

UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



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THE MEETING OF ALFRED AND THE EARL OF BERKS.

*Frontispiece.*



TALES

OF THE

KINGS OF ENGLAND :

STORIES OF CAMPS AND BATTLE-FIELDS,  
WARS AND VICTORIES.

BY STEPHEN PERCY.

“ Wherein I speak  
Of moving accidents by flood and fields.”

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Sixth Edition.

CONTINUED TO THE PRESENT TIME.

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## PREFACE.

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THESE Tales have been written as much for the amusement of children as for their instruction.

The compiler of them has frequently remarked that young readers have a dislike to the study of History, and when urged to pursue it, excuse themselves by saying, "It is so dry." Is not this to be attributed to the very general practice of giving them abridgments — mere outlines of history, in which there is nothing to arrest the attention of a child? Young minds require something

more amusing, more interesting, than a bare detail of occurrences, or the dates of the years in which kings reigned or died. They want something more stirring.

The compiler has endeavoured to select such incidents from the History of England as shall not only convey instruction to his young readers, but also, he hopes, afford them as much interest and delight as the fairy stories of their infancy.

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# TALES

OF THE

## KINGS OF ENGLAND.

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### FIRST EVENING.

INTRODUCTION—INVASION OF BRITAIN BY JULIUS CÆSAR—STORY OF A BRITISH KING—DEPARTURE OF THE ROMANS—ARRIVAL OF THE SAXONS—INVASION OF THE DANES—FARM-HOUSE IN SOMERSETSHIRE—A LEARNED PEASANT—TURNS BAKER—A SKIRMISH—RETREAT OF THE BAKER.

IT was on a cold winter's evening, when we were all seated by a cheerful fire, that my little brothers Magnus and Lawrence came to the side of my chair, and asked me to tell them some amusing tale before they went to bed.

“What shall it be about?” I asked, laying down the book which I had been reading.

“Oh,” said Magnus, “some nice interesting story that we can understand.”

“I wish that brother would tell us some story about history. I am sure it would be very interesting,” said little Lawrence.

“ Well,” I replied, “ suppose we begin to-night with Tales from the History of England, at the time of the first inhabitants. We shall soon get on to the reign of Alfred, who was both a great and good king.”

“ Will you tell us all the pretty tales, brother, and skip all the history part ?” asked Magnus.

“ Not exactly,” I answered ; “ but I will make it all as interesting to you as I can : sit down now, and I will begin by telling you of

### The Invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar.

The first inhabitants of Britain were a race of savage barbarians, who had neither king, laws, nor government of any kind. They dwelt in huts, and were clothed with the skins of wild beasts, with which the country abounded. Their chief occupations were hunting and fishing ; or, in the southern parts of the island, cultivating the ground and tending their cattle. About fifty years before the birth of Christ, Julius Cæsar, the emperor of Rome, after having conquered all France, then called Gaul, came over the narrow sea that separates our island from that country, and landed, it is supposed, at Deal. The inhabitants, who had received notice of his intention, were quite ready

to meet him, and several battles were fought without much advantage to either side, until, as winter was approaching, Cæsar was obliged to take his army back to France; the next summer he came over again with a much greater force, and the poor Britons were conquered in two or three battles. As Cæsar advanced farther into the country, he found more resistance, and so little to feed his numerous army with, that, at last, he abandoned the enterprise and left the kingdom.

About a hundred years after this retreat, the Romans again invaded Britain, and defeated the inhabitants in several battles. You must not be surprised at this, for the Roman soldiers were trained to fighting from their childhood; and few nations ever withstood the progress of their arms. A numerous army of Britons, under the command of Caractacus, still opposed them, and a very severe battle was fought, when the British chief was defeated, and, with his wife and children, sent captive to Rome, where they were all made to walk through the streets, loaded with chains, while the emperor and the people were assembled to look at them, as if they had been so many wild beasts. Caractacus behaved very nobly, even in this condition, and made such a moving speech to the em-

peror, that he immediately ordered his chains to be taken off, and ever after treated him with great kindness.

The Romans kept possession of Britain for four hundred years, during which time they had to defend it from many incursions of the Picts and Scots, the fierce and warlike inhabitants of the northern parts of the island.

The Roman empire was now declining, and every year soldiers were called from Britain to defend their own country. At last, they all returned, and the Britons were left quite defenceless. They had been for a long time unaccustomed to arms, the Romans fighting all their battles for them; and now the Picts, taking advantage of their weak condition, attacked them without mercy. They immediately sent ambassadors, with this letter, to Rome, to ask for assistance:—"THE GROANS OF THE BRITONS. THE BARBARIANS, ON THE ONE HAND, CHASE US INTO THE SEA; THE SEA, ON THE OTHER, THROWS US BACK UPON THE BARBARIANS; AND WE HAVE THE HARD CHOICE LEFT US, OF PERISHING BY THE SWORD OR BY THE WAVES." The Romans were too much engaged in their own wars to grant them any aid; and, labouring under domestic evils, and threatened with invasions, the Britons were, at last, compelled to send



a deputation to Germany, to invite over the Saxons for their protection and assistance.

The Saxons were, at that time, esteemed the most warlike nation in the world. Their whole thoughts and occupation were in war, and the Britons hoped that they would soon expel the Picts and Scots from their kingdom, and would then return back to their own country. After the Saxons had restored tranquillity to the island, they could not help noticing what a beautiful fertile country they were in, and how very superior it was to their own woods and morasses. Some of them returned to Germany, and gave their brethren such a flattering account of Britain that the Saxons flocked over by thousands, over-ran the country, and in a few years took entire possession of it, making the unfortunate Britons their slaves.

There were a great many Saxon kings in England, as Britain was then first called, from "Angles," another name of the Saxons; but very few were of any celebrity. The kingdom was divided into seven parts, and seven kings reigned at once. This was called the Heptarchy. As you may suppose, there were plenty of battles fought between the different princes, but they were often obliged to join all their armies together to resist

the incursions of the Danes, a barbarous race of men, who lived entirely by piracy, and by plundering the inhabitants of the sea-coast. These men came over, at one time, in such numbers that, after a great many battles, the English were, for a time, quite overcome. This brings me to the time of King Alfred the Great, and now I shall be able to tell you something that I hope will be more interesting. All that I have just been telling you is really true; what I am about to relate is mostly fiction, although the main points of the story are given in several histories. When you are older you may read the book I have borrowed part of the tale from: it is called 'The Sea Kings of England,' and I can assure you is very entertaining: it is

### A Tale of the Time of King Alfred.

It was about eight hundred and seventy years after Christ, that Alfred came to the throne of England. The country was, at the time, filled with those barbarous Danes of whom I have before told you; and, within a month of his accession to the regal power, Alfred was obliged to lead an army against them. He at first gained some advantages, but, overpowered by numbers, he was at

last obliged to seek safety in flight and concealment. It is at this time, when the conquering Danes were giving full vent to their love of plunder and violence, that my tale begins.

Bending over the fire, in a large room in an old farmhouse in Somersetshire, sat a good-looking man, apparently about thirty years of age. He was clad in the common costume of the peasantry, but there was a certain noble air about him that ill accorded with his poor appearance. He was occupied, too, in a way in which few could employ themselves in those days of ignorance — he was reading a small volume, written on leaves of vellum, which seemed to interest him deeply ; for, although he had begun his study directly after the morning meal, and it was now drawing towards noon, he had never once raised his eyes from the book. In another part of the room a jolly-looking dame was busily employed in kneading dough, and making it into small flat cakes. She turned her head more than once, and looked long and wistfully at her guest—for such he was—and once or twice opened her lips as if about to speak, but, muttering the words to herself, she continued her work. At last her patience could hold out no longer ; so, turning round, she said—“ Well, my fine fellow, thee seem’st to be very comfortable there by the fire.”

“Yes, my good Swetha, thanks to your kindness,” said the stranger in the sweetest tone; “and I hope you will let me remain so for a short time longer; I shall soon finish this book.”

“And what good will it do thee when thee have finished it?” asked the dame. “I wonder, for my part, how people can spend their blessed lives with their eyes fixed on a bit o’ paper with lots of scratches on it: I can say, I’m no such fool:” and, putting her arms to her side, she seemed quite willing to maintain her opinion.

“I dare say, good Swetha, you wonder to see me spend my time thus idly; but, if you could read these scratches, believe me, you would be as idle too,” said her guest.

“Not I, i’ fath,” replied the dame. “Dost thee think I could make my cakes better, or count my pigs easier, if I were to learn all that nonsense thou botherest thy head about? Don’t tell me such stuff as that. And, besides,” added she, getting warmer as she proceeded, “I think it would be much better for thee if thou hadst never got all thy learning; for then, perhaps, thou would’st do something for thine own living, and not live on the sweat of other people’s brows.”

“I will do anything you bid me,” said the peasant, instantly rising from his seat, and putting



KING ALFRED IN THE WEATHER'S COTTAGE.



his little volume into his pocket; "pray don't be angry with me, good Swetha; what can I do for you?"

"No, no, man, I a'nt angry," replied the dame; "only I can't bear to see thee sit cowering o'er the fire i' that way, doing nothing at all, but just turning over bits o' parchment from one hour's end to another. But, if thou art willing to do something, just lend me a hand; put these cakes on the hearth, and do thee stop here and watch 'em; just turn 'em now and then, or they'll burn, and then there'll be no cakes for the good man when he comes home to dinner. I'm going to see after the cows. Now don't take out that book of thine again, but watch the cakes, and mind to turn 'em properly."

Her guest promised to pay the greatest attention to his charge, and not to look at the book again till he obtained her permission.

Away bustled the dame, and for some minutes the stranger sat with his eyes fixed on the loaves, and once or twice he turned them. Looking round, he recollected his arrows wanted trimming, and that his bow was out of order: he immediately set about them, and, at the same time, carefully attended to his charge. When he had repaired his weapon, he laid it aside, and, resting his head



upon his hand, seemed for a long while to be watching the cakes with the greatest attention; but his thoughts were far otherwise engaged; and, although he could not but see the thick smoke rising from the burning bread, he took no notice of it, but sat motionless as a statue, wholly unconscious of all about him. A smart box on his ear, and the *gentle* voice of Swetha, aroused him.

“Thou good-for-nothing idle loon,” cried she, snatching away the cakes, “look what thee hast done; do’st see, thou profitless lazy villain? Thee canst eat the bread well enough, but thee canst not take it from the fire when ’tis blazing under thy nose. Out wi’ thee, I say; out wi’ thee. I’ll teach thee what thee’st never learned yet, wi’ all thy learning. Go away, I tell thee, or I’ll make thee”——

It was in vain that the poor man, evidently sorry for his neglect, endeavoured to appease the wrath of the angry dame. Accompanying her last words with a suitable action, she flung one of the blackened cakes at his head; he moved aside, and this time escaped the blow; but, as he advanced nearer, to soothe her, the dame got absolutely furious, and, snatching up the loaves one after another, in quick succession, hurled them at him.

“Take that,” she cried, “thou worse-than-no-



thing beggar,—and that—and that—and that: out with thee: ah, I thought I'd make thee," she added, as the poor man, after running various ways to avoid her missiles, at last made his escape at the door.

The dame, satisfied with her vengeance, made no attempt to follow him, but, grumbling and growling, began to put in order the stools and various articles that had been disturbed; then, sinking down into her large wicker chair, she sat quite exhausted with her own violence.

The offender lingered at the door, and, when he found all had become quiet, ventured to open it. The portly dame was sitting with her back to him, and did not turn her head: advancing slowly, he ventured to take one of her hands in his, and said, in a gentle voice, "I hope I have not offended you past all forgiveness, good Swetha." There was no answer. "Shall I take my rod, and see if I can bring home a trout or two?" Still no reply. He removed the rod and basket from the corner, and then, saying, "I shall return before sunset, and I hope not without some reward for my trouble," left the house.

The dame sat for some time without moving; but, at last, turning her head, perceived that he was gone: she sat more forward in her chair, and,

passing her apron over her forehead, exclaimed, "Well certainly, I ha' been in a thundering rage, and now to see how that soft-spoken chap has come over me after all. But, save us! what's he good for; he can't plough, nor sow, nor thrash, nor, hang me, if he can bake. After all though, I'm glad I didn't break the head or him. I wonder what Father Winifred would have said if he had seen me. But I must be up and doing. D'rat me, but I've left the butter half churned." Bouncing up as the thought struck her, Swetha bustled out of the room, and was presently occupied in her work in the dairy.

## SECOND EVENING.

A RENCONTRE AND CONVERSATION—THE PEASANT AND A NEW FRIEND—RETURN TO THE COTTAGE—A MERRY SUPPER—AN ANGLING EXCURSION—AN UNEXPECTED DISCOVERY—KING ALFRED—AN UNLOOKED-FOR MEETING—THE EARL OF BERKS—AN EVENING AT THE COTTAGE—DEPARTURE OF THE EARL—MEETING OF THE NOBLES AND BARONS AT TAUNTON.

THE peasant walked slowly till he came to a stream of beautifully clear water, not half a mile from his present humble abode. He had just cast his line into the water, and seated himself under the shade of a large oak, when he became aware of the approach of some person who had come over the bridge a little higher up. He looked at him earnestly, and perceived that he was a young man apparently twenty years of age, of handsome appearance, and dressed in a way that at once showed that he belonged to the higher class. Why he was alone, and on foot, was a mystery; for, in those days, no man of rank was safe, unless attended by a numerous guard. As the traveller approached the old oak, he saw the angler, whom he took to be a peasant, sitting under it. He immediately accosted him with—

“ Good morrow, friend, what sport to-day ?”

“ None at present,” replied the peasant; “ I have but this minute thrown in my line.”

“ Pray, can you tell me the way to Glastonbury, and how far distant I am from it ?” asked the new comer.

“ The road lies straight before you,” replied the peasant, rising; “ but, if you take my advice, you will not pursue your journey much farther this evening; ’tis full twelve miles to Glastonbury, and the road is much broken. Besides, report says night journeys are dangerous in these parts, now that no one knows what has become of our king.”

“ I care not for danger,” said the traveller, carelessly. “ I expected to have reached the town before night-fall; but, as it is so far off, I suppose I must content myself till to-morrow morning. Do you know any place where a poor traveller can refresh himself, and rest his wearied limbs? for I confess I am not soldier enough yet to take my couch supperless amid these marshy fields.”

“ In the hamlet under the hill yonder,” answered the peasant, “ there is an ale-house, where I have no doubt you will find every thing you need. But stay a moment, noble sir,” said he, as the stranger, waving his hand, moved onwards, “ cannot you tell me some news from the west? any tidings yet

of the king? what are the nobles about that they suffer the country to be infested with these lawless Danes?" The traveller was astonished at the peasant's asking such questions as these, and could not help noticing that there was something in his speech and air that ill suited with his lowly garb.

Gazing at him more earnestly, the stranger replied, "The north-men, I hear, begin to move again, and threaten wider devastation. Of the king, nothing is known; but men talk much about him; some say he has gone to France, and others, that he still hides in England. This I know, that never was a vessel at a more perilous hour left without a pilot at her helm, than our country at this time. As for the nobles, each gathers his strength in his own castle; and will submit to no one's rule. Some report there is of a new king to be chosen by them: and truly it will be the best that they can do, if Alfred appear not soon, to rally round him the faithful men who still burn to meet the enemy."

"And who is the man they would make king of England?" asked the peasant.

"Indeed I know not," replied his companion. "I have merely heard this from travellers like myself."

"I should like to hear more from you," said the

angler, who had just caught a fine salmon, and was beginning to put up his rod and line: "it is doubtful if there will be accommodation for you at the hostel—will you not accept a supper and couch under the lowly roof where I myself am at present a guest? There will be wheaten cakes and good ale; and, moreover, this dainty salmon will furnish us with a delicious meal. To-morrow I will direct you on your course."

There was in this singular person such an expression of benevolence, and such a dignity of manner, that he instantly attracted the love and commanded the respect of the young traveller. "Freely do I accept your offer," said he, holding forth his hand to the peasant. "Lead on, and let us strive to be better acquainted with each other." The stranger then related to his new friend the leading circumstances of his life; and the peasant, on his part, declared that he was not what he seemed, but that he could not at present reveal his name. Thus conversing, they bent their way to the cottage, and soon arrived at the door, before which the good dame was busily employed washing her milk-pails. As they drew nigh, the peasant called out, "I bring you a guest for the night, good Swetha, and," holding up the salmon, "somewhat to cheer the supper board with." Swetha

looked with astonishment at the handsome stranger, and, making a lowly obeisance, gave him a cheerful welcome: then, turning to her former guest, said, "Well, that's a fine salmon for once, I *will* say, and I've a good fire, so you shan't wait long for it." Then, bustling away, they could soon hear her making preparations for their repast.

"Ha! Denulf," said the peasant, as he entered the cottage, to a pale-faced man who was bending over the fire, intent on a scroll of parchment, "still at your lesson. Take courage, man, your labour will soon become lighter."

"Thanks to your kindness," replied Denulf, Swetha's husband, "I begin to understand it a little now, and, with your help, I hope shall soon get on better."

In a very short time Swetha spread the table for their repast, to which the traveller and the dame did ample justice. They conversed very merrily, and the worthy hostess with many a jest and boisterous laugh, animated the spirits of all. "Ay, ay, Dame Swetha," said her guest, "your face looks somewhat sweeter now than when"—

"Hold your tongue, do," she exclaimed, clapping her broad hand unceremoniously on his mouth. "I'll hear no more on't. Was it not too bad," said she, "to burn all my best cakes as black



as my Den's beard? Many's the wife I know, that would ha' flung the stool at his head. But, howsomever, that's past, and here's waes hael to you all, and so now I wish you good night."—Taking her husband by the arm, she then left the apartment to her two guests, who did not separate till they had spent several hours in earnest conversation, and had become deeply interested in each other's welfare.

Early the next morning the traveller arose, but found even then that he was the last up. The good dame was already at her work in the dairy, and, on going into the apartment in which he had supped on the previous evening, he found his new acquaintance sitting by the fire, writing on a small roll of vellum. "Good morning, my young friend," said he; "Swetha has been waiting for you."

At that instant, the dame came into the room, and, with a smile, wished them a good morning. They were soon joined by Denulf, and then all sat down to a homely, but plentiful breakfast, consisting of wheaten cakes, fresh milk, and curds.

When they rose from the table, the two guests, each taking with him an angling rod and a small basket, bid their hostess good day, and sallied forth. It was a delightful morning in the beginning of April. The sun shone clearly from a



bright blue sky, the trees were just breaking into verdure, and the merry birds poured forth their early songs in a continuous strain of melody.

The companions walked for some time in silence, each meditating on the beautiful scene before him, and thinking how soon the fair fields and cheerful cottages might be laid waste by the destroyer. At length they reached the spot where they had met on the preceding day, and, casting their lines into the water, the peasant thus began their conversation.

“ My young friend, I have told you I am not what I seem; in a short time I will tell you who I am; but, for the present, let that be. I have two letters in my pocket: one to the abbot of Glastonbury, another to the earl of Berks; they are of importance; may I trust them to your care?”

“ Give them me,” said his companion. “ If you wish me to start now, the sun shall not go down ere I deliver them. Glastonbury, you tell me, is not far distant; and the earl of Berks, I heard but yesterday, is raising his standard in Somerset.”

“ Not quite so soon,” rejoined the peasant, smiling, and giving him the letters. “ To-morrow will be soon enough; if you start at break of day, you will reach the town before noon, and will be sure to learn there in what quarter the good earl

now is. But where did you get that chain?" asked he, with evident surprise, as, unbuttoning his coat to place the letters in security, the traveller displayed a handsome gold cross suspended by a chain of exquisite workmanship. "Surely I have seen it before."

"My father, Oswulf," answered he, taking it off, and handing it to his companion, "has often told me that it was placed round my neck by my mother, when she gave me to his charge. I well remember a rude Dane taking it from me when I was a child."

"Did you ever hear Father Oswulf say that he went with young Alfred to Rome?" asked the peasant, again examining the chain.

"Often has he spoke to me of the noble bearing and the industrious study of the young prince," replied the youth, looking with surprise at the excited countenance of his companion.

"Where is he now? why did he not seek Alfred and claim his friendship?" asked the peasant quickly; and then, as if to himself, adding, half aloud,—“There can be no mistake—this was her chain—no one could have another like it.” Then, in a voice trembling with emotion, he said, “Have you no other token of your mother’s love?”

“ Yes, this have I worn ever since I was a boy of ten years old nearest my heart, it is a portrait of my mother, done by an artist of Rome,” replied the young man, taking from his bosom a small case of ivory and unclasping it.

“ Let me see it,” said the peasant, eagerly catching at it. “ Oh, merciful Heaven!” he exclaimed, as his eye rested on the face. “ Thy name is Edmund; thou art my brother’s son, and the son of one to whom I owe all that is good on earth—thou art—thou must be the child of the blessed Judith, the noble grand-daughter of Charlemagne, who first taught my boyish lips to read the words of wisdom. Well do I remember this cross and chain; a hundred times have I, in my boyish days, taken them from the neck of your mother, my beloved Edmund;” and falling on his neck he wept tears of joy.

Edmund stood in speechless astonishment as his companion gave utterance to these words. He knew not what to think: that his mother was a noble lady he did not doubt, but that she was of royal blood he could scarcely yet believe. “ Who is my father?” he exclaimed. “ Why has he cast me from him?”

“ Alas!” replied the apparent peasant, “ my brother Ethelbald is dead; and many and weighty

were the reasons that caused your blessed mother to give you to the charge of Oswulf."

"And whom do I now address?" asked Edmund in farther astonishment. "You cannot surely mean that you are"—

"The dethroned King," interrupted his noble companion. "I AM ALFRED."

When the young man heard the name of him with whom he had been so familiarly conversing, and to whom he had so freely spoken, he stood motionless and silent. Casting his eyes, however, on the countenance of Alfred, he there beheld such an expression of kindness and benignity that his confidence was restored; gracefully taking off his cap, he bended one knee to the earth, and said, in a low but fervid voice, "My king, accept my fealty."

"Thy knee unto the King of kings," said Alfred, raising him; "that homage is due to him alone: give *me* thy hand:" then, warmly grasping it, he continued: "Edmund, you must soon draw the sword in your country's cause. Even now I am expecting messengers to bring me tidings from Gloucestershire: there are great armies gathering, and I am told they wait for me alone; but I go not yet. You will be the bearer of dispatches to the earl of Berks: I wait his answer. Many and

great exertions must be used before I shall be able to lead a force against our enemies sufficient to overwhelm them. My fate shall be decided in one great battle, and may Heaven prosper us."

Edmund fixed his eyes with respectful modesty on the face of his illustrious uncle, and, again sinking on his knee, exclaimed, "My king, to thee I devote my life: thy wish shall be my guidance in every action."

"Come, come," said Alfred, smiling, "do not turn courtier yet; remember, thou art my brother's son; let us be as we were yesterday, friends and equals. But it is time for us to go home, though I know not what our good hostess will say when we return without a single fish: we must make the best excuse we can." Then, passing his arm within that of Edmund, with their rods in their hands, they turned towards the cottage.

When they had proceeded some little distance, Alfred suddenly stopped, and, drawing Edmund behind a large hazel-bush, said, in a low voice, "I hear the tramp of horses and the clang of armour; it may be that our enemies are near; look forth now, and see who is coming." Edmund, carefully concealing his person, saw through the branches that six men on horseback were approaching, though at present, from the glare of the sun, he

could not make out whether they were friends or foes. Soon after, he distinguished the banner with the white horse, and, as the men rode nearer, Alfred could easily recognise the accent of his Saxon friends. They both, therefore, stepped again into the road, and walked onwards. "He upon the black horse is known to me," said the king, "and his arrival will save you a journey."

The horsemen now came up, and their chief, a tall and stately warrior, addressing himself to Alfred, asked, "How far to Taunton, my friend? and what manner of road have we?"

"The distance is nine miles," replied the king, "and the road is swampy and difficult." As he said this, the horseman gazed steadily on his face, and, after a short pause, said, "Your voice, methinks, has met mine ear before now; but yet I cannot recall the time or place where I have encountered you: I am the earl of Berks."

"Retire with me a little way, my lord," answered Alfred, "and I may perhaps awaken your recollection." As he spoke, he moved aside, and the earl instantly followed him. "My lord, what errand brings you here?" said the king. "I heard but yesterday that you had raised your standard in your country's cause: surely I have

not been deceived. You know me now," he added, removing his peasant's cap, but instantly replacing it.

"My king!" exclaimed the earl, in great surprise; and, taking his foot from the stirrup, he was about to throw himself from his horse, but Alfred prevented him. "Not now," he said; "I must remain here for the present; and the secret would be but ill kept by your followers."

"You might have trusted them," replied the earl: "though little would they expect to find their king concealed in this disguise. I am now on my way to Taunton, with these, my followers, to join the council that is summoned there to-morrow. I trust your majesty will bear us company; your presence will be much needed to check the turbulent spirit of our barons."

"I cannot be there," replied Alfred; "I have other business. But you must be cautious; we are not yet ready to take the field, and, if our enemies get notice of your meeting, I fear me it will go hard against you." The earl then related to Alfred the preparations that he had made for joining the earl of Wilts and other noblemen. To this the king listened with eager attention: and, after much consultation, it was decided that they should all stay that night at the farm-house, and that early



the next morning the earl and his attendants should proceed to Taunton.

They then returned to their companions, and, cautioning the nobleman and his attendants to be careful where their horses trod, Alfred again took Edmund's arm and walked towards the cottage. As they approached nearer to the temporary abode of the king, they could see the good dame Swetha busily employed in the enclosure before the house. When, however, the sound of horses' feet met her ear, she started, turned round her head, and ran with haste into the cottage, closing the door after her with a loud clap. Alfred and his companion tried to open it, but it resisted all their efforts. They then looked in at the window, and saw the quiet Denulf sitting by the fire, reading his book. The king called to him to open the door, adding that he had brought a few friends with him for the night. Denulf immediately arose, and hastened to obey; but before he had crossed the apartment, they could hear the dame's voice shouting to him from an inner room—

“Denulf, man! Denulf! don't let them in; they are come to murder us. They are the bloody-minded Danes come to cut our throats.” But Denulf was not so easily to be frightened, and soon opened the way for his guests and their com-



panions; the terrified dame at the same moment running out at a back door in the utmost fear and trepidation.

Alfred desired her husband to seek and assure her that there were none but Saxon friends, and that business of the greatest consequence alone would have induced him thus to trespass on her hospitality. Then, turning to his companions, he exclaimed—"My brave men, the hour is at hand when your utmost devotion may be put to the proof: your king has been oppressed with sickness, and his enemies have said he has abandoned his people; believe them not; he will soon be ready to lead his faithful soldiers to the field; in the mean time he trusts to your honour to preserve his secret. Behold him now before you."

Loud and long was the cry of "God save King Alfred!" and each man, bending his knee before his sovereign, swore to support him with all his might upon the day of battle.

They then retired to an inner room, where Denulf quickly brought a substantial repast. The good earl had slipped into his hand a broad and heavy piece of gold; and though the dame dared not make her appearance before guests whom she had so rudely treated, yet the supper which she caused to be placed before them was upon a scale

of liberality proportioned to the amplitude of the gift. When they had finished their meal, and one of the men had carefully bolted the door to prevent intrusion, Alfred unfolded to his companions the plans on which he had determined to proceed, and deep was the consultation that followed. Alfred learned that the Danes were then encamped near Westbury, under Guthrum their king; that it was expected every day that he would attack Kenwith castle, and that he was now despoiling the country on every side. Before they retired to rest, it was agreed that the earl and his companions should set out for Taunton early in the morning, and, after attending the council, to which the king had written a letter, declaring it his intension to appear in a few days, that they should disperse in various directions over the country, collecting all the forces that they could raise, and on the third day from that time should meet together near the town of Morton, where Alfred promised to join them. After offering up a short prayer to Heaven for success, they separated each to the couch of clean straw that had been hastily prepared for them.

The sun had scarcely risen ere the earl of Berks and his companions were again proceeding on their journey, deeply pondering on the unexpected events of the previous evening. They arrived at

Taunton long before noon, and, after hastily partaking of refreshments, made their appearance before the council, which was already assembled.

The noble earl was loudly cheered and warmly greeted by his friends as he entered the hall. He listened for some time in silence to the various proposals of the chiefs ; but, when he found that they all believed King Alfred had either deserted them, or was dead, he arose, and, after censuring them for their infidelity to their sovereign, read to them the letter from the king. Great was the joy of the assembled nobles at this unexpected intelligence : it was at once agreed that each should return with the greatest expedition to his own territories, raise as large a body of armed men as he could, and at the time and place appointed, lead them to the standard of the king.

## THIRD EVENING.

ALFRED LEAVES DAME SWETHA'S COTTAGE—ARRIVES AT KENWITH CASTLE  
—TWO MINSTRELS—THE DANISH CAMP—THE ROYAL TENT.—A WAR-SONG  
—A SONG OF PEACE—A QUARREL—DEPARTURE OF THE MINSTRELS—THE  
PLAIN OF MORTON—A MARCH BY MOONLIGHT—A TERRIBLE SURPRISE—  
THE BATTLE—CONFLICT BETWEEN EDMUND AND HUBBO THE DANE—  
VICTORY OF THE SAXONS—RESTORATION OF ALFRED.

“It is very cold to-night; let us get as close to the fire as we can. There—now we shall do.”

On the same morning that the earl of Berks set out to attend the meeting of the council, Alfred took an opportunity of announcing to the good dame Swetha his intention of leaving her cottage.

“I am going,” said he, “to join the standard of the king, who is about to give battle to the invaders; this good youth and I must fly to his assistance. If he prevail, you will soon hear from me; if he fall, I shall die with him.”

“May Heaven bless you and him!” answered the dame, wiping the corners of her eyes.

“For the present this is all I can give you;” said Alfred, putting into her hand some broad pieces of gold from a well-filled purse that had been left him by the earl. “I hope in a short time I shall be better able to repay you.”

Swetha was quite astonished at her reward. She looked first at the gold, then at her husband, then turned her eyes to the king, and dropping on her knees before him, exclaimed, "Forgive me, noble Sir, for my great rudeness: my temper, Sir, is hasty; and I did not know that you were a nobleman."

"Arise, good Swetha," said Alfred, laughing; "I have forgiven you long ago. I tell you plainly, I am no peasant, and that your kind treatment to me in distress and poverty will be rewarded,—if I live!—and now, good Swetha, for the present, farewell." Thus saying, the good-natured king shook heartily the hand which the dame timidly held out to him, and, after bidding Denulf to remember his book, as it might be of service to him hereafter, he mounted a horse which had been sent him by the earl of Berks, and rode away. He was quickly followed by Edmund, who whispered to the dame, as he took her broad palm in his, "You will have cause to bless the day that this poor stranger came to your cottage."

The two horsemen pursued their way for a long time in silence; indeed the fast pace at which they were proceeding would allow but little conversation. At last, slightly checking his steed, Alfred turned to his companion, and exclaimed, "We shall be in

good time ; yonder are the turrets of Kenwith ; and the sun has not yet reached his highest point. This very evening, if it be possible, we will follow out our plans."

They soon after arrived at the castle, and requested an audience of the earl of Devon, who commanded it. They were immediately ushered into the presence of this worthy nobleman, whom Alfred knew to be one of his staunchest friends. The earl did not at first recognise him ; but, when the king, with an expression of calm dignity, said, " My gallant earl of Devon, we have come to put ourselves under your protection, and ask your help," the nobleman threw himself on his knees, exclaiming, " Most willingly do I grant you what protection my poor castle will afford ; and highly am I honoured when the king of England asks for my assistance. But," continued he, rising from his knees, " does your majesty know that even now this castle is beset with enemies ? and that the Danish camp is not two miles distant from this spot ?"

" I heard so," replied the king ; " and for that reason have I joined you." Alfred then introduced Edmund as the son of his noble brother ; and, retiring to an inner apartment, they held a long consultation on the means of avoiding the danger which so imminently threatened them.

Towards the close of the day on which Alfred and his companion arrived at Kenwith castle, two minstrels were seen to issue from its gate. They were dressed in the loose flowing robes worn by men of their profession, and carried with them their harps slung across their shoulders.

The minstrels of these times were of a very superior class to the wandering musicians of our own times. It is true they travelled from one castle to another, and subsisted on the bounty of their patrons: but they were generally treated with great respect. During the most cruel wars, their persons were considered sacred; and rarely was a savage found so barbarous as to inflict death on one of their peaceable occupation.

The two walked slowly along, conversing as they went. When they had reached the bottom of the steep path that led to the castle gate, they struck into a narrow footpath across the fields, and just as the shadows of the trees began to deepen in their hue, arrived at the summit of a hill from which they could behold a vast array of tents and banners, covering the valley that stretched beneath:—it was the Danish camp. The minstrels stood for some moments in silence, contemplating the scene before them. From one part they heard the distant noise of merriment, as



the rude soldiers, carousing, broke forth into boisterous peals of laughter; from another, the stroke of the ponderous hammer and the clang of steel gave fearful notice of their dire intent. Here and there was seen a blazing fire, surrounded by groups of men; some leaning on their swords; others recumbent at their full length upon the grass, listening to some companion's valiant tale of war. Near the centre of the valley was pitched a tent, far superior to the rest in size and magnificence; and from the long staff which surmounted it there floated a banner, on which the raven with wide-spreading wings was plainly discernible. This the minstrels knew at once must be the abode of the Danish king.

“May Heaven preserve us in this hour of peril!” ejaculated the elder of the two, as they prepared to descend the hill. “Yonder stands the tent of Guthrum, the Dane, into which we must soon gain admittance. Discover no fear at any thing you see or hear, for the least indiscretion may betray us.”

“You may trust me,” replied his companion, looking somewhat indignant. “I have lived too long in these turbulent times to fear. I may betray myself by anger, and my thirst for revenge, but not by fear.”



“ Well, well,” rejoined the former speaker, smiling; “ I meant not to wound your feelings, but only to put you on your guard against surprise; and, in truth, we have need of great caution.”

The minstrels had by this time reached the outworks of the camp, where they were roughly challenged by the sentinel; but when the man perceived their profession, he at once admitted them, saying, “ You’re welcome here, my friends, though you be Saxons; we need some merry music to keep our spirits up in this confounded hole, where we have been mewed in far too long for my liking.”

As soon as they had entered the camp, they were surrounded by soldiers, who, with every demonstration of respect, entreated them to play. They seated themselves on a bench, and the elder harper began one of those lays which were so famous in those times. At first the men listened with attention, as he recounted the exploits of some celebrated warrior; as he proceeded, they bent forward with eager eyes and open mouths to drink in every word he uttered; but when the minstrel burst forth into a higher strain, and

“ In varying cadence, soft or strong,  
He swept the sounding chords along;”

and told how the brave men who died in battle feasted at an everlasting banquet, in the hall of Valhalla; their joy increased to ecstasy. Leaping in the air, and clashing their weapons, they uttered the most discordant yells, and became almost frantic.

The sound of the harp, and the applause that attended it, drew together a vast number of the soldiers and many of their chiefs. When the lay was ended, a noble warrior, for whom the crowd opened a way to pass, approached the minstrels and bid them follow him. The two harpers arose, and, accompanied by the soldiers, passed through the camp to the tent of Guthrum, who was seated at a table on an elevated platform, making merry with his chiefs.

“Ha! Sidroc,” cried he, “whom bring you here? more Saxon slaves?” “Two minstrels,” replied the Swede; “and, if I may judge from what I have already heard, one of them is of no ordinary kind.”

“They are welcome here,” rejoined the king; “we are all in a merry mood.” Then, addressing himself to the younger harper, he added, “Can you sing us a good war-song, Saxon?” The young man bowed, and, boldly sweeping his harp, began the following lay:—



THE MINSTRELS IN THE DANISH CAMP.



“ The clash of swords to the brave,  
Is their dearest melody ;  
Woe ! woe to the coward slave  
Who fights not to be free.

“ Drink, drink to the warrior bold,  
Who trusts to his faithful sword,  
Far dearer to him than gold,  
Or miser's secret hoard.

“ He flies to the field of death,  
Rejoicing in his power,  
Hurrah ! for the stormy breath  
Of the fierce battle hour.”

Loud applause from the chiefs followed this song, and Guthrum, filling a goblet to the brim, held it out to the minstrel, who quaffed it with an apparently good will. “ Saxon, thou hast done well,” said the king, as the harper placed his empty goblet on the board, “ thou shalt be rewarded ; take this chain of gold, and, when thou look'st upon it, remember Guthrum the Dane.”

As he said this, he unclasped a massive chain of curious, though coarse workmanship, and held it towards the minstrel, who, bowing low, received it from his hands, and hung it around his own neck. Then turning to his companion, the king exclaimed, “ And canst thou, Saxon, strike thine harp to tales of glory ?” The elder minstrel bowed, and when

silence had been obtained among the noisy and unruly guests, with an expression of deep feeling he poured forth a milder lay. He showed how much more glorious it was to rule a kingdom by the arts of peace rather than by the tyranny of war, and how much greater blessings attended the industry of the husbandman than the rude turmoil of the camp.

Before he had concluded, a gigantic Dane, thumping the board furiously with his fist, roared out in a voice that at once stopped all farther melody, "A curse on all dastard cowards! What Saxon dog is it who dares to talk of peace to us?"

"Hubbo," cried the king, "I command you to be silent; these are minstrels, and as such must be free from violence."

"Look, how that younger dog scowls at me! By Odin, he shall pay dearly for it," cried Hubbo, drawing his immense broad sword, and advancing.

"Touch him at your peril," exclaimed Sidroc; "I brought him here to amuse the king, not a sacrifice to your murderous weapon;" and, drawing his sword, he placed himself between the now infuriated savage and his intended victims.

Hubbo endeavoured to rush past him, but Sidroc let fall a blow on his arm that immediately turned

the monster's fury on himself. The swords of the two chiefs were in an instant crossed, and one or other would most certainly have fallen, had not the king rushed in between them, and, beating down their weapons with his mace, cried out, "What means this broil? am I to be bearded thus in mine own tent? Earl Sidroc, put up your sword; and, Hubbo, more than once before has your ungovernable temper betrayed you into acts of madness; sheathe that too-ready blade of yours, and retire till I again summon you." The savage, casting a sullen look of hatred on all around, left the tent without reply.

Guthrum then advanced to the minstrels, who had regarded with intense interest the issue of this quarrel, and putting round the neck of the elder a similar chain of gold to that which he had given his companion, he gave them in charge to Sidroc, who conducted them safely through the camp, and, bidding them beware of ever placing themselves within the power of Hubbo, left them to pursue their journey.

The harpers walked quickly on till they were hidden by a wood from the view of the soldiers; they then stopped, and from among the trees took a long and scrutinizing look at the situation and disposition of the camp.



They soon reached Kenwith castle, where they found the noble earl anxiously awaiting their return. He had wanted to accompany them and share their danger, but Alfred knew too well the haughty temper of the earl of Devon to trust to his companionship. The king was busily employed till midnight, dictating to Edmund letters to those noble chiefs whom he hoped would embrace his cause, enjoining them, for the sake of their country and their king, not to fail at the time and place appointed. These the earl immediately despatched by some of his most trusty followers; and then, after they had partaken of a slight but necessary refreshment, the earl conducted his noble guest and his companion to their chambers.

At the first dawn of day Alfred arose, and, putting on a splendid suit of armour, soon seated himself on his noble steed. Edmund, also clothed in armour, quickly followed him into the courtyard, where the earl of Devon, attended by twenty knights, and about two hundred men-at-arms, were already assembled. When Alfred made his appearance, the earl, taking off his helmet, advanced to meet him, and turning to his followers, cried out, "My men, behold your king!" An universal shout followed this exclamation; and, waving their caps and clashing their swords against their ar-



mour, the devoted soldiers cried, "Long live King Alfred!" till the castle walls re-echoed with the sound.

After the earl had introduced several of his most powerful followers to the king, they proceeded on their march. Turning to the left hand as they issued from the castle gates, Alfred, with his faithful attendants, took the road to the town of Morton, where it had been previously arranged that his friends should meet him. About two hours before noon the little band halted within sight of it: at a little to their right was a gentle eminence, on which stood a small but strongly fortified castle; the king, observing it, asked to whom it belonged, and, hearing that it was then occupied by an old Saxon thane, named Leofric, he immediately rode towards it, followed by Edmund. When they arrived at the castle, the guards, seeing that they were Saxon noblemen, immediately admitted them into the presence of their master. The noble thane had been in the battles against the Danes, in which Alfred had been vanquished, and knew his person well; when, therefore, without any previous announcement, he saw the king standing before him, the aged warrior was struck dumb with surprise.

Alfred, quickly recognising an old acquaintance,

shook him warmly by the hand, and told him of his present situation, asking him permission to use the castle as a place of rendezvous for his nobles.

To this, Leofric, with great joy, most willingly consented, and with him Alfred stayed till the time appointed for the general meeting of his friends. Chief after chief came to the castle to do homage to his king, after he had led his men to swell the ranks of the English army, and on the evening of the second day after his arrival, Alfred, attended by most of the influential barons of England, went forth to join the devoted army, who now resolved to free their country from its barbarous oppressors, or to die.

Forty thousand men had by this time collected on the plain near the town of Morton, and as the king with his companions rode up to this vast assembly, the air resounded with the acclamations of their followers; shout after shout was sent up to the vault of heaven, and when Alfred, after thanking them for their welcome, promised to lead them against their enemies on the morrow, an universal cheer broke forth that continued loud and long, and was echoed and re-echoed till the last faint sound died away many minutes after the cry had issued from the mouths of the soldiers.

The king then retired to his tent, and gave orders that the whole army should go to their rest as early as possible, and be prepared at a moment's notice to leave their camp.

About one hour after midnight the men were roused from their slumbers, and in a very short space of time were quickly and silently marching on their way. It was a fine clear night; the deep blue sky, illumined by thousands of twinkling stars, was not o'ershadowed by a single cloud; and as the soldiers proceeded on their route—the moon-beams glittering upon their armour as they here and there emerged from the shadow of the trees—they appeared like the onward flowing of some mighty sea that had burst through the barriers that had restrained it.

In four hours, the advanced guard arrived at that hill whence the two minstrels first beheld the Danish camp; there the soldiers halted till their companions arrived; and as each successive body of men came up, Alfred himself conducted them to their assigned post. It was nearly six o'clock in the morning, when the sun had just risen in all its splendour, that the king finally completed his arrangements, by which the Danish army, still lying encamped in the valley, was almost surrounded.

The few sentinels which the barbarians had posted were either slumbering, or lazily walking to and fro, without for one moment imagining any danger was nigh. The Danes had learned that a large body of men had collected near Morton, but they were themselves so numerous, and had for so long a time been allowed to proceed with impunity, that they paid little attention to the information, intending on the next day to march against and disperse this paltry force. When, therefore, they were aroused from sleep by a loud blast of trumpets, which Alfred commanded to be sounded as a signal for a general charge on all quarters of the camp, great was their surprise and confusion.

Guthrum, their king, earl Sidroc, and the chiefs, were in an instant clothed in armour, and hurrying from tent to tent, arousing their men, and forming them into bands. Little time had they for preparation; the Saxons, impetuously rushing down the hill, quickly broke through the feeble barrier with which the Danes had surrounded their camp, and with the fury of revenge began the work of battle. The barbarians had at least twice as many men as their opponents, but their very number only added to their confusion. From his previous knowledge of their situation,

and the nature of the ground around them, Alfred had so skilfully arranged his men, that at one and the same moment their camp was entered in four different quarters. Alfred had given orders that each body of his men should force its way to the tent of Guthrum, and had promised a splendid reward to whomever should pull down the raven standard. Terrible then was the first onset—the Saxons, burning with revenge against their savage enemies, showed them little mercy. Thousands upon thousands were overwhelmed as they in vain opposed the rushing of the tide that at first swept all before it. Soon, however, the Saxons found a more formidable resistance:—the Danes had gathered in immense numbers around their king, and it was only by the suddenness of his attack that Alfred with his divided forces could at all hope to conquer his enemies. Urging forward in person one large company of men, and supported by Edmund with a still more numerous body, Alfred led the way to the centre of the camp, and burst upon the astonished troops of Guthrum before they had time to range themselves together: here the noble Sidroc was seen hurrying from place to place, strenuously exerting himself to preserve order in the Danish ranks, but with little avail; they were in inextricable confusion, and,

although they fought with bravery, and did not yield an inch, the Saxons assaulted them with such impetuosity that they fell by hundreds.

Each division of Alfred's army was now attacking them, and they knew not which way to turn. Their chiefs were driven to despair: leading on as many men as they could muster, several of them broke through the ranks of the Saxons and took to flight; others furiously charged their enemies, and were beaten back with dreadful carnage. One prince, of immense size and strength, seemed to bear down all that opposed him; he was clothed in complete mail, and armed with a huge iron mace, which he swung about him, dealing death at every blow. Edmund, who had joined in the thickest of the battle, saw the monster advancing, and recognised the savage Hubbo; he immediately made his way towards him, and defied him to combat.

“Ha!—ha!—I have you,” howled the Dane, as he caught sight of the young warrior. “By Odin, you shall not escape me;” and so saying, he dashed his weapon at the face of Edmund.—The young Saxon leapt on one side, and, before the unwieldy Dane could recover himself, dealt him such a stroke with his sword upon the helmet that he fairly split it in two, and left the head of



Hubbo without defence. This further infuriated the barbarian, who discharged a blow upon his adversary, which, had he not caught it on his shield, must inevitably have crushed him. The pain, however, was intense; the shock was so great, that, although, from the inclination of his shield, the blow did not break his arm, yet it was so benumbed, that for some moments it was rendered perfectly useless. The Dane took advantage of this, and swung about his weapon with increased rapidity. Edmund, however, was too agile to allow any more such blows to fall upon him, but, seizing any opportunity that was afforded him, he struck with his sword at his fierce antagonist, and more than once with effect, for the blood gushed out from several wounds which he had inflicted. At last the Dane, raised to the utmost pitch of fury, dashed a blow at him with all his force, and when Edmund avoided it, the ponderous weapon forced itself deeply into the earth. Before the barbarian could again wield it, the young Saxon dealt him a stroke upon his naked head that at once felled him to the ground, killing him outright. Edmund was very glad when the contest was thus ended; he knew he was no equal match in point of strength to the Dane, but he recollected the slaughter of the abbot of Croyland, and the scene

in Guthrum's tent, and he had burned to be revenged.

When the last blow was given, and Hubbo beaten to the earth, the Saxon soldiers raised a shout that was heard loud above the din of battle, and, turning afresh upon the Danes, dispersed them in all directions; indeed, the battle was now decided, Guthrum, Sidroc, and many other chiefs were prisoners, and their men laying down their arms, surrendered themselves to the victorious Saxons.

The result may be easily told: the invaders were so much frightened at the issue of this battle, that all who were not present at the time, and all those who escaped, fled with one accord to their ships, and set sail for their own country. Those nobles who had been made prisoners were treated with the greatest kindness; and after several interviews with their conqueror, he persuaded them all to become converts to Christianity, and then released them.

Many returned to their homes; but several, among whom were Guthrum and Sidroc, consented to remain in England, under the government of the Saxons.

Thus, after many years of trial and suffering, Alfred was restored to that throne from which he



had been so unjustly and barbarously expelled. One of his first actions, after he had assumed the reins of government, was to grant to Edmund, to whom he had become most sincerely attached, the title of earl of Somerset, with a magnificent estate, which had been forfeited to the crown; and he soon after sent for Swetha and her husband, whom, to their great surprise, he advanced to important posts in his household. Alfred lived for many years to govern England; he was by far the best ruler that this kingdom had in those early ages, and it may be questioned if any monarch ever sat on a throne who took more interest in the welfare of his subjects, or did more to render the inhabitants of his country happy and contented.

The Danes made several more irruptions into the northern parts of the kingdom during his reign, but on Alfred's appearance invariably fled to their ships; and the latter part of this good king's life was spent in the quiet performance of his duties. So celebrated was he for his many virtues and wise laws, that, when he closed his glorious reign, not only the English, but the inhabitants of all civilized countries, bestowed on him the name of ALFRED THE GREAT.

## FOURTH EVENING.

ALFRED IS SUCCEEDED BY HIS SON—SAINT DUNSTAN—STORY OF CANUTE—THREE RIVAL CLAIMANTS—A SHIPWRECK—HOSPITABLE RECEPTION—TREACHERY—BATTLE OF DOL—HAROLD'S OATH—DEATH OF EDWARD THE CONFESSOR—BATTLE OF THE WELLAND—INVASION OF WILLIAM OF NORMANDY—BATTLE OF HASTINGS—DEATH OF HAROLD.

ALFRED the Great was succeeded on the throne by his son Edward, a brave man, but not so clever or so good a king as his father. During this, and several of the following reigns, England was very little disturbed by any foreign invaders; but the kings were at continual war with their own turbulent subjects, and there were frequently great battles fought, and much blood shed.

I cannot pass over one remarkable character in these times, who exercised great influence over the monarchs in whose reigns he lived: I mean, Dunstan. This celebrated man was born of noble parents in the west of England, and being educated by his uncle Anselm, then archbishop of Canterbury, he betook himself to the ecclesiastical life. He soon became devotedly attached to it, assumed the monastic habit, and, in order to gain a character for sanctity among the people, secluded himself entirely from the world. He framed a cell

so small that he could neither stand erect in it, nor stretch out his limbs during his repose, and he there perpetually employed himself in devotion. His sanctity became known all over the country, and the people flocked in crowds to see him. It is probable that he became almost crazed by his situation and occupation; for he fancied that the devil frequently paid him visits; and being one day more earnest than usual in his temptations, Dunstan, provoked at his importunity, seized him by the nose with a pair of red-hot pincers as he put his head into the cell, and held him there till the malignant spirit made the whole neighbourhood resound with his bellowing. After his death Dunstan was made a saint, and miracles were said to be wrought at his tomb.

In the reign of Ethelred (to whom historians gave the epithet of the Unready), about ninety years after the death of Alfred, the North-men again began to infest the coasts of England; but it was not till the time of his successor, Edmund Ironside, that the Danes, under Canute, gained any footing in the island. After several battles, in many of which Edmund was defeated, the Danish and English nobility obliged their kings to come to a compromise, and to divide the kingdom by treaty between them. Canute reserved for himself the

northern division, and left the southern parts to Edmund ; but, at the death of the latter, who was soon after barbarously murdered at Oxford, he succeeded to the throne of England.

Canute was a very brave king, and by his conquest attained the utmost height of grandeur ; he was sovereign of Denmark and Norway, as well as of England, and by far the wisest and most powerful monarch of his time.

Some of his flatterers, breaking out one day in admiration of his greatness, exclaimed that every thing was possible for him ; upon which the monarch, it is said, ordered his chair to be set on the sea-shore while the tide was rising ; and as the waters approached, he commanded them to retire, and to obey the voice of him who was lord of the ocean. He feigned to sit some time in expectation of their submission ; but when the sea still advanced towards him, and began to wash him with its billows, he turned to his courtiers, and remarked to them that every creature in the universe was feeble and impotent, and that power resided with one Being alone, in whose hands were all the elements of nature ; who could say to the ocean, " Thus far shalt thou go and no farther ;" and who could level with his nod the most towering piles of human pride and ambition.

Canute was succeeded by his son, Harold Hare-foot, who reigned for a very short time, little esteemed by his subjects ; he left the crown to his brother, Hardicanute, whose death two years after his accession gave the English a favourable opportunity for recovering their liberty, and shaking off the Danish yoke. Sweyn of Norway, the eldest living son of Canute, was absent ; and as the two last kings died without issue, E'dward, son of Ethelred, to the great joy of his countrymen, took possession of the throne. It was during this king's reign that the celebrated Earl Godwin attained to perhaps greater power than any subject ever arrived at in this country.

Edward, who had spent his youth in Normandy, had invited over many of his friends, and given them the highest offices of state ; but Earl Godwin, disliking the preference invariably shown to foreigners, with the assistance of his three sons, Harold, Sweyn, and Tosti, assembled a large army, and compelled Edward to banish the Normans from the kingdom.

At the death of Edward, there were no less than three claimants to the throne of England. Edgar Atheling, nephew of Edmund Ironside, was the only descendant then living of the Saxon kings. He had never been in England, and con-

sequently his claim was little thought of; much less was that of William, duke of Normandy, who rested his pretensions on a promise given him by Edward that he would leave the kingdom to him in his will. Harold, the son of Earl Godwin, who died a few years before the king, also claimed the crown; he was at the time the most powerful nobleman in England, and was warmly supported by the bishops and clergy, and many of the barons, connected with him by alliance and friendship, willingly seconded his claim. It is of him that I am going to tell you a short story, but at the time I now speak of, King Edward was still alive:—

On a stormy night, towards the close of the year 1065, an English ship was driven on the coast of Normandy, and completely wrecked, although many of the crew managed to escape in a boat, and landed in safety on the territory of Guy, count of Ponthieu. Among them was one to whom the rest paid great respect, and who, from his noble appearance and graceful manners, evidently belonged to the noble class.

When the crew of the boat found that they could render no assistance to their unfortunate companions, they turned their thoughts on their own condition; they were without food or water,



and knew not whether they were on the land of a friend or enemy. As soon as morning dawned, one of the men was despatched to a steep eminence near, to reconnoitre: he quickly returned, with the intelligence that they were scarcely an hour's walk distant from a castle, that stood in the midst of a forest before them. They immediately set out towards it, and soon reached its gates, on which the nobleman whom I have mentioned struck loudly with the hilt of his sword. On the appearance of the warder, he said, "I am an English chief, who, with these my followers, have been wrecked on this coast; say to the master of this castle, whoever he may be, that we ask from him a temporary shelter." The guard instantly disappeared, and in a few minutes returned, and throwing wide the gates, cried out, "Guy, count of Ponthieu, bids you welcome." Commanding his men to wait in the body of the spacious hall, the nobleman followed the warder to the further extremity, where, on a raised platform, was seated the owner of the castle. On the approach of the Englishman, Guy rose from his seat, and extending his hand, warmly grasped that of his guest. "Whom have I the honour of receiving in this poor castle of mine?" asked he; "and by what chance were you thrown on this coast?"

“ I was on my way to the court of the duke of Normandy,” replied the Englishman, “ to demand the release of my brother and nephew, who have been detained by him as hostages. I am Harold, son of Earl Godwin.” The face of the count brightened at this intelligence, and summoning his attendants, he ordered a banquet to be immediately prepared for his new guests ; then turning to Harold, he said, “ While they make ready, let me hear some further particulars of your history, for little do we learn of the exploits of men.” The English nobleman then related to his host, that some years previously, Earl Godwin, his father, had been obliged to give his son and grandson as hostages to King Edward, who for greater security consigned them to the custody of the duke of Normandy. The earl being now dead, the king had given his consent to the release of the hostages ; and he was proceeding on his voyage to the duke, to demand their freedom, when a violent tempest arose and drove his vessel upon the shore, where it was unfortunately wrecked.

After a few minutes conversation, they sat down to their repast, to which the hungry sailors and soldiers who were with Harold did ample justice. When they had eaten to their fill of the wild boar, venison, and other dainties, with which the tables



were profusely covered, goblets were placed before the guests, who speedily forgot, under the influence of the blood-red wine, their late misfortunes. Harold had been conversing with his noble entertainer during the banquet, and now could not help noticing the liberal way in which his followers were supplied; turning to the count, he said, "We owe you much, my lord, for this kindness, you must go with me to England, that I may repay your hospitality."

"There will be no need of that," said the count, laughing, as he rose to leave the hall, requesting Harold to preside at the board during his absence.

The Englishman took the vacant seat at the head of the table, and pouring out a full goblet of wine, cried, "My men, drink with me to the health of our noble host, Guy, count of Ponthieu." Each of his followers did so; hardly had they replaced their cups on the board, when Guy re-entered, followed by a train of armed men.

Harold and his companions started up at the sight, and drew their swords. The count advancing, exclaimed, "Harold of England, you and your followers are my prisoners till you have paid me three thousand marks; one of your men only is at liberty to leave this castle, that he may get

you the required sum. Saxons, lay down your swords."

"Never," cried Harold, who, as he saw the fearful odds against him, could only hope to escape by flight. Crying out, "Harold! Harold!" as a signal for his companions, he burst into the midst of the count's men, and striking with his sword on all sides, forced his way to the door. His men attempted to follow him, but labouring under the effects of their deep potations, were easily beaten back, leaving their commander to fight alone against more than twenty swords.

