderful beauty and fair complexion," adds, that in "matters of weighty importance" he was "supernatural and in a manner divine."* This glowing and superhuman account of King Henry VII. contrasts somewhat remarkably with the demoniacal description of Richard III. by the same chroniclers, and others who penned their works during the reign of the Tudor sovereigns. Thus, for example: "The tyrant King Richard was born," says Rous, "with teeth, and hair reaching to his shoulders, on the feast of the eleven thousand Virgins, at whose birth Scorpion was in the ascendant, which is the sign of the House of Mars; and, as a scorpion, mild in countenance, stingeth in the tail, so he showed himself to all."† Sir Thomas More, after enlarging upon his miraculous birth, describes him as "little of stature, ill-fetured of limbs, crook-backed, and hard-favoured of visage"... "malicious, wrathful, envious, and from afore his birth ever forward."‡ And Holinshed, after corroborating both the foregoing accounts, adds,§ that "his face was small, but his countenance cruel, and such that at the first aspect a man would judge it to savour and smell of malice, fraud and deceit. When he stood musing he would bite and chew busily his nether lip, as who said that his fierce nature in his cruel body, always chafed, stirred, and was ever unquiet; besides that the dagger which he wore he would (when he studied) with his hand pluck up, and draw from the sheath to the midst, never drawing it fully out."

D.

OFFSPRING OF EDWARD III. AND QUEEN PHILIPPA.

(See page 24.)

1. Edward of Woodstock, Prince of Wales, surnamed the Black Prince, and father of Richard II.
2. William of Hatfield, deceased in childhood.
3. Lionel of Antwerp, Duke of Clarence, father of Philippa, (married to Edmund, Earl of March,) the ancestress of the royal House of York.
4. John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, ancestor of the royal line of Lancaster.
5. Edmond of Langley, Duke of York. He was the root whence the kingly family of York branched itself—their claims on the crown being based on the union in marriage of the heirs of Clarence and York.
6. William of Windsor, died in infancy.
7. Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester and Earl of Buckingham, ancestor to Henry, Duke of Buckingham, beheaded by command of Richard III. at Salisbury.
8. Isabel, married to Ingelram de Coucy, created Earl of Bedford.
9. Joane, espoused by proxy to Alphonso, King of Castile and Leon; but deceased of the plague on her progress to Spain.
10. Blanche, died an infant.
11. Mary, the wife of John de Montfort, Duke of Britaine, surnamed the Valiant.
12. Margaret, consort of John Hastings, Earl of Pembroke. He was the first subject who followed the example of his royal father-in-law, King Edward III., in quartering of arms.

Sandford, Geneal. Hist., book iii. ch. iii. p. 177.

* Grafton, p. 948.
† Rous, p. 215.
‡ More, p. 8.
§ Holinshed, p. 447.

E.

ENUMERATION AND EXPLANATION OF THE DEVICES FORMERLY BORNE AS BADGES OF COGNIZANCE BY THE HOUSE OF YORK.

(See page 26.)

"While searching among the Digby MSS.," says Sir Henry Ellis, "in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, in the autumn of last year, I discovered an enumeration of the devices borne as badges of cognizance by Richard, Duke of York, the father of King Edward IV., written in a cotemporary hand, evidently in the duke's lifetime. I found it written on a blank leaf of parchment at the beginning of the Digby MSS. No. 28."

"These ben the names of the lordships with the badges that pertaineth to the Duke of York:—

1. The dukeship of York with the badges, ben the fawcon and the fetterlock.
2. The badges that he beareth by Conysbrow, ys the fawcon, with a maiden's head, and her hair hanging about her shoulders, with a crown about her neck.
3. The badges that he beareth by the Castle of Clifford *is a white rose.*
4. The badges that he beareth by the earldom of March is a white lion.
5. The badges that he beareth by the earldom of Ulster is a black dragon.
6. The badges that he beareth by King Edward III. is a blue boar, with his tusks and his cleis and his members of gold.
7. The badges that he beareth by King Richard II. is a white hart and the sun shining.
8. The badges that he beareth by the honour of Clare is a black bull, rough, his horns and his cleys and his members of gold.
9. The badges that he beareth by the 'fair maid of Kent' is a white hind."

Archæologia, vol. xvii. p. 226.

F.

SUPER CUSTODIA DUCIS EBORUM, ET PRISONARIORUM, APUD AGYNCOURT CAPTORUM.

(See page 27.)

Supplie, humblement Robert Waterton que comme certains sommes des deniers
A. D. 1415. An. 3 H. 5. currount, ou demaunde vers lui en l'escheker, à cause de la costages et expences si bien de Richard Duc de Zork come pour le salve garde, costages, et expences del Count de Ewe, Arthur de Bretaigne, la Mareschall Buchecaud, &c., prisoniers au roy notre souveraigne seigneur que Dieux pardoint. Le quelle duc et autres seigneurs et prisoniers suisditz, estoient myses en gouvernance et garde du dit Robert Waterton, par l'ordinance de notre soveraigne seigneur suisdit, et son tres sage counseil as diverses foitz parentre, noessisme jour de Marcz l'an tierce, nôtre dit soveraigne seigneur et de dit darreine jour d'Aust, tanque à le primer jour de May darreine passe, que please a voz tres sages discretions graunter lettres du garent du prive seal, directez as tresorer, barons, et chambellеyns del escheker, pur accompter ovesque le dit Robert par son serment, ou d'autri et son noun de toutz maniers des deniers, par luy rescieux, a cause des costages, expences, et salve garde du dit Duc de Zork et autres seigneurs et prisoniers suisditz deins le temps suisdit. Fesaunt à mesme le Robert due et pleyne allowance par le suisdit serement, de toutz maniers de deniers par lui paiez.

Si bien pour les coustages et expences du dit Duc de Zork a CLI. per an. Et les costages, expences, et salve garde del Count de Ewe, Arthur de Bretaigne, et le Mareschall Buchecaud, prisoners (assuvoir) les trois ensemble a XXIIIJ^{s} IV^{d}. le jour, selone le pointment et ordinance notre dit souveraigne seigneur et son counseil.—See *Fœdera*, Lond. ed., tome ix. p. 317. King Henry, in a subsequent document (see p. 319) ordering immediate payment of the foregoing expenses, styles the petitioner "nostre bien amé escuier Robert Waterton;" and in a letter from this monarch to the Bishop of Durham, (inserted p. 801,) he commands him strictly to observe Robert Waterton's vigilance over the Duke of Orleans to prevent his attempting to escape.

G.

RHYTHMICAL LINES, COPIED FROM AN ANCIENT ROLL FORMERLY IN THE POSSESSION OF AUGUSTUS VINCENT, WINDSOR HERALD, AND QUOTED BY HIM IN HIS "CATALOGUE OF THE NOBILITY," PUBLISHED 1622. (This very curious instrument is thus more particularly described by Weever, in his "Funeral Monuments," p. 734.)

(See page 30.)

"At Clare in Suffolk stood a religious house of Augustine friars, whose foundation may be gathered out of certaine rythmical lines which, not many years since, I copied out of an ancient roll, as then in the custody of my dear deceased friend, Aug. Vincent, Windsor Herald; the rubrick, or the title in red letters, of this roll is as followeth:—

"'This dialogue betwixt a secular asking and a friar answering at the grave of Dame Johanna of Acres,* showeth the lineal descent of the lords of the honour of Clare, from the time of the foundation of the friars in the same honour, the year of our Lord 1248, unto the first of May, the year 1460. The pictures of the secular priest and the friar are curiously limned upon the parchment. The verses are both in Latin and English. The translation of the Latin numbers into English stanzas seemeth to have been composed at one and the same time, as appears by the character.'"

After detailing the parentage of Joane of Acres, daughter of Edward I., and the derivation of that name from the town of her birth, it proceeds to speak of her marriage with Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, son of Sir Richard de Clare, who first brought the Augustine friars into England to dwell; then of the birth of their daughter united to Sir John de Burgh, Lord of Ulster, whose only child was united to Edward the Third's second son, Lionel, Duke of Clarence.† Their daughter Philippa married Sir Edmond Mortimer, the first Earl of March; and it is from that portion of the roll which relates more especially to them and their offspring, that the following minute detail of the parentage of Richard of York and his children is taken.

"Had she any issue?" "Yea, sir, sikerly."‡
"What?" "A daughter." "What name had she?"
"Like her mother, Elizabeth, sothely;"§
"Who ever the husband of her might be?"
"King Edward's son, the Third was he,
Sir Lionel, which buried is, her by,‖
As for such a prince too simply."

"Left he any frute, this prince mighty?"
"Sir, yea—a daughter, and Phillippa she hight;¶
Whom Sir Edmond Mortimer wedded truly;
First Earl of the March, a manly knight,
Whose son, Sir Roger, by title of right
Left heir another—Edmond again:
Edmond left none, but died barren.

"Right thus did cese of the March's blode
The heire male." "Whider passed the right
Of the Marches landes, and to whom it stode,
I wolde faine lerne, if that I might?"
"Sir Roger, middel Erle, that noble knight,
Tweyn daughters left of his blode roial—
That one's issue died, that other's hath al."

"What hight that lady** who's issue had grace
His lordship t' attaine?" "Dame Anne, I wys,

* Joane de Acres, second daughter of King Edward I., and consort of Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, died A. D. 1305, and was buried in the church of the Augustine friars at Clare, in a chapel of her own foundation. "At whose tomb," says Sandford, "that dialogue in Latin and English, between a secular priest and a friar, is fancied to be spoken, (exhibited in Weever's Funeral Monuments,) containing the lineal descent of the lords of the honour of Clare."—Book iii. p. 142.

† Prince Lionel, having acquired the honour of Clare with Eliz. de Burgh, his wife, was, in Parliament 1362, created by Edward III. Duke of Clarence.

‡ Surely. (Spenser.) § Truly. (Saxon.)

‖ Prince Lionel died at Alba, Pompeia, 1368, and his remains were brought to England to be interred by the side of his first wife, Elizabeth de Burgh, in the chancel of the Augustine friars at Clare in Suffolk.—*Sandford*, book iii. p. 221.

¶ She was named. ** What name had that lady.

To the Erle of Cambridge and she wife was,
Which both be dede. God graunte hem blys.
But her son Richard, which yet liveth,* is
Duke of Yorke, by descent of his fader,
And hath Marches landes by right of his moder."

"Is he sole or married, this prince myghty?"
"Sole, God forbede; it were great pitee."
"Whom hath he wedded?" "A gracious lady."
"What is her name, I thee praie tell me?"
"Dame Cecile, sir." "Whose daughter was she?"
"Of the Erle of Westmoreland, I trowe the yengest
And yet grace hir fortuned to be the highest."

"Is there any frute betwixt hem two?"
"Yea, sir—thanked be God, ful glorious."
"Male or female?" "Sir, bothe two."
"The number of this progeny gracious,
And the names, to know I am desirous:
The order eke of birth, telle yf thou can;
And I will ever be, even thyn own man."

"Sir, after the tyme of long bareynesse,
God first sent Anne, which signyfieth grace;
In token that all her hertis heavynesse
He (as for bareynesse) wold fro hem chase.
Harry, Edward, and Edmonde, eche in his place
Succeeded; and after tweyn doughters came,
Elizabeth and Margarete; and afterwards William.

"John after William next borne was,
Which both be passed to God's grace.
George was nexte: and after Thomas
Borne was; which sone after did pace
By the path of death to the heavenly place;
Richard liveth yet. But the last of alle
Was Ursula; to hym whom God list call.

"To the Duke of Exeestre, Anne married is
In her tender youthe. But my Lord Herry
God chosen hath, to inherite heaven's bliss;
And lefte Edward to succede temporally:
Now Erle of Marche: and Edmonde of Rutland sothely
Conute† bothe fortunabil to right high marriage.
The other foure stand yet in their pupillage.

"Longe mote he liven to God his plesaunce,
This high and mighty prince in prosperitie;
With virtue and victory, God him advaunce
Of all his enemyes; and graunte that hee
And the noble princesse his wife may see
Her childres children, or thei hens wende,
And after this outelary,‡ the joye that never shall ende."

H.

THE DUKE OF YORK'S SPEECH TO SIR DAVY HALL, IN REPLY TO HIS REMONSTRANCE, BESEECHING HIM TO DISREGARD QUEEN MARGARET'S TAUNTS.

(See page 33.)

"Although Sir Davy Hall, his old servant and chief counsellor, advised him to keep his castle, and to defend the same with his small number, till his son the Erle of March were come with his power of Marchmen and Welsh souldiers, yet he would not be counselled, but in a great fury said, 'A Davy, Davy, hast thou loved me so long, and

* This line proves that these rude verses were composed during the life of Richard, Duke of York, but after the decease of his parents; thus proclaiming the political purpose for which they were written.

† Knit, or knotted. (Saxon.)

‡ A passage out. (Saxon.)

now would'st have me dishonoured! Thou never saw'st me keep fortress when I was regent in Normandy, when the dolphin* himself with his puissance came to besiege me; but, like a man, and not like a bird included in a cage, I issued, and fought with mine enemies, to their loss ever (I thank God) and to my honour. If I have not kept myself within walls for fear of a great and strong prince, nor hid my face from any man living, would'st thou that I, for dread of a scolding woman, whose weapons are only her tongue and her nails, should incarcerate myself? Then all men might of me wonder, and all creatures may of me report dishonour, that a woman hath made me a dastart, whom no man ever to this day could yet prove a coward. And surely my mind is rather to die with honour than to live with shame; for of honour cometh fame, and of dishonour riseth infamy. Their great number shall not appal my spirits, but encourage them: therefore advance my banner, in the name of God and St. George; for surely I will fight with them, though I should fight alone.'"

Hall, fol. 183.

I.

THE ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF WAKEFIELD, AS GIVEN BY THE HISTORIAN HALL, CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO OTHER CHRONICLERS.

(See page 34.)

The tragedy enacted at the battle of Wakefield has been variously represented by different chroniclers; and though the greater part corroborate in the main the testimony of the Abbot of St. Albans, a cotemporary writer, as regards the revolting insults which he so minutely details, yet doubts have been advanced respecting Queen Margaret's presence at the fatal contest, and efforts made likewise to prove that the mockery was made over the duke's lifeless corpse. But on this point, as well as on all subjects connected with the private and personal history of this illustrious prince, the testimony of Hall, who positively asserts that the queen was present, and took an active share in the revolting proceedings of the day, becomes equal in value to any cotemporary writer, and superior even to such cotemporaries as were not actually eye-witnesses of the event; because this historian was the grandson of Sir Davy Hall, the brave knight whose name is so intimately associated with the Duke of York, throughout that prince's troubled career. Hall was his faithful follower and friend; "his chief counsellor," as well as his companion in arms; and during the early quarrels between York and Somerset, Sir Davy is named as contesting possession of Caen, in Normandy, with the latter noble, it having been left under his charge upon the duke's departure for England.—*Monstrel.* v. p. 123. He is afterwards found with his patron in Ireland, during his difficult position in that country; and his warning voice at Sendal was so urgently and imploringly exerted not to risk a battle, until their small band was joined by fresh forces under the young Earl of March, that the prince's ire was roused, and he impatiently replied in the memorable speech which has been transcribed in Appendix H.

At this early period of history, when narratives of ancestral exploits were transmitted from father to son as an heir-loom, and that the domestic affections were perpetually revived by the solemn yearly observance of the "obit," or death-day of parents and grandsires (see *Paston Letters*, vol. iv. Letter 74), particulars so interesting as the above would doubtless have been impressed upon young Hall's memory from his earliest childhood; it being more than probable that he had ofttimes heard the tale from the old knight's companions in arms, Sir Davy having himself fallen a victim to his zeal in defending his patron at this fatal contest.

The historian flourished about fifty years after the battle of Wakefield, but his work was not printed until after his decease; for, being bred to the law, and holding high and responsible situations in that profession,† his maturer years were devoted to it; and he probably saw the danger of publishing matter that, in the remotest degree, favoured the fallen dynasty, notwithstanding it had been crushed long antecedent to his own time. As his work was dedicated to Henry VIII., and was penned after the

* Dauphin.

† Edward Hall, author of the Chronicle entitled "The Union of the Houses of York and Lancaster," was educated at Eton, and a fellow of King's College, Cambridge. He afterward's studied at Gray's Inn, was called to the bar, made a sergeant at law, and a judge in the Sheriff's Court. He was also a member of the House of Commons.—*Gen. Biog. Dict.*

extinction of the House of York, it is not probable, however, that Hall would have stated so distinctly the presence of the queen before the Castle of Sendal, have reiterated her taunts to the duke of his "want of courage in suffering himself to be tamely braved by a woman," or have described the active part taken by Margaret relative to placing his head over the gates of York, had he not received particulars of the awful day from some associate of his grandsire, whom he especially mentions as forming one of the garrison of Sendal, and to have fallen in its defence. His testimony, then, taken in conjunction with Whethamstede, Abbot of St. Albans, to which city Queen Margaret and her army proceeded direct from Wakefield, (thus giving the ecclesiastical chronicler abundant means of hearing from the victors themselves those minute details of their recent treatment of the captured York which are given on his cotemporary authority,) must surely be considered evidence superior to any that can be adduced, merely from discrepancy on these disputed points by later historians, or from the silence of other annalists, who were wholly unconnected with the appalling circumstance.

J.

BRIEF SKETCH OF THE REMARKABLE CAREER OF HENRY CLIFFORD, "THE SHEPHERD LORD."

(See page 34.)

The Lord John Clifford, whose history is so remarkably connected with the House of York, was killed at Ferry-bridge, in the 26th year of his age; leaving, as the inheritor of his titles and vast estates, an infant heir, Henry, afterwards tenth Lord Clifford. Having rendered himself odious to the reigning family, in consequence of his having slain the young prince, Edmund, Earl of Rutland, a few months previously, the deceased Lord Clifford was attainted by act of Parliament; and his widow (the Baroness Vesci in her own right), fearing that the Yorkists would avenge themselves on the heir of a chieftain who had incurred their bitterest enmity, fled with her child to the wildest recesses of Cumberland, and, under the garb of a shepherd boy, effectually concealed him from all knowledge of those political enemies, whose indignation would probably have sacrificed the child in retaliation for the father's crimes. After the lapse of some years, the Lady Clifford espoused a second husband, Sir Launcelot Threlkald, to whom she imparted her secret: and who aided her in keeping "the shepherd lord" concealed from the Yorkist faction. For the space of twenty-four years the unconscious victim of political hatred tended his sheep, alike unconscious of his noble birth as of the maternal solicitude which watched unsuspected over the life of the mountain boy. After spending the prime of his days in perfect seclusion, amidst the fastnesses of his native county, during the reigns of Edward IV., Edward V., and Richard III., his name and title were at length made known to him; and, in the thirty-second year of his age, he was fully restored to his ancestral honours by King Henry VII. But although bred in obscurity, and, from necessity, deprived of all education, even so much as learning to write, lest "it might make discovery of him," the lordly spirit of a noble race remained unsubdued by the lowly occupation to which he was early inured. On his restoration to "all his baronies," he placed himself under the tuition of the monks of Bolton Priory, by means of whose tuition he made rapid progress in the acquirements of the age, and with whom, at his adjoining ancestral abode, "Barden Tower," he prosecuted the favourite studies of the period. Amongst the archives of the Clifford race are yet preserved records that testify the interest he took in astronomy, alchemy, and other philosophical pursuits, and the zeal with which he devoted himself to such branches of knowledge.

Moreover, he also gave proof that the warlike genius of "the stout Lord Cliffords" had slumbered—not slept—in the person of their remarkable descendant; for at the advanced age of sixty, casting aside his peaceful studies, and exchanging the philosopher's gown for the coat of mail, he acted a conspicuous part at the battle of Flodden Field, in which contest he was one of the principal commanders. He was twice married, and was the parent of ten children. Shortly after emerging from his lowly disguise, he married the cousin-german of the reigning sovereign, King Henry VII., Anne, the only daughter of Sir John St. John of Bletso; by whom he had three sons and four daughters; the eldest of whom, Henry, the eleventh Lord Clifford, succeeded to the family honours in 1523, and was speedily created Earl Clifford and Earl of Cumberland. The entire career of "the shepherd lord" forms, perhaps, one of the wildest tales of romance which real life ever presented. He lived under the rule of six English monarchs, viz., Henry VI., Edward IV., Edward V., Richard III., Henry VII., and Henry VIII.; and whether his eventful history is considered with reference to the vicissitudes that marked his early days, the calm dignity and true wisdom that he displayed when emerging from abject poverty to feudal power, or the chivalrous feeling he evinced when distinguishing himself at the close of life on the battle-field, admiration cannot fail to be elicited at the strong natural understanding, the innate dignity, and the extraordinary firm and vigorous mind which, in all the stirring scenes of his unparalleled career characterized the checkered life of "the Shepherd Lord."

