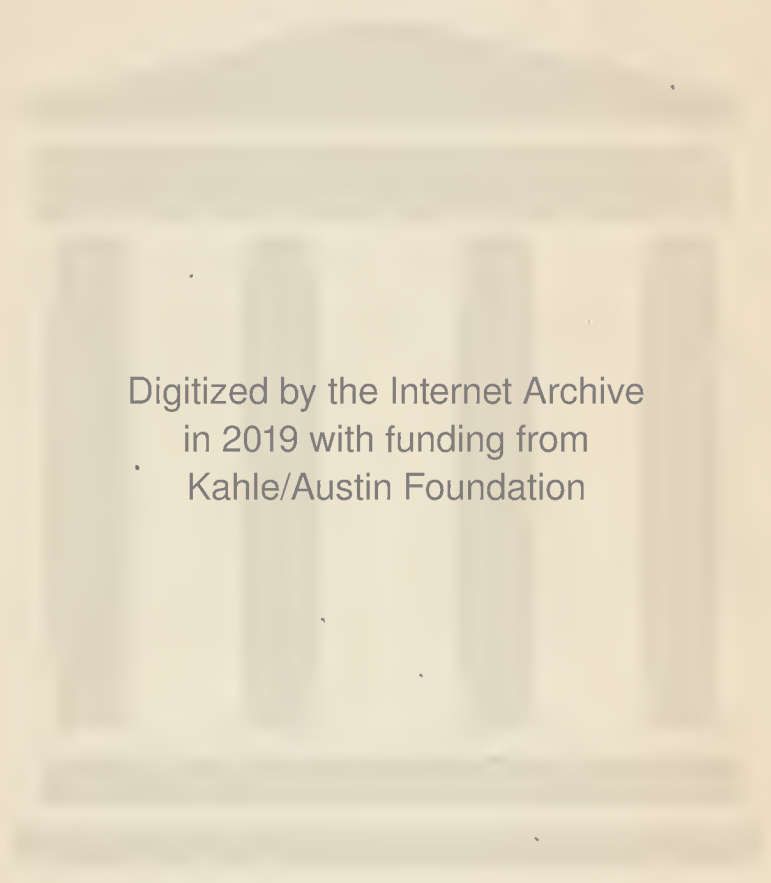




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FROM THE

EARLIEST PERIODS.

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BY DR. JOHN CAMPBELL.

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CONTINUED TO THE YEAR 1779,

BY

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A NEW EDITION,

REVISED, CORRECTED,

AND BROUGHT DOWN TO THE PRESENT TIME,

BY

HENRY REDHEAD YORKE, Esq.

BARRISTER AT LAW.

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IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

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PHILOSOPHY 101

LECTURE NOTES

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1.2 THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

1.3 THE METHOD OF PHILOSOPHY

1.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF PHILOSOPHY

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## DR. CAMPBELL'S

### Preface.

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**T**HE general utility and great importance of naval history to the inhabitants of Britain, is obvious from our being seated in an island; whence it is evident, that to navigation we owe our very being as a people. Next to this is the consideration, that we are a commercial nation, from whence we equally derive internal and external advantages, have enlarged our correspondence to the utmost limits of the globe, whither we have carried our own commodities and manufactures, and have brought from them whatever was esteemed either valuable or singular. The great figure we make in the world, and the wide extent of our power and influence, are due to our naval strength, to which we stand indebted for our flourishing plantations, the spreading the British fame, and, which is of far greater con-

DR. CAMPBELL'S PREFACE.

sequence, British freedom, through every quarter of the universe. These are the glorious trophies of maritime empire, and the fruits of that dominion over the sea, which was claimed by the earliest possessors of this island, and has been derived by an uninterrupted succession of NOBLE ACHIEVEMENTS on that element to our own times, in which the FLEET of BRITAIN may be truly said to have no rival.

The preserving a regular and well connected detail of that long series of events, by which that mighty empire has been gradually attained, was the original cause of detaching this from our general histories, in which, while it lay involved, there was, as indeed of necessity there must be, no little obscurity. In order to remove which, and to place things in a full and conspicuous point of view, it became necessary to collate and compare not only our own but foreign historians, and, when this was done, to consult a number of other authors, who have incidentally treated of such matters as had any relation to the subject; that from thence, those circumstances might be drawn, which might illustrate and explain the several parts of the history of our marine. These would have been often esteemed trifling or tedious, improper or impertinent, in general histories, and would necessarily have swelled them beyond their just bounds. But, when collected with care, and ranged in their proper order, in conjunction with those parts of our political history, which were requisite to their



## DR. CAMPBELL'S PREFACE.

being thoroughly understood, they became equally curious and useful, and furnished the reader with an agreeable variety of pleasing and interesting events, and contributed, not a little, to cherish and preserve that heroic spirit, which is the source of every gallant enterprize, and which excites private men to despise ease and pleasure, and to brave perils and dangers of every kind, in defence of public safety, or for promoting public good.