When Harold escaped at the door of the hall, he endeavoured to fly into the woods, but the castle was everywhere surrounded by a high wall, defended on each side by a deep moat. The only access to the castle was by means of a rude draw-bridge, which the count had previously commanded to be raised; and now, not knowing which way to fly, and overpowered by numbers, the English noble was obliged to yield himself a prisoner.

After reproaching Guy for his treacherous hospitality, Harold requested that his most trusty follower might be despatched immediately to England for the money. To this the count consented, and after a short conversation with his chief, an English soldier was allowed to depart.

The man, obeying the private instructions of Harold, instead of directing his course to the seashore, took the nearest way to the court of the duke of Normandy, to whom he represented that while his chief was proceeding to his court, in execution of a commission from the king of England, he had met with unwarrantable treatment from the mercenary disposition of the count of Ponthieu. The duke immediately despatched a messenger to demand the liberty of his prisoner, and the count not daring to refuse so great a prince as William, duke of Normandy, without delay, although with the greatest reluctance, delivered Harold into the hands of the Norman, who conducted him and his followers to Rouen, where William then was.

The duke was, at the time, engaged in a war with Conan, count of Brittany; and well knowing the superior abilities of Harold as a warrior, immediately conceived the idea of requesting his assistance. As soon, therefore, as he heard that Harold had arrived at Rouen, he invited him to his court. The English nobleman readily obeyed the summons, and quickly presented himself before the Norman prince.

“Most noble Harold,” said the latter, “right welcome are you to this, my country. You met

with but a poor reception from the count of Ponthieu, but we will make ample amends for that. Tell me now, what brings you hither?"

"I am come, my lord," replied Harold, "to demand of you, in the name of Edward, king of England, certain hostages committed to your care."

"They are from this moment free to depart with you," rejoined the duke; "but I hope you will not leave us yet awhile. I have often heard of your prowess in the battle-field; will you not aid me in my present campaign?"

"Never shall it be said of Harold," replied the Englishman, "that he was asked to fight, and would not; till you have overcome your present adversary, whoever he may be, do I devote myself to your service."

"Thanks, noble Harold," said William; "I know you too well to doubt of your success. A detachment of my Norman troops are now in Rouen. Conan of Brittany is besieging Dol: march against him; and if you disperse his army, by the splendour of war, greatly will I reward you!"

"I need no reward," replied Harold; "willingly will I lead this band, and putting my trust in God and my right arm, soon will I free your country from its enemies. Farewell."

Harold soon after marched at the head of the Norman troops to Dol, a strongly fortified town on the banks of the Rhine ; and when he had approached within a short distance, rode forward, attended by a few of the Norman chiefs, to reconnoitre the position of the enemy. He found Conan and his army hotly engaged in an assault upon the town, and little prepared to contend with an enemy in their rear. Taking accurate notice of the means of concealment for himself and followers, he rode back, and with great caution led all his men to the foot of a hill, which separated them from the besiegers. As soon as the troops were sufficiently refreshed he ordered them to mount the steep, and without a moment's delay to burst down upon the enemy.

The men, putting confidence in a general of whose valiant exploits they had all heard, in the full assurance of victory, immediately commenced the ascent. A small company of horse soon reached the summit, and without discovering themselves to the enemy, rode away to the right hand, that they might make their attack in a different quarter : soon the main body, with Harold at their head, surmounted the hill, and then with loud shouts and clashing of armour, poured down upon the astonished Conan.

Brief was the resistance he could offer; short was the combat; his men, throwing away their arms, took to flight on all sides, and the inhabitants of the town, at the same time rushing from their gates, hotly pursued them. It was a complete massacre. Harold, with two thousand men, had put to flight five thousand under Conan, and rescued the town of Dol at the moment it was about to surrender.

On his return to Rouen, William, greatly delighted at his success, bestowed upon him the honour of knighthood, and offered him the hand of his daughter Adèle in marriage.

A few days after this battle, William and Harold were walking together on the battlements of Rouen castle, when the former thus addressed the English noble. "You have done me one great kindness, Harold, but I ask one still greater from your hand. Assist me to gain the throne of England?" Harold started in surprise. "Nay, be not frightened," he continued; "it is mine at Edward's death; he swore to me, when I was at his court, that he would bequeath it to me; he cannot survive long: but if I do not gain friends in England, I fear me, my claim will be opposed." Harold, who himself expected to succeed to Edward's crown, was, for a moment, struck dumb with surprise, but recol-



lecting that he and his relations were entirely in the power of William, replied, "You may depend upon my friendship and exertions whenever they are needed."

"If you serve me faithfully," continued the duke, "I pledge myself to appoint you lieutenant of England, and provide munificently for your relations and adherents; but go with me now to the cathedral; my brother Odo is there, and will administer an oath to each of us."

When they entered the stately pile, the English nobleman was struck with its magnificent interior; the pointed arches and fretted roof were to him new objects of admiration. England as yet could only boast of its heavy, but solid and substantial Saxon architecture, in which strength and durability seemed to be the chief aim, instead of the elegance of the Gothic style. As the duke and Harold advanced with loud-echoing steps up the centre aisle, the organ pealed forth its majestic notes, adding fresh grandeur to the imposing scene. Odo, bishop of Bayeux, was standing at the altar, surrounded by monks, arrayed in white; on the table was placed a golden basket, covered with a napkin, on which were three relics of some martyred saint. At the approach of the duke of Normandy and his companion, Odo signed his

attendants to retire, and advancing a few steps, led the two warriors to the side of the altar. After a few minutes conversation with his brother, Odo, turning to the English noble, thus spoke, "Harold, son of Earl Godwin, dost thou, by these sanctified and holy relics of departed saints, swear that thou wilt, to the utmost of thy power, assist William, duke of Normandy, to gain the throne of England, on the death of Edward the king?"

Harold, placing his hands upon the relics, immediately answered, "I swear."

Then turning to the duke, the bishop continued, "William, duke of Normandy, dost thou swear by these holy relics, that if Harold shall freely, and to the utmost of his ability, assist thee to gain the throne of England, thou wilt reward him, his relations, and friends to the best of thy power?"

"I swear," answered William. Odo then lifted up the napkin, and discovered, to the surprise of Harold, a large collection of the most precious relics. Taking a piece of dark-coloured wood from among them, the bishop said, "This is a piece of the true cross; by it, and these sanctified remains, you have now sworn. May the divine vengeance overtake him who breaks his oath!" The organ again poured forth its melody as William and Harold slowly left the cathedral.





HABOLD'S OATH.



The Englishman pondered deeply on the extraordinary oath he had just taken, and even at that moment sought for some excuse by which he might violate it.

Soon after he had concluded this agreement with William, Harold returned to England, accompanied by his brother and nephew. He immediately repaired to the presence of King Edward, and gave a faithful statement of all that had happened to himself in Normandy, and of the violent measures resorted to by the duke to compel him to promise his assistance in gaining him the throne of England. Edward was deeply indignant at the treatment of his ambassador, and revoked all the promises he had ever made to William of Normandy, at the same time giving Harold full powers to act as his lieutenant during the remainder of his life, and promising to leave him the crown of England at his death.

On the 5th of January, 1066, Edward the Confessor, as he is called by historians, died,—and was soon after buried at Westminster. Harold lost no time in seizing the vacant throne, and causing himself to be proclaimed king, and in a few days he was solemnly crowned by the archbishop of Canterbury.

William of Normandy was greatly enraged when

he heard this, and sent over a messenger to Harold, summoning him to observe the oath he had sworn when in Normandy. The king paid no regard to it; saying that the oath had been extorted from him by violent means, and that at the time he took it he was in fear of his personal liberty. William assembled his barons, who readily promised him their support, and instantly resolved upon invading England, to wrest the crown from Harold.

At the same time Tosti, the king's brother, in concert with Hardrada, king of Norway, landed on the northern coast of England, and beat the inhabitants in several battles. Harold was obliged to march against them: and summoning all his barons as he passed along, by the time he reached Stamford he was at the head of a large army. The evening before Harold came up with the enemy, he paid a visit to one of his nobles, at the castle of Torquilstone. While seated there at a feast, with a crowd of noble Saxon leaders, an ambassador from Tosti demanded an audience of him. The envoy was admitted, and moved up the hall undismayed by the frowning countenances of all around him, until he made his obeisance before the throne of King Harold. "What terms," he said, "hath thy brother Tosti to hope, if he should lay down his arms, and crave peace at thy hands?"

“A brother’s love,” cried the generous Harold, “and the fair earldom of Northumberland.”

“But should Tosti accept these terms,” continued the envoy, “what land shall be assigned to his faithful ally, Hardrada, king of Norway?”

“Seven feet of English ground,” answered Harold fiercely; “or as Hardrada is said to be a giant, perhaps we may allow him twelve inches more.” The hall rung with acclamations, and cup and horn were filled to the Norwegian, who should be speedily in possession of his English territory. The baffled envoy retreated, to carry to Tosti and his ally the ominous answer of his injured brother.

On the following day the two armies engaged, and direful was the conflict. The Norwegians retreated over the river Welland, and one man long defended the bridge by his single arm; he was at length pierced with a spear thrust through the planks from a boat beneath. The victorious Saxons pressed after them, and, after displaying the most undaunted valour, Tosti and the king of Norway both fell, with ten thousand of their bravest followers.

Harold was slightly wounded in this engagement, and was recruiting his strength at York, when a messenger arrived, announcing that William of Normandy had planted his banner on the soil of

England. The king immediately led his victorious army to the south, publishing, on his route, an order to all his barons to arm their vassals and follow him to London.

The Norman fleet and army had been assembled early in the summer, but were detained for several weeks by contrary winds at St. Valori. These bold warriors, who despised real dangers, were very subject to the dread of imaginary ones, and many began to mutiny: the duke, in order to raise their drooping spirits, ordered a procession to be made with the relics of St. Valori, and prayers to be said for more favourable weather. The wind instantly changed; and as this incident happened on the eve of the feast of St. Michael, the tutelar saint of Normandy, the soldiers, fancying they saw the hand of Heaven in these favourable circumstances, set out with the greatest alacrity. The Norman armament, without opposition, and without any material loss, arrived at Hastings in Sussex, where the army quietly disembarked. The duke himself, as he leaped on shore, happened to stumble, and fearful that the accident might be construed into a bad omen, he seized some of the sand, and, stretching out his arm, exclaimed, "Thus do I hold my lawful inheritance." A camp was immediately formed, and fortified with timber.

Harold marched rapidly against his enemy, resolved to attack him in person, and not to wait for the arrival of succours, although his army was not nearly so numerous as that of the Normans. Willing to spare the effusion of blood, he sent a message to the duke, promising him a sum of money if he would depart the kingdom. This offer was rejected with disdain; and William, not to be behindhand with his enemy, dispatched a monk to Harold with three propositions for his acceptance: to abandon the crown in his favour; to abide by an appeal to the Pope; or to decide their quarrel by single combat. Harold replied, that the God of battles would soon be the arbiter of all their differences.

On the 14th of October the two armies met. The English front of battle stretched over a line of hills, fortified on all sides with a rampart of stakes and hurdles formed of osiers. The Normans advanced, divided into three columns; William in person commanding the centre. Before leading them to the attack, he thus addressed his soldiers: "Fight bravely, my men, and give no quarter. If we conquer, we shall all be rich; whatever I gain, you will gain; if I succeed, you will succeed; if I win this land, you will share it with me. I have not come hither merely to claim my right, but to



avenge our whole nation of the perjuries and treacheries of these English. Advance then, and punish their crimes ; consider yourselves as men who, before this day closes, will either be dead or victorious." The Normans then advanced, shouting forth the war-song of Charlemagne and Roland, famous at that time throughout all Europe. The archers attempted to drive the English from their intrenchments, but they were too securely sheltered. The infantry, armed with lances, and the cavalry, wielding long and heavy swords, then rushed boldly upon them ; but the Saxon battle-axe cut through their coats of mail, and they were repulsed with slaughter : again and again they returned with fury to the charge, but the firm ranks of the English remained unbroken. At length, William, seeing the impossibility of forcing the intrenchments, had recourse to a stratagem. He commanded his troops to retreat, which they did in apparent confusion ; the English, abandoning their impregnable position, rushed down upon them, and promised themselves an easy victory. The Norman cavalry now wheeled about, and having the advantage of the plain ground, broke through their opponents, who had no weapons but their heavy axes, which it required both hands to wield ; and now the sabres of the horse-soldiers, the lances of the in-



fantry, and the arrows of the bowmen, spread death among the English warriors. They retreated to the intrenchments, but the enemy entered along with them; and though a stern resistance still was offered, it was vain.

Harold and his two brothers, Gurth and Leofwin, fell at the foot of their standard; while the English, discouraged by their loss, lost ground on all sides, and were pursued with great slaughter by the victorious Normans.

Thus was gained by William, duke of Normandy, the great and decisive victory of Hastings, after a battle which was fought from morning till sun-set. William had three horses killed under him, and there fell nearly fifteen thousand men on the side of the Normans.

The loss was still greater on the part of the vanquished, besides the death of the king and his two brothers. The dead body of Harold was brought to William, and was generously restored without ransom to his unhappy mother, who buried it at Waltham Abbey.

## FIFTH EVENING.

CRONATION OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR—THE CURFEW-BELL—A  
MIRACLE OF THE ELEVENTH CENTURY—WILLIAM RUFUS—HENRY  
BEAUCLERC—SHIPWRECK OF PRINCE WILLIAM—HENRY PLANTAGENET  
—THOMAS A BECKET—ROMANTIC ANECDOTE—MURDER OF BECKET—  
UNNATURAL REBELLION—DEATH OF HENRY THE SECOND.

“Now, brother, we are ready to hear your next tale,” cried Lawrence, jumping down from his high chair at the table, where he had been diligently studying, and running to my seat by the fire-side.

“Have you both learned your lessons for to-morrow?” I inquired, shutting my book.

“Oh yes!” exclaimed Magnus, as he placed his stool by my side, “we have just been saying them to mamma, and she tells us we are good boys.”

“Well, then,” I replied, “I will, with great pleasure, resume my story:—

Immediately after the battle of Hastings, WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR marched towards the town of Dover, which after a feeble resistance opened its gates. He then pushed on for London, where

he was soon after crowned king in Westminster Abbey.

He behaved very kindly to the English at first, and pardoned most of those nobles who had taken arms against him ; but during his absence to revisit his former dominions, the Saxons created great disturbances, and arranged a plan for the general extermination of the Normans, during the fast on Ash-Wednesday. William somehow heard of it, and returning immediately to England, severely punished the inhabitants for their rebellion, as he called it, and ever after regarded them as his enemies. He stripped the nobles of their possessions, which he gave to his followers, who also usurped every office of power throughout the kingdom. The English bishops and clergy were degraded ; and, to sum up all, an edict was sent forth, which forbade any Englishman, on pain of death, to burn a light in his dwelling after the bell had tolled the curfew, at eight o'clock in the evening.

A curious story is told by an old historian, which of course we cannot credit, but which shows the readiness of the people in those days to believe in anything marvellous.

Wulstan, bishop of Worcester, had been commanded by William to deliver up his staff, and

was summoned to Westminster Abbey for that purpose.

Before the high altar, and near the tomb of Edward the Confessor, was erected a throne of great splendour and magnificence, on which sat William the Conqueror, crowned with the diadem of England, holding a sceptre in his hand, and surrounded with all the insignia of royalty. On his right stood Lanfranc, a Milanese monk, recently made archbishop of Canterbury, who, as Wulstan entered and bowed before the royal presence, thus addressed him.

“Wulstan, sometime bishop of Worcester, I am commanded by our Sovereign Lord King William to inform you, that he has been pleased to remove you from that station which you have so long unworthily occupied, seeing that you are an unlearned and foolish person, wholly incapable either of instructing the church or counselling the king: I therefore call upon you to deliver up your pastoral ring and staff, that I may give them to him whom his majesty has been pleased to nominate as your successor.”

Wulstan drew himself up proudly to reply, and his tall form and sinewy limbs seemed to expand to colossal dimensions as he spake. “My lord archbishop,” he said, “I know that I am unfit and

unworthy of so high a station, being undeserving of the honour and unequal to the task, and yet I think it unreasonable that you should demand that staff of me which I never received from you. However, I submit to your sentence, and will resign it, but to none other than King Edward the Holy Confessor, who thirty years ago conferred it upon me."

Thus saying, he crossed the church; and with gigantic force struck his staff so violently upon King Edward's tomb, that it penetrated above an inch into the solid marble.

The king, who had risen from his throne on perceiving the impassioned gestures of Wulstan, sunk back into it again with a smile when he saw that his passion had ended in a display so impotent. Then turning to one of his attendants, he said: "My good Lord Robert of Orleans, pluck away, I pray thee, that staff, and keep it for thy pains."

The Norman monk proceeded with alacrity to seize upon the symbol of his new honours; but he might as easily have uprooted an oak from its firm foundations as have removed the staff from the place in which the hand of Wulstan had planted it.

"Death," cried the king, foaming with passion:

“ have our Norman prelates such girlish muscles that they cannot unseat the planting of that old driveller’s arm? My lord archbishop, bring me the staff.”

Lanfranc, a man apparently of superior strength to Wulstan, then approached the tomb, but his efforts were as unavailing as those of his brother monk.

The king, with a mixture of wonder and contempt in his countenance, derided their imbecile efforts; and at last promised to confer the bishopric upon whichever of the ecclesiastics could remove the staff. The reverend fathers, one and all, laboured painfully, and no doubt with hearty good will, but all were at length obliged to abandon the task in despair. The king, incensed almost to madness, leaped from his throne, and striding to the tomb, seized the silver staff in his own Herculean grasp. It shook in his sinewy hand, but to remove it from its place seemed impossible. The big drops started upon his brow, and he gasped for breath from the violence of his exertions, before he relinquished his hold. Wulstan now again approached the tomb of King Edward, and taking the staff into his hand, removed it as easily as Samson broke his manacles. The whole assembly seemed panic-struck; for a moment they gazed

on in breathless silence, and then, "A miracle! a miracle!" was shouted by every one present.

"The will of Heaven be done!" said the conqueror, approaching Wulstan. "Keep, my lord of Worcester, the pastoral staff which your hand has borne so long with honour; and may God pardon us for having listened to evil counsellors, who were plotting the destruction of one of his most faithful servants."

A shout, which seemed to rend the roof of the venerable pile under which they were assembled, burst from the multitude, and the day closed amidst expressions of general satisfaction and delight from the English populace.

William the Conqueror reigned over England twenty-one years: he framed many good laws, but cruelly ill-treated the natives of the country. He was killed by the stumbling of his horse, at the siege of a French town, on the 9th of September, 1087, leaving the crown of England to his second son, William, surnamed *Rufus*, or the *Red*, from the colour of his hair. This king treated the English even worse than his father, and heaped upon them most grievous burdens. I have nothing particular to tell you concerning his reign, except that the first crusade was then proclaimed. This was an expedition, in which all Christendom



joined against the Saracens, who at that time had possession of Jerusalem, and inflicted great cruelties on the pilgrims who visited the Holy Sepulchre. The crusade was productive of no good, and many thousand Christians were killed by the infidels.

The death of William Rufus was rather tragical: he was hunting one day in the New Forest in Hampshire, with Walter Tyrrel, a French gentleman remarkable for his address in archery. William dismounted after a long chase, and Tyrrel wishing to show his dexterity, let fly an arrow at a stag, which suddenly started before him. The arrow, glancing from a tree, struck the king in the breast, and instantly slew him, while Tyrrel, without informing any one of the accident, put spurs to his horse, hastened to the sea-shore, embarked for France, and joined the crusade.

The body of William was found by a labourer, and was buried without pomp, and without regret, at Winchester.

His younger brother Henry, who by reason of his literary acquirements had received the surname of Beauclerc, or good scholar, immediately took possession of the throne. His first act was to alleviate the sufferings of the English. He restored many of the nobility to their ancient estates

and privileges; and by his generous conduct, soon made himself beloved by all classes. During his reign the king of France invaded Normandy. Henry having received intelligence of it, immediately raised an army, and taking with him his son William, a prince of great promise, sailed over, and in a short time compelled the French to retreat to their own country. The king on his return set sail from Barfleur, and was soon carried by a fair wind out of sight of land. The prince was detained by some accident, and his sailors as well as their captain Thomas Fitz-Stephens, having spent the interval in drinking, were so confused that, being in a hurry to follow the king, they heedlessly drove the ship upon a rock, where she immediately foundered. Prince William was put into the long-boat, and had got clear of the ship, when, hearing the cries of his sister Maud, he ordered the seamen to row back, in hopes of saving her; but the numbers who then crowded in soon sunk the boat, and the prince, with all his followers, perished.

Above a hundred young noblemen of the principal families of England were lost on this occasion. A butcher of Rouen was the only person on board who escaped: he clung to the mast, and was taken up next morning by a fisherman. Fitz-

Stephens also took hold of the mast; but being informed by the butcher that Prince William had perished, he said he would not survive the disaster, and threw himself headlong into the sea. When this sad intelligence was communicated to the king, he fell senseless to the ground, nor was he ever afterwards seen to smile.

On the death of Henry the First, which took place in the year 1135, his nephew Stephen, count of Boulogne, took possession of the throne, in violation of an oath which he had sworn, to support the cause of the Princess Matilda, the king's eldest daughter.

On this account there were many battles fought during his reign, and at one time he was taken prisoner by the princess: it was at last agreed that Stephen should remain king of England during his life, but that at his decease the crown should devolve upon Henry, the son of Matilda.

This prince came to the throne in the year 1154. Besides being king of England, he was master of many most important provinces in France and Normandy. He was the first of the Plantagenets, and the greatest monarch of his time in all Europe. The Plantagenets were a very celebrated race of kings: their name is derived from *planta* and *genista*, Latin words, meaning *the plant, broom*,

which Geoffery, the father of Henry, wore on the crest of his helmet.

I will now tell you something of a remarkable man, who was by far the most prominent character in the reign of Henry II.

THOMAS A BECKET, the son of a tradesman in the city of London, was the first man of English descent who, since the Norman conquest, and during the course of a whole century, had risen to any considerable station. An old chronicler of that period gives a curious tale relative to his birth. His father, Gilbert Becket, in the prosecution of his calling, followed the English army to Palestine, where he fell into the hands of the infidels and became the slave of a rich Mussulman. The Mussulman had a daughter who was permitted to converse freely with the captive, and who conceived such an affection for him that she furnished him with the means of escape, under the assurance that she should be the companion of his flight. Gilbert, however, found it impossible to carry the lady with him, and flying alone, returned in safety to London. Meanwhile the faithful girl, eluding the vigilance of her father, fled also, and, though entirely ignorant of the English language, made her way, by a frequent repetition of the word London, to the capital of the English monarchy. Here

again she was as much at a loss as ever ; for in addition to the word London, her vocabulary retained only the name of her lover, which, however, she continued to pronounce till she attracted public curiosity. Gilbert himself became aware of the circumstance. He hastened to his mistress, was joyfully recognised by her, and immediately made her his wife.

The fruit of this union was Thomas, who, being endowed with industry and great capacity, early insinuated himself into the favour of Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury. He was, when very young, promoted by the king to the dignity of chancellor of the kingdom, and soon after became dean of Hastings, and constable of the Tower ; while, to complete his grandeur, he was entrusted with the education of Prince Henry, the king's eldest son. He lived in great pomp and style, and in an embassy to France with which he was entrusted, he astonished that court by the number and magnificence of his retinue.

Henry, besides committing all his important business to Becket's management, honoured him with his friendship and intimacy. One day, as the king and the chancellor were riding through the streets of London, they saw a beggar shivering with cold. " Would it not be very praiseworthy,"

said Henry, "to give that poor man a warm coat in this severe season?"

"Surely it would," replied the chancellor; "and you do well, sire, in thinking of such good actions."

"Then he shall have one presently," cried the king; and seizing the skirt of the chancellor's cloak, which was scarlet and lined with ermine, he began to pull it in good earnest. The chancellor defended himself for some time, and they were both of them very near tumbling off their horses into the street, when Becket, after a long struggle, let go his cloak, which the king bestowed on the beggar, who, being ignorant of the quality of the persons, was not a little surprised at the present.

By his wit and good humour, Becket rendered himself so agreeable to Henry, that on the death of Theobald, he was made archbishop of Canterbury. No sooner was Becket installed in this high dignity than he totally altered his demeanour and conduct, and endeavoured in every way to acquire a character for sanctity. He wore sackcloth next his skin; his usual diet was bread; his drink, water, which he rendered still more unpalatable by the mixture of disagreeable herbs; he tore his back with lashes which he inflicted on himself; and daily on his knees washed the feet of thirteen



beggars, whom he afterwards dismissed with presents. Henry's chief object in making Becket archbishop was, that he might assist him in curbing the excessive power of the clergy. It had grown to such a height that even if one of them murdered a man he could not be tried by the common law: and in many instances the greatest enormities were suffered to go unpunished. But Henry was much deceived: to defend the rights of the church, and the privileges of the clergy, was now the principal study of the archbishop, who in a very short time gave great displeasure to the king.

After several quarrels, Becket was banished from England, and obliged to take refuge in the court of France, where he was kindly treated by the king. After a time, he was reinstated in his office, under a promise that he would be more obedient to Henry's command.

The return of Becket to the see of Canterbury resembled more the triumphal procession of a conqueror than a journey of a Christian bishop from a place of exile to his home. Crowds of people of all ranks and degrees attended him, and celebrated his arrival with hymns of joy. The first act of Becket was to excommunicate the archbishop of York, and the bishops of London and Salisbury, for assisting at the coronation of the king's eldest



son, Henry, without permission. The degraded prelates hastened to Normandy, where the king then was, and complained of the arrogance and violent proceedings of the primate. The archbishop of York remarked, "Your majesty can never hope to enjoy peace and tranquillity while Becket lives." Henry was deeply affected; "To what a wretched state am I reduced," said he, "when I cannot do as I will in mine own kingdom, by reason of one priest; and there is no one to deliver me out of my troubles." Four gentlemen of his household, Reginald Fitz-Urse, William de Traci, Hugh de Moreville, and Richard Brito, taking this passionate exclamation to be a hint for Becket's death, secretly withdrew from court. Some threatening expressions they had used gave a suspicion of their design, and the king despatched a messenger after them, charging them to attempt nothing against the person of the primate.

These orders arrived too late; the four knights, though they took different roads to England, arrived nearly at the same time at Canterbury, where the archbishop had established his residence. Confiding in the sacredness of his character, he had gone that evening, very slenderly attended, to celebrate vespers in the cathedral.

"Where is the archbishop?" shouted Traci, as

he and his companions rushed fiercely into the chapel of St. Benedict; "where is the traitor?"

"I am here," replied Becket, who stood by the altar; "no traitor, but archbishop of Canterbury."

"Thou art my prisoner," cried Fitz-Urse, seizing him by the sleeve.

"What meaneth this?" said Becket, firmly. "Why come ye thus with armed men into my church?"

"To kill thee," shouted De Moreville fiercely, as he uplifted his sword; "traitor, thou must die."

"Be it so," was the answer of the fearless prelate, "I am ready now, or at any time, to die in defence of the liberties of the church." The weapon descended upon his naked head, and before he fell, his brains were dashed out by the other assassins, and scattered with savage triumph upon the pavement.

The spot where this barbarous murder was committed is shown to this day. When I was at Canterbury last summer, I visited the cathedral, and saw the stone upon which Thomas à Becket fell. A large piece has been cut out of it, which they say was so deeply stained with his blood that it could never be washed clean; the fragment was sent to the pope at Rome, where it is still preserved as a most valuable relic.



THE MURDER OF THOMAS A BECKET.



“ If ever I go to Canterbury,” said Magnus, “ I will be sure and recollect to ask for St. Benedict’s chapel. Is the altar still there ? ”

“ No, Magnus, the altar has been removed, but you need not *ask* to see the spot ; almost every body who visits the cathedral has read of this story ; and the verger, I have no doubt, considers it the most interesting sight that he has to show.”

“ But what was done to these wicked men ? ” inquired Lawrence ; “ and what did King Henry say ? ”

When Henry heard of the murder, he shut himself up in his chamber three whole days, during which he neither ate, nor drank, nor conversed with any body. The courtiers, apprehending dangerous effects from his despair, were at last obliged to break in upon his solitude. When he came forth, he despatched an embassy to the pope to plead for his pardon, which, after many delays, was very unwillingly granted. The four assassins are not again mentioned in history ; there is no doubt that they fled to some other country, and very probably joined the second crusade, which soon after commenced. The rest of Henry’s reign was passed in wars with Ireland and Scotland, in which he usually conquered ; but the latter part of his life was greatly embittered by the rebellion of

his sons, Henry, Richard, and Geoffery, against whom he was obliged to lead an army into Normandy.

While prosecuting this unnatural quarrel, the eldest son, Henry, died overwhelmed with remorse. His brother Geoffery soon after died also, leaving Richard to fight alone against his father. Henry was beaten in numerous encounters; castle after castle was taken from him; and in the end he was obliged to accept the terms dictated by the rebels. Among other conditions, he agreed to grant a general pardon to the nobles who served against him under Richard's banner. When the list was shown to him, he beheld first among the names of the rebels that of John, his youngest and favourite son. The unhappy father, already overloaded with cares and sorrows, broke out into exclamations of bitter despair, cursed the day on which he received his birth, and bestowed upon his ungrateful and undutiful children a malediction which he could never be prevailed upon to retract. His spirits were quite broken, and a fever seized him of which he soon expired, at the castle of Chinon. His corpse was removed to Fontevrault Abbey, where it lay in state. Richard here came to visit it; struck with horror and remorse at the sight, he exclaimed, "I am my father's murderer;"

and expressed, when too late, a deep sense of that undutiful behaviour which had brought his parent to an untimely grave.

“Remember this story, my dear boys; and if ever you feel inclined to do any thing that you know is contrary to your father’s will, recollect King Henry the Second and his rebellious children.”



## SIXTH EVENING.

RICHARD CŒUR DE LION—THE CRUSADERS—THE EMPEROR OF CYPRUS AND HIS SILVER FETTERS—THE RIVAL STANDARDS—THE EAGLE OF AUSTRIA—ST. GEORGE FOR ENGLAND—THE LION, THE EAGLE, AND THE LILIES—ENGLISH COATS OF ARMS AND CRESTS—A ROYAL INTERVIEW—RICHARD'S DISPLAY OF STRENGTH—SALADIN'S FEAT OF DEXTERITY—RICHARD'S DEPARTURE.

RICHARD, surnamed Cœur de Lion, or the Lion-hearted, immediately on taking possession of the English throne, resolved upon expiating his great crimes by joining the crusaders, who were then about to sail to Palestine, to recover Jerusalem from the Saracens. He gave his brother John immense possessions, and appointed him guardian of the kingdom of England during his absence.

When they heard of the king's determination, all the military and daring men of the nation flocked round his standard, impatient to distinguish themselves against the infidels. Philip, king of France, had likewise undertaken this expedition with a numerous army; and both monarchs decided upon proceeding to the Holy Land by sea, as there were innumerable difficulties attending a long march through a hostile country.

In the autumn of the year 1189, Richard of England and Philip of France held each an assembly of his nobles, in which it was decided that all those who had assumed the cross (the crusaders wore a cross of red linen sewed upon their cloaks) should assemble in the plains of Vezelay, on the coast of France. On their arrival there, Richard and Philip found their combined army amounted to a hundred thousand men; a mighty force animated with religious zeal and the hopes of glory. The English and French kings here renewed their promises of friendship and mutual support, and pledged their honour not to invade each other's dominions during the crusade. Five judges were appointed for the maintenance of order, and laws were made that whoever killed another during the voyage was to be tied to the dead body, and thrown into the sea; whoever drew his sword upon another, was to lose his hand; a blow of the fist was to be punished with ducking; and bad language by a fine of as many ounces of silver as there had been words uttered; thieves were to have their hair shaven off, pitch put on their head, and feathers shaken on it, and in that condition they were to be turned adrift on the first land their vessel came to. After a repose of two days they embarked, and for a time had a

very prosperous voyage ; but, as they approached the straits of Messina, they encountered a most terrific storm ; the sky became dark as pitch, the thunder pealed and roared, the lightning flashed, revealing for a moment the minutest objects, and then burying all again in gloom. Dreadful was the mischief done among the fleet ; loud crashed the masts as they fell beneath the impetuous blast, and louder still was the agonizing shriek of the sinking crews. Many vessels were lost ; and on the following day the rest of the fleet entered the port of Messina, to repair the extensive damages they had sustained.

The two kings were unfortunately detained here for some time. The Messinese did not much like their warlike guests, and many quarrels occurred between them and the English. On one occasion, a follower of Richard's was purchasing bread from an inhabitant of the town, who, enraged at being offered what he esteemed too low a price, began to abuse the Englishman, whereupon several of the inhabitants joined their countrymen in the dispute, and cruelly ill-treated the crusader. The English only wanted a pretence for attacking the Messinese ; they directly assaulted the town, and had it not been for the interference of King Richard, would soon have massacred all the inha-

bitants. The king gave orders, in token of his victory, that the standard of England should be erected on the walls. Philip of France was sorely annoyed at this, and sent immediately to demand that his banners should be planted alongside those of England. This Richard refused, and thus arose a quarrel between these powerful kings, which was productive of the greatest evils.

On the 30th of March the fleet of Philip of France weighed anchor, and after a prosperous voyage, arrived at Palestine.

Early on the morning of the 16th of April, the war-ships of King Richard, two hundred in number, put to sea, and proceeded with swelling sails and joyous clamour along the coasts of Italy. On the fourth day a violent storm arose, and three of the largest ships were driven on the coast of Cyprus, where the crews landed in safety. The emperor, as he styled himself, of this island, under pretence of providing for their safety, placed the English crusaders in a deserted castle, and afterwards refused to liberate them. Richard, who soon after arrived at Cyprus, took ample vengeance for this injury. As soon as he had landed, he rode with about fifty knights against the inhabitants, and the emperor himself was borne to the ground by the lance of the king of England. He quickly

mounted another horse, and then fled to the mountains. Richard easily obtained a second victory, reduced the emperor to submission, and established governors over the island. The captive prince, being thrown into prison and loaded with irons, complained of the indignity, upon which Richard ordered silver fetters to be made for him, and the emperor, pleased with the distinction, expressed a sense of the generosity of the conqueror.

The English army then again embarked, and on the 8th of June, 1191, arrived at Palestine, where the crusaders who had preceded them were engaged in the siege of Acre. This town had been besieged for two years by their united forces, but was bravely defended by Saladin and the Saracens.

The arrival of Philip and Richard inspired new life into the Christians, and these princes, sharing together the honour and danger of every battle, gave hopes of speedily subduing the infidels; but the king of France, who had received his brother of England with all becoming honour on his arrival, was soon excited to jealousy by the superior respect shown for his more munificent and valiant rival. Many of the pilgrims placed themselves under the English monarch, whom they seemed to recognise as the master of the Holy Land: every

day he led them with his army to the assault, and performed such prodigies of valour that he acquired a great and splendid reputation. Sir Walter Scott tells the following tale of Richard's quarrel with the duke of Austria:—

### The Lion of England.

The standard of England was placed upon a mount in the centre of the camp of the crusaders, where it floated proudly and alone. Among those nobles who had assumed the cross was Conrad, marquis of Montserrat, who, jealous of the fame acquired by Richard king of England, wished to create enemies against him. For that purpose he one day taunted Leopold, duke of Austria, for allowing the flag of England to wave *alone* in the crusaders' camp.

“Mean you seriously, my lord?” said the Austrian. “Think you that Richard of England asserts any pre-eminence over the free sovereigns who are his allies in this crusade?”

“I know not but from circumstances,” replied Conrad: “yonder hangs his banner alone in the midst of our camp, as if he were king and generalissimo of our whole Christian army; but it cannot concern the poor marquis of Montserrat to contend

against an injury patiently submitted to by such potent princes as Philip of France and Leopold of Austria. What dishonour you submit to cannot be a disgrace to me."

"I submit!" said Leopold, indignantly; "I, the archduke of Austria, submit myself to this king of half an island! No, by Heaven! The camp, and all Christendom shall see that I know how to right myself, and whether I yield ground one inch to the English ban-dog. Up, my lieges, up and follow me! We will, and that without losing one instant, place the eagle of Austria where she shall soar as high as ever floated the banner of England." With that he started from his seat, and, amidst the tumultuous cheering of his guests and followers, made for the door of the pavilion, and seized his own banner, which stood before it.

"Nay, my lord," said Conrad, affecting to interfere: "it will blemish your wisdom to cause an affray in the camp at this time; and perhaps it is better to submit to the usurpation of England a little longer than to——"

"Not an hour, not a moment longer," vociferated the duke; and, with the banner in his hand, and followed by his shouting guests and attendants, he hastened to the mount on which the ensign of England proudly floated. Leopold laid his hand



on the standard spear as if to pluck it from the ground; but on the remonstrances of one of his attendants he withdrew it, and planting his own banner by the side of that of England, he commanded a cask of wine to be brought to regale the by-standers, who quaffed many a cup around the Austrian standard.

Richard was at this time confined by sickness to his bed, and hearing a great noise, sent out Thomas De Vaux, one of his attendants, to ascertain the cause. De Vaux returned to tell him that a great crowd had gathered round Saint George's Mount, and that the archduke of Austria was pulling down the banner of England, and displaying his own in its stead.

"What say'st thou?" said the king, in a tone which might have waked the dead.

"Nay," said De Vaux, "let it not chafe your highness, that a fool should act according to his folly."

"Speak not to me," said Richard, springing from his couch, and casting on his clothes with a despatch which seemed marvellous; "speak not to me; he that breathes but a syllable is no friend of Richard Plantagenet." At this last word the king snatched up his sword, and without any other weapon, or calling for assistance, he rushed out of the

tent. De Vaux immediately raised the alarm among the English nobility, who hastened after their king, shouting, "St. George for England!" till the whole camp was up in arms.

Richard soon reached the foot of St. George's Mount, and, bursting his way through the disorderly troop who crowded round it, quickly gained the level platform on the top of the eminence, on which were pitched the rival banners, surrounded still by the archduke's friends and retinue. In the midst of the circle stood Leopold himself, still contemplating with much satisfaction the deed he had done, and still listening to the shouts of applause which his partisans bestowed with no sparing breath.

While he was in this state of self-congratulation, Richard burst into the circle, attended indeed only by two men, but in his own headlong energies an irresistible host. "Who has dared," he said, laying his hands upon the Austrian standard, and speaking in a voice like the sound which precedes an earthquake; "who has dared to place this paltry rag beside the banner of England?"

Leopold wanted not courage, and it was impossible he could hear this question without reply; yet, so much was he surprised at the unexpected arrival of Richard, that the demand was twice





RICHARD COEUR DE LION TRAMPLING ON THE FLAG OF AUSTRIA.

repeated, in a tone which seemed to challenge heaven and earth, ere the archduke answered, with as much firmness as he could command, "It was I, Leopold of Austria."

"Then shall Leopold of Austria," replied Richard, "presently see the rate at which his banner and his pretensions are held by Richard of England." So saying, he pulled up the standard-spear, splintered it in pieces, threw the banner itself upon the ground, and placed his foot upon it.

"Thus," said he, "I trample on the banner of Austria. Is there a knight among you dare resent the deed?"

There was a momentary silence; but there are no braver men than the Austrians. "I," and "I," and "I," was heard from several of the duke's followers, and he himself added his voice to those which accepted the king of England's defiance.

"Why do we dally thus?" said the Earl Wallenrode, a gigantic warrior from the frontiers of Hungary. "Brethren, this man's foot is on the honour of your country. Let us rescue it from violation, and down with the pride of England." So saying, he drew his sword, and struck at the king a blow, which might have proved fatal, had

not one of his attendants intercepted and caught it upon his shield.

“ I have sworn,” said King Richard,—and his voice was heard loud above the tumult, which now waxed loud and wild,—“ never to strike one whose shoulders bear the cross ; therefore, live, Wallenrode, but live to remember Richard of England.” As he spoke, he grasped the tall Hungarian round the waist, and hurled him back with such violence that his body seemed as if sent from a military engine, not only through the ring of spectators, but over the edge of the mount itself, down the steep side of which Wallenrode rolled headlong ; until, pitching upon his shoulder, he dislocated the bone, and lay like one dead. This almost supernatural display of strength did not encourage either the duke, or any of his followers, to renew a personal contest. Those who stood farthest back did indeed clash their swords, and cry out, “ Cut the island mastiff to pieces !” but those who were nearer veiled their personal fears under a regard for order, and cried, “ Peace ! peace ! the peace of the cross ! the peace of the Holy Church !”

At this moment, Philip, attended by his nobles, came forward to enquire the cause of the disturbance. Richard blushed at being discovered by his

rival in an attitude neither becoming his character as a monarch nor as a crusader; and it was observed that he withdrew his foot, as if accidentally, from the dishonoured banner, and exchanged his look of violent emotion for one of affected composure and indifference. Leopold also struggled to display some show of courage, mortified as he was by having been seen passively submitting to the insults of the fiery king of England.

“What means this unseemly broil,” said Philip, “between the sworn brethren of the cross, the majesty of England, and the princely duke Leopold? How is it possible that those who are the chiefs and pillars of this holy expedition——”

“A truce with thy remonstrances, France,” cried Richard: “this prince, or pillar if you will, hath been insolent, and I have chastised him: that is all.”

“Majesty of France,” said the duke, “I appeal to you and every sovereign prince against the foul indignity which I have sustained. This king of England hath pulled down my banner and trampled on it.”

“Because he had the audacity to plant it beside mine,” said Richard.

“My rank as thine equal entitled me,” replied the duke, emboldened by the presence of Philip.



“Assert such equality for thy person,” said King Richard, “and, by St. George, I will treat thee as I did thy broidered kerchief there.”

“Nay, but patience, brother of England,” said Philip; “I came not hither to awaken fresh quarrels. The only strife between the lion of England, the eagle of Austria, and the lilies of France should be, which should be carried farthest into the ranks of the infidel.”

“It is a bargain, my royal brother,” said Richard, giving his hand with all the frankness that belonged to his rash but generous disposition; “and soon may we have an opportunity to try this gallant and fraternal wager.”

“Let this noble duke also partake of the friendship of this happy moment,” said Philip; and the duke approached half-sullenly, half-willingly, to enter into some accommodation.

“I think not of fools nor of their folly,” said Richard carelessly; and turning his back upon him he withdrew from the ground. Richard had cause to remember these words afterwards, as you will very soon hear.

“Brother, what did King Philip mean by the lion, the eagle, and the lilies?” enquired Lawrence, who, with Magnus, was highly delighted with the bravery of Richard.

“ My dear boys,” I replied, “ every civilised country has some particular device for its national banner: England’s is still the lion, that of France, the lilies, and the eagle still soars on the standard of Austria. In those days the different armies were often called by the representation on their banners; and warriors, who were then completely clothed in armour, were only known by some device on their shield, or upon their helmet: thus we read of the knight of the leopard, the knight of the rose, the falcon knight, and a great number of others. From these we derive our coats of arms and crests; and there are few old English who cannot boast of one of these.

The siege of Acre was prosecuted with vigour. The Christians had a secret friend in the town, whose name they never could learn, but who probably was of their own creed. By means of slips of paper attached to arrows, he gave them intelligence of all the proceedings of the enemy, so that whenever Saladin made an attack on the crusaders’ camp, they were prepared to receive him. The infidels were at last obliged to surrender the town to the mercy of their conquerors, who allowed them, after they had laid down their arms, to march out with their wives and children.

The king of England now resolved to seek the

friendship of Saladin, and proposed an interview with that prince. On the appointed day he rode to the place of rendezvous upon a large and handsome Spanish horse : his reins were adorned with gold ; a housing of green embroidered with gold covered his saddle, on the back of which were two small golden lions, with their fore-paws raised in attitude to fight. The tunic of the king was of rose-coloured velvet ; his mantle was striped with silver half moons, between which were scattered numerous golden suns ; his hat was of scarlet cloth, embroidered with figures of beasts and birds in gold ; his spurs and the hilt of his sword were of gold ; the sheath of his sword was covered with silver, and it hung from a silken belt ; in his right hand he held his sceptre. Dismounting from his steed, thus accoutred, he entered the splendid pavilion that had been prepared for the interview, where was every thing that eastern luxury could devise. When the two monarchs had discoursed for some time in a friendly way, but without coming to any agreement, Saladin's attention was drawn to the two-handed sword that was borne after Richard by one of his attendants ; a broad straight blade, the seemingly unwieldy length of which extended nigh from the shoulder to the heel of the wearer.

“Had I not,” said Saladin, “seen this brand flaming in the front of the battle, like that of Azrael, I had scarce believed that human arm could wield it. Might I request to see the lion-king strike a blow with it in peace, in pure trial of strength.”

“Most willingly, noble Saladin,” answered Richard; and looking around for something whereon to exercise his might, he saw a steel mace held by one of the attendants, the handle being of the same metal, and about an inch and a half in diameter. This he placed on a block of wood, and taking the ponderous weapon from his attendant, and wielding it with both his hands, he swung it around his head, and discharged such a tremendous blow, that the bar of iron rolled on the ground in two pieces, as a sapling divided by a woodman's axe.”

“By the head of the prophet, a most wonderful blow!” said Saladin, accurately examining the iron bar which had been cut asunder, and the blade of the sword, which was so well tempered as to exhibit not the least token of having suffered by the violence of the stroke. He then took the king's hand, and, looking on the size and muscular strength which it exhibited, laughed as he placed his own, so lank and thin, by its side.

“Something I would fain attempt,” said Saladin; but wherefore should the weak show their inferiority in presence of the strong? Yet, each land has its own exercises, and this may be new to the lion-king.” So saying, he took from the floor a cushion of silk and down, and placed it upright on one end. “Can thy weapon, my brother, sever that cushion?” he said to Richard.

“No, surely,” replied the king; “no sword on earth can cut that which opposes no steady resistance.”

“Mark, then,” said Saladin, unsheathing his scimitar, a curved and narrow blade of a dull blue colour. Wielding this weapon, apparently so inefficient, when compared to that of Richard, the sultan stepped forward, drew the scimitar across the cushion, applying the edge so dexterously, and with so little apparent effort, that the cushion seemed rather to fall asunder than to be divided by violence.

“It is a juggler’s trick,” said one of Richard’s attendants, darting forward, and snatching up the portion of cushion that had been cut off, as if to assure himself of the reality of the feat.

Saladin seemed to comprehend his meaning, though the man spoke in the English tongue, for he instantly undid a sort of veil he wore upon his

head, and laid it along the edge of his sabre, then extending the weapon edgeways in the air, and suddenly drawing it through the veil, he severed it into two parts, which floated to different sides of the tent; equally displaying the extreme temper and sharpness of the weapon, and the exquisite dexterity of him who used it.

“ Now, in good faith, my brother,” said Richard, “ thou art even matchless at the trick of the sword, and right perilous were it to meet thee! Still, however, I put some faith in a downright English blow; and what we cannot do by sleight we eke out by strength.”

After many courtesies had passed between the English and the Saracen monarchs they separated, each returning to his own army. The same day Richard sent a present of falcons and hunting dogs to Saladin, who, in return, made him many rich presents.

At this time Philip of France, jealous of the superior ascendancy acquired by Richard, declared his resolution to return to his own country, pleading the bad state of his health as an excuse. Richard then, without opposition, assumed the head of affairs in Palestine, and soon distinguished himself more than ever. He gained a great battle over Saladin, in which forty thousand Saracens



were slain. He was able to advance within sight even of Jerusalem, the object of the enterprise, when he had the mortification to find that he must abandon all farther hopes.

The crusaders, from long absence from home, fatigue, disease, want, and a variety of incidents, had gradually abated in that enthusiastic ardour for the holy war that at first had set before their eyes fame and victory in this world, and a crown of glory in the next. Every one, except the king of England, expressed an ardent desire to return to Europe, and Richard was reluctantly obliged to conclude a truce with Saladin for three months, three weeks, three days, and three hours,—a magical period, suggested by superstition,—on condition that free access to the holy sepulchre should be afforded to all pilgrims.

It was now high time for the king of England to turn his attention to his own dominions, where the greatest confusion prevailed. In defiance of the vow he had taken, Philip of France had opened a series of correspondence with Prince John; promised to give him his sister Alice in marriage, and to assist him in taking possession of his brother's dominions. After the truce, there remained no business of importance to detain Richard in Palestine; and when intelligence was brought to him of



the state of his affairs in England, he immediately determined on returning home.

“ We must now leave this brave king for a short time; to-morrow evening I will tell you more about him.”

“ What a strong man he must have been,” exclaimed Magnus, “ to cut asunder that iron mace.”

“ Ah! but I like Saladin’s feat the best,” added Lawrence; “ what a beautifully sharp sword he must have had, and how dexterously he must have used it!”

“ That tale also is told by Sir Walter Scott, who, I have no doubt, has borrowed it from some old historian, and related it in his own amusing and interesting way. To-morrow evening I will tell you more of this valiant king of England.”

## SEVENTH EVENING.

RICHARD I. LEAVES PALESTINE—THE THREE PALMERS—RICHARD'S CAPTIVITY—BLONDEL DE NESLE—RELEASE OF CŒUR DE LION—BERTRAND DE GOURDON—THE FATAL ARROW—DEATH OF RICHARD—ACCESSION OF JOHN—ARTHUR PLANTAGENET—CASTLE OF FALAISE—HUBERT DE BOURG—NOBLE CONDUCT—KING JOHN—CAPTIVITY OF DE BOURG—THE INTERVIEW—THE FATAL LEAP.

LAST evening I finished by saying that Richard I. had determined to leave Palestine, and return to his own dominions. He embarked at the port of Acre; but after tossing about for six weeks, his ship was at last obliged to take refuge in the port of Corfu, where he landed under the name of Hugh the merchant. He immediately sent a costly ring to the governor with a prayer for a safe conduct. "This is not the gift of a merchant," said the governor, "but of Richard, king of England, a generous prince who deserves no interruption. Let him pass on in safety." When Richard arrived within the confines of Germany, great precaution became necessary, in order that he might elude the vigilance of Leopold, duke of Austria, who sought him with unrelenting hatred. One by one his followers were taken, till he was at last obliged

to wander three days and nights without food, with only two attendants, who, as well as himself, were disguised as palmers.

Several stories are told of Richard's capture by the duke of Austria. A short time ago I read an amusing ballad about it, but which is too long for me to repeat. According to that, Richard and his followers went one day into a hostelry to procure food. A minstrel happened to be there, who by some means recognised the king; and knowing that a reward had been offered for his capture by Leopold, he hastened to the duke, and betrayed to him the hiding-place of Richard of England.

The king was taken by surprise, and conveyed to the castle of the duke of Austria, who, overjoyed at being able to repay to Richard the insults he had received from that monarch in Palestine, threw him into prison, and treated him with great indignity. The emperor of Austria, Henry VI., who also considered Richard as his enemy, hearing of his capture, despatched messengers to the duke, requiring the royal captive to be delivered up to him.

Thus the king of England, who had filled the whole world with his renown, found himself, during the most critical state of his affairs, confined in a dungeon, and loaded with irons, entirely at the mercy of his enemies.

A romantic tale of the discovery of his prison by a distinguished minstrel, named Blondel de Nesle, is thus related in a chornicle of the thirteenth century:—

“ Now we will tell you of King Richard, whom the duke of Austria held in prison, and no one knew aught of him, save only the duke and his councillors. Now it happened that he had for a long time had a minstrel, who was born in Artois, and who was named Blondel. This man resolved in himself that he would seek his lord in all countries till he had found him, or till he had heard tidings of him; and so he set forth, and he wandered day after day, till he had spent a year and a half, and never could hear any sure tidings of the king; and he rambled on till he came into Austria, as chance led him, and went straight to the castle where the king was in prison; and he took up his abode in the house of a widow woman, and asked her whose was that castle that was so fair and strong, and well seated. The hostess made answer, and said that it was the duke of Austria's. ‘ Fair hostess,’ said Blondel, ‘ is there any prisoner in it now?’ ‘ Yea, doubtless,’ said she, ‘ one who has been there these four years, but we cannot learn of a certainty who he is, but they guard him very diligently, and we surely think

that he is a gentleman and a great lord.' And when Blondel heard these words he marvelled, and he thought in his heart that he had found what he was in quest of, but he said naught of it to the hostess. He slept that night, and was at ease, and when he heard the horn sounding the day, he got up and went to the church to pray to God to aid him; and then he came to the castle and went up to the governor, and told him that he was a player on the harp, and would willingly abide with him if it pleased him. The governor was a young knight, and handsome, and he said he would willingly retain him. Then Blondel went for his harp; and he came back to the castle, and so served the governor, that he was on good terms with all the family, and his services pleased much. So he stayed there all the winter, and he never could learn who the prisoner was. At length, he was going one day in the festival of Easter through the garden which was by the tower, and he looked around to try if by any chance he could see the prisoner. So while he was in that mind, the king looked and saw Blondel, and thought how he should make himself known to him; and he called to mind a song which they had made between them two, and which no one knew save the king. So he began loudly and clearly to sing the first verse, for

he sung right well. And when Blondel heard him, he knew of a certainty that it was his lord, and he had the greatest joy in his heart that ever he had on any day, and he went forthwith out of the orchard and entered his chamber, and took his harp, and went to the governor and said to him, 'Sire, if it please you I would willingly go to mine own country, for it is a long time since I have been there.' 'Blondel, my fair brother,' said the governor, 'this you will by no means do, if you believe me, but you will remain here, and I will do you great good.' 'Sire,' said Blondel, 'I would not stay on any wise.' When the governor saw he could not keep him, he gave him his congé, and therewith a good nag. Then Blondel parted from the governor, and journeyed till he came to England, and told the friends of the king, and the barons, where he had found his lord, and how. When they heard these tidings they were greatly rejoiced, for the king was the most liberal knight that ever wore spur. And they took counsel among them to send to Austria to the duke to ransom the king, and they chose two most valiant and most wise knights to go thither. And they journeyed till they came to Austria to the duke, and they found him in one of his castles, and they saluted him on the part of the barons of England,

and said to him, ‘Sire, they send to you, and pray that you will take ransom for their lord, and they will give you as much as you desire.’ The duke replied,—‘Lords, if ye wish to have him, ye must ransom him for two hundred thousand marks sterling, and make no reply, for it would be lost labour.’ Then the messengers took their leave of the duke, and said that they would report it to the barons, and they would then take counsel on it. So they came back to England, and told the barons what the duke had said, and they replied that the matter should not stand for that. Then they made ready the ransom, and sent it to the duke, and the duke delivered up to them their king.”

Great was the joy of the English on the re-appearance of their monarch, who had suffered so many calamities, who had acquired so much glory, and who had spread the reputation of their name into the farthest east, whither their fame had never before been able to extend.

As soon as Philip of France heard of the king’s deliverance from captivity, he wrote to his confederate John in these terms: “Take care of yourself; the devil has broken loose.” Prince John was a coward as well as a traitor; he humbly craved pardon for his offences, and by the intercession of his mother, was received again into his brother’s



favour. "I forgive him," said the king, "and hope I shall as easily forget his injuries as he will my clemency." The king of France was the great object of Richard's resentment and animosity; and they fought several battles, in which sometimes the one conquered and sometimes the other. At length, on the 28th of March, 1199, Richard laid siege to the castle of Chalons: the garrison offered to surrender, but the king replied that, since he had taken the pains to come thither, he would burn their houses, and hang every man of them. The same day Richard approached the castle to examine it, when one Bertrand de Gourdon, an archer, took aim at him, and pierced his shoulder with an arrow. The king gave instant orders for the assault, which proved successful; he entered the castle, and hanged all the garrison except Gourdon, who had wounded him, and whom he reserved for a more cruel execution. He sent for him, and asked, "Wretch, what have I ever done to you that you should seek my life?"

"What have you done to me?" replied the prisoner coolly. "You killed, with your own hands, my father and my two brothers; and you intended to have hanged myself. I am now in your power, and you may take revenge by inflicting on me the most severe tortures; but I shall endure

them all with pleasure, since I am happy in ridding the world of such a tormentor." Richard, struck with the reasonableness of the reply, and humbled by the near approach of death, ordered Gourdon to be set at liberty, and a sum of money to be given to him.

Richard did not long survive this interview; after having bequeathed the kingdom to his brother John, he expired, in the forty-second year of his age, and the tenth of his reign.