See *Hall's Chron.*, p. 253; *Collins's Peerage*, vol. vi. p. 360; and *Whittaker's History of Craven.*

K.

PETITIO JOHANNÆ COMITISSÆ DE WESTMORELAND SUPER CUSTODIA RICARDI DUCIS EBORUM. A. D. 1426. (PAT. 4 HEN. VI. P. 2. M. 15.)

Pro Duce Eborum, facto Milite.

(See page 37.)

Rex omnibus, ad quos, &c., salutem.

Monstravit nobis carissima consanguinea nostra *Johanna Comitissa Westmerlandiæ*, qualiter ipsa, ut executrix testamenti carissimi domini et viri sui *Radulphi*, nuper *Comitis Westmerlandiæ*, defuncti, habet custodiam et gubernationem carissimi consanguinei nostri *Ricardi Ducis Eborum*, virtute concessionis nostræ eidem nuper comiti factæ.

Pro cujus quidem ducis sustentatione, per avisamentum concilii nostri, concessimus eidem nuper comiti ducentas marcas percipiendas annuatim durante minore ætate ejusdem ducis. De quibus quidem ducentis marcis prædictus dux, honorificè prout convenit statui suo, sustentari non potest, pro eo quod ipse miles efficitur, et in honorem, ætatem, et hæreditatem crescit, qui majores expensas et custus exquirunt, ad magnum onus dictæ consanguineæ nostræ ut dicit. Nos præmissa considerantes, de avisamento et assensu concilii nostri, concessimus præfatæ consanguineæ nostræ centum marcas percipendas annuatim, pro sustentatione *ipsius* ducis, ultra dictas ducentas marcas, durante minore ætate ejusdem ducis, de dominiis terris et tenementis quæ fuerunt Edmundi, nuper Comitis Marchiæ, nunc in manibus nostris ratione minoris ætatis ejusdem ducis existentibus, infra comitatus Dorsetiæ et Suffolciæ, per manus firmariorum vel occupatorum eorumdem; videlicet unam medietatem summæ prædictæ per manus firmariorum dominiorum, terrarum, et tenementorum prædictorum infra medietatem ejusdem summæ per manus firmariorum dominiorum, terrarum, et tenementorum prædictorum infra comitatum Suffolciæ.

In cujus, &c.

Teste Rege, apud Leycester, vicesimo sexto die Maii.

Per breve de privato sigillo, A. D. 1426. An. 4 Hen. VI.

Rymer's Fœdera, tome x. p. 358.

L.

DISASTROUS FATE OF ALL WHO BORE THE NAME OF RICHARD, WHO WERE EITHER IN FACT OR TITLE KINGS OF ENGLAND.

(See page 39.)

"In the very haven," says Habington, "after a long and tempestuous voyage, thus perished the Duke of Yorke; as if it had been in the fate of all the Richards, who were either in fact or title kings of England, to end by violent deathes; Richard I. and Richard II. preceding him; his sonne Richard the Tyrant, and Richard, Duke of Yorke, his nephew, following him in the like disaster, though several wayes, and upon different quarrels."

Richard I., slain by the arrow of an assassin (Bertram Jourdan), when besieging the Castle of Chalons.

Richard II., deposed by his cousin, Henry of Lancaster, and murdered in Pomfret Castle.

Richard, Earl of Cambridge, his cousin, executed at Southampton for treason and rebellion.

Richard, Duke of York, son to the above earl, beheaded at Wakefield Green.

Richard III., slain at Bosworth Field, and *Richard*, the last Duke of York, of the Plantagenet line, said to be murdered in the Tower by his uncle, who terminated the Plantagenet dynasty.

Habington's Historie of Edward IV., p. 2.

M.

(See page 40.)

In a "Collection of Ordinances and Regulations for the government of the Royal Household, made in divers Reigns from King Edward III. to King William and Queen Mary," printed by the Society of Antiquaries, 1790, is inserted the following very curious document:—

"A compendious recytacion compiled of the order, rules and constructione of the house of the right excellent Princess Cecill, late mother unto the right noble prince, King Edward IV." It commences thus:—

"Me seemeth yt is requisyte to understand the order of her owne person, concerninge God and the world." And after minutely detailing the manner in which she spent her time, her hours of devotion and meditation, her self-discipline and temperate habits, it ends by the following apostrophe:—"I trust to our Lord's mercy that this noble princesse, thus divideth the houres to his High pleasure."

Then follow very elaborate rules for the regulation of her house and household.

These are drawn up with extreme care, and are in every respect conformable to the severe discipline, as relates to diet, exacted by the Church of Rome, from rigid members of its communion. No portion of the establishment of the Lady Cecill was overlooked or disregarded; the most perfect method, and admirable regularity prevailed in each department, and the strictest order was enforced, as relates to justice, religion and morality. A few brief extracts will sufficiently exemplify the truth of this remark.

"At every half-yeare, the wages is payde to the householde; and livery clothe once a year. Payment of fees out of the householde is made once a year. Proclamacione is made foure times a yeare about Berkhamsted, in market-townes, to understande whether the purveyors, cators, and other make true paymente of my ladye's money or not; and also to understande by the same, whether my ladye's servantes make true payment for theiyre owne debts or not: and if any defaulte be found, a remedy to be had forthwith for a recompence.

"The remaynes of every offyce be taken at every month's ende, to understande whether the officers be in arrearadye or not.

"To all sicke men is given a lybertye to have all such thinges as may be to theire ease.

"If any man fall impotente, he hath styll the same wages that he had when he might doe best service, duringe my ladye's lyfe; and xvi*d.* for his boarde weekelye, and ix*d.* for his servaunte. If he be a yeoman, xii*d.*; a groome, or a page, tenpence."

N.

LETTER FROM THE EARL OF MARCH (AFTERWARDS EDWARD IV.) AND HIS BROTHER OF RUTLAND, TO THEIR FATHER, RICHARD, DUKE OF YORK.—COTT. MSS. VESP. F. III. FOL. 9.

(See page 41.)

Right high and right mighty prince, our full redoubted and right noble lord and father; as lowly with all our hearts, as we your true and natural sons can or may, we recommend us unto your noble grace, humbly beseeching your noble and worthy fatherhood daily to give us your hearty blessing; through which we trust much the rather to increase and grow to virtue, and to speed the better in all matters and things that we shall use, occupy, and exercise.

Right high and right mighty prince, our full redoubted lord and father, we thank our blessed Lord, not only of your honourable conduct, and good speed in all your matters and business, and of your gracious prevail against the intent and malice of your evil-willers, but also of the knowledge that it pleased your nobley* to let us now late have of the same, by relation of Sir Walter Denreux, knight, and John Milewatier, squier, and John at Nokes, yeoman of your honourable chamber. Also we thank your noblesse and good fatherhood of our green gowns, now late sent unto us to our great comfort; beseeching your good lordship to remember our porteux,† and that we might have some fine bonnets sent unto us by the next sure messenger, for necessity so requireth. Over this, right noble lord and father, please it your highness to wit, that we have charged your servant William Smith, bearer of these, for to declare unto your nobley certain things on our behalf, namely, concerning and touching the odious rule, and demening of Richard Crofte and of his brother. Wherefore we beseech your gracious lordship and full noble fatherhood, to hear him in exposition of the same, and to his relation to give full faith and credence.

Right high and right mighty prince, our full redoubted and right noble lord and father, we beseech Almighty Jesus give you a good life and long, with as much continual perfect prosperity, as your princely heart can best desire.

Written at your Castle of Ludlow, on Saturday in the Easter Week.

Your humble sons,

E. Marche, and
E. Rutlande.

See also *Ellis's Original Letters*, 1st series, vol. i. p. 9.

O.

IMMENSE POSSESSIONS INHERITED BY THE HOUSE OF YORK.

(See page 43.)

The castles of Fotheringay, in Northamptonshire and Berkhampstead, in Hertfordshire, were the patrimonial inheritance of the family of York; all the dukes, from the first who bore that title, having possessed and dwelt at these their baronial halls; and, with the title, they descended to the next heir as his ancestral abode. King Edward III. gave Fotheringay, with its ancient castle, to his fifth son, Edmund of Langley, the first Duke of York, which was erected into a duchy in his person, an. 9 Richard II., 1385; and this prince, its first possessor of that race, rebuilt the castle and the keep in the form of a fetterlock, the device of the House of York. His son Edward, the second duke, who chiefly resided at Fotheringay, founded and endowed its magnificent collegiate church, for which he was obliged to mortgage great part of his estate, and in the choir of which he was buried, having been brought to England for that purpose after the battle of Agincourt, where he lost his life. From him Fotheringay Castle descended to his nephew and heir, the third duke, father of Richard III., who was born in this favourite abode of his ancestors. The body of the above-named third duke, with that of his young son, the Earl of Rutland, both slain at Wakefield, was removed here for interment by command of King Edward IV., his heir and successor; and here, also, at her earnest desire, was buried the Lady Cecily of York, who survived her illustrious consort thirty-five years.‡

The Castle of Berkhampstead, also, came to the House of York from the first duke of that title, King Richard II. having bestowed it upon his uncle, Edmund de Langley, the said duke. He derived his surname from being born at a royal manor adjacent to Berkhampstead, called King's Langley; in the church appertaining to which he was buried, with his illustrious consort, Isabel of Castile. Berkhampstead remained in the family of York until that house became extinct, when it returned to the crown; its castle was the chief abode of Cecily, Duchess of York, during her long and eventful widowhood.§

Ludlow Castle, in Shropshire, and the fortress of Wigmore in Herefordshire, first

* Noblesse.

† This was the breviary, a compendious missal, which contained not only the office of the mass, but all the services except the form of marriage.

‡ See Hutton's History and Antiquities of Fotheringay; Sandford's Geneal. Hist., book v. pp. 359. 369; Nichols' Royal Wills, p. 222.

§ Anglorum Speculum, p. 370; Harrison's Survey, p. 582; Walpoole's Brit. Trav., 222.

became annexed to the possessions of the House of York through Richard, its third duke, who inherited these wealthy demesnes in right of his mother, the Lady Anne Mortimer, whose children were the heirs and legal representatives of the House of March, on the decease of her brother, the last earl, without issue.

Ludlow was an ancient lordship appertaining to the Mortimers, and the Castle of Wigmore was the early feudal abode of that warlike race; but after the creation of Roger, Lord of Wigmore, as first Earl of March and Ulster, it would appear that Ludlow Castle was preferred to their more ancient stronghold of Wigmore, judging at least from the many charters dated from the former place. King Edward IV., who, previous to his accession, had borne the title of Earl of March, and was likewise the fourth Duke of York, established, after he ascended the throne, a vice-royalty in Wales, under the designation of "The Council of the Marches," in honour of the Earls of March, from whom he was descended. Ludlow (for which place he had an especial favour as the abode of his youth) was appointed to be the seat of their court, and the lord president of the council was located at its castle; for the transactions of the illustrious House of Mortimer, from the first Earl of March until the title merged in the crown in the person of King Edward IV., had relation chiefly to Ludlow. Here that monarch's son, the young Prince of Wales, held his court at the time of his father's decease; and here also he was first proclaimed king, by the title of Edward V.: here, likewise, sojourned and died Arthur, Prince of Wales, the promising grandson of Edward IV.—the sovereign to whom the town of Ludlow owed its subsequent importance; the local sovereignty which he instituted by royal prerogative having subsisted until abolished by act of Parliament in the reign of William and Mary, when the government was divided between two peers of the realm, with the title of lords-lieutenant of North and South Wales.*

The ancient castles of Clare, in Suffolk, and that of Trimmes in Ireland also passed to Richard, third Duke of York, through his maternal ancestry, Philippa of Clarence, espoused to his great grandsire, Edmund Mortimer, third Earl of March, having inherited this ancient demesne from her grandmother, Elizabeth de Burgh, heiress of Gilbert, last Earl of Clare; by marriage with whose only child Elizabeth, King Edward III.'s second son, Prince Lionel, acquired the earldom of Ulster in the kingdom of Ireland, the honour of Clare in the county of Suffolk, and was created therefrom Duke of Clarence, 36 Edward III., 1362;† from which duchy the name of Clarenceux, being the title of the king-at-arms for the south-east and west parts of England on this side the Trent, is derived. Prince Lionel, and the Lady Elizabeth de Burgh, his consort, (in right of whose only child, Philippa, the race of York derived their claims to the throne,) together with Edmund Mortimer, last Earl of March, who left Richard, Duke of York, his heir, as also others of the noble House of Mortimer, were buried in the convent church of the ancient monastery of Clare.‡

Innumerable were the other manors, lordships, and demesnes which centred in Richard III., Duke of York, either by heirship or inheritance: Coningsburgh in Yorkshire, which gave the surname to his ill-fated parent, the Earl of Cambridge; "Wakefield and Sendal Castle, a great lordship pertaining to the duchy of York," and from which latter stronghold he issued to meet his own untimely death,§ with many more of less historical importance; but Middleham, so expressly named by Sir George Buck as the early abode of his children, could scarcely have been so during the lifetime of their father, for the lordship of Middleham appertained to the House of Neville, into which family it came by the marriage of Robert de Neville with Mary, the daughter and co-heir of Ralph Fitz-Randulph; and all the writers of that period mention the fact of the Earl of Salisbury fleeing to "his castle of Middleham," as did "York to Wigmore," when Queen Margaret and her councillors, in 1457, (only three years before the battle of Wakefield,) sought to entrap them by stealth to that destruction which force of arms had not been able to accomplish.

Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 86.; *Sandford, Geneal. Hist.*, book iv. p. 294.; *Anglo. Spec.*, p. 773.

* See Matthew Paris, p. 854; and Gent. Mag., vol. xv. No. IV. p. 393.
† Ibid.
‡ Sandford's Geneal. Hist., book iii. p. 220; Nichol's Royal Wills.
§ Fleetwood's Chronicle, p. 6.

P.

ENUMERATION OF THE TITLES BY WHICH THE BROTHERS OF CECILY, DUCHESS OF YORK, WERE ENNOBLED, TOGETHER WITH THE NAMES OF THE ANCIENT FAMILIES WITH WHICH HER SISTERS WERE ALLIED.

(See page 45.)

1. John, who died during the lifetime of his father, leaving a son, who afterwards succeeded his grandfather as Earl of Westmoreland.
2. Ralph, married to Mary, co-heir to Sir Robert Ferrars.
3. Maud, married to Peter Lord Manley.
4. Alice, married first Sir Thomas Gray, of Heton; secondly, Sir Gilbert de Lancaster.
5. Philippa, married to Thomas Lord Dacres of Gillesland.
6. Margaret, married to Richard Lord Scrope of Bolton.
7. Anne, married to Sir Gilbert de Umfraville, knight.
8. Margary, Abbess of Barking.
9. Elizabeth, a nun, of the Order of St. Clare at the Minories, London.
10. Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury.
11. William Lord Faulconberg.
12. George Lord Latimer.
13. Edward Lord Abergavenny.
14. Robert Bishop of Durham.
15. Cuthbert Neville,
16. Henry Neville,
17. Thomas Neville, } who died without issue.
18. Catherine, wife of John Mowbray, second Duke of Norfolk, and afterwards married to Sir John Woodville, son of Richard, Earl of Rivers.
19. Eleanor, wife first of Richard Lord Spencer, and secondly of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland.
20. Anne, wife first of Humphrey, Duke of Buckingham, and afterwards of Walter Blount, Lord Mountjoy.
21. Jane, a nun.
22. Cecily, married to Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York.

Blore's Monumental Remains, part iii.

Q.

LIST OF THE MANORS BESTOWED UPON RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, BY HIS BROTHER, KING EDWARD IV., BEFORE THE YOUNG PRINCE HAD ATTAINED HIS TWELFTH YEAR.

(See page 56.)

The fee farm of Gloucester, with the manors of Kingstone Lacey, in Dorset: Richmond, in Yorkshire; Chipping Norton, in Oxfordshire; Sarton, Great Camps, Abiton Magna, and Swaffham, in Kent; Polenthorn, Penhall, Tremarket, Trevalin, Argelles, Trewinion, and Droungolan, in Cornwall; Overhall, Netherhall, Aldham, Preston, Pendham and Cokefield, in Suffolk. The castles and manors of Henham, Elham, Parva, Vaur, Bumsted, Helion, Canfield-Magna, Stansted-Montfichet, Bumsted-upon-Terrens, Earls Calne, Crepping, Bentleigh-Magna, Crustwich, Fingrithe, Doddinghurst, Preyeres, Bower Hall, Creyes, Eston'Hall, Cileby, Beamond, Downham, with Kensington and Walehurst, in Middlesex; Calverton, in Bedfordshire; Milton and Paston, in Northamptonshire; Market Overton, in Rutlandshire; Flete and Battlesmere, in Kent. All which were part of the estate of John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, attainted. He also constituted Richard Lord High Admiral of England, constable of Corfe Castle, and keeper of the forests in Essex. A great portion of the lands and immense possessions of the attainted Cliffords were likewise settled on the young prince, who was created, in addition, Duke of Cornwall; and, consequently, enjoyed the enormous revenues derived from the mineral products of that duchy, and the rights and privileges connected with the Stannary courts.

See *Hutton's Bosworth*, p. xix.

R.

SEVERE EXERCISES ALLOTTED TO THE YOUTHFUL ASPIRANTS FOR KNIGHTHOOD DURING THE MIDDLE AGES.

(See page 62.)

Amongst the gymnastic exercises required of children at a very early age, one was to ride in full career against a wooden figure holding a buckler, called a quintaine. This quintaine turned on an axis; and as there was a wooden sword in the other hand of the supposed opponent, the young cavalier, if he did not manage the horse and weapon with address received a blow, when the shock of his charge made the quintaine spring round. Boys, more advanced in years, were taught to spring upon a horse while armed at all points; to exercise themselves in running; to strike for a length of time with the axe or club; to dance and throw somersets, entirely armed excepting the helmet; to mount on horseback behind one of their comrades, by barely laying hand on his sleeve; to raise themselves betwixt two partition walls to any height, by placing their back against the one, and their knees and hands against the other; to mount a ladder placed against a tower, upon the reverse, or untouching the rounds with their feet; to throw the javelin, and to pitch the bar.

Brayley's Graphic Illustrator, p. 27.

S.

SIR THOMAS MORE'S HISTORY OF KING RYCHARDE THE THIRDE.

(See page 65.)

A report seems early to have prevailed, assigning this history, usually imputed to Sir Thomas More, to the pen of Cardinal Morton.

Sir John Harrington, in his "Metamorphosis of Ajax," published 1596, says, "The best, and best written, of all our chronicles, in all men's opinions, is that of Richard III., written, as I have heard, by Morton; but, as most suppose, by Sir Thomas More." And Buck relates, "that Sir Edward Habby told him he had seen the original history in Latin, written by Morton, in the hands of Mr. Roper, of Eltham, an immediate descendant of More's." That Sir Thomas derived his information from Morton can scarcely be doubted, from the minuteness with which the particulars of transactions and conversations in which the bishop was a participator are related. This consideration will exculpate Sir Thomas More from any intentional misrepresentation of facts; and, at the same time, will make us receive the hideous portrait here drawn of Richard with some allowance for the prejudices of an inveterate and interested Lancastrian.

All the later historians of this reign, from Grafton down to Hume and Henry, have derived their materials from this history, for Rous of Warwick, the Chronicler of Croyland, Fabyan and Polydore Virgil afford but little additional information. Grafton and Holinshed have not, as Lord Orford asserts, "copied it verbatim:" they have indulged in unwarrantable interpolations and omissions; their copies being, as the old editor says, "very muche corrupte in many places, sometimes having less and sometimes having more, and altered in wordes and whole sentences." More's brother-in-law,* Rastall, when he made the collection of his kinsman's works in 1557, points out the incorrectness of the impressions of this history, which was first printed in Grafton's "Continuation of the Metrical Chronicle of John Hardyng," in 1543; and was again printed in the chronicles of Grafton, Hall and Holinshed, and professes to have been "conferred and corrected by his own copy." A portion of this history also exists in Latin; and Mr. Laing conjectures that it may have been first composed in that language. This Latin version has also been published, and was first printed at Louvain in 1566, with the other Latin works of Sir Thomas More. The editor remarks that it is an unpolished fragment, written without much study, and apparently unrevised, and that it is not to be compared, in point of elegance of style, to More's other Latin works. May not this Latin fragment be the identical history which has been attributed to Morton? It is remarkable that Grafton, in his narrative, takes up the conversation between the Earl of Buckingham and Bishop Morton, and continues it with the same minute particularity as it had been begun by Sir Thomas More; the subsequent events of the reign are detailed with the same exactness as if he had received his information from an eye witness of them. In Bishop Kennet's "Complete History of England," that learned prelate has contented himself with a faithless paraphrase, varying entirely in all essential characteristics from the original, so as scarcely to leave any trace of Sir Thomas More's manner of narration; and by trusting to this faulty copy, Hume has been led into error.