In order to do this effectually, it seemed requisite to intersperse the memoirs or personal histories of those illustrious men, who had distinguished themselves in this method of rendering service to their country. It appeared to be a tribute justly due to those services, and, at the same time, expedient to the satisfaction of the reader, who must naturally desire to be more intimately acquainted with those to whom the nation stood indebted for her discoveries or her conquests. Besides, it gave an opportunity to discuss minutely some points of consequence, that otherwise might have embarrassed the narrative, to vindicate some great characters from injurious aspersions, and to answer many other purposes, that serve to throw light upon the whole design. But to avoid, as far as possible, the confounding naval history with these memoirs, it was found expedient to place them at the end of every reign; and the greatest attention possible has been bestowed, to prevent any unnecessary repetition, or intermixing such circumstances of their lives, as had no connection with the character in which

## DR. CAMPBELL'S PREFACE.

they are here considered. We have also been more succinct in some, and have omitted the lives of others, which have been written at large elsewhere, or are to be met with in our biographical collections, and this chiefly to keep within due bounds; which was one of the greatest difficulties in our task, and which it was requisite to mention, to obviate any objection that has been sometimes made, without reflecting on the impossibility of producing every thing, relative to so copious a subject, within the narrow compass of a portable library, principally intended for the furniture of a cabin.

All the original writers, all the ancient historians, and all the foreign authors that have been consulted in this work, are distinctly and precisely cited, so that the reader may have recourse to them with the greatest facility, and discern from thence the several authorities upon which the facts are founded that are here recorded. This is a point of very great importance, and is perhaps the most considerable improvement, in writing history, that has been made by the moderns. Because certainty is of far greater consequence than elegance of composition; and a judicious peruser will be always better satisfied, with knowing whence the informations came, than with reading the most florid account without any vouchers for what it contains. He also sees, and can from thence judge, of the propriety with which the materials have been gathered; and when he knows by whom things are asserted, he

DR. CAMPBELL'S PREFACE.

likewise knows the measure of credit that is due to them. Add to this, that if he has been fortunate enough to meet either with books, or with passages in books, that have escaped the author, for he would be weak indeed who pretended to infallibility in matters of this kind, he has an opportunity of pointing out these for the benefit of the public, which he never could have had if the authorities were concealed, or so loosely quoted as not to be found with ease.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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IN presenting to the public the first volume of a new Edition of Dr. Campbell's Lives of the Admirals, it will naturally be expected, that some account should be given of the nature and extent of my undertaking; after having said a few words relative to the original work itself.

There have appeared no fewer than six editions of this work; three during the life-time of the Author, and three since his death. This fact, of itself, demonstrates its great and acknowledged merit. The extreme scarcity and advanced price of the volumes, denoted that a new edition, extending our Naval History nearly to the present day, would be favourably received by the public. The most important part of our Naval History falls within that period which I have engaged to delineate. It is not intended by this to deteriorate from the labours of Dr. Campbell or of Dr. Berkenhout; but to shew that a considerable portion of the ensuing volumes will form an entirely new and original work. Dr. Campbell terminated his historical narrative at the epoch of the death of George I. From that time, the Naval History was con-



## INTRODUCTION.

tinued by Dr. Berkenhout, as far down as the year 1779. My proportion of labour consists therefore in having carefully revised the histories both of Campbell and of Berkenhout; in having added such notes, facts, and observations, as will cast a fuller light upon the events which they have recorded; and lastly, in having composed an entirely new history of our Naval Affairs, from the period when Dr. Berkenhout laid down his pen, until the memorable battle of Trafalgar, which indisputably fixed the Naval Trident in our hands; though the victory which was the result of that battle, was clouded by the death of the hero, by whose genius, example, and prowess, it was achieved. The æra of the death of Lord Nelson I have selected for the termination of my labours, because that epoch was marked by great and most important events; affording abundant scope for political reflection, and exhibiting, at one moment, the most mortifying and the most exhilarating scenes to the observation of mankind.

It had long been my anxious wish to engage in some literary undertaking, that should be wholly unconnected with the vexations and contentions which polemical questions are calculated to excite. A long and dangerous indisposition enabled me to carry this wish into effect, by abstracting me wholly from the study of politics; and, at the suggestion of my learned and excellent friend, the Rev. Dr. Valpy, of Reading, who first encouraged me to continue Campbell's History, I was, on my return to London, enabled immediately to embark in the project, by the spirit and zeal of the Publisher, and by the extraor-

## INTRODUCTION.

dinary encouragement which the proposals experienced from the public.