"Brother," said Lawrence, "you said King Richard was ransomed for two hundred thousand marks, how much is that?"

"About equal to four hundred thousand pounds of our present money; a great sum, to raise which, the clergy melted down the church plate, and every nobleman contributed his share."

I cannot tell you exactly why Richard did not leave the crown to his nephew Arthur, who was the rightful heir, rather than to his brother, who had behaved so very unkindly to him. I suppose that he thought Prince Arthur, who was only twelve years of age, was too young to rule so large a kingdom in those turbulent days, or that he would be incapable of maintaining his claim against the powerful faction of which John was the head.

In accordance with the will of Richard, John

was proclaimed king of England, and of the extensive provinces of Normandy, Aquitaine, and Poictou. The barons of these countries, however, immediately declared in favour of Arthur's title, and applied for assistance to Philip, king of France, who readily embraced the cause of the young prince. As soon as John had received the submission of the nobles of England, he passed over to France, in order to conduct the war against Philip, and to recover the revolted provinces from his nephew Arthur. After several battles, a peace was concluded between the two monarchs, in which Arthur's interests were but little regarded; and for several years that prince was obliged to live in retirement.

When Prince Arthur rose to man's estate, he determined to seek his security and elevation by an union with Philip and the malcontent barons of Normandy, who were again at war with John. He was received with great marks of distinction by the French king, who gave him his daughter in marriage, and bestowed upon him the honour of knighthood.

Every thing which he undertook succeeded. Many towns that had yielded to John were again wrested from him, and the tide of fortune was running strongly against the English monarch,

when an event happened that unfortunately gave him a decisive superiority over his opponents.

Young Arthur, fond of military renown, had broken into Poictou, at the head of a small army, and laid siege to the fortress of Mirabeau, where John's mother, Queen Eleanor, then was. John, roused from his indolence by so pressing an occasion, collected a large army, and falling on Arthur's camp before that prince was aware of his danger, dispersed his men, and took him prisoner, together with the most considerable of the revolted barons.

The castle of Falaise, situated in the town of that name, famous as being the birth-place of William the Conqueror, was the place selected by John as the prison of the captured prince, who as he entered its dismal walls seemed to part from life and hope. He was, however, kindly received by Hubert de Bourg, constable of the castle, who, though he dared not resist the commands of John, yet endeavoured as much as possible to alleviate his prisoner's misfortunes.

"My dear Prince," said he, when Arthur was confided to his charge, "be comforted;—wretched as is your lot, let not the high soul of Arthur Plantagenet forsake him."

"Alas! Hubert," replied the prince, "I am

the hopeless tenant of a dungeon, the speedy victim of a tyrant's cruelty; ere to-morrow's sun has risen, I may no longer be Prince Arthur, but a senseless lump of clay."

"Think not so harshly of your uncle," rejoined Hubert; "cruel though he is, he dare not, cannot take your life."

"Your words are but a drop of comfort in an ocean of grief," answered the prince. "I fear me I have too often thwarted my uncle's schemes, and have too many friends to support my just pretensions to the throne of England, to allow him to deal mercifully with me. But, my good Hubert, let me have one hour's notice before the murderers come."

"You shall have as long time as you please for preparation while Hubert de Bourg is governor of Falaise," replied he. "Farewell, my Prince, may your forebodings be groundless."

The next morning two men arrived at Falaise castle, and demanded immediate audience of the governor. Hubert de Bourg's heart shrunk within him when they entered his chamber and with low obeisances presented him a roll, on which he, with great pain, discovered the royal signet. They were dark, forbidding looking men, of moody, sullen aspect, to whom ferocity and bloody deeds seemed

no strangers; and as the feelings of humanity caused De Bourg's cheek to turn pale, and his lips to quiver as he perused the document they had delivered to him, they exchanged glances of their dull grey eyes that might have been too easily understood by an observer. When Hubert had finished reading the scroll, he dropped it on the floor, and stood for a few seconds gazing upon vacancy; at length, rousing himself, he turned haughtily to the men, and said, "What your master has commanded must be done, but you must wait awhile.—I must communicate to my prisoner the contents of that cursed paper, and give him some little time for preparation."—

"Please you, sir governor," answered one of the ruffians, "our orders were to do this matter at once; we cannot be delayed by such an excuse as this."

"Wretch!" violently exclaimed De Bourg, "cease thy brutality; I am governor here, as soon thou shalt know if thou darest dispute my will again." He then turned on his heel, and trampling on the scroll, left the apartment.

Prince Arthur had passed a miserable night in his cold, dismal cell, in one of the turrets of the castle to which he was confined. He was meditating on his dark prospects, and the little hope



he had of ever again being free, when the entrance of the governor disturbed him. He turned quickly round, and read in the melancholy look of De Bourg the sad fate that awaited him. "Hubert," said he, "I know what thou wouldst say,—they are come,—the cruel monster has sent his blood-thirsty hounds to tear me in pieces." De Bourg tried in vain to speak; before he could give utterance to the words they were choked in his throat. "Oh Hubert," continued the prince, "is it not hard for me thus to die? Had it been my fate to fall on the field of battle, I would not have murmured at my lot; but to be murdered in cold blood, without one single chance of life. Oh Hubert! 'tis too much!" and falling upon the neck of De Bourg, he wept bitterly. De Bourg himself was no less affected; he pressed him to his breast, and the stern warrior's eyes were dimmed with tears. At last, starting, as if by some sudden impulse, he exclaimed, "It shall not be. Am not I governor of this castle, and shall I allow a foul, unnatural murder to be committed within its walls? What if King John does command? Am I to be an instrument of his villanous designs? Shall my name be treated with dishonour, because King John wills it? No! By my faith it shall not be!" "Prince Arthur," he continued, after a short pause,





PRINCE ARTHUR AND HUBERT DE BOURG.



“while you are in my hands your life is safe, though my own pay the forfeit of my disobedience.”

“Thanks, noble Hubert,” exclaimed the prince, “you leave me one ray of hope yet; may you be able to serve me without injuring yourself!”

The governor then hastened to the apartment in which he had left the two messengers from King John, and without any parley thus roughly addressed them:—

“Caitiffs, begone! Darken not these walls any longer with your vile presence. Tell your master that Hubert de Bourg refuses to execute his diabolical commands, and that while he is governor of the castle of Falaise, the blood of the innocent shall not be spilled.” The men looked aghast, they could scarcely believe their senses;—that the governor of a castle should refuse to do the bidding of his king, was to them marvellous. They looked at each other in silence; and when Hubert again thundered forth the word “Begone,” they slowly and reluctantly left the apartment to carry back their tidings to the king.

John was seated alone in a chamber of his palace at Rouen, when one of his attendants announced that two men waited to speak with him. A malignant smile played upon his lip as he ordered them to be brought into his presence; but when

the men entered with drooping heads and averted eyes, a dark scowl gathered on his brow, and, speaking in a hollow tone of voice, he said, "Has he escaped me? or what means this mummery of grief?"

"So please your majesty," replied one of the ruffians, "we lost no time in getting to Falaise; but Hubert de Bourg bade us tell you that he would not execute your commands, nor should his prisoner die while he was governor of the castle."

"We will soon see to this," exclaimed the king; and bursting out of the room in a transport of disappointed rage, he ordered his horse to be got ready, and fifty of his own guards to attend him. Without delay he set out towards Falaise, and on the following day arrived at the castle. He immediately ordered the governor into his presence, and when De Bourg with bended knee stooped before his royal master, the king in an angry tone thus addressed him: "False traitor, wherefore hast thou dared to disobey my commands? Knowest thou not that I have power to place thy head on the highest battlement of this castle, of which thou callest thyself the governor? And, by St. George, that will I do, if thou dost not instantly make amends for thy misconduct, by leading me to where this prisoner of *thine* is kept."

“Threats have no influence on me, gracious Sire,” replied Hubert, boldly; “thou canst do with this poor body as thou wilt, when life has parted from it; but never will I be an accomplice in so unnatural a murder as that thou contemplatest.”

“Guards,” called the king, in a voice almost choked with passion, “seize this insolent slave, bear him to the deepest dungeon of the castle: we will soon see whose will is to be obeyed.”

He then commanded one of Hubert’s followers to lead the way to the cell in which Prince Arthur was confined; and the man, having already seen his master thrown into captivity, dared not disobey. John followed him alone, and when the fellow, after winding up several stairs, stopped at an iron door and unbolted it, the king, in a low voice, bade him wait his return outside, and then with the savage appearance of a fiend entered the cell.

Prince Arthur started with surprise, when turning his head as he heard the door opened he beheld the features of his detested uncle. His first impulse was to rush upon him, and endeavour to repay the many cruelties he had received at his hands; but he was unarmed, and John, besides being of a larger and stronger frame, carried his drawn sword in his hand. The captive looked

round, but no chance of escape presented itself; and he then stood erect and firm, to await the issue of this unexpected interview.

“Arthur Plantagenet,” said the king in a hoarse voice; “thou art mine enemy; thou hast led armies into my countries, thou hast burned my towns, thou darest to aspire to my crown, and thou art my prisoner; thy liberty is at my disposal, thy life is mine. On one condition, and on one only, will I pardon thee. Wilt thou swear never to assert thy claim to the throne of England?”

“Sooner will I die,” replied the intrepid prince, “than yield that which is my just inheritance. And dost thou come hither with thy sword drawn against thy brother’s son? art thou turned murderer? canst thou find none other to do thy hellish work?”

“Wilt thou swear?” roared John in his loudest voice, presenting his weapon at the prince: “if not”—

“I will not swear,” replied Arthur. “England is mine, and while I breathe so long will I proclaim it.”

“Then die, thou traitor,” cried the infuriated king, as he plunged his sword full at the breast of the young prince. Arthur leaped hastily aside, and avoided the thrust. Uttering a piercing shriek

of horror, with one bound he gained the window that admitted light into the cell: it was full fifty feet from the earth, but he saw not the distance: he gave the fatal leap, and the next moment was a mangled corpse on the stones below.

The body was found by one of Hubert's followers, and concealed; and though the murder was for a time kept secret, the people soon learned the truth. All men were struck with horror at the inhuman deed: and from that moment, King John, detested by his subjects, retained but a very precarious authority over the nobles and barons in his dominions. Philip of France continued the war against him, and took from him nearly all his continental possessions.

“ This is rather a melancholy conclusion to my tale, and I am sorry to leave you with such long faces; but the story of Prince Arthur is generally believed, and I cannot alter it.”



## EIGHTH EVENING.

MAGNA CHARTA—DEATH OF JOHN—HENRY OF WINCHESTER—SIMON DE MONTFORT—A CLEVER ESCAPE—BATTLE OF EVESHAM—DEATH OF HENRY—RETURN OF PRINCE EDWARD—PETTY BATTLE OF CHALONS—LLEWELLYN OF WALES—ELEANORA DE MONTFORT—INVASION OF WALES—BATTLE OF THE MENAI—PONT OREWYN—DEATH OF LLEWELLYN—MASSACRE OF THE BARDS—THE YOUNG PRINCE OF WALES.

I HAVE but little more to tell you of King John. The barons of England were so much disgusted with his conduct that they made war against him, and after several battles obliged him to yield to their demands. The king appointed a conference with them at Runnymede, not far from Windsor Castle, and there, on the 19th of June, 1215, in the presence of all the assembled warriors and prelates of the kingdom, he signed and sealed "MAGNA CHARTA." This deed granted very important liberties to every order of men in the kingdom, and laid the foundation of that system of free government which has been for ages the admiration of the world, and under which we now enjoy so many blessings. I have nothing more to tell you of King John, except the cause of his death. He was assembling a considerable army

to fight a battle against Lewis, the son of Philip of France, who had laid claim to the crown of England, when, passing from Lynn into Lincolnshire, his road lay along the sea-shore, which is always overflowed at high-tide, and not choosing the proper time for his journey, he lost in the inundation all his carriages, treasure, baggage, and regalia. This disaster, added to the distracted state of his kingdom, so preyed upon his mind, that not long after he reached the castle of Newark, he expired there on the 1st of October, 1216.

John was succeeded by his eldest son, Henry,—the third king of that name,—who was only nine years old when his father died. The earl of Pembroke, Henry's uncle, was made protector of the kingdom during his nephew's minority, and so long as he lived the affairs of state were conducted with great vigour; but after his death, Henry, who was of a weak disposition, was greatly oppressed by his barons, who joined themselves together in attacks upon his authority. There is nothing particularly interesting in this king's reign, although it is the longest that is to be met with in the English annals, with the exception of that of our late good monarch, George the Third.

When he was nearly sixty years old, Henry was beaten in a battle, and, together with his son Ed-

ward, taken prisoner by Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, a most powerful and ambitious nobleman. The young prince, however, managed to escape. He had a horse of extraordinary swiftness, and one day when riding out, guarded by several of the earl's retinue, he proposed that they should for amusement's sake ride races with one another: he took care not to join in their sport, and when their horses were thoroughly tired and heated, he suddenly clapped spurs to his steed, and saying, "Adieu, my friends, I've had enough of your company," galloped off. The men followed him for some time, but were not able to overtake him. The prince immediately raised a large army, and advanced to Evesham against Simon de Montfort, who when he saw the great superiority and excellent disposition of the royal troops, cried out, "The Lord have mercy on our souls, for I see our bodies are the prince's!" meaning, that he foresaw his own discomfiture and death.

The battle began with great fury on both sides, and, after a short struggle, was decided in favour of Prince Edward. The earl of Leicester was slain, with almost all the knights and gentlemen of his party, and the young prince gained as complete a victory as he could wish. The old king had been

purposely placed by the rebels in the front of the battle, and being clad in armour, and thereby not known to his friends, he received a wound and was in danger of his life: but crying out, "I am Henry of Winchester, your king," he was saved and put in a place of safety by his son, who, hearing his well-known voice, flew to his father's rescue.

Henry survived this battle seven years, but at last, overcome by the cares of government and the infirmities of age, he expired at Bury St. Edmunds, in the sixty-fourth year of his age.

We now come to one of the wisest and most warlike kings that ever sat on the English throne. Prince Edward had reached Sicily on his way home from Palestine, where he had been fighting with the crusaders against the infidels, who still kept possession of the Holy Sepulchre, when intelligence of the king's death was communicated to him. He expressed the deepest sorrow and concern; but as he was well assured of the fidelity of his barons, and the quiet state of his kingdom, he was in no hurry to take possession of the throne, but spent nearly a year abroad before he made his appearance in England. In his passage through Chalons in Burgundy, the prince of that country invited him to a tournament, which he was preparing with great magnificence. Edward, who

excelled in all martial exercises, eagerly embraced this opportunity of acquiring honour among the noblest knights in Christendom. He repaired to the court of Chalons on the appointed day, attended by several of his barons, and a thousand men-at-arms.

He entered the lists against the prince in person, and at the first encounter bore him from his saddle. The English barons then tilted against the noblest of the French knights, and overthrew them all, one after another, till the count of Chalons, greatly provoked at the superiority of his opponents, proposed that they should all engage together in a *mêlée*. To this Edward agreed, and leading on his thousand men, and supported by his knights, he was met by double that number of French cavaliers, headed by the count in person. They fought for a short time in sport and good fellowship; but their blood becoming warm, the mock encounter assumed by degrees the aspect of a real battle, and many were slain on each side. Edward and the count of Chalons had engaged hand to hand, and fought with skill and good temper, but when the English king saw that his followers were seriously attacked by their opponents, he exerted all his energies, and took his faithless host a prisoner. Then leading his men to the charge,

he quickly repulsed the French knights, and drove them from the field. This rencounter received the name of the Petty Battle of Chalons. Edward soon after departed for England, where he was received with joyful acclamations by his people, and was solemnly crowned, together with his consort, Eleanor of Castile, at Westminster.

He found the nation perfectly tranquil, and all that seemed to him necessary was to infuse a little more vigour into the proceedings of the judges and sheriffs. Certain bands of outlaws, which continued to haunt the forests, were hunted down, and the roads rendered secure to the unarmed traveller.

Among the various complaints made to him, none were so universal as that of the adulteration of the coin: the imputation of the crime fell upon the Jews, who then inhabited England in great numbers. Edward seemed to have indulged a strong prepossession against that people, for he let loose the whole rigour of his justice against them. Two hundred and eighty Jews were hanged at once on this account in London alone, and all their houses and lands confiscated. No less than fifteen thousand more were at the same time robbed of their effects and banished the kingdom. Very few of that nation have since lived in England.



Edward was of much too active a spirit to remain long without employment, and an occasion soon offered itself to his restless ambition.

History has recorded few events more replete with pathetic interest than the fate of LLEWELLYN, justly entitled "The Great," the last of the Welsh princes.

A series of brilliant actions, during the minority of Edward I., whom he had early foiled in the field of battle, gave rise, it is said, to a personal animosity in that prince, to be appeased only by the downfall of Llewellyn and his people. It could not be more strongly shown than by the manner of his taking advantage of the long romantic passion entertained by the Welsh prince for the daughter of the earl of Leicester, Eleanora de Montfort, to whom he had been affianced in their childhood. After the death of her father she retired to France, where she completed her education, and subsequently became the pride and ornament of the court. Splendid offers of the high-born and the powerful were laid at her feet, for she was niece of Henry III., and first cousin to the martial Edward. She was even tempted by crowned heads to forsake Llewellyn, but she still remembered and loved him; loved him, perhaps, more deeply because he was the unhappy object of



a mighty king's and a great nation's unforgiving wrath. Early in the year 1276, at the solicitation of Llewellyn, she left the French court, attended by her brother, and set sail for the coast of Wales; unfortunately, in passing the Scilly Islands, the vessel was captured by an English ship, and Eleanora was conveyed to the court of Edward, and detained in honourable attendance upon the queen. Llewellyn was distracted at this unfortunate wreck of his fondest hopes, and implored the king to release, and offered a large sum for the ransom of his bride, but for a time it was in vain.

After tormenting the Welsh prince for about two years, Edward restored to him his dearest treasure; and, as a mark of royal favour, the nuptials were graced by the presence of the king and queen.

Llewellyn, almost immediately after his marriage, retired with his consort into Wales, and an interval of repose, which lasted two years, followed their return; when the early death of the lovely and faithful Eleanora seemed to snap asunder the only tie which held both the princes and people of the two countries in temporary amity.

Soon after this melancholy event, a spirit of general resistance to the English laws broke out

among the inhabitants of Wales; their prince refused to attend the summons of the English king, and in the month of April, 1282, Edward began his march towards Chester.

At first he could make no progress; but towards the close of the same year he advanced to Conway, where he took up a strong position, on the plains at the foot of Snowdon. Anglesea soon fell, and Edward prepared to pass the straits of Menai, to gain possession of the enemy's rear.

The English made a bridge of boats, wide enough for sixty men to march abreast; the Welsh, on their side, threw up intrenchments to secure the pass. Before the bridge was quite complete, a party of English passed at low-water without opposition; they were suffered to advance, but as soon as the river had risen, the nearest body of the Welsh rushed from their position, and routed them with great slaughter. Fifteen knights and one thousand soldiers were thus slain, or perished in the Menai.

Edward was obliged to retire to the castle of Rhuddlan, and the Welsh were eager to become the assailants, but their leader, not conceiving himself sufficiently strong, retired with his army into South Wales, where he summoned an assembly of his barons

Llewellyn soon learned that Edward was marching against him with a large army. He had nothing to fear from the southern quarter, but was anxious to secure the only pass into the country by which danger might arrive from the north. On the morrow, therefore, having posted his main army on a mountain, he placed a body of his troops at Pont Orewyn, which commanded the passage over the Wye. Thus secured, as he thought, from any fear of surprise, Llewellyn, unarmed, and attended only by his squire, proceeded into the valley where he had agreed to meet his barons.

Immediately on his departure, the English, under Sir Edmund Mortimer, attacked the bridge with a strong force; while a native Welshman, named Walwyn, pointed out to the enemy a passage through the river a little lower down. Assaulted both in front and rear, the Welsh, after a severe battle, abandoned their post, and the English passed over. Llewellyn, in the meantime, was waiting for his barons in the wood appointed for the interview; but none of them appeared. When he found that his men had been beaten back, and the enemy had passed the river, he endeavoured to escape, but was unfortunately seen and pursued by an English knight, who, perceiving him to be a Welshman, and ignorant of his

quality, plunged his spear into the prince's body, unarmed as he was, and incapable of defence. The knight then rode on to join the army which was engaged with the Welsh.

They fought with the greatest bravery, though uncheered by the presence of their great leader, who, as he lay mortally wounded, without friend or foe to assist him, must have heard the din of the last of his battles—the knell of his country's freedom—as it fell sadly and heavily upon his ear. The contest was for a long time doubtful, and it was not till two thousand of their countrymen lay dead upon the field, that the Welsh gave way and fled.

During this time Llewellyn continued alone and expiring, without a friend to soothe or comfort him, till a white friar, who chanced to pass by, administered to him the last sad duties of his sacred office.

After the battle, the English knight returned to examine his victim, when, to his great joy, he discovered that he was no other than the Prince of Wales; and, no sooner had the wounded man expired, than he cut off his head, and sent it as a trophy to King Edward, who despatched it forthwith to London, to be exhibited on the highest-turret of the Tower. Thus died Llewellyn, the

last and best of the Welsh princes. He combined the most noble and amiable qualities with superior martial skill and energy, and few princes have there been who have been more admired and beloved by their subjects.

The conquest of Wales was followed by the unmerciful slaughter of its inhabitants. Prince David, a brother of Llewellyn, was obliged to conceal himself in a morass, but was betrayed by one of his own retainers, and carried to King Edward at Rhuddlan castle. From thence the unfortunate prince was conveyed to Shrewsbury, where he was condemned to death. The sentence pronounced upon him was, that he should be drawn at the tails of horses through the streets of Shrewsbury to the place of execution, as a traitor to the king;—to be there hanged for having murdered Fulk Trigald and other knights in Hawarden castle; his heart and bowels to be burnt, because those murders were perpetrated on Palm Sunday; his head to be cut off; and his body to be quartered, and hung up in different parts of the kingdom. This was all carried into execution, and his head was placed near that of Llewellyn on the Tower of London.

King Edward continued for some time to reside in Wales, but found great difficulties in subduing the natives. Knowing what influence the Welsh

minstrels had over the minds of the people, and sensible that nothing kept alive their military valour and ancient glory so much as their traditional poetry, he barbarously ordered the unfortunate bards to be put to death. They fled to the mountains and caves, but wherever they could be followed, their enemies pursued and murdered them.

After this, all the nobility of Wales submitted to the conqueror, and the English laws and ministers of justice were established in that principality. Edward promised them a prince, a Welshman by birth, and one who could not speak a word of English. On their acclamations of joy at his liberality, he declared to them that his own son, who had just been born in Carnarvon castle, and of course could not speak English, should be *Prince of Wales*; and from that time, the eldest son of the king of England has borne that title.

## NINTH EVENING.

SCOTTISH HISTORY—SIR WILLIAM WALLACE—BATTLE OF STIRLING—BATTLE OF FALKIRK—DEATH OF WALLACE—ROBERT THE BRUCE—DEATH OF THE “HAMMER OF THE SCOTTISH NATION”—EDWARD II.—THE FIELD OF BANNOCKBURN—VICTORY OF THE SCOTS—EDWARD III.—A NIGHT ADVENTURE—THE FRENCH CROWN—BANKS OF THE SOMME—FIELD OF CRESSY—EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE—BATTLE OF CRESSY—DEFEAT OF PHILIP OF FRANCE.

“ My last story was more about a Welsh prince than an English king ; and I must now tell you some anecdotes from the history of Scotland ; but in which Edward of England was one of the principal actors.

About four years after the conquest of Wales, King Edward was appealed to by the nobles of Scotland to decide on the pretensions of Robert Bruce, lord of Annandale, and John Baliol, the lord of Galloway, who both laid claim to the crown of that kingdom : both were great and powerful barons, and both were descended from the Scottish royal family. Edward declared Baliol to be king of Scotland, to be held under him as the lord paramount or sovereign thereof ; and Baliol, rather than hazard his claim by offending the English



monarch, consented to do homage to him, and acknowledge him as his liege lord.

Soon after this transaction, King Edward began to show Baliol that it was not his intention to be satisfied with a bare acknowledgment of his right of sovereignty, but that he was determined to exercise it with severity on every possible occasion. Many quarrels arose between the two kings; and at last Baliol sent a letter to Edward, formally renouncing his dependence upon him. Edward immediately raised a powerful army, amongst which came Robert Bruce, marched into Scotland, and defeated Baliol in a great battle near Dunbar. All the important towns opened their gates to the conqueror, who marched from one end of the kingdom to the other, and at the close of the year the whole of Scotland was in possession of the invader. There was a stone to which the popular superstition of the Scots paid the highest veneration: all their kings were seated on it during the ceremony of their coronation, and an ancient tradition assured them that wherever this stone was placed, their nation should always govern. Edward got possession of it, and removed it to Westminster Abbey. It remains there to this day, and is always used in the coronation of an English Sovereign.

Baliol was carried prisoner to London, and committed to the Tower; two years after, being restored to liberty, he submitted to a voluntary banishment in France, where, without making any farther attempts for the recovery of his throne, he died in a private station.

Edward appointed officers to maintain his dominion over Scotland, with a small military force to secure their authority. One of them, named Cressingham, treated the Scots with great severity, and had no other object than amassing money by rapine and injustice. The bravest and most generous spirits of the nation were thus exasperated in the highest degree, and only wanted some leader to command them, to rise up in a body against the English, and recover the liberty of their country.

One soon arose in the person of SIR WILLIAM WALLACE of Ellerslie, whose name is still remembered with the greatest veneration by the Scots. This man having been provoked by the insolence of an English officer, put him to death, fled into the woods, and offered himself as a leader to any who would join him in his retreat. Here he soon collected so large a body of his persecuted countrymen, that the English soldiers all left the country, and fled to Edward for assistance. Their

terror gave courage to the Scots, who took to their arms in every quarter, and prepared to defend, by an united effort, that liberty which they had so unexpectedly recovered.

Earl Warrenne, to whom the care of preserving order in Scotland had been committed, soon passed the Tweed at the head of forty thousand men, and advanced to Stirling, in the vicinity of which, though upon the northern side of the river Forth, Wallace had encamped. A narrow wooden bridge crossed the stream, over which Warrenne attempted to pass. Wallace suffered a considerable part of the English army to advance, but when about half were over, and the bridge was crowded with those who were following, he charged them with his whole force, slew a great number, and drove the rest into the Forth. Those who had not passed the bridge first set fire to it, and then fled in the greatest confusion. Cressingham, who led the van, was killed in the very beginning of the battle, and the Scots detested him so much that they flayed the skin from his dead body, and made saddle-girths of it.

Edward I. was in Flanders when these events took place; he now hastened over to England, and in a very short time led an army in person into Scotland, and met Wallace near the town of Fal-

kirk. The English king had with him a large body of the finest cavalry in the world, Normans and English, all armed in complete mail; he had also a celebrated band of archers, who were each said to carry twelve Scotsmen's lives under their girdle.

A most desperate battle was fought, which for a long time was undecided; but when Edward commanded his archers to advance, they poured upon the enemy's ranks such close and dreadful volleys of arrows, that it was impossible to sustain them. The whole Scottish army was broken and chased off the field with great slaughter.

Wallace retired to the mountains, and continued to live there for no less than seven years after the battle of Falkirk. Edward offered a large reward for his capture, and at length this brave patriot and hardy warrior was betrayed by a friend, Sir John Menteith, whom he had made acquainted with the place of his concealment. Wallace was carried in chains to London, tried as a rebel and traitor, and condemned to death. He was drawn upon a sledge to the place of execution, where his head was struck off, and his body divided into four quarters, which were exposed on pikes of iron upon London Bridge.

Edward was deceived in supposing that this

great severity would tame the Scots into submission; for soon after the death of Wallace, Robert Bruce, a grandson of that Bruce who opposed the pretensions of Baliol to the Scottish throne, determined upon shaking off the yoke of England, or perishing in the attempt. He was, without doubt, the rightful heir to the throne of Scotland, and the nobility readily took up their arms in his support; they soon made themselves masters of all the open country and the most important fortresses, and Robert Bruce was solemnly crowned at Scone.

Edward was greatly incensed when he heard that the Scots were making new attempts to shake off his authority, and sent a large army against them under the earl of Pembroke, who attacked Bruce unexpectedly at Methven, in Pethshire, and entirely defeated him. Bruce fought with the most heroic courage, was thrice dismounted in the action, and as often recovered himself; but was at last obliged to flee to the mountains, where he and a few brave adherents were chased from one place of refuge to another, and underwent many hardships.

Edward, however, burned for more ample vengeance than this. He collected a large army and marched towards the border, with the intention of

severely chastising the now defenceless Scots; but when he reached Carlisle he was suddenly seized with a severe illness, from which he never recovered. He died in a tent upon the plain of Burgh, near Carlisle, on the 7th of July, 1307, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, and thirty-fifth of his reign.

His hatred of Scotland was so inveterate, that on his death-bed he made his son, Edward II., promise never to make peace with that nation until it was subdued. He gave also very singular directions concerning the disposal of his dead body. He ordered that it should be boiled in a cauldron till the flesh parted from the bones, and that then they should be wrapped up in a bull's hide and carried at the head of the English army. His son did not choose to obey this strange injunction, but caused his father to be buried in Westminster Abbey, where his tomb is still to be seen. I recollect it bears this inscription:—"Here lies the Hammer of the Scottish nation."

Edward the Second was a very weak prince, and I shall tell you but little about him.

He marched a short way into Scotland with the immense army his father had collected, but returned without fighting a single battle. He repaired immediately to London, where, in the



society of Piers Gaveston, the son of a distinguished French knight, he gave himself up to pleasure, and wasted in idle fêtes the treasures which his father had collected for widely different purposes.

In the meantime, the Scots re-took nearly all the castles that Edward the First had conquered; and at last Sir Philip de Mowbray, the governor of Stirling, came to London to tell the king that the last Scottish town of importance which remained in possession of the English would be surrendered, if it were not relieved by force of arms, before Midsummer.

Edward roused from his lethargy, assembled forces from all parts of his dominions, enlisted troops from foreign countries, and invited large bodies of the Irish and Welsh to a certain conquest. The Scotch historians say his army amounted to a hundred thousand men-at-arms.

Robert Bruce entreated all his nobles to join him, when he heard of these extensive preparations; but he could not persuade more than thirty thousand men to join his standard. With these, however, he determined on waiting the arrival of the English; and as he knew that their first attempt would be to relieve the castle of Stirling, he led his army down into a plain near that town,



where he posted them with great skill and prudence. On the right, he was protected by the banks of the brook called Bannockburn, which are so rocky that no troops could march upon them; on his left the Scottish line extended nearly to Stirling. Not content with this, Bruce ordered all the ground upon the front of the line of battle to be dug full of holes and filled with brush-wood, and it is said, he also caused steel spikes to be scattered up and down the plain where the English cavalry were most likely to advance.

On the 24th of June, 1314, King Edward arrived within sight of the Scottish army, and next morning at break of day began the famous battle of Bannockburn.

The English king ordered his men to begin the action. The archers bent their bows, and shot so closely together, that the arrows fell like flakes of snow, and many hundreds of the Scots were killed. Bruce, who had foreseen this, ordered a body of his cavalry to the attack. Charging full gallop among the defenceless archers, who had no weapons, save their bows and arrows, which they could not use in close combat, they cut them down by thousands. The English cavalry then advanced to support their archers and attack the Scottish line, but passing over the ground which had been dug

full of holes, the horses fell, and the riders lay tumbling about without any means of defence, and unable to rise, from the weight of their armour. While the English were alarmed at their unfortunate situation, an event happened which at once decided the battle. A large body of men and boys, who were followers of the Scottish army, had been placed in ambush by Bruce, behind a hill on the left. When they witnessed the confusion of the enemy, they rushed from their place of concealment with such weapons as they could command, and as they had with them several military standards, the English, already embarrassed, mistook this disorderly rabble for a new army of their adversaries. A panic seized them, they threw away their arms and fled. The Scots pursued them with great slaughter for more than ninety miles, and King Edward himself narrowly escaped from their hands, by taking shelter in Dunbar, whose gates were opened to him by the earl of March.

This defeat made a deep impression upon the minds of the English, and for some years no superiority in numbers could encourage them to attack their victorious enemies.

The Scots, on the other hand, overjoyed at the glorious issue of this battle, fought in the cause of

FREEDOM, were raised to the highest pitch of military pride; and from that day to this, the Field of Bannockburn has been the theme of their constant admiration. A Scotchman can never visit it without feeling proud of his patriotic ancestors and their glorious victory; and many has been the verse that has been composed upon the sacred spot.

King Edward on his return to London was received very coldly by his barons, and soon after he was obliged to take the field against them. At first the king's party prevailed. The earl of Lancaster, the leader of the rebels, was taken, and being found guilty of rebellion, was condemned to death. He was clothed in coarse attire, placed on a miserable-looking horse, and, attended by the shouts of the people, conducted to an eminence near Pontefract, and there beheaded. For a short time after this the king was permitted to remain in quiet; but his inconsiderate partiality for a favourite, named Hugh de Spencer, upon whom he bestowed almost all the forfeited estates, stirred up fresh enemies in every quarter. The Queen Isabella joined in this new rebellion, and a most perilous contest ensued. De Spencer was taken and put to death with great cruelty, and Edward himself, having been compelled to surrender, was led in

triumph to the capital. He was there formally deposed, and the unhappy monarch, stripped of all honours, was committed as a state prisoner to the care of three noblemen, Lords Berkeley, Montravers, and Gournay, who were entrusted alternately, each for a month, with the charge of guarding him. While he was in the custody of Berkeley, he was treated with the gentleness due to his rank and misfortunes, but when the turns of Montravers and Gournay came, every species of indignity was practised against him. One day when the king wished to be washed and shaved, these ruffians ordered cold and dirty water to be brought from a ditch for that purpose; and when he desired it might be changed, and was still denied his request, he burst into weeping at this most cruel insult, and as the *tears* ran coursing down his cheeks, exclaimed, "In spite of you, I will have *warm* water." When they found that after the most cruel usage Edward still lived, they resolved to despatch him in a quicker way. Taking advantage of Lord Berkeley's sickness, in whose custody he then was, Montravers and Gournay came to Berkeley castle, and breaking into the king's room, burned him to death with hot irons in the most cruel and barbarous manner. It is said that the agonizing shrieks of the tortured king were heard at a great distance

from the castle, but when the guards rushed to his room, EDWARD OF CARNARVON was dead.

The same barons who deposed Edward the Second had, even before his death, placed the crown upon the head of his son, Edward the Third, then only fourteen years of age: at the same time they appointed a regency, consisting of twelve noblemen, to govern the affairs of the kingdom, although the real authority passed into the hands of the Queen Isabella, and a nobleman named Roger Mortimer. In the first year of his reign, Edward marched in person at the head of a very numerous army against the Scots, who had been making incursions into the northern counties of England: he also invited over John of Hainault, and some foreign cavalry, whose discipline and arms were superior to those of his own soldiers.

Thomas Randolph, earl of Murray, and Lord James Douglas, were the two most celebrated warriors bred in the long hostilities between the Scots and English; and their men, trained in the same school, and inured to hardships and fatigue, were perfectly qualified for that desultory and destructive war which was carried on between the two countries. They were but lightly armed, and mounted on very small but active horses. They carried no provisions except a bag of oatmeal, and each had

hung from his saddle a small plate of iron, on which, when he pleased, he could bake the oatmeal into cakes. They killed the cattle of the English, and their cookery was as expeditious as all their other operations. After flaying an animal, they placed the skin, hanging in the form of a bag, upon some stakes, poured water into it, then kindled a fire below, and thus made it a cauldron for the boiling of the flesh.

Edward's army, on the contrary, was encumbered with waggons, and the men, clothed in armour, moved along but slowly; so that it was a long time before the English king could come within reach of the Scots, who kept continually changing their position: but, at last he overtook them, encamped upon an unassailable rock on the other side of the river Wear.

As the two armies lay thus posted within sight of each other, without the English being able to make any attack, an end was nearly put to the campaign by a daring adventure of Lord James Douglas. This far-famed warrior, taking with him about two hundred men-at-arms, crossed the river at midnight, at such a distance from the camp that he was not noticed, and falling upon the English army, attacked them valiantly, shouting, ' Douglas for ever! Ye shall die, ye thieves of England!'



He and his companions killed more than three hundred men, and galloping up to the royal tent, they cut the cords, and were well nigh taking the young king prisoner; but hearing the noise, and judging what was the cause, Edward had time to escape. Finding that he was gone, the Scotch warrior retreated with his followers, closely pressed by the English soldiers. He got back safely to his friends, with the loss of a very few men. Shortly after this, the Scottish army decamped stealthily by night, and returned to their own country, greatly to the surprise of the English, who on the next morning found the rock which they had occupied deserted and barren. In a short time a peace was concluded with Robert Bruce on terms highly honourable to Scotland. Edward renounced all pretensions to the sovereignty of the country, and, moreover, gave his sister Joanna to be wife to David, the eldest son of Bruce.

We now come to a transaction on which depended the most memorable events, not only of this long and active reign, but of the whole English and French history during more than a century. It had been for years the custom in France that the crown should never descend to a female. This was called the salique law. In the year 1314, Philip the Fourth of France died, leaving three



sons, all of whom in their turns succeeded to the throne, and died without issue. Two competitors now appeared for the vacant crown: Edward the Third, whose mother was Isabella, daughter of Philip the Fourth; and Philip of Valois, whose father was a younger brother of the same king. Edward, though he acknowledged the salique law, insisted that his mother's disqualification did not extend to himself; and the matter was referred to the peers of France, who immediately decided in favour of Philip. Edward soon after led an army into France; but nothing was then done worthy of mention. The next year he gained a great victory over the French fleet off Sluys; and laid siege to Tournay, a very considerable city, which, after ten weeks, was reduced to the greatest distress. The governor was just about to capitulate, when Philip arrived with a mighty army, and through the interposition of the countess of Hainault, Philip's sister, a truce was concluded between the two monarchs till the next midsummer. This truce was but ill kept by either, and the war soon broke out between them fiercer than ever. I find some of the particulars of the following tale related by that entertaining old historian, Sir John Froissart.

### The Field of Cressy.

It was on a fine summer's evening in the month of August, of the year 1346, that the banks of the Somme, a river in the north of France, were covered with the numerous tents of the English army. Edward, their king, had for several days been endeavouring to find some bridge or ford by which he might cross the river, but hitherto he had been unsuccessful; all the bridges were either broken down or strongly guarded. Behind him Philip of France was approaching with an army of a hundred thousand men; and Edward was thus exposed to the danger of being completely enclosed and starving in an enemy's country, without any hope of being able to overcome the forces opposed to him.

The king of England was seated in his tent alone; his brow was clouded, and a pensive air overspread his whole countenance. "Before me," he murmured to himself, "flows a wide impassable river, barring my progress onward; behind and around me, come those whose dearest wish is my destruction. What must I do to avoid this threatening storm? To fight on this ground against such odds as are opposed to me, is sure destruction; yet, whither shall I turn?"

At this moment two noblemen entered the tent, whose dress and mien betokened them of high authority and rank. Edward raised his head as they advanced, and, starting eagerly from his seat, exclaimed, "How now! my earl of Warwick, bringest thou good tidings? is there any way of escaping from this perilous strait?"

"None, my liege, that we can find," replied the earl; "we have ridden along the banks of the river, but every bridge is broken, and every pass is so strongly guarded that it were madness to attempt it."

"What advisest thou then in this extremity?" enquired the king.

"To fight," replied Warwick, with energy; "though their forces were thrice our own, never should it be said that the English soldiers fled from Frenchmen."

"It is but a poor chance left to us," rejoined Edward; "but, if it must be so, Philip shall find that he has to deal with the king of England. Who is this man?" he continued, as a peasant, meanly attired, presented himself at the door of the tent.

"I know him not," replied the earl: "I will enquire why he thus dare to intrude on your royal presence." He soon returned, holding the



KING EDWARD CONVERSING WITH ROBERT AGACE.



peasant by the arm, who bowed lowly as he approached the king, who had re-seated himself upon his couch.

“What seekest thou here?” asked Edward. “Thy dress shows me thou art no follower of mine.”

“I am a poor man,” replied the peasant, “and heard that you have offered a reward to him who shows you a ford by which you can pass this river. Sire, I promise you, upon peril of my life, that I will conduct you to such a place; it is fordable twice a day; twelve men abreast may pass it, and the water will not reach above their knees. The bottom is of hard gravel and white stones, over which your carriages may safely pass, and from thence it is called Blanchetaque. To-morrow morning you must be at this ford before the sun rises.”

“Friend,” replied the king, “if I find what thou hast just told me to be true, I will make thee a present of a hundred nobles, and the best horse in the English army.”

“You may trust Gobin Agace,” rejoined the peasant; “although I assist the enemies of my country, I have my excuse; I am poor. To-morrow, ere break of day, I will attend your majesty.” The peasant then, bowing to the ground, left the tent.

“This is well,” said the king, turning to the earl of Warwick; “once let us pass this river, and, by St. George, Philip of Valois shall fight us on ground of our own choosing. Think you this man will prove true?”

“His looks bespeak him honest,” replied the earl; “but we must be upon our guard; I hear we have enemies on the other side of the stream.”

“Ah! say you so?” exclaimed Edward. “We shall have tough work then. My good lords, see that there is strict watch kept this night: at the earliest dawn we must again be on the march. Proclaim this in the camp, that all may be ready at the trumpet’s blast.”

“Your majesty’s orders shall be obeyed,” replied the earl, bowing, as he retired with his companion.

The king of England tossed restlessly upon his couch that night; anxiety for the morrow, and his present dangerous situation, pressed heavily upon his mind, and scared away sleep from his eyes. Soon after midnight he arose, and wakening his attendants, with their assistance quickly clothed himself. Throwing a cloak over his shoulders, he advanced to the door of his tent, and stepped out upon the plain. The bright summer’s moon was



shining upon the mighty camp, now hushed in the stillness of night; not a sound met his ear, save the measured tramp of the sentinel, and the rippling of the water as it gently and unceasingly flowed on.

“How soon must this tranquil scene be changed,” said Edward, musingly, as he walked along the camp. “How many who sleep this night in the full vigour of life may, ere yon moon again shows her light, sleep for ever! And why? That I may gain glory,—that I may win renown,—that I may be king of France! Ah!” he continued, “ambition is the crime of kings, and dearly do they often expiate it. Heaven grant my hour may not yet come.”

Thus conversing with himself, Edward wandered along the camp, until he came to the banks of the Somme. He there found that the water was ebbing fast, and that in a few hours it would again return. With hasty strides he returned to his tent, and summoned his attendants; then taking a trumpet from the hand of one of them, he blew so long and loud a blast, that ere the echoes had died away, the whole camp was in motion; every tent poured forth its occupants, and in one short half-hour the troops were ready to resume their march. Faithful to his appointment came Gobin Agace, under

whose guidance the English king led forth his faithful soldiers.

The whole army moved slowly and quietly along the banks of the river, and just as the sun began to gild their armour with his earliest tints, Edward and the first detachment reached the ford of Blanchetaque. The water was still ebbing, and in a short time the deepest part was not above a man's knee. Edward then ordered his marshals to advance, but before they had crossed half-way over an unexpected obstacle presented itself. Galloping from behind a wood that skirted the banks of the river, appeared a numerous body of French cavalry, led on by Sir Godémar du Fay, and close behind them followed an army of six thousand men. King Edward for one moment was irresolute; but recollecting that it was his only chance, he dashed into the water, crying, "St. George for England!" and, followed by his nobles, rode through the river to the other side. Here a desperate conflict ensued: the French knights rushed impetuously upon them; and many gallant feats of arms were performed in the middle of the stream.

At last the French were compelled to give way, and at the same time the English archers discharged such an uninterrupted shower of arrows

upon the men-at-arms, that, confounded and embarrassed, they lost all order. The English knights gradually bore back their opponents towards the dry land, who, feeling that they were defeated, fled over the country in all directions. The French infantry was next attacked: they immediately fled, and Edward remained victor of the field.

The battle was just won in time; the rear-guard of the English army had hardly crossed the river, when the light troops under John of Hainault and the old king of Bohemia, who had both joined the French monarch, appeared upon the opposite bank, and slew several stragglers who had been left behind. The king of France had set out that morning, thinking to find the English on the banks of the Somme. When news was brought to him of the defeat of Sir Godémar and his army, he immediately halted, and demanded from his marshals what was to be done; they answered, that he could only cross the river by the bridge of Abbeville, for that the tide was now flowing in at Blanchetaque. He therefore turned back to that town with his army, and Edward was left to pursue his march.

The king of England's first act was to call to him Gobin Agace, to whom he gave the hundred golden nobles, and the fleetest horse in his camp,

as a recompense for his timely services. He then proceeded on his march, advanced into the forest of Cressy, and halted there for the night. On the next morning he despatched the earl of Warwick and two noblemen to examine the country around them. Philip of France was advancing against him with eight times the number of soldiers; but Edward, trusting in the goodness of his cause, and placing implicit confidence in his men, resolved, now that he had the choice of ground, to make a stand, and in one great battle to decide his fate. The earl and his companions chose the famous field of Cressy, a field that will never be forgotten while the English language exists. The ground was an irregular slope between the forest of Cressy and the river Maie; the declivity looked towards the south and east, from which quarters the enemy was expected to arrive, and some slight defences were easily added to the natural advantages of the ground.

On the same evening, the 25th of August, 1346, the principal lords and knights of the English army were invited to a banquet in Edward's tent, who there made known to them the plan of battle he intended to pursue on the following day. After explaining to each noble leader the post which he wished him to occupy, "For my own part," he

added, "I am content with the laurels I have already won; to my son Edward do I yield the place of danger, and of honour; on him do I confer the important post of leading the vanguard of my army; and if Heaven wills it, I am resolved to let the day be his." Young Edward, called the **BLACK PRINCE**, from the dark colour of the armour he usually wore, gladly received this important charge. Although he was at that time only just sixteen years of age, yet he had already evinced such superior abilities in the art of war, and was moreover so beloved by the whole army, that King Edward risked little by his generous conduct.

It was nearly midnight before the noble lords retired. As soon as the king was left alone, he entered into his oratory, and falling on his knees before the altar, prayed long and fervently, that if he should combat his enemies on the morrow, he might come off with honour. He then lay down to rest for a few hours; early in the morning he again rose to receive the sacrament with his son and many other knights and nobles, after which the trumpets sounded, and the army marched to take up the position which had been selected.

According to the instructions given by the king, the prince of Wales, with eight hundred men-at-arms, two thousand archers, and one thousand

Welsh infantry, occupied a post nearly at the foot of the hill. The archers, as usual, were placed in front, supported by the light troops of Wales and the men-at-arms, in the midst of whose ranks appeared the prince, and many of the noblest lords of England. This division occupied the right; on the left was a body of eight hundred men-at-arms, and twelve hundred archers, under the command of the earls of Northampton and Arundel. The king himself had taken up his position with the third battalion, upon a rising ground surmounted by a windmill; and so well is the place remembered, that to this day you may stand upon the field of Cressy, and with great certainty trace the spots upon which, five centuries ago, were placed the king of England and his gallant son. When these arrangements were all complete, the king, mounted upon a small white palfrey, and attended by his marshals, rode slowly from rank to rank, entreating each man to guard his honour and defend his rights. His countenance was cheerful and smiling, and there was so much glad confidence in his words, that all who before had been disheartened were now cheered and comforted by his words and manner. It was nearly noon before the king had passed through all the lines, and permission was then given for the sol-



diers to refresh themselves. They ate and drank at their leisure, and then lying down in their ranks upon the soft grass, with their weapons and helmets placed before them, they patiently awaited the coming of their enemy.

That same morning—it was a Saturday—the king of France rose betimes, heard mass in the monastery of St. Peter's in Abbeville, and at sunrise, left the town at the head of his immense force. When he had advanced about six miles from Abbeville, and was approaching the English army, he formed his troops in line of battle, and ordered his foot soldiers to march forward, that they might not be trampled upon by the horse. At the same time he despatched several noble knights to reconnoitre the enemy's position. They approached within a short distance of Edward's army, and gained an exact knowledge of his plan of battle, then returned to Philip and reported what they had seen. The king immediately gave orders to his two marshals to command a halt. One instantly spurred forward to the front, and the other galloped to the rear, crying out, "Halt banners, in the name of St. Denis." Those that were in front stood still at this command, but those who were behind rode on, declaring that they would not pause till they were amongst the fore-



most. When the front found that the rear still pressed upon them, they pushed forward again, and neither the entreaties of the king, nor the threats of his marshals could stop them. Each earl and baron hurried on his men to the attack, and disarray and inevitable confusion succeeded. When, however, they suddenly emerged from a small wood, close by the field of Cressy, and found themselves in the presence of the English army, the first line fell back in great disorder, and the second, fancying the first had been engaged and defeated, gave way also, increasing the confusion. Thus arrived the French army on the field of Cressy.

On seeing their enemies advance, the English rose up undauntedly, and fell into their ranks in the most admirable order, covering the entire hill-side in fair and martial array, while the standard of the Black Prince floated proudly in the foremost line. In a few minutes after, Philip himself reached the field. When he beheld the English, his blood began to boil, for he mortally hated them, and he now thought he had them within his reach. He cried out to his marshals, "Order the Genoese bowmen forward, and begin the battle in the name of Philip and St. Denis." These bowmen, loaded with their armour, had just made

a weary march in the heat of a summer's day; and just as they were advancing forward with their weapons in their hands, a thunder-storm came on, accompanied by torrents of rain, which so slackened the strings of their cross-bows, that many were rendered unserviceable.

It cleared up soon after, and the sun burst forth in glorious splendour, dazzling the eyes of the French, while the English received its rays upon their backs. The Genoese rushed forward with loud shouts, and began to shoot their quarrells at the English archers, who, drawing their bows from the cases that had protected them from the rain, stepped forward a few paces, and discharged a flight of arrows with such force and quickness, that it seemed as if it snowed. When the Genoese felt these arrows, which pierced their arms, heads, and through their armour, they flung their cross-bows on the ground, and all turned about and fled.

The French had a large body of men-at-arms on horseback to support their archers; and Philip, seeing the Genoese thus retreating, cried out in a rage of disappointment, "Kill me those cowardly scoundrels; why block they up our road? Down with the rascals." The cavalry instantly rushed upon them, and a scene of the utmost horror, con-

fusion, and dismay ensued ; while still, amidst the crowd of their discomfited enemies, the English archers poured the incessant flight of their unerring arrows, and not a bow-string was drawn in vain.

In the meanwhile the count of Alençon, one of the nobles of France, avoiding this mêlée in the front, swept round to one side of the battalion of the prince of Wales, while the count of Flanders did the same on the other, and thus escaping the arrows of the English, both at the same moment charged the knights and men-at-arms around the heir of the British throne. The chivalry of England, headed by the gallant prince, upon whose young efforts the whole weight of the day's strife was cast, met the impetuous charge of the French knights with equal valour and with great success. The count of Blois, dismounting with his followers, fought his way on foot to the very standard of the prince of Wales, and fell by the hand of the young commander. The counts of Alençon and Flanders were also killed, and terror began to spread among the French troops. Philip, seeing the efforts of his followers, pushed forward to their assistance with a large body of cavalry, who enduring the terrible flight of arrows which had already proved fatal to so many, cut their way through the bow-

men in front, and poured in upon the men-at-arms.

At this time the little phalanx of the Black Prince was pressed at all points, and was in the greatest danger. The earls of Northampton and Arundel moved up with the second division to support the van, and the earl of Warwick, seeing fresh bodies of the enemy still advancing against them, despatched a knight, Sir Thomas Norwich, to the king, who still remained on the hill above, to ask him for assistance. On reaching the presence of the monarch, the knight delivered this message, "Most noble Sire,—The earl of Warwick, the lord Stafford, and other nobles who are fighting around your son, entreat that you will come to his assistance with your battalion, for if the numbers of the enemy increase, they fear he will have too much to do."

"Sir Thomas," demanded Edward, "is my son dead, unhorsed, or so badly wounded that he cannot support himself?"

"Not so, Sire," replied the knight; "but he is in great danger, and needs your help."

"Go back, Sir Thomas, to those who sent you," rejoined the king, "and let them know that as long as my son lives they shall have no aid from me. Say that I command them to let the boy win his

spurs ; for I am determined, if it please God, that all the glory and honour of this day's fight shall rest with him."

This message inspired the prince and those around him with fresh ardour, and efforts surpassing all that had preceded them were made by the English soldiers to repel the forces that were incessantly poured upon them. Still, as the French men-at-arms rushed fiercely on the English ranks, they met the same fate, and, wounded, slain, or hurled from their dying horses, they lay upon the field of battle encumbered with their armour ; while bands of half-armed Welshmen darted here and there through the midst of the fight, putting to death every one who was once smitten to the ground.

At this time, the blind old king of Bohemia, hearing that the day was going against King Philip, desired to be led against the English forces, that his example might be followed by others. Tying the reins of his bridle to their own, several of his knights ranged themselves by his side, and carried him into the midst of the thickest strife. They there fought gallantly for some time, till at length the standard of Bohemia went down. The old king was found next day dead upon the field of Cressy, with his friends around him. His crest,

three ostrich feathers, and his motto, the German words, ICH DIEN, *I serve*, were adopted by the prince of Wales in memorial of this great battle, and are still borne by the eldest son of the king of England.

During this sanguinary contest, Philip had made several efforts to give efficient succour to those who were engaged, but before he could himself reach the real scene of strife, it was growing dark. Terror and confusion had already spread among his men, those who could extricate themselves were seeking safety in flight, and still the unremitting showers of English arrows poured like hail. At length the French monarch's horse was slain, and John of Hainault, who had already urged him to quit the field, furnished him with one of his own steeds, and seeing that his majesty was wounded in two places, and the troops almost annihilated, he seized his bridle, exclaiming, "Away, Sire, away! if you have lost this day, you will win another;" and thus forced him from the field. They rode on till they came to the castle of Broye, where they found the gates closed. The governor had received sad tidings from the field of Cressy, and it was not till he heard the king's voice exclaiming, "Open, open the gates, governor; it is the unfortunate king of France!" that the draw-



bridge was lowered and the gates unlocked. Here the king stayed for a few hours, but shortly after midnight he again set forth, nor did he draw reins till he entered the city of Amiens at daybreak. In the meanwhile, the Black Prince held firmly his station in the middle of the battle, till the shouts of the leaders and the clang of arms died away, and the silence that crept over the field announced that his victory was complete in the flight of the enemy.

King Edward then descended for the first time from his station on the hill, and clasping his conquering boy to his bosom, affectionately embraced him. "God give you perseverance in your course, my child," exclaimed the king; "you are indeed my son! Nobly have you acquitted yourself this day, and worthy are you of the place you hold." Overcome by his own sensations and his father's praise, the young hero sank upon his knees before the monarch, and prayed for a father's blessing after such a day of glory and of peril. And thus ended the BATTLE OF CRESSY."



## TENTH EVENING.

SIEGE OF CALAIS—SIX NOBLE CITIZENS—SURRENDER OF CALAIS—CAPTURE OF THE KING OF SCOTLAND—SIR AYMERY DE PAVIE—THE DOUBLE TRAITOR—SIR GEOFFREY DE CHARGNY—THE KNIGHT OF THE GOLDEN ARMOUR—A GLORIOUS COMBAT—SIR EUSTACE DE BEAUMONT—A BANQUET IN CALAIS CASTLE—THE CHAPLET OF PEARLS—THE BLACK PRINCE—BATTLE OF POICTIERS—CAPTURE OF THE KING OF FRANCE—THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY—RELEASE OF THE KINGS OF SCOTLAND AND FRANCE—DEATH OF THE BLACK PRINCE—DEATH OF EDWARD THE THIRD.

WHEN my little hearers had seated themselves in their usual places by the fire-side, I thus continued my narrative: "I left King Edward III. with his son the Black Prince, and the English army, reposing from their terrible exertions upon the field of Cressy. You will recollect that the battle was fought upon a Saturday afternoon. On the following morning, Edward ordered all the dead to be numbered and buried, and early on Monday he led his victorious forces from the scene of glory.

In a few days the English king arrived before Calais, to which he immediately laid siege. Calais was at that time a very important town of France, and was defended by strong and almost impregnable walls. You know that it is on the sea-coast, very near to England;—so near, indeed, that I

recollect your father once telling me that from the cliffs of Dover, on a fine sun-shining day, he saw the vessels in its harbour;—and Edward, aware of the great advantage its possession would give him in his wars with France, resolved at all hazards, to obtain it.