See *Introduction to Singer's Reprint of More's Rycharde III.*

* An almost universal error prevails in considering Rastall, the chronicler, as son-in-law, instead of brother-in-law, of Sir Thomas More. Rastall married the sister of the learned chancellor, who had but two daughters; the one, well known as the celebrated "Margaret Roper," as eminent for her virtues as her astonishing learning; and the other, "Mary," maid of honour to Queen Mary, and espoused afterwards, first to Mr. Stephen Clark, and secondly to Mr. James Basset.

T.

THE ORDER OF THE GARTER LIMITED AT ITS FIRST INSTITUTION EXCLUSIVELY TO KNIGHTS OF HIGH MILITARY REPUTATION.

(See page 71.)

Sandford, in his "Genealogical History of the Kings of England," gives the following account of the original design of this martial association.

"Many solemn tournaments, and other exercises of war, are performed at Dunstable and Smithfield, but more especially at Windsor, where King Edward designed the restoration of King Arthur's Round Table, in imitation of which he caused to be erected a table of 200 foot diameter, where the knights should have their entertainment of diet at his expense, amounting to 100*l.* per week. In emulation of these martial associations at Windsor, King Philip of Valois practised the like at his court in France, to invite the knights and valiant men of arms out of Italy, and Almain thither, lest they should repair to King Edward, which, meeting with success, proved a countermine to King Edward's main design, who thereby finding that his entertainment of stranger knights was too general, and did not sufficiently oblige them his in the following wars, at length resolved on one more particular, and such as might tie those whom he thought fit to make his associates in a firm bond of friendship and honour.

"Wherefore, having given forth his own garter for the signal of a battle that sped fortunately, (which, with Du Chesne, we conceive to be that of Cressy, fought three years after his setting up the round table at Windsor,) he thence took occasion to institute this order, and gave the Garter (assumed by him for the symbol of unity and society) pre-eminence among the ensigns thereof; whence that select number, (being five-and-twenty besides the sovereign,) whom he incorporated into a fraternity, are frequently styled Equites Periscelides, vulgarly, Knights of the Garter."

Geneal. Hist., book iii. p. 163.

U.

SPLENDID FUNERAL OF RICHARD, DUKE OF YORK, AND OF HIS SON EDMOND, EARL OF RUTLAND.

(See page 73.)

"King Edward, immediately after his great victory at Towton, caused the head of the duke his father to be taken down from the walls of York, and buried with his trunk, and the corpse of his son Edmond, Earl of Rutland, at Ponfract; 'from whence their bones, by the said king's command, were with great solemnity afterwards removed, and interred at Fotheringay.' In order to which, upon the 22d of July, 1466, the said bones were put into a chariot covered with black velvet, richly wrapped in cloth of gold and royal habit, at whose feet stood a white angel bearing a crown of gold, 'to signify that of right he was king.' The chariot had seven horses, trapped to the ground, and covered with black, charged with escocheons of the said prince's arms; every horse carried a man, and upon the foremost rode Sir John Skipwith, who bore the prince's banner displayed. The bishops and abbots went two or three miles before, to prepare the churches for the reception of the prince, in pontificalibus.

"Richard, Duke of Gloucester, followed next after the corpse, accompanied with a number of nobles, the officers of arms being also present. In this equipage they parted from Ponfract, and that night rested at Doncaster, where they were received by the convent of Cordeliers, in gray habit; from thence by journeys to Bleide, to Touxford in the Clay, to Newarke, to Grantham, to Stamford, and from thence on Monday, the 29th of July, to Fodringhay, where they arrived betwixt two and three of the clock in the afternoon, where the bodies were received by several bishops and abbots in pontificalibus, and supported by twelve servants of the defunct prince.

"At the entry of the churchyard was the king, accompanied by several dukes, earls and barons, all in mourning, who proceeded into the heart of Fodringhay church, near to the high altar, where there was a herse covered with black, furnished with a great number of banners, banneretts and pencills, and under the said herse were the bones of the said prince and his son Edmond.

"The queen and her two daughters were present, also in black, attended by several ladies and gentlewomen. Item, over the image was a cloth of majesty, of black sarcenet, with the figure of our Lord, sitting on a rainbow, beaten in gold, having, on every corner, a scocheon of his arms of France and England quarterly, with a vallence about the herse also of black sarcenet, fringed half a yard deep, and beaten with three angels of gold holding the arms within* a garter, in every part above the herse.

"Upon the 30th July, several masses were said, and then at the offertory of the mass of requiem, the king offered for the said prince his father; and the queen and her two daughters and the Countess of Richmond offered afterwards; then Norroy king of arms offered the prince's coat of arms; March king of arms, the target; Ireland king of arms, the sword; Windsor herald of arms of England and Ravendon herald of Scotland offered the helmet; and Mr. de Ferrys, the harness and courser."

From an ancient Document preserved in the College of Arms, and quoted thence by Sandford, in his "Genealogical History of England," book v. p. 373.

V.

KING EDWARD'S STRONG ATTACHMENT TO RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, EVINCED BY THE CONTINUED HONOURS AND POSSESSIONS THAT WERE BESTOWED UPON HIM BY THAT MONARCH, FROM THE PERIOD OF HIS ACCESSION TO THAT OF HIS DEATH.

(See page 84.)

1st Ed. IV.—Richard created Duke of Gloucester and Lord Admiral of England.—*Rot. Parl.*, vol. v. p. 461.

2d Ed. IV.—Grant to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, of the castle of the town of Gloucester, the constableship of Corfe Castle, the earldom, honour and lordship of Richmond, and numerous manors, forty-six in number, which fell to the crown by the attainder of John de Vere, Earl of Oxford.—*Rot. Parl.*, vol. vi. p. 227.

3d Ed. IV.—By patent the king granted to his brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester, the castles, manors, and lands forfeited by the attainder of Henry Beauford, late Duke of Somerset.—*Rymer's Add. MSS.*, vol. i. art. 91.

4th Ed. IV.—Grant of Stanhope Park and Weardale Forest to the duke for life, in lieu of an annuity of 100*l.* a-year.—*Surtees's Hist. Durham*, p. lx.

5th Ed. IV.—Payment to Richard, Earl of Warwick, for costs and expenses incurred by him on behalf of the Duke of Gloucester.—*Issue Roll of the Exchequer*, p. 490.

6th Ed. IV.—Richard, Duke of Gloucester, created a Knight of the Garter.—*Hist. Brit. Knighthood*, p. 92.

8th Ed. IV.—Grant to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, of the numerous manors which had belonged to Robert, Lord Hungerford, and all the possessions of Henry, Duke of Somerset, or of Edmund his brother.—*Cal. Rot. Pat.*, m. 1. p. 314.

9th Ed. IV.—Richard, Duke of Gloucester, appointed Chief Justice of South Wales, Admiral of England, and constable of England for life.—*Cal. Rot. Pat.*, m. 10. p. 315.

10th Ed. IV.—Richard, Duke of Gloucester, appointed a commissioner of array in the county of Gloucester; also in the counties of Devonshire and Cornwall.—*Rymer's Fœdera*, vol. xi. p. 655.

* Signifying that the arms of Richard, Duke of York, were placed within the Garter.—*Sandford*, p. 373.

11th Ed. IV.—Richard, Duke of Gloucester, appointed justiciary of North Wales.—*Cal. Rot. Pat.*, m. 9. p. 316. The king also confers upon Richard, by letters patent, the castles, manors, lordships and forfeited estates of Richard, Earl of Warwick, Sir Thomas Dymocke, Sir Thomas de la Laund, and others.—*Cott. MSS.*, Julius B. xii. fol. 111. *b.*

12th Ed. IV.—Richard, Duke of Gloucester, appointed keeper of all the king's forests beyond Trente for life.—*Cal. Rot. Pat.*, m. 10. p. 317.

14th Ed. IV.—The king awards to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, in right of his wife, half the vast possessions that accrued to her as co-heiress of the Earl of Warwick, with the additional clause that it was to remain with him in the event of a divorce.—*Rot. Parl.*, vi. p. 100.

15th Ed. IV.—The Duke of Gloucester nominated by King Edward IV. as one of the commissioners appointed by him to sign the contract of marriage between the Dauphin of France and the Princess Royal of England.—*Rymer's Fœdera*, vol. xii. p. 15.

Also (15 Ed. IV.) the honour, manors, castle and demesnes of Skipton, with other land of the attainted Cliffords, were granted to Richard, Duke of Gloucester.—*Pat. Rolls*, 15 Ed. IV.

17th Ed. IV.—The king created Edmund Plantagenet, his nephew, eldest son of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, Earl of Salisbury.—*Cal. Rot. Pat.*, part 11. p. 322.

Ibid.—Richard, Duke of Gloucester, appointed great chamberlain of England for life.—*Ibid.*

18th Ed. IV.—Richard, Duke of Gloucester, appointed Admiral of England, Ireland and Aquitaine.—*Ibid.*, part i. p. 323.

20th Ed. IV.—Richard, Duke of Gloucester, appointed the king's lieutenant-general during his own absence on an expedition against the Scotch.—*Ibid.*, part i. p. 325.

22d Ed. IV.—An act was passed reciting that the Duke of Gloucester and his heirs male should have the wardenship of the west marches of England towards Scotland; the castle, city, town and lordship of Carlisle; the castle, manor and lordship of Bewcastle in Cumberland, with Nicole Forest; also the countries and ground in Scotland, called Liddlesdale, Eskdale, Ewsdale, Annandale, Wallopdale, Clydesdale, and the west marches of Scotland, &c. &c.; in addition to which, he was to receive 10,000 marks in ready money.—*Rot. Parl.*, vol. vi. p. 197.

W.

TESTIMONY OF COTEMPORARY WRITERS, ESTABLISHING THE FACT OF KING EDWARD'S HAVING BEEN MADE A PRISONER BY THE DUKE OF CLARENCE AND THE EARL OF WARWICK.

(See p. 85.)

A° 1469. "In the mean time King Edward was captured at a village near Coventry, and was thence conveyed as a prisoner, through the influence of his brother George, Duke of Clarence, Richard, Earl of Warwick, and George Nevill, Archbishop of York, to Warwick Castle: but lest his friends in the South should release him, he was removed to Middleham, in Yorkshire, from which he was freed by the express consent of the Earl of Warwick, inasmuch as an insurrection had broken out among the partisans of Henry VI. in that part of England adjoining Scotland, which the earl could not repress except by making public proclamation in the king's name that all his lieges should rise in his defence against the rebels; for the people would not obey his mandates until they saw him in freedom at York. The insurgents having been dispersed, and the king taking advantage of his liberty, hastened to London, where, in a great council, a reconciliation was effected between him, the Duke of Clarence, the Earl of Warwick and their adherents. The injury, however, which he had received is conjectured by the chronicler to have rankled in the king's mind."

Cont. Hist. Croyland; Gale, i. p. 551. (Abstract.)

9 Ed. IV. "And after that, the Archbishop of York had understanding that King Edward was in a village beside Northampton, and all his people he raised were fled from him. By the advice of the Duke of Clarence and the Earl of Warwick, he rode with certain horsemen harnessed with him, and took King Edward, and

had him unto Warwick Castle a little while, and afterward to York city; and there, by fair speech and promise, the king escaped out of the bishop's hands, and came unto London, and did what him liked."

Warkworth's Chronicle, p. 7.

To this cotemporary evidence may be added the more recent corroboration of Dr. Lingard, who, after stating that every writer of the age, whether foreign or native, confirms the fact of King Edward's imprisonment by his rebellious and unnatural kinsmen, not only adduces the authority of Comines to aid in substantiating the circumstance, but also minutely investigates the untenable arguments used by later historians to invalidate the above-named authority.

Lingard's Hist. Eng., vol. v. p. 195.

X.

EXTRAORDINARY INFLUENCE OF THE EARL OF WARWICK OVER GEORGE, DUKE OF CLARENCE.

(See p. 94.)

"But the wonder of the world then was at the powerful sorcery of those persuasions which bewitched the Duke of Clarence, the king's brother, to this conspiracy: but he was young and purblind in foreseeing the event of things. Profuse in expense beyond his revenue, and almost beyond the king's power to supply; grudging the favours conferred upon the queen and her kindred; valuing his birth too high, as who forgot the brother of a king is but a subject; forward upon any terms to make himself greater, easily lending ear to dangerous whispers, and as rashly giving consent. These preparations made this young prince fit to take any mischief which the Earl of Warwick ministered most plentifully."

Habington's Edward IV., p. 42.

Y.

FEEBLENESS OF HENRY VI. EVINCED BY HIS DEFICIENCY IN MUSCULAR STRENGTH.

(See p. 109.)

Dr. Whitaker, in speaking of King Henry VI., in his most interesting History of Craven, says, when describing the well-known relics of this unfortunate monarch left by him at Bolton, (a pair of boots, a pair of gloves, and a spoon,) either from haste and trepidation, or as tokens of his regard for the family,—"In an age when the habits of the great, in peace as well as war, required perpetual exertions of bodily strength, this unhappy prince must have been equally contemptible from corporeal and from mental imbecility; yet I do not recollect that any historian mentions this circumstance. The boots are of a fine brown Spanish leather, lined with deer's skin, tanned with the fur on, and about the ankles is a kind of wadding under the lining to keep out the wet. They have been fastened by buttons from the ankle to the knee; the feet are remarkably small, (little more than eight inches long,) the toes round, and the soles, where they join to the heel, contracted to less than an inch in diameter. The gloves are of the same material, and have the same lining; they reach up like woman's gloves to the elbow, but have been occasionally turned down with the deer's skin outward. The hands are exactly proportioned to the feet, and not larger than those of a middle-sized woman."

Whitaker's Hist. of Craven, p. 104.

Z.

EXAMINATION OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS.

(See p. 115.)

On the 24th July, 1822, it was resolved by the House of Commons, "that an humble address should be presented to his Majesty (George IV.) representing that the

editions of the works of our ancient historians are incorrect and defective; that many of their writings still remain in manuscript, and in some cases in a single copy only; and that an uniform and convenient edition of the whole, published under his majesty's royal sanction, would be an undertaking honourable to his majesty's reign, and conducive to the advancement of historical and constitutional knowledge." And the House, therefore, humbly besought his majesty "to give such directions as in his wisdom he might think fit for the publication of a complete edition of the ancient historians of the realm." In answer to this address, Mr. Peel, secretary of state for the home department, on the 19th November, 1822, wrote a letter to the commissioners on the public records, informing them that his majesty had been graciously pleased to comply with the prayer of the said address, and desiring them "to take measures for carrying his majesty's most gracious intentions into effect, conferring, from time to time, with the home secretary, or the lords of the treasury, in the progress of the work, as there should be occasion."

On the 18th March, Mr. Peel's letter was laid before the Board, and a sketch of a plan by Mr. Petrie, keeper of the records in the Tower, for collecting, arranging and publishing the History of Britain from the earliest times to the accession of Henry VIII., was read and adopted; Mr. Petrie being appointed by the committee principal sub-commissioner for the superintendence and execution of the work. The result of this important proceeding has already developed matter of great interest, were it only in making known to the public, by means of the official reports already laid before the lords of the treasury, the value, extent and completeness of the national records of this country. Sir Francis Palgrave, in closing his report of May, 1840, concludes it by observing that the public records of England constitute "a series of unparalleled completeness and antiquity." "No other European state," he adds, "possesses consecutive archives commencing at so early a date, or extending over so long a period of time. They exhibit the full development of the laws and institutions of the realm, and are evidences of the progress of society in the various changes which the policy of the nation has sustained."

The records deposited in the Tower of London commence with the archives of the Norman race, and include the acts and proceedings of all the early kings in due order of succession, terminating with those of the Plantagenet dynasty. These records are chiefly deposited in the Wakefield Tower, and in the White Tower commonly called Cæsar's Chapel. The Parliament rolls preserved in the Wakefield Tower begin in the fifth year of Edward II., A. D. 1311, and end with the reign of Edward IV., 1483; the patent rolls, which begin in the third year of King John, A. D. 1201, end with the reign of Edward IV., 1483. In the upper gallery of this tower are also deposited several lockers, containing innumerable loose parchments of a very miscellaneous nature, but which could not be finally examined until repertories had been made for the more important records. Indeed, so voluminous are the state documents contained in the Tower, that in the first report of the commissioners, it is stated that "the timbers which support the roof of the room adjoining the chapel are some of them so decayed and sunk by the weight of the records as to require immediate repair."

The Rolls Chapel is the next most important national depository, being crowded with charter rolls, patent rolls, close rolls, and other chancery records, contained in a regular series from the beginning of the reign of Richard III. These documents are deposited in presses round the walls of the chapel, but so constructed as not to excite the notice of any casual observer, as the chapel is used as a place of worship every Sunday during term time. So abundant, indeed, are the innumerable records there deposited, that every available place, not excepting even the pulpit and the seats of the pews, which are converted into boxes, have been put in requisition. The Rolls House, which immediately adjoins the chapel, and the rooms of which are spacious, is chiefly appropriated to records belonging to the Court of Queen's Bench, extending from the reign of Henry VI. down to the fourth of George IV. The earlier series connected with the Rolls House are preserved in the Chapter House at Westminster, and the subsequent series of this department are partly in the treasury of the Court of Queen's Bench, and partly in the office of the court now in the Temple.

See Cooper's *Proceedings of His Majesty's Commissioners on the Public Records*, vol. i. p. 201, and vol. i. p. 158—173. Also Sir Francis Palgrave's *Reports* for May 15th, 1840, and May 15th, 1841.

AA.

SEAL OF RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, AS LORD HIGH ADMIRAL OF ENGLAND.

(See p. 119.)

The history of the discovery of this seal is replete with interest. It is of brass, and is, in all respects, perfect and uninjured. It was the property of Mr. J. Hankey, an attorney at St. Columb in Cornwall, who purchased it in a lot of old brass and iron, amongst the household goods of one Mr. Jackson, an innkeeper of that town. How Mr. Jackson came possessed of it does not appear. He was a native of Cumberland, from which he removed to Devonshire, and afterwards to St. Columb, where he died. He seemed not to have put any value upon the seal, nor to have ever mentioned it to his family. Richard, Duke of Gloucester, resided frequently both at Penrith, Carlisle, and other places in Cumberland, during his wardenship in the North, which helps to explain, in some measure at least, how the seal probably came into the possession of a native of that county.

Upon the death of Mr. Hankey, in 1782, it became the property of Mr. Dennis, attorney, of Penzance, and shortly afterwards an impression was forwarded to the Society of Antiquaries, by the Rev. Dr. Milles, Dean of Exeter, together with the foregoing account, and some further very interesting particulars connected with its history.

It appears probable that this curious seal was wrought between the years 1471, when the Duke of Gloucester was invested for the second time with the office of Lord High Admiral of England, and 1475, when King Edward IV. advanced Sir Thomas Grey, the queen's son by her former marriage, to the dignity of Marquis of Dorset.

See *Archæologia*, vol. vii. p. 69.

BB.

OATH OF RECOGNITION TAKEN BY RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, TO THE INFANT PRINCE OF WALES.

(See p. 120.)

On 3d July, 11 Edward IV. (1471), the Duke of Gloucester and other peers, spiritual and temporal, took and subscribed the following oath of recognition of Prince Edward, as heir of King Edward IV.

"I acknowledge, take, and repute you, Edward, Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwayll, and Erle of Chestre, furste begoten son of oure sovereigne lord, as to the corones and reames of England and of France and lordship of Ireland; and promette and swere, that incas hereafter it happen, you by Goddis disposition to outleve our seid sovereigne lord, I shall then take and accept you for true, veray, and righteous Kyng of Englond, &c. And feith and trouth to you shall bere. And yn all thyngs truely and feithfully behave me towardes you and youre heyres, as a true and feithfull subject oweth to behave hym to his sovereigne lord, and rightiiys Kyng of Englond, &c. So help me God, and Holidome, and this holy Evaungelist."

Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 232.

CC.

ARTICLES CONNECTED WITH THE TREATY OF MARRIAGE BETWEEN THE PRINCE OF WALES AND THE EARL OF WARWICK'S SECOND DAUGHTER.

(See p. 126.)

"Touching the second point, that is, of marriage, true it is that the queen would not in any wise consent thereunto for offer shewing, or any manner of request, that the King of France might make her. Same time she said, that she saw never honour ne profit for her, ne for her son the prince. In other she alleged that and she would, she should find a more profitable party, and of a more advantage, with the King of England. And indeed she shewed unto the King of France a letter which she said was sent her out of England the last week, by the which was offered to her son, my lady the princess;* and so the queen persevered fifteen days, or she would any thing intend to the said treatie of marriage."