Having thus stated the motives which led me to revise, and continue this Naval History; I shall next proceed to enumerate the assistance I have received, and the facilities I have obtained; through the liberality and kindness of others.

In the first place, I must mention the RIGHT HONOURABLE GEORGE ROSE, M. P. AND TREASURER OF THE NAVY; who, from the very outset of the undertaking, favoured me with the best advice relative to the conduct of the work, procured me access to public offices, and who has kindly permitted me to apply to him for any information which the nature of this history may require. The splendid library of Mr. Rose, bequeathed to him, in great part, by the earl of Marchmont, who had been very careful in forming a collection of books and treatises concerning the Naval Affairs of the British empire, has been generously offered for my inspection. There is another circumstance from which I have been enabled to derive the most useful information. Mr. Rose lived in strict habits of friendship with our Author, Dr. Campbell, all of whose manuscripts are in his possession; and he has furnished me with such few anecdotes respecting the character of that able writer, as have not been already recorded in the memoir of Dr. Campbell's Life, prefixed to this volume. To this I must add, that Mr. Rose placed in my hands the first edition of the Author's work, together with the numerous corrections in his own

## INTRODUCTION:

hand-writing; from which I hope that I have been able to come at a correct idea of Dr. Campbell's mode of reasoning, in the prosecution of this portion of his literary lucubrations. All these advantages are unquestionably great; and if this work should become an useful addition to the public stock of instruction and entertainment, it will be, in a great measure, owing to the valuable materials in the possession of Mr. Rose, materials not to be found even among the most valuable of the national collections; as well as to the liberality, encouragement, and fund of knowledge, which distinguish that gentleman.

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY I must likewise express my obligations, for allowing me to inspect such papers as may be useful to me in the course of my researches. Some years ago, a fire broke out at the Admiralty in consequence of which, all the records relative to the Naval Affairs of Great Britain were consumed. Fortunately, the patriotism of Mr. Rose has, in a great degree, supplied the defect occasioned by that accident. Among the many curious and important documents collected by the earl of Marchmont, are ten manuscript volumes in folio, comprising minutes of all our naval proceedings, from the reign of Charles II. These invaluable manuscripts Mr. Rose presented to the Admiralty; and to them I have been allowed a ready access. I shall have occasion, in a subsequent part of this work, to write more particularly respecting the contents of these volumes.



## INTRODUCTION.

In the next place, I am indebted to CHARLES DERRICK, Esq. who, in addition to his own excellent work, entitled, “*Memoirs of the Rise and Progress of the Royal Navy;*” in which the highest accuracy and minuteness of research are apparent; has, from the commencement of my labours, afforded me the best advice, besides having put into my hands some valuable ancient manuscripts, which will appear in another part of the ensuing volumes.

I have also derived considerable information from the Rev. Mr. Bree’s Sketch of the State of the Naval Establishment of this Kingdom, during the Fourteenth Century; not forgetting his account of the Campaign of Edward the Third, in Normandy and France, in the years 1345 and 1346 to the taking of Calais: the whole of which are collected from ancient manuscripts in the British Museum, and elsewhere. It is much to be lamented, that the author was prevented by untoward circumstances from pursuing further his inquiries.

From the polite communication of Mr. PENNINGTON, I have been able to correct some errors in Dr. Campbell’s account of the birth-place, and rise of Sir John Pennington, who commanded the Channel fleet, in the time of Charles the First. I have availed myself of this manuscript Memoir in my own additions to the work.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE the EARL OF HARDWICKE has signified his wish to inspect the biographical account of Lord Anson before it is sent to press, on account of the

## INTRODUCTION.

connection of his lordship's family with that of the illustrious admiral.

To my worthy and learned friend, ALEXANDER TILLOCH, Esq. I am also indebted for a most entertaining old manuscript, written by James Melville, of Anstruther, respecting the reception which the Spaniards experienced in that part of Scotland, at the time of the projected invasion of England, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

I have other acknowledgments to make for many useful hints and communications, which shall not be overlooked in the course of these volumes. It is not possible to enumerate within the limits of a preface, the obligations I am under to naval and literary gentlemen, for the information with which they have furnished me; but I shall not neglect to mention the sources whence such information was derived.