A Burgundy knight, named Sir John de Vienne, was then governor of Calais; and, supported by many other noble'esquires and gentlemen, and the inhabitants of the town, he offered such a valiant resistance, that Edward was obliged to turn his siege into a blockade, and endeavour to effect by famine what he could not obtain by force of arms. He built a large castle between the town and the sea, and fortified it so strongly that no succour could possibly be given to the Calesians on that side. When the governor of Calais saw the preparations of the king of England, he collected together all the poor inhabitants who had not laid in any store of provisions, and one morning sent upwards of seventeen hundred men, women, and children out of the town. These poor creatures, expecting every moment to be set upon and killed, advanced with great fear towards the English army. When Edward saw them, he sent to enquire the cause of their arrival, and on being told that they were driven from Calais because they were poor

and could not get food to eat, he ordered them each a plentiful repast, and a small sum of money, and then dismissed them in safety.

In the mean time, King Philip of France, who felt that his subjects must be in great straits, commanded all the knights and esquires of his realm to rendezvous at Amiens on the feast of Whitsuntide, and as no one dared to disobey this order, Philip soon marched at the head of a gallant army to raise the siege of Calais. When he approached within a short distance of the town, the French monarch found that he could not attack the English army with any prospect of success. Edward had placed a strong guard at every pass by which his enemy could surprise him; and so well were his precautions adopted, that, after waiting several days in the hope that the king of England would leave his intrenchments and give him battle, Philip was obliged to return to Amiens, and disband his army.

After the departure of the king of France, Sir John de Vienne saw clearly that all hopes of succour were at an end; the next morning, therefore, he mounted the battlements, and made a sign that he wished to hold a parley with the English king. Edward sent to him Sir Walter Manny; and after two or three conferences, it was agreed that Sir

John should immediately surrender the town; that six of the principal citizens should be left to the disposal of the conqueror, and the remainder of the inhabitants pardoned. Sir John proceeded from the battlements into the market-place of Calais, where he ordered the trumpets to be sounded. The half-famished townsmen flocked in thousands to the call, and quickly filled all the open space. He told them of the hard conditions on which alone the king of England would accept their surrender, and entreated them at once to comply with his demands. This information caused the greatest lamentation and despair; even the lord de Vienne wept bitterly.

At length one of the most wealthy of the citizens, named Eustace de St. Pierre, elevating his voice, exclaimed, "My friends, there is no time for deliberation; shall we all perish miserably by famine? Shall we live to see our wives and children expiring at our feet? Or, shall not some of us, by offering ourselves to this blood-thirsty king, avert these great calamities? My brethren, I name myself first of the devoted six."

When he had done speaking, many of the populace threw themselves at his feet with tears in their eyes, and almost worshipped him. Another rich and much respected citizen soon offered himself

as a second victim ; and in a few minutes, four others named themselves as companions to their patriotic fellow-townsmen.

After each of the six had retired to his home to bid farewell to his family and friends ; dressed in coarse gowns, with their heads and feet bare, with halters round their necks, and the keys of the city-gates in their hands, these noble-minded men departed from the town amid the general weeping of its inhabitants.

They were received, outside the walls, by Sir Walter Manny, who immediately conducted them to the pavilion of the king. When they entered his presence, they fell on their knees before him, and St. Pierre exclaimed, "Most noble king, behold us, six citizens of Calais, who, to save the lives of its inhabitants, surrender ourselves to your royal will ; we bring to you the keys of our town and castle, and trust to your nobleness of mind to have compassion upon us." Edward, eyeing them with angry looks, replied, "Why should I show mercy to those who have killed my soldiers, who have destroyed my ships, and obstinately persisted in opposing me?" Then turning to his guards, he cried out, "Away with these men, strike off their heads !"

The noblemen present, with one accord, en-

treated the king to be more merciful ; but, starting from his chair, and waving his arm, he exclaimed with a loud voice, “ Where is the headsman ? Not all your entreaties can prevail upon me ; these men must die.”

At this moment, Queen Philippa, hearing the lamentations of the devoted men and the outcry of the nobles, rushed into the tent. She threw herself upon her knees before the king, and, with tears in her eyes, exclaimed, “ My beloved husband, since I have crossed the sea with great danger to visit you, I have not asked of you one favour ; I now implore you, for the sake of the Son of the blessed Mary, and for your love to me, to have mercy on these six men.”

The king looked at her for some minutes in silence, and replied, “ Lady, I had determined otherwise, but I cannot refuse your entreaties ; take them, and do with them as you will.”

The queen conducted the six citizens to her apartments, and had the halters taken from their necks ; she then gave them new garments, and set before them a plentiful repast ; after which she presented each with six golden nobles, and commanded that they should be escorted in safety out of the camp.

Thus the strong and important town of Calais,



after sustaining a twelvemonths' siege, was surrendered to the king of England, who immediately ordered all the inhabitants to be driven out, to make room for his English soldiers, whom he intended should henceforth occupy it. Soon afterwards Edward returned to London, where he found that, during his absence in France, David Bruce, the king of Scotland, had been taken prisoner by an English knight, named Sir John Copeland, in a great battle fought at Neville's Cross, near Newcastle. I now come to a very interesting tale:—

### The Knight of the Golden Armour.

King Edward had appointed as governor of Calais a Lombard knight, named Sir Aymery de Pavie, in whom he put the greatest confidence. He had returned to England, however, but a short time, before he received information that Sir Aymery was about to betray his trust, and deliver up the town to a French nobleman, Sir Geoffrey de Chargny.

Edward immediately sent an order to the governor to come before him, at Westminster, and De Pavie obeyed, little imagining that his treason had been discovered. When he appeared in the



presence of the king he bowed low before the throne, as Edward thus addressed him: "Sir Amery de Pavie, I have entrusted to thee that which, next to my wife and children, I hold dearest in this world: I mean, the town of Calais. They tell me thou hast sold it to the French: if so, thou deservest death."

The Lombard threw himself on his knees, crying, "Mercy, most gracious King, have mercy on me! 'tis true I have agreed to do this wicked thing, but at present I have not received one penny."

The king, who had brought up this young knight from a child, and loved him much, replied: "Sir Aymery, I did not expect this of thee. On these conditions only can you hope for my pardon: return immediately to Calais, continue this treaty, and inform me of the day and hour thou agreest to deliver up the town." The unhappy governor, glad to escape with his life, readily acceded to these terms, and was then permitted to depart.

It was drawing towards midnight of the last day of the year 1348, when a large body of French troops presented themselves before the southern gate of the town of Calais. Their commander was the gallant knight Sir Geoffrey de Chargny, who, with the assistance of many other noble cava-

iers, intended that evening to take possession of the town and castle, expecting that the gates would be opened to them by the traitorous governor.

“How shall we make known our arrival?” asked Sir Geoffrey of one of his companions, named Odoart de Renty; “I would not arouse the town-folk; but how can we avoid it?”

“He comes,” interrupted de Renty: “see you not yon knight approaching us?”

“Ah! my trusty Lombard,” cried Sir Geoffrey, as the horseman galloped up to the speakers, and discovered to them the face of Sir Aymery de Pavie, “is all well; art thou ready to perform thy bargain?”

“All is well, Sir knight,” replied the Lombard, “and Calais is yours on payment of the twenty thousand crowns.”

“Then, Sir Odoart de Renty, do thou take twelve of our truest knights, and one hundred men-at-arms, and go with the gallant Sir Aymery, who on payment of this money will put you in possession of the castle.” Thus saying, De Chargny delivered a bag to Odoart containing the twenty thousand crowns.

“Lead on, Sir Aymery,” cried De Renty, “morn will soon break, and I would have the

banner of Philip of France floating on yonder tower ere sunrise."

Away they rode. At a sign from the Lombard, the drawbridge was let down, and one of the gates of the castle opened. Odoart, having entered with his detachment, placed the bag of crowns in Sir Amery's hands. He flung it into a side room, and exclaimed as he locked the door, "I suppose they are all there, but I must e'en wait till daylight before I count them." He then conducted them to the great tower, drew back the bolts, and flinging wide the door, cried out, "Now, Odoart de Renty, now take possession of the castle."

The French knights eagerly advanced, and were pushing forward to the staircase, when a loud cry of, "Manny! Manny! to the rescue!" broke upon their astonished ears. At the same moment, two hundred English soldiers, armed with swords and battle-axes, rushed upon them, led on by a knight clothed in a brilliant suit of armour, inlaid with gold, who, at one stroke, struck down the foremost of the intruders. A short struggle ensued.

"We yield, we yield," cried Odoart, giving up his sword to the knight. "That double traitor, Aymery de Pavie, has betrayed us." The French were immediately disarmed, and made prisoners.

The Knight of the Golden Armour then, turning to his companions, cried, "On, my brave earl of Suffolk! Berkeley and Stafford, on! Manny, to the rescue! we'll teach these coward French more honourable dealing." Thus saying, he rushed into the castle-yard, mounted his steed, which with two hundred others was ready harnessed for him, and galloped off to the southern quarter of the town.

The day was now breaking, and Sir Geoffery de Chargny, surrounded by his numerous followers, with their banners proudly displayed, waited impatiently till the gate should be opened, that he might enter the town in triumph. "If this Lombard delays much longer," said he to his attendants, "we shall all die of cold."

"He is counting the money," replied one of them, laughing, "to see if there be any false crowns, and if they be right in number." At this moment the gate was unclosed, and, amidst deafening shouts of, "Manny, Manny, to the rescue!" a body of armed warriors rode fiercely on towards the French forces.

"Gentlemen," shouted Sir Geoffrey de Chargny, "we are betrayed. If we fly, we lose all: let us fight then; the day may yet be ours."

"By St. George," cried the Knight of the Golden Armour, who had approached near enough

to hear these words, "you speak well: perdition seize the coward who thinks of flight." At the same time he charged the Frenchman, and with his lance bore him to the ground.

The battle then raged with the utmost fury. The knight was seen in the thickest of the fray, hewing down all before him; while on the part of the French, a gentleman named Sir Eustace de Beaumont, by his extraordinary prowess, struck terror into the ranks of the English. The knight remarked him, and recognising his person, cried out, "Sir Eustace de Beaumont, I challenge thee;" at the same time, leaping from his horse, he placed himself directly before his strong and valiant adversary.

"I know thee not," replied Sir Eustace; "but never shall it be said, De Beaumont refused to fight." Their swords were immediately crossed, and soon their helmets and armour rang with the blows which they inflicted upon each other. Their swords broke, and with a battle-axe each renewed the combat with redoubled vigour. Twice did Sir Eustace beat the English knight to the earth, but he arose unhurt; the conflict was for a long time doubtful, until De Beaumont, striking with too much violence, let fall his weapon, and as he stooped to regain it, the knight with a blow felled

him to the earth; planting his knee upon his breast, the victor cried, "Yield thee, Sir Eustace, or thou diest."

"Sir knight," replied he, "I am your prisoner, the honour of the day is yours." A shout of applause from the English ranks followed this victory; and the French, discomfited on all sides, precipitately took to flight.

When the engagement was over, the Knight of the Golden Armour returned to Calais castle, where he ordered all the prisoners to be brought. Taking his helmet, which had been closely shut during the combat, from his head, he seated himself on a throne, and commanded them into his presence. Great was their surprise and alarm, when they found that their conqueror was Edward the Third of England, who, under the banner of Sir Walter Manny, had fought so valiantly. When they were all assembled, he turned to their commander, whom, as I told you, he had borne to the ground with his lance and made his prisoner, and thus addressed him:—

"Sir Geoffrey de Chargny, I have but little reason to love you, since you wished to seize from me by stealth last night what has cost me so much trouble and such sums of money to acquire. I am rejoiced, however, that I have caught you in your



attempt. You thought you could purchase Calais for twenty thousand crowns; but, through God's assistance, you have been disappointed." Sir Geoffrey, struck dumb with surprise and vexation, could not reply.

"My brave knights," continued the king, "this is New Year's day; to-night you shall sup with me in Calais castle." He then retired. The French men-at-arms were confined as prisoners; but the knights, who had been invited to the supper, were conducted to apartments in the castle and supplied with new robes.

When the hour for the banquet arrived, the king of England placed himself at the head of the principal table, and made his prisoners take the most honourable seats. No distinction was made between the knights of the two nations, except that, perhaps, the French were regaled with more profuse liberality than their captors.

The supper passed off merrily, each recounting his exploits in the morning's affray. Edward the Black Prince, who had fought with his father, went round the tables conversing cheerfully with the guests, and sometimes supplying their wants.

At the conclusion of the banquet, the king rose from his seat; he was bareheaded, except that he wore around his brow a rich and handsome chaplet



of fine pearls. He walked slowly down the hall, conversing with the knights, till he came to Sir Eustace de Beaumont, when, assuming a more cheerful look, he spoke with the kindest smile: "Sir Eustace," he said, "thou art the most valiant knight in Christendom that ever I saw attack his enemy or defend himself. I have never yet found any one in battle, who, hand to hand, has given me so much to do as thou hast this day. I adjudge to thee, above all the knights of my court, the prize of valour which is so justly thy due."

The king then took the splendid chaplet of pearls from his brow, and placing it on the head of the knight, continued, "Sir Eustace, I present thee with this chaplet, as being the best combatant this day; wear it for my sake. I know that thou art a gallant youth, and takest delight in the company of ladies and damsels; tell them that Edward of England gave it thee. I also give thee liberty, without ransom; to-morrow morning thou mayest depart and go where it best pleaseth thee."

Sir Eustace threw himself on his knee before the king, and taking his hand kissed it with the most fervent gratitude. Edward then left the hall, and the knights retired. In a few days after they were all ransomed, and with their followers returned to their own territories.

About this time a most destructive pestilence afflicted the inhabitants of every kingdom in Europe. So great were its ravages, that in the church-yard of the Charter-house, London, alone, two hundred bodies were daily interred; and an old chronicler states that fifty thousand persons died of this plague in Norwich, but this is scarcely credible. It broke every bond of attachment asunder; servants fled from their masters, wives from their husbands, and children from their parents. There were no laws in force, and the greatest excesses were committed with impunity. It took a wider range, and proved more destructive than any calamity of the same nature known in the annals of mankind.

On the 22nd day of August, 1350, died Philip of Valois, king of France: he was buried at St. Denis, near Paris; and on the 26th of the following month, John, his eldest son, was crowned at Rheims.

This monarch entered upon his duties while the kingdom of France was in a very unsettled state. In the very first year of his reign, he was called upon to defend himself against the encroachments of Charles, king of Navarre, called the Bad, and whose conduct fully entitled him to that name. After several engagements, in which Charles was

usually successful, he was at last taken prisoner by John, through the treachery of Charles, John's eldest son, a youth seventeen years of age, who was the first that bore the appellation of Dauphin. This prince invited the king of Navarre, and other noblemen, to a feast at Rouen, and there betrayed them into the hands of his father, who immediately put to death the most obnoxious barons, and threw Charles of Navarre into prison.

About the same time, the truce that had been made between England and France after the battle of Cressy expired, and Edward the Third again resolved to attempt to get possession of the French crown. In the month of October, 1355, he landed at Calais, at the head of a numerous army, to which he gave a full licence to overrun and plunder the open country: but he was soon obliged to return to England, in order to repel the invasion of the Scots, who, taking advantage of his absence, had broken into the northern provinces and committed great ravages.

The next year Edward sent his son the Black Prince into France, with a small army of 12,000 men, with which he ventured to penetrate into the very heart of that kingdom. When King John heard of this invasion he exclaimed, "By St. Denis, we will ourselves give battle to this young stripling,"

and immediately ordered an army of 60,000 men to be collected, with which he advanced against the English prince. After taking the castle of Romorantin, and overrunning many of the most fertile provinces of France, young Edward began to think it was time for him to retreat, as his army was too small to oppose the formidable body commanded by the French king.

John had marched with extraordinary rapidity, and soon overtook the English prince, quite unexpectedly, close by the town of Poitiers. Edward, sensible that his retreat was now become impracticable, prepared for battle with all the courage of a young hero, and with all the prudence of the oldest and most experienced commander. He posted his army in a most advantageous position, upon the declivity of a hill, amidst vineyards and orchards. The only road by which they could be approached was bordered on each side by lofty hedges, behind which were secreted small bodies of troops, and a few bowmen: at the bottom of the hill he placed the archers in the form of a harrow, and thus prepared, they awaited the attack of their enemies.

On the 19th of September, the French king divided his army into three battalions, and advanced against the English prince. He was supported by all the nobility of France, richly dressed

out in brilliant armour, with banners and pennons gallantly displayed, and fluttering in the wind.

The French forces could not possibly attack the English army except through the narrow road; and in order to open a passage, two of the marshals were ordered to advance. While they marched along the lane, the English archers who lined the hedges discharged their arrows at them from each side, and being very near them, yet placed in perfect safety, they coolly took their aim against the enemy, and slaughtered them with impunity. The French detachment, much discouraged by the unequal combat, and diminished in their number, arrived at the end of the lane, where they met on the open ground the prince of Wales himself. He immediately charged them with a chosen body of his troops, and completely routed them: one of the marshals was slain, and the other taken prisoner.

At this time a body of English soldiers, who had been concealed in ambush, rushed down from a hill upon one of the wings of the French army, which after a brief resistance was thrown into great confusion.

The English nobles immediately mounted their horses, and Sir John Chandos exclaimed to the prince, "Sir Sir, now push forward; the day is

ours ; yonder is our adversary the king of France : where he is, there will be the thickest strife ; let us attack him.”

The prince cried out, “Advance banner, in the name of Edward and St. George !” The banner-bearer obeyed, and with loud shouts of, “St. George for Guienne !” the English army rushed down from their post, and charged the main body of their opponents. Terrible was the clash with which they met : thousands fell at the first onset, and after a desperate struggle the French army fled with precipitancy, hotly pursued by their victorious adversaries.

King John, on his part, proved himself a valiant knight. He was armed with a battle-axe, with which he beat down all that attempted to approach him, but at last, spent with fatigue and overwhelmed with numbers, he was obliged to surrender himself a prisoner.

That same evening, the Prince of Wales gave a supper in his pavilion to the king of France, and to the greater part of the princes and barons who were prisoners. The prince himself served at the king’s table with every mark of humility, and would not sit down in spite of all John’s entreaties for him to do so, saying, “I am not worthy of the honour of taking a seat at the table of so great a



king and so valiant a man as your majesty has shown yourself this day.”

He soon conducted his prisoner to Bourdeaux, where he concluded a two years' truce with the French nobles. He then set sail for England, and after a voyage of twelve days disembarked safely, with his captive, at Sandwich.

When King Edward heard of their arrival, he gave orders for the citizens of London to make such preparations as were suitable for the reception of so great a prince as the king of France. Upon which they all dressed themselves very richly, and with flags and banners advanced in companies to meet him. The prisoner was clad in royal apparel, and mounted on a white steed, distinguished by its size and beauty, and by the richness of its furniture. The prince of Wales rode by his side, dressed in humbler attire, and carried by a small black palfrey.

In this situation, more glorious than the insolent parade of a Roman triumph, the noble conqueror passed through the streets of London, amid the deafening cheers of the assembled citizens.

The king of France was confined a prisoner in the palace of the Savoy, where, besides the generous treatment he met with, he had the melancholy consolation of seeing a companion in affliction,



the king of Scotland, who had been eleven years a captive in Edward's hands.

The king was released shortly afterwards, on payment of a very heavy ransom, and in three years, King John of France was likewise restored to liberty, when it was stipulated that he should pay three millions of golden crowns, equal to about one million five hundred thousand pounds of our present money.

King John soon after died, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Charles the Fifth of France, surnamed the Wise. This prince, educated in adversity, was well qualified by his prudence and experience to repair all the losses which the kingdom had sustained during the reign of his father. He was the first king in Europe who fixed it as his maxim never to appear at the head of his armies; and thus showed the advantage of policy and judgment over rash and precipitate valour.

The king of England was soon obliged to send armies into France, in order to preserve the conquests he had made, but his generals were several times defeated; while the Black Prince, on whom Edward had bestowed the supreme command, was in such a languishing state of health that he could not even mount his horse.

On the 8th of June, 1376, this illustrious prince.

after a lingering illness, died in the forty-sixth year of his age. His valour and military talents formed the smallest part of his merits. He was distinguished for every eminent virtue, and, from his earliest youth till the hour he expired, his character was unstained by any blemish.

King Edward did not long survive the loss of his son. On the 21st of June, in the following year, he expired in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and fifty-first of his reign. His body was carried in grand procession to Westminster Abbey, where he was buried by the side of his Queen Philippa, who had died some few years before him.

## ELEVENTH EVENING.

A WELCOME—THE COTTAGE—RICHARD OF BORDEAUX—THE POLL-TAX—THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH—A FEARFUL PUNISHMENT—REBELLION—THE REBELS' MARCH—ENCAMPMENT ON BLACKHEATH—INTERVIEW OF THE REBELS' AMBASSADOR WITH KING RICHARD—THE ROYAL ANSWER—THE BANKS OF THE THAMES—INSOLENCE OF THE REBELS—THE REBELS ENTER LONDON—CONFERENCE AT MILE-END—MURDER OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY—SMITHFIELD—WAT TYLER'S INSOLENCE—HIS DEATH—THE YOUNG KING'S COURAGE—SIR WILLIAM WALWORTH.

IT was some months before I was again able to resume my evening stories, and summer had come in all its glory. It was therefore arranged, that, as the weather was delightfully fine, we should walk to a cottage that we well knew, and sit in the quiet little summer-house in the garden,—“Where,” said Lawrence, “we shall hear no noise except the birds singing in the shrubbery.”

At the appointed time, I found the two boys anxiously waiting to conduct me to their chosen retreat. The “cottage,” almost hidden from observation among a grove of trees, was not quite a mile distant from our home; there was a large garden attached to it, on a gentle ascent, upon the summit of which stood the little building that we designated the summer-house. We took our seats

in it, and there, enjoying the sweet scent of the honey-suckle that crept round the open windows, and sometimes stopping to listen to the joyous carols of the birds that one after another poured forth their evening song, I thus continued:—

Immediately upon the death of Edward the Third, his grandson Richard, then but eleven years of age, was placed upon the throne of England. The accession of this young sovereign was hailed with delight by the whole body of the nation, who fondly hoped that as he advanced in years, he would emulate the virtues of his illustrious parent—the celebrated Black Prince. His coronation took place soon after, when his three uncles, the dukes of Lancaster, York, and Gloucester, took upon them the care of his person, and assumed the authority of guardians of the kingdom during his minority.

The war against France was still carried on with various success. Charles the Wise had recovered many of the possessions which had been wrested from his father by Edward the Third, and would most probably have succeeded in driving the English entirely from his kingdom, had he not suddenly died in the flower of his age, leaving the crown to his only son, Charles the Sixth, a child of tender years.

In the meanwhile, the expenses of these long-continued wars, and a want of proper economy in the management of domestic affairs, had so exhausted the English treasury, that the government was obliged to impose a new and unusual tax of three groats on every person, male and female, above fifteen years of age. At this time the people of England were in a very unquiet state: they complained greatly of the oppressions of the nobles; and a notion had begun to be very prevalent among the lower classes, that as they were all descended from the same parents, Adam and Eve, there ought to be no distinction between lords and vassals, but that all ranks should be levelled, and all property held in common.

This poll-tax, as it was called, of three groats, greatly inflamed the disaffected of the populace, who rose in arms in various parts of the country. But I will tell you in what way the disturbances first commenced.

### Wat Tyler's Rebellion.

In a little village in the county of Kent, there lived, during the reign of Richard the Second, a sturdy blacksmith, called by his neighbours 'Wat the Tiler,' or 'Wat Tyler,' as, besides his ordinary

occupations, he sometimes undertook the thatching and tiling the roofs of houses. Wat was a man of no small importance in the village in which he lived, and it very frequently happened, that while engaged in his laborious work, he lightened his task by stopping every now and then to gossip with the villagers, who in groups of three or four were generally to be seen leaning over the low wall in front of his shop.

Wat Tyler was what we should call at the present day an ultra-radical; he was possessed of strong common sense, but, unfortunately, as is too often the case, he could see but little farther than where his own interests were concerned; and being of an herculean frame and immense strength, he was ready, on all occasions, to support his political opinions with no small degree of impetuosity.

It must be granted, however, that in his time, the poorer classes of England had many and great reasons for complaint—in fact, they were little better than slaves; every peasant was attached to some baron or lord, at whose command he was obliged to plough, sow, reap, or follow him to the field of battle, as it best suited the nobleman's convenience. In return for this, the baron was expected to protect the life and property of his

serf, and grant him sufficient land wherewith to procure subsistence for himself and family.

The poll-tax, which I have before mentioned, had just been proclaimed, and afforded an excellent opportunity for the disaffected blacksmith to launch forth into violent declamations against the king and government. One morning in the spring of the year 1381, he had been pursuing his avocation with unusual energy. The din of his ponderous hammer, and the roaring of his fire had been continued with scarce any intermission for more than two long hours. At last, hurling down his hammer in a somewhat angry mood, he turned to two or three gossips who were lounging away their time at his door, and exclaimed, as the big drops fell profusely from his forehead:—

“Tell me, my friends, is it right that a freeman of England should have to work in this way for his bread?”

“No, no, no,” shouted his hearers in one breath.

“Leave off now, Wat,” added one of them, who from his white hat and coat was evidently a miller; “let’s hear what you’ve got to say about this poll-tax.”

“Plague take the tax,” cried the blacksmith, “and them who made it. Had not we enough



to bear before? This comes of having kings and nobles: they must live in palaces—clothe themselves in velvet and ermine—have fifty servants a-piece to wait on them—drink wine, and ride on horseback; while we, who earn our bread by the sweat of our brows, and are obliged to live in huts like this, must pay for their extravagances. I wonder whether they think we are of the same flesh and blood as themselves. For my own part, I am of opinion that we have as much right to the lands of this kingdom as the proudest nobleman of them all.”

“ Hurrah !” shouted the villagers ; “ Wat Tyler shall be our king !”

“ Ah !” exclaimed the miller, when the hubbub caused by this speech had subsided,

‘ When Adam delved, and Eve span,  
Where was then the gentleman ? ’ ”

At this moment, a door was opened at the further end of the shop, and a pretty young maiden, of about twelve years of age, skipped playfully in. Running up to the blacksmith she took his broad sinewy palm in her own tiny hand, and, endeavouring to pull him with what force she could, exclaimed, “ Come, father; come in to dinner.”

“ I’ll come directly, Madge,” replied Wat, relaxing in an instant from the stern and angry tone in which he had been speaking, and gently patting his child upon her fair white shoulder; “ but I must have a little more talk about the poll-tax.”

“ The poll-tax! what is it?” asked Madge, looking innocently in her father’s face. “ Is it anything dreadful?”

“ It *may* be, my child,” answered the blacksmith; but you are too young yet to understand such things.”

“ Here comes the tax-gatherer,” shouted one of the villagers, as a man approached riding on horseback, followed by several attendants. In a minute after, he dismounted at the door, and having given his horse’s rein to one of his followers, the collector of the poll-tax, with all the importance of a prince, pushed aside the peasants who were standing in his way, and entered the blacksmith’s shop. “ How many persons are there in this house above the age of fifteen?” he enquired, in an authoritative tone.

“ Two,” replied Wat, sullenly.

“ This wench,” said the tax-gatherer, pointing to Madge, “ is not she fifteen yet?”

“ No,” answered the blacksmith, in a louder and angrier tone.

“How old are you, my sweet chick?” asked the fellow, turning to the already frightened child, and attempting to take her hand.

“Touch that girl,” shouted her father, “and by my troth you shall repent it!”

“And what will your black-looking worship do, if I should kiss the girl, which I’ve a great fancy to do?” asked the tax-gatherer sneeringly.

“Tempt me not,” cried Wat, in a transport of passion; “lay but a hand on that maiden, and you’re a dead man.”

The other laughed at this sally, and catching the young girl’s arm, attempted to execute his threat; but Madge struggled resolutely; and her father, enraged beyond all bounds at the fellow’s insolence, seized him by the shoulders, and hurled him to the far-end of his work-shop.

The collector, more frightened than hurt, quickly recovered himself, and, maddened at the treatment he had received, drew his sword, and rushed wildly at the blacksmith. Wat Tyler stood for one moment in hesitation; then stooping to the floor, he lifted his ponderous hammer which he had just cast aside, and avoiding the attack made upon him, he swung his fearful weapon through the air, and with all his force discharged a blow upon the head of the unhappy tax-gatherer.

The poor man fell to the ground a disfigured corpse.

A loud shout from the assembled villagers bore testimony to their approbation of this violent deed, and immediately drew to their sides an immense concourse of the inhabitants of the place, who one and all took part with their countryman; but the followers of the tax-gatherer, beholding with rage and horror the murder of their master, drew their swords, and spurring their horses amidst the crowd, slashed their weapons at such of the peasants as were within their reach.

Wat Tyler, half repenting of the deed which he had committed, stood over the dead body of his victim, regarding it with a mixture of fear and compassion. Presently he turned to his companions, and began to excuse himself for his violence; but seeing them thus attacked, his anger was at once rekindled. He flew to the door, brandishing his unwieldy weapon, and dashed furiously at the nearest horseman; who, seeing the blow which was about to descend upon him, drew back his rein—struck his spurs into his equally terrified horse, and galloped off, quickly followed by his companions.

Another shout, louder and longer than the former, burst from the villagers at the flight of

these men. Wat Tyler threw down his hammer with a look of triumph, and the miller advancing a few steps, struck his hand heartily into the palm of the victorious rebel. "Well done, Wat Tyler!" he cried. "Thou hast taught these rascals a lesson to-day they'll not easily forget." "This man's blood be upon his own head," replied the blacksmith; "he brought his death upon himself. But, my friends, this must not rest here. You, as well as myself, will soon repent of this day's work, unless we follow up the victory. The Londoners are ready to rise in arms against our proud noblemen, and have sent for the men of Kent to come to their assistance. Shall we march, my brethren, and join these free-minded citizens?"

"To London! to London!" shouted the peasants. "Wat Tyler for ever!"

"Go every man to his home," said Wat; "let him bid farewell to his children and friends,—let him arm himself with whatever weapon he may be provided,—and in two hours from this time meet me on the common." He then entered his door, and taking the hand of his child, who had been a horror-stricken spectator of the whole of this scene, led her into the inner apartment.

The villagers at once separated to their cottages, and spent the two hours which had been

given them for preparation, in settling their little affairs, and bidding adieu to their families. At the expiration of that time, the whole population of the village seemed to have crowded into its narrow street. Men, women, and children, with one accord, rushed to the appointed place of meeting.

A few minutes after their arrival on the common, Wat Tyler made his appearance among them, and was greeted with loud shouts. He harangued them for nearly half-an-hour, declaiming violently against the oppressions of the rulers of the kingdom, and insisting that each one among his hearers had as good a right to live in a palace as the greatest king in Europe. "Are we not all descended from the same parents, Adam and Eve?" said he; "and what can the nobles shew, or what reason can they give why they should be masters more than ourselves? Let us go to the king and demand that all men shall be equal; if he refuse us, we will ourselves seek to amend our slavery." This speech was heard with rapture by the misguided mob, who demanded to be led at once to their fellow-sufferers in London.

Wat Tyler immediately ordered all those who intended to follow him, to separate from the others, and he then found that more than two hundred



peasants had determined on asserting their fancied rights under his leadership. They were armed in the most disorderly way,—one had an immense broad-sword—another, a short dagger—one, a huge cross-bow—his companion, a long pike,—while many were obliged to appear without any other weapon than was afforded them by the stout branches of the neighbouring trees. Among them were three wandering minstrels, with their harps, who hoped by joining this little army to gain a better livelihood than they could usually obtain. At Wat Tyler's command, they struck their instruments to some martial air; when, placing himself at the head of his troop, the rebel began his march to London. At the very first town he came to, several hundred of the dissatisfied populace joined his ranks, and every hamlet and cottage gave out its number, so that by the time he had reached Canterbury, Wat Tyler was commander of sixty thousand men. Emboldened by success, the rebels proceeded to attack the houses of all the nobility that happened to be situated in their line of march, and finding but little resistance, they pillaged churches and mansions without mercy or remorse. Canterbury Cathedral was stripped of its most valuable plate, and the dwelling-house of the archbishop robbed of every article that could be car-



ried off. Here, too, fresh reinforcements poured upon them from the villages on every side, and increasing rapidly as they proceeded, like a mountain-torrent, they swept through the country, overwhelming everything in their impetuous career.

On their arrival near Rochester, the populace of that city flocked to meet them with bands of music and colours flying. The most daring of the rebels advanced to the castle, which was at once thrown open to them, and seized the governor, a gallant knight, named Sir John de Newtoun; they then ordered him to accompany them at the head of the army, and to his remonstrances that he served King Richard, and that it did not become him to lead his enemies, one of the men drew his sword and threatened death if the knight did not yield to the demand. Sir John, finding it useless to attempt reasoning with an outrageous mob, most unwillingly suffered himself to be placed by the side of Wat Tyler, at their head.

They soon reached Blackheath, where, learning that the gates of London were shut against them, they fixed their quarters. Their numbers were increased daily, and it is said that they now exceeded a hundred thousand men. Here a council of their chiefs was summoned to consider of their future proceedings, and as they were at present

unprepared to attack such an important city as London, it was agreed that Sir John de Newtoun should go to the Tower, demand an audience of the king, and invite him to a conference with them upon Blackheath.

On the morning of the 12th of July, 1381, the King of England, and many of his most powerful noblemen, were assembled in council in one of the large apartments in the Tower of London. The young monarch sat upon a throne which was placed on a slightly-raised platform at the end of the room, arrayed in his kingly robe of velvet lined with ermine, and decorated with clasps of gold: he wore the crown of state, and in his right hand he grasped the royal sceptre. Around him stood the Earls of Warwick, Salisbury, and Suffolk, the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Walworth, Mayor of London, and many other noblemen and knights. They had met to consider of the best means of suppressing the dangerous spirit of rebellion that had already extended so far: and many and various were the plans suggested by the councillors. The king himself was inclined to try pacific measures; but the hot-headed warriors wished to march against the disorderly rabble, as they termed the rebels,

and threatened to disperse them at one single charge. In the midst of this debate, a messenger entered the chamber, to demand audience for a knight who had just arrived on urgent business; and without delay he was admitted.

“What brings the gallant De Newtoun to our presence?” asked King Richard, as the ambassador of the rebels was ushered in.

“My most gracious liege,” answered the knight, kneeling before the throne, “I pray you be not displeased at the message that I bear. I come not of mine own free will; but by compulsion of your rebellious subjects.”

“Deliver thy message fairly, Sir John,” replied the king: “we hold thee excused for its contents.”

“The faithful commons of your realm, assembled on Blackheath, entreat that your majesty will hold a conference with them. They request that you will meet them unattended, and they swear that no harm shall happen to your royal person. They will respect you as their king; but they will tell your majesty many things which they say it is necessary for the welfare of your country that you should hear.—Grant me some reply, my gracious lord,” continued the knight, “that I may convince these men that I have been



THE INTERVIEW OF THE REBELS' AMBASSADOR.



in your royal presence. They have my children as hostages for my good faith: and they swear, that if I do not as they have commanded me, they will assuredly put them to death."

"Retire for a while, good De Newtoun," replied the king; "we must consider of this demand." The knight, bowing lowly, left the room; but ere many minutes had elapsed, he was again led into the royal presence.

"Go back to our *faithful* commons assembled on Blackheath," said the king, "and tell them, that we will meet them on the banks of the Thames at noon to-morrow."

"Thanks, many thanks, my noble liege," replied Sir John, overjoyed at this unexpected compliance; "I shall regain my precious treasures,—my sweet children!" Then, kissing the royal hand which was held out to him, the worthy knight rose, and with joyful alacrity hastened back to the rebels' encampment.

On the day appointed for the conference, King Richard, attended by the Earls of Warwick and Salisbury, and many other nobles, entered the royal barge, and, followed by several smaller boats, filled with knights and their attendants, was with great pomp rowed down the Thames. Favoured by the tide, the king's barge quickly reached

Rotherhithe, where a most exciting scene presented itself to his view. As far as the eye could reach, the bank of the river was lined with human beings, pressing one upon another until many were forced into the stream, so anxious were they to get a view of the young monarch. As soon as they caught sight of the royal barge, they set up such wild shouts and fearful cries, that the king knew not what to think of them. He exclaimed, "Surely these must be demons, not men!" And when the boats arrived nearer the shore on which the rebels stood, their extravagant gestures and threatening aspect so terrified him, that he refused to land, and commanded his helmsman to steer the barge away. "What do ye wish for, my good friends?" cried he: "I am come hither, according to my promise, to hear what you have to say."

"Land! land! We want you to land!" shouted the mob; "we will then tell you what we want."

"And do you think," exclaimed the Earl of Salisbury, angry at the insolence of the rebels, "that such rascals as you are fit company for a king? Go to your homes, and let us hear of no more such insolence."

A storm of groans and hisses followed this remark, and some of the most violent of the mob even threw missiles at the speaker. The king



immediately gave orders to his boatmen, and in a few seconds the royal barge was swiftly impelled into the middle of the stream, in the direction of the Tower.

“To London! let us march to London!” cried the infuriated and disappointed rebels, when they beheld the boat rapidly increasing its distance from them:—“We will have our rights! Wat Tyler for ever!”

Thus shouting, the crowd hurried back to Blackheath, where their companions were very anxiously awaiting the issue of the conference. When they heard what had happened, they also joined in the cry, “To London!” and without farther preparation, the whole mass crowded confusedly on the road. Advancing into the suburbs of the capital, which at that time were very handsome and extensive, they pulled down many of the finest buildings; attacked the king’s prison, called the Marshalsea, demolished the walls, and set at liberty the prisoners; and then marching to London Bridge, they threatened, that if the gates were not immediately opened to them, they would set fire to the environs, take the city by storm, and afterwards burn and destroy it.

In the mean time, the disaffected within the town were not inactive; they met together in

immense bodies, and appeared before the house of the chief magistrate. "Why do you refuse admittance to these honest men?" said they. "They are our friends, and what they are doing is for our good;" and behaved so disorderly, that the mayor, finding it was impossible to resist any longer, ordered the gates to be thrown open. The crowds immediately rushed in, and seizing upon all the provisions that fell in their way, soon made up for the privations they had lately endured.

Their leaders, Wat Tyler, and others who assumed the names of Hob the Miller, Jack Straw, and Will Carter, with John Ball, a seditious preacher, attended by more than twenty thousand men, marched through the streets of London to the palace of the Savoy, which, after killing the guards and porters, they set on fire. Not content with this violence, they broke open the houses of the rich bankers and plundered them, killed many of the inhabitants, and committed the greatest outrages.

Richard and his nobles were all this time safely lodged in the Tower; but they began to fear that even that fortress would prove but a poor security, if it were resolutely attacked; the king therefore ordered proclamation to be made to the rebels, that if they would retire to a large meadow, which,

in the summer-time, was used by the people as a play-ground, at Mile-End, he would, on the next day, meet them there. On the following morning the road to the appointed spot was thronged with the disaffected populace; and when the king arrived, attended by his barons, he found upwards of sixty thousand men assembled, from the different towns and villages in England. He instantly advanced into the midst of them, and, speaking in a pleasant manner, said, "My good people; I am your king and your lord. What is it you want? What wish you to say to me?" Those who heard him, answered, "We want you to make us free for ever; us, our children, and our lands. We want no longer to be called slaves, nor held in bondage. Pardon us also for this rebellion." The king replied, "I grant your wishes. Now, therefore, my friends, return to your homes. Every demand that you have made shall be fully granted. I will order charters to be sent you, sealed with my royal seal. I pardon you for what you have already done; but now follow my banners, one of which I will send to each of your counties."

The people were greatly pleased at this ready compliance, and shouted unanimously, "We will! we will! Long live King Richard!" Then dispersing into numerous groups, the greater part of

this formidable assembly departed, and returned quietly to their homes.

But many of the rebels had remained in London, and, as soon as the king and his attendants had left the city, with Wat Tyler at their head, had broken into the Tower. Running from chamber to chamber, they found the Archbishop of Canterbury, a brave and pious man, whom they murdered without pity; three other prelates suffered the same fate; the ruthless miscreants then cut off their heads, and fixing them on poles paraded the streets of London, and then exposed them upon London Bridge.

On the following morning, which was a Saturday, the king and his lords went to Westminster Abbey to hear mass. On their return to the Tower, they were passing through Smithfield, when Richard, observing a large crowd of people, stopped, saying that if they were troubled he would endeavour to appease them. There were not less than twenty thousand men who were listening to the declamations of their favourite leader—Wat Tyler.

When this rebel saw the monarch and his companions, he cried, “Here is the king; I will go and speak with him. Stir not till I bid you. But when I make a signal, advance, and kill every

man of them except the king. Hurt him not; he is young, and we can do what we please with him. We will carry him with us through the country, and we shall be lords of England without opposition." Then spurring his horse, he galloped so closely to King Richard that his horse's head touched the royal person. "King, dost thou see all those men there?" he exclaimed, in a loud and insolent tone, pointing to the mob.

"Yes," answered King Richard: "why dost thou ask?"

"Because," said the rebel, "they are all under my command, and have sworn, by their faith, to do whatsoever I shall bid them."

"I have no objection to that," replied the young monarch.

"And thinkest thou, king," continued Wat Tyler, "that those men, and thousands more, who are in this city, will depart till you have yielded to their demands?"

"What want they more than I have already granted?" asked Richard.

"What hast thou given us?" cried the rebel, with a rude laugh.

"Sirrah, you are insolent!" exclaimed the mayor, who was one of the king's attendants. "Know you to whom you speak?"

“By my troth, right well: to Richard Plantagenet,” replied Wat Tyler. “But what does it concern thee? Why dost thou interfere?”

“I’ll not sleep this night till you’ve paid for this,” cried Walworth; and pushing on his horse, the mayor drew his sword, and raising himself in his stirrups, struck the daring rebel a blow on the head that felled him lifeless to the earth.

The insurgents, seeing their leader fall, shouted, “They have killed our captain! let us slay them all!” and rushing furiously at the king and his retinue, each man drew his bow: in a moment more, a shower of arrows would have been discharged, sufficient to have overwhelmed the whole royal party, when King Richard, seeing his imminent peril, rode boldly out to meet them. The rebels, with one accord, slackened their bows. “What is the meaning of this disorder, my good people?” said the king, in a conciliating tone. “Are ye angry that you have lost your leader? I am your king: I will be your leader.” The men, overawed at his presence, and having no one to urge them on, looked at each other in silence.

“Follow me to the fields,” he continued: “I will there hear more of the cause of this unseemly tumult.” He rode on: and the rebels, drawing themselves up in battle-array, quietly followed



him, and when they had reached the open country, halted at his command. The king was there joined by a knight named Sir Robert Knolles, with an army of eight thousand men-at-arms, who had been collected together on the first appearance of the tumult. Sir Robert wanted immediately to fall on the rioters and put them to flight, but the king would by no means allow it. "Go to those misguided men," said he to Walworth, "and demand from them the banners that they carry. If they give them, well;—if not, they must be taken from them."

The nobles applauded this determination, and the mayor rode off to execute the orders of his sovereign. When he had come near enough to be heard, Walworth cried out, "My men, the king commands you to give up your banners. Bring them to me, and you may hope for mercy." The demand was immediately complied with, and the rebels, knowing that they stood but a poor chance against well-armed troops, began to disperse in all directions.

The mayor carried the flags back to King Richard, who ordered them to be torn in pieces. Then addressing Walworth, he complimented him highly upon his courage; and, as a reward for his services, bestowed upon him the honour of knighthood.



In a few days, the rebellion was totally suppressed. Jack Straw and John Ball were betrayed by their companions, and led to execution: their heads were cut off, and, with Wat Tyler's, fixed on London Bridge, as the heads of traitors. Every one was glad at the fortunate issue of such great danger to the country, and all admired the courage, presence of mind, and address of their young king, who had so dexterously eluded the violence of the tumult.

As I finished my tale, the last rays of the sun were beginning to fade from the heavens. I therefore took a hand of each of my little hearers in mine, and walked home, answering, as we went along, the numerous remarks which they made respecting Wat Tyler's Rebellion.

## TWELFTH EVENING.

IMBECILITY OF RICHARD THE SECOND—HARRY HOTSPUR—BATTLE OF OTTERBOURNE—DEATH OF EARL DOUGLAS—TRIAL BY COMBAT—BANISHMENT OF NORFOLK AND HEREFORD—RETURN OF HEREFORD—DETHRONEMENT OF RICHARD THE SECOND—DEATH OF RICHARD AT PONTEFRACCT CASTLE—HENRY THE FOURTH—A HIGHWAY ROBBERY—MADCAP HARRY—JUDGE GASCOIGNE—OWEN GLENDOWER—BATTLE OF HOMILDON HILL—PERCY'S REBELLION—BATTLE OF SHREWSBURY—DEATH OF HARRY HOTSPUR.

ON the next evening, we again walked to the summer-house, where by general consent it was agreed that we should go whenever the weather was fine; and I thus continued my narrative:—

As Richard the Second was only sixteen years of age when he repressed Wat Tyler's rebellion, his bravery and vigour of mind raised great expectations in the nation, and every one hoped that he would equal the glories which had so uniformly attended his father and grandfather in all their undertakings. But in proportion as Richard advanced in years, these hopes vanished, and his want of capacity appeared in every enterprise which he attempted. In the early part of his reign, the Scots again made incursions into the northern provinces of England; he marched

against them with a splendid army, and burned several of their most important towns, but before he could obtain any real advantage, he became weary of the war, and returned to London. Here, in the company of one or two favourites, he wasted his time in idle pleasures, and shewed himself so little able to manage the affairs of a great kingdom, that his uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, and four other noblemen, entered into a combination against him, and, upon the pretext that he was yet too young to govern, deprived him of all authority.

Richard did not tamely submit to this degradation. At the age of twenty-three he boldly declared in parliament that he had attained the full age which entitled him to rule the kingdom in his own person, and that he was now resolved to exercise his right of sovereignty. No one ventured to contradict so reasonable an intention, and Richard quickly recovered his kingly power. At first he used it with moderation; but, in a few years, discovering that the Duke of Gloucester was again plotting against him, he ordered his uncle to be arrested, and sent over to Calais, where he soon afterwards died by the hands of assassins, employed, it was said, by his unfeeling nephew.

It was during the reign of this king that a very

famous battle was fought between the brave and noble families of Percy and Douglas; and, as I think the account of it, which I read a short time since, was very interesting, I will relate it to you.

### *The Battle of Otterbourne.*

TOWARDS the close of the summer of the year 1389, a small body of the Scots, under the Lord James Douglas, made an incursion into the northern parts of England, and with fire and sword despoiled the country as far as Newcastle, where they were stopped by the Earl of Northumberland and his gallant son, Sir Henry Percy. This young nobleman, better known by the name of Harry Hotspur, from his fiery temper and impetuous valour, met the Lord Douglas in a skirmish, and challenged him to combat. Each rode against the other with his lance, and each endeavoured to bear his adversary from his steed; after many encounters, the English knight was unhorsed, and Douglas, dismounting, got possession of Percy's lance and pennon. Waving it proudly in the air, he rode off, exclaiming, "This trophy will I bear to Scotland: I'll plant it on the highest turret of my castle of Dalkeith, that men may see from afar this token of thy prowess."

“Never, Douglas!” cried Hotspur, in a rage; “never shalt thou carry that banner from Northumberland!”

“Wilt thou come this night to seek it?” asked Douglas; “I’ll fix it before my tent: thou mayst take it, but ’twill be at thy peril.” So saying, he again waved the pennon in triumph, and rode swiftly to rejoin his troops.

That same evening, the Scots decamped.—Percy would have pursued them; but his friends, imagining that a much larger body of the enemy was advancing against them, overruled his eagerness, by telling him, that it was much better to lose a pennon than two or three hundred knights. Some esquires, however, who had followed the Scots, returned in a day or two with the information that their army did not consist of above three thousand men, including all the followers of the camp. “To horse! to horse!” cried Hotspur, when he heard this, “by the faith I owe my father, I will this night recover the Percys’ pennon;” and assembling together about six hundred knights, and eight thousand men-at-arms, he led them in gallant array against the Douglas, who was engaged at the siege of the castle of Otterbourne. It was late in the day when they arrived within sight of the Scottish army; they had been labouring hard





THE BATTLE OF OTTERBOURNE.



at the siege, and were refreshing themselves with what cheer they could provide, or reposing in their roughly-built tents, upon the side of a rising hill. Suddenly, the war-cry of "Percy!" sounded through the camp; in an instant every warrior started to his feet, and flew to meet the impetuous charge of Hotspur. Ranging themselves under the banners of their chiefs, and shouting,— "Douglas! Douglas! to the rescue!" the Scots quickly advanced to the support of their brethren who had been first attacked; and then began the hardest fought battle that was ever known between the rival nations.

The Earl of Douglas, impatient to gain renown, placed himself in the midst of his troops, and shouting the war-cry of his clan, urged on his followers by his presence. Hotspur, burning to revenge the indignity that he had suffered in the loss of his pennon, rushed to the spot where the Douglas fought. The two banners met, and the men-at-arms, under each, exerted their best energies to gain the victory; but, at this encounter, the superior numbers of the English soon bore back their enemies, and drove them to their former position. The high-spirited Scot, fired with anger at seeing his men thus repulsed, seized a battle-axe, so huge that scarcely another man in the field could use it.

Wielding it with both hands, he rallied his followers, and dashing into the very midst of his enemies, dealt such blows around him, that men fell on every side.

“ Thus,” says an old chronicler, “ like another Hector, he advanced against his foes, hoping, by his own prowess, to recover the field which he had lost. Neither helmet nor breast-plate could withstand the stroke of his ponderous weapon; and shouting—‘ Douglas!’ till the cry was heard loud above the din of battle, he fought long and bravely against a hundred spears. At last, three men rushed upon him at once, and, striking their lances into his body, bore him, still fighting desperately, to the earth. He never rose again.”

The Scots, in the mean time, had collected in large bodies, and now bore down impetuously upon the English, who were fatigued with their long march. As they passed the spot where Douglas lay bleeding, with only one man left to protect his master’s body from further injury, a knight, named Sir John Sinclair, recognised his fallen leader.

“ Cousin, how fares it with you?” asked the knight, as he kneeled by his side.

“ I die like my forefathers,” replied the expiring hero,—“ in a field of battle, not on a bed of sickness. Sir John—conceal my death—defend my

standard, and avenge my fall. There is an old proverb,—‘A dead man shall gain the field;’—may it be accomplished this night,—my friends,—farewell!” With these words, he expired.

The banner was once more raised; and, shouting—“Douglas! Douglas!” the Scots again attacked their enemies, and this time drove them from the field. Harry Hotspur engaged hand to hand with the Lord Montgomery, and fought, without interruption, long and valiantly; till at length the English nobleman was disarmed and taken prisoner by the gallant Scot. Sir Ralph Percy—Hotspur’s brother—was likewise made prisoner; and the English, discomfited at all quarters, took to flight.

There never was an action more severely fought than this, and most gallant deeds of valour were performed on both sides. There are several different accounts of it; but I have borrowed mine from a contemporary historian,—Froissart,—who afterwards conversed with many of the combatants.

At this period, the king’s uncle, John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, was living in retirement, after having wasted his own, and impoverished the resources of his country, in a vain attempt to gain the throne of Castile. He had a son named

Henry, whom the king had created duke of Hereford, in addition to his hereditary dignity of earl of Derby. This nobleman was one day riding by the side of the duke of Norfolk, when they entered into a long conversation upon the state of public affairs. A few days afterwards, in the presence of Richard, Hereford accused the duke of Norfolk of having slandered the king. Norfolk denied the charge, gave Hereford the lie, and challenged him to mortal combat. The challenge was accepted, and the lists for the decision of truth and right were appointed at Coventry. All the nobility of England banded into parties, and adhered to the one duke or the other; and the whole nation was held in suspense with regard to the event; but when the two champions appeared in the field, accoutred for the combat, the king interposed, and ordered them both to leave the kingdom. He banished the duke of Norfolk into perpetual exile, and Hereford for ten years. Hereford was a man of great prudence and command of temper, and behaved himself with so much submission, that, before his departure, the king promised to shorten the time of his exile four years, and also granted him letters patent, by which he was empowered, in case of his father's death, to enter immediately in possession of his

inheritance, and to postpone the doing of homage till his return.

The duke of Lancaster soon after died; and the king, notwithstanding his promise to the duke of Hereford, seized the deceased nobleman's possessions, and retained them for his own use.

Hereford was extremely indignant when he heard this, and immediately resolved on asserting his claim by force of arms. He was connected with most of the principal nobility by alliance or friendship; and as the injury done him by the king might in its consequences affect them all, he easily brought them to take part in his resentment. The people, who found nothing in the person of their sovereign which they could love or revere, and who were even disgusted with many parts of his conduct, transferred to Hereford that attachment which was due to their lord and governor. Richard, at this time, had the imprudence to embark for Ireland, to avenge the death of the earl of March, who had been slain by the natives of that country. The duke of Hereford, taking advantage of his absence, landed in England with a few chosen followers, and in a few days assembled an army of sixty thousand men. As soon as King Richard heard of this, he hastened back from Ireland, with a body of

twenty thousand men; but even this army, seized with the general spirit of disaffection, gradually deserted him, and he was obliged to throw himself upon the mercy of his cousin. Hereford referred him to the parliament, which was then sitting in London; and by their decision Richard the Second was deposed, and obliged to resign his crown and sceptre to his opponent, who assumed the title of Henry the Fourth.

The unfortunate prince was shortly afterwards conveyed to Pontefract Castle, where he died in the thirty-fourth year of his age, and the twenty-third of his reign. It is uncertain, even to the present day, how he came by his death. Some said that it was from natural causes; others, that he was starved; while one of the old chroniclers gives, on what he calls "right excellent authority," the following tale:—

"As King Henry the Fourth was one day sitting at table, surrounded by his nobles,—who, we may suppose, had been talking of the dethroned monarch,—he sighed very deeply, and said,—‘Have I no faithful friend to deliver me of him, whose life will be my death, and whose death will be the preservation of my life?’ This saying was much noticed by those who were present, and especially by one called Sir Piers of Exton. This



knight immediately departed from the court, with eight strong men in his company, and came to Pontefract, and forbade the esquire, who attended on King Richard, to do so any more; saying, 'Let him eat as much as he will now, for he shall not long eat.' King Richard sat down to dinner, and was served without courtesy; whereupon, much marvelling at the sudden change, he demanded of the esquire why he did not his duty. 'Sir,' replied the esquire, 'I am otherwise commanded by Sir Piers of Exton, who has just arrived from King Henry.' When Richard heard this, he seized the carving-knife in his hand, and with it struck the esquire upon the head, saying, 'The devil take Henry of Lancaster and thee together.' In a moment, Sir Piers entered the chamber, well armed, with eight tall men, likewise armed, each having a pole-axe in his hand. King Richard, perceiving this, pushed the table from him, and stepping up to the foremost man, wrung the weapon out of his hand, and so valiantly defended himself, that he slew four of those who thus came to assail him. Sir Piers, half dismayed herewith, leaped into the chair where the king was wont to sit, while the other four men fought with him, and chased him about the room. As King Richard traversed the chamber, from one side to



another, he was obliged to pass by the chair on which Sir Pier's stood; who, striking him upon the head with a pole-axe, felled him to the ground, and therewith rid him out of life. It is said, that Sir Piers of Exton, after he had thus slain him, wept right bitterly, as one stricken with a guilty conscience, for murdering him whom he had so long obeyed as king."

Whether this account be true or not, it is quite impossible to say. Most historians think that it is a fabrication; but all agree that Richard's body was embalmed, and carried to Saint Paul's Cathedral, where it lay for three days, that all men might behold it, and was then buried at Langley. King Henry the Fifth afterwards caused it to be removed to Westminster Abbey, and honourably entombed.

Although the duke of Hereford was formally crowned king of England by the title of Henry the Fourth, and received the submission of the nobility, yet he could not in any way have made a legal claim to the throne. Richard the Second having died childless, the succession devolved upon the descendants of Lionel, duke of Clarence, the second son of Edward the Third, and brother to the Black Prince. Clarence left but one daughter, who was married to Edward Mortimer, earl of

March. The fruit of this union was Roger Mortimer, who was killed in a rebellion in Ireland, leaving two children—Edmund and Anne. To this young Edmund the throne of England rightfully belonged; but as, at Richard's decease, he was but seven years of age, no great stir was made about him.