After enumerating "certain articles," by means of which the said marriage was agreed and promised, "present the King of France and the Duke of Guienne," the manuscript gives "the oath of the Earl of Warwick at Angers, sworn to King Henry;" also "the oath of the King of France and of the Queen Margaret." Item: "In treating the foresaid marriage, it was promised and accorded, that after the recovery of the realm of England, for and in the name of the said King Harry, he—holden and avouched for king, and the prince for regent and governor of the said realm—my Lord of Clarence shall have all the lands that he had when he departed out of England, and the duchy of York, and many other; and the Earl of Warwick his, and other named in the appointment."

Ellis's Orig. Letters, 2d series, vol. i. p. 132. (The original is preserved in the Harl. MSS., No. 543. fol. 169.)

DD.

SECOND MARRIAGES CONSIDERED INDECOROUS IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY, IF ENTERED INTO WITHIN A CERTAIN FIXED PERIOD.

(See p. 130.)

This fact is illustrated by an interesting event in the life of Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy, the sister of Edward IV. and Richard, Duke of Gloucester.

On the decease of her husband, Charles, Duke of Burgundy, slain at Nancy, 1477, the King of Scotland applied to Edward IV. to aid him in negotiating a marriage between his sister, the said Margaret, and the Duke of Albany, brother to the Scottish king; but this proposal was deferred by the English monarch, "forasmuch as after the old usages of this our royaume (of England) none estate, ne person honourable, communeth of marriage within the year of their doole," and it was never carried into effect.—See *Excerpta Hist.*, p. 226. It further appears that in the middle ranks of life, widows were restricted from second marriages, which, when detected, occasioned the total forfeiture of legacy, &c., from their husbands: a provision to that effect having been made in wills.

Testamenta Vetusta, p. xxxiv.

EE.

AWARD OF WARWICK'S LANDS TO HIS CO-HEIRESSES, THE LADY ISABEL AND THE LADY ANNE NEVILLE.

(See p. 131.)

It was enacted in Parliament, 9th May, 14 Edward IV. (1474), that George, Duke of Clarence, and Isabel his wife, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and Anne his wife, the daughters and heirs of Richard Neville, late Earl of Warwick, and heirs apparent to Anne, Countess of Warwick, late wife of the said earl, should from thenceforth enjoy, in right of their wives, all honours, lordships, castles, towns, manors, lands, &c., which had previously belonged, or did then pertain to the said countess, in like manner as if she were naturally dead; that the said Isabel and Anne should be reputed and taken as heirs of blood of said countess, and of other their ancestors; that she should be barred and excluded from all jointure at dower out of the possessions of the earl, her late husband, and that the said dukes and their wives should make a partition thereof. If the said Isabel or Anne died leaving her husband surviving, he was to enjoy her moiety during his life: any alienation made thereof by the said dukes and their wives was to be of no effect.

It was further provided, that if the Duke of Gloucester and Anne should be divorced, and afterwards marry again, the act should be as available as though no such divorce had taken place; or in case he should be divorced, "and after that he

* Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Edward IV., born Feb. 11th, at Westminster, 1466.—*Sandford*, book v. p. 417.

do his effectual diligence and continual devoir by all convenient and lawful means to be lawfully married to the said Anne the daughter, and during the lyf of the same Anne, be not married ne wedded to any other woman, he should have as much of the premises as pertained to her during her lifetime."

See *Rot. Parl.*, vol. iv. p. 100.

FF.

PAPAL DISPENSATIONS REQUISITE TO LEGALIZE A MARRIAGE AFTER PREVIOUS BETROTHMENT TO ANOTHER PARTY.

(See p. 132.)

This point is curiously exemplified in the case of Joanna, the fair maid of Kent, who is designated by some historians as the Countess of Salisbury, because she had, in her infancy, been betrothed to William de Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, from whom she was divorced by consent; nevertheless, before she could espouse her cousin, Edward the Black Prince, it was necessary to obtain, in addition to the papal dispensation arising from their too near consanguinity, a bull to release her from her former engagements with the Earl of Salisbury, although they had been divorced by mutual consent, and that he was long dead, having been killed in a tournament.

See *Kennet's Complete Hist. of Eng.*, vol. i. p. 229.

GG.

THE GREAT DEARTH OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS AT THE PERIOD WHEN SHAKSPEARE FLOURISHED LED TO THE FOUNDATION OF THE BODLEIAN AND COTTONIAN LIBRARIES.

(See p. 145.)

It is well known that, until the reign of King Henry the Eighth, learning had been several ages at a low ebb, especially among the laity in England, where the tumultuary state of the nation, and the long wars between the Houses of York and Lancaster, had found them employment widely different from the pursuit of letters. Hence, in this kingdom, the two universities and the religious houses became the only repositories of books of erudition. Even they were scantily supplied. We have no account transmitted to us of any considerable number of valuable books being at any one time introduced into England preceding the Reformation, except the collection made by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, for his library at Oxford. King Henry VIII., soon after the general dissolution of religious houses, founded the Royal Library, for the use of the princes of the blood, placing therein many choice MSS., collected by John Leland and others, out of the spoils of the monasteries.*

Towards the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Sir Thomas Bodley turned his thoughts to the reinstating the public library at Oxford, then in a ruinous condition, and to the adorning it not only with printed books, but with whatever manuscripts could at that time be procured. To this end he quitted the court, and dedicated the remainder of his life to the searching after and purchasing books and manuscripts at home, whilst his agents abroad ransacked almost every port of Europe for the like literary supplies. Bodley's great cotemporary, Sir Robert Cotton, had been equally diligent in collecting ancient MSS., and by an expensive and indefatigable labour of upwards of forty years, he accumulated those numerous and inestimable treasures which compose the Cottonian Library.

After so many MSS. had been thus secured, not merely in the above-named rich deposits, but in other valuable though smaller collections, the prospect of furnishing a new library with any considerable number of choice MSS. was very unpromising: but an innate love of science, and a strong propensity to search into the transactions of former ages, determined Mr. Harley† early in life to purchase whatsoever curious

* This library was afterwards considerably augmented by his successors, and is now preserved in the British Museum, by order of George the Second.

† Robert Harley, Esq., of Brampton Bryan in the county of Hereford, was, in February, 1700, chosen speaker of the House of Commons; in May, 1711, was created Earl of Oxford and Mortimer, and five days afterwards promoted to the important station of Lord High Treasurer of Great Britain.

MSS. he could meet with, more especially such as in any wise tend to explain and illustrate the history, laws, customs and antiquities of his native country. The principal point which the noble founder of the Harleian Library had in view was the establishment of a MS. English *Historical Library*, and the rescuing from oblivion and destruction such valuable records of our national antiquities as had escaped the diligence of former collectors. At the decease of his son, Edward, Lord Harley, in 1741, who considerably enriched the collection, the MS. library consisted of nearly 8000 volumes. This invaluable repository, together with the Cottonian, Arundelian, Sloanian, Lansdown, and many other MS. libraries, is now deposited in the British Museum, where they are easy of access to the student of history and antiquity.

See Preface to *A Catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts: printed by command of his Majesty, George III.*, p. 2.

HH.

THE LORD HASTINGS ACCEPTS THE FRENCH MONARCH'S BRIBE, BUT REFUSES TO GIVE A WRITTEN ACKNOWLEDGMENT FOR IT.

(See page 156.)

"When Louis XI. entertained divers counsellours of King Edward IV. with large pensions to steed him in England, he sent Peter Cleret, one of the masters of his household, unto the Lord Hastings, the king's chamberlain, to present him with two thousand crowns; which, when he had received, Peter Cleret did pray him, that for his discharge, he should make him an acquittance. The lord chamberlain made a great difficulty thereat: then Cleret doth request him again, that he would give unto him only a letter of three lines for his discharge to the king, signifying that he had received them: the lord chamberlain answered; 'Sir, that which you say is very reasonable; but the gift comes from the good-will of the king, your master, and not at my request at all. If it please you that I shall have it, you shall put it within the pocket of my sleeve, and you shall have no other acquittance of me. For I will never it shall be said of me, that the Lord Chamberlain of the King of England hath been pensioner to the King of France; nor that my acquittances shall be found in the chamber of accounts in France.' The aforesaid Cleret went away malcontent; but left his money with him, and came to tell his message to his king, who was very angry with him. But thenceforth the Lord Chamberlain of England was more esteemed with the French, and always paid without acquittance."

Camden's Remains, p. 352.

II.

ATTAINDER OF GEORGE, DUKE OF CLARENCE.

(See p. 160.)

Dr. Lingard, in referring to the long and laboured bill of attainder (*Rot. Parl.*, vi. 193), has so ably condensed the leading points, that the nature of these accusations cannot be more clearly shown than by the following extract from his valuable History. "The king produced his witnesses, and conducted the prosecution. He described the tender affection which he had formerly cherished for his brother, and the great possessions with which he had enriched him; yet the ungrateful prince had turned against his benefactor, had leagued with his enemies, had deprived him of his liberty, and during his exile had conspired to dethrone him. All this had been forgiven: yet what was the return? Clarence had again formed the project of disinheriting him and his issue. For this purpose he had commissioned his servants to give public entertainments, during which they insinuated that Burdett had been innocent of the crime for which he suffered; that the king was himself a magician, and therefore unfit to govern a Christian people; and what was more, was a bastard, and consequently without any right to the crown. Moreover, Clarence had induced men to

MM.

CURIOUS FRAGMENT RELATING TO THE ADMINISTRATION AND ECONOMY OF RICHARD III., AT MIDDLEHAM PARTLY BEFORE, AND PARTLY AFTER HIS ACCESSION TO THE CROWN.

(See p. 181.)

"Middleham. —

"Warrant to th' auditor of Middleham to allowe Geaffry Franke, rec^r of the same, in his accompts the summe of ciiij^xx. xij^li. x^s.; y^t is to wit, xxij^s. and ix^d. for grene cloth for my lord prince, and M^r. Niguill, by him bought, xx^d. for making of gowns of the same cloth; xiij^s. iiij^d. to the gild of Alveton, v^s. for chusing of the king of West Witton; vi^s. xj^d. for rushes; xxij^s. viij^d. to Augnes Coup, xj^s. for a cloth sak; xxiij^s. iiij^d. for a horse bought for Will Litell Scott; xxij^s. vij. to Seint Xpofer Gild at York; v^s. for a fether to my lord prince; x^s. for a foder of lede bought of th' abbot of Coverham; xxij^s. iij^d. for y^e Lord Ric costs from Middleham to Ponctfret; xlij^s. iiij^d. for the Lord Richard buriall; xiiij^s. j^d. to Dryk, shoemaker, for stuff for my Lord Prince; vi^s. viij^d. to y^e Lord Richard's servants; vj^s. viij^d. for y^e chusing of y^e king of Middelham; xo^s. for my lord prince offering to o^r Lady of Gervaux, Coverham and Wynsladale; xij^s. ix^d. for dten stuff bought for M^r. Nevill; xo^s. ix^d. for stuff bought of Edward Pilkington; xx^d. for my lord prince offering at Gervaux; ij^s. vj^d. for offering at Founteins; iiij^s. offering at Pountfret; xlviij^s. ix^d. to Jane Colyns for offerings, and other stuff by her bought; xxj^s. vj^d. for th' expences of y^e Lord Ric servants and y^e horse at Middleham; iiij^li. x^s. to Oliver Chambre, John Vachan, Ruke Metcalf, Anthony Patrick Dennys, John Marler, for other quarter wages at Midsomer; xxxij^s. iiij^d. to Henry Forest for his halff yere wages; xj^d. to yest for mending of my lords irrga; xij^d. to Martyn y^e fool; xij^d. to Sheren by the way; xx^d. for my lords drynkyng at Kynghouses; viij^d. for trussing corde; viij^d. for a brydall bitt; xo^s. x^d. to Sir Tho^r Bromles for my lords alms; xiiij^s. iiij^d. for a prymmer for my lord; vij^s. x^d. for a black satan for covering of it, and of a sawter; ij^s. for my lord princes drynking at Kyppes; xxxvij^li. xvj^s. x^d. for the expences of my lord prince household, and y^e Lord Ric from Saint . . . . . to Midsomer day; xxxj^li. x^d. for th' expences of the same house from Midsomer day to y^e ij^de daye of August; xxiij^li. xiij^s. v^d. for my saide lordes household from y^e ij^de of Aug^st to y^e xxij^de daye of y^e saide moneth; 1^s. 1^d. for my said lordes household at Wedderby and Tadcastre; vj^s. viij^d. to Mettcalfe and Pacock for running on foot by side my lord prince; c^s. to Jane Colyns for hir hole yeres wages, ending at Michelmasse; x^li. for coste of the houndes, and yeir wages y^t kepe them; vj^li. xiij^s. iiij^d. for household wages; xliij^s. viij^d. for keeping of Sonstewgh; xl^s. to Michel Warton for wark; v marcs for lying at London viij dayes and for coming with y^e jewells from London; x^li. to y^e Lyntone; xxiij^s. iiij^d. for the expences of my lord princes householde from York to Pountfret; x^s. for iii waynes from York to Pountfret; vj^s. v^d. for th' expences of my lord princes chariot from York to Pountfret; l^li. iij^s. iiij^d. to a wiff besides Doncastre by y^e kings commaundement; ij^s. xj^d. for their bating ef y^e chariot at York; vij^s. ij^d. for th' expences of my lord princes horse at York; xx^s. j^d. for bringing of stuff from Barnards Castel; v^li. vj^s. iiij^d. for iiij yerds of black velvet; iiij^li. x^s. to Oliver Chamber, John Vaghan, Ruke Metcalff, Patrick Dennys, John Marler, for three quarters wages from Midsomer to Michelmass; iij^s. vj^d. for fustyan bought of Thomas Fynche; vj^li. xiiij^s. for money paied to Sir Thomas Gower, by him laid out for th' expences of the Lord Ryvers.

"Yeven the xxi day of Sep^br, a^o. primo."

Harl. MSS., m. 8. 433, p. 118.

N N.

DOCUMENTS ESTABLISHING THE ANXIETY SHOWN BY KING EDWARD IV. FOR THE PERSONAL SAFETY AND COMFORT OF HIS BROTHER RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER.

(See p. 183.)

"To Master Hobbes, the king's physician and surgeon, sent by the king to the North, to attend upon the Duke of Gloucester, being in the king's service against the Scotch, with eight surgeons in his retinue, for one month's wages, 13*l.* 16*s.*

"To John Cleck, the king's apothecary, for divers medicines, syrup Alexandrines, bottles, electuaries, and other necessaries provided and delivered, by the king's command, to the Duke of Gloucester, of the king's gift, for his use in his expedition against the Scotch."

Issue Roll of the Exchequer, p. 501.

OO.

ENTRIES PRESERVED IN THE ISSUE ROLL OF THE EXCHEQUER, SHOWING THE GREAT COST ATTENDING THE WAR WITH SCOTLAND.

(See p. 185.)

"Anno 22d Edw. IV. (1482). To Sir John Elrington, knight, the king's treasurer-at-war, by the hands of Richard, Duke of Gloucester; namely, for the wages of 1700 fighting men retained by the said duke to accompany him in the war against the Scotch: viz., from 11th August until the end of fourteen days then next following, 595*l.*

"To the keeper of the king's great wardrobe, for the purchase of divers stuffs and the making thereof, by the king's command, for the Duke of Albany, for the journey of the said duke, who accompanied the Duke of Gloucester in his expedition to the kingdom of Scotland, 50*l.*

"To Richard, Duke of Gloucester, in money sent to him to pay the wages of divers fighting men, upon the Western Sea, proceeding against the Scotch, according to his discretion, 133*l.*

"To Richard Boteler, sent by the king to Berwick with 800*l.*, to be delivered to the treasurer-at-war, and in other matters concerning the preservation of that town, for the Duke of Gloucester and other nobility assembled there on the king's behalf, 12*l.*, 19*s.* 4*d.*

"To the Duke of Gloucester in full payment of 2000 marks, due from the king to him, &c., 164*l.* 15*s.*

"To Sir John Elrington, the treasurer-at-war, in part payment of the wages of 20,000 men-at-arms, going upon a certain expedition with the Duke of Gloucester against the Scotch, 4504*l.*

"To the same treasurer, as a reward given to divers soldiers, as well in the retinue of the Duke of Gloucester as in that of the Earl of Northumberland, for their expenses in going from Berwick to their own homes, 350*l.*"

Issue Roll of the Exchequer, p. 501.

A.

GRANT TO RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, OF THE WARDENSHIP OF THE WEST MARCHES OF ENGLAND.

(See p. 191.)

On the 18th Feb., 22 Edward IV., 1483, an act was passed, reciting that it had been agreed between the king and Richard, Duke of Gloucester, that the duke and the heirs male of his body should have the wardenship of the West Marches of England, towards Scotland; in consideration whereof the former was to assure him by authority of Parliament, certain castles, lordships, manors, &c. That the king, the lords spiritual and temporal, and the Commons, considering "that the said duke being warden of the said West Marches, late by his manifold and diligent labours and devoirs, hath subdued great part of the west borders of Scotland adjoining to England by the space of thirty miles and more, thereby at this time not inhabite with Scotts, and hath got and achieved divers parcels thereof, to be under the obeissance of our said sovereign lord, not only to the great rest and ease of the inhabitants of the said West Marches, but also to the great surety and ease of the north parts of England, and much more thereof he intendeth, and with God's grace is like to get and subdue hereafter: and the said West Marches more surely to be defended and kept against the Scotts, if the said appointments and agreements be performed and accomplished." It was therefore enacted that the duke and his heirs male should have the wardenship of the West Marches of England, towards Scotland, and for occupying the same should have the castle, city, town and lordship of Carlisle, the castle, manor

and lordship of Bewcastle in Cumberland, with Nicoll Forest; also the countries and ground in Scotland called Liddesdale, Eskdale, Ewsdale, Annandale, Wallopdale, Clydesdale, and the West Marches of Scotland "whereof great part is now in the Scot's hands, and all new castles, lordships, manors, lands, &c., within the same dales and borders, which he or his heirs have, or shall hereafter get or achieve;" in addition to which he was to receive 10,000 marks in ready money.

Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 204.

PP.

THE TOWER OF LONDON, FORMERLY THE ABODE OF THE ENGLISH MONARCHS.

(See p. 206.)

For several centuries the White Tower was used as a royal residence, and continued to be occupied as such until the reign of Queen Elizabeth. King Henry III. strengthened it as a fortress, and beautified and adorned it as a palace. It being the chief residence of himself and his court, he had the apartments fitted up with that importance and splendour which led to its being inhabited by so many of his successors; and the ancient chapel of St. John's (now occupied as a repository for records) he greatly enriched with sculpture, tapestry and painted glass.

The First, Second and Third Edwards were occasional residents within its walls, and Richard II. dwelt there in his minority with his royal mother, "who was lodged in that part of the Tower Royal called the Queen's Wardrobe." During the insurrection of Wat Tyler, the court and principal nobility, to the number of six hundred, were domiciled within its precincts. Henry IV. and Henry V. are recorded as departing from "their castle of London" on many occasions of festivity and rejoicing; and to the hapless Henry VI. this regal abode was by turns a palace and a prison. Edward IV. frequently kept his court here in great magnificence, and both himself and Queen Elizabeth Wydville, the parents of the ill-fated Edward V., lodged at the Tower before the day fixed upon for their coronation; proceeding thence to Westminster, according to the ancient usage, to be invested with the symbols of royalty.—See *Berner's Froissart—Hearne's Fragment—Stow's Chronicle—Bayley's History of the Tower—and Brayley's Londiniana.*

QQ.

CECILY, DUCHESS OF YORK, PROFESSES HERSELF A NUN OF THE BENEDICTINE ORDER.

(See p. 215.)

[Cott. MS. Vitel. L. fol. 17.]

The fact of the Lady Cecily having enrolled herself a sister of the Order of St. Benedict in the year 1480 is proved beyond dispute by the MS. details preserved in the Cottonian library, but it is equally certain, from other documents, that she did not retire altogether from the world or lead a life of seclusion in any religious house belonging to the order whose vows she had embraced.

It appears from the Paston Letters (vol. iv.) that during the middle ages it was customary for persons growing in years to procure by purchase or gift a retreat in some holy society; where, abandoning worldly matters, the piously disposed might pass the remainder of their days in prayer and supplication; but this connection with religious houses did not imply always the adopting formally a conventual life, or becoming an inmate of those monastic establishments in whose "merits, prayers and good works," the new member of their fraternity shared. Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby, for example, mother of King Henry VII., and the cotemporary of Cecily, Duchess of York, was enrolled a member of five devout societies; but although she abstained from that period, as far as was compatible with her exalted station, from all worldly pleasures and occupations, yet it is well known that she never became an inmate of any religious house. A recluse in her own dwelling she certainly was, for she never quitted the retirement she had voluntarily embraced, excepting when a sense of duty required a temporary sojourn in the metropolis; and in all likelihood the same devotional feelings, qualified by reservations insurmountable in her remarkable position, influenced the Duchess of York, when she professed herself a member of the Benedictine Sisterhood.