The new king quickly found the truth of the old adage, that "The usurper's crown will always sear the brow of him who wears it." Soon after his accession, many of the nobles conspired against him, and endeavoured to seize his person; but, having received information of their designs, he met them with a large army, and put them to flight. The conspirators were afterwards nearly all beheaded.

I will now tell you of a highway robbery that has attained some celebrity, from the rank of those engaged in it. You must not imagine that all the particulars are true; but there can be little doubt that there was some foundation for the tale.

In a little inn, by the road-side, about half-way between London and Rochester, there were, on one winter's afternoon, five men gathered round a blazing fire, carousing merrily. A stranger would immediately have been struck with something singular in the appearance of

these revellers, and more particularly of one of them, to whom the rest seemed, at times, to pay great deference. He was a handsome young fellow, not above twenty years of age, but his manner showed that he had mixed early with the world, and had long laid aside the feelings of his boyhood. His countenance was frank and pleasing, and his demeanour bold, though not unmixed with a daring and reckless air. His companions, both from their dress and behaviour, were evidently of an inferior rank; but although they joked and laughed with him as with an equal, he was evidently pleased with their society.

“How now, Jack!” cried he, slapping his hand on the broad back of a fat old fellow, who seemed as if he could scarce carry the burden of his own flesh: “Wilt never have done drinking? Finish that cup of sack, man, and let’s be stirring; my blood warms when I think of the work we’ve in hand to-night.”

“Ha! ha!” laughed he, readily obeying the command given him, “thou’rt impatient, Hal, thou’rt impatient! I like my fire-side corner and good old sack too well, to leave them over-willingly such a night as this.”

“Why, thou thirsty old rascal!” rejoined the former speaker, “here hast thou been, pouring

cup after cup into that capacious stomach of thine, ever since mid-day. Up, man, up! or, by my father's beard, I'll spit and roast thee as they do oxen on a feast-day." So saying, the young man drew his sword, and, amid the loud laughter of his companions, began to prick the lazy fellow with its point.

"I tell thee, Hall," he cried, as he reluctantly rose from his seat, "thou'rt a coward, to attack an unprepared man in this way. By the faith of my forefathers, I've a mind to stick thee through with my dagger."

"I care as little for thy dagger as for a lady's bodkin," said the young man. "Gird on thy sword, Jack, and put thyself at the head of thy valiant troop." Then, calling for the host, he discharged the reckoning, and the whole party left the house.

It was getting late, and almost dark, when they sallied forth and walked along the road towards London, laughing long and loudly at the sallies of wit that ever and anon passed between the young man and his jolly companion. They had not proceeded far, before they heard the sound of wheels approaching them. "Ensconce that huge carcass of thine behind yon hawthorn bush," cried Hal to the old fellow, "and, if thou

valuest that precious life of thine at one farthing, stir not till I tell you; when I cry,—‘Harry to the rescue!’ then mayst thou prove thy much-boasted valour.”

“Ah! that will I,” replied Jack: “I’ll show them what good steel and a strong arm can do;”—and he shook his weapon in the air, and concealed himself in the place pointed out to him. The others likewise retired amidst the trees by the way-side, and waited patiently while the vehicle slowly approached them. They could perceive, through the branches, that it was a carrier’s cart, attended by four men; one of whom walked at the horse’s head, while the others attempted in vain to keep themselves warm within the covering. At last it reached the spot, and immediately the robbers rushed out and surrounded it. The man who was walking, guessing their intentions, without a moment’s consideration, took to flight; and those who were within the cart, hastily jumped out. They, however, would not give up their trust so easily; each had a long oaken staff, with which he laid about him most lustily; but the robbers were armed with swords, and soon proved themselves more than a match for their hardy opponents. Their leader, laughing heartily at the sight of the unequal contest, shouted out,—“Harry! Harry!

to the rescue !” In a moment, the ponderous old fellow burst from behind the bush, and most valorously rushed to the support of his comrade. One of the carriers, seeing him come full butt against them, slipped quietly aside, and, with his stick, bestowed such a terribly hard thwack on the poor fellow’s head, that his courage was at once abated ; and, first rubbing the wounded part, with a rueful countenance, he fairly took to his heels. The carriers soon after found that the odds were against them, and made off as fast as they could ; leaving the cart and its contents in the possession of the robbers, who forthwith proceeded to ransack it.

“ Nay, my friends,” said their captain, “ touch not these honest men’s goods ; take nothing but the gold :—that, I know, belongs to his most gracious majesty, who can easily spare a few paltry pounds.”

“ Here it is !—here it is !” exclaimed one of the men, leaping from the cart, and dragging after him a small but well-secured box. “ It must be here, and pretty heavy it is, too.” Thus saying, he placed it on the ground, and tried to force open the lid, but without success.

“ Let me help you,” said the young man. The two raised the box as high as they could above



the earth ; then dashed it down, and broke it into twenty pieces. "Now, my comrades," he continued, as he picked up a somewhat heavy bag that the box had contained, "now for our reward." He then cut the string that was tied round its mouth ; and, emptying the contents upon the ground, began to count them out into four portions. "As for old Jack," he said, "I should think he'll boast no more of bravery ; the cowardly rascal dare not come back even now."

"No, I dare swear they'll not come back," replied a well-known voice by his side. "I gave one of them such a truncheoning that he'll remember this blessed night till"—

"Why Jack, man, where dost thou spring from?" said the former speaker, turning round with surprise. "I thought thou hadst taken wing, and soared far away."

"I soar away ! marry, come up ! if it had not been for my sword, methinks you'd have got little of that gold."

"Why, thou cowardly knave, thou didst take to thine heels at the first stroke of a stick, as if a mad bull were behind thee. Was it not marvellous to see the hugely fattened boar rolling along at such a rate ?—verily, he would have outstripped the best of us."



"'T is false ; I did but sham !" interrupted the accused : " did ye not see how they immediately turned round and followed me ! 'twas to gull away the furious knaves from their gold ; and though they all set upon me, I stoutly resisted them, and if I've not killed them, they'll all carry the marks of my good broadsword to their graves."

" Ha ! ha ! ha !" laughed the robbers, as each took up his share of the plunder, and pocketed it ; " thou'rt valiant with thy tongue, most mighty Jack : so thou didst beat them all three ?"

" Yes, that did I," replied he : " but where's my gold ? By my father's sword, I'll force it from some of you, if ye do not give me the just reward of my valour !"

" Oh, most valiant Jack, we'll go down on our knees, and crave thy forgiveness," said their leader, attempting to assume a serious tone, " when thou wilt satisfy us that thou didst beat those three men."

" Do you doubt me ?—look to yourselves, then," cried he, drawing his sword, and putting himself in a fighting posture, " come all at once—I'm a match for a dozen of ye !" The captain placed his sword across that of the valorous challenger, and, after a pass or two, succeeded in wresting it from the old man's grasp.

“ I’ll not fight with thee, Hal !” he cried, when he was left defenceless ; “ thou knowest I would not harm thee for fifty times the money : I’ve thrown down my sword as a pledge of peace.”

“ Give me thy hand then, honest Jack,” replied his opponent ; “ and since thou art so careful of me, I’ll even share my portion with thee :—here, thou most renowned warrior,” he added, giving him a handful of money, “ take this as a reward for thy surpassing courage.”

The little band, with many a laugh and joke at the fortunate issue of their adventure, after tying the reins of the carrier’s horse to a tree, set out briskly on their way to London.

On that same night, the hostess of “ The Boar’s Head,” in Eastcheap, a well-known tavern in those times, was very busily employed in attending on a little party who were carousing merrily in—what she was pleased to call—her oak parlour. It was a long room, and rather loftier than was then usual. A handsome gothic window, ornamented with several pieces of stained glass, admitted the rays of the moon to shine upon the highly-polished oaken floor, while the antique carving of the chimney-piece, and the figures that adorned it, seemed starting into life by the glimmering light that was afforded from the dying fire,

and the lamps on the table of the merry-makers. Tankard after tankard of the primest sack had the good dame carried in to them, although it was long past midnight, and still the demand for more was vociferated by the boisterous revellers. She was just preparing a fresh bowl, when a loud knocking at the street-door startled the worthy hostess in the midst of her occupation. Hastily putting aside her cups and flagons, and wondering much what could bring her a visitor at such a time of night, she drew back the heavy bolts that secured the entrance to her dwelling; and, opening the door a little way, demanded who it was that disturbed her quiet house at that unseasonable hour.

“Let us in, good mistress,” said a voice that the dame recognised as that of one of the officers of the sheriff of London; “there are some persons within that we would fain speak with.”

“And what may be thy business with my guests that makes thee knock up honest folk at this time?” asked the dame.

“It is rather an unpleasant affair,” replied the man: “some robbers of the king’s highway have taken shelter in your tavern; and, with your leave, we must have a word or two with them.”

“Robbers in my house!” exclaimed the asto-

nished hostess; "it's utterly impossible. I have but one party here to-night, and I should like to see thee charge *them* with robbery."

"Whoever they may be," said the officer, pushing in with two of his attendants, "we must take them into our safe keeping for awhile." Then, without further parley, they advanced to the door of the oak parlour, and unceremoniously entered it with the staves of their office in their hands.

"Surrender!" exclaimed the foremost constable, as he placed his hand on the shoulder of one of the party, "you are my prisoner." In an instant, the revellers started to their feet, drew their swords, and prepared to defend themselves.

"By what authority," cried one of them—the young man who was at the head of the robbers; for here they had resolved to celebrate their good fortune,—“by what authority dost thou dare to invade our privacy, and lay hands on us?”—and as he spake he advanced, and with a face flushed with anger confronted the intruders.

"So please your highness," said the man, drawing back in confusion, "we traced a band of highwaymen to this house; it has been watched since twilight, and they have not yet left it."

“Ay, and this fat old fellow was one of them,” added a second constable bluntly: ‘I’ll swear to him before any judge in England’——

“Thou false knave!” cried the accused, blustering up to the speaker with a drawn sword in his hand;—“I’ll make thee swallow some inches of cold steel, if thou repeat thy charge. How darest thou accuse a knight of robbery?”

“I care neither for your knighthood nor your steel,” replied the man, beating down the sword with his staff, and catching roughly hold of the braggart’s coat. “You are he that the carrier knocked on the pate; ’t is no use denying it: so come with me.”

“Nay, nay,” interrupted the young man; “I will answer for his appearance and my own whenever it please you.—You know me, sirrah,” he continued, addressing the chief officer. “We shall be here till noon to-morrow.”

“I know not if it be right, my lord,” replied the man; “but I will do as you bid me, and take the consequence.—Come, my comrades, let us be off; we stop the merriment of these worthy gentlemen:” and, taking his companion’s arm, he hastened from the room.

“Well, Jack,” said he whom the constable had addressed as “my lord,” when the intruders had

closed the door, "thou hast brought us to a pretty pass. These bloodhounds have tracked thy fat carcase, and now we must, one and all, fight it out before some grave old judge."

"And dare any judge reprove that valiant knight Sir John Falstaff?" said he, stamping his right foot upon the floor, and leaning his hand upon the hilt of his sword: "by St. George! I would answer him as boldly as he gave. Ne'ertheless, Hal, I begin to wish the crowns down the bellies of the owners, rather than in our pockets."

"Never fear, my valiant knight," answered Hal, "never fear; they'll soon be in our landlady's money-bag: but, my men, let's be jovial while we may. Do thou," he continued, addressing one of them, "sing us some merry ballad; and one of ye run to the kitchen, and see why our good hostess is so slow in her supplies." The man soon returned, bearing a large bowl of foaming liquor, which he placed upon the board. Each filled his goblet, and the singer lustily poured forth a popular ditty, in which the praises of wine and good fellowship were not forgotten. This was followed by loud applause, and many a similar strain, until daylight began to show itself; when the revellers retired to rest.



On the following day, the officers were early in their attendance at the "The Boar's Head;" summoning the party to answer to the charge that had been laid against them. Soon after midday, they all appeared before a celebrated judge, named Gascoigne, who was not a little surprised when he discovered that the leader of a band of robbers was no other than the prince of Wales.

Gascoigne reprimanded young Henry rather severely, and ordered his companions to be imprisoned: this so incensed the prince, that he rudely pushed back the venerable old man against his chair. The judge instantly called for his guards, and the royal offender was himself locked up with his comrades. When Henry had time to reflect upon his conduct, he perceived how wrongly he had acted; and, pleading his youth, made an humble apology to the worthy judge. He was soon liberated, and, at his intercession, his companions were likewise allowed to go free. All this reached King Henry's ears, who exclaimed,—“Happy the monarch who has a judge so resolute in the discharge of his duty, and a son so willing to submit to the laws!”

In the second year of his reign, Henry was obliged to send forces into Wales against the inhabitants, who, under the standard of Owen



Glendower, a lineal descendant of their ancient princes, had risen for the recovery of their former liberty. A troublesome and tedious war was thus kindled, which Glendower long sustained by his valour and activity, aided by the natural strength of the country, and the untamed spirit of the native Welsh.

He gained two splendid victories, in one of which he captured a knight named Sir Edmund Mortimer, who was uncle to the young earl of March, and nearly related to the family of Percy. The king was obliged to march in person into Wales; but he could never find his active and cunning enemy. It seemed as if Glendower had taken refuge in the clouds, and thence waged war by commanding the elements. Incessant rains distressed the English, inundated the valleys, and made the mountain-torrents impassable. The king's tent was swept away by a tempest; and Henry at last withdrew, convinced, it is said, that Owen Glendower was a mighty magician.

About the same time, the Scots again made an incursion into England under lord Archibald Douglas. Ten thousand warriors—the best of Scotland—followed his banner, which flew like a meteor from one devoted castle to another. Having carried terror and devastation as far as the walls

of Newcastle, without finding any force to oppose him, he turned back, laden with plunder, and in a careless manner marched towards the Tweed.

In the meanwhile, the earl of Northumberland and his son, Harry Hotspur, having received intelligence of this inroad of their deadly enemy, gathered a numerous army, and posted it near Milfield, in the northern part of Northumberland. Douglas, hampered by his spoil, came suddenly upon this force, and perceiving a strong position between the two armies, called Homildon Hill, immediately flew to take possession of it. The English occupied the ridges of a neighbouring eminence; but, finding that the Scots would not move, they advanced to the assault. The impetuous Percy was about to charge up the hill of Homildon, when a more considerate chief caught his bridle, and advised him to stay in the valley, and begin the fight with his archers.

The counsel was taken: the English bowmen advanced to the foot of the hill, and shot upwards with wonderful force and correct aim. Instead of charging at first, as Bruce had done at Bannockburn, Douglas left his defenceless troops drawn up in ranks on the face of the hill, where they presented one general mark to the enemy. Scarcely

an English arrow flew in vain; the Scots fell in heaps, without so much as drawing their swords.

At last, a Scottish knight, named Swinton, tired with this unequal contest, cried out to his followers, —“ My brave men, why stand ye here to be shot at like fawns in a pack? where is your ancient valour? Let those who will, descend with me; we will meet our foes hand to hand, and break that host, and conquer; or, if not, at least we'll die with honour, like soldiers.” Douglas then charged down the hill. The English bowmen retired a little as he advanced; but presently halting again, they turned round, and sent a flight of arrows, so “sharp and strong,” that no armour could withstand it. The Douglas himself was wounded, though not mortally, in five different places; he fell from his horse,—was made prisoner, and a complete rout of the Scots ensued. Eight hundred remained on the field of battle, and it is said five hundred more were drowned in the Tweed. The English men-at-arms, knights, and squires, never drew the sword, or couched the lance, the whole affair being decided by the archers. Such was the famous battle of Homildon Hill, fought on the 14th day of September, 1402.

When King Henry heard of this victory, he sent orders to the earl of Northumberland and

young Percy not to ransom their prisoners, as he intended to detain them, that he might be able, by their means, to make an advantageous peace with Scotland; but the Percys were greatly indignant. It was to their assistance that the king mainly owed his present position on the throne of England; and although he had bestowed the office of High Constable on the earl, and conferred other gifts on the family, yet they were extremely discontented at the treatment they had received. Besides this, Sir Edmund Mortimer, the brother of Hotspur's wife, was still a prisoner in the hands of Glendower, and Henry had refused to the earl of Northumberland permission to treat for his ransom. The impatient spirit of Harry Percy could ill brook this usage. He and his father raised the standard of rebellion against their king: they liberated Earl Douglas without ransom, on condition of his joining them with all his vassals; and formed a close league with Owen Glendower, who promised to assist them with twelve thousand Welsh. Douglas, true to his engagement, crossed the borders with a considerable force. The earl of Northumberland being "sore sick," Hotspur took the command of the army, and marched towards North Wales; and, while on the road, his uncle, the earl of Worcester, joined

him with a great body of archers from Cheshire. The plan of his campaign was excellent, but he had to do with an enemy quite as active, and much more skilful. The king quickly marched at the head of fourteen thousand men to Shrewsbury, where he came upon Percy before that nobleman was joined by Glendower. Enraged, but not disheartened, at the delay of the Welsh, Hotspur boldly determined to meet Henry with his present forces, and quickly drew up his men within sight of the royal troops; but night coming on prevented them from joining battle that day.

On the morrow, the 21st of July, 1403, the two armies met on the plain close by the town of Shrewsbury. Many years had elapsed since England had beheld her sons thus arrayed against each other, and now the mightiest nobles of the land stood opposed.

King Henry, still willing to spare his subjects blood, sent the abbot of Shrewsbury to the rebel army, to propose an amicable arrangement; but Percy rejected the offer, and a battle became inevitable. The trumpets blew; Hotspur, followed by his troops, shouting "Esperance, Percy!" and, gallantly supported by the earl of Douglas, led the first onset against his enemy. The royalists, crying, "Henry and St. George!" stoutly resisted





PRINCE HENRY RESCUING HIS FATHER.



them, and in a few minutes fierce war raged throughout the plain. Hotspur and Douglas, two of the most renowned warriors in Christendom, were seen to fly from troop to troop, performing the most valiant deeds. The royal standard was cast down, the king's guard were dispersed, and many noblemen slain, in the first charge; while Douglas, resolved to fight with King Henry in person, sought for him with undaunted valour. Three gentlemen did he slay who bore the royal armour, and at last he met the king. Douglas fought like a lion, and Henry's life was greatly endangered; when, at the critical moment, the young prince of Wales flew to his father's rescue, and put the Scottish nobleman to flight.

The brilliant charge of Percy was but ill-supported. The royal lines through which he had forced his way, closed in upon him; and when, after fighting through the whole depth of the troops, he turned to regain his friends, he found his enemies immoveable as a rock. In vain he strove to pierce through their serried ranks: the royalists stood close and firm, presenting an impenetrable barrier. He sustained himself for a long time against fearful odds; but while the battle was still raging on every side, he was struck by an arrow which pierced his helmet, and, passing

through his brain, killed him on the spot. The death of Hotspur was soon made known; his followers lost heart, and fled, pursued by the victorious royalists. Douglas, falling over a precipice, was captured; and the earl of Worcester and many others were taken prisoners in the flight. The former nobleman was treated with the respect due to his rank and valour; but the earl of Worcester, as one of the chief instigators of the rebellion, was, in a few days, conducted to the scaffold.

Although victorious on this occasion, King Henry quickly found enemies springing up against him in various parts of his dominions; some of them he easily subdued, but with others he had to contend long and fiercely. At length, worn out with the anxiety attendant on these harassing oppositions, Henry the Fourth died in the flower of his age, after a reign of thirteen years.

His son, Henry of Monmouth, prince of Wales, succeeded him without opposition, and was crowned king, by the name of Henry the Fifth.

## THIRTEENTH EVENING.

GOOD RESOLUTIONS OF HENRY THE FIFTH—STATE OF FRANCE—ASSASSINATION OF THE DUKE OF ORLEANS—SIEGE OF HARFLEUR—AWKWARD POSITION OF THE ENGLISH ARMY—HEIGHTS OF BLANGI—BATTLE OF AGINCOURT—HENRY'S TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO LONDON—THE BRIDGE OF MONTEREAU—BASE TREACHERY—SIEGE OF ROUEN—TREATY OF TROYE—DEATH AND FUNERAL OF HENRY THE FIFTH—HENRY THE SIXTH—SIEGE OF ORLEANS—JOAN OF ARC—DEFEAT OF THE ENGLISH—CORONATION OF CHARLES THE SEVENTH—CAPTURE AND CRUEL DEATH OF THE MAID OF ORLEANS—MARGARET OF ANJOU—THE ENGLISH EXPELLED FRANCE—CLAIM OF THE DUKE OF YORK.

As soon as Henry the Fifth took possession of the throne, he called together his former companions, and told them that he was determined to alter his mode of life; and, after exhorting them to imitate his example, he dismissed them with liberal presents. His subjects, who expected that he would have continued his extravagant and disorderly career, were thus agreeably disappointed; and now the character of the young king shone forth brighter than if it had never been clouded by any errors.

The kingdom of France was at this time in a very distracted state. Charles the Sixth, who had come to the throne at a very early age, had no sooner arrived at manhood, and given great

proofs of genius and spirit, than he was unfortunately seized with fits of frenzy, which rendered him incapable of exercising his authority. The administration of affairs was disputed between his brother, Lewis, duke of Orleans, and his cousin, John, duke of Burgundy, and the whole nation was divided between these contending princes. At length, moved by the interposition of common friends, they agreed to enter into strict amity, and bury all past quarrels in oblivion. They swore before the altar to the sincerity of their friendship, and gave to each other every pledge which could be deemed sacred among men. But all this solemn preparation was only a cover for the basest treachery, deliberately premeditated by the duke of Burgundy. He engaged some assassins, who fell upon and slew his rival in the streets of Paris; and the crime having been traced to him, Burgundy had the audacity to openly avow and attempt a justification of the heinous deed. The young duke of Orleans, joined by his brothers, and many of the most powerful lords, immediately made violent war against him; and the city of Paris became a perpetual scene of blood and violence, while the provinces also were laid waste, and assassinations were everywhere daily committed.

The king of England thought this too good an opportunity of aggrandizing himself to be lost. The court of France was deeply in arrears with him for the ransom of King John, which he sent over to demand. This, as Henry anticipated, was refused; and, upon pretext of enforcing his rightful claim, he assembled a large fleet at Southampton, and invited all the nobility and military men of the kingdom to attend him to conquest and glory.

On the 14th day of August, 1415, Henry put to sea at the head of 6,000 men-at-arms, and 24,000 foot-soldiers, mostly archers, and, sailing over to Harfleur, a sea-port of France, he forthwith laid siege to it. The town was most valiantly defended by those of the French nobility who were within its walls; but as the garrison was weak, and the fortifications in bad repair, the governor was at last obliged to capitulate. The English king having taken possession of it, expelled all the French inhabitants, and caused a proclamation to be made in England that whosoever—whether merchant, gentleman, or artisan—would inhabit Harfleur, should have a dwelling given to him and his heirs for ever. Great multitudes immediately flocked over, and the town was quickly re-peopled by the English.

The fatigues of this siege, and an unusual continuance of hot weather, so wasted Henry's army, that he now found it impossible to enter on any further enterprise, and he was obliged to think of returning into England. He had dismissed his ships, which could not anchor upon the enemy's coast, and he lay under the necessity of traversing the country to Calais, before he could reach a place of safety. That he might not discourage his army by the appearance of flight, he made slow and deliberate marches till he reached the river Somme, which he intended to have crossed at the ford of Blanche-taque—the same place where Edward the Third had escaped from Philip of Valois; but the constable D'Albret, the general of the French army, had taken the precaution to render it impassable, by driving stakes into the bottom of the river, and Henry was obliged to march higher up the stream, in order to seek for a safe passage. The English army was here continually harassed by the lightly-armed troops of the enemy; their provisions were cut off, and sickness and fatigue seemed to have reduced Henry's affairs to a desperate situation, when he had the good fortune to discover a shallow ford, over which he safely carried his army.

Hoping that he had thus avoided his enemies,



Henry pushed on his troops with fresh vigour, towards Calais; but on his arrival at the heights of Blangi, he was greatly surprised to find the whole French army so encamped upon the plains beneath that it was impossible for him to proceed on his march without coming to an engagement with them. Nothing in appearance could be more unequal than the condition of the two armies. The English had lost at least half their men, either at the siege of Harfleur or by disease; the remaining portion were so overcome with fatigue and famine, that they seemed but ghosts of their former selves.

The French troops, on the contrary, amounted to nearly sixty thousand men in full vigour, and were led on by the most noble princes of the kingdom.

Henry's situation was exactly similar to that of Edward at Cressy, and the Black Prince at Poitiers, and the memory of these great battles inspiring the English with courage, made them hope for a like deliverance from their present difficulties. The king likewise observed the same prudent conduct which had been followed by those great commanders. He drew up his army between two woods, having a little village in the rear, which he might fly to in case of need, and in this position waited the attack of the enemy.



The French nobility, confiding in their vast superiority of numbers, and doubting not in the least that they should completely crush the little band of invaders, ordered a chariot to be made, in which to carry the king of England in triumph through the streets of Paris, and even the soldiers of the camp played at dice for the English.

A herald was likewise sent to King Henry, to enquire what ransom he would give. "Tell the constable of France, from us," he replied, "that sooner than we will pay ransom, our dead bodies shall be his prize. We seek not to fight; but if he seek us, willingly will we meet him. If we may pass, we will; if we be hindered, we will dye the tawny ground of France with the red blood of her sons."

Henry then posted his men in order of battle; he sent two hundred archers into a meadow near the front ranks of his enemies, but separated from them by an impassable ditch, with orders to remain hidden there till he gave the signal for them to discharge their weapons. He then divided his army into three battalions. The first, the vanguard, under the duke of York, was composed entirely of archers. The second, in which were the heavy-armed troops, he commanded in person; and his uncle, the duke of Exeter, led the rear-

guard, consisting of bill-men and archers mixed. The cavalry were posted in various places, to be ready to assist wherever the attack might be most severely felt; and still further to provide against the fearful odds opposed to him, Henry caused stakes, bound at both ends with sharp iron spikes, to be pitched before the archers, forming a pali-sado almost impregnable to the French cavaliers.

When he had completed his battle array, the king of England, armed *cap-a-pie*, appeared before his men, urging them by the remembrance of Cressy and Poitiers, to emulate the glories of those victories. As he walked from rank to rank, he overheard one of the noblemen who attended him say,—“ Oh! that we had but ten thousand of those men who are idle this day in England!” The king, turning to him, replied,—“ My cousin Westmoreland, wish not for one man more. We are, indeed, but a little band opposed to yon mighty host; but if, for our misdeeds, we are to be delivered into the hands of our enemies, the fewer we be the less damage shall the realm of England sustain. If we conquer, the greater will be our glory. No, my cousin, wish not another man from England; I would not lose so great an honour as one man more would share from me.” Then, addressing his soldiers, he con-

tinued,—“ Be confident, be valiant : God and our just quarrel will defend us, and deliver to us our proud enemies ; I am myself resolved, either by a famous death or glorious victory, to win honour and renown.”

The loud acclamations that rent the air were closely followed by the storm of battle. The French nobility, assuring themselves of victory, and thinking that they should easily bear down the half-starved ranks of their enemies, with very little order, galloped furiously against them ; but the English archers, with one accord, drew their bows, and let fly a cloud of arrows that at once repelled their vain-confident assailants. Horse rolled upon horse, and both fell struggling to the earth ; while their riders, encumbered with their armour, and unable to rise, were mostly crushed to death by their own steeds. Those who escaped the arrows were met by the iron spikes, and either taken prisoners or killed : the greatest confusion prevailed, and the French vanguard was totally discomfited. The king of England, encouraged at this success, led forward his second division, and gave the command for a general charge upon the enemy. The archers, casting away their bows, took their bills and axes, and engaged hand to hand. The French valiantly

withstood them, and for three hours the issue of the fight was doubtful. The king himself fought in person with the duke of Alençon, and received from him a blow that nearly felled him from his horse; happily he recovered himself, and, after much skirmishing, took the duke prisoner, and slew two of his attendants, who had come to the rescue of their master.

Perceiving that the battle was still perilous, Henry ordered his cavalry to fetch a compass round, and fall upon the rearguard of the enemy. The nature of the ground favoured this enterprise; and when the French suddenly perceived the horsemen behind them, they were so much amazed, that, without order, they flung down their arms, and fled like scared sheep.

In the meantime, while the fight was thus raging, and the English were taking thousands of prisoners, some French knights and other men-at-arms, to the number of six hundred horsemen, who were the first to run away, hearing that the English tents and pavilions were a good way distant from the army, and without any sufficient guard for their protection, secretly galloped towards them, slew the lackeys and boys, broke open the chests, and plundered the camp of all the valuable property it contained. News of this

quickly reached Henry's ears, who, fearing that his enemies might gather again, and that the Frenchmen who were taken would turn against their captors, gave orders that ever soldier should, on pain on death, immediately slay his prisoner. When this decree was pronounced, it was most pitiful to see how the poor Frenchmen were unmercifully killed: some were stabbed with daggers, some dashed on the head with axes; while other victims, with their throats cut by the cruel sword, lay bleeding upon the earth in the last agonies of death.

When this lamentable slaughter—for which there was no help—was ended, the English again disposed themselves in battle array, expecting to be attacked. None of the enemy, however, advanced against them; and those bands which still remained took to flight immediately upon their approach. About four o'clock in the afternoon, King Henry commanded the trumpets to sound for the recall; and having gathered his army together, he ordered his chaplains and prelates to return thanks to heaven for so great a victory. Every man knelt upon the earth during this ceremony, and every voice joined in praise, as they concluded with this psalm:—“*Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam.*”





HENRY'S ANSWER TO THE FRENCH HERALD.



The king of England and his nobles passed that night in the French camp, which they found well stored with provisions. On the next morning, Mountjoy, the herald, came to desire leave to bury their dead. Before Henry answered him, he asked, in sport, to whom the victory was given. Mountjoy replied,—“To thee, most mighty king; and now I come to crave permission that we may wander in safety over this bloody field. Many of our princes lie soaked in mercenary blood, and we would fain give them Christian burial.”

“I grant thy request,” answered the king; “but tell me, herald, what castle is it that crowns the summit of yon hill?”

“It is called Agincourt,” said Mountjoy.

“Then,” continued Henry, “let this be called the field of Agincourt, fought on St. Crispin’s day.”

No battle was ever more fatal to France than this. The number of princes and nobility, either slain or taken prisoners, is almost incredible. The constable himself, the duke of Brabant, and many of the noblest lords, were killed; while the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, and a host of other princes, were conveyed captives into England. The total number slain was upwards of ten thou-

sand men, and Henry was master of fourteen thousand prisoners. On the side of the English, the only persons of importance that were killed were, the duke of York, and the earl of Suffolk; and the total is stated by many writers not to have exceeded forty men.

King Henry lost not a moment of time, but quickly resumed his march towards Calais, where he embarked for England, with all his troops and prisoners, and on the same day landed at Dover. Upon Blackheath he was met by the mayor and aldermen of London, apparelled in the richest scarlet robes, and followed by four hundred commoners, dressed in beautiful murrey-coloured cloth; they were all mounted on horses, decorated with sumptuous gilt chains and collars; and soon after them the clergy, in the most pompous array, with crosses of gold and massive censers, came out in full procession to meet the conqueror

Thus attended, King Henry made his triumphant entry into London, amidst the deafening shouts of his delighted subjects, who, in every town throughout the kingdom, welcomed his return with bonfires, processions, and the most exultant rejoicing.

Before he left Calais, Henry concluded a truce with France for two years; during which time that

kingdom was torn asunder by all the furies of civil war. The duke of Burgundy attempted to gain possession of the person of the unfortunate king; but was strenuously opposed by the Count D'Armagnac, constable of France. Queen Isabella, having been ill-used by the constable, who seized her treasures, in order to defray the expenses of the government, joined the duke of Burgundy, and extended her animosity even to her son, the dauphin, who had joined the party of D'Armagnac.

In concert with her, the duke entered France with a large army, and soon fought his way to the gates of Paris. The populace rose in his favour, and one of his captains was admitted into the city in the night-time. The king was seized,—the dauphin escaped with difficulty; but the Count D'Armagnac, and many other noblemen, were murderously slain.

While France was in this terrible condition, and so ill-prepared to resist a foreign enemy, King Henry landed in Normandy, with an army of twenty-five thousand men. He quickly subdued several important towns; and having received a reinforcement from England, laid siege to Rouen. This important place was most gallantly defended; the garrison sallied forth at all hours and in all places, and swore to one another never to deliver

up the city while they could hold a sword in their hands, or lay a spear in rest.

The king of England, having heard of this, changed his plan of operations, and converted the siege into a blockade; he caused the walls to be surrounded with deep trenches, which were filled with stakes, and watchfully guarded by archers, who suffered no one to issue out of the gates. This continued from Michaelmas to Christmas-time, and food began to be very scarce in Rouen; dogs, cats, rats, and mice, were sold at a very high price; and the poor were daily starved to death. Many miserable wretches were driven out of the city by the garrison, and driven back again to the walls by the English archers, so that they lay down, without hope of relief, and died by hundreds, daily. On Christmas-day, however, King Henry, to his great praise, ordered food to be given to the survivors, whose lives he thus preserved, and who were thankful beyond measure at this unexpected generosity. At length, in the beginning of January, the gates of Rouen were opened, and the king of England agreed to spare the lives of the defenders, on condition that they should not take up arms against him for the next twelve months.

The duke of Burgundy and the young dau-

phin, having received intelligence of Henry's success, began to think it was high time for them to reconcile their quarrels, and join together in defence of their country. They, therefore, agreed to an interview, and, with their attendants, came to the town of Montereau. The duke lodged in the castle; the dauphin in the town, which was divided from the castle by the river Yonne. The bridge between them was chosen for the place of interview, and two high rails, a few yards apart, were drawn across it; the gates on each side were guarded,—one by the officers of the dauphin, the other by those of the duke. The princes, each accompanied by ten persons, entered into the intermediate space; and, with all this precaution from mistrust, began to conciliate each other's friendship. Among the attendants of the dauphin there were several noblemen who had been zealous partisans of the late duke of Orleans; and these men determined to seize the opportunity of revenging on the assassin the murder of that prince. At a given signal, each man drew his sword, rushed upon the duke of Burgundy, and hewed him to the earth: his friends, astonished, were incapable of defence, and either shared his fate, or were taken prisoners.

The whole state of affairs was changed by this

unexpected incident: the city of Paris, passionately devoted to the family of Burgundy, broke out into the highest fury against the dauphin; and the queen, persevering in her unnatural animosity against her son, increased the general flame. But, above all, the new duke of Burgundy thought himself bound, by every tie of honour and duty, to revenge the murder of his father.

The king of England had, in the mean time, profited extremely by the distractions of France, and now threatened Paris even, with the terror of his arms. Whilst in the midst of these successes, he was most agreeably surprised to find his enemies, instead of combining against him in the defence of their country, ready to throw themselves into his arms, and make him the instrument of their vengeance upon each other. A league was immediately concluded between him and the duke of Burgundy, who agreed to every demand made by the English monarch.

The principal articles of the treaty were, that Henry should marry the Princess Catherine; that King Charles, during his life-time, should enjoy the title and dignity of king of France, but that Henry should be declared and acknowledged heir of the monarchy, and be intrusted with the present administration of the government; that the king-



dom of France should pass to his heirs; and that France and England should for ever after be united under one king, but should still retain their several usages, customs, and privileges. This famous league, known as the Treaty of Troye, was never wholly accomplished. Henry soon after espoused the Princess Catherine, carried his father-in-law to Paris, and took possession of the city. He then turned his arms, with success, against the adherents of the dauphin, who, as soon as he heard of this treaty, took the title of regent, and appealed to God and his sword for the maintenance of his right.

About this time, Henry was obliged to go over to England, leaving his uncle, the duke of Exeter, governor of Paris during his absence. The regent, hearing of his departure, sent over to Scotland for assistance; and that nation, jealous, in the highest degree, of Henry's important conquest, readily complied with his request. Seven thousand Scotchmen, under the command of the earl of Buchan, quickly landed in France, and joined the army of the young prince. They soon encountered some English troops, and totally defeated them, killing the duke of Clarence, Henry's brother, and taking three noble earls prisoners.

The arrival of the king of England, with a



reinforcement of twenty-eight thousand archers and horsemen, was more than sufficient to repair this loss. Henry immediately conducted his army against the dauphin, made himself master of Chartres and Dreux, and laid siege to Meaux, which was for eight months obstinately defended by the bastard of Vaurus, but who was at last obliged to surrender at discretion.

The bravery of this officer was equalled only by his cruelty. He was accustomed to hang without distinction, all the English and Burgundians who fell into his hands; and Henry, in revenge of this barbarity, ordered him to be strung up on the same tree which he had made the instrument of his inhuman executions.

This success was followed by the surrender of many other important towns that held for the dauphin, and that prince was chased almost out of the kingdom. To crown all the other prosperities of Henry, his queen presented him with a son, who was called by his father's name, and whose birth was celebrated by rejoicings no less pompous, and no less sincere, in Paris than in London.

In the midst of all this glory, when Henry the Fifth had nearly attained the very summit of his ambition, his career was stopped short by the

hand of nature, and all his mighty projects vanished into air. From some disease, contracted by exposure during the intense heat of the dog-days, he expired in the thirty-fourth year of his age, and the tenth of his reign.

An old chronicler, after passing a most flattering eulogium upon his character, thus describes his funeral:—"His body, embalmed and closed in lead, was laid in a chariot-royal, richly apparelled with cloth of gold. Upon his coffin was a representation of his person, adorned with robes, a diadem, and sceptre. The chariot was drawn by six horses, richly trapped; the first with the arms of St. George emblazoned upon the housings—the second with the arms of Normandy—the third, of King Arthur—the fourth, of St. Edward—the fifth, of France—and the sixth with the arms of England and France. On this same chariot were James, king of Scotland, chief-mourner; the dukes of Exeter and Warwick; the earls of March, Stafford, and Beaufort, and many other mourners. The Lord Dudley bore the standard of England in advance; and many lords carried banners and pennons on each side; while round about the chariot rode five hundred men-at-arms, all in black armour, with the butt-end of their spears upwards; the armour on their horses like-

wise being black. Besides these, on each side of the chariot were three hundred men with torches. With these appointments was this dolorous funeral conducted from Vincennes, through Paris, to Rouen, Calais, and Dover, thence through London to Westminster Abbey; where Henry's body was interred with such solemn ceremonies, mourning of lords, prayers of priests, and lamenting of commons, as never, before then, the like was seen in England."

After the death of that noble prince, King Henry the Fifth, his only son, a child not yet twelve months old, was proclaimed king of England and France, with great ceremony. By the will of his deceased father, his uncle, the duke of Bedford, was appointed regent of France; the duke of Gloucester, regent of England; and the care of the young king's person was entrusted to the duke of Exeter and bishop of Winchester.

In less than two months after Henry's death, Charles the Sixth of France terminated his unhappy life; and soon after, his son, the dauphin, caused himself to be crowned king, by the name of Charles the Seventh, at Poitiers.

Meanwhile, the duke of Bedford ably continued the war that Henry had left unfinished; and the new French monarch was driven from place

to place, without any hopes of success. Everything conspired in favour of the English regent. At a battle fought near Verneuil, where Charles had the assistance of 7,000 Scots, under the earl of Buchan, the English army, with about equal numbers, gained a most decisive victory. As usual, the archers, fixing their palisadoes before them, discharged their volleys into the thickest ranks of the enemy, and with their usual effect. Four thousand French and Scotch were left dead upon the field, while the English lost but sixteen hundred men.

The condition of the new king of France now appeared very terrible, and almost desperate. He had lost the flower of his army and the bravest of his nobles in this fatal action; and his resources were so scanty, that it was with great difficulty that he could supply himself and his few followers with the plainest necessaries of life. At this juncture, some of the French nobility who had sworn allegiance to Henry the Fifth and his infant son, as his successor, jealous of the power which the English nation was acquiring, suddenly joined King Charles, with all their troops. This enabled Charles to hold out, and matters continued thus for several years; many battles were fought, and towns taken and retaken, when the regent deter-

mined on laying siege to the important city of Orleans. He committed the conduct of the enterprise to the earl of Salisbury, who had just arrived from England with a reinforcement of six thousand men, and that nobleman most vigorously began the assault. The French king, on his part, used every expedient to supply the town with provisions and the bravest garrison; and many distinguished officers threw themselves into the place for its protection. The eyes of all Europe were turned towards this scene, where it was expected that the French would make their last stand for the independence of their kingdom. After an obstinate resistance, the earl of Salisbury obtained possession of the bridge of Orleans; but on the very next day he was unfortunately killed by a cannon-ball, as he was taking a view of the enemy. The earl of Suffolk succeeded to the command, passed the river, and invested Orleans on every side. Numberless feats of valour were performed, both by the besiegers and the besieged, during the winter that followed. Bold sallies were made, and repulsed with equal boldness. Provisions were sometimes introduced into the town, and as often intercepted; so that the supplies were unequal to the consumption of the place, and the English seemed daily, though slowly to be

advancing towards the completion of their enterprise.

Even the besiegers themselves were obliged to procure their provisions from a distance, and the French parties not unfrequently attacked their convoys. On one occasion, a detachment of the English army, of two thousand men, while escorting a large supply of every kind of stores, was attacked by four thousand French, under the command of the count of Dunois, a celebrated warrior of the time. The English commander drew up his troops behind the wagons; and the French general, afraid of attacking men in that position, planted a battery of cannon against them. The English rushed from their places, and brought on a general engagement, in which they routed their enemies, with the loss of five hundred men. This action was called the "Battle of Herrings," because there was a great quantity of that provision in the English convoy, for the troops to eat during Lent.

It was at this time that there first appeared one of the most remarkable characters to be found in the pages of our chronicles: but as it belongs more to the French, than English history, I must be as brief as possible.

In the village of Domremi, on the borders of



the province of Lorraine, there lived a country girl, called Joan of Arc. This maiden, about twenty-seven years of age, and of an irreproachable character, was servant in a small inn, where she was accustomed to wait on the travellers who frequented the little hostel, and no doubt to hear much talk of the present situation of France. A young prince, kept back from his lawful throne by his rebellious subjects and the arms of strangers, could not fail to interest the compassion of all those whose hearts were not corrupted by the divisions of faction. The siege of Orleans, the successful attacks of the English, and the distress of the garrison and inhabitants, were the incessant theme of the inhabitants of France. Every one was seized with a desire of rendering assistance to their sovereign ; and, among the rest, Joan of Arc was inflamed with the wild ambition of fighting in his defence. She could rest neither day nor night ; she fancied she saw visions, and heard voices exhorting her to re-establish the throne of France, and expel the foreign invaders. Imagining herself destined by heaven to this office, she threw aside all the timidity of her sex, and went boldly to King Charles. It is pretended that, immediately on admission to his presence, she knew him ; although she had never seen his



face before, and though he purposely kept himself amidst a crowd of courtiers. She offered to raise the siege of Orleans, and conduct him to Rheims, to be crowned; and, on his expressing doubts of her divine mission, to convince him, she demanded, as the instrument of her future victories, a sword, which she said would be found in a particular spot in the church of St. Catherine; and which, though she had never seen it, she described by all its marks.

After many idle ceremonies and enquiries, it was decided by a grave assembly that Joan of Arc was inspired. All her requests were complied with; she was armed *cap-a-pie*, mounted on horseback, and, with a consecrated banner in her hand, shewn, in that warlike habiliment, before the people, by whom she was received with the loudest acclamations.

Whether King Charles and his ministers really believed in what they pretended, or whether they only thought that Joan of Arc might, by good management, be imposed upon the people as an aid from heaven, it is impossible to say. All the English affected to laugh at the maid and her divine commission; and said that the French king was indeed reduced to a sorry pass, since he was obliged to have recourse to such ridiculous expe-

dients. Yet they felt their imagination secretly struck with some superstitious feeling, and waited with anxious expectation for the issue of this extraordinary scheme.

The maid was sent to Blois, where a large convoy had been prepared for the supply of Orleans, and an army of ten thousand men assembled to escort it. She marched at its head, and, without opposition from the English, entered the besieged town, and relieved the hungry inhabitants with plenty of provisions.

By this movement, the earl of Suffolk was placed in a situation of the greatest perplexity. He saw his troops, formerly so elated with victory, and so fierce for the combat, daunted, and overawed with the notion of a divine influence accompanying the maid. The French, on the other hand, inspired with the idea of supernatural protection, became day by day more enthusiastic and more daring. They sallied forth from the town, and attacked the besiegers in their redoubts; driving them away, and taking many prisoners. In one of these assaults, the French were repulsed, and the maid was almost left alone. She was obliged to retreat, and join the runaways; but displaying her sacred standard, and animating them with her voice and action, she led them on again

to the attack, and overpowered the English in their intrenchments. In the assault of another part, she was wounded in the neck with an arrow, and fell to the ground apparently lifeless. In a moment after, she rose, plucked the weapon with her own hands from the wound, hastened back to the head of the troops, and planted her victorious banner on the ramparts of the enemy. At length, the English were forced to raise the siege of Orleans, and retreat to a neighbouring town; where they in turn were themselves besieged, and after a feeble resistance, most of them either killed or taken prisoners. So great a terror had taken possession of their minds, that the hearts of their bravest leaders quailed beneath the influence of this superstition.

Hitherto, Charles had kept away from the scene of war. As the safety of the state depended upon his person, he had been persuaded to restrain his military ardour; but now, seeing the prosperous state of his affairs, he determined on appearing at the head of his armies. He set out for Rheims, with twelve thousand men; every town, as he passed along, opened its gates to him, and there he was again crowned king of France. The Maid of Orleans, as Joan of Arc was frequently called, stood by his side in complete armour, waving over

him her sacred banner, which had so often struck terror and dismay into the ranks of the English.

During these transactions, the duke of Bedford, who, you will recollect, was made regent of France during young Henry's minority, displayed the greatest wisdom and address in the management of the affairs of the kingdom, and employed every resource which fortune had yet left him. Fortunately, in the present emergency, he received a reinforcement of five thousand men from England, and with them he was enabled still to defend many important towns. He also brought over the young King Henry, and had him crowned and anointed at Paris; but the ceremony was performed in silence, and was very different to the splendid coronation of Charles at Rheims.

An accident at this time again changed the aspect of affairs. The English, assisted by the duke of Burgundy, were besieging the town of Compeigne with a large force, when the Maid of Orleans, to the great joy of the inhabitants, threw herself into it to fight in its defence. The garrison thenceforth thought themselves invincible, and boldly sallied out to attack the besiegers. In one of these skirmishes, the maid led the troops, and twice drove the enemy from their entrenchments; finding their numbers increase, she ordered

a retreat, and when ~~hard~~ pressed by her pursuers, she turned upon, and made them again recoil ; but, deserted by her friends, after many proofs of valour, she was at last taken prisoner by the Burgundians.

A complete victory could not have given more joy to the English and their partisans than this accidental capture. The unfortunate maid was brought to trial for sorcery and witchcraft, and condemned to death. Although possessed of the most undaunted courage in the field of battle, and though she had answered all the accusations brought against her at her trial with the greatest firmness and intrepidity, she could not bear up against this sentence. Her spirit was at last subdued, and those visionary dreams of inspiration, in which she had been supported by the triumphs of success, gave way to the terrors of that punishment which she was about to suffer. She publicly acknowledged the deceptions she had practised, and promised never more to make use of them. Her sentence was then mitigated : she was ordered to perpetual imprisonment, and to be fed during her lifetime upon bread and water.

But the poor girl's enemies were not content with this victory. Suspecting that the woman's clothes, which she was now obliged to wear, were disagreeable to her, they purposely placed in her

apartment the suit of man's apparel that she had before used. At the sight of a dress in which she had acquired so much renown, all her former ideas and passions revived; she ventured, in her solitude, to clothe herself again in the forbidden garments, and in that situation was caught by her insidious enemies.

No recantation would now suffice—no pardon could be granted her. She was condemned to be burned in the market-place of Rouen; and the cruel sentence was soon after barbarously executed. A strong and thick stake, to which she was tied with ropes, was driven firmly into the ground; piles of fagots were then placed around her, and barrels of tar emptied upon them, to cause them to burn the fiercer. At a signal from the chief magistrate, fire was then applied to various parts of the pile; and in a few minutes poor Joan of Arc expired in the most dreadful torments.

The affairs of the English, far from being advanced by this act of cruelty, went every day more and more to decay. The French, notwithstanding the great abilities of the duke of Bedford, were seized with a strong desire of returning under the obedience of their rightful sovereign: and a quarrel, which arose between the regent and



the duke of Burgundy, hastened the destruction of King Henry's claims. Shortly afterwards, a conference was held between King Charles and the duke of Burgundy; and a treaty concluded, in which the latter prince agreed to support his lawful sovereign in regaining his dominions, on conditions which, had it not been for the present necessity, would have been deemed highly dishonourable to the crown of France. A few days after the duke of Bedford received intelligence of this treaty, so fatal to the interests of England, he died at Rouen, to the great regret of his countrymen. Several months elapsed before a new governor was appointed, during which time Charles continued to besiege and take many important towns that had been captured by the English; and when, at last, the duke of York was appointed regent of France, he found that Paris itself was in the hands of king Charles.

Many years thus elapsed, during which the French slowly regained their possessions; but so reduced were the finances of each country, from the long and harassing wars that they had been carrying on, that it seemed impossible for either party to lead an army into the field to decide the important contest at one blow.

When king Henry the Sixth reached the twenty-



third year of his age; his ministers began to think of choosing him a queen.

He was of extremely harmless, inoffensive, and simple manners; but of the most slender capacity, and subject, both by the softness of his temper and the weakness of his understanding, to be perpetually governed by those who surrounded him. After a short negotiation, Margaret of Anjou, daughter of the king of Sicily, was chosen to be his consort; and this princess, the most accomplished and most beautiful woman of the age in which she lived, seemed well qualified to supply all the defects and weaknesses of her husband.

About this time, a curious charge was brought against the wife of the duke of Gloucester, uncle to the king. She was accused of the crime of witchcraft; and it was pretended that there was found in her possession a waxen figure of the king, which she and her associates—Sir Roger Bolingbroke, a priest, and a woman called Margery Jordan, the Witch of Eye—melted in a magical manner before a slow fire, with an intention of making Henry's body waste away by like insensible degrees.

The duchess and her confederates were brought to trial; and, in the ignorant and credulous age in which they lived, the accusation was readily be-

lieved. The prisoners were pronounced guilty; the duchess was condemned to do public penance, by walking through Cheapside clothed in white garments, with a lighted taper in her hand, and to suffer perpetual imprisonment. The Witch of Eye was burned in Smithfield, and Sir Roger Bolingbroke hung at Tyburn—declaring, with his last breath, that he was innocent of the crimes laid to his charge.

There is little doubt but that these violent proceedings were instituted by the cardinal of Winchester, and other noblemen, to mortify the duke of Gloucester, who was at the head of a party opposed to them in the council. The people, with whom the “good duke Humphrey” was a great favourite, were highly provoked at this treatment; and increased their esteem and affection towards a prince who was exposed to such indignities, until the cardinal and his party, fearing that the duke’s popularity might become dangerous, resolved on his destruction. They summoned a parliament at St. Edmondsbury; and as soon as he appeared, accused him of high-treason, and threw him into prison. A few days afterwards he was found dead in his bed; and though it was asserted that his death was natural, no one doubted but that he had fallen a victim to the

vengeance of his enemies. Some gentlemen of his retinue were afterwards tried as accomplices in his treason, and were condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered.

They were led to Tyburn, hanged, and cut down; but, just as the executioner was proceeding to quarter them, a pardon from the king arrived. Means for their restoration were immediately used, and in a short time they were recovered to life.

In the mean time, Charles of France continued pushing his advantages against the English. The whole of Normandy submitted to him; and the duke of Somerset, the governor of that province, after shutting himself up in Caen, without any prospect of relief, was obliged to capitulate. A like rapid success attended the French arms in Guienne; and, after an ineffectual resistance, the English were finally expelled that province, of which they had kept possession for three hundred years. Except Calais, scarcely an important town of France remained in the hands of the English.

Poor King Henry, utterly incompetent to manage the affairs of his kingdom, and surrounded with discontent, rebellion, and civil commotions, now received a shock that quite unnerved him. A

new claimant appeared for the crown of England, in the person of Richard, duke of York, who was descended from the second son of Edward the Third; whereas King Henry derived his lineage from the Duke of Lancaster, third son of that monarch. The whole of the nobility were divided on this important occasion; and there was scarcely a family in England but that embraced the cause either of King Henry, or the duke of York.

This brings me to an important part of English history; and as it will take me some time to tell you all about it, I think we had better wait till to-morrow evening.

“Very well, brother,” said Magnus: “and had not we better make all haste back? Look how black the clouds are getting!”

Off we started; and just as the heavy drops that precede a summer's storm began to sprinkle the pavement, we reached our HOME.

## FOURTEENTH EVENING.

CLAIM OF THE DUKE OF YORK—MURDER OF THE DUKE OF SUFFOLK—JACK CADE'S REBELLION—WARS OF THE ROSES—BATTLES OF ST. ALBAN'S, NORTHAMPTON, AND WAKEFIELD—DEATH OF THE DUKE OF YORK—HIS SON PROCLAIMED KING—BATTLE OF TOUTON—FIELD OF HEXHAM—MARGARET OF ANJOU—HEXHAM WOOD—THE BANDITS—MARGARET'S ESCAPE—A NOBLE-HEARTED ROBBER—A BANDIT'S COTTAGE—MARGARET'S ESCAPE TO FLANDERS—LADY ELIZABETH GRAY—KING EDWARD'S MARRIAGE—WARWICK THE KING-MAKER—FLIGHT OF KING EDWARD—BATTLE OF BARNET—BATTLE OF TEWKESBURY—MURDER OF PRINCE EDWARD—DEATH OF HENRY THE SIXTH—KING EDWARD AND THE TANNER OF TAMWORTH.

I TOLD you last evening that Richard, duke of York, laid claim to the throne of England, and that he was supported by many of the first nobility of the kingdom. The earls of Salisbury and Warwick, the duke of Norfolk, and many others, warmly espoused his cause, while the dukes of Suffolk and Somerset, and the earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, adhered to the existing government.

At first, the duke of York complained only of the bad conduct of the king's ministers, and demanded their removal; in consequence of which the duke of Suffolk was impeached of high-treason; but, before he could be brought to trial, he submitted to the mercy of the king, who banished

him for five years. His enemies, not content with this punishment, employed a captain of a vessel to intercept him in his passage to France. He was seized near Dover, taken into a boat, and made to lie with his neck upon the side. Not a moment's respite was given him. A single stroke divided his head from his body, and both were immediately thrown into the sea. No enquiry was ever made after the perpetrators of this atrocious deed of violence.

About this time, a serious rebellion broke out among the lower classes in Kent, not unlike that in which Wat Tyler made so conspicuous a figure. A man of low condition, named Jack Cade, observing the discontents of the inhabitants, assumed the name of Mortimer, (pretending to be a cousin of the duke of York,) and excited the common people by publishing complaints against the government, and demanding a redress of grievances. Twenty thousand men soon flocked to Cade's standard, and totally defeated a small force that was sent against them by the court. Cade immediately marched for London, where he found the gates open to receive him. He passed over the bridge, and, striking his sword upon London Stone, cried out,—“Now is Mortimer lord of this city.” For some days he maintained great regularity

among his followers, and always led them into the fields during the night-time ; but, in order to gratify their passions, he caused Lord Say, the treasurer of England, to be arraigned at Guildhall ; and when that nobleman pleaded his privilege of being tried by his peers, the barbarous leader seized him by force, led him to the Standard, in Cheapside, struck off his head, and then ordered it to be borne before him on the top of a long pole. Not content with that, he went to Mile-End, and there seized Sir James Cromer, the sheriff of Kent, cut off his head, and caused it to be carried by the side of Lord Say's, making them kiss together in every street, to the horror and detestation of all beholders. Open rapine succeeded these outrages, and the houses of the wealthiest citizens were the first to be plundered. The mayor sent to the Tower for the assistance of Lord Scales, and a battle was fought at night upon London Bridge. The rebels in multitudes drove back the citizens, and set fire to the houses. " Great pity it was," says an old chronicler, " to behold the miserable state wherein some, desiring to avoid the fire, died upon their enemies' weapons ; women, with children in their arms, for fear, leaped into the river, while others, in deadly care how to save themselves, between fire, water, and



the sword, were choked and smothered in their houses." By the morning, the rebels were beaten back again into Southwark, where the archbishop of Canterbury went to them, and offered a general pardon to any that would lay down their arms. The whole body immediately dispersed, and Jack Cade was obliged to seek his safety by disguising himself, and fleeing into the woods. A reward was offered for his body, dead or alive, and was soon claimed by a gentleman in Kent, named Eden, who found and slew him in his garden. The rebel's body was conveyed to London in a cart; his head was stuck upon London Bridge, and his limbs sent to different towns in Kent.