That she never removed from her castle at Berkhampstead, excepting for brief intervals, is clear, because she expired within its walls; and the severity of her life there in declining years is made known by the rules and regulations which have descended to this present day, and which attest that she considered Berkhampstead as her home throughout the varied changes of her troubled life, and that her occasional residence at Baynard's Castle arose more from the necessity of the measure with reference to others than from any reprehensible indulgence in those ambitious feelings which influenced her actions at an earlier period of life.

RR.

LETTER FROM KING EDWARD V. TO OTES GILBERT, ESQ., COMMANDING HIM TO BE PREPARED TO RECEIVE KNIGHTHOOD AT HIS APPROACHING CORONATION.

(See p. 218.)

[Harl. MSS. No. 433. p. 227.]

"Trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well; and by the advice of our dearest uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, Protector of this our royaume during our young age, and of the Lords of our Council, we write unto you at this time, willing and natheless charging you to prepare and furnish yourself to receive the noble order of knighthood at our coronation; which, by God's grace, we intend shall be solemnized the 22d day of this present month at our palace of Westminster, commanding you to be here at our Tower of London, four days before our said coronation, to have communication with commissioners concerning that matter; not failing hereof in any wise, as you intend to please us, and as ye will answer.

"Given, &c. &c. the 5th day of June.

"To Otes Gilbert, Squier."

Similar letters to this appear to have been sent to forty-nine other persons; amongst whom were the Lord Ormond, the Lord Stourtoun, the son and heir of Lord Bergavenny, the Lord Grey of Ruthin, the son and heir of the Lord Cobham, and Henry Colet, alderman of London.—See *Sir Henry Ellis's Original Letters*, 2d *Series*, p. 147.

SS.

LIST OF ROBES ORDERED FOR KING EDWARD V.

(See p. 218.)

"A short gown, made of two yards and three quarters of crimson cloth of gold, lined with two yards and three quarters of black velvet; a long gown, made of six yards D of crimson cloth of gold, lined with six yards of green damask; a short gown, made of two yards and three quarters of purple velvet, lined with two yards and three quarters of green damask; a doublet and a stomacher, made of two yards of black satin, &c.; besides two foot-cloths, a bonnet of purple velvet; nine horse harness and nine saddle housings of blue velvet; gilt spurs, with many other rich articles and magnificent apparel for his henchmen and pages." (See *Hist. Doubts*, p. 64.) The wardrobe account, whence the foregoing robing extract is taken is written on vellum and bound up with the coronation rolls of Henry VII. and Henry VIII.; the latter, however, are merely written on paper. It is the office account of Piers Curteis, keeper of the great wardrobe, and contains a statement of deliveries, from the day of Edward IV.'s death to the month of February in the following year, including the time of the intended coronation of Edward V., and the actual coronation of Richard III. The number and similitude of the robes delivered for each of these kings justify the conclusion, (arrived at in consequence of the discussion that ensued, when public attention was directed to the above-named coronation roll,) that the robes ordered for

"Lord Edward, son of Edward IV.," were designed for the apparel of this young prince at his own contemplated coronation, and were not, as Lord Orford was at first led to imagine, used by him to grace the procession of that of his uncle, Richard III.—See *Archæologia*, vol. i. p. 361., and *Supplement to Hist. Doubts*, in Lord Orford's Works, vol. ii.

TT.

GLOUCESTER—AN ILL-OMENED TITLE.

(See p. 219.)

In addition to the mysterious murder of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, at Bury,* may be instanced the yet more appalling death of Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, uncle of Richard II., who was treacherously inveigled from his castle at Pleshy by the young monarch himself, then aged but twenty years, and by his command cruelly murdered for having opposed his wishes when a minor.†

Also Thomas Le Despencer, Earl of Gloucester, closely allied to the House of York, who was beheaded at Bristol by command of Henry IV., in the first year of his usurpation.‡ To this catalogue may be added the names of Richard, Duke of Gloucester,§ the subject of this present memoir; Henry, Duke of Gloucester, the youngest son and companion in misery of the ill-fated Charles I.,‖ and William, Duke of Gloucester, only son of Queen Anne, and sole survivor of seventeen children, who, after giving promise of the most extraordinary excellence,¶ expired almost suddenly in the eleventh year of his age.

UU.

LETTER FROM RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, TO THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF YORK.

(See p. 220.)

"The Duke of Gloucester, brother and uncle of kings, Protector and Defender, Great Chamberlain, Constable, and Lord High Admiral of England.

"Right trusty and well-beloved. We greet you well. Whereas, by your letters of supplication to us delivered by our servant John Brackenbury, we understand that by reason of your great charge that ye have had and sustained, as well in defence of this realm against the Scots as otherwise, your worshipful city remains greatly unpaid for, on the which ye desire us to be good mover unto the king's grace, for any ease of such charges as ye shall yearly bear and pay unto his grace's highness. We let you wot, that for such great matters and business as we now have to do, for the weal and usefulness of the realm, we as yet ne can have convenient leisure to accomplish this your business, but be assured that for your loving and kind disposition to us at all times showed, which we never can forget, we in all goodly haste shall so endeavour for your ease in this behalf, as that ye shall verily understand we be your special good and loving Lord, as our said friend shall show you, to whom it would like you him to give further credence unto, and for your diligent service which he hath done, to our singular pleasure unto us at this time, we pray you to give unto him laud and thanks, and God keep you!

"Given under our signet at our Tower of London this 8th day of June."

"To our trusty and well-beloved the Mayor, Aldermen,
Sheriffs and Commonalty of the City of York."

Drake's Eborac., p. 111.

* Hall, p. 209.
‡ Heylyn, p. 330.
‖ Sandford, lib. vii. p. 570.
† Froissard, lib. iv. c. 86. 92.
§ Rous, p. 217.
¶ Burnet's Own Times, vol. iv. p. 357, 358.

VV.

LETTER FROM RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, DELIVERED TO JOHN NEWTON, MAYOR OF YORK, BY RICHARD RATCLIFFE, KNIGHT, REQUIRING THE AID OF ARMED MEN FROM THE NORTH TO PROTECT HIM FROM GREAT PERIL.

(See p. 220.)

[15th June An. 1 Ed. V. 1483.]

"The Duke of Gloucester, brother and uncle of king's, Protector and Defender Great Chamberlain, Constable, and Admiral of England.

"Right trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well. And as you love the weal of us, and the weal and surety of your own self, we heartily pray you to come unto us in London in all the diligence ye can possible, after the sight hereof, with as many as ye can make defensibly arrayed, there to aid and assist us against the queen, her bloody adherents and affinity, which have entended, and do daily entend to murder and utterly destroy us, and our cousin, the Duke of Buckingham, and the old royal blood of this realm, and as is now openly known, by her subtle and damnable ways forecasted the same, and also the final destruction and disherison of you, and all other the inheritors and men of honour, as well of the north parts as other countries that belong unto us, as our trusty servant this bearer shall more at large shew you; to whom we pray you to give credence; and as ever we may do for you, in time coming, fail not, but haste you to us.

"Given under our signet at London the 10th of June.

"To our trusty and well-beloved the Mayor, Aldermen, Sheriffs
and Commonalty of the City of York."

Drake's Eboracum, p. 111. That author asserts, that both this and the preceding letter are given, so far as it is legible, verbatim from the original MS.

WW.

INSTRUCTIONS SENT TO LORD MOUNTJOY, GOVERNOR OF CALAIS, TO DISPOSE HIS SOLDIERS TO DEPART FROM THEIR OATH TO KING EDWARD V. AND TO TAKE ANOTHER TO KING RICHARD III.

(See p. 242.)

[Harl. MSS. No. 433. fol. 238.]

"That howbeit such oath of allegiance was made soon upon the death of the said King Edward IV. to his son, not only in Calais, but also in divers places in England, by many great estates and personages being then ignorant of the very true and sure title which our sovereign lord that now is, King Richard III., hath and had at the same time to the crown of England. That oath, notwithstanding, now every good true Englishman is bound, upon knowledge had of the said very true title, to depart from the first oath, so ignorantly given to him to whom it appertained not; and therefore to make his oath anew, and owe his service and fidelity to him that good law, reason, and the concord assent of the lords and commons of the realm, have ordained to reign upon the people, which is our said sovereign lord King Richard III., brother to the said King Edward IV., late deceased, whom God pardon; whose sure and true title is evidently shewed and declared in a bill of petition which the lords spiritual and temporal and the commons of this land solemnly presented unto the king's highness at London the 26th day of June; whereupon, the king's said highness, notably assisted by well near all the lords spiritual and temporal and the commons of this realm, went the same day to his palace of Westminster, and there, in such royal honourable robes apparelled, within the great hall, took possession, and declared that the same day he would begin to reign upon his people; and from thence rode solemnly to his cathedral church of London, and was received with procession and with great congratulation and acclamation of all the people in every place and by the way that the king was in that day. The copy of which bill will be sent unto Calais, and there to be read and understanded together with these presents; desiring right effectually all manner of persons within these three jurisdictions, what estate, degree, or condition that they be of, and also they of Guisnes and Hammes, to make their faith and oaths to him, as their sovereign lord, like as the lords spiritual and temporal, and many other great

number being in England, freely and of good heart have done the same for their parts; and that the same town of Calais and all castles and fortresses, being within the said marches, they will safely keep unto the behoof of the said sovereign lord, King Richard III., and them not to deliver to any person but by his commandment."

Similar instructions were forwarded to the governors of Guisnes and Hammes.—See *Harl. MSS.*, No. 433, fol. 239.

XX.

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES ADOPTED BY RICHARD III. PRIOR TO HIS CORONATION.

(See p. 244.)

[Rymer, Add. MSS. No. 4616. Art. 16.]

"PREVIOUSLY to the coronation of Richard III., a proclamation was issued, forbidding any person, under penalty of death, on account of any old or new quarrel, to make any challenge or affray whereby the peace might be broken, or any sedition or disturbance of the peace within the city of London, or the parts thereunto adjoining; that all parties offending should be brought before the Mayor of London, or the steward of the king's household, as the case might be, until the king's pleasure should be taken thereupon. It was strictly enjoined, that strangers and aliens should not be molested; it was commanded that no man, under pain of imprisonment, should take any lodging in the city or suburbs, except by appointment of the king's harbingers; every one was to be in his lodging by ten o'clock at night; and the carrying of glaives, bills, long and short swords and bucklers was prohibited."

YY.

"THESE be the dukes, earls, lords and knights that were at the coronation of our sovereign lord King Richard III. and Queen Anne, the first year of his noble reign, the 6th day of July, 1483."

(See p. 245.)

[From an ancient MS. roll, printed in the Excerpta Historica, p. 384.]

Duke of Buckingham	Earl of Lincoln
Duke of Norfolk	Viscount Lisle
Duke of Suffolk	Viscount Lovell
Earl of Northumberland	Lord Stanley*
Earl of Arundel	Lord Audley
Earl of Kent	Lord *****†
Earl of Surrey	Lord Ferrars, of Chartley
Earl of Wiltshire	Lord Powys
Earl of Huntingdon	Lord Fitzhugh
Earl of Nottingham	Lord Scrope, of Upsall
Earl of Warwick	Lord Scrope, of Bolton
Lord Grey of Codner	Sir Richard Lodlow
Lord Grey of Wilton	Sir William St. Low
Lord Stourton	Sir Thomas Twayts
Lord Cobham	Sir Edward Dudley
Lord Morley	Sir Rafe Ashton
Lord Abergavenny	Sir Richard Charlington
Lord Zouche	Sir Thomas Grey
Lord Ferrers, of Groby	Sir Phillip Barkley

* In a MS. copy of this list in the College of Arms, the name of Lord Stanley is omitted. The following variations may also be noticed: for Sir Gilbert Dike, Sir Gilbert Debnam (in the margin of the Harleian MSS. it is written "Broke"); for Sir Terry Robsart, Sir Peter Robsart; for Sir George Wentworth, Sir Harry Wentworth; for Sir Rafe Ashton, Sir Rofe Ashton; for Sir Roger Fynes, Sir Roger Ryves; for Sir James Arowsmyth, Sir James Strangewishe; and for Sir Robert Everard, Sir Robert Elyard.

† Dacres.

Lord Wells	Sir James Harington
Lord Lumley	Sir John Gresley
Lord Maltravers	Sir John Coniers
Lord Harbert	Sir William Stoner
Lord Beauchamp	Sir Phillip Cortney
Sir James Tyrell	Sir William Eastney
Sir William Knevett	Sir Richard Midleton
Sir Thomas A. Brough	Sir Roger Fynes
Sir William Stanley	Sir George Vere
Sir William A. Parro	Sir Henry Percey
Sir George Browne	Sir John Wood
Sir George Midleton	Sir John A. Parr
Sir John Heningham	Sir John Grey
Sir Michael Latimer	Sir James Danby
Sir Thomas Montgomery	Sir Robert Talboyse
Sir Thomas Sandes	Sir Thomas Ridid
Sir Gilbert Dike, or Driby	Sir John Harynge
Sir Terry Robsart	Sir William Stoner
Sir William Brandon	Sir Richard Henderby
Sir John Savell	Sir John Barkley
Sir George Wentworth	Sir James Arowsmyth
Sir Edward Stanley	Sir Rafe Tarbock
Sir Richard St. Maur	Sir Giles Daubney
Sir William Yonge	Sir John Constable
Sir Thomas Bowseer	Sir Robert Everard
Sir Henry Wingfield	Sir Robert Dorell
Sir Thomas Wortley	Sir John Gilford
Sir John Sentlow	Sir John Lewknor
Sir Charles Pilkington	Sir John Merbury
Sir John Ashley	Sir Thomas Powys, or Howys
Sir Thomas Barkley	Sir John Bolayn
Sir Richard Bewchamp of the Carpett	Sir Edward Bedingfield
Sir William Gorney, or Goney	Sir William Norris

These following were made Knights of the Bath at his coronation:—

Sir Edmund de la Pole, son to the Duke of Suffolk	Sir Thomas Arundell
	Sir Thomas Bulleyn
Sir John Grey, son to the Earl of Kent	Sir Edmund Bedingfield
	Sir Gervoise of Clifton
Sir William, brother to the Lord Zouche	Sir William Sey
	Sir William Enderby
Sir Henry Neville, son to Lord Aberganey	Sir Thomas Lewkner
	Sir Thomas Ormond
Sir Christopher Willoby	Sir John Browne
Sir William Barkley	Sir William Barkley.
Sir Henry Barington	

See also *Harl. MSS.* 2115. fol. 152, and *Buck's Richard III.* lib. 1. p. 26.

ZZ.

ORDINANCE MADE BY KING RICHARD III. FOR THE REGULATION OF HIS HOUSEHOLD IN THE NORTH.

(See p. 254.)

"THIS is the ordinance made by the king's good grace for such number of persons as shall be in the north as the king's household, and to begin from the 24th day of July, Anno 1^mo^. 1484.

"First, that the hours of God's service, diet, going to bed and rising, and also shutting of the gates be at reasonable time, and hours convenient.

"Item, that monthly the treasurer and comptroller show the expenses to one of the council or two, the which shall appoint themselves monthly, throughout the year.

"Item, that if any person offend in breaking of any of the said ordinances, or of

any other made by the council, to punish or expel the offender after the discretions out of the house according to their demerits.

"Item, my Lord of Lincoln and my Lord Morley be at one breakfast; the children together at one breakfast; such as be present of the council at one breakfast; and also that the household go to dinner at the furthest by eleven of the clock on the flesh day.

"Item, the treasurer to have the keys of the gates, from the time of the dinner and supper beginning to the end of the same.

"Item, that stuff of household be purveyed and provided for a quarter of a year before the hand.

"Item, the costs of my Lord of Lincoln, when he rideth to sessions, or any meetings appointed by the council, the treasurer to pay for meat and drink.

"Item, at all other ridings, huntings, and disports, my said lord to be at his own costs and charges.

"Item, that no liveries of bread, wine, nor ale, be had, but such as be measurable and convenient, and that no pot of livery exceed measure of a pottle, but only to my lord and the children.

"Item, that no boys be in household but such as be admitted by the council.

"Item, that every man that is at day wages be at their check, and those that be at standing wages without check.

"Item, that none servant depart without assent of the treasurer, and upon pain of losing his service.

"Item, that no breakfast be had in the house, but such as be assigned.

"Item, that convenient fare be ordained for the household servants and strangers to fare better than others."—*Harl. MSS.* No. 433, fol. 265.

AAA.

KING RICHARD'S VISIT TO OXFORD.

(See p. 255.)

[Anno Domini, 1483. 1 A°. Rich. III.]

"The 22d of July this year the founder of Magdalen College came to Oxford, to the end provision might be made at this college for the reception of King Richard III. The 24th of the said month the king came from Windsor, and approaching Oxford was met by the chancellor, regents, and non-regents at the town's end, where, after they had expressed their love and duty to him, he was honourably and processionably received into Magdalen College by the founder, president, and scholars thereof, and lodged there that night. At the same time came with the king, the Bishops of Durham, Worcester, St. Asaph, and Thomas Langton, the Bishop elect of St. David's, the Earl of Lincoln, Lord Steward, Earl of Surrey, Lord Chamberlain, Lord Lovel, Lord Stanley, Lord Audley, Lord Beauchamp, Sir Richard Radcliffe, knight, and many other nobles—all which lodging in the college, the University gave to most of them wine and gloves. The next day being St. James's day, were at the command and desire of the king two solemn disputations performed in the common hall of the said college, viz., in Moral Philosophy by Mr. Thomas Kerver, opponent, and a certain bachelaur of the said college, respondent, which being concluded, a disputation in Divinity was made before the king by Mr. John Taylor, S. T. P., opponent, and Mr. William Grocyn, respondent, which being also finished, he rewarded the disputants very honourably, that is to say, to the doctor he gave a buck and 5*l.*; to the respondent, a buck and five marks; the master that opposed in Philosophy, a buck and five marks; and to the bachelaur, a buck and 40*s.* He gave also to the president and scholars two bucks and five marks for wine.

"The next day being St. Anne's day, he with his nobles visited several places in the University, and heard also disputations in the public schools, scattering his benevolence very liberally to all that he heard dispute or make orations to him; so that after the Muses had crowned his brows with sacred wreaths for his entertainment, he the same day went to Woodstock, the University then taking leave of him with all submission. Not long after, according to a promise made to the scholars at his reception, he confirmed the privileges of the University, granted by his predecessors, as part of an epistle from the University to him attesteth:—'Nos vero quos concessis a primogenitoribus tuis privilegiis etiam sine pretio donasti, quantum tibi debemus.'"

Gutch's History of Oxford, edit. 1792, p. 638.

BBB.

RELATION OF THE MESSAGE DECLARED BY GRANFIDIUS DE SASIOLA, ORATOR OF ISABELLA, QUEEN OF CASTILLE, TO KING RICHARD III., DRAWN UP BY HIMSELF IN LATIN.

(See p. 258.)

"On the 8th of August, 1483,* Geoffry de Sasiola, the orator of the Queen of Spain, stated on her behalf to the king and council at Warwick, that she wished to maintain a firm peace and to enter into a strict alliance with him; that if it were his intention to go to war with Louis, King of France, for the recovery of the possessions pertaining to the crown of England, she would open her ports to his army, and supply them with arms and provisions at a reasonable price, and would, on the same terms, lend him her ships: she also promised to raise a force of knights, men-at-arms, and foot-soldiers, well armed and in sufficient number, the king paying their wages.

"Besides these instructions given in writing by this orator, he shewed to the king's grace by mouth, that the Queen of Castille was turned in her heart in times past from England, for the unkindness which she took against the king last deceased, for his refusing of her, and taking to his wife a widow of England. For which cause also was mortal war betwixt him and the Earl of Warwick, the which took ever her part at the time of his death; and therefore she moved for these causes against her nature, the which was ever to love and favour England, as he said she took the French king's part and made leagues and confederations with him. Now the king is dead, which shewed her this unkindness, and, as he said, the French king hath broken four principal articles appointed betwixt him and the King of Castille and her; wherefore she, now returning to her kind and natural disposition, desireth such things to be appointed betwixt the realms of England and Spain, as ye may understand by these instructions of her said orator. Another cause which moved her to depart from King Louis was, that she had a grant from the Queen of Navarre to have her daughter and heir for the Prince of Castille her son, if the consent of King Louis might thereon have been had; and forasmuch as he, by no manner would be thereto agreeable, she taketh a great displeasure with him, and desireth by all means to her possible to make these alliances and confederations with the king's good grace as be shewed in these instructions."†

Harl. MSS. 433, fol. 235.

CCC.

THE ORDER WHICH RICHARD III. SENT FROM YORK ON THE LAST DAY OF AUGUST TO PIERS COURTEIS, KEEPER OF HIS WARDROBE.

(See p. 260.)

"BY THE KING.

"We will and charge you to deliver to the bringers hereof for us the parcels following, that is to say, one doublet of purple satin lined with Holland cloth, and interlined with busk; one doublet of tawney satin lined in likewise; two short gowns of crimson cloth of gold, the one with 'drippis,' and the other with nets lined with green velvet; one cloak with a cape of velvet ingrained, the bow lined with black velvet; one stomacher of purple sattin, and one stomacher of tawny satin; one gown of green velvet lined with tawny sattin; one yard and three-quarters corse of silk nedled with gold and as much black corse of silk for our spurs; two yards and a half and three nails of white cloth of gold for a 'crynelze' for a board; five yards of black velvet for the lining of a gown of green satin; one placard made of part of the said two yards and one half and two nails of white cloth of gold lined with buckram; three pair of spurs, short, all gilt; two pair of spurs, long, white parcell gilt; two yards of black buckram for amending of the lining of divers trappers: one banner of sarsnet of our Lady; one banner of the Trinity; one banner of St. George; one banner of St.

* Sir H. Ellis, in his Orig. Letters, 2d series, calls this name "Granfidius," and not Geoffry, p. 152.

† Sir H. Ellis, who has also copied this instrument from the Harl. MSS., adds, (after the word "instructions,") "the first part of this statement is fully corroborated by the English historians, viz., Hall, Grafton and Lelanp."—*Collect.*, t. i. p. 500.

Edward; one of St. Cuthbert; one of our own arms all sarsenet; three coats of arms beaten with fine gold, for our own person; five coat armours for heralds, lined with buckram; forty trumpet banners of sarcenet; seven hundred and forty pencells of buckram; three hundred and fifty pencells of tartar; four standards of sarcenet with boars; thirteen thousand quinysans of fustian with boars."

Drake's Eborac., p. 117.

DDD.

PARCELS OF THE CLOTHING TO BE DELIVERED BY THE BISHOP OF ENACHDEN TO THE EARL OF DESMOND.

(See p. 266.)

[See Harl. MSS. 433. fol. 265.]

"First—A long gown of cloth of gold, lined with sattin or damask.
"Item—A long gown of velvet, lined with sattin or damask.
"Item—Two doublets, one of velvet, and another of crimson sattin.
"Item—Three shirts, and kerchiefs for the stomachers.
"Item—Three pair of hosen, one of scarlet, another of violet, and the third of black.
"Item—Three bonnets, two hats, and two tippets of velvet. A collar of gold of 20 oz. = 30*l.*"

The Bishop of Enachden was further instructed to dispose the Earl of Desmond concerning the king's high pleasure and intent for the earl to renounce the wearing and usage of the Irish array, and from thenceforth to give and apply himself to use the manner of the apparel for his person after the English fashion.

EEE.

VAGUE AND UNCERTAIN REPORTS, RELATING TO THE DEATH OF EDWARD V. AND HIS BROTHER, IN THE LIFETIME OF SIR THOMAS MORE.

(See p. 274.)

[Supplement to *Hist. Doubts* in Lord Orford's Works, vol. ii. p. 215.]

"From that very scarce book called 'The Pastime of the People,' and better known by the title of 'Rastell's Chronicle,' I transcribed verbatim the following paragraphs: —

"'But of the manner of the death of this young king, and of his brother there were divers opinions. But the most common opinion was, that they were smouldered between two feather-beds, and that in the doing, the younger brother escaped from under the feather beds, and crept under the bedstead, and there lay naked awhile till that they had smouldered the young king, so that he was surely dead. And after that, one of them took his brother from under the bedstead, and held his face down to the ground with his one hand, and with the other hand cut his throat whole asunder with a dagger. It is a marvel that any man could have so hard a heart to do so cruel a deed save only that necessity compelled them, for they were so charged by the Duke the Protector, that if they shewed not to him the bodies of both those children dead on the morrow after they were so commanded, that then they themselves should be put to death. Wherefore they that were commanded to do it were compelled to fulfil the protector's will. And after that, the bodies of these two children, as the opinion ran, were both closed in a great heavy chest, and by the means of one that was secret with the protector, they were put in a ship going to Flanders; and when the ship was in the black deeps, this man threw both those dead bodies so closed in the chest over the hatches into the sea, and yet none of the mariners, nor none in the ship, save only the said man wist what thing it was that was there so inclosed; which saying divers men conjectured to be true, because that the bones of the said children could never be found buried, neither in the Tower, nor in no other place.

"'Another opinion there is, that they which had the charge to put them to death, caused one to cry so suddenly *treason, treason;* wherewith the children being afraid, desired to know what was best for them to do. And then they bad them hide themselves in a great chest, that no man should find them, and if any body came into the chamber, they would say they were not there. And according as they counselled them, they crept both into the chest, which anon after they locked. And then anon they buried that chest in a great pit under a stair, which chest was after cast into the black deeps as is before said.'"

We find from Ames's Typographical Antiquities (p. 147) that this book was printed in 1529, the 21st year of Henry VIII., and from page 141, that Rastall, the compiler and printer, married Sir Thomas More's sister. Rastall was not only his relation but printer—his very next publication being a dialogue written by More, and printed in the same year with the Chronicle.

Nor did Sir Thomas More pick up the materials for his own history after the appearance of Rastall's Chronicle, which was published but six years before Sir Thomas's death, when the persons from whom he gained his intelligence must have been dead likewise. But Sir Thomas's own words betray, not only doubts in his own breast, but thorough proof of the uncertainty of all the incidents relative to the murder. He tells us that he does not relate the murder in every way he had heard it, but according to the most probable account he could collect from the most credible witnesses.

FFF.

GRANTS TO ROBERT BRACKENBURY, 1 AND 2 RICH. III. 1473–4.

(See p. 277.)

[Harl. MSS. 433.]

Fol. 23^{b}.—Robert Brackenbury Esq., appointed Constable of the Tower, and Master of the Mint.
Fol. 56^{b}.—Re-appointed Constable of the Tower, with a yearly fee of 100*l.*; keeper of the king's lions in the Tower, with a fee of 12*d.* per day, and 6*d.* per day for the keep of each lion and leopard.
Fol. 57.—Appointed the king's receiver of various lordships.
Fol. 74^{b}.—Receiver-general of all lands being in the king's hands by attainder of forfeiture in various counties.
Fol. 75^{b}.—Had confirmation of various offices granted to him by Sir Thomas Montgomery.
Fol. 87.—Had an assignment made to him by writ of privy seal of 100*l.*
Fol. 91^{b}.—Appointed Constable of Tunbridge Castle with a fee of 10*l.* yearly, besides lands, &c.

GGG.

LETTER FROM KING RICHARD III. TO THE MAYOR OF YORK.

(See p. 307.)

[Drake's Eboracum, p. 118.]

"BY THE KING.

"Trusty and well-beloved: We greet you well, and let ye wit that the Duke of Buckingham traitorously has turned upon us, contrary to the duty of his allegiance, and entendeth the utter destruction of us, you, and all other our true subjects that have taken our part; whose traitorous intent we with God's grace intend briefly to resist and subdue. We desire and pray you in our hearty wise that ye will send unto us as many men defensibly arrayed on horseback as ye may goodly make to our town of Leicester, the 21st day of this present month, without fail, as ye will tender our honour and your own weal, and we will see you so paid for your reward and charges as ye shall hold ye well content. Giving further credence to our trusty pursuivant this bearer. Given under our signet at our city of Lincoln, the 11th day of October.

"To our trusty and right well-beloved the Mayor, Aldermen, Sheriffs and Commonalty of the City of York."

The entry of the above letter in the city records is preceded by the annexed memorial:—

"Mem.—13 Oct. 1 Ric. III. 1483. John Otyr, yeoman of the crown, brought the following letter to the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, Sheriffs and Commonalty."

HHH.

SUMMARY OF THE PROCLAMATION ISSUED BY KING RICHARD III. AT LEICESTER.

(See page 308.)

23 Oct^r. A^o 1 Rich. III. 1483. A proclamation was issued tested by the king at Leicester, setting forth that he, remembering the profession of mercy and justice made by him at his coronation, had issued a general pardon, trusting thereby to have caused all his subjects to have adhered to him according to their duty and allegiance; and had, in his own person, visited various parts of his realm for the indifferent administration of justice. Yet this notwithstanding, Thomas, late Marquis of Dorset, "holding the unshamefull and mischevous woman called Shore's wife, in adultery," Sir William Norreys, Sir William Knevet, Sir Thomas Bourchier of Barnes, Sir George Brown, knights, and others with them traitorously associated, had gathered his people by the comfort of his great rebel and traitor, the late Duke of Buckingham and the Bishops of Ely and Salisbury, intending not only the destruction of his royal person, but also the maintenance of vice and sin: promises a free pardon to such as will withdraw from their company; offers a reward of 1000*l.* in money or 100*l.* in land for the taking of the duke, 1000 marks in money or 100 in land for either of the bishops, and 500 marks in money or 40*l.* in land for each of the said knights; and forbids any one to aid or assist them with goods, victuals, or otherwise, under the penalty attached to treason.

Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 204.

III.

SINGULAR PRESERVATION OF THE HEIR OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AFTER THE CAPTURE AND EXECUTION OF HIS FATHER.

(See page 310.)

[From a copy of an old roll of paper* found out in the treasury at Thornbury Castle among the evidences there—mensis Julii, anno 1575.]

"M^d the second† year of King Richard the Third, Duke Henry of Buckingham came from Brecknock to Webblie, and with him brought my lady his wife, my Lord Stafford and my Lord Henry, and there tarryed one week, and sent for the gentlemen of the country unto him; and when he had spoken with them departed thence. My lord his father made him a frieze coat, and at his departing he delivered his son and heir to Sir Richard Delabeare, knight, for to keep until he sent for him by a token, &c., viz., *et tu es Petrus O super hanc petram*.

"Item—John Amyasse, that went with my lord away, delivered my Lord Stafford in the little Park of Webbeleye to Richard Delabeare, knight, and then came after Sir William Knevet and Mistress Cliffe, and so they came to Kynnardsley all together. And when they came to Kynnardsley there were xx^ti of my Lord's servants in the place.

"Item—At that time Dame Elizabeth Delabeare being servant to Sir Richard Delabeare, knight, took my Lord Stafford on her lap, and bare him amongst and through them all into a chamber of the place of Kynnardsley, and then went again and fetched Sir William Knevet and the gentlemen, and brought them into the chamber to my Lord Stafford.

"Item—A proclamation come to Hereford for the said duke his son and Sir William Knevet, that whosoever would take them, he should have for the said duke four thousand pounds, for the Lord Stafford a thousand marks, for my Lord Henry five hundred pounds, and for Sir William Knevet five hundred marks, the which proclamation Sir William Knevet read himself, and prayed that it should not miss, but be proclaimed. And then was there great search made where this said company was become. And so all the gentlemen of Herefordshire were sent for by privy seal to King Richard to Salisburie, and by that time Duke Henry of Buckingham was brought by Sir James Tyler the third day, where he was pitifully murdered by the said king, for raising power to bring in King Henry the Seventh. And after the said duke was taken, the Vaughans made great search after my Lord of Stafford, and for the said Sir William Knevitt, which Lord Stafford and Sir William Knevitt were in the keeping of Dame Elizabeth Delabeare and William ap Symon. In the mean time, she shaved the said Lord Stafford's head, and put upon him a maiden's raiment, and so conveyed him out of Kynnardsley to New-church. And then came Christopher Wells bourne from Sir James Tyler to Kynnardsley, and said his father commanded to have the said Lord Stafford delivered. And then answered the said Dame Elizabeth Delabeare and William ap Symon, that there was none such Lord there 'and that shall ye well know, for ye shall see the house searched.' And then went he to Webbely to my Lady, and there met with Sir John Hurlestone's brother, and fetched my Lady of Buckingham, and brought her to the king to London. And the said Dame Elizabeth and William ap Symon fetched the said lord again to Kynnardsley, and the said Sir William Knevit, and brought them into the Place of Kynarsly, and there kept them until David Glin Morgan came thither from King Richard, and said Mr. Delabeare was arrested, and said, there he should abide until he delivered Lord Stafford; and then said Dame Elizabeth and William ap Symon, 'that ye shall well know there is none such here, and ye shall come and see the place, and it please you,' and so in great malice he departed thence.

"Item—The night before that David Glin Morgan came to Kynnardsley, the said Dame Elizabeth and William ap Symon conveyed my Lord Stafford and Sir William Knevet to a place called Adeley in the parish of Kynnardsley, and there rested they four days and then the said Lord Stafford and Sir William Knevet were fetched again to Kynnardsley by the said Dame Elizabeth and William ap Symon, for because they could not convey meat and drink to them aright. And they kept them there one sennight, and then there came a great cry out of Wales, and then the said Dame Elizabeth took my Lord Stafford in her lap, and went through a brook with him into the park of Kynnardsley, and there sat with him four hours, until William ap Symon came to her, and told her how the matter was that no man came nigh the place. And in the mean time Sir William Knevet went out with one William Pantwall into the fields, and left Mistress Olyffe in the place all this while. After that the Dame Elizabeth and William ap Symon took the said Lord Stafford, and went to Hereford in the midst of the day, and he riding behind William ap Glin aside upon a pillow like a gentlewoman, rode in a gentlewoman's apparel. And I wis he was the fairest gentlewoman, and the best that ever she had in her days, or ever shall have, whom she prayeth God daily to preserve from his enemies, and to send him good fortune and grace. And then the said Dame Elizabeth and William ap Symon left my Lord Stafford in a widdow's house, a friend of hers at Hereford, and Mistress Oliffe with him, and at that time Sir William Knevet departed from my Lord Stafford."

Blakeway's Hist. of Shrewsbury, vol. i. p. 241.

* It has been considered advisable in this as in many of the preceding extracts, to modernize the spelling, although the words themselves remain unchanged.

† This is an error, for the conspiracy occurred in the first, and not the second year of King Richard III.

KKK.

UNWORTHY CONDUCT OF SIR THOMAS ST. LEGER, AS SHOWN IN THE ACT OF ATTAINDER, PASSED AFTER HIS EXECUTION.

(See p. 314.)

"In the Parliament assembled at Westminster, 23d Jan. A^o 1 Ric. III. 1484, a bill was preferred, reciting that on the 3d Nov. A^o 1 Edw. IV. 1461, Henry, late Duke of Exeter, was attainted of high treason, whereby his duchy of Exeter, with his other possessions, were forfeited; that subsequently Sir Thomas St. Leger, by seditious means, married Anne, Duchess of Exeter, late wife of the said duke, he being then living, and of her begot a daughter, called Anne; that the said Thomas induced the

said late king that his said daughter should inherit the duchy of Exeter, and caused him to suffer an act of Parliament to be enacted on the 3d June, in the seventh year of his reign, 1467, whereby the said daughter had between the said Thomas and the said late duchess, for default of issue of Anne, daughter of the said late duke and duchess, which lived but short time after, might enherit the said duchy and other hereditaments; that after the passing of the said act, the said Anne, daughter of the said duke and duchess, died without issue, and the said late duchess deceased with issue of her body by the said duke; after whose decease, by the labour of the said Thomas by another act of Parliament, 20th Jan. A° 21 Edw. IV., it was enacted, that Richard Gray, Knight, should have and enjoy certain manors: the said acts are hereby repealed, and the grants made by them are resumed."

Rot. Parl., vol. vi. p. 242.

LLL.

SUBSTANCE OF TWO WRITS ISSUED AT WINCHESTER BY RICHARD III. 1483.

(See p. 315.)

[Harl. MSS. 433. fol. 123.]

"Art. 1563.—Warrant to Mr. John Gunthorpe, keeper of the privy seal, to discharge Richard Bele from his place in the office of the said prive seale, to which he had been admitted, contrary to the old rule and due order, by mean of giving of great gifts, and other sinister and ungodly ways, in great discouraging of the under clerks, which have long continued therein, to have th' experience of the same, to see a stranger, never brought up in the said office, to put them by of their promotion, &c.

"Yeven at Winchester, the 22d day of November, *anno primo.*

"Art. 1564.—Grant to Robert Belman, of the place of one of the clerks of the prive seale, for the good and diligent service done by the said Robert in the said office, and specially in this the king's great journey, and for his experience and long continuance in the same: declaring that no more clerks shall be admitted in the said office until the time the said office shall be reduced to the number ordered and stablished in the days of King Edward III.

"Yeven the 22d day of November, *anno primo.*"

MMM.

RECAPITULATION OF KING RICHARD'S TITLE TO THE THRONE, WITH THE ACT THAT WAS PASSED FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF THE CROWN UPON HIM AND HIS HEIRS.

(See p. 320.)

[Rot. Parl. vol. vi. p. 240.]

"To the High and Myghty Prince Richard, Duc of Gloucester.

"Please it youre Noble Grace to understande the consideracon, election, and petition underwritten of us the lords spiritual and temporal and commons of this reame of England, and thereunto agreeably to geve your assent, to the common and public wele of this lande, to the comforte and gladnesse of all the people of the same.

"Furst, we considre how that heretofore in tyme passed this lande many years stode in great prosperite, honoure, and tranquillite, which was caused, forsomuch as the kings then reignyng used and followed the advice and counsaill of certaine lord spuelx and temporelx, and othre personnes of approved sadnesse, prudence, policie, and experience, dreading God, and havyng tendre zele and affection to indifferent ministration of justice, and to the comon and politique wele of the land; then our Lord God was dred, luffed [loved], and honoured; then within the land was peace and tranquillite, and among neighbors concorde and charite; then the malice of outward enemyes was myghtily repressed and resisted, and the land honorably defended with many grete and glorious victories; then the entrecourse of merchandizes was largely used and exercised; by which things above remembred, the land was greatly enriched, soo that as wele the merchants and artificers as other poor people, laboryng for their lyvyng in diverse occupations, had competent gayne to the sustentation of thaym and their households, livyng without miserable and intolerable povertie. But afterward, whan that such as had the rule and governaunce of this land, deliting in adulation and flattery and lede by sensuality and concupiscence, followed the counsaill of persons insolent, vicious, and of inordinate avarice, despising the counsaill of good, vertuous and prudent personnes such as above be remembred, the prosperite of this lande dailie decreased, soo that felicite was turned into miserie, and prosperite into advsersite, and the ordre of polecye, and of the law of God and man, confounded; whereby it is likely this reame to falle into extreme miserie and desolation,—which God defende,—without due provision of convenable remedie bee had in this behalfe in all godly hast.

"Over this, amonges other thinges, more specially we consider howe that the tyme of the raigne of Kyng Edward IV., late decessed, after the ungracious pretensed marriage, as all England hath cause so say, made betwixt the said King Edward and Elizabeth sometyme wife to Sir John Grey, Knight, late nameing herself and many years heretofore Queene of England, the ordre of all politeque rule was perverted, the laws of God and of Gode's church, and also the lawes of nature and of Englond, and also the laudable customes and liberties of the same, wherein every Englishman is inheritor, broken, subverted, and contempned, against all reason and justice, so that this land was ruled by self-will and pleasure, feare and drede, all manner of equitie and lawes layd apart and despised, whereof ensued many inconvenients and mischiefs, as murdres, estortions, and oppressions, namely, of poor and impotent people, soo that no man was sure of his lif, land, ne lyvelode, ne of his wif, doughter, ne servaunt, every good maiden and woman standing in drede to be ravished and defouled. And besides this, what discords, inward battailes, effusion of Christian men's blode, and namely, by the destruction of the noble blode of this londe, was had and comitted within the same, it is evident and notarie through all this reaume unto the grete sorrowe and heavynesse of all true Englishmen. And here also we considre howe that the said pretensed marriage, bitwixt the above named King Edward and Elizabeth Grey, was made of grete presumption, without the knowyng or assent of the lords of this lond, and alsoe by sorcerie and wichecrafte, committed by the said Elizabeth and her moder, Jaquett, Duchess of Bedford, as the common opinion of the people and the publique voice and fame is through all this land; and hereafter, if and as the case shall require, shall bee proved suffyciently in tyme and place convenient. And here also we considre how that the said pretenced marriage was made privatly and secretly, with edition of banns, in a private chamber, a profane place, and not openly in the face of church, afire the lawe of Godd's churche, but contrarie thereunto, and the laudable custome of the Churche of England. And howe also, that at the tyme of contract of the same pretensed marriage, and bifore and long tyme after, the said King Edw was and stoode marryed and trouth plyght to oone Dame Elianor Butteler, doughter of the old Earl of Shrewesbury, with whom the saide King Edward had made a precontracte of matrimonie, longe tyme bifore he made the said pretensed mariage with the said Elizabeth Grey in manner and fourme aforesaide. Which premises being true, as in veray trouth they been true, it appeareth and followeth evidently, that the said King Edward duryng his lyfe and the said Elizabeth lived togather sinfully and dampnably in adultery, against the lawe of God and his church; and therefore noe marvaile that the souverain lord and head of this londe, being of such ungodly disposicion, and provokyng the ire and indignation of oure Lorde God, such haynous mischiefs and inconvenients as is above remembered, were used and committed in the reame amongst the subjects. Also it appeareth evidently and followeth that all th' issue and children of the said king beene bastards, and unable to inherite or to clayme any thing by inheritance, by the lawe and custome of England.