I must now tell you more of the contest between the king and the duke of York, a quarrel in which the whole nation joined, and which deluged England with blood for more than thirty years. The partisans of the latter prince assumed as a badge by which they might be known to each other, a white rose; while those who supported the king and the house of Lancaster, distinguished themselves by a red one. From this cause, the battles that were fought between these two parties have frequently been called **THE WARS OF THE ROSES.**

The first blood that was spilled in this fatal

quarrel was at St. Alban's, on the 22nd of May, 1455. The Lancastrians, with the king at their head, were posted in various parts of the town, which the duke of York nearly surrounded with his army. The king sent an ambassador to the duke, to treat of peace; but while he was proceeding to one end of the town, the earl of Warwick, with his marchmen, entered it at the other, and fiercely attacked the vanguard of the royal troops. The Yorkists were beaten back, and with increased numbers and greater fury returned to the charge. The Lancastrians, overwhelmed, fled in every direction. The duke of Somerset, the most important nobleman on King Henry's side, was killed, together with the earl of Northumberland, a great many knights, and about five thousand men. The king, finding himself deserted, took refuge in a poor man's cottage, where he was discovered by the duke of York, who treated him with the greatest respect, but who obliged him to yield the whole authority of the crown into his hands; and the parliament then appointed the duke to be protector until the king's son, Edward, prince of Wales, should attain his majority.

Soon afterwards, at the instigation of Queen Margaret, Henry, availing himself of the absence of the duke of York, declared his intention of

resuming the government; and, with the consent of parliament, he was reinstated in sovereign authority. Even the protector and his friends acquiesced in this act; and, at the interposition of the archbishop of Canterbury, it was agreed that all the great leaders should meet in London, and be solemnly reconciled. A procession to St. Paul's was appointed, where the duke of York led Queen Margaret; and a leader of one party marched hand in hand with a leader of the opposite.

A trifling accident soon after dissolved this seeming harmony. One of the king's retinue insulted one of the earl of Warwick's; their companions took part in the quarrel, and a fierce combat ensued. This was the signal for a general outbreak; each nobleman flew to the head of his troops, and two battles were fought; one at Bloreheath, in which the Yorkists were victorious; and another near Ludlow, in which, through the treachery of some of his troops, the duke of York was totally defeated, and obliged to flee to Ireland. The earl of Warwick, attended by many other leaders, escaped to Paris, where his great popularity soon drew around him a very powerful army.

At its head, he quickly returned to England,

and, with the earl of March, the duke of York's eldest son, marched, amid the acclamations of the people, to London. The city immediately opened its gates to him; and, his troops daily increasing, he was soon in a condition to oppose the royal army, which was hastening to attack him. A desperate battle was fought at Northampton, in which the Yorkists completely gained the victory; King Henry was again taken prisoner, and many of his principal supporters were slain.

The duke of York hastened over from Ireland; and it was appointed by parliament that, although Henry should wear the crown during his lifetime, the administration of the government should be in the hands of the duke, and that he should be declared heir to the throne.

In the mean time, Queen Margaret, who, after the battle of Northampton, had fled into Scotland, collected together, among her friends in the north, an army of twenty thousand men. The duke of York, ignorant of such a power, marched against her with a body of only five thousand soldiers; and, notwithstanding the advice of his friends, offered battle to the queen. It was instantly accepted; and Margaret, by her numbers, quickly overpowered her brave but rash opponent.

The duke himself was killed in the action; his

head was cut off, and, by Margaret's orders, placed on the gates of York, with a paper crown upon it, in derision of his pretended title. His son, too, the earl of Rutland, a youth of twelve years of age, was murdered, in cold blood, by Lord Clifford. The young prince was hurrying from the field of slaughter, under the protection of his father's chaplain, when this barbarous nobleman overtook him, and, in spite of the most pathetic entreaties, stabbed him to the heart, as he knelt down before him.

After this important victory the queen divided her army. She sent the smaller division, under the earl of Pembroke, against Edward, earl of March, the new duke of York; while she herself marched towards London, to oppose the earl of Warwick. Pembroke was defeated by Edward, at Mortimer's Cross, in Hertfordshire, with great loss; his army was dispersed, and he was obliged to fly: but Margaret compensated this defeat by a victory she obtained over the earl of Warwick, at St. Alban's, in which two thousand of the Yorkists were slain, and the person of the king was again re-taken by his own party. The duke of York soon advanced against the royal army; and, collecting the remains of Warwick's troops, obliged the queen to retreat to the north. He then

marched to the capital, where, by general consent of the inhabitants, he was proclaimed king of England, by the title of Edward the Fourth. Thus ended the reign of Henry the Sixth—a monarch who, while in his cradle, had been proclaimed king both of France and England; and who began life with the most splendid prospects that any prince in Europe had ever enjoyed.

Still the Lancastrian party were not wholly dismayed; they kept their ground in the north, where the queen, by her exertions, brought great multitudes to her standard; and, in a few weeks, she raised an army of sixty thousand men. The new king and the earl of Warwick hastened, with forty thousand, to check her progress; they met at Touton, and the fiercest and bloodiest battle ensued that was fought during the Wars of the Roses. While the Yorkists were advancing to the charge, a snow-storm came on, which driving full in the faces of their enemy, almost blinded them. Lord Falconberg, who led King Edward's van, improved this advantage by a stratagem: he ordered his archers to advance a short way, and, having fired one volley, immediately to retire. The Lancastrians, feeling the shot, but by reason of the snow, not being able to see their enemies,



poured forth volley after volley of arrows, which all fell short of the Yorkists. As soon as they had emptied their quivers, Falconberg again led forward his men, who not only discharged their own arrows, but, gathering those of their enemies, let a greater part of them fly against their first owners. The conflict continued for ten hours, when at last the Lancastrians threw down their arms and fled. Thirty-six thousand men were computed to have fallen in the battle and pursuit; and it was said that men passed dry-footed over a deep river, upon the dead bodies that choked it up. King Henry, and Queen Margaret, who had remained at York during the action, learning the defeat of their army, fled with the greatest precipitation into Scotland. Edward thought it unnecessary to pursue them, and returned to London, where he was again received with every demonstration of attachment.

Notwithstanding these reverses, Queen Margaret was of far too ambitious a temper to let her cause sink without another effort. She went in person to the court of France, and induced Louis the Eleventh to assist her with two thousand men; and, by promising the Scots that her son Edward, then a boy of twelve years of age, should marry a sister of their king, she likewise obtained a large



reinforcement from that nation, and again made her appearance in the north of England.

A singular accident here befel her, which, at last, decided the contest between the Houses of York and Lancaster; and as I think that it will be more interesting to you, I will give you an account of it in a short tale:—

### The Field of Hexham.

UPON the summit of a hill that overlooked an extensive plain in Yorkshire, there stood two men, apparently deeply interested in the scene before them. They were both dressed in the wildest and most uncouth way, and armed with fearful-looking weapons; but still something in the demeanour of the younger proclaimed that he was not of so reckless or hardened a disposition as his companion. Shading their eyes with their hands from the blaze of a summer's sun, they were gazing intently upon the field beneath them; and it was evident that the feelings of the younger man were excited to the highest pitch.

“Look, look!” he cried, “the king's troops give way. See! they throw down their swords. Now, by St. George! yon's a most valiant knight—he rallies them—he leads them back to the

charge. Now they meet again—the white roses fall, and King Harry will be conqueror yet!”

“And what matters it,” said the elder man, “whether Lancaster or York be king?—’t will be much the same to thee, I’ll warrant.”

“I’m thinking, captain,” replied the former speaker, “he’ll be but a cold-blooded fellow that can keep his hand from drawing sword either for one side or the other: there’s not a man in England but will fight to his death about the colour of a rose; and, as I’m a loyal subject, I’m for King Harry of Lancaster.”

“Ha! ha!” laughed the captain, “thou’rt a loyal subject truly!—if shooting the king’s deer, or robbing the king’s lieges be loyalty, then mayst thou boast of it. I tell thee, Will, I care not a straw whether the red rose or the white bloom the brighter; though ’t is pretty plain King Edward has won this day. See you not yon horseman spurring his steed over the brook?—’tis Henry of Lancaster!—I know him by his helmet. Look, his army is routed; see, they all follow him.”

“Curses on the cowardly loons!” cried Will, drawing his sword and brandishing it in the air; “I would I were nearer the rascals; I dare swear they’ve not run so fast for many a month.”

“But who are these that seek our wood?” in-

errupted the other: "a woman unattended, and a child. 'Fore George! there's some work for us. Haste thee, Will, to Hexham Castle, and tell the news of this battle: I'll to our comrades."

The youth immediately parted from his companion; and, plunging into a dense forest that covered the ground behind them, was soon lost to sight. The other hesitated for a moment, to watch the course of the fair fugitive, and then giving a shrill whistle, which was immediately replied to from a distant part of the wood, sprung quickly away in the direction from which it had proceeded.

It was, indeed, as the bandit had supposed. After a most severe battle, in which many of the Lancastrian nobles had been killed, King Henry had only saved himself by the swiftness of his horse; and Margaret, his queen, with her son, the young prince of Wales, were obliged, unguarded and on foot, to fly from the pursuit of the victorious Yorkists.

Margaret of Anjou was even at this time a very handsome woman. When, at an early age, she married Henry of Lancaster, she was admitted by all to be the most beautiful lady of the time. Her manners were likewise befitting the exalted station which she was destined to fill; and, although some few years of deep anxiety and suffering had

left their traces upon her once polished brow, yet there still remained the piercing lustre of her eyes, and a dignity that at once arrested the attention, and commanded the obedience, of those who were subject to their influence.

At the battle of Hexham, the queen had stationed herself upon an eminence slightly removed from the royal army, whence she could plainly see the various events in that important contest which was to decide her husband's and her own fate. Assisted by the kings of Scotland and of France, she doubted not but that her cause would again be triumphant; and, in expectation of receiving many noble prisoners, she had arrayed herself in all the regal magnificence that she could command. Her head was encircled with a diadem of precious stones, and her dress sparkled with diamonds, more befitting the splendour of a court than the rough usages of a battle-field. It was with no little grief, therefore, that she beheld the partisans of the Red Rose waver and fall back in the beginning of the action; joy returned to her when the Yorkists in their turn were routed; but who can describe the anguish that she felt when she beheld her husband flying from the field, followed by his panic-stricken soldiers, and hotly pursued by a victorious enemy? Seeking their own

safety, her attendants fled. She was left alone with her child. For a moment, the disappointed woman buried her face within her hands and wept; but she soon recovered herself, and, taking her boy by the hand, hurried from the spot, and sought to escape unnoticed from the plain.

This young prince, the only son of the unfortunate Henry, was the sole hope of the Lancastrian party, though but a boy of tender years. Bred up in the midst of war and strife, and continually surrounded by arms and warriors, it is said that, even at this early age, he had given proofs of his superior valour and understanding. Proud indeed was Margaret of him; and long did she struggle in order to have him acknowledged heir to the throne of England.

“Edward, my child,” cried the fond mother, as she led her precious charge towards a dense and thickly-tangled wood, “here must we seek refuge from our foes. Thy father is obliged to fly for his life; his friends are killed; and we are left desolate.”

“Mother,” replied the boy, looking innocently in her face, “let us hasten into the forest; if they do follow us, they will never find us among all these trees.”

“My child,” replied the queen, “danger often lurks in these dark and secret places; but we

have no other resource. If, Edward, we meet with enemies, fly and conceal thyself. Thou mayst yet live to be king of England.”

As she spake, they reached an opening in the wood that had been used by the inhabitants as a shorter path from one part of the country to another; they entered into it, and, in a few moments, were buried in the gloom of the overhanging foliage.

“I heard a rustling among the bushes,” whispered the boy, ere they had proceeded far. “Are there any wolves here, mother?”

“I fear not wolves,” replied the queen, hastening onwards; “but men worse than wolves, who—”

She paused;—for at that moment a man stepped from behind a tree, and stood in the pathway before her.

“Why do you stay me?” exclaimed Margaret, in a bold determined tone. “You will not molest an unprotected woman?”

“You must go with me,” replied the man, grasping her arm in his broad hand. “We’ve a law in this forest, that whoever passes through shall pay toll for it.”

“Stand back, ruffian!” cried the queen, recovering the use of her imprisoned hand, and violently pushing aside the robber. “Though I



be a woman, thou shalt know, to thy cost, that I am no coward!"

The man, taken by surprise at this sudden assault, retreated a few steps, and drew his sword half-way from its scabbard; but, recollecting himself, he pushed it hastily back again, and gave a shrill whistle. In an instant, Queen Margaret was surrounded by men, whose appearance at once made known their intentions. Two of them seized her by the arms, while another tore away the boy, who had clung to his mother's side; and, without a word, hurried them off in the direction that the first robber led them. Leaving the beaten road, the bandits bore their prisoners along paths that scarcely admitted the hard-hunted deer to pass through them unscathed. Briers and thorns caught their feet at every step; while huge branches of trees, which, from the prevailing gloom, were almost invisible, often barred their onward progress, until they almost crept upon the earth. At length, they reached a small open space, where the sun's rays were permitted to shine upon smooth and mossy turf; near the centre of this little spot stood an old and almost withered oak, whose gnarled trunk and twisted branches showed strangely in contrast with the bright green leaves that here and there covered



the young twigs which sprung vigorously from its dying boughs.

The ruffians drew Margaret and her son beneath it; and then, viewing with delight the jewels with which she was adorned, proceeded remorselessly, and without opposition, to strip them from her dress. The young prince, too, had on his head a beautiful velvet cap, ornamented with precious stones, and at his side an exquisitely-finished sword, with its hilt studded with gold. These the robbers quickly possessed themselves of, and placed in a hollow of the old oak.

While they were busy at their cruel work, the bandit who first met the queen, and who was the same that had stood upon the hill to view the battle, fancied that he saw one of the others secrete a bracelet beneath his clothing.

“Hark ye,” cried he to the offender, “if thou puttest not that toy into the robbers’ oak, thou’lt pay dearly for it!”

“I’ve taken nothing,” replied the man, sullenly.

“I saw thee take a bracelet from her arm,” said the captain, fiercely. “Give it up, man, or—” here he tapped the hilt of his sword, and looked round to his companions.

The men, glorying in a quarrel, although be-

tween two of their own comrades, soon interfered ; some taking the side of the accused, and some that of his accuser. Words ran high ; and, leaving their victims, they all entered warmly into the contest. Swords were drawn ; and one man fell, severely wounded. A fierce battle ensued ; and, as the parties were pretty equal, it continued for some time.

Queen Margaret, who had been half-killed by the inhuman treatment she had experienced, gained courage as she saw a chance of escape thus present itself. She drew her child to her side, and whispering him to be firm, and follow her closely, she suddenly glided into the wood unperceived by the combatants.

Without daring to turn her head, she pressed forward through the bushes, scarcely feeling the wounds inflicted by their thorns ; and, followed by the young prince, soon reached a beaten path. Grasping her child's arm, she then hurried on at the utmost speed she was capable of exerting, until she at last perceived an open plain at the end of the walk before her. Uttering a cry of joy, she redoubled her exertions, and was just on the point of emerging from the hated wood, when her path was again stopped, and an armed man stood before her.





MARGARET OF ANJOU AND THE ROBBER.

Margaret drew back as the robber threatened her with his naked sword pointed at her breast; while young Edward, like a frightened bird, crept close to the side of his mother, who, almost overcome with the fatigue and terror that she had endured, well nigh fainted.

Suddenly, as if moved by some secret impulse, she recovered herself; and, taking the prince between her arms, stepped forward,

“Here, my friend,” said she to the robber, in a soft and kindly tone, “I commit to thy care the safety of the heir to the throne of England. This is the prince of Wales.”

The robber—it was Will, who had speedily returned from Hexham Castle, in the hope of sharing the spoil—stood for a moment silent and motionless; then, dropping his sword, and bending upon his knee,

“Pardon!” he cried: “pardon me, most gracious lady!”

“Alas!” replied Margaret, “we are in thy power. If thou canst assist us in our distressed condition, thou mayst have occasion hereafter to bless the day on which thou didst help Queen Margaret.”

“My cottage is close at hand,” said the bandit. “If you will but take refuge within its walls,

you will find me to be a true friend of the Red Rose."

The mother whispered to her son, to take courage; and, turning to the man, bade him to lead the way.

Will did as he was bidden. Winding through narrow paths, and assisting the royal fugitives where the difficulties of the road rendered it necessary, he soon conducted them to the foot of a rock that overhung a rippling stream. Then, drawing a little bugle from his side, he sounded a few quick notes, and in a moment a large hound, with long, drooping ears, bounded along the path, and, with loud baying, jumped upon his master. Queen Margaret gazed with wonder upon the animal, for she could not make out whence it had come; but presently she perceived a young and pretty woman emerge from a recess in the rock, and, stepping over a few large stones that were laid in the bed of the streamlet, trip lightly to meet them.

"Marian," said Will, when she drew nigh, "these are the queen of England and her son. They seek a refuge in our cottage from the pursuit of enemies."

The woman looked with astonishment from Will to the fugitives, and again to Will, scarcely believ-

ing what she had heard ; but, at last, convinced by his manner and the tone of his voice, she made a lowly obeisance, and requested the fugitives to follow her.

Marian offered her hand as an assistance to the queen, as they passed over the brook, while Will bore the young prince in his arms. After walking a few steps on the other bank, they came to a cleft in the rock, in which trees, even of the larger size, found means to vegetate ; the acclivity on either side was also covered with bushes and young trees, almost excluding the daylight, which just peeped through the opening above. In the furthest corner of this dark recess, Will, with the assistance of some comrades, had raised a slight cottage, built with large grey stones, and covered with the boughs of trees ; which served him the double purpose of a dwelling-place for himself and Marian, his wife, and a place of concealment when hard pressed by the officers of justice.

“ Your majesty will find but little comfort in our poor hut,” said Marian, as they all stooped under the low door that afforded entrance to it.

“ We have been used to hardships, lately, good Marian,” replied the queen ; “ and care little, at the present moment, whether our dwelling be a cot-



tage or a palace, so long as we can safely trust our host."

"I pray you, doubt me not," answered Will. "Though I be a robber—an outcast from civilized men—a savage, whose dwelling-place is amidst rocks and forests—yet am I a man. I have said before, that I am a friend of the Red Rose; and by this cross I swear, that, to my death, I will defend Queen Margaret and her son;" and, drawing his sword, he knelt down and kissed its hilt.

"Believe him, gracious madam, I entreat you believe him," cried Marian, throwing herself at the queen's feet.—"He will protect you; he cannot, shall not harm you."

"Thanks, thanks, good friends!" replied Margaret. "If Henry of Lancaster ever regain the throne of England, Will of Hexham Wood shall not be unrewarded."

On looking around her, the queen found that, though in a rough state, the interior of the cottage was very superior to what might have been anticipated from its outside walls. A few coarse articles of furniture were arranged neatly round the apartment; the earth was made to serve them for a flooring, but it was well covered with the finest sand; while around the single opening that served as a window, shrubs and flowers of the most

fragrant kind were tastefully planted. A little door opened into another, smaller, room, where a straw couch was spread upon large boughs of trees, placed crosswise upon each other.

In this humble cottage, Queen Margaret and the young prince passed many days, treated with the greatest kindness by Marian; while Will sought anxiously for means of escape for his distinguished guests. At last, he learned that a vessel was about to sail to Flanders, from a port not many miles distant. He imparted this intelligence to the queen, who immediately determined upon attempting to escape by so favourable an opportunity. Will borrowed two horses from his comrades—for he was not fortunate enough to have procured one for himself—and, mounting the queen upon one, while he carried the prince before him upon the other, at early sunrise they one morning left the forest. Marian, to whom Margaret had given a cross of gold, which had escaped the notice of the robbers, stood with tearful eyes to witness their departure, thanking Heaven that she was a poor peasant's wife, rather than the consort of a dethroned king.

The queen and her son arrived safely at the sea-coast, where they found that the ship was just ready to sail: they lost no time in embarking;

and, having extorted from Will a promise, that he would find them out, if he heard that they had again arrived in England, they set sail, and were quickly borne across the narrow sea to Flanders. Here Margaret had no difficulty in discovering friends to her cause; and, with little delay, she passed to her father's kingdom, where finding consolation in the hopes held out to her, in the cause of her son, Prince Edward, she spent many years in retirement.

“Oh! how glad I am that the poor queen escaped,” exclaimed Magnus.—“What a kind man Will must have been, though he was a robber!”

Many a poor fellow, I fear, was almost *obliged*, in those days, to have recourse to robbery, as the only means of providing for his livelihood. When war and all its attendant miseries swept through the country, and desolated alike the rich man's castle and the poor man's cottage, there were many excuses for such a life, and many an honest man, like Will, must have been driven to it from sheer necessity.

After the battle of Hexham, King Henry was more unfortunate than his queen; although he contrived to escape, and conceal himself among his friends in Lancashire, his enemies soon dis-

covered him, and delivered him to King Edward, by whose order he was imprisoned in the Tower.

Edward's authority was now pretty firmly established throughout the country; supported by the parliament, and almost universally acknowledged by the people, there was little danger of its being called in question; but a singular occurrence overthrew for a time this apparently well-grounded supposition.

After the fatigues of a hunting party, Edward one day alighted at the house of the duchess of Bedford, at Grafton, in Northamptonshire. The duchess had some years before married a private gentleman, a Sir John Woodeville, and had several children. One of the daughters, named Elizabeth, remarkable for the grace and beauty of her person, as well as for the most amiable accomplishments, was united when very young to a gallant knight, Sir John Gray, of Groby. In the second battle of St. Alban's, Sir John, who fought on the side of the Lancastrians, was slain. As was then customary, his estate was confiscated; and Lady Gray, with several children, being thus left without provision, returned to live in her mother's house, where she was staying at the time of the king's visit. Thinking this a most favourable opportunity for obtaining some grace from so gallant

a monarch as Edward the Fourth, the young widow threw herself at his feet, and entreated him to have compassion on her impoverished and distressed children. The sight of such beauty in affliction strongly affected the young king. Raising her from the ground, he assured her of his compliance with her request; and, finding his love increased by the conversation of this amiable lady, he was in turn reduced to the posture of a suppliant at her feet. He offered to share his throne, as well as his heart, with one whose beauty and dignity entitled her to both. With some reluctance, Lady Gray complied; the marriage was privately solemnized at Grafton, and for some time kept a profound secret.

Shortly before this, the earl of Warwick had been sent by King Edward into France, to demand in marriage Bona of Savoy, sister of the queen of Lewis the Eleventh. The negociation had been perfectly successful, and Warwick was just about to bring the princess over to England, when he received intelligence of Edward's marriage with Lady Gray. The earl, considering himself affronted, both by being employed in such a fruitless enterprise, and also by not being treated with the king's confidence, immediately returned to England, inflamed with rage and indignation.

Several incidents occurred to widen the breach thus made between the king and his powerful subject. The queen's family were one after another quickly raised to some important titles: her father was created earl of Rivers; her brother made Lord Scales; and her three sisters married to noblemen of the first quality. Her eldest son, also, Sir Thomas Gray, was married to a daughter of the duke of Exeter.

Not only the earl of Warwick, but the king's brother, the duke of Clarence, and many other nobles, were disgusted with this partiality for the Woodevilles. Insurrections broke out in various parts of the kingdom; but although beaten in one or two skirmishes, the king's party at length prevailed, and obliged Clarence and Warwick to flee the country. These noblemen repaired to the court of the French king, by whom they were warmly received. Margaret of Anjou and her son Prince Edward were sent for; and, strange as it may seem, an alliance was formed, in which it was stipulated that the earl of Warwick should use his best endeavours to recover the crown of England for Henry the Sixth; so great had become that nobleman's hatred to the reigning monarch.

Warwick also persuaded his brother, the Marquis of Montague, who was one of Edward's



generals, to enter into the confederacy, and obtained from him a promise that he would join them, with all his forces, so soon as they should land in England. King Edward paid but little attention to the storm that was gathering around him; he sent over to the duke of Clarence, to endeavour to detach him from his enemies; but beyond that, he made no preparations for the approaching conflicts.

While he was in the north, suppressing an insurrection, the earl of Warwick, the duke of Clarence, and many of the first nobility, took advantage of his absence, sailed across from France, and landed at Dartmouth. Thousands flocked to the standard of the earl—some from love to him, others from zeal for the house of Lancaster, and many more from a spirit of discontent that had lately manifested itself in all parts of England. Warwick soon found himself at the head of sixty thousand men, with which he boldly set out to meet King Edward, who was advancing against him. The rival armies encamped within sight of each other at Nottingham, where a decisive battle was every hour expected. Lord Montague, who commanded a large body of troops on King Edward's side, thought that this was a favourable opportunity for him to strike the first blow; and,



in the dead of night, arming his men, with loud shouts, he assaulted the king's quarters.

Edward, hearing the war-cry usually employed by the Lancastrians, started from his couch; and being informed of his danger by one of his attendants, mounted on the first horse that could be brought to him,—rode swiftly, accompanied by a slight escort only, to Lynn, in Norfolk; where he embarked on board a vessel that was just about to sail for Holland. Thus, in eleven days, the earl of Warwick was left entirely master of England. For form's sake, Henry the Sixth was restored to the throne, and the Lancastrian nobles to their former possessions; but Warwick and Clarence were appointed regents, and the whole power of government lay in their hands. Edward remained for nearly six months in Holland, uncertain to whom to apply for assistance, and hearing daily of the successes of his enemies. At last, his brother-in-law, the duke of Burgundy, furnished him with four ships, and about two thousand men; with this small force, he attempted to land on the coast of Norfolk; but, being repulsed, he sailed northward, and disembarked at Ravenspur, in Yorkshire. The partisans of the White Rose flocked to him in crowds; he was admitted into the city of York, and soon after marched to

the capital, where the gates were readily opened to him. The duke of Clarence, resolving to support the interests of his own family, joined his brother, with twelve thousand men; and Edward soon found himself in a condition to meet the earl of Warwick, who had posted himself at Barnet, near London. A battle was fought with the greatest obstinacy on both sides; the two armies, in imitation of their leaders, displayed most extraordinary valour, and the victory for a long time was undecided: an accident determined it in favour of the Yorkists. Edward's cognizance was a blazing sun; that of Warwick, a star with rays; and the mistiness of the morning rendering it difficult to distinguish them, the earl of Oxford, who fought on the side of the Lancastrians, was attacked by his own friends, and driven from the field. Warwick, contrary to his usual custom, fought that day on foot; and, perceiving his men give way, led them on again in person against the foe. He was slain in the thickest of the engagement; his brother, Lord Montague, was likewise killed, and the whole army routed with great and undistinguished slaughter.

On the same day that this decisive battle was fought, Queen Margaret and her son, supported by a few French troops, landed at Weymouth.

The young prince had just reached his eighteenth year; and by his noble spirit, and the talents which he had displayed, gave great hopes to those who still adhered to the Lancastrian family. The earls of Pembroke and Devonshire, and many more noblemen, immediately joined them, and exhorted them still to hope for success, and fight for the crown of England. Every hour brought fresh support to the army; but in five days from their landing, King Edward met them at Tewkesbury, on the banks of the Severn. A long and bloody battle was fought, from sunrise to sunset, when Margaret of Anjou, who had escaped so many battles, was at last taken prisoner, together with her son, Prince Edward, and their troops totally routed.

As soon as the king heard of these important captures, he commanded the prisoners to be brought to his tent. He was immediately obeyed.

“How daredst thou enter this realm with banners displayed, against thy king?” asked Edward of the young prince.

“To recover my father’s kingdom and heritage!” boldly answered the youth; “from his father and grandfather to him, and from him to me, right lineally descended.”

“Presumptuous boy!” cried the king, striking

him upon the mouth with his gauntlet. "Darest thou brave me thus?"

The young prince was staggered at the blow; and before he could recover himself, the duke of Gloucester stabbed him with his dagger, and laid him lifeless at his mother's feet.

"Kill, oh! kill me, too!" cried the unfortunate Margaret. "Have ye no children? Fiends that ye are;—you could not have done this if ye had!"

"Bear her hence," exclaimed the king; "away with her to prison!"

"May the fate of this poor boy be yours and your children's!" cried the distracted mother, as she was forcibly carried away. "May Heaven's vengeance light upon you!" The poor queen was taken captive to the Tower; where she was confined until her father, by selling his kingdom to Lewis the Eleventh, was enabled to pay the heavy ransom that was demanded for her liberty.

A few days after the battle of Tewkesbury, King Henry the Sixth was found dead in his bed. Many say that he was murdered by the duke of Gloucester: certain it is that he died suddenly; and although his body was exposed to public view, yet all men were persuaded that he had not fairly met his death.

All the hopes of the House of Lancaster seemed now to be utterly extinguished. Every legitimate prince of that line was dead ; and Edward's claim to the throne was wholly unopposed. He quickly gave himself up to the pursuit of pleasure ; and not being called upon to defend himself against any important enemies, he passed the rest of his life in the quiet possession of his throne.

I must not, however, conceal an act of barbarity of which he was guilty, in accusing his own brother, the duke of Clarence, of high-treason, on the most frivolous grounds. He even appeared against him in the House of Peers ; and when the unfortunate duke was condemned to death, Edward only gave him his choice of the mode of its execution.

Clarence, who was a weak prince, and much addicted to drinking, chose to be drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine, into a cask of which he was plunged head-foremost, in the Tower of London.

Before I finish with King Edward, I will repeat to you part of an old ballad respecting him that is highly amusing. But I must alter a few of the words into more modern English, or I fear you will not understand me.

*A Merrie, Pleasant, and Delectable Historie betweene  
King Edward IV. and a Tanner of Tamworth.*

IN summer time, when leaves grow greene,  
And blossoms bedecke the tree,  
King Edward would a hunting ryde,  
Some pastime for to see.

And he had ridden o'er dale and downe  
By eight o'clock i' the day,  
When he was aware of a bold tanner  
Came riding along the waye.

A faire russet coat the tanner had on,  
Fast buttoned under his chin;  
And under him a good cow-hide,  
And a mare worth four shilling.

"God speede, God speede thee!" sayd our king,  
"Thou 'rt welcome, sir," sayd he;  
"The readiest way to Drayton Basset,  
I praye thee to shewe to mee."

"To Drayton Basset wouldst thou go  
Fro' the place where thou dost stand,  
The next payre of gallowes thou comest to,  
Turne in 'pon thy right hand."

"That is an unreadye way," sayd our king;  
"Thou dost but jest I see;  
Nowe shewe me out the nearest waye,  
And, I pray thee, wend with me."

“ What art thou ? ” hee sayd, “ thou fine fellowe ;  
Of thee I ’m in great feare,  
For the clothes thou wear ’st upon thy backe  
Might beseme a lord to weare.”

“ I never stole them,” quoth our king ;

“ I tell you, sir, by the rood ! ”

“ Then thou play ’st as many an unthrift does,  
And standest in midst of thy good.”

“ What tydings heare you,” sayd the king,

“ As you ryde farre and neare ? ”

“ I heare no tydings, sir, by the masse,  
But that cow-hides are deare.”

“ Cow-hides ! cow-hides ! what things are those ?  
I marvel what they bee ! ”

“ What ! art thou a foole ? ” the tanner replyde •  
I carry one under mee.”

“ What craftsman art thou ? ” sayd the king ;

“ I pray thee tell me true.”

“ I am a tanner, sir, by my trade ;  
Now tell me what art thou ! ”

“ I ’m a poor courtier, sir,” quoth he,

“ That am out of service worne ;

And faine I wolde thy prentice bee,  
Thy cunnige for to learne.”

“ Marrye, Heaven forfend ! ” the tanner replyde,

“ That thou my prentice were ;

Thou wouldst spend more good than I should winne,  
By fortye shilling a-year.”



- “ Yet one thing wolde I,” sayd our king,  
“ If thou wilt not seem strange ;  
Though my horse be better than thy mare,  
Yet with thee I fain wolde change.”
- “ Why, if with me thou faine wilt change,  
As change full well may wee,  
By the faith of my bodye, thou proude fellowe,  
I ’ll have some boot of thee.”
- “ That were ’gainst reason,” sayd the king,  
“ I sweare, soe mote I thee,  
My horse is better than thy mare,  
And that thou well mayst see.”
- “ Yea, sir, but Brocke is gentle and mild,  
And softly she will fare ;  
Thy horse is unrulye and wild, I wist ;  
Aye skipping here and there.”
- “ Here ’s twenty groates of white monèye,  
Sith thou wilt have it o’ me.”
- “ I would have sworn now,” quoth the tanner,  
“ Thou hadst not one pennie.
- ‘ But since we two have made a change,  
A change we must abide ;  
Although thou hast gotten Brocke, my mare,  
Thou gettest not my cow-hide.”
- “ I will not have it,” sayd the king,  
“ I sweare soe mote I thee,  
Thy foul cow-hide I would not beare  
If thou wouldst give it to mee.”

The tanner he tooke his good cow-hide  
That of the cow was hilt,  
And threwe it upon the king's sadelle  
That was so fayrelye gilte.

“ Now help me up, thou fine fellowe,  
'T is time that I were gone;  
When I get home to Gyllian, my wife,  
She'll say I'm a gentilmon.”

When the tanner he was in the king's sadelle,  
And his foot in his stirrup was,  
He marvelled greatlye in his minde  
Whether it were gold or brass.

But when his steede saw the cow's taile wagge,  
And eke the black cow-horne,  
He stamped, and stared, and away he ranne,  
As if the devil he had borne.

The tanner he pulled, the tanner he sweat,  
And held by the pommell fast;  
At length the tanner came tumbling downe,  
His neck he had well nigh brast.

The king set a bugle-horne to his mouthe,  
And blew both loud and shrille;  
And soone came lords, and soone came knights,  
Fast ryding o'er the hille.

“ Now, out alas ! ” the tanner he cryde,  
“ That ever I sawe this daye !  
Thou art a strong thiefe,—yon come thy fellowes,  
Will beare my cow-hide away.”

“ They are no thieves,” the king replyde,  
 “ I sweare, soe mote I thee ;  
 But they are lords of the north countrie,  
 Here come to hunt with me.”

And soone before our king they came,  
 And knelt downe on the grounde ;  
 Then would the tanner have beene awaye,  
 And had rather gi'en twenty pounce.

“ Be not afraid, tanner,” said our king ;  
 “ I tell thee, soe mote I thee ;  
 So here I make thee the best esquire  
 That 's in the north countrie.

“ For Plumpton Parke I will give thee,  
 With tenements faire beside ;  
 'T is worth three hundréd marks a year,  
 To maintain thy good cow-hide.”

“ Gramercye, my liege,” the tanner replyde,  
 “ For the favour thou hast shewn ;  
 If ever thou comest to merry Tamworth,  
 Neate's leather shall clout thy shoon.”

“ What a funny story !” said little Lawrence.  
 “ Do you think it is true ?”

“ Nay, my boy,” I answered, “ that I am sure I cannot tell you ; it is part of a very old ballad, printed as early as the year 1589, and most probably there was some foundation for it.”

“ Brother, what does ‘ soe mote I thee,’ mean ?”

asked Magnus: "you used the words several times."

"It is a very ancient expression: 'so may I thrive' is perhaps the best *translation* that I can give you. To 'stand in the midst of thy goods,' would be, to be possessed of no other wealth than what you carried on your back. To 'have some boot,'—to have something given in, to boot. The word 'hilt,' means flayed; 'brast,' broken; and 'to clout,' to mend. Lads, I have nothing more to say of Edward the Fourth, than that, while he was threatening war against France, he was seized with illness, and died, in the forty-second year of his age and twenty-third of his reign."

## FIFTEENTH EVENING.

EDWARD THE FIFTH—THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER—THE YOUNG DUKE OF YORK—DEATH OF LORD HASTINGS—GLOUCESTER'S AMBITION—MURDER OF THE TWO PRINCES—GLOUCESTER CROWNED KING AS RICHARD THE THIRD—BUCKINGHAM'S REBELLION AND DEATH—THE EARL OF RICHMOND—BATTLE OF SHREWSBURY—DEATH OF RICHARD—HENRY THE SEVENTH—HIS AVARICE—LAMBERT SIMNEL—PERKIN WARBECK—DEATH OF HENRY THE SEVENTH—HENRY THE EIGHTH—CARDINAL WOLSEY—THE PLAIN OF ARDRES—THE FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD—THE TOURNAMENTS—ANNE BOLEYN—JANE SEYMOUR—ANNE OF CLEVES—CATHERINE HOWARD—CATHERINE PARR—DEATH OF HENRY THE EIGHTH—EDWARD THE SIXTH—HIS GOODNESS AND CHARITY—HIS DEATH.

EDWARD, prince of Wales, the eldest son of the late monarch, Edward the Fourth, was but thirteen years of age when he succeeded to the throne. At the time of his father's death, the young prince was staying at the castle of Ludlow, under the care of his uncle, the earl of Rivers, and his half-brother, Sir Richard Gray; who, immediately that the intelligence reached them, proceeded to escort the new king to London. They were met on the road by the duke of Gloucester; who, though an enemy to the family of the Woodevilles, spent an evening very amicably with them at Stony Stratford. On the next morning, however, Lord Rivers and Sir Richard Gray were both arrested by the

order of the duke, and conveyed to Pontefract Castle. Gloucester apologized to the young king for the imprisonment of his relatives ; but Edward was too much attached to them to conceal his displeasure.

When the queen heard of the arrest of her brother and son, she foresaw that the violence of the duke of Gloucester would not stop there ; and she therefore fled into the sanctuary in Westminster, carrying with her her five daughters, and Edward's younger brother, the duke of York, a boy ten years of age.

The duke of Gloucester pretended to be very indignant at the affront put upon him by the queen's ill-grounded apprehension ; and urged to the privy council the necessity of the young prince's appearance at the coronation of his brother. He even proposed to take him by force from the sanctuary : but that measure was strenuously opposed ; and it was at last agreed that the archbishops of Canterbury and York should endeavour by their persuasion to bring the queen to a compliance with the duke's wishes. These prelates were persons of undoubted integrity and honour ; and being themselves assured of the duke's good intentions, they employed every argument, and used the most earnest entreaties, to

bring her to the same opinion. The queen long continued obstinate; and maintained that it would be safer, both for the king and the duke of York, that he should continue with her in the sanctuary: but finding that no one supported her, and that Gloucester threatened violence in case of her refusal, she at length unwillingly consented. After many injunctions to the archbishops, she turned to the child. "Farewell, my own sweet son," she said: "may Heaven preserve you!" Then, bending down to him, she continued,—“Once more, my child, let me kiss you before you go. God only knows when we shall kiss again!” Then, laying her hands upon his head, she gave him her blessing, turned her back and wept, and went her way, leaving the young prince drowned in tears. He was immediately carried to the duke of Gloucester, who welcomed him kindly, took him in his arms, and kissed him. He was then taken to the king his brother, at the bishop's palace, and from thence both princes were, with great pomp, conducted through the city to the Tower of London.

The duke of Gloucester being the nearest kinsman of the royal family capable of governing the kingdom, was, by general consent, made protector of the realm during Edward's minority, and no one foresaw any danger from so natural a measure.



The duke had hitherto concealed his ambitious views by the most profound dissimulation; but now that he had got the young princes in his power, he began to discover his real intentions. By his order, the earl of Rivers, and several other noblemen connected with him, were beheaded at Pontefract Castle. He had artfully gained the consent of the duke of Buckingham and Lord Hastings to this barbarous murder, and he now endeavoured to represent to them how much to their interest it was that the young king should never be allowed the power to revenge the death of his relations. Buckingham yielded to his arguments, and promised to support the protector in all his enterprises; but Hastings was firm in his allegiance to the children of Edward the Fourth, who had ever honoured him with his friendship. Gloucester immediately determined to ruin the man who dared oppose his wishes. On the very day that Rivers was executed, he summoned a council in the Tower, whither Hastings, suspecting no design against himself, repaired without hesitation. On taking his place at the council-table, the protector appeared in the most jovial humour imaginable; and having paid some compliments to the bishop of Ely on the fine and early strawberries he had raised in his garden in Holborn, he

begged the favour of a dish of them, which the prelate immediately despatched a servant to bring to him. The protector then left the council; but soon after returning with a countenance flushed with anger, he demanded of them,—“What punishment do they deserve who conspire against my life,—I, who am uncle to the king, and protector of the kingdom?”

“The death of traitors,” replied Lord Hastings.

“These traitors,” cried the protector, “are my brother’s wife, and his mistress, that witch, Jane Shore. See to what a condition they have reduced me by their incantations.” Upon which, he turned up the sleeve of his doublet to the elbow, and shewed them his arm withered away. The lords, knowing that this infirmity had attended him from his birth, looked at each other in amazement; and, above all, Lord Hastings began to be anxious concerning the issue of this extraordinary proceeding.

“Certainly, my lord,” said he, “if they be guilty of these crimes, they deserve the severest punishment.”

“And do you reply to me,” exclaimed the protector, “with your *ifs* and your *ands*? You are their chief abettor. You are yourself a traitor!

And I swear by St. Paul that I will not dine this day before your head be brought to me!"

He struck the table violently with his fist, and armed men rushed in and filled the chamber.

"I arrest thee, traitor!" said the protector to Lord Hastings.

The guards seized him; and, before he could even ask the nature of his crime, the unfortunate nobleman was hurried away to the green beside the chapel in the Tower; where his head was placed upon a log of wood, and instantly chopped off.

After these violent proceedings, the protector made no secret of his intention to usurp the crown. A Dr. Shaw was appointed to preach in St. Paul's Cathedral, and to declare that the young king and his brother were illegitimate children of Edward the Fourth; inasmuch as that monarch's marriage with Lady Gray was invalid, as he had before privately married Lady Eleanor Talbot, who was still alive. All this was mere pretence, without a syllable of truth. Nevertheless, the duke of Buckingham soon after addressed a meeting of the citizens, and expatiated upon the noble qualities and numerous virtues of the protector. With much difficulty, a feeble cry was raised, among a few of the meanest of the populace, of "God

save King Richard!" That was enough. The sentiments of the nation were declared; and the duke of Gloucester was *prevailed* upon to accept the throne. He was very soon crowned king, by the title of Richard the Third.

This ridiculous farce was quickly followed by a scene truly tragical. Richard sent orders to Sir John Brackenbury, constable of the Tower, to put the two young princes to death; but this gentleman refused to lend his assistance to so vile a deed. The tyrant then sent for a Sir James Tyrrel, who readily promised obedience; and Brackenbury was commanded to deliver up the keys of the Tower to him for one night. Sir James took with him two associates, named Forrest and Dighton; and, about midnight, went to the chamber where the children were lying. He then ordered the assassins to enter and execute their commission, while he himself stayed without. "The wretches," says an old chronicler, "found the two boys asleep in each other's arms. Without pity,—without a spark of human feeling,—they suddenly seized the bed upon each side, and completely covered the poor children within it, keeping them down by force, with the pillows hard upon their mouths. In a few moments, smothered and stifled, their breath failing them,

they gave up their innocent souls to the joys of heaven, leaving their dead bodies to their remorseless murderers." The men then called in Sir James Tyrrel: who, after he had assured himself of the completion of the deed, ordered the bodies to be buried at the foot of the staircase, deep in the ground, under a heap of stones.

[Many years after, in the reign of Charles the Second, when there was occasion to dig in that very spot, the bones of two human beings were found; which, by their size, exactly corresponded to the age of Edward and his brother. It was thought certain that they were the remains of those princes, and King Charles ordered them to be buried under a marble monument.]

It was impossible that men could witness such deeds as Richard the Third was guilty of without feeling the greatest detestation at his atrocity; and, although he now thought himself securely seated upon the throne of England, there was scarcely a nobleman in the country who would not have at once joined any prince who could have laid claim to the crown. All parties were united in the same sentiment,—that to endure such a bloody usurper seemed to draw disgrace upon the nation. The duke of Buckingham, hitherto one of Richard's most devoted tools, had a

quarrel with him about some estates which the king refused to grant him ; and from that time he, too, numbered himself among Richard's enemies.

A conspiracy was formed among many of the most influential nobles, to invite over Henry Earl of Richmond, who was at that time detained in a kind of honourable custody, by the duke of Brittany. This prince had but a very distant claim to the throne of England ; and, indeed, would never have been thought of, had it not been for the present state of affairs. His mother was great grand-daughter of the famous John of Gaunt ; and his father, Edmund, earl of Richmond, was a son of Catherine, the widow of Henry the Fifth, by Sir Owen Tudor, whom she had married after Henry's decease.

Although his title was deficient in many points, yet the partisans of the house of Lancaster now regarded him as their only surviving hope, and anxiously expected the consequence of their invitation to him. A large sum of money was likewise sent out to the earl by the queen-dowager, who required him to take an oath that, as soon as he landed in England, he would marry her eldest daughter, the princess Elizabeth, and thus unite the two parties of York and Lancaster.

The king soon received intelligence of this



extensive plot, and summoned the duke of Buckingham to appear at court; but that nobleman, well acquainted with Richard's treachery, only replied by taking arms in Wales, and giving the signal for a general insurrection. Unfortunately, at that very time, there happened to fall such heavy and incessant rains, as were never known within the memory of man. Before Buckingham could join his confederates, the river Severn rose to such a height, that it overflowed all the adjoining country; insomuch that men were drowned in their beds, children were carried about the fields, swimming in their cradles, and cattle in great numbers were swept away. This lasted ten days; and was ever after called "Buckingham's flood." The Welshmen, moved by superstition at this extraordinary event, left the camp; and Buckingham, finding himself deserted by his followers, was obliged to disguise himself, and seek refuge in the house of an old servant of his family, named Bannister. A reward of a thousand pounds was offered for his apprehension by King Richard; and Bannister, unable to resist so tempting an allurements, basely betrayed his master. The duke was arrested by the sheriff of Shropshire; and, by the king's command, taken to Shrewsbury, where he was beheaded, without a trial, in the



open market-place. Many of the other conspirators, hearing of this, made their escape over to Brittany, and joined the earl of Richmond. A few fell into the king's hands, and two or three were executed; but no one of any great importance.

The king, everywhere triumphant, now turned his attention to the further securance of his throne. He paid court to the queen-dowager, and by his eloquence gained her over to promise him the hand of the Princess Elizabeth, although he was that young lady's uncle. The queen even wrote to some of her partisans, desiring them to withdraw from the earl of Richmond; but this made Richard's enemies the more eager to bring the earl over from Brittany. The king of France likewise encouraged this enterprise; and on the 7th of August, 1485, the earl of Richmond set sail from Harfleur with an army of 2000 men, and after six days' sail landed at Milford-Haven, in Wales, without opposition. Richard, not knowing in what quarter to expect the invader, had taken post at Nottingham in the centre of his kingdom: he immediately hastened in person to meet the earl, who, receiving fresh reinforcements at every step, marched to Shrewsbury. Here he was joined by Sir Gilbert Talbot, and many other persons of

distinction; and his cause began to assume a most favourable aspect. Richard, in the meantime, had levied an army of twelve thousand men, and expected that Lord Stanley and his brother, Sir William, would join him with seven thousand more. These noblemen, connected by marriage with the earl of Richmond, knew not how to act; they would have at once declared against the usurper, had he not kept in his power Lord Stanley's eldest son, Lord Strange, as an hostage for their fidelity. The two armies at last approached each other at Bosworth, near Leicester, and a decisive battle was every hour expected between them. Stanley posted himself at Atherstone, not far from the hostile camps, ready to join the one side or the other, as events might determine.

Richard was now placed in the situation that he had long wished for, being certain that a victory over the earl of Richmond, which he did not for a moment doubt but that he should achieve, would enable him to enjoy the throne in safety, and take ample revenge upon his enemies. His state of mind at this time must have been appalling. An old chronicler states that whenever he walked abroad, he wore defensive armour beneath his clothing; that his eyes continually whirled around him; that his hand was always upon his

dagger, as if he ever feared some secret enemy ; that when he retired at night, he lay long waking, rose wearied with care ; that he rather slumbered than slept, troubled with most fearful dreams ; and that he sometimes suddenly started up, leaped from his bed, and ran wildly round his chamber. It is said, too, that on the night before the battle, as he slept in his tent, he had a most terrible dream ; that the ghosts of those whom he had murdered appeared to him in succession, and upbraided him with his sins. Hardened as he was in crime, he could not bear up against these supernatural visions ; and in the agony of their remembrance, he declared to his most intimate friends, that shadows had that night struck more terror to his soul, than ten thousand soldiers, led by the earl of Richmond, ever could have done.

As soon as morning dawned, Richard armed himself, and advanced to the head of his troops. He spoke to them for nearly half-an-hour, confessing that he had been guilty of deep crimes ; but hoping that strict penance, and many salt tears, had washed away the stain. He then spoke lightly of the earl of Richmond, calling him a Welsh milksop, who had never seen a field of battle ; and concluded by exhorting them to fight bravely. " And as for myself," he cried, " this day will I

triumph by glorious victory, or suffer death for immortal fame. Let us then, my friends, march to the attack; for, by St. George, I swear that he who is a valiant champion this day, shall be highly rewarded, but he who is a cowardly dastard, shall meet with dreadful punishment!"

When Richmond heard that the king was preparing to attack him, armed at all points, he rode from rank to rank, encouraging and inspiriting his men; then stepping to the top of a little mound in the midst of the camp, he undid his helmet, gave it to his attendant, and while the morning breezes played with his beautiful golden hair, he thus addressed his men:—

“ If ever God gave victory to men fighting in a just quarrel,—if he ever aided those who made war for their country's good,—if he ever succoured those who ventured their lives for the relief of innocent men,—then, my friends and comrades, I doubt not but he will this day send us triumphant victory over our proud adversaries. Our cause is just; virtue is on our side. What quarrel can be more goodly than to fight against one who is a murderer of his own kin, an oppressor of the poor, a fiery brand, an intolerable tyrant? Let us then cast all fear aside; and, like sworn brethren, join fight to our deaths. If we win this battle, the fair

realm of England will be ours: the profit will be ours, and the honour will be ours. Let us, therefore, fight like invincible giants,—let us set on our enemies like fearless tigers and ramping lions. And now, advance forward, true men against traitors!—good men against murderers!—true inheritors against false usurpers!—the scourges of Heaven against tyrants! Display my banners bravely! The battle is at hand; and the victory approacheth! Get this day's quarrel, and be conquerors!—lose this day's battle, and be slaves! And now, my friends, in the name of Harry and St. George, let every man courageously advance his standard, and lead his followers to victory!”

The shouts that followed this cheering speech had scarcely died away, when the vanguard of the king's archers appeared in sight, and discharged a dense volley of arrows against their adversaries. Richmond's archers quickly retaliated; and the troops met hand to hand: neither bill nor axe was spared; and a fierce contest ensued. While they were yet in the very heat of the encounter, a cry was heard, “Stanley!—Stanley to the rescue!” and Richard's troops were sorely dismayed at perceiving that Lord Stanley and his brother, Sir William, had, with all their forces, joined the earl of Richmond. A panic seized them. Many threw down





THE EARL OF RICHMOND CROWNED KING.



the arms which they had unwillingly wielded, and fled; and, in every part, Henry's troops were victorious. King Richard, maddened at the sight, dashed headlong through his enemies, to the very spot on which Henry was fighting, determined that either his own or his adversary's death should decide the fate of the day. He killed with his own hands Sir William Brandon, standard-bearer to the earl, and overthrew a valiant knight who had dared to intercept him. He even crossed swords with Richmond himself; but at that instant, Sir William Stanley, seeing the imminent danger of the earl, rushed forward with his men, and parted the rival champions. Richard, surrounded by enemies, and fighting bravely to the last moment, fell overwhelmed with numbers; and his men everywhere sought safety in flight.

Loud acclamations of "Long live Henry the Seventh!" spontaneously arose from the victorious troops, and resounded throughout the field; and Sir William Stanley, having discovered among the spoils an ornamental crown that Richard had worn, brought it to the conqueror, and placed it upon his head.

Henry willingly accepted the magnificent present; and, after he had returned thanks to God, for his divine assistance in procuring him the

victory, he again ascended the little mound from which he had before addressed his army; and, bestowing great praise upon their fidelity and bravery, promised them all a speedy recompense.

Richard's body was discovered among a heap of slain; and so great was the detestation in which he was held, that the soldiers stripped it entirely naked, threw it across a horse—as they would the carcass of a sheep—and thus carried it shamefully to Leicester; whence but the day before the usurper had set out with the most gorgeous pomp and pride.

The new king was joyfully received throughout the entire country; and no one thought of disputing his very questionable title to the throne; and as he soon after married the princess Elizabeth, his affairs went on most prosperously. Although the two Houses of York and Lancaster were now united, yet there still existed much jealousy between the rival parties; and Henry took every occasion to show his hatred of the Yorkists. The duke of Norfolk, and several other noblemen, were attainted of high treason, for fighting with Richard at Bosworth-Field; and only purchased their liberty with heavy fines. How men could be guilty of treason by supporting a king in the possession of a throne, it is

not easy to conceive ; but the parliament was very complaisant, and did just as Henry desired. But the people in general, with whom the Yorkists were great favourites, were extremely discontented with these proceedings ; and Henry had soon just cause to regret his partiality, as we shall see.

There lived in Oxford one Richard Simon, a priest, who determined upon raising some disturbance against the government ; and, for that purpose, he engaged a youth, named Lambert Simnel, the son of a baker, to personate the earl of Warwick, who was at that time confined a prisoner in the Tower of London. This unfortunate prince, the son of that duke of Clarence who was drowned in a butt of malmsey, had been kept in close custody by the jealousy of Richard the Third ; and, from some fear of his being able to prove a better claim to the crown than himself, Henry had even more strictly imprisoned him. A report was spread that Warwick had escaped from the Tower, and the people readily believed that the impostor was the true Plantagenet. He first presented himself in Ireland, to the earl of Kildare, who, not suspecting so bold an imposture, treated him with the greatest attention ; and, in a few days, the whole of the population of Dublin tendered their allegiance to Simnel,

and publicly proclaimed him king, by the appellation of Edward the Sixth.

When intelligence of this was carried to King Henry, it caused him no little perplexity. His first step was to order that the real earl of Warwick should be taken from the Tower, and conducted through the streets of London to St. Paul's, and there exposed to the view of the citizens. This expedient had the desired effect in England; but, in Ireland, the people still persisted in their revolt, and charged the king with having shown a counterfeit Warwick to the Londoners. The earl of Lincoln, a nobleman of great capacity and courage, likewise joined the insurrection; and with Lord Lovel went over to Ireland, with two thousand German soldiers that were hired by his aunt, the duchess of Burgundy. The earl was well aware of Simnel's imposture, but he intended to make use of this rebellion to further his own ambitious views; for Richard the Third had declared that if he died without issue, he would leave the crown to his nephew, the earl of Lincoln. He was the son of Elizabeth, Richard's eldest sister, and the duke of Suffolk; and had, at all events, as good a claim to the throne as Henry the Seventh.

The king vigorously prepared to defend his

dominions from any attack. He ordered troops to be levied in various parts of the kingdom ; and when he heard that the rebels had landed in Lancashire, he marched in person to give them battle.

The earl of Lincoln had hoped that the disaffected counties in the north would have risen in his favour ; but, convinced of Simnel's imposture, and averse to join Irish and German invaders, they either remained in tranquillity, or joined the royal forces.

The hostile armies met at Stoke, in the county of Nottingham, and fought a battle which was more obstinately disputed than could have been expected from the inequality of the forces. The Germans, being experienced soldiers, kept the event long doubtful ; and the half-naked Irish showed themselves not deficient in spirit and bravery. Numbers at last prevailed ; the earl of Lincoln and other leaders of the rebels were slain upon the field, and the king's victory was complete. Lambert Simnel and Simon were taken prisoners ; the latter was imprisoned for life,—and Simnel, too contemptible for resentment, was pardoned, and made a scullion in the king's kitchen ; but afterwards advanced to the higher office of chief-falconer.