"Moreover we consider howe that aftreward, by the thre estates of this reame assembled in a Parliament holden at Westminster the 17th yere of the regne of the said King Edward the iiijth, he then being in possession of coroune and roiall estate, by an acte made in the same Parliament, George, Duc of Clarence, brother to the said King Edward now decessed, was convicted and attainted of high treason; as in the same acte is conteigned more at large. Because and by reason whereof all the issue of the said George was and is disabled and barred of all right and clayme that in any wise they might have or challenge by inheritance to the crowne and roiall dignitie of this reame, by the auncien lawe and custome of this same reame.

"Over this we consider howe that ye be the undoubted sonne and heire of Richard

late Duke of Yorke verray enheritour to the said crowne and dignitie roiall and as in ryght Kyng of Englond by way of enheritaunce and that at this time the premisses duely considered there is noon other person lyvyng but ye only, that by right may clayme the said coroune and dignitie roiall, by way of enheritaunce, and how that ye be born within this lande, by reason whereof, as we deme in our myndes, ye be more naturally enclyned to the prosperite and comen wele of the same; and all the three estates of the land have, and may have more certain knowledge of your birth and filiation above said. Wee considre also, the greate wytte, prudence, justice, princely courage, and the memorable and laudable acts in diverse battalls which we by experience knowe ye heretofore have done for the salvacion and defence of this same reame, and also the greate noblesse and excellence of your byrth and blode as of hym that is descended of the thre most royal houses in Christendom, that is to say, England, Fraunce, and Hispaine.

"Wherefore these premisses by us diligently considered, we desyring affectuously the peas, tranquilitie and wele publique of this lande, and the reducion of the same to the auncien honourable estate and prosperite, and havyng in your greate prudence, justice, priccely courage and excellent virtue, singular confidence, have chosen in all that in us is and by this our wrytyng choise you, high and myghty Prynce into our Kyng and soveraine lorde &c., to whom we knowe for certayn it appartaneth of enheritaunce so to be choosen. And hereupon we humbly desire, pray, and require your said noble grace, that accordinge to this election of us the three estates of this lande, as by your true enheritaunce ye will accept and take upon you the said crowne and royall dignitie with all things thereunto annexed and apperteynyng as to you of right belongyng as well by enheritaunce as by lawfull election, and in caas ye do so we promitte to serve and to assiste your highnesse, as true and faithfull subjietz and liegemen and to lyve and dye with you in this matter and every other just quarrel. For certainly we bee determined rather to aventure and comitte us to the perill of our lyfs and jopardye of deth, than to lyve in suche thraldome and bondge as we have lyved long tyme heretofore, oppressed and injured by new extorcōs and imposicons, agenst the lawes of God and man, and the liberte, old police and lawes of this reame wherein every Englishman is inherited. Oure Lorde God Kyng of all Kyngs by whose infynyte goodnesse and eternall providence all thyngs been pryncypally gouverned in this worlde lighten your soule, and graunt you grace to do, as well in this matter as in all other, all that may be accordyng to his will and pleasure, and to the comen and publique wele of this land, so that after great cloudes, troubles, stormes, and tempests, the son of justice and of grace may shyne uppon us, to the comforte and gladnesse of all true Englishmen.

"Albeit that the right, title, and estate, whiche oure souverain lord the Kyng Richard III. hath to and in the crown and roiall dignite of this reame of England, with all thyngs thereunto annexed and apperteynyng, been juste and lawefull, as grounded upon the lawes of God and of nature, and also upon the auncien lawes and laudable customes of this said reame, and so taken and reputed by all such personnes as ben lerned in the abovesaide laws and custumes. Yet, nevertheless, forasmoche as it is considred that the moste parte of the people of this lande is not suffisiantly lerned in the abovesaid lawes and custumes whereby the trueth and right in this behalf of liklyhode may be hyd, and not clerely knowen to all the people and thereupon put in doubt and question: And over this howe that the courte of Parliament is of suche autorite, and the people of this lande of suche nature and disposicion, as experience teacheth that manifestation and declaration of any trueth or right made by the thre estats of this reame assembled in Parliament, and by auctorite of the same maketh before all other thyng, moost faith and certaintie; and quietyng men's myndes, remoweth the occasion of all doubts and seditious language:

"Therefore at the request, and by the assent of the three estates of this reame, that is to say, the lords spuelx and temporalx and comens of this lande, assembled in this present Parliament by auctorite of the same, bee it pronounced, decreed and declared, that oure saide souveraign lorde the kinge was and is veray and undoubted kyng of this reame of Englond; with all thyngs thereunto within this same reame, and without it annexed unite and apperteynyng, as well by right of consanguinite and enheritance as by lawful election, consecration and coronacion. And over this, that at the request and by the assent and autorite abovesaide bee it ordeigned, enacted and established that the said crowne and roiall dignite of this reame, and the inheritaunce of the same, and other thyngs thereunto within the same reame or without it annexed, unite, and now apperteigning, rest and abyde in the personne of oure said souveraign lord the kyng duryng his lyfe, and after his decesse in his heires of his body begotten. And in especiall, at the request and by the assent and auctorite abovesaid, bee it ordeigned, enacted, established, pronounced, decreed and declared that the high and excellent Prince Edward, sone of oure said souveraign lorde the kyng, be hiire apparent of our saide souveraign lorde the kyng, to succeed to him in the abovesayde crowne and roiall dignitie, with all thyngs as is aforesaid thereunto unite annexed and apperteignyng, to have them after the decesse of our saide souveraign lorde the kyng to hym and to his heires of his body lawfully begotten."

To this bill the Commons gave their assent, and it consequently passed.

NNN.

SUBSTANCE OF THE BILL OF ATTAINDER PASSED ON THE 1ST PARLIAMENT OF RICHARD III. JAN., 1484.

(See p. 320.)

[Rot. Parl. vol. vi. p. 244.]

Act 23 Jan. 1, Ric. 3. 1484, reciting that, "Whereas in late days herebefore great troubles, commotions, assemblies of people, conspirations, insurrections and heinous treasons have been committed and made within this realm by divers persons, unnatural subjects, rebels and traitors unto our sovereign lord, King Richard III., and great multitude of people by them abused to consent and be partners of the same offences and heinous treasons, whereby both the king's highness and his peace, and also the politic rule and common weal of this his realm have been greatly inquieted and troubled; they intending thereby, as much as in them was, the universal subversion and destruction of the same, and also of the king's most royal person, the which troubles, commotions and other offences above named, by God's grace, and the great and laborious vigilance of our said sovereign lord, with the assistance of his true and faithful subjects, been now repressed. Wherein howbeit that his said highness, for great considerations touching the weal of this his realm, having therewith respect to the abuse and deceit of the said multitude as before is rehearsed, moved with benignity and pity, and laying apart the great rigour of the law, hath granted to divers persons culpable in the said offences his grace and pardon yet: nevertheless, such it is according to reason and all policy that such notary and heinous offences and treasons, in no wise utterly passe unpunished, which if it should so happen, the example thereof might and should be a great occasion, cause, and boldness unto other hereafter to attempt and commit like offences and 'exerbitations,' whereby great inconveniences might and were like to ensue, tho' God forbid. And also to the intent that benignity and pity be not so exalted that justice be set apart, nor that justice so proceed that benignity and pity have no place, but that a due moderation and temperament be observed in every behalf as appeareth to eschew the manyfold and irreparable jeopardies and the inconveniences that else might and be like to ensue:

"Considering furthermore that those persons whose names be underwritten were great and singular movers, stirrers and doers of the said offences and heinous treasons; that is to say, *Henry, late Duke of Buckingham, now late days standing and being in as great favour, tender trust and affection with the king, our sovereign lord, as ever subject was with his prince and liege lord, as was notarily and openly known by all this realm*, not being content therewith, nor with the good and politique governance of his said sovereign lord, but replete with rancour and insatiable covetise; and also John, Bishop of Ely, William Knyvet, late of Bodenham Castle, in the Shire of Norfolk, John Rush, late of London, merchant, and Thomas Nandike, late of Cambridge, 'Negromancier,' being with the said Duke of Brecknock, in Wales, the 18th Oct. A° 1483, falsely conspired the death and destruction of the king and to depose him, and to execute their said purpose assembled at Brecknock as aforesaid with great number of people harnessed and arrayed in manner of war to give battle to the king and his true lords and subjects; and after various traitorous proclamations there made, proceeded thence to Weobley. And also the said duke on the 24th September, by his several writings and messages by him sent, procured and moved Henry, calling himself Earl of Richmond, and Jasper, late Earl of Pembroke being there in Brittany, great enemies of our said sovereign lord, to make a great navy and bring with them an army from Brittany; by reason whereof the said Henry and Jasper and their adherents came from Brittany with a navy and army of strangers and landed. And

over this, George Broun, late of Beckworth co., Surrey, (and others who are named,) at the the traitorous procurement and stirring of the said duke, the said 18th of October in the year aforesaid at Maidstone as rebells and traitors intended, &c., the king's death, and on that day and on the 20th of the same month at Rochester, and on the 22d at Gravesend, and on the 25th at Guildford, assembled, harnessed and arrayed in manner of war, and made sundry proclamations against the king to execute their said traitorous purpose: and also at the traitorous motion of the said duke, William Noreys, late of Yackenden co., Berks, knight, Sir William Berkeley of Beverston, Sir Roger Tocote, of Bromham, Richard Beauchamp Lord St Amand, William Stonor, knight (and others who are named,) on the said 18th October, at Newbury co., Berks, and John Cheyney (and others who are named), at Salisbury, compassed and imagined the king's death. The parties enumerated were therefore declared to be convicted and attainted of high treason, and their estates to be forfeited."

OOO.

TENOUR OF THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO RICHARD III. ADMINISTERED BY COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

(See p. 321.)

[Harl. MSS., No. 433. fol. 141.]

"I SHALL true and faithfull leigeman be, to our sovereign lord, King Richard the Third, by the grace of God King of England and of France, and lord of Ireland, and to him, his heirs and successors, kings of England, my truth and faith shall bear during my life, nor no treason nor other thing hide that should be hurtful to his royal person, but that I shall open and disclose it to his highness or to some of his noble council in all haste possible that I can, and his part utterly take against all earthly creatures, nor no livery, badge, nor cognizance shall take from henceforth of any person, nor none of his rebels and traitors succour, harborer, nor favour contrary to the duty of allegiance, but put me in my utmost devoir to take them. So help me God," &c.

Given at Sandwich, 16th January, A° 1 Ric. III., 1484.

PPP.

PLEDGE GIVEN BY KING RICHARD III. FOR THE SAFETY OF THE DAUGHTERS OF EDWARD IV.

(See p. 326.)

[Harl. MSS. No. 433. fol. 308.]

MEMORANDUM that I, Richard, by the grace of God King of England and of France, and lord of Ireland, in the presence of you my lords spiritual and temporal, of you mayor and aldermen of my city of London, promise and swear *verbo regio* and upon these Holy Evangiles of God by me personally touched, that if the daughters of Dame Elizabeth Gray, late calling herself Queen of England, that is to wit, Elizabeth, Cecil, Anne, Katherine and Bridget, will come unto me out of the sanctuary of Westminster, and be guided, ruled and demeaned after me, I shall see that they be in surety of their lives, and also not suffer any manner of hurt, by any manner person or persons to them or any of them in their bodies and persons to be done by way of ravishment or defouling contrary to their wills, nor them nor any of them imprison within the Tower of London or other prison, but that I shall put them in honest places of good name and fame, and their honestly and courteously shall see to be found and treated, and to have all things requisite and necessary for their exhibition and finding as my kinswomen. And if I shall, do marry such of them as now be marriageable to gentlemen born and every of them give in marriage lands and tenements to the yearly value of two hundred marks for term of their lives, and likewise to the other daughters when they come to lawful age of marriage if they live; and such gentlemen as shall happ to marry with them I shall straitly charge from time to time lovingly to love and intreat them as their wives and my kinswomen as they will avoid and eschew my displeasure. And over this that I shall yearly from hence-

forth content and pay, or cause to be contented and paid for the exhibition and finding of the said Dame Elizabeth Gray during her life, at three terms of the year, to John Neffeld, one of the esquires for my body, for his finding to attend upon her, the sum of seven hundred marks of lawful money. And moreover I promise to them that if any surmise or evil report be made to me of them by any person or persons, that then I shall not give thereunto faith nor credence, nor therefore put them to any manner of punishment, before that they or any of them so accused may be at their lawful defense and answer. In witness whereof, &c., the 1st day of March in the 1st year of my reign (1484).

QQQ.

BRIEF SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE COLLEGE OF ARMS FROM ITS FOUNDATION BY RICHARD III. TO THE PRESENT TIME.

(See p. 329.)

COLD HARBOUR, the "right fair and stately house" munificently awarded to the College of Heralds by King Richard III., was anciently styled Coldeherbergh. Stow calls it Cole-herbet, Maitland and Pennant Cold Harbour. It is thus described in the letters patent that perpetuate the grant:—"One messuage with the appurtenance in London, in the parish of All Saints called Pulteney's Inn, or Cold Harbour." This house, which had long been the residence of the princes of the blood, the nobility, and the highest gentry, was built in the reign of Edward III. by Sir John Poultney, who had been Lord Mayor of London four times, whence it was called Poultney's Inn, and which name it long retained after it passed into other hands. Its last owner, John Holland, Duke of Exeter, (who was the first husband of Anne, eldest sister of Edward IV. and Richard III.,) lost it by attainture of Parliament, so that at Richard's accession it was in the crown, and was by him bestowed, as above narrated, on the officers of the College of Arms in the 1st year of his reign. On the death of this monarch at Bosworth Field, all his acts were rendered null; he was attainted, pronounced an usurper, and all his grants were cancelled. That to the Heralds was declared void, and the officers at Arms were ordered to remove. It was in vain that they pleaded having performed the duties enjoined them, or that Garter king-at-arms claimed it in his private capacity; the mansion was taken possession of by Henry VII., and the Heralds were compelled to quit their college. They retired to a conventual building near Charing Cross, intitled "our Lady of Ronceval," which had been a cell to the priory of Roncevaux in Navarre, and stood upon part of the site of the present Northumberland House; but having no claim to the property, they were there only upon sufferance of the crown, and in the reign of Edward VI., the place was bestowed upon Sir Thomas Cawarden. During the previous reigns of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. the Heralds frequently and earnestly petitioned the throne for a grant of some house or place wherein to hold their assemblies, but without success. King Edward VI., however, in a charter in his third year, and by authority of Parliament, endeavoured to make them some amends by exemplifying to them their ancient privileges, but it was not until the reign of Queen Mary that the Heralds were re-established in a permanent abode. This sovereign, by charter bearing date the 18th July, in the second year of her reign, re-incorporated "the Kings, Heralds and Pursuivants at Arms;" and their original habitation at Cold Harbour having been taken down, and a number of small tenements erected upon its site, the queen bestowed upon them "a messuage with its appurtenances called Derby House, within the city of London, and in the street leading from the south door of the cathedral church of St. Paul's to a place thence called Paul's Wharf, thentofore parcel of possessions of Ed., Earl of Derby, and to be by the said corporation held in free burgage of the city of London."

In this edifice—and restored to their pristine importance—the Officers of Arms continued to dwell undisturbed during the sovereignty of Elizabeth, James I. and Charles I.; but the reign of Charles II. found them once more bereft of a house,—the great fire of London, in the year 1666, having entirely consumed their college. The Heralds, however, had the great good fortune to save all their muniments and books, except one or two; and the re-building of their college, now in ruins, was, by act of Parliament for re-building the city, directed to be begun within three years. On the site, then, of the former edifice was erected the regular quadrangular building as it

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now appears, and which was considered at that time one of the best designed and handsomest brick edifices in London. The hollow archway of the great gate in particular was esteemed "a singular curiosity." In November, 1683, the college part of the building being finished, the rooms were divided among the Officers of Arms by their mutual agreement, and according to their degrees. This arrangement was afterwards confirmed by the earl marshal; consequently the apartments thus selected at the re-establishment of the collegiate body have been ever since annexed to their respective offices.—See *Edmondson's Body of Heraldry*, pp. 143. 154; and *Noble's Colleges of Arms*, pp. 54. 56.

RRR.

DECREE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE IN REQUITAL OF KING RICHARD'S BENEFACTIONS.

(See page 330.)

[Cott. MS. Faustina, ch. iii. 405.]

"To all the faithful in Christ who shall inspect these letters. The most reverend father in Christ, the Lord Thomas Rotherman, by the grace of God Archbishop of York, Primate of England, Legate of the Apostolic See, and Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, and the unanimous assembly of the Regents and Non-regents of the same University, greeting in the Saviour of all. Whereas the most renowned prince, the King of England and France, and Lord of Ireland, Richard, after the Conquest, the Third, has conferred very many benefits upon this his University of Cambridge, and especially has lately, liberally and devoutly founded exhibition for four priests in the Queen's College. And now also the most serene Queen Anne, consort of the same lord the king (that most pious king consenting and greatly favouring), has augmented and endowed the same college with great rents. Whereas, also, the same most fortunate king has, with the greatest kindness, bestowed and expended not a little money for the strength and ornament of the university, both in most graciously ratifying the privileges of the university, as also with most devout intention founding and erecting the buildings of the King's College, the unparalleled ornament of all England. These, and many designs considering in our minds, we, the aforesaid chancellor and the unanimous assembly of the masters of the said university, embracing with gratitude such great and royal munificence, and desiring, as far as we can, to bestow spiritual recompense, decree, that for all time to come whilst the renowned prince shall continue in this life, on the second day of May, the mass of Salus Populi shall be celebrated by the whole congregation of regents and non-regents of the aforesaid university, for the happy state of the same most renowned prince and his dearest consort Anne. And after the aforesaid most renowned King Richard shall depart this life, we appoint and decree, that when that shall first come to our knowledge, exequies for the dead, and a mass of requiem, diligently and devoutly we will perform for the soul of the same most illustrious Prince Richard, and the souls of all the progenitors of the same. And that every of the premises granted and decreed may obtain strength and virtue, these our present letters concerning them we have caused to be sealed with the common seal of our university, and also with the seal of the chancellor affixed to fortify the same.

"Given in the year of our Lord 1843, in the 1st year of the reign of the said most renowned king, on the 16th day of the month of March."

Printed in *Cooper's Cambridge*, p. 228.

SSS.

LETTER FROM JAMES THE THIRD, KING OF SCOTLAND, TO KING RICHARD THE THIRD, THE SOVEREIGN OF ENGLAND.

(See p. 350.)

[See Harl. MS. 433. fol. 246.]

By the King of Scots.

"Right excellent high and mighty prince, and right trusty and well-beloved cousin,

we commend us unto you in the most heartily-wise. And howbeit that oft time afore, certain ruption, break and disturbance has been betwixt the realms of England and Scotland by the workings and means of evil-disposed persons in contrary our mind and intention, as God knows. Nevertheless, we remain in the same purpose as afore, like as we write to the right noble prince your brother, whom God assoil, to observe and keep love, peace, concord and amity with all Christian princes, and above others, with our neighbors and realms next approaching to the borders of our realm of Scotland."—Dated 16th August, 1484.

He desires to be informed of the king's mind and intention herein.

LETTER FROM RICHARD THE THIRD TO THE KING OF SCOTLAND, DATED 16TH SEPTEMBER, WHEREIN HE ACKNOWLEDGES THE RECEIPT OF THE PRECEDING LETTER, BY THE KING OF ENGLAND.

"Cousin, we ascertain you our mind and disposition is, and ever shall be, conformable to the will and pleasure of God our Creator, in all reasonable and convenient peace, without feigning that, should be desired of us by any nation; and if that your desire and pleasure be to send hither such personages to treat for the accomplishing thereof, we having knowledge from you of their names, shall give unto them our sure safe conduct for a reasonable number and season."

Harl. MSS. 433, *fol.* 247.

TTT.

COPY OF THE LETTER TO BE DELIVERED TO THOSE FROM WHOM THE COMMONS REQUESTED LOANS IN THE KING'S NAME.

(See p. 356.)

[See Harl. MS. No. 433. fol. 276.]

"Sir,

"The king's grace greeteth you well, and desireth and heartily prayeth you, that by way of loan ye will let him have such sum, as his grace hath written to you for. And ye shall truly have it again at such days as he hath shewed and promised to you in his letters. And this he desireth to be employed for the defence and surety of his royal person, and the weal of this realm. And for that intent his grace and all his lords thinking that every true Englishman will help him in that behalf, of which number his grace reputeth and taketh you for one. And that is the cause he this writeth to you before other, for the great love, confidence and substance that his grace hath and knoweth in you which trusteth undoubtedly that ye, like a loving subject, will at this time accomplish his desire."

UUU.

EXTRACTS FROM SIR HARRIS NICOLAS'S MEMOIR OF "ELIZABETH OF YORK," pp. 42—46.

(See p. 359.

"The question whether Richard intended to marry Elizabeth in the event of the death of his wife is important to his character; and the truth of the assertion that before Queen Anne's decease he was not only accepted, but eagerly courted by Elizabeth, is no less material to her fame. Richard's detractors have insisted that after he discovered the intentions of the friends of Elizabeth and of the Earl of Richmond to blend their respective pretensions to the crown by their marriage, he was impressed with the policy of strengthening his own title by making her his queen; that this became apparent in the similarity of her costume to the dress of her majesty, as early as Christmas, 1488, and that to promote his wishes he actually poisoned his wife."

"That it was not his [King Richard's] interest to marry the Princess Elizabeth, and consequently that the strongest testimony is necessary to prove that he intended to do so, is apparent from the following circumstances:—It was the act of the first parlia-

ment which he summoned to bastardize the children of his brother, because their legitimacy would have been an insurmountable bar to his right to the throne 'by inheritance,' which was the title he pretended to possess. In the only document which has been discovered relative to them, dated in March, 1484, they are treated as illegitimate, and on the death of the Prince of Wales, in April, the Earl of Lincoln was declared heir to the crown. It is certain that they were still considered in the same light so late as August in that year, when, with the view of strengthening the alliance with Scotland, Richard promised his niece Anne, the daughter of the Duchess of Suffolk, to the Prince of Scotland, she being his nearest female relation whose blood was not bastardized or attainted. These acts occurred many months after he became aware of the design of marrying the Earl of Richmond to Elizabeth of York, and there seems no greater reason why he should have thought it politic to marry Elizabeth after August, 1484, than previous to that time. Independent of his relationship to her, there were other obstacles to their union. His title to the crown would not have been strengthened by marrying a woman whom the law had declared a bastard; and to have repealed that declaration would be to call into existence his right to the crown, and to proclaim himself an usurper. A measure so inconsistent with his safety, so contradictory to the whole tenour of his policy, seems incredible; and can it for a moment be believed that he endeavoured to effect it by the murder of a wife who was fast hastening to the tomb with disease, and by a marriage which even the authority of the Pope could not, it is said, reconcile to the feelings and manners of his subjects!

"There is no difficulty in supposing that Richard would commit any crime which his interest might dictate, but it is not easy to imagine that he would imbrue his hands in the blood of his wife to gain an object, which, so far from promoting his interests, must have materially injured them. The worst enemies of the usurper have contended themselves with representing him as an atrocious villain, but not one of them has described him as a fool."

VVV.

LETTER FROM KING RICHARD III. TO THE MAYOR AND CITIZENS OF YORK, IN ALLUSION TO THE REPORT OF HIS INTENDED MARRIAGE WITH HIS NIECE.

(See p. 370.)

[Drake's Eboracum, p. 119.]

"BY THE KING.

"TRUSTY and well-beloved, we greet you well. And where it is so that divers seditious and evil disposed persons both in our city of London and elsewhere within this our realm enforce themselves daily to sow seeds of noise and slander against our person, and against many of the lords and estates of our land, to abuse the multitude of our subjects and avert their minds from us, if they could by any mean attain to that their mischevous intent and purpose; some by setting up of bills, some by messages and sending forth of false and abominable language and lies; some by bold and presumptuous open speech, wherewith the innocent people which would live in rest and peace and truly under our obeissance as they ought to do, bene greatly abused, and oft times put in danger of their lives, lands and goods as oft as they follow the steps and devices of the said seditious and mischevous persons to our great heavyness and pity. For remedy whereof, and to the intent the truth openly declared should suppress all such false and contrived inventions, we now of late called before us the mayor and aldermen of our city of London, together with the most sad and discreet persons of the same city in great number, being present many of these lords spiritual and temporal of our land, and the substance of all our household, to whom we largely showed our true mind of all such things which the said noise and disclander run upon in such wise as we doubt not all well-disposed persons were and be therewith right well content. Where we also at the same time gave straitly in charge as well to the said mayor as to all other our officers, servants and faithful subjects wheresoever they be, that from henceforth as oft as they find any person speaking of us or any other lord or estate of this our land, otherwise than is according to honour, truth and the peace and rightfulness of this our land, or telling of tales and tidings whereby the people might be stirred to commotions and unlawful assemblies, or any strife or debate arise between lord and lord, or us, and any of the lords and estates of this our land, they take and arrest the same person unto the time he hath brought forth him or them of whom he understood that that is spoken, and so proceeding from one to other unto the time the first author and maker of the said seditious speech and language be taken and punished according to his deserts. And that whosoever first find any seditious bills set up in any place he take it down and without reading or shewing the same to any other person bring it forthwith unto us or some of the lords or other of our council. All which charges and commandments so by us taken and given by our mouth to our city of London we notify unto you by these our letters, to the intent that ye shew the same within all the places of your jurisdiction, and see there the due execution of the same from time to time, as ye will eschew our grievous indignation and answer to us at your extreme peril.

"Given under our signet at our city of London the 5th day of April.

"To our trusty and well-beloved the Mayor and his Brethren
of the City of York."

WWW.

LETTER ADDRESSED BY KING RICHARD III. TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF ARRAY FOR THE COUNTY OF YORK.

(See p. 376.)

[Harl. MSS. 433. fol. 220.]

"BY THE KING.

"TRUSTY &c. And forasmuch as certain information is made unto us that our rebels and traitors associate with our ancient enemies of France, and other strangers intended hastily to invade this our realm and disheriting of all our true subjects. We therefore will and straitly command you that on all haste possible after the receipt hereof, you do put our commission heretofore directed unto you for the mustering and ordering of our subjects in new execution according to our instructions, which we send unto you at this time with these our letters. And that this be done with all diligence as ye tender our surety, the weal of yourself and of all this our realm.

"Given at Nottingham the 22d day of June.

"To our trusty and well-beloved our Commissioners of Array,
appointed within our County of York."

Like letters to all other commissioners in every shire in England.

XXX.

INSTRUCTIONS SENT BY KING RICHARD III. TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF ARRAY THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM.

(See p. 376.)

[Harl. MS. 433. fol. 220.]

"FORASMUCH as the king's good grace understandeth by the report of his commissioners and other the faithfull dispositions and readiness that his subjects be of to do him service and pleasure to the uttermost of their powers for the resisting of his rebels, traitors and enemies, the king's highness therefore will that the said commissioners shall give on his behalf especial thanking unto his said subjects, exhorting them so to continue.

"Item, that the said commissioners in all haste possible review the soldiers late mustered before them by force of the king's commission to them late directed, and see that they be able persons well horsed and harnessed to do the king service of war, and if they be not, to put other able men in their places, &c.

"Item, that the said commissioners on the king's behalf give straitly in command-

ment to all knights, esquires and gentlemen to prepare and array themselves in their proper persons to do the king service upon an hour's warning, when they shall be thereunto commanded by proclamation or otherwise. And that they fail not so to do upon peril of losing of their lives, lands and goods. And that they be attending and waiting upon such captain or captains as the king's good grace shall appoint to have the rule and leading of them, and upon none other.

"Item, that the commissioners make proclamation that all men be ready to do the king service within an hour's warning whenever they be commanded by proclamation or otherwise.

"Also to shew to all lords, noblemen, captains, and other, that the king's noble pleasure and commandment is that they truly and honorably all manner quarrels, grudges, rancours, and unkindness, lay apart and every of them to be loving and assisting to other on the king's quarrel and cause, shewing them plainly that whosoever attempt the contrary, the king's grace will so punish him that all other shall take example by him."

YYY.

TENOUR OF THE LETTERS DIRECTED TO ALL SHERIFFS THROUGHOUT ENGLAND AND WALES, BY COMMAND OF KING RICHARD III.

(See p. 377.)

[Harl. MS. 433. fol. 221.]

"Trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well. And forasmuch as we have commanded our commissioner of array within our counties of Nottingham and Derby to put our commission to them heretofore directed for mustering and ordering our subjects in new execution according to our instructions to them directed. We therefore will and straitly command you that incontinently upon the receipt hereof ye fully dispose you to make your continual abode within the shire town of your office or your deputy for you, to the intent that it may be openly known where you or he shall be surely found for the performing and fulfilling of such things as on our behalf or by our said commissioners, ye shall be commanded to do, &c.

"Given, &c., at Nottingham the 22d day of June."

ZZZ.

PROCLAMATION OF RICHARD III. MADE TO EVERY SHIRE UNDER THE GREAT SEAL OF ENGLAND BY A WARRANT UNDER THE SIGNET, CALLING UPON HIS SUBJECTS TO RESIST HENRY TUDOR, AS A TRAITOR.

(See p. 377.)

[See Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 319; also Harl. MS. 433. fol. 221.]

Ric. Rex.

"Forasmuch as the king our sovereign lord hath certain knowledge that Piers, Bishop of Exeter, Jasper Tydder, [Tudor,] son of Owen Tydder, calling himself Earl of Pembroke, John, late Earl of Oxon, and Sir Edward Wodeville, with other divers his rebels and traitors disabled and attainted by the authority of the high court of Parliament, of whom many be known for open murders, advoutres [adulterers], and extortioners contrary to the pleasure of God, and against all truth, honour, and nature, have forsaken their natural country, taking them first to be under th' obeisance of the Duke of Bretagne, and to him promised certain things which by him and his counsell were thought things greatly unnatural and abominable for them to grant, observe, keep, and perform, and therefore the same utterly refused.

"The said traitors, seeing the said duke and his council would not aid nor succour them nor follow their ways, privily departed out of his country into France, and there taking them to be under the obeissance of the king's ancient enemy Charles calling himself King of France, and to abuse and blind the commons of this said

realm, the said rebels and traitors have chosen to be their captain one Henry Tydder, son of Edmund Tydder, son of Owen Tydder, which of his ambitiousness and insatiable covetius encroacheth and usurpeth upon him the name and title of royal estate of this realm of England, where unto he hath no manner, interest, right, or colour, as every man well knoweth, for he is descended of bastard blood, both of father's side and of mother's side; for the said Owen, the grandfather, was bastard born, and his mother was daughter unto John, Duke of Somerset, son unto John, Earl of Somerset, son unto Dame Katherine Swynford, and of their indouble avoutry* gotten, whereby it evidently appeareth that no title can nor may in him which fully entendeth to enter this realm proposing a conquest; and if he should achieve his false intent and purpose, every man's livelihood and goods shall be in his hands, liberty and disposition, whereby should ensue the disheriting and destruction of all the noble and worshipful blood of this realm, for ever, and to the resistance and withstanding whereof every true and natural Englishman born must lay to his hands for his own surety and weal. And to the intent that the said Henry Tydder might the rather achieve his false intent and purpose by the aid, support and assistance of the king's said ancient enemy of France, hath covenanted and bargained with him and all the counsell of France to give up and release in perpetuity all the right, title and claim that the King of England have had, and ought to have to the crown and realm of France, together with the duchies of Normandy, Anjou and Maine, Gascoign and Guyne Cascell [Castle] and towns of Calais, Guynes, Hammes, with the marches appertaining to the same, and dissever and exclude the arms of France out of the arms of England for ever.

"And in more proof and shewing of his said purpose of conquest, the said Henry Tydder hath given as well to divers of the said king's enemies as to his said rebels and traitors, archbishopricks, bishopricks, and other dignities spirituel, and also the duchies, erledomes, baronies, and other possessions and inheritance of knights, squires, gentlemen, and other the king's true subjects within the realm, and intendeth also to change and subvert the laws of the same, and to induce and establish new laws and ordinances amongst the king's said subjects, and over this, and besides the alienations of all the premises into the possession of the king's said ancient enemies, to the greatest anyntishments, shame and rebuke, that ever might fall to this said land, the said Henry Tydder and others, the king's rebels and traitors aforesaid, have extended at their coming, if they may be of power, to do the most cruel murders, slaughters, and robberies, and disherisons, that ever were seen in any Christian realm. For the which and other inestimable dangers to be eschewed, and to the intent that the king's said rebels, traitors and enemies may be utterly put from their said malicious and false purpose, and soon discomforted, if they enforce to land, the king our sovereign lord willeth, chargeth and commandeth all and every of the natural and true subjects of this his realm to call the premises to their minds, and, like good and true Englishmen, to endower themselves with all their powers for the defence of them, their wives, children and goods, and heriditaments ayenst the said malicious purposes and conspiracions which the said ancient enemies have made with the king's said rebels and traitors for the final destruction of this land as is aforesaid.

"And our said sovereign lord, as a well willed, diligent and courageous prince will put his most royal person to all labour and pain necessary in this behalf for the resistance and subduing of his said enemies, rebels and traitors, to the most comfort, weal and surety of all his true and faithful liege men and subjects.

"And over this our said sovereign lord willeth and commandeth all his said subjects to be ready in their most defensible array to do his highness service of war, when they by open proclamation or otherwise shall be commanded so to do, for resistence of the king's said rebels, traitors and enemies. Witness myself at Westminster, the 22d day of June, in the second year of our reign."

* Double, or perhaps indubitable adultery.

AAAA.

LETTER FROM HENRY, EARL OF RICHMOND, BEFORE HE WAS KING, TO HIS FRIENDS HERE IN ENGLAND FROM BEYOND THE SEAS.

(See p. 378.)

[Harl. MS. 787. fol. 2.]

"Right trusty, worshipfull, and honourable good friends, and our allies, I greet you well. Being given to understand your good devoir and intent to advance me to the furtherance of my rightful claim due and lineal inheritance of the crown, and for the just depriving of that homicide and unnaturall tyrant which now unjustly bears dominion over you, I give you to understand that no Christian heart can be more full of joy and gladness than the heart of me your poor exiled friend, who will, upon the instance of your sure advertise what powers ye will make ready and what captains and leaders you get to conduct, be prepared to pass over the sea with such forces as my friends here are preparing for me. And if I have such good speed and success as I wish, according to your desire, I shall ever be most forward to remember and wholly to requite this your great and most loving kindness in my just quarrel.

H. R.

"Given under our signet.

"I pray you give credence to the messenger of that he shall impart to you."

BBBB.

LETTER FROM THE DUKE OF NORFOLK TO JOHN PASTON, ESQ., WRITTEN A FEW DAYS PREVIOUS TO THE BATTLE OF BOSWORTH.

(See p. 385.)

[Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 334.]

"Well beloved friend, I commend me to you, letting you to understand that the king's enemies be a land, and that the king would have set forth as upon Monday, but only for our Lady day,* but for certain he goeth forward as upon Tuesday, for a servant of mine brought to me the certainty.

"Wherefore I pray you that ye meet with me at Bury, for by the grace of God I purpose to lie at Bury as upon Tuesday night, and that ye bring with you such company of tall men, as ye may goodly make at my cost and charge, besides that ye have promised the king, and I pray you ordain them jackets of my livery, and I shall content you at your meeting with me,

"Your lover,

"J. Norfolk.

"To my well-beloved friend
John Paston be this bill
delivered in haste."

CCCC.

"Part of their names shall you hear that came to Kynge Richard."

(See p. 393.)

[See Harl. MS. No. 542. fol. 34.]

The Duke of Norfolk
The Earl of Surrey, his heir
The Earl of Kent
The Earl of Shrewsbury
The Earl of Northumberland
The Earl of Westmoreland
Robbert Ryddysh
Sir Robert Owlrege
Sir John de Grey
Sir Thomas de Mingumbre
Sir Roger Standfort
Sir Robert Brackenbury
Sir Harry Landringham
Sir Richard Chorwelton
Sir Raffe Rolle
Sir Thomas Marcomfeld

* The Assumption of the Virgin.

Sir John Huntyngdon
Sir John Wilynn
Sir John Smally
Sir Bryan of Stapleton
Sir William, his cousin
The Lord Bartley
The heirs of Bartley
The Lord Fryn, so gray,
The Lord Lovell, chamberlain of England
The Lord Hugh, his cousin
The Lord Scroop, of Upsall
The Lord Scroop, of Bolton
The Lord Dacres, raised the North Country
The Lord Ogle
The Lord Bower
The Lord Graystoke, he brought a mighty many;
Sir John Blekynson
Sir Raffe Harbottle
Sir William Ward
Sir Archibald, with the good Ridley;
Sir Nicholas Nabogay was not away;
Sir Oliver of Chaston
Sir Henry de hynd Horsay
Sir Raffe of Ashton
Sir Roger Long in Arpenye
Sir John Pudsey
Sir Robert of Middleton
Sir Thomas Strickland
Sir Robert, his brother
Sir John Nevill of Bloodfallhye
Sir Roger Sandyll
Sir Christopher Ward
Sir William Beckford
Sir John Cowburne
Sir Robert Plumpton
Sir William Gascoye
Sir Marmaduke Constable
Sir William Conyers
Sir Martin of the Fee
Sir Robert Gilbard
Sir Richard Heaton
Sir John Lothes
Sir William Ratcliffe
Sir Thomas, his brother
Sir William, their brother
Sir Christopher de Mallyre
Sir John Norton
Sir Thomas de Malleveray
Sir Raffe Dacres of the North
Sir Christopher the Morys
Sir William Musgrave
Sir Alexander Haymor
Sir George Martynfield
Sir Thomas Broughton
Sir Christopher Awayne
Sir Richard Tempest out of the Dale
Sir William, his cousin
Sir John Adlyngton
Sir Roger Heron
Sir James Harryngton
Sir Thomas Pilkington.

"All these sware that King Richard should wear the crown."

[From an ancient cotemporary manuscript preserved in the Harleian Library, supposed to have been written by a follower of Lord Stanley, and entitled, "Narrative borrowed of Henry Savyll."]

DDDD.

CONTRACT FOR THE MARRIAGE OF DAME KATHERINE PLANTAGENET, DAUGHTER OF KING RICHARD THE THIRD.

(See p. 406.)

[Harl. MS. 258. fol. 11b.]

"This endenture, made at London the last day of Februare, the first yere of the raigne of our souverain lord King Richard Third, betwene oure said souverain lord on the oon partie, and the right noble Lord William, Erle of Huntingdon, on the other partie, witnesseth, that the said erle promiseth and graunteth to our said soverain lord, that before the fast of St. Michael next commying by God's grace he shall take to wiff Dame Katerine Plantagenet, doughter to oure saide souverain lord, and before the day of their marriage to make or cause to be made to his behouff a sure, sufficient, and lawfull estate of certain his manoirs, lordships, lands and tenements in England to the yerely valeue of cc^{li} over all charges, to have and hold to him and the said Dame Katerine, and to their heires of their two bodies lawfully begotten remayndre to the right heires of the said erle, for the whiche oure saide souverain lord graunteth to the said erle and to the said Dame Katerine to make or cause to be made to theim before the said day of mariege a sure, suffisaunt, and lawfull estate of maniors, lordships, lands and tenements of the yerely value of a M. marc over all reprises to have to theim and to theire heires masles of their two bodyes lawfully begotten in maner and fourme folowinge, that is to wit, lordships, manoirs, lands and tenements in possession at that day to the yerely value of vj^{c}. marc, and manoirs, lordships lands, and tenements in reversion after the decesse of Thomas Stanley Knight, Lord Stanley,

to the yerely value of iiij^{c}. marc; and in the mean season oure said souverain lord grauntith to the said erle and Dame Katerine an annuite of iiij^{c}. marc yerely to be had and perceyved to theim from Michelmasse last past during the life of the said Lord Stanley of the revenues of the lordships of Newport, Brekenok, and Hay in Wales by the hands of the receyvours of theim for the time being, and overe this oure said souverain lord granteth to make and bere the cost and charge of the said mariage at the day of the solemnizing thereof.

"In witnesse whereof oure said souverain lord to that oon partie of these endentures remaynyng with the said erle hath set his signet, and to that other partie remaynyng with oure said souverain lord the said erle hath set his seal the daye and yere above-said."

THE END.