Many brave men fell in the battle of Stoke. Lord Lovel, one of the few who escaped from the fight, was observed flying towards the river Trent; and, as he was never seen again, it was conjectured that he was drowned in attempting to cross it. More than a hundred years afterwards, in pulling down Minster Lovel, a house that had belonged to him in Oxfordshire, a secret chamber was discovered, in which was found the skeleton of a man, seated in a chair, with his head reclining upon the table. It was then thought that these were the remains of that Lord Lovel; and that he had contrived to escape to his own house, and from some cause had been there starved to death in this secret chamber. An empty jar and a barrel were found near him.

Henry gained great reputation throughout Europe by his vigorous conduct; and now, for some time, his affairs in England went on peaceably enough. This monarch's greatest vice was extreme avarice; he used every means, often illegal, of extorting money from his wealthier subjects; and, assisted by corrupt ministers, it is said, he amassed an enormous sum, equal to nearly three million pounds of our present money.

France, at this time, had lately acquired possession of Brittany; to defend which Henry had



allowed some English troops to go over, under Lord Woodeville; but these men, with their commander, were nearly all slain. The English were extremely anxious to revenge this upon the French; and besides, the tribute that Lewis the Eleventh had stipulated to pay to Edward the Fourth and his successors had lately been refused. King Henry, therefore, thought this an excellent opportunity for levying a tax upon his people for the support of a war; and London alone was obliged to contribute above ten thousand pounds to his coffers. He declared his intention of not limiting his pretensions merely to repelling the present injury, but of laying claim to the crown of France; and of maintaining, by force of arms, so just a title, transmitted to him by his gallant ancestors. The English nobility, calling to mind the battles of Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, were universally seized with a desire of military glory, and talked of no less than carrying their triumphant banners to the gates of Paris, and putting the crown of France upon the head of their own sovereign. King Henry crossed the sea on the 6th of October, at the head of twenty-five thousand foot and sixteen hundred horse. He had come over, he said, to make an entire conquest of France, which was not the work of



one summer ; it was, therefore, of no consequence at what season he began the invasion. He immediately marched into the enemy's country, and laid siege to an important town ; but, after all his magnificent boasts and threats of vengeance, a peace was suddenly concluded, by which the king of France agreed to pay Henry the enormous sum of four hundred thousand pounds, besides a yearly pension of about thirteen thousand.

During the excitement consequent on this invasion, another claimant to the throne started up, in the person of a youth named Perkin Warbeck, who was instructed to represent himself as Richard, duke of York, the younger brother of Henry the Fifth. It was alleged that, through the connivance of the ruffians who were employed to murder the young princes, the duke of York was allowed to escape ; and this youth had so strong a resemblance to the Plantagenet family, and acted his part so well, that many very distinguished persons fully believed him to be the true prince.

He first presented himself to the duchess of Burgundy, and claimed her protection as her brother's son. The duchess, although she was in the secret of the plot, pretended at first to disbelieve his story, and put several questions to him, which Perkin readily answered. After a long

examination, she feigned the greatest joy at his wonderful deliverance; threw her arms round his neck, exclaiming that he was indeed her long-lost nephew—the very image of King Edward—the sole heir of the Plantagenets—and the only legitimate successor to the English throne. She immediately gave him a handsome equipage, and a guard of thirty soldiers, and on all occasions spoke of him as the “White Rose of England.” The news of this extraordinary event brought over hundreds of Henry’s disaffected subjects; and the answers of Warbeck to their enquiries were so extraordinary, and his conduct was so princely and dignified, that all who saw and conversed with him were persuaded of the truth of his story. King Henry began to be very uneasy at the success of this plot, and sent spies over to Flanders to ascertain the real birth and condition of the new aspirant to his throne. He quickly gained information, and likewise learned what persons in England were holding correspondence with him; these were all seized in one day, and soon after tried, condemned, and executed. Shortly afterwards, Sir William Stanley, who placed the crown on Henry’s head after the battle of Bosworth, suffered the same fate. The only crime charged against him was his having declared that, if he

were certain Perkin Warbeck was the real duke of York, he would never bear arms against him. Stanley was one of the most wealthy noblemen in the kingdom, and Henry was accused by many with having sacrificed a faithful adherent for the purpose of seizing upon his property. The fate of Stanley made great impression in the kingdom, and struck with dismay all the partisans of Warbeck, who now fled for assistance to the court of James the Fourth of Scotland. This young monarch was easily persuaded that the adventurer was a true Plantagenet, and was led to embrace his cause with great warmth. He gave Warbeck in marriage the Lady Catherine Gordon, one of the most noble and accomplished ladies in his kingdom, and even entered England at the head of an army. The Scots immediately began to plunder, as was their custom; but Warbeck declared that he would rather lose a crown than obtain it by the ruin of his subjects, and the king returned to Scotland. Warbeck then went over to Ireland, where he stayed some months, till he received an invitation from the people of Cornwall to come over and put himself at their head. He landed at Whitsand Bay, attended by a few followers, but was soon joined by three thousand men, with whom he marched forward and laid

siege to Exeter. A large body of the king's troops advanced against him; and Warbeck, seeing that all resistance would be useless, left his companions, and fled by night to the abbey of Beaulieu. On receiving a promise from the king that his life should be spared, he was induced to yield himself up, and he was then carried prisoner to the Tower. By some means he contrived to escape, but was again apprehended; and he was then compelled to sit in the stocks at Westminster and Cheapside, and read a paper to the surrounding populace, by which he confessed himself to be a cheat and an impostor. He was again conducted to the Tower, where his restless spirit soon engaged him in further enterprise. By means of one of his guards, he entered into a correspondence with the earl of Warwick, and a plan was concerted between them for their escape. The king did not fail to discover this conspiracy. After having been twice pardoned, Warbeck could scarcely hope for mercy; he was arraigned of high-treason, condemned to death, and hanged at Tyburn. Three days afterwards, the unfortunate earl of Warwick was beheaded on Tower Hill.

Henry the Seventh lived ten years after these events, chiefly occupied in his never-failing desire of amassing treasure. His eldest son, Arthur,

prince of Wales, was married to Catherine of Arragon; but that prince dying, his brother Henry succeeded to his title; and, by his father's command, espoused the widowed Catherine. In the next year, the king's eldest daughter, Margaret, was married to James the Fourth, king of Scotland. When Henry found his death approaching, he was seized with remorse at the many unjust extortions that he had practised, and endeavoured, by founding religious houses, and distributing alms to the poor, to atone for the great crimes with which his reign had been stained. He died of a consumption at his favourite palace at Richmond, after a reign of nearly twenty-four years.

### Henry the Eighth.

No young monarch ever ascended the throne of England under more favourable auspices than the late king's eldest son, Henry the Eighth. The contending titles of York and Lancaster were, at last, fully united in his person; and people now expected an impartial administration. Moreover, when, instead of a severe and avaricious monarch, whom every one feared, and many hated, a young prince, of only eighteen years, and of the most promising hopes, succeeded to the throne, the

whole nation universally declared their unfeigned satisfaction.

Historians describe the young king as being tall, finely made, with a ruddy, open countenance; excelling in every manly exercise; and with the appearance of spirit and activity in all his demeanour. For the first two years of his reign, all went on well: the wealth that his father had amassed was enormous; but Henry quickly found means of disposing of it, and scarcely a day passed, in which he did not command some splendid tournament, where he himself most frequently carried off the honours of triumph.

It was in the early part of this reign, that a most celebrated man was first brought into notice. Thomas Wolsey was the son of a butcher at Ipswich; but, having received an excellent education, and being endowed with very superior natural abilities, he was admitted into the Marquis of Dorset's family, as tutor to that nobleman's children, and soon gained the friendship of his patron. By him, Wolsey was recommended to Henry the Seventh, who appointed him his chaplain; and, in a secret negotiation in which he was employed, he acquitted himself with so much diligence and dexterity, as to obtain great praise from that monarch. To the young king, Henry the Eighth,



he was at first but little known; but, being introduced to court, he quickly gained his favour; and Henry admitted him to his parties of pleasure, where Wolsey promoted all the frolic and entertainment which he found so suitable to the age and inclination of the youthful prince. He rapidly advanced to be a member of the privy council; then prime minister; and, at length, the whole authority and weight of the government were placed in his hands.

By his advice, Henry, in the fourth year of his reign, prepared to make war with France, and sailed across the channel at the head of a numerous army. A battle was fought, in which the English were completely victorious; and so quickly did the French cavalry take to flight, and so good an use did they make of their armed heels, that it has ever since been called the "Battle of Spurs." Henry then advanced further into the country, and laid siege to the important city of Tournay, which soon surrendered to him; but, as the winter season was approaching, instead of pushing on his victories, he returned to England with the greater part of his army.

On the same day on which Tournay was taken, a very celebrated battle was fought in the north of England, between Lord Surrey and James the



Fourth, king of Scotland. James had passed the borders at the head of fifty thousand men, and was ravaging the county of Northumberland, and taking possession of the castles, when the earl of Surrey suddenly came upon him with a force of twenty-six thousand men. Sir Walter Scott has given such an animated and beautiful account of the battle that ensued, that I must repeat a part of it to you:—

“ Nor martial shout nor minstrel tone  
 Announced their march ; their tread alone,  
 At times, one warning trumpet blown,  
     At times, a stifled hum,  
 Told England, from his mountain-throne  
     King James did rushing come.

\* \* \* \* \*

They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,  
 With sword-sway, and with lance's thrust ;  
     And such a yell was there,  
 Of sudden and portentous birth,  
 As if men fought upon the earth,  
     And fiends in upper air.  
 Oh ! life and death were in the shout,  
 Recoil and rally,—charge and rout,  
     And triumph and despair.  
 Wide raged the battle on the plain ;  
 Spears shook and falchions flashed amain ;  
 Fell England's arrow-flight like rain,—  
 Crests rose and stooped, and rose again,  
     Wild and disorderly.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Border slogan rent the sky,—  
 ‘ A Home ! a Gordon ! ’ was the cry :  
     Loud were the clanging blows :  
 Advanced, forced back—now low, now high—  
     The pennons sunk and rose ;  
 As bends the bark’s mast in the gale,  
 When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,  
     They wavered ’mid the foes ;  
 And now upon the dark’ning heath  
 More desperate grew the strife of death.  
 The English shafts in volleys hailed,  
 In headlong charge their horse assailed ;  
 Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep  
 To break the Scottish circle deep,  
     That fought around their king ;  
 But yet, though thick the shafts as snow—  
 Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,  
 Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow—  
     Unbroken was the ring !  
 The stubborn spearmen still make good  
 Their dark impenetrable wood ;  
 Each stepping where his comrade stood  
     The instant that he fell.  
 No thought was there of dastard flight :  
 Linked in the serried phalanx tight ;  
 Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,  
     As fearlessly and well ;  
 Till utter darkness closed her wing  
 O’er their thin host and wounded king.  
 Then skilful Surrey’s sage commands  
 Led back from strife his shattered bands ;  
     And from the charge they drew,  
 As mountain waves, from wasted lands,  
     Sweep back to ocean blue.  
 Then did their loss his foemen know ;  
 Their king, their lords, their mightiest low,

They melted from the field—as snow,  
When streams are swoln and south winds blow,  
Dissolves in silent dew.  
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,  
While many a broken band,  
Disordered, through her currents dash  
To gain the Scottish land ;  
To town and tower, to down and dale,  
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,  
And raise the universal wail.  
Tradition, legend, tune, and song,  
Shall many an age that wail prolong :  
Still from the sire the son shall hear  
Of the stern strife and carnage drear  
Of Flodden's fatal field ;  
Where shivered was fair Scotland's spear,  
And broken was her shield,"

The loss of the Scots in this battle was very great ; and included many of the first nobility of the land. " Scarce a Scottish family of eminence," says a modern writer, " but has an ancestor that was killed at Flodden ; and there is no province in Scotland, even at this day, where the battle is mentioned without a sensation of terror and sorrow."

Besides King James, and his natural son, Alexander Stuart, there were no less than twelve earls killed on the field, and fifteen lords, or chiefs of clans. The loss on the part of the English was never correctly ascertained ; but there were few

persons of any note among the slain. The earl of Surrey was soon after made duke of Norfolk, in reward for this gallant victory; and several of his captains received fresh dignities.

About twelve months after this battle, Lewis the Twelfth of France died, leaving the crown to his son-in-law, Francis the First, one of the most gallant princes of his age. The king of Spain died, likewise, about the same time, and was succeeded by his grandson, Charles the Fifth, who soon became emperor of Germany. Thus, the three most important nations of Europe were governed by young monarchs, all emulous of fame and power. Charles and Francis were decided rivals; and each endeavoured to gain Henry to his side. Charles even came over to England to have a personal interview with him: he treated the king with the greatest respect, and made Wolsey some most magnificent presents; but he was unable to get Henry to make any distinct promise in his favour. Before the emperor's visit, Francis had invited Henry to meet him on the borders of the English territories in France; and a large plain, between Guisnes and Ardres, was chosen to be the place of interview; and, on the same day that Charles left England, Henry, with the queen, Wolsey, who had now reached the dignity of car-

dinal, and the whole court, sailed for Calais to keep the appointment.

It was on the 4th of June, 1520, that these two gallant monarchs, each attended by a numerous retinue, first met on the plain of Ardres. The English king took up his residence at a temporary palace, which he ordered to be erected for his accommodation, at Guisnes. This palace, according to the old chronicler, Hall, was the most noble and royal building that ever was seen. On the green plain before the entrance-gate, there was built a fountain of curiously-embowered workmanship, glittering with gold, and engrailed with antique carving; in the midst of it sat a figure of Bacchus, "birling" out red and white wine, and claret, in most copious streams. Over his head was an inscription, in golden letters, which may be thus translated:—"Make good cheer!—all are welcome!" To correspond with this fountain, on the other side, was a column of "ancient Romaine worke," encircled with wreaths of gold, on the summit of which stood the little blind god, Cupid, in the act of discharging an arrow of love. The supporters of this column were four golden lions. The entrance-gate looked as if built of solid masonry. It consisted of a very handsome arch, flanked on each side by an embattled tower; in

the niches of the windows were figures of ancient heroes,—Hercules, Alexander, and many others, in warlike attitudes, richly adorned with golden armour; and from the battlements there appeared strange, uncouth figures, ready to hurl down large stones upon the heads of the passers-by. The eyes of the visitors were thus dazzled before they entered even the court-yard; to describe which, the old chronicler takes at least thirty lines: suffice it, that the whole building was in accordance with the gorgeous entrance. The framework of every window was burnished with gold; the floor of every apartment was covered with beautifully-wrought cloth, and the ceilings with blue and scarlet silk, studded with golden stars; the walls were hung with richly-embroidered arras, representing the history of some well-known heroes; and the cushions of the chairs were of Turkey cloth, with fringes and tassels of gold. For the attendants, several hundred tents were erected upon the plains of Guisnes, “which was a goodlie sight.”

Francis, that he might not be behindhand with the English monarch, caused a splendid tent to be prepared at Ardres, for himself and court. An immense mast was set firmly in the earth, and from it ropes made of blue silk, twisted with gold



of Cyprus, were carried to a considerable distance, and fixed securely to the ground; on these was spread a covering of blue cloth, glittering with stars of gold; and "the orbs of the heavens, by the craft of colours, in the roof, were curiously wrought in manner like the sky, or firmament." Such is the magnificent description given of "THE FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD."

As soon as the two kings had taken possession of their respective residences, the business of the meeting commenced. Cardinal Wolsey, attended by a multitude of lords, knights, and gentlemen, all clothed in crimson velvet, with a marvellous number of chains of gold, proceeded to the camp of Francis; while, at the same time, a deputation of French noblemen waited upon Henry. The negotiation lasted for several days; but, at last, a treaty was agreed upon, to be signed by the two monarchs; and a tent was prepared for the occasion, exactly half-way between the camps. King Henry, apparelled in a garment of cloth of silver, ribbed with cloth of gold, and riding on a charger caparisoned with trappings of russet-coloured velvet, curiously adorned with damask gold, to represent the waves of the sea, went forth to meet his brother, the King of France.

Francis was still more magnificently attired in



a garment of cloth of silver, looped with golden cords. Over one shoulder he wore a cloak of satin brocade, richly set with pearls and precious stones, which was fastened round his waist by a gilded purple-coloured band; on his head was a cap of damask-gold, sparkling with a profusion of diamonds. The courser on which he was mounted was likewise adorned with the most costly trappings.

The two monarchs met on horseback, and embraced each other most lovingly before their assembled nobles; they then dismounted, and embraced again, with most courteous words, and entered, arm-in-arm, into the tent. There, they partook of a sumptuous banquet; and, after they had spent some time in pleasant talk, and drinking "hippocrass," as it drew near even-time, they parted for the night, the one to Guisnes, the other to Ardres.

Several months before this meeting, it had been proclaimed by sound of trumpet, throughout Europe, that the kings of England and France, as brothers-in-arms, would hold jousts and tournaments, and defend the field against all knights. Lists, nine hundred feet long, were prepared, almost surrounded with galleries, for the two queens and the ladies who attended their courts. In the midst, was raised a mound, on which were

two artificial trees,—a hawthorn for England, and a raspberry-tree for France. The leaves of these trees were of green damask, and the boughs, which interwove lovingly with each other, were covered with cloth of gold. The shield of Francis, bearing the arms of France, was hung upon one tree, and the shield of Henry, emblazoned with the arms of England within the order of the garter, was suspended from the other.—“ Their beautie shewed farre.”

In a few days after the interview between the kings, the jousts were opened. Never, from the first introduction of chivalry to the present day, was there seen such a gorgeous spectacle. The sloping galleries were crowded with all that was noble, wealthy, and beautiful among the aristocracies of France and England; the dresses glistened with gold and sparkling jewels, while the vacant spaces between the stands were filled with the gaily-decked attendants of the camps. At each end of the lists was prepared a handsome tent, for the convenience of those knights who were to take a part in the proceedings of the day; and close by them were fountains that poured forth an incessant stream of wine, of which all were invited freely to partake. At the appointed hour, Henry and Francis, armed at all points, and

mounted on horseback, entered the enclosed ground together. The English monarch was attended by the duke of Suffolk, the marquis of Dorset, and five other noblemen, all of whom were dressed in splendid suits of armour, similar to the king's. The trappings to their horses were likewise all of the same material,—russet-coloured velvet, wrought with damask gold, to imitate the waves of the sea. Francis was attended by the Duke de Vendôme, Count St. Pol, and five of the most gallant knights in France. Their horses were superbly arrayed in purple satin, embroidered with gold; and the knights themselves were encased in armour of highly-polished steel.

Presently, the queens of England and France entered the lists; and, amidst the loud flourish of clarions and trumpets, were conducted to their seats. Catherine was appointed the Queen of Beauty, whose duty it would be to reward the victor in the tournament; and so sumptuous was the throne which was prepared for her, that her very foot-cloth was powdered with costly pearls. Many illustrious knights entered the field against the two monarchs and their companions; and, after the usual proclamations had been made by the heralds, the trumpets sounded for the combats to begin.

The king of France and the duke d'Alençon were the first rivals in the mock battle; they ran valiantly against each other, and "brake speares mightilie;" but the king won the honour of the day. Henry of England, and a valiant French knight named Grandeville, next entered the lists, and took their stations at the opposite extremities of the line; the trumpets clanged, and the combatants, with lance in rest, vanished from their posts with the speed of lightning, and closed in the centre of the lists with the shock of a thunderbolt. The king's lance was shivered to the vant-plate, and that of his adversary burst to splinters; while the shouts of the spectators testified their delight at such a gallant feat of arms.

The combatants quickly procured fresh weapons, and resumed their stations. Again the trumpets sounded for the charge; and again the champions rushed swiftly from their posts, and encountered the rival lances midway, but not with the same fortune as before. Henry's weapon struck upon his adversary's helmet, and bore him, reeling backwards, from his saddle to the earth. A still louder shout from the assembled thousands, and waving of scarfs and handkerchiefs from the ladies, hailed this victory, and bore testimony to

the prowess of the king of England. The other noblemen then encountered each other "right valiantlie," so that "the beholders had great joy;" after which the heralds cried,—“Disarm!” and the trumpets sounded for the games to be broken up.

Sometimes, also, other sports were introduced; occasionally, a large number from either side fought together in what was termed a *mêlée*; but this was dangerous, and broken limbs, and often loss of life, resulted from it. One day archery was introduced, and then the king of England shone conspicuous: he appeared habited in the forest garb of merry England. The bugle-horn of gold, suspended from his shoulder, was sustained by a baldric richly embossed with the same precious metal; a number of arrows couched beneath his embroidered girdle; and in his hand he carried a long-bow of the finest Venetian yew. The crowd of nobles who waited on their monarch were equipped in a corresponding style of magnificence; and the gallant bearing of this hunter-band, as they stationed themselves around the butt, called forth a spontaneous burst of admiration from the whole French court. Henry was then in the bloom of youth: to a handsome countenance he added a figure of the most perfect

symmetry ; and his height was considerably above six feet. The plumed bonnet and sylvan dress, assumed for the present occasion, served to enhance these personal advantages not a little ; and, in truth, he appeared a noble personification of the tall English archer. When, therefore, he stepped forth from among the group of attendant foresters, and, with a manly, vigorous air, was seen to brace his trusty bow, expectation rose on tiptoe. As he drew the first arrow from his belt, the French, delighted with the novelty of this spectacle, suffered not a whisper to escape them ; the English, forgetful that the fame of their archery resounded throughout all Europe, felt as though it depended solely upon their royal champion's success. And right well did Henry on that day maintain the reputation of his countrymen. He repeatedly shot into the centre of the white, although the marks were erected at the extraordinary distance of twelve-score yards apart. A simultaneous burst of admiration marked the delight and astonishment of the vast assembly who witnessed this fine display of skill and personal strength ; applause no doubt as sincere as well deserved.

For many days did the two courts thus amuse themselves, vieing with each other in displaying the gorgeous pageantry and gallant feats.



“ Each following day  
 Became the next day's master, till the last  
 Made former's wonders,—its; to-day, the French  
 All clinquant, all in gold, like heathen gods,  
 Shone down the English; and, to-morrow, they  
 Made Britain, India: every man, that stood,  
 Shewed like a mine.—Their dwarfish pages were  
 As cherubims, all gilt.”

But, notwithstanding the outward profession of friendship that was kept up, everything was conducted by the two courts as if each were suspicious of treachery from the other. When the two kings met, the guards to each were carefully counted; and great care was taken that neither one nor other should advance an inch beyond the spot that was marked as midway between the camps.

Francis, who was of a frank and generous temper, could not relish these cold and formal ceremonies, and adopted a noble course in order to remove them.

The king of England was one morning lying in his chamber, in the palace of Guisnes, in that dreaming, dozing state which one scarcely knows whether to call asleep or awake. The large square bed, on which he was reclining, was covered with a rich coverlet of embroidered arras, which, hanging down on each side, swept the floor with its golden fringe.







FRANCIS THE FIRST AND HENRY THE EIGHTH.

High overhead was suspended from the ceiling a curiously-wrought canopy, on which some industrious lady had traced, with threads of gold, the history of the famous Alexander the Great. This mighty conqueror was represented in the act of overthrowing King Darius, who, being in a great fright, was, on his part, bestowing a terrific blow on the clumsy elephant, on which he was mounted, with his sceptre. The walls were likewise hung with tapestry, on which King Solomon and the queen of Sheba, among many other renowned personages, were fancifully delineated. The square lattice window was half open, letting in the sweet breath of the summer morning upon the king, who, with his head half covered with a black velvet nightcap, embroidered with gold, still rested himself after the fatigues of the previous day's exercise.

He was just dreaming of some furious charge in which he had borne his adversary—horse and rider—to the earth, when a loud reiterated knock upon his chamber door suddenly startled him from his slumber. Henry instantly starting up, snatched his sword, which lay beside him; but before he could disengage himself from the coverings of the bed, an armed man stood before him with a blade glittering above his head.

“Yield thee! rescue, or no rescue!” cried a voice that Henry easily recognized. “Thou’rt my prisoner.”

“I yield! I yield! my good brother of France!” exclaimed the English monarch, delighted with the jest that Francis had played upon him.—“By my faith, thou hast shewn me the best turn that ever prince shewed another. I yield me your prisoner; and as a sign of my submission, I beg you to accept this jewel.” So saying, he took from his pillow, where it had laid the night before, a rich bracelet of emeralds, and clasped it on the French king’s arm.

“I receive it willingly,” answered Francis; “but, as you are my prisoner, I command you to wear this chain:” and unfastening a jewelled collar from his breast, he threw it over Henry’s neck.

Many were the civilities and friendly speeches that ensued. Henry was about to summon his attendant to assist him in dressing, but Francis took the office on himself. “I will be your valet for this morning,” said he; “I have ridden far, that I might converse with you alone.” He then helped the king of England, by putting on his hose and trussing his points, in the most brotherly humour; and soon afterwards, fearing lest his absence might cause anxiety in his camp, he mounted

his horse, and rode to Ardres. Henry could scarcely do less than return this visit in the like confiding and unceremonious manner; and, after this, the intercourse between the courts was more familiar. There were banquets and balls, maskings and mummings, in which the ladies, and even the kings themselves, bore their parts; and these continued for many days. "But," says an old historian, "pleasures must have their intermissions; and kings, if not by their greatness, are, by their affairs, severed."

After an affectionate farewell, the two monarchs, with their attendants, separated. Francis went back to Paris, and Henry to Calais; whence he soon afterwards embarked for Dover, and, with his court, returned "all safe in body, but empty in purse," to London.

I have already told you that Henry the Eighth married, when very young, his brother Arthur's widow, Catherine of Arragon. About twelve years after "The Field of the Cloth of Gold," Henry, pretending that the marriage was illegal, sued for and obtained a divorce, and the poor queen was obliged to live in retirement. But the real object of the king was, that he might be united to a most beautiful lady, named Anne Boleyn; and three days after his former marriage had been declared

null and void, she was conducted, with great pomp, through London, and crowned queen in Westminster Abbey.

Anne Boleyn enjoyed the crown but a short time. Soon after she had given birth to a daughter, afterwards Queen Elizabeth, Henry began to entertain suspicions of her fidelity, and ordered her to be committed to the Tower. It would be a melancholy task for me to relate her unhappy history: she was tried without the aid of counsel, and beheaded upon a scaffold erected in the Tower of London. Two days afterwards, the king was married to Jane Seymour, the daughter of a gentleman of Wiltshire; and her happy temper suited so well with Henry, that she might perhaps have long retained his affections, had not death dissolved her union with him in less than twelve months.

Henry now looked about in foreign courts for a suitable partner. One lady, to whom he made proposals of marriage, returned for answer, that "She had but one head; if she had had two, she might have ventured to marry him."

But he had not to wait long. Having been shown a portrait of the Princess Anne of Cleves, he was so much pleased with it, that he sent to demand the lady in marriage.

When she arrived in England, Henry found her so unlike the picture, that it was with difficulty that he was persuaded to marry her; but when, shortly after, he discovered that she was very stupid, and could only speak the Dutch language, he resolved on being again divorced. Anne retired to Richmond Palace, with a handsome allowance: very glad, no doubt, to have got rid of her capricious husband. A fortnight after this divorce had been pronounced, Catherine Howard, niece of the duke of Norfolk, was presented to the court as queen. Henry was at first much charmed with his new wife; but his happiness was of short duration: he discovered undoubted proofs of her having led a most abandoned life, and he quickly caused her to be beheaded.

One would have thought that, after so many trials, Henry would have given up the idea of marriage,—at all events, for some time; but, in the very next year after Catherine Howard's death, he was united to Catherine Parr, the widow of Lord Latimer; and this lady, by her good sense and happy temper, preserved the good opinion of the king till his death, amidst all the storms of his caprice and violence.

Henry the Eighth died on the 27th of January, 1547. His temper, which, during the latter years



of his life, had been gradually getting worse, was, even to the last, so terrific that, when he was upon his death-bed, no one durst so much as to hint his danger to him. At last, some one ventured to tell him that he had but a few hours to live, and asked him if he wished for a clergyman? He replied,—“Yes, Cranmer;” but when the archbishop arrived, the king was speechless, and soon afterwards died, pressing his hand.

This monarch's life affords a striking example of the danger to which continual prosperity subjects mankind. Young, handsome, and generous, Henry ascended the throne amid the universal acclamations of his people; affable, and extremely fond of show—qualities which have never failed to please the populace—for many years he continued beloved by all classes. But soon the scene entirely changed. His capricious temper could not brook the least opposition; and, at last, completely spoiled by fortune, his passions became ungovernable, and his conduct, on all occasions, tyrannical and despotic.

The execution of the earl of Surrey, upon some frivolous pretext, will ever be a foul stain upon his memory; and, although it was during his reign that the protestant religion was first established in England, yet little praise can be given

to him ; for there can be no doubt that it was only to serve his own purposes that he embraced that cause. Henry the Eighth left three children, who all succeeded, in turn, to the throne of England : Mary, daughter of Catherine of Arragon—Elizabeth, daughter of Anne Boleyn—and Edward, son of Jane Seymour. By his father's will, this prince, though many years younger than his sister Mary, ascended the throne, under the guardianship of no less than sixteen executors, who, soon after, chose the earl of Hertford—Edward's uncle, by his mother's side—protector of the kingdom, during the young king's minority.

Edward was little more than nine years old when his father died ; but all historians agree that he was the most amiable and accomplished youth that had ever sat upon the throne of England. His greatest care was, with the assistance of his uncle and archbishop Cranmer, to extend the protestant religion ; and in this he greatly succeeded. It is said that, in consequence of a sermon which he heard from Dr. Ridley, he sent for the preacher, to devise with him the best means for relieving the distressed poor ; and, with Ridley's advice, he founded Christ's Hospital, for the education of poor children ; St. Thomas's and St. Bartholomew's, for the relief of the sick ; and Bridewell, for the correction of vagabonds.

This good young king did not live long to reign over England. By the advice of the duke of Northumberland, one of his guardians, he made a will, in which he left the crown to his cousin, Lady Jane Grey—to the exclusion of his sisters, Mary and Elizabeth—little foreseeing the dreadful evils that would result from it. For many months he had been in a declining state; and, as soon as he had got this will signed by the great officers of state, he grew gradually worse. Northumberland pretended to be very anxious concerning him, and, dismissing the royal physicians, put him under the care of an ignorant old woman, who pretended that she could cure him; but he sank still lower, and, at last, died in the sixteenth year of his age. But it is time to finish for to-night: to-morrow evening I must begin with the melancholy history of Lady Jane Grey.

## SIXTEENTH EVENING.

LADY JANE GREY—QUEEN MARY—DEATH OF NORTHUMBERLAND—WYAT'S INSURRECTION—DEATH OF LORD GUILDFORD DUDLEY AND LADY JANE GREY—RELIGIOUS PERSECUTIONS—SIEGE OF CALAIS—DEATH OF QUEEN MARY—ACCESSION OF QUEEN ELIZABETH—HER CORONATION—ROYAL PROGRESSES—VISIT TO KENILWORTH—HER RECEPTION—SHOWS AND PAGEANTS—THREATENED INVASION OF ENGLAND—"THE INVINCIBLE ARMADA"—SUCCESS OF THE ENGLISH ADMIRAL—DESTRUCTION OF THE ARMADA—DEATH OF ELIZABETH.

"BROTHER," asked Magnus, as we were about to start this evening, "may little Benjamin go to the cottage with us?—mamma has given leave, if you will but take him."

"Oh! by all means," I replied. "Let us have the young gentleman immediately: I know that he is a sad talkative young monkey; but, if he will promise to be a good boy, he shall have the nice little seat by the window." In a few minutes, my little auditor came down, fully equipped for the walk; Lawrence took charge of him, and the two scampered off finely together, while Magnus and I followed at a more sober pace behind them.

When we had taken our places in the summer-house, and all little Benjamin's enquiries about

what I was going to talk about, were satisfied ; I thus continued :—

### *Lady Jane Grey.*

One of the most powerful noblemen, during the reign of Edward the Sixth, was the earl of Warwick, afterwards created duke of Northumberland ; he was one of the king's guardians, and a man of the most unbounded ambition, but of little principle. To serve the interests of his own family, he pretended a very great regard for the protestant religion, and under that mask obtained almost absolute power over the young sovereign. I have already told you that, upon his death-bed, Edward signed letters patent, by which he left his crown to the Lady Jane Grey, instead of to either of his half-sisters, Mary, or Elizabeth. This was entirely at the instigation of Northumberland. He pretended that, as the mother of the princess Mary was divorced from Henry the Eighth, and the mother of Elizabeth beheaded for high-treason,—their children were illegitimate ; and that the real heir to the crown was the marchioness of Dorset, the elder daughter of the late duchess of Suffolk. The duchess was a child of Henry the Seventh,—was first united to Lewis the Twelfth of France,

and at his death married again, to the duke of Suffolk. The marchioness was willing to forego her claim in favour of her daughter, the Lady Jane Grey, and Northumberland persuaded that lady to marry his fourth son, Lord Guildford Dudley.

The princesses Mary and Elizabeth were both absent from court when their brother died, and Northumberland caused Lady Jane Grey to be proclaimed queen, although much against her own inclination. Mary immediately raised an army to assert her lawful claim, and the people of Suffolk, where she was residing, flocked by thousands to her standard. Northumberland in person marched to oppose her; but when he arrived at Bury St. Edmund's, he found that his troops were not half so numerous as those of the princess. He despatched messengers to the council of London for a reinforcement; but, taking advantage of his absence, instead of complying with his request, they unanimously declared for Mary, who was proclaimed queen, amid the shouts of the people.

Lady Jane, after the vain pageantry of wearing a crown during ten days, returned to a private life with more satisfaction than she felt when the royalty was tendered to her.

Northumberland was quickly taken prisoner, tried by the council, condemned as a traitor, and executed.

Lady Jane Grey and her husband were likewise imprisoned, and sentence was pronounced against them, but without any present intention of putting it in execution. Neither of them had reached their seventeenth year, and their youth and innocence pleaded sufficiently in their favour.

As had been feared before her accession, no sooner did Mary take possession of the reins of government, than she exerted her whole influence for the support of the popish religion. About a year after, she entered into a treaty of marriage with Philip of Spain, much to the dissatisfaction of her subjects; and a Sir Thomas Wyatt, with several other gentlemen, raised an insurrection against her, intending to replace Lady Jane Grey upon the throne. Wyatt at first had some success; but when he came to London, the citizens did not rise in his favour, and he was seized and executed. Mary took advantage of this rebellion to bring down vengeance upon those whom she suspected to be opposed to her; and, to prevent any further demonstration in favour of the Lady Jane, she ordered the sentence against her, and Lord Guildford Dudley, to be carried into execution. The



unhappy Jane received warning of her doom without dismay; she had long expected it, and the innocence of her life, as well as the misfortunes to which she had been exposed, rendered it in no wise unwelcome to her.

When the fatal day arrived, Lord Dudley desired permission to see her, but she refused her consent, saying, that she feared that the tenderness of their parting would overcome the fortitude of both; their separation, she said, would only be for a moment, and they would soon rejoin each other where they would be for ever united, and where disappointment and misfortunes would no longer disturb their happiness.

It had been intended to execute Lady Jane and Lord Guildford together on the same scaffold at Tower-hill, but the council, dreading the compassion of the people for their youth, beauty, innocence, and noble birth, changed their orders, and gave directions that she should be beheaded within the Tower. Through the windows of her prison, Lady Jane saw her husband led to execution, and having given him a token of her remembrance, she waited with calmness till her own appointed hour should bring her to a like fate. It soon arrived; and on her way to the scaffold, she met the headless body of her husband, carried back in

a cart. She gazed upon the melancholy spectacle without a tear; and being told that he had suffered with firmness, she seemed to take more courage, and walked on with a tranquil countenance. When all was prepared, she addressed a few words to the bystanders, saying, that she justly deserved punishment for not having rejected the crown with sufficient constancy; but that she had erred less through ambition, than through reverence to her parents, whom she had been taught to respect and obey. She then implored God's mercy; after which she veiled her own eyes with her handkerchief, and laid her head upon the block, exhorting the unwilling executioner to the quick performance of his office. At last the axe fell, and her lovely head rolled away from the body, drawing tears from the eyes of every spectator.

Her father, the duke of Suffolk, (formerly marquis of Dorset,) was tried soon after, and beheaded, without receiving much compassion from the people, as it was greatly through his means that the Lady Jane had met with her untimely end.

By such like proceedings as these Queen Mary soon became universally hated by the people; and her life is represented as having been a continued course of disappointments and misery. She married Philip of Spain, a grasping and tyrannical

man, who was as much disliked as the queen, whom he sometimes treated very badly.

This was a sad reign for religious persecutions. Ridley, Latimer, Cranmer, and many other famed upholders of protestantism, were burned to death; and, for some months, scarcely a week passed but fires were lighted in Smithfield for the destruction of those who had incurred the resentment of the Catholics.

It was during Mary's reign, likewise, that the French regained possession of the important town of Calais. The duke of Guise, with a large army, unexpectedly invaded the English territory in France on New Year's Day, 1558; at which time Lord Wentworth, the English lord-deputy, was possessed of so small an armed force, that he was obliged to abandon every outpost, and confine himself to the defence of Calais only. Guise made an attack upon the walls near the Water-gate, in order to draw off the attention of the English from the castle, which, he had learned, was in a very tottering condition. While they were busy repairing the breaches he had made in the walls, he suddenly brought fifteen double cannon to bear upon the castle; and, before evening, it was reduced to a ruin. The Lord Wentworth, as the best thing that could be done, withdrew his

soldiers from it, and made a train with gunpowder, intending, as soon as the French should take possession of it, to blow them and the ruins into the air. Either the train was badly laid, or when the French passed the ditch which surrounded the castle, they got their clothes wet, and so damped the gunpowder;—at all events, the attempt utterly failed. Guise passed the night in the castle, and next morning resolutely attacked the town. The English marshal, Sir Anthony Agar, with a few brave men, as boldly defended it, and drove back the French to the castle, from which he in vain endeavoured to dislodge them. He himself, with about eighty officers and men, were killed in the attempt; and the Lord Wentworth had no alternative but to capitulate. The inhabitants of Calais were allowed to depart; but every article of property was seized by the victorious French, who knew not how to conceal their joy at the conquest of this important town, which had cost Edward the Third an obstinate siege of more than eleven months, and which the English had kept possession of for more than two hundred years.

Queen Mary was very much grieved at this loss; and it is said to have accelerated her death, which followed soon after, to the great satisfaction of the people of England, who hailed, with undis-

guised joy the accession of the Princess Elizabeth, and the return of the protestant religion.

### Queen Elizabeth.

ON the same day that Mary died the Lady Elizabeth was proclaimed queen, amidst the most lively demonstrations of popular joy. The bells of all the churches were set ringing, tables were set in the streets, "where was plentiful eating, drinking, and making merry;" and at night bonfires were lit in all directions, and the skies were reddened by flames which had *not* consumed human beings. Elizabeth was residing at her pleasant manor of Hatfield, at the time that she received the news of her easy accession, when she fell upon her knees, exclaiming,—"*A Domino factum est istud, et est mirabile oculis nostris.*" (It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.) She soon removed from Hatfield, attended by a joyous escort; and, at Highgate, was dutifully met by the mayor and citizens of London, who conducted her to the capital.

On the 15th of January, 1559, Elizabeth was crowned queen. She rode, with great majesty, out of the Tower, "most honourably accompanied as well with gentlemen, barons, and other the no-

bility of this realm, as also with a notable train of goodly and beautiful ladies, richly appointed," and all riding on horseback. The Lord Mayor and citizens, desirous of showing their great loyalty, furnished all the streets between the Tower and Westminster with pageants, sumptuous shows, and cunning devices. In one pageant, Time led forth his daughter, Truth; and Truth, greeting her majesty, presented to her an English Bible, which the queen accepted with a gracious countenance, and, reverently kissing it, and pressing it to her bosom, she said she would oftentimes read that holy book. Gog and Magog, deserting their posts in the Guildhall, stood to honour the queen, one on each side of Temple-Bar, supporting a wondrous tablet of Latin verse, expounding the hidden meaning of all the pageants in the city.

The queen's behaviour during the whole day was affable in the extreme. In Cheapside, she was observed to laugh; and being asked the cause, replied, that she had overheard a man say,—“I remember old King Harry.” Many times she stayed her chariot, to receive nosegays and supplications from poor women; and a branch of rosemary, given to her grace about Fleet-bridge, was seen in her chariot till she came to Westminster. She was crowned by the bishop of Carlisle, and







QUEEN ELIZABETH.

afterwards dined with the nobility in Westminster Hall.

Every history of the early reign of Elizabeth is filled with accounts of the offers of marriage which were made to her, and with the melancholy story of the unfortunate Mary Stuart, queen of Scotland; but, as it is very probable that I may, one of these days, relate to you the life of this celebrated, but unfortunate woman, I shall not now enter upon her history.

Like her father, Henry the Eighth, when he was young, Elizabeth was fond of pageantry and pompous show; and many pages of Holinshed's Chronicles are filled with descriptions of her processions, which, now-a-days, would be considered most ridiculous displays.

She made various "progresses" to different parts of England, one of which was to Norwich, where she spent several days, and where she was received with all the magnificence that the citizens could command. Even on an ordinary visit, she rode under a sort of canopy, which was borne and surrounded by gentlemen of her court; and, upon one occasion, when she honoured the earl of Leicester (her chief favourite) with her presence, at Kenilworth, she was so royally equipped, and so splendidly received, that I cannot refrain from

giving you a description of it, as it is told by an old historian.

It was upon the 9th of July, 1575, that Queen Elizabeth was expected to honour Kenilworth Castle with her presence; and the avenue that led from the entrance gate to the building was densely crowded with the populace, who waited long and anxiously for their royal visitor. They would no doubt have grumbled at the delay; but a profusion of refreshment of every kind was distributed among them; roasted oxen and casks of beer were provided, and the utmost hilarity everywhere prevailed. The sun had set, and the twilight of a summer evening had succeeded to the glare of day, when a rocket was seen to shoot high up into the air; and at the same time, far-heard over flood and field, the great bell of the castle tolled. In an instant all was hushed—nothing was heard save the whispered murmur of a multitude; but soon a shout of applause, so tremendously vociferous, that the country echoed for miles around, proclaimed to all that Queen Elizabeth had entered the royal chace of Kenilworth. Bands of music immediately commenced playing, and a round of artillery was discharged from the castle; but the noise of drums and trumpets, and even of the cannon, was but faintly heard amidst the reiterated

welcomes of the assembled thousands. Presently, a broad glare of light appeared, and the royal cavalcade advanced along the avenue. Two hundred waxen torches, carried by as many horsemen, cast a light equal to that of broad day all around the procession, but especially on the principal group, of which the queen herself, arrayed in the most splendid manner, and blazing with jewels, formed the central figure. She was mounted upon a milk-white horse, which she reined with peculiar grace and dignity. The ladies of the court, arrayed in almost equal magnificence, attended her; and the earl of Leicester, as well in quality of her host, as of her master-of-horse, rode on her majesty's right hand. The black steed that carried him had not a single white hair on his body, and was one of the most renowned chargers in Europe; and, as the noble animal chafed at the slow pace of the procession, and, arching his stately neck, champed on the silver bit which restrained him, the foam flew from his mouth, and specked his well-formed limbs as if with spots of snow. Behind, came a long crowd of knights, and gentlemen of high birth. With much form, the whole cavalcade was permitted to enter the gate of the castle; and immediately a clamorous burst of music was poured forth, which was replied to by other bands of min-

strelsy, placed at different points on the castle walls,—and by others again, stationed in the chase; while the tones of the one, as they yet vibrated on the echoes, were caught up and answered by new harmony from a different quarter. Amidst these bursts of music, which, as if the work of enchantment, seemed now close at hand, now softened by distance, and now wailing so low and sweet, as if that distance were gradually increasing, Queen Elizabeth crossed the gallery-tower, and came upon the long bridge, which extended from thence to Mortimer's Tower. Here a new spectacle was provided. As soon as the music gave signal that the queen had reached the bridge, a raft, so managed as to resemble a small floating island, illuminated by a great variety of torches, and surrounded by floating pageants, representing sea-horses, on which sat Tritons, Nereids, and other fabulous deities of the waters, made its appearance upon the lake, and floated gently toward the farther end of the bridge.

On the islet was a beautiful woman, clad in a silken mantle, bound with a broad girdle inscribed with mystical characters. Her feet and arms were bare, but her wrists and ankles were adorned with gold bracelets of uncommon size. Amidst her long, silky, black hair, she wore a

crown of artificial misletoe, and bore in her hand a rod of ebony, tipped with silver. Two nymphs attended her, dressed in the same antique guise.

The pageant was so well managed, that this lady of the floating island, having performed her voyage with much picturesque effect, landed at Mortimer's Tower, with her two attendants, just as Elizabeth presented herself before that out-work. The stranger then, in a well-penned speech, announced herself as that famous Lady of the Lake, renowned in the stories of King Arthur, who had nursed the youth of the redoubted Sir Lancelot; since which time she had never, she said, raised her head from the waters which hid her crystal palace: but now that so great a queen had appeared, she came, in homage and duty, to welcome the peerless Elizabeth to the castle.

The queen received this address with great courtesy, and made a gracious answer; whereupon, the Lady of the Lake vanished, and Arion, who was amongst the maritime deities, appeared upon his dolphin. But the good man who was to have performed the part had, early in the evening, partaken too freely of the festivities; and now, instead of delivering his speech, he tore off his vizor, and swore that he was none of Arion,—no, not he,—but only honest Harry Goldingham;



whereat, the queen, being heartily tired of fine speeches, declared she was well pleased. A burst of music followed; and the queen passed on through a scene which might well have been taken for fairy-land: there were cages of all kinds of beautiful birds from Sylvanus; silver basins of rich fruits from Pomona; bowls of grain from Ceres; clusters of grapes from Bacchus; and other appropriate offerings, expressive of the most unfeigned affection for the fair majesty of England. These, and other acts of homage and courtesy, together with abundance of poetry and music, ushered the queen into the inner court, from which she was conveyed to her chamber; then was the blaze of fire-works, of sparkling stars, the streams and hail of fiery sparks, the lightnings of wildfire, the flight-shots of thunderbolts, the rushing of rockets, which crossed and recrossed each other in the air, whilst the surface of the lake glowed, like molten fire, with the reflection; and many fireworks which continued burning, even in that opposing element, dived, and rose, and hissed, and roared, and spouted fire, like so many dragons of enchantment sporting on a burning lake;—"So that," says the quaint old coxcomb who chronicled this event, "even I myself, albeit somewhat hardy, yet did it make me very vengeably afraid." The three fol-



lowing days the queen was entertained with hunting; and generally, when returning homewards, some "salvage man," carrying in his hand a tree plucked up by the roots, and dressed fantastically, would issue forth from an illuminated thicket, and call upon his sylvan friends, the nymphs, satyrs, and fairies, to solve the cause of his wonderment, and explain what distinguished and lovely person it was that thus invaded his solitudes; but none of these having power to answer, he would, in some poetical conceit, invoke the echo to his assistance, who, returning back his rhymes, dispelled the mystery; whereat he, kneeling, proffered homage after the most approved fashion. Next day was exhibited a sport which was considered the most gratifying of the whole; namely, the baiting of thirteen bears!—"Which," says the historian, "was a sight most pleasant to behold. To see the bear, with his pinkey eyes, leering at the dogs as they approached; the nimbleness of his adversaries to take his advantage, and the force and experience of the bear to avoid them; how, if he were bitten in one place, how he would pinch in another to get free; but if he were taken, then what shift, with roaring, and tumbling, and tossing, and clawing, to wind himself from them; and when loose, to shake himself free of the dust

and other marks of the conflict, was, to the spectators, a goodly relief!" Then, as usual, was the evening closed with peals of ordnance, and showers of fireworks; while the company within doors were entertained with the postures of a "wondrous Italian." On Sunday, the queen went to church, where she heard an "edifying discourse;" and, after sermon, the rustics of the neighbouring country assembled, to amuse her with dancing, and running at the quintain, and breaking each other's heads; spurring their ragged, ill-trained horses at one another, so that the ground was soon littered with prostrate men and horses, amidst the vociferous laughter of the noble spectators. Amid such "princely pleasures" as these did the queen spend nineteen days at Kenilworth; yet that time did not suffice for all the sports that had been prepared for her majesty; and many of the shows, on which all the wit and talent of the age had been employed, had either to be abridged, or entirely omitted.

About thirteen years after this "royal progress," England was threatened with invasion by Philip of Spain, who raised an immense fleet, of a hundred and thirty vessels, to carry over his troops. All the nobility of that country, and many foreign princes, joined in the enterprise, and so confident

were they of success, that they gave their navy the name of "The Invincible Armada." As you may suppose, the English were rather frightened when they heard of the extensive preparations that were making against them, but the queen was undismayed: she issued her orders with tranquillity, and every rank of men, obeying her commands, prepared themselves with vigour to resist the invaders. The more to excite the martial spirit of the nation, Elizabeth appeared on horseback in the camp at Tilbury; and, riding through the lines, with a cheerful and animated countenance, she exhorted the soldiers to remember their duty to their country and their religion; and told them that, although a woman, she herself would lead them into the field against the enemy, and rather perish in battle than survive the ruin of her people.

On the 29th of May, 1588, the Spanish fleet, full of hopes, set sail from Lisbon; but, on the very next day, a violent tempest scattered them, and sunk several of the smaller vessels, so that they were all obliged to put back; and it was not till July that they were sufficiently repaired to be able to sail again. On the 19th of that month, the English admiral, Lord Howard of Effingham, descried the Spanish Armada coming full sail towards

him, disposed in the form of a crescent, and stretching seven miles across the English channel.

Never, before or since, has such a magnificent spèctacle appeared upon the ocean,—the lofty masts, the swelling sails, and the towering prows of the Spanish galleons, infused equal terror and admiration into the minds of the beholders;—“And,” says an Italian writer, “although the ships bore every sail, they advanced but with a slow motion,—for the ocean groaned with supporting, and the winds were tired with impelling, so enormous a weight.” Lord Effingham, nowise daunted, prepared vigorously to attack this formidable armament; and, although his vessels were much smaller, and carried fewer men, yet he doubted not but that he should be able to repel the assailants. As the Armada sailed up the channel, the English hung around them; and, whenever an opportunity offered, seized upon the ships that lagged behind. Several were thus taken, and every trial added courage to the English, while it abated the confidence of the Spaniards. The Armada soon anchored off Calais, where it was expected that it would be greatly reinforced; but the Duke of Parma, upon learning the misfortunes that had already attended it, resolutely refused to expose his fine army in so hazardous an enterprise. Here

the English admiral, one night, practised a most successful stratagem:—he filled eight of his smaller ships with combustible materials, and setting them on fire, sent them, one after another, into the midst of the enemy. The Spaniards immediately cut their cables, and took to flight, with the greatest disorder; and, while yet in confusion, the English, next morning, fell upon them, and destroyed twelve of their vessels.

The Spanish admiral now found that the immense size of his ships was of the greatest disadvantage; for while they presented a broad mark for the cannon of the English, his own shot passed harmlessly over their heads, as their ships lay beneath him. Although he had destroyed only one small vessel of the English, he found he had lost a considerable part of his own navy; and he foresaw that, by continuing the combat, he should draw inevitable destruction on the remainder. He prepared, therefore, to return homewards; but, as the wind blew up the channel, he was obliged to make the tour of Great Britain, in order to reach the Spanish harbours by the ocean. The English fleet followed him for some time; and had it not been that their ammunition fell short, they would have obliged the whole Armada to surrender at discretion. This would have been more glorious for the

English ; but the event was almost equally fatal to the Spaniards : for when they had passed the Orkney Islands, a tremendous tempest overtook them. They were obliged to throw overboard, horses, mules, artillery, and baggage. Some of the ships were dashed to pieces on the Western Isles ; some were cast upon the rocky coast of Argyle ; and more than thirty were wrecked upon the shores of Ireland ; and not a half of “ The *Invincible Armada* ” ever returned to Spain. Such was the miserable conclusion of an enterprise that had been preparing for three years, and which had filled all Europe with expectation and anxiety.

After a prosperous reign of forty-five years, during which England attained to a much higher state of civilization than it had before enjoyed, Queen Elizabeth died, in the seventieth year of her age.

## SEVENTEENTH EVENING.

JAMES THE FIRST—GUNPOWDER TREASON—LADY ARABELLA STUART—  
PRINCE HENRY—THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM—PRINCE CHARLES'S VISIT  
TO SPAIN.

“BUT you promised that you would tell us some more tales, brother,” said Magnus, when one evening, after a long absence, I again found myself among old friends, with smiling faces, and all the happiness of HOME around me.

Magnus, and Lawrence, and little Benjamin, now grown almost as big as his brothers, had gathered near me as soon as an opportunity was offered them; and “When will you begin to tell us about the kings of England again, brother?” had been one of their first enquiries. I pleaded that my time was already fully occupied; and then came the words at the beginning—“But you promised.” Of course I could urge no further excuse, and that very evening I began by telling them of—

*James the First.*

The accession of King James the First to the



throne of England was hailed with an almost universal joy. Crowds of all ranks and parties flocked to meet him on his way from Scotland; and when he entered London, on the 7th of May, 1603, the greatest rejoicings were made throughout the city. So pleased does the king appear to have been with the attentions of his new subjects, that before he had set foot in his palace of Whitehall he had knighted two hundred gentlemen, and before he had been three months in England he conferred the same honour on nearly seven hundred. But it was on his Scottish followers that James bestowed the greatest honours and rewards, and the English noblemen were soon filled with jealousy. Elizabeth had always had her favourites, and had been accustomed to follow her own inclinations very much; but King James soon proved that his notions of the royal prerogative were far higher than those of the late queen. On his journey, a man was detected at Newark picking the pocket of one of the gentlemen of his court, James heard of it, and immediately, without any legal trial, ordered the man to be hanged. This was the first specimen which the English received of his arbitrary temper; and he had not been seated on the throne many months when two dangerous conspiracies against him were detected, in one of which the celebrated

Sir Walter Raleigh, whom James had treated very ill, took a leading part: the design of these conspirators was to dethrone James, and to place the crown upon the head of the Lady Arabella Stuart, who had nearly as good a claim to it as James had. These plots, however, were really of service to the king, for they gave him an opportunity of crushing his bitterest enemies, and bestowing their estates upon his own favourites.

James was very fond of hunting, and even neglected business of state that he might enjoy his favourite recreation. Once, when at Royston, there was one of the king's special hounds, called Jowler, missing one day. The king, who was much displeased that he was wanting, notwithstanding went a hunting. The next day, when they were on the field, Jowler came in among the rest of the hounds; the king was told of him and was very glad, and, looking on him, spied a paper about his neck, and in the paper was written, "Good Mr. Jowler, we pray you speak to the king—for he hears you every day, and so doth he not us—that it will please his majesty to go back to London, for else the country will be undone; all our provisions are spent already, and we are not able to entertain him longer." It was taken for a jest, and so passed over.

You remember I told you, that in the reign of Queen Mary, many good and pious men were burnt at the stake for upholding the Protestant religion; and fearful were the excesses that the Roman Catholics at that time committed. When Elizabeth succeeded to the throne, the Protestant religion, which she professed, was restored to the nation; and, in their turn, the Catholics were oppressed, though not with the same cruelties. King James had promised toleration to both parties, but the Catholics quickly discovered that they were now worse off than ever; for James proved himself bigoted against them to excess, and persecuted them in every way, and this led to

### The Gunpowder Treason.

On the 5th of November, 1605, the Parliament, which had been prorogued for an unusually long time, was ordered to meet, and King James, with his eldest son Henry, were expected to be present. Some few days previously, Lord Mouteagle, a Roman Catholic peer, received this letter :

My lord out of the love I beare to some of your friends i have a care of your preservation therefor i would adbyse youe as youe tender your lyf to debyse some excuse to shift of your attendance at this par-

leament for god & man hath concurred to punish the wickedness of this tyme & thinke not sliqbilpe of this advertisment but retyere youre self into youre contrie where youve may expect the ebent in safiti for thowghe there be no apparence of annit stir yet i saye they shall receybe a terrible blowe this parleament & yet they shall not seie who hurts them this council is not to be condemned because it maye do youve good & can do youve no harme for the dangere is passed as soon as youve have burnt the letter & i hope god will gibe youve the grace to make good use of it to whose holy proteccion i commend youve.

This was carried by Lord Mouteagle to Lord Cecil, the King's first minister; and when James, who at that time was "hunting the fearful hare," returned to London, it was laid before him. Cecil had already guessed at the meaning of the letter; but gave all the credit of the discovery to the king, who plumed himself mightily on his own wonderful sagacity and penetration. The 5th of November was on a Tuesday. On the afternoon of the day before, the Duke of Suffolk, accompanied by Lord Mouteagle, went down to the parliament house to see that every thing was ready for the meeting on the ensuing day. They pretended that some of the king's stuffs were missing, and descended into the cellars in search of them. On opening the

door of one they saw a very tall and desperate fellow standing in a corner. Suffolk asked him who he was, to which he replied, that he was servant to Mr. Percy, and looking after his master's coals. "Your master," said the duke, "has laid in a good stock of fuel;" and without adding any thing else he and Mounteagle left the cellar. Shortly after midnight this tall and desperate fellow left the cellar; but, before he had got many yards, he was seized by a party of soldiers, bound hand and foot, and carried to the king's bed-chamber in Whitehall! The cellar was immediately searched; behind the door there was a dark lantern with a light burning in it, and at the end of the vault an immense heap of wood and coals: some of this was removed, and then, underneath it, were found thirty-six barrels of gunpowder, with large stones and bars of iron scattered amongst them. The man was examined by the king himself; he boldly avowed that as soon as the parliament should have met together he intended to have lighted a slow match which would have communicated with the gunpowder and blown the whole house into the air. The king asked him how he could have the heart to destroy his children and so many innocent souls that must have suffered. "Dangerous diseases," said the villain,

“require desperate remedies.” One of the Scottish courtiers inquired why he had collected so many barrels of gunpowder. “One of my objects,” he replied, “was to blow Scotchmen back into Scotland.” On the next morning he was sent to the Tower, with instructions that he should be tortured until he avowed his accomplices. But the king had not to wait for his confession; for about twenty gentlemen of the Catholic religion immediately declared themselves by flying from London and taking up arms. One of them, named Rookwood, waited till the last moment to see what would follow; but finding himself in imminent peril, at noon-day, on the 6th of November, he mounted his steed and rode off in desperate haste. He had previously placed relays of horses all the way to Dunchurch, and he now found them of real service. He quickly passed over Highgate Hill and spurred across Finchley Common; there he overtook another conspirator named Keyes, who accompanied him some distance. As he galloped on he came up with two more, Catesby and John Wright; and those four soon afterwards overtook another two, Christopher Wright and Thomas Percy. All these six rode together with headlong speed, some of them throwing their cloaks into the hedge that they might ride the lighter, till they came to Ashby St.



Leger's, in Northamptonshire, at six o'clock in the evening. The distance from London was eighty miles, which Rookwood had ridden in six hours. At Lady Catesby's, at Ashby, they found more conspirators; and very soon the whole party mounted horse and rode to join Sir Everard Digby, who also was in the plot, at Dunchurch. Early next day all of them were again flying for their lives; on their way they called upon the Catholic gentry to arm and follow them, but they were driven from the doors with the bitterest reproaches, and told that they had brought ruin and disgrace on them and their religion. At Warwick they found some cavalry horses, which they seized, leaving their own tired steeds in their places, and by night they reached Holbeach, a house belonging to a conspirator named Littleton, on the borders of Staffordshire. By this time Sir Richard Walsh, sheriff of Warwickshire, with a large body of the country gentlemen, and all the men they could get together, were in pursuit of the fugitives. Several of them, hearing this, escaped separately and on foot during the night; but next day, at noon, Sir Richard Walsh surrounded the house and summoned the rebels to lay down their arms. Resistance was in vain, but they preferred to die where they were rather than on a scaffold. Catesby, Percy, John



and Christopher Wright, with several others, were shot dead; Rookwood was badly wounded and made a prisoner, with all the rest who were within the house.

In the meantime, the man who had been discovered in the vault had undergone the severest tortures; but nothing of any importance was elicited from him. On the 8th of November he wrote his name, Guido Fawkes, to a deposition, with a bold, firm hand; but two days after, when he signed a confession of the names of his accomplices, (who had already betrayed themselves,) his hand was faint and trembling: it is evident he could scarcely hold the pen in his agony from the tortures that had been inflicted on him—the Christian name alone is written, and then there is a scrawl as if the pen had dropped from his hand. This single incident tells a tale of horror. All those who had escaped from Holbeach were taken; and by the end of January, Sir Everard Digby, Rookwood, Keyes, and many others, among them, Guido Fawkes—"the Devil of the Vault," were condemned to die the death of traitors; the sentence was fulfilled, with all its horrors, upon a scaffold erected at the west end of St. Paul's church-yard. Thus ended the terrible Gunpowder Plot.

James the First, like many of his predecessors

on the throne of England, always liked to have some favourite companion. In July, 1606, a young man named Robert Carr attended as esquire to Lord Dingwall in a grand tilting match at Westminster. In the course of the entertainment he had to present his lord's shield to the king. In doing this, his horse fell with him close to James's feet: his leg was broken, but his fortune was made. The king, struck with his handsome countenance and elegant appearance, ordered his own surgeon to attend him, and as soon as the sports were concluded went to visit him. As soon as Carr got better, James had him constantly with him, gave him instruction in Latin himself, and treated him with the most extravagant friendship. He was quickly made Sir Robert Carr; and a few years afterwards created Viscount Rochester, when he also received the order of the garter. In December, 1614, he married the countess of Essex; and in order that the lady might not lose rank by marrying his favourite, James created him earl of Somerset.

But there is one sad episode in the reign of James the First which I cannot pass by. It is the melancholy story of the unfortunate Lady Arabella Stuart; a story that, with many others, I wish I could blot out from the page of history.

*Lady Arabella Stuart.*

This lady was a great grandchild of Henry VII.; and it was supposed, as I before told you, that Sir Wälter Raleigh, and a few other conspirators, at one time wanted to place her on the throne in the place of James. Since the discovery of that plot she had been kept about the court, and strictly watched; and it was only owing to her avowed determination not to marry, that the king's jealousy of her claim was removed. But it so happened that at some court-festival she renewed her acquaintance with William Seymour, son of Lord Beauchamp. It is supposed that there existed some previous attachment to each other; for very soon after, an arrangement for marriage was discovered to have been made between them. The king was greatly alarmed, for Seymour also could boast of royal blood in his veins; and he fancied they might at some future time lay claim to the throne. The lovers were summoned before the privy-council, and, to avoid imprisonment, they were obliged to promise not to marry without the king's permission. In the following month it was discovered that they were married. James instantly committed Seymour to the Tower, and the Lady Arabella to the custody of a gentleman at Lambeth.

This confinement was not very rigorous ; for the lady was permitted to walk in the garden, and Seymour contrived occasionally to meet her there. But soon the dismal intelligence was brought to her that she must be removed to Durham. She refused to go, and the officers were obliged to carry her in her bed to the water-side, where they put her into a boat, and rowed her across the river. Her great distress brought on a fever, and the king allowed her to remain for a month at Highgate, where she lodged in a gentleman's house, and was closely watched. But Seymour was not inclined to part so readily with his new and beautiful bride ; he engaged two friends to assist him, and they contrived to hold communication with the Lady Arabella. ' Disguising herself by drawing a great pair of French-fashioned hose over her petticoats, putting on a man's doublet, a man-like peruke, with long locks over her hair, a black hat, black cloak, russet boots with red tops, and rapier by her side, she walked forth between three and four of the clock with Markham. After they had gone a-foot a mile and a half to a very sorry inn, where Crompton attended with horses, she grew very sick and faint, so as the ostler that held the stirrup said, that the gentleman could hardly hold out to London ; yet, being set on a good gelding, astride,

in an unwonted fashion, the stirring of the horse brought blood enough into her face, and so she rid on towards Blackwall.' There she found a boat with attendants ready; she was quickly rowed down to Gravesend, and put on board a French bark, where she hoped to find her husband; but although he had escaped from the Tower, disguised as a physician, he had not reached the vessel. After waiting a short time the French captain, who knew the seriousness of the adventure became alarmed, and, notwithstanding the entreaties of the Lady Arabella, hoisted all sail and put to sea. When Seymour reached Gravesend, he was sadly disconcerted at finding that his wife was gone; but he got on board a collier, and on the day after was safely landed on the coast of Flanders. The Lady Arabella was not so fortunate. As soon as her flight from Highgate was known at the palace, all was confusion and alarm, as if another gunpowder-plot had been discovered. Ships were sent down the channel one after another; and when it was learned that Seymour had escaped from the Tower, the privy-council appeared to think that church and state were in danger. Unfortunately, the French bark was overtaken when about half-way down the channel. The captain and his crew fought well, but it was

useless; the Lady Arabella was again taken prisoner, and carried to the Tower. She said she cared not for captivity as long as her husband was safe; but her heart was breaking, she could not recover her liberty, and grief and despair drove her mad. She died in that pitiable state about four years after she had entered within the walls of the Tower.

“What a melancholy story!” exclaimed Lawrence, as a tear ran down his cheek. “How cruel and hard-hearted King James must have been!”

“In these days,” I replied, “we feel it so; but two centuries since, oppression of this kind was too common to excite any others than those immediately concerned in it. When you are older, if you will read a full history of King James’s reign, you will find another fearful instance of his hardness of heart in his treatment of the gallant and unfortunate Raleigh; or, if you have a book called the ‘Heroes of England,’ you will find a life of Raleigh in that, and learn how cruelly the king used him.

### Prince Henry.

But I have not yet told you of the young Prince Henry, King James’s eldest son. At eighteen



years of age he was the complete favourite of the people; he held a court of his own, which was always more frequented than his father's, so that the king was heard to say, "Will he bury me alive?" He was well made, graceful, frank, brave, and active; fond of all martial exercises, and a particular lover of horses. He would have the largest and finest that could be procured sent to him from all countries; and when he went hunting, he seemed to take more pleasure in galloping his gallant steeds than in following the dogs. One day, as he was amusing himself with tossing the pike,—a short lance that was thrown by the hand,—the French ambassador asked him if he had any message for the king of France? "Tell him," cried the young prince, "what I am now doing." He was very fond of Sir Walter Raleigh, whom he often visited in the Tower; and was once heard to say, that no king but his father would keep such a bird in such a cage. Once when the prince was hunting a stag, it chanced that the stag, being spent, crossed the road where a butcher and his dog were travelling; the dog killed the stag, which was so great that the butcher could not carry him off. When the huntsman and company came up, they fell at odds with the butcher, and endeavoured to incense the prince against him, to



whom the prince soberly answered: "What, if the butcher's dog killed the stag, what could the butcher help it?" They replied, "If his father had been served so, he would have sworn so as no man could have endured it." "Away!" replied the prince; "all the pleasure in the world is not worth an oath." About the middle of October, 1612, Prince Henry was seized with a dangerous illness at Richmond. With care he got a little better, so that he was able to ride on horseback to London; but, notwithstanding the coldness of the season, he was rash enough to play a "great match of tennis" with the Count Henry of Nassau, without his coat. The next day he complained of a pain in the head, yet he dined with the king, and ate with a seemingly good appetite; but his countenance was sadly pale, and his eye hollow and ghastly. He grew daily worse, and at eight o'clock in the evening of the 6th of November, the heir to the throne of England died. He was then not quite nineteen: never was the death of any prince more lamented by the people.

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I have little more to tell you of King James the First. During the later years of his reign he discarded his old favourite, Robert Carr, whom he

had made earl of Somerset, and bestowed all his favour on a handsome but profligate young man, named George Villiers. This man soon obtained a greater influence over the king than even Somerset had done; and he quickly received the title of earl, and afterwards of duke of Buckingham. He used to call James his "dear dad and gossip," and the king called him "Steenie." One of Buckingham's letters to the king is subscribed, "A lover of you, and your majesty's most humble slave and dog, Steenie."

James's last years were spent in continual quarrels with the house of commons. Men had grown sick of his arbitrary temper and his extravagance, and it was with great difficulty that James could get money enough to defray his necessary expenses. There is no doubt but that anxiety, and the use of sweet wines, of which he was immoderately fond, hastened his death. He went to his last rest on the day of rest, March 27, 1625, and in less than a quarter of an hour after the breath was out of his body, his son Charles was proclaimed king of England.

But before I tell you of Charles the First as king, I must narrate his adventure in Spain during his father's life-time, when he was only prince of Wales.

### Prince Charles's Visit to Spain.

It was at one time arranged that the heir to the English crown should marry the infanta of Spain, the sister of Philip IV., king of that country. Charles had never seen the lady, and he determined to visit her in disguise. The duke of Buckingham promised to accompany him, and after some little trouble they obtained the king's leave for their journey. On the 17th of February, 1623, the two knights' errant took their leave of his majesty, and set out with false beards and borrowed names, attended only by one gentleman, Sir Richard Graham. The prince called himself John Smith, Buckingham was Thomas Smith. At Gravesend they excited suspicion by giving a piece of gold to the man who took them over the ferry; and near Rochester they had to "teach post-hackneys to leap hedges," to avoid the French ambassador. They were stopped at Canterbury by order of the mayor, and Buckingham had to take off his beard, and declare who they were before they could get away. At Dover, they found Sir Francis Cottington and Master Endymion Porter, who had been sent before to provide a vessel; and on the following morning they hoisted their adventurous sails for the coast of France.

In a few days the “sweet boys and dear venturous knights, worthy to be put in a new romanso,” (these are King James’s words) arrived safely in Paris, still continuing their disguise. Prince Charles spent the whole of one day in “seeing the French court and city of Paris, without that any body did know his person, but a maid that had sold linen heretofore in London, who, seeing him pass by, said ‘Certainly this is the Prince of Wales;’ but withal suffered him to hold his way, and presumed not to follow him.” On the same evening he and Buckingham went to the court, without being known, where they saw the young Queen of France, and nineteen “fair dancing ladies,” practising a masque. Among these was Henrietta Maria, the sister of the French king, whom Charles afterwards married. The next day the adventurers set out for Spain. They were only detained once; but quickly resumed their journey, and late one evening arrived on mules at the house of Lord Bristol, the English ambassador in Madrid. Mr. Thomas Smith went in first, with a portmanteau under his arm; and presently Mr. John Smith, who staid outside a while, was sent for. When the ambassador recognised in his two visitors the heir to the English crown and the marquis of Buckingham, he was surprised beyond measure, for he had not received any intelligence

of their travels. The first thing he did was to write to the king of England to acquaint him that his son had arrived safely in the capital of Spain, and dispatch a courier with the important news. King Philip was in raptures with the journey and with the prince; he treated him and his attendants with the most costly kindness, and seemed as if he scarcely knew how to do Charles enough honour. The etiquette of the Spanish court forbade him having any private interviews with the infanta; but he saw her very frequently in public; and at first she wore a blue riband on her arm, that he might the more easily distinguish her. But Charles was not quite content with this; learning that Donna Maria sometimes went to a summer-house belonging to the king early in the morning to gather May-dew, he rose one day-break, and, taking Endymion Porter with him, ventured to demand admittance at the house. He was not refused; but when he got into the garden, he found that the infanta was then in the orchard, from which he was separated by a high wall. Nothing daunted, the prince mounted the wall, and, seeing the lady he was in pursuit of, he sprung down and ran towards her, but the infanta, perceiving him before any of her attendants, gave a shriek and ran back; whereupon the old marquis, who was then her guardian, fell

on his knees before the prince, and entreated him to leave the orchard, or he might perhaps lose his head for admitting him to the presence of the infanta; "so the door was opened, and the prince came out under that wall over which he had got in."

Charles and Buckingham, with a host of companions, stayed at the Spanish capital for several months. Bull-fights, feasts, tournaments, and hunts wiled away the time. Charles began to study Spanish, and the infanta English; and everything seemed to be going on merrily. King James, in one of his letters to his son, besought Baby Charles and Steenie not to forget their dancing, though they should whistle and sing one to the other, for want of better music; ending it with this entreaty: "I pray you, my baby, take heed of being hurt, if you run at tilt." At length they determined upon returning to England; the prince of Wales received the most magnificent presents of horses, jewels, and pictures; and he in return gave presents to the king and queen of Spain, and to the infanta a string of pearls, and a diamond anchor, as an emblem of his constancy. Notwithstanding all this, in a very short time afterwards the negociation for the marriage was broken off, and war was declared between the two countries. The reasons for this are so many and so compli-

cated that I must leave you to read them by and bye ; but the chief excuse made by Prince Charles was that the lady was a Roman Catholic.

You will be rather surprised to learn that even before this Spanish match was quite given up, ambassadors were sent to the French court to make overtures for the marriage of the prince of Wales with Henrietta Maria, who, as I told you, was sister to the French king. These overtures were favourably received ; and, just before the death of James, the marriage-treaty was signed and ratified by the oaths of the kings of England and France ; and three days after his father's death, Charles, as king, confirmed the same treaty.



## EIGHTEENTH EVENING.

ACCESSION OF CHARLES THE FIRST—DEATH OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM—  
 BATTLE OF EDGE HILL—BATTLE OF NASEBY—CARISBROOK CASTLE—TRIAL  
 OF CHARLES THE FIRST—HIS LAST DAYS AND EXECUTION.

JAMES, as I before told you, died on the 16th of March, 1625. On the 1st of May, Charles the First was married to Henrietta Maria, at Paris, a French prince acting as his proxy. The duke of Buckingham, attended by an immense retinue, immediately set off for France, in order to escort the bride home to England. It was not till the evening of the 27th of June that she reached Dover Castle. On the morrow, King Charles rode over from Canterbury to Dover, and they met in the castle, when the king took her up in his arms and kissed her. An old writer describes her as being “nimble and quick, black-eyed, brown-haired, and, in a word, a brave lady.” At first, every one was pleased with the new queen, although she was a Roman Catholic. Stories were told of her having eaten pheasant and venison on a fast-day; and people supposed that she would soon turn to the Protestant religion. But

in this they were greatly mistaken ; and some of the first troubles of Charles reign arose from his wife's over-fondness for her own religion and her own countrymen.

The story of King Charles's reign fills a melancholy page in English history. It is of one continual war between the king and the houses of Parliament, terminating in the deepest tragedy that ever a king bore a part in. James had died in debt to the amount of 700,000*l.*, and Charles had contracted debts to a considerable amount before he came to the throne. His first application to parliament was for money ; but he only received a very small supply, quite insufficient for his necessities.

It was about this time that a new kind of religion spread most widely over the kingdom, more particularly among the lower classes. Exasperated, in various ways, against the Roman Catholics, the people flew to the opposite extreme of them in every thing. Because the Roman Catholics worshipped God in magnificent cathedrals, and wore fine robes, the " Puritans," so they were called, met together in the plainest buildings, and would wear no robes at all ; because the Roman Catholics knelt at their prayers and stood while they sung, the Puritans stood to pray and sat down to sing ;

and, to carry out at full length their hatred, because the Roman Catholics and the supporters of the king wore their hair long and hanging over their shoulders, the Puritans cropped their hair so close that they have always since been called the "Round-heads." It was with the Puritans that Charles the First had to contend during his whole reign. He had imbibed from his father a strong feeling of the divine right of kings; and every opposition to his will did but render him more determined to support that right. That he was often wrong there is no doubt; but that his enemies were hard-hearted, bigoted, and cruel men is equally certain. It is true that among them were some men of honour, who, with mistaken zeal, helped towards the ruin of their king; but they were few—John Hampden, the brightest name amongst them, died before the struggle had ended, and others were over-ruled by the fierce multitude.

To his favourite and constant companion, the duke of Buckingham, King Charles owed many of his troubles. Buckingham was detested by the whole nation, and well he deserved their hatred. He was an over-ambitious man, vain of his power, a boaster, and a great coward. He undertook the management of several wars; but he always returned with disgrace. His death was most tragical.

It was on St. Bartholomew's Eve, on the 23rd of August, 1628, that Buckingham was about to sail from Portsmouth to Rochelle. He was proceeding through the hall of the house he had slept in, in order to get into his carriage, when, as he stopped to speak to one of his officers, a knife was struck into his left breast. He drew forth the weapon, muttered the word "Villain!" and died. An English gentleman, named Felton, who had formerly been in the army, was the assassin. He might have escaped, but he coolly surrendered himself, saying, "I killed him for the cause of God and my country." On his road to the Tower of London he was greeted with prayers and blessings by the common people, who regarded him as their deliverer. Felton was hanged at Tyburn.

Soon after this, the disputes between Charles and the Parliament grew more desperate, and the king was advised to raise an army for his defence. It was found that the people of the northern and the western counties were mostly for the king; those in the southern and eastern, for the Parliament. The first battle was at Edge-hill, on the 23rd of October, 1642; but it was not decisive, as both parties claimed the victory. Charles then marched to Oxford, where he held his court, and a vain attempt was made at a treaty. In the next summer

the queen, who had been sent over to Holland for security, came back to England with men and money; the war began afresh, and for a time the king's troops were victorious. John Hampden was slain at the battle of Chalgrove; and Fairfax, another of the leaders of the rebellion, but a better man than most of his companions, routed with great loss at Atherton Moor. At the battle of Newbury the king was slightly defeated. In the next year the Scots sent an army into England to support the Puritans; and, in July, a great battle was fought at Marston Moor, close by York, which lasted till ten o'clock at night, and in which Prince Rupert, the commander of the Royalist troops, was completely defeated by Oliver Cromwell, and his famous troop of horse, his "Ironsides." The king's party never recovered this blow.

In order to give you an idea of the atrocious spirit which pervaded the parliament at this time, I must tell you of the death of the good Archbishop Laud. Some years before his best friend, Lord Strafford, had been beheaded for the very crime of which he was accused, the crime of doing all in his power to support the church of England; and, now upwards of seventy years of age, he was dragged from the Tower, where he had been imprisoned, tried by the parliament, and, after various

delays, beheaded. Even his last moments were embittered by the presence of his enemies, who insulted him on the very scaffold. It is difficult to conceive of any beings more detestable than some of these bigoted Puritans, who, with God's name constantly on their lips, committed as bad crimes as are recorded in the page of history. On the same day that the archbishop was beheaded, the parliament passed a law, making it felony to use the Common Prayer Book.

The next battle of importance was fought at Naseby, in Northamptonshire—Fairfax and Cromwell commanding the rebels, and the king in person being at the head of his own troops. Prince Rupert, as usual, began the battle with his cavalry, and with his usual success; but the main body of the king's army was so severely assaulted by Cromwell that they gave way, and 3,000 men were killed. It is said by one of the historians of the time, that a hundred women, many of them ladies of rank, were taken prisoners, and murdered in cold blood. Unfortunately for the king, the parliament got possession of his private cabinet of letters, which they took to London, and showed to any one who chose to read them. Some of them were printed, and their publication did the king great injury; for of course the parliament took



care to print those only which were likely to hurt the royal cause.

After the battle of Naseby nothing prospered with the king, and he was at last obliged to stand at bay at Oxford. There he was besieged by Fairfax; and, as a last resource, the unhappy Charles was obliged to throw himself upon the protection of the Scottish army. Instead of treating him as their king—for Charles was king of Scotland as well as of England—the base Scots made him a prisoner; and as they had spent much money in battling for the parliament, they now made the king's person a means of procuring repayment. To their everlasting disgrace, the Scotch generals delivered up the king to his enemies upon receiving 400,000*l*. So careful were they in this matter, that the parliament had to send down to York 200,000*l*. in hard cash. The money-bags filled thirty-six carts, and it took the Scotch receiver nine days to count it. Charles was taken by order of the parliament to Holmby House, near Northampton, where he was allowed but little liberty, and none of his friends were permitted to come near him without express permission.

But now his enemies began to quarrel among themselves. The members of the parliament were mostly Presbyterians, the army were nearly all



Independents. Among the latter was the famous Oliver Cromwell. This man had risen, step by step, until at last he seemed to have set no bounds to his ambition. At his advice, the king was seized by a soldier named Joyce, who went to Holmby with a troop of horse, and, without any explanation, carried the king a prisoner to Cambridge. From thence he was sent to Hampton Court, where he was closely watched; but in an evil hour he was tempted to escape, intending to take refuge on the continent. Unfortunately, the ship which he had expected could not be found, and Charles, as a last resource, put himself under the protection of Hammond, the governor of the Isle of Wight, who placed him in Carisbrook Castle.

In the meantime the king's party were not idle; several battles were fought, but all in vain. The town of Colchester declared for the king, and was besieged for a long time by Fairfax; the inhabitants were reduced to the greatest extremity, and could get nothing to eat but the most miserable food. They were at last obliged to surrender, and two of their officers were shot in cold blood in the castle yard.

The story of King Charles's life is now nearly at an end. The army, through the influence of

Cromwell, attained a complete supremacy over the parliament; and one day a Colonel Pride stationed himself with his soldiers at the entrance of the House of Commons, and as the members entered, took fifty-two of them into custody. At Cromwell's instigation, the remaining members passed a vote, that it was high-treason for a king to make war against the parliament; the most miserable piece of nonsense perpetrated in these miserable days; for it was clearly the parliament who had committed the treason, by making war against their lawful king. And next they appointed a court of justice for the trial of "Charles Stuart," so they called him.

Charles had hoped that the sovereigns of Europe would have endeavoured to save him; but they waited the event in silence, making scarcely any effort, and the king's only hope lay in the mercy of his enemies. Fairfax, the general of the army, would have nothing to do with the proceedings against him; but he could not stop them.

The trial took place in Westminster Hall. A lawyer, named Bradshaw, as hard-hearted a ruffian as ever breathed, was president, and sixty-six other members of the court were present on the first day. The king was seated on a chair in the middle of the hall. When the accusation was

read, charging "Charles Stuart to be a tyrant and a traitor," the king laughed as he sat in the face of the court; and when called upon to answer, which he did with the greatest dignity, he demanded by what lawful authority he was brought thither. "Remember," he said to them, "I am your lawful king. Let me know by what lawful authority I am seated here; resolve me that, and you shall hear more of me."

Bradshaw replied, "If it does not satisfy you, *we* are satisfied with our authority, which we have from God and the people."

Three times Charles was brought up before the court, but he would never allow the authority of his judges. Many witnesses were examined, and all the usual forms were rigidly adhered to. On the fourth time a verdict of guilty was pronounced against the king, and sentence of death passed upon him.

Three days were allowed the king, between his sentence and execution. Two of his younger children, the Princess Elizabeth and the duke of Gloucester, all who had remained in England, were allowed admittance to him. To the young duke, then quite a child, he gave this advice:— Holding him on his knee, he said, "Now they will cut off thy father's head." The child looked

at him very earnestly. "Mark, child, what I say; they will cut off my head, and perhaps make thee a king. But mark what I say: thou must not be a king as long as thy brothers Charles and James are alive. They will cut off thy brothers' heads when they can catch them, and thy head they will cut off at last; therefore I charge thee, do not be made a king by them." The child sighed, and said, "I will be torn in pieces first." Charles requested that Bishop Juxon might be allowed to be with him, and this was granted. The last night of all he spent in St. James's Palace, and slept soundly for four hours. Awaking about two hours before the dismal daybreak of the 30th of January, (1649) the king dressed himself with unusual care, and put on an extra shirt because the season was so cold. He said, "Death is not terrible to me, and, bless my God! I am prepared." About ten o'clock Colonel Hacker came to conduct him to the place of execution; and they walked together through the park to Whitehall, in the front of which a scaffold, covered with black, had been erected. Bishop Juxon walked also with him, and a troop of halberdiers followed. Although the park was full of people, nothing save the footfall of the soldiers was heard; all were silent as the grave.

About twelve o'clock the king drank a glass of claret wine, and ate a piece of bread, and was then summoned to the scaffold. There he behaved with the greatest firmness, and spoke much and prayed most earnestly. Two men with masks stood by the block. To one of them Charles said, "I will say but short prayers, and then thrust out my hands for a signal." Then turning to the bishop, he said, "I have a good cause and a gracious God on my side." "You have now," said Juxon, "but one stage more. The stage is turbulent and troublesome, but it is a short one: it will soon carry you a very great way; it will carry you from earth to heaven." "I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no disturbance can be," was the reply of the king. And, taking off his cloak, he stooped, laid his neck across the block, and stretched out his hands. At one blow his head was severed from his body; and the other executioner, holding up the head streaming with blood, cried, "This is the head of a traitor."

The bloody deed was accompanied by a dismal, universal groan.

Here I paused; and shortly added, "The recollection that this act of infamy was perpetrated by our own countrymen makes me sad even at this

long distance of time. Many men have written and have said that Charles deserved his death, and have praised Cromwell. I have studied both sides of the question; and the more I have studied the more have I become convinced that Charles was the victim of a few selfish and designing men. Those who take Cromwell's part may be *great* philosophers, but I do not envy them.

My young audience were quite silent; but the tears that stood in their eyes sufficiently proved their sympathy with the fate of the unfortunate Charles.

## NINETEENTH EVENING.

OLIVER CROMWELL—WAR WITH SCOTLAND—BATTLE OF WORCESTER—THE ROYAL OAK—ESCAPE OF CHARLES THE SECOND—CROMWELL DISSOLVES THE LONG PARLIAMENT—DEATH OF CROMWELL—GENERAL MONK—THE RESTORATION — RYE-HOUSE PLOT—DEATH OF CHARLES THE SECOND—JAMES THE SECOND—THE DUKE OF MONMOUTH—ABDICATION OF JAMES—ACCESSION OF WILLIAM AND MARY.

THE confusions which overspread England after the murder of Charles the First were so various, and proceeded from so many different causes, religious and political, that I must pass them by. When you are older you will read of them in history, and be greatly interested in tracing the progress of the different creeds and systems which were now started.

In Scotland, almost immediately after the death of Charles, his eldest son was proclaimed king, as Charles the Second, upon condition “of his good behaviour;” but, though the Scots gave him the name, they allowed him none of the privileges of a king. Before he could place his foot on their land, one of his bravest friends, the gallant marquis of Montrose, was hung by order of the Scotch parliament, in the most ignominious way; his body



was quartered and sent to different cities; and when Charles passed through Aberdeen, a part of his unfortunate adherent was still hanging over the gate of the town. The English no sooner found that Charles was acknowledged in Scotland than they determined upon invading that country; and Fairfax, the general of the army, was solicited to take the command. But though he had lent his name towards the trial of Charles, he would not listen to the proposal of this invasion, and resigned his commission. Cromwell was immediately appointed general, and soon marched into Scotland with 16,000 men. The command of the Scottish army was given to Lesley, an experienced officer, who entrenched his troops in a fortified camp near Edinburgh. Cromwell tried to bring him to a battle; but Lesley would do nothing but skirmish, and kept Cromwell so long at bay that he was obliged to retreat for want of provisions. Lesley followed him, and knowing the country well, obtained an advantageous position where he might have held the English in check for ever; but some of the Scotch enthusiasts (they were called "Covenanters") fancied they had had the victory revealed to them, and that Agag, meaning Cromwell, was delivered into their hands. They compelled their general to advance, and Cromwell

immediately attacked them, and, with half the number of men, completely defeated them: three thousand of the Scots were slain and nine thousand taken prisoners. Cromwell pursued his advantage and took possession of Edinburgh. The remnant of the defeated army soon gathered again near Stirling, and Charles himself soon after took the command. Here Cromwell made a sad mistake in military tactics; for, finding that Charles's army was supplied with provisions from the north of Scotland, he passed his army over the Frith of Fife, in order to intercept the supplies. Young Charles immediately embraced a resolution worthy of a prince contending for an empire; he marched his whole army into England. He expected that, as he passed along, thousands would flock to his standard; but the authority of the parliament was so great that few joined him, and when he arrived at Worcester his army was no larger than when he left Stirling. Cromwell followed the king with the greatest expedition, and with an army double in amount attacked Worcester upon all sides. The Scots could give little resistance, and those who were not killed or taken prisoners in the battle were put to death by the country people. The king himself, after having given many proofs of valour, was obliged to fly; he left Worcester at six

in the evening, and without halting rode twenty-six miles, accompanied by about fifty of his friends. He then separated from them; and, by the advice of the earl of Derby, took refuge in the house of a man named Penderell, a farmer at Boscobel, in Staffordshire. Here he stayed several days; and, although a great reward was offered for him, his host was faithful to him. So also were Penderell's four brothers. They gave him clothes like their own and an axe, and took him to the woods with them to cut faggots. One day, for greater concealment, Charles climbed into a great oak, from which he could see several soldiers pass by, and more than once he heard them talk of their great desire of capturing him. This tree was afterwards called the Royal Oak, and was regarded with great veneration. Charles was thus in the middle of the kingdom, surrounded on all sides by enemies, so that he could not stay where he was or stir a step beyond without the most imminent danger. After a short time he placed himself in the hands of Colonel Lane, a zealous royalist, who lived not many miles distant. A scheme was then formed to get him to Bristol; and as Colonel Lane had a near relation there, he obtained a pass for his sister and a servant to travel to Bristol. The king was clothed as the servant, and rode before Miss Lane,

as the fashion then was, on horseback; there he was recognised by the butler; but the man promised not to betray him, and kept his word.

It was found that no ship would sail from Bristol for a month, and Charles was obliged to entrust himself to the care of Colonel Windham, of Dorsetshire, another staunch adherent to the royal cause. Windham, with the king's permission, entrusted the secret to his mother, his wife, and four servants. The venerable old matron expressed the greatest joy at receiving her sovereign, though three of her sons and one grandson had died in the defence of his father. By this time most people imagined that the king was dead, and less search was made for him. After a variety of adventures and narrow escapes, Charles at length, after forty-one days concealment, during which he was known to no less than forty persons, got safely on board a collier at Shoreham, near Brighton, and escaped to France.

After the battle of Worcester Cromwell returned to London, and was received with great triumph. But soon a great quarrel broke out between the parliament and the army; and Cromwell one day went to the house of commons attended by a party of musketeers. After reproving the commons for their proceedings, he told them they were no

parliament; and, stamping with his foot, more than twenty armed men entered, with whose assistance he turned out all the members; he then took away the speaker's mace, locked the door, and put the key in his own pocket. Cromwell soon after summoned another parliament: they were very ignorant men, and were named "The Barebones Parliament," because of one of their number, who was called "Praise God Barebones." They soon resigned their power into the hands of Cromwell; but as some would still continue to sit in the House, he sent a Colonel White down to remove them.

"What are you doing here?" White asked, as he entered.

"We are seeking the Lord," answered their speaker.

"Then you may go elsewhere," replied the colonel; "for to my certain knowledge the Lord hath not been here these many years." With that he summoned his men, and turned the Barebones Parliament all out.

Cromwell was at this time very ambitious of being crowned king; but so many of his friends threatened to desert him if he usurped the regal title, that he was afraid, and contented himself with being called the Lord Protector. Meanwhile affairs prospered with the nation; and, to do Cromwell

justice, he governed the kingdom as no other man could have done in those troubled times. Still he must have led a terrible life. He one day read a tract called "Killing no Murder;" in which the writer asserted that any one could kill Cromwell without sin; and he was never seen to smile afterwards. He wore armour under his clothes, carried loaded pistols concealed about him. He never went and returned by the same road, and scarcely ever slept soundly at night. At last, from this continual state of suspense, his health gave way; he was seized with an ague; and, after a short illness, died on one of his fortunate days, the 3rd of September, 1658.

Cromwell was succeeded in the protectorship by his son Richard, a quiet, unambitious country gentleman; but the disputes in the army grew so violent, that he soon became tired of his new honours, and resigned his office. The old parliament, called "The Rump," was then summoned, but was of no good; and the people soon got so tired of it that they roasted rumps of beef in the streets to show their contempt. It was soon afterwards dissolved, and a new parliament was assembled. At this crisis, when the whole country was in a state of confusion, without a king or even a protector, with an untried parliament and a quarrelling army,



one man stood forward, and with one decisive measure restored tranquillity and happiness to the nation. This man was honest George Monk, the general of the army.

Monk had served under Cromwell, and been of excellent service to him; but now that he saw that ruin was spreading over the land, he thought that the best he could do would be to restore the throne to Charles the Second. At his instigation a messenger was announced from Charles to the new parliament; the members rose in great joy and demanded that the letter should be read. The conditions, which were few and simple, were accepted, and a present of 50,000*l.* was sent to the king, with a request that he would come to England with all speed.

### *The Restoration.*

Never was there greater joy in the nation than on the 25th of May, 1660, when Charles the Second arrived at Dover. Four days afterwards he made his entry into London. The streets were all railed in, the houses were hung with tapestry, flowers were strewed in his path, trumpets and drums sounded from every side, and all was jubilee. This good feeling did not last very long, for Charles



quickly made enemies on all sides. He did not punish many for their rebellion or the murder of his father ; but his dissolute life gave great offence. And when it was known that he was much inclined to the Roman Catholic religion, many plots were laid against him, from one of which, the "Rye-House Plot," he had a narrow escape. One of the conspirators had a farm, called the "Rye-House," on the road to Newmarket, where the king sometimes went to enjoy the diversions of the races. It was proposed that a cart should be overturned in the road, near the Rye-House, just before the king returned, and that, while he was endeavouring to pass the cart, the conspirators should shoot at him and his party from behind the hedges. But a fire broke out in Newmarket which obliged Charles to leave some days earlier than had been expected, and thus he escaped unhurt. One of the conspirators confessed this plot, and implicated many people of high standing. Among others was the duke of Monmouth, a natural son of the king, who escaped to Holland, and lord Russell and Algernon Sidney, both of whom were executed ; both protesting against ever having known of any plan of assassination, though they acknowledged having joined a conspiracy for an insurrection.

Not long after this, Charles was seized with

illness, and it soon became evident that he would never recover. It then became apparent how popular he still was; for people went to church by hundreds to pray for him.

During his illness he received the holy communion from a Benedictine monk; and at last died, openly professing the Roman Catholic faith.

There was great fear that, on the death of Charles the Second, there would be some opposition to the succession of his brother, James the Second, on account of his being a Roman Catholic; but at first none was attempted.

Soon afterwards the duke of Argyle raised an army in Scotland in defence of Protestantism, and began his march into England at the head of two thousand men; but when he heard that the king's forces were coming to meet him, he left his army and escaped. He was quickly taken prisoner, and executed at Edinburgh. About the same time the duke of Monmouth landed in Dorsetshire, and, assuming the dignity of king, set a price upon the head of James, Duke of York. He soon raised an army among the country people, and at Taunton was presented by twenty young ladies with a pair of colours of their own making and a Bible. His success did not last long. Three thousand men were sent against him under the command of

Lord Faversham, whom he met near Bridgwater. A combat ensued for three hours, when Monmouth seeing it was against him, precipitately fled, till his horse sunk under him twenty miles from the field of battle. He then changed clothes with a peasant; but his pursuers, finding this man, redoubled their exertions, and at last discovered Monmouth lying at the bottom of a ditch, covered with fern, through which some one saw his eyes shining. He was soon afterwards executed. It is said that no fewer than two hundred and fifty-one men were afterwards hung for joining in this conspiracy by the inhuman Judge Jefferies, who was sent down to punish the greatest offenders.

After the deaths of Argyle and Monmouth, James thought himself more secure than ever of his throne, but he was mistaken. His love for the Catholic religion was so great that it blinded him to the effects of his rashness; and it was not till his son-in-law William, Prince of Orange, who had married his daughter Mary, threatened an invasion, that he began to be aware how imprudently he had acted in endeavouring to force his own religion upon the people. All the Protestants who had reason to be dissatisfied with James joined the court of William, whose wife, in case James had died without children, would have been

next heir to his throne. When intelligence was brought to them that the queen of England was delivered of a son, they affected to disbelieve it; but the circumstance hastened their motions, and William soon afterwards landed at Torbay with 14,000 men. Upon this there was a great commotion all over England, and the unpopularity of the king was so clearly shown that he resolved to fly. Even his own children deserted him. When it was told him that his favourite daughter Anne had left him, he cried out in the extremest agony, "God help me, my own children have forsaken me!" At length so great was the panic into which the king was thrown, that he sent off the queen and infant prince to France, and he himself, with only one attendant, fled one night towards a ship that was waiting for him at the mouth of the Thames. At Feversham, however, he was discovered, and he was afterwards obliged to return to London, where he was received by the populace with great demonstrations of joy. The prince of Orange immediately sent a message requiring him to leave London at ten o'clock on the next day; and James retired to Rochester, whence he escaped to France, and joined his wife and child. William now openly claimed the crown: there were some who, as James had abdicated the throne, declared

that the rightful successor was the infant prince, and who wished to make William protector or regent; but they were overruled, and William and Mary were crowned king and queen of England. This was the Revolution of 1688, the most peaceable, but perhaps the most important change in the succession of the English crown.

And now I must finish for this evening. Tomorrow is the last day I can be with you for some long while, but I hope I shall have time to conclude my Tales before I go.

“What!” exclaimed Magnus, “tell us about William and Anne and all the Georges in one evening?”

“Yes, my boy. History now becomes too serious a matter to be trifled with, and events now crowd upon events so quickly that I cannot tell you one story as I should like without entering upon a dozen others. But now, good night.”

## TWENTIETH EVENING.

WILLIAM AND MARY—SIEGE OF DERRY—BATTLE OF THE BOYNE—MASSACRE OF GLENCOE—DEATH OF WILLIAM—QUEEN ANNE—BATTLE OF BLENHEIM—UNION WITH SCOTLAND—GEORGE THE FIRST—THE PRETENDER—GEORGE THE SECOND—PRINCE CHARLES—BATTLE OF PRESTON-PANS—BATTLE OF CULLODEN—ADVENTURES AND ESCAPES OF PRINCE CHARLES—GEORGE THE THIRD—CONCLUSION.

THIS evening I began as follows:— Though James had so quietly obeyed the command of the prince of Orange in London, he did not by any means give up his claim to the English throne, and friends were not wanting either in Scotland or Ireland to take up his cause.

The Viscount Dundee, famous in Scottish song, with a small body of Highlanders, fought gallantly in James's cause, and at the pass of Killiecrankie routed a much greater army of the royal troops; but Dundee himself was killed, and with him died away all interest for James in Scotland.

But it was in Ireland, where the Catholic religion was in the ascendancy, that James had most friends; and he himself soon arrived at Dublin and took the command of the army which had been raised for him. There were some towns in the north of Ireland in which the Protestants were in great

force; and as they declared for William, James went in person and laid siege to Londonderry, which the inhabitants bravely defended for so long a time that there was a dreadful famine in the town, and they were obliged to eat horses, dogs, rats and mice, and must have surrendered had not supplies arrived just in time from England; and then James, after great loss, gave up the siege. In the next spring King William landed in Ireland, and advanced towards Dublin with 36,000 men. James, with an army of almost equal strength, marched to oppose him, and they met on the banks of the river Boyne, near Drogheda. A long-contested battle ensued, in which William's brave old general, Duke Schomberg, was killed; but when James, who viewed the battle from a distance, saw that his troops were giving way, he sought safety in flight, and his army was quickly dispersed. James directly set sail for France, where he arrived in safety. King William met with little further opposition in Ireland, and in the next year completely asserted his authority throughout the island.

### *Massacre of Glencoe.*

There is one terrible incident in the history of



this time that I would gladly pass over as too monstrous for belief, but unfortunately it cannot be doubted. Those Highlanders who had taken up arms for James under Dundee were required to take an oath of allegiance to William before a certain day. Macdonald of Glencoe was prevented by the snow from doing so till a day or two after; but the sheriff took his oath and gave him the proper certificate. Macdonald's enemies seized upon the delay as a proof of his ill-will, and assured the king that he was the chief cause of the turbulence in the Highlands. They obtained an order "to extirpate that set of thieves," as they termed Macdonald and his clan.

Shortly after Captain Campbell, of Glenlyon, marched into the valley of Glencoe with a company of soldiers, under pretence of levying arrears of land-tax. Macdonald demanded whether they came as friends or foes. Campbell answered as friends, and promised that no injury should be done. He and his men were then received with the greatest hospitality, and lived fifteen days in the valley, to all appearance in great friendship. But one bitter night, when all were buried in sleep and when the snow covered all the ground, who can describe the horror of the inhabitants at finding themselves surrounded on all sides by their

ungrateful guests, who were turned to murderers ! Macdonald's two sons suspecting danger from some conversation they overheard, saved themselves by flight ; but the old man was shot dead in his bed, and his wife died next day, distracted at the scenes she had witnessed. Thirty-eight men and children were inhumanly slaughtered, the houses were all burnt to the ground, and the women and children left to perish in the snow.

King William never recovered from the disgrace of this horrid outrage, which was as impolitic as it was barbarous.

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James, or rather the king of France for him, made one more attempt at the recovery of the throne of England ; but the French ships sustained a terrible defeat at La Hogue, and James then retired into comparatively private life, and soon after died, leaving his son, whom Louis acknowledged as king of England, to fight for the crown, his lawful birthright.

The Pretender, as James's son was called in England, was quite determined to assert his right, and William was making vigorous preparations for war, when an accidental fall from his horse in Bushy Park brought on an illness which caused his death. His queen had died childless some years before.

It had been declared in the Revolution of 1688, that the son of James should not succeed to the crown, and it was now given to his daughter Anne, who was married to George, prince of Denmark. The principal reason of this choice was that Anne was a zealous Protestant, whereas the Pretender was, like his father, a Roman Catholic.

There is little of interest that I can tell you about Queen Anne, except the victories of the great duke of Marlborough. To prevent Louis, of France, from getting the crown of Spain for his grandson, a grand alliance had been formed between the English, the emperor of Germany, and the Dutch. Queen Anne followed up the measures of the late king, and sent the earl of Marlborough with a large army to the assistance of her allies.

The first great battle that was fought was at Blenheim, on the banks of the Danube, in Germany. The emperor being hard pressed by the French, Marlborough marched to his relief, and was joined by the Prince Eugene. Their united force amounted to fifty-two thousand men; that of the enemy was fifty-six thousand. The battle began at one in the afternoon, and lasted till night, when the French were totally defeated, and forty thousand men were killed or taken prisoners.

For this great victory Marlborough received the thanks of the houses of parliament, the royal manor of Woodstock was conferred on him and his heirs; and the queen erected on it a splendid mansion, which she named Blenheim.

Southey has written such a beautiful poem on this battle that I cannot but repeat it:—

### The Battle of Blenheim.

It was a summer evening,  
Old Kaspar's work was done,  
And he before his cottage door  
Was sitting in the sun,  
And by him sported on the green  
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin  
Roll something large and round,  
Which he beside the rivulet  
In playing there had found;  
He came to ask what he had found,  
That was so large and smooth and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,  
Who stood expectant by;  
And then the old man shook his head,  
And with a natural sigh,  
" 'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he,  
" Who fell in the great victory.

- ‘ I find them in the garden,  
For there’s many here about ;  
And often when I go to plough,  
The ploughshare turns them out !  
“ For many thousand men,” said he,  
“ Were slain in that great victory.”
- “ Now tell us what ’twas all about,”  
Young Peterkin, he cries,  
And little Wilhelmine looks up  
With wonder-waiting eyes ;  
“ Now tell us all about the war,  
And what they fought each other for.”
- “ It was the English,” Kaspar cried,  
“ Who put the French to rout ;  
But what they fought each other for,  
I could not well make out ;  
But every body said,” quoth he,  
“ That ’twas a famous victory.
- “ My father lived at Blenheim then,  
Yon little stream hard by ;  
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,  
And he was forced to fly ;  
So with his wife and child he fled,  
Nor had he where to rest his head.
- “ With fire and sword the country round  
Was wasted far and wide,  
And many a childing mother then,  
And new-born baby died ;  
But things like that, you know, must be  
At every famous victory.

“They say it was a shocking sight  
After the field was won ;  
For many thousand bodies here  
Lay rotting in the sun ;  
But things like that, you know, must be  
After a famous victory.

“Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won,  
And our good Prince Eugene.”

“Why 'twas a very wicked thing !”  
Said little Wilhelmine.

“Nay, nay, my little girl,” quoth he,

“It was a famous victory.

“And every body praised the Duke  
Who this great fight did win.”

“But what good came of it at last ?”  
Quoth little Peterkin.

“Why that I cannot tell,” said he,

“But 'twas a famous victory.”

Marlborough won many more battles, the most famous of which were at the sieges of Namur, Oudenarde, and Mons, and he was never beaten ; but in Spain the English were not so successful, and in two battles they were routed with great loss.

One of the most important events in the reign of Queen Anne was the union of the two kingdoms of England and Scotland. There had been only one king over both countries since the death

of Queen Elizabeth; but now the Scotch agreed to send their members of parliament to London.

Queen Anne died of gout in the fiftieth year of her age, and was succeeded by George the First, the great-grandson of James I., and the nearest heir to the throne, who was a Protestant. The Pretender and his friends, however, were not inclined to allow the throne to be undisputed; and the Scotch quickly raised an army for him, and proclaimed him as James III., and for a time all seemed prosperous. James himself landed in Scotland, and a day was fixed for his coronation at Scone; but the royal troops increased so rapidly, that he found he had no chance of success against them, and with the earl of Mar he got on board a French vessel and escaped to France.

Several of his friends who had taken arms in his behalf, were brought to trial for high-treason and beheaded; one of them, Lord Nithisdale, escaped out of the Tower of London in women's clothes, brought him by his mother, on the evening before the day he was to have been executed.

The rest of the reign of George I. passed away in tranquillity. He died on a visit to his dominions at Hanover in 1727, and was succeeded by his son, George II.

The romance of English history is now almost



finished. I have but one more tale to relate to you,—the attempt of the Chevalier St. George, son of the Pretender, or, as he was called, the Young Pretender, to gain the throne of his grandfather,—and I shall then have done.

### Bonnie Prince Charlie.

It was just thirty years after the Pretender had attempted to gain the crown of Great Britain, that his son, aided by the court of France, landed in the north of Scotland. Hundreds immediately flocked to his standard, and he quickly marched to Edinburgh and took up his abode in Holyroodhouse, the ancient palace of his father. Sir John Cope, the commander of the royal army in Scotland, was advancing to the recovery of the city, when at the village of Preston-pans he was suddenly attacked by the Chevalier at the head of three thousand Highlanders, and most completely routed. This success greatly inspired the courage of the friends of the Young Pretender, and he resolved to try his fortune in England, but he could only muster five thousand men. He first attacked Carlisle, which soon surrendered, and then marched on quickly to Manchester, where he was received with great joy; he then advanced to

Derby; but finding that his enemies were gathering large armies around him, and that a French army which he had expected in the south of England had not arrived, he resolved to retreat, and by rapid marches he regained Carlisle, and thence proceeded to Glasgow and to Perth. His next attempt was to take Stirling Castle; and at Falkirk he defeated General Hawley who was coming to its relief. But learning that the Duke of Cumberland was approaching with the royal army, he found it most prudent to retreat to the north. The duke followed him, and on the 16th of April came up with the Pretender at Culloden. A general engagement ensued, and in less than half-an-hour the Highlanders were all dispersed. Upwards of twelve hundred men were slain in the fight or in the pursuit and Prince Charlie, as the Highlanders fondly called the Young Pretender, was obliged to fly for his life. Cumberland, not content with his victory, devastated the country on all sides, and his men committed unheard-of acts of barbarity, so that to this day his memory is hated by all Scotchmen.

A reward of £30,000 was offered for Prince Charles, dead or alive, and never had one man so many hair-breadth escapes from the hands of enemies. With a few faithful friends he directed

his course to the islands on the north coast of Scotland; and, representing themselves as shipwrecked merchants, they were hospitably entertained by some of the inhabitants. But their enemies did not leave them unmolested, and Charles was obliged to secrete himself in a hovel no better than a hog-stye, where he lived for several weeks. There he made himself known to the laird of Clanranald, who took him some wine, and shirts, and shoes, and stockings, and treated him with the greatest kindness. But it soon became clear that Charles must either escape to France or be captured, for all Scotland was searched in quest of him: all the ferries were guarded, and no one was permitted to leave the coast without a passport. To the great honour of the poor people, among whom Prince Charlie lived, though all knew him, none were base enough to betray him for the sake of the reward.

He was thus hard pressed, and must inevitably have been captured had it not been for the assistance of a young lady named Flora McDonald, a niece of old Clanranald, who was on a visit to him. He was obliged to part with his faithful friends, and it was agreed that he should assume the character of a servant-maid to Miss McDonald. One evening he embarked in an open boat, dressed

in a coarse printed gown, a light-coloured quilted petticoat, and a mantle of dun camlet, all made in the Irish fashion, and accompanied only by Flora McDonald and a Highlander named McEachen, neither of whom he had seen a week previously. The weather at first was fair, but soon after became boisterous. It became very cold, and their situation was anything but agreeable; notwithstanding, Prince Charlie sung a lively old song called "The Restoration," and amused his companions by telling them pleasant stories. In the morning they perceived the lofty headlands of Skye, but covered with armed men. The boatmen immediately changed their course, not before they had been perceived and fired at by the soldiers; but they were too far distant to take any harm. They at last landed at another part of Skye. It chanced to be a Sunday, and they met the people returning from church, who annoyed them not a little by their expressions of surprise at the unusual height of the maid-servant, and the indelicate way in which she held up her petticoats to prevent their being wet. The prince was cautioned of this by his guide; so when he came to a stream across the road he suffered his dress to hang down and float on the water; this he was also told of, and the poor prince nearly

exposed himself by laughing at his own awkwardness.

They arrived at Kingsburgh House at eleven o'clock at night; and there Charles, for the first time for many months, found a good bed to lie in. So unusual had this luxury become to him that, after ten hours' sleep, he did not wake till roused by his host at one o'clock next day, who told him he had found there was no time to lose, and that he must again start if he would escape the search of his enemies. Kingsburgh prepared a Highland peasant's dress for Charles, and gave him what he much wanted, a new pair of shoes. A boat was prepared for him, and after an affecting farewell with his kind preserver he again set out to sea. He arrived in safety at Ramsay, where his bed of state was made of heather, in the primitive Highland fashion, with the stalks upright and the flowers uppermost. There he remained two days, and then he sought the country of McKinnon, one of the chiefs who had fought for him. On his way he met two Highlanders who had been at Culloden; they recognised him, and burst into tears, and promised not to say that they had seen him. After many dangers the prince arrived at McKinnon's house, where he stayed but a very short time. He again put to sea, and reached the main land, where

he was in greater danger than ever; but luckily, after he had wandered about forty-eight hours without food, one of his companions discovered a robber's cave, in which were six men partaking of a sheep they had just roasted. The men recognised the prince, and fell on their knees before him; but Charles was too hungry to stay to listen to their loyal speeches, and asked them to give him some food first; this they willingly did, and likewise provided him with a complete change of clothing. At this time a young man, very much like Charles, who had been engaged in the rebellion, was taken by a party of soldiers; he endeavoured to escape, and when the soldiers shot him, he fell, exclaiming, "You have killed your prince!" The men, overjoyed at their supposed good fortune, cut off his head, and took it to the duke of Cumberland, who immediately set off with it in his carriage to London, where, greatly to his chagrin, he found he had been imposed upon.

But this was fortunate for Prince Charlie, for the troops were withdrawn from the Highlands; and at last, after three months' weary troubles, he was enabled to embark on board a French ship which had been sent for him: and although he met the whole British fleet in the channel, yet, such was his good fortune, that owing to a dense fog,



he sailed through it without molestation, and landed at the small port of Roscort in France. Thus ended the last attempt of the Stuarts to regain the throne of England.

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It was in the reign of George II. that the war with America first began, which lasted for many years; but I must leave you to read of that hereafter. We had also to fight hard in India, where Lord Clive earned great praises. George II. died at the age of seventy-seven years, and was succeeded by his grandson, George III.

We have now arrived at a time when the history of England is so full of important events that it would take me as long to tell you of them as of all the tales I have already told you; but I am not at all sure that you would be so interested in these more recent events, and their narration does not belong to "Tales of the Kings of England," for kings now-a-days do every thing by their ministers. I should like to have told you of Napoleon Buona-parté and the glorious battle of Waterloo; but there are books containing famous accounts of it, which I recommend you to read.

George III. reigned fifty-nine years: he became blind and was bereft of reason during the latter



part of his life. He died in 1820, and was succeeded by his son, George IV., who reigned nine years. His brother, William IV., succeeded him; and when that good king died, his niece, our present most gracious queen, Victoria, ascended the throne, which we all hope she may long live to enjoy.

“Do we not boys?”

A shout of “Long live Victoria!” was the answer the young urchins gave; and thus finished my Tales.

THE END.

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