Besides these contributions from various quarters, I have access to the rich stores of antiquity contained in the British Museum and the Record Office in the Tower. In consequence of my admission into the former, I have been able to verify the numerous authorities cited by Dr. Campbell; and, through the politeness of S. LYSONS, Esq. the keeper of the Records in the Tower, I have come at a most valuable document, by which I have been able to correct a material error in the history of Campbell, wherein he asserts that there was, properly speaking, no Naval Establishment, until the reign of Henry the Eighth. This document is a letter from King Henry the Fifth to his Chancellor, preserved among the records of the Chan-



## INTRODUCTION.

cery, and dated at Tonque in France; and, it appears from this letter-missive, that there were in those days, not only great ships, but that commanders were appointed to them with fixed salaries, payable at Easter and Michaelmas. The names of the captains are also given. This letter will be inserted in another volume; at the same time, I am happy to mention, that Mr. Lysons is preparing for the press a quarto volume of Royal and other Letters, of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Centuries, from the Originals in the Record Office. The publication of these valuable materials, will considerably abridge my researches in that quarter; as well as throw new light upon our Naval History.

In justice, however, to the memory and reputation of Dr. Campbell, it should be remarked, that this letter of King Henry the Fifth, and several other precious documents of the same kind, were not known to have existed in his day. They have been recently discovered by Mr. Lysons, among a huge mass of old papers in the course of his revision of the Public Records. The discovery is, however, of the first importance; as it serves to confirm the principle laid down, and strenuously maintained throughout all the ensuing volumes, that from the earliest ages the sovereigns and parliaments of England, were particularly attentive to the naval interests of the kingdom.

In addition to this curious fact, I have seen in the Record Office, a List of the King's Ships, and of those furnished by the sea-ports, with the number of mariners

## INTRODUCTION.

to each ship, employed by Edward the Third, in 1347. Mr. Selden had availed himself of this manuscript in his *Mare Clausum*; and I doubt not that the account published in Hakluyt's Collection of Voyages, is taken from the same source.

It is no depreciation of Dr. Campbell's assiduity and researches, to affirm, that such materials must necessarily tend greatly to improve the value and merit of the original work; since he had not the means of ascertaining whether such monuments of past time had survived the wreck of ages, and the confusions which arose from the many contests for power, with which our national history abounds.

But it is due to truth, nevertheless, to observe, that the "Lives of the Admirals," constitutes the most diffusive work which fell from the pen of that indefatigable and excellent writer. It is, undoubtedly, enriched by elaborate researches; by a happy penetration into the causes of public measures; and by many deep political reflections. The numerous alterations made by the author himself, in the first edition, and which, as I have before mentioned, are in his own hand-writing, in the copy with which I was obligingly furnished by Mr. Rose, demonstrate, that he had not bestowed so much attention upon some parts of his subject, as their importance demanded; while upon others, of less moment, he has laid great stress, and often launched into unnecessary details. In fact, this work was composed in the earlier period of his literary life; when, perhaps, he might have thought, that the Lives of the

## INTRODUCTION.

Admirals could not be successfully written, without writing also an epitome of English history.

To alter or abridge the author's composition, forms no part of my engagement with the public. I am bound to follow the path which he has trodden, and to confine myself solely to a careful revision of his steps.

At first, I had intended to have interspersed my own notes and observations into the body of the work; but, after mature deliberation, and after consulting with literary persons, much more experienced in such sort of arrangements than I can pretend to be, the present method has been preferred. Accordingly, the original work of Dr. Campbell, together with the supplementary volume of Dr. Berkenhout, are now re-édited from the last corrected edition. This arrangement has been made with a view of supplying the great demand for a work which had become extremely scarce, and the price of which, had, on that account, been greatly enhanced.

Nevertheless, my task has been both irksome and laborious. For, I have felt it to be my duty to turn to all the authors, with some few exceptions, cited in this volume, in order to ascertain the exactitude of the references. All these collations have been made from the last edition of the work, compared with the books referred to, as they are to be found in the British Museum. Whoever will take the trouble of comparing the last with the present edition, will perceive instantaneously the many inaccuracies which I have been under the necessity of correcting. It is important that this fact should be well



## INTRODUCTION.

understood; because there are different editions of our monastic writers, the only historians of the early events of England, which vary materially in their pages. Where Dr. Campbell mentions, which he rarely does, any particular edition of a work, I have referred to that edition; and where this has not been the case, I have invariably corrected the references by the books in the British Museum, as that vast, though insufficient repository of our ancient literature, is now rendered accessible to the researches of the literary world.

There are some, but not many, Authors cited by Dr. Campbell, whose works I have not been able to find in the British Museum, although the most diligent search was made after them. He also refers occasionally to manuscripts in his own possession. In such instances, I have been under the necessity of giving credit to the accuracy of his references. Before the termination of my labours, however, this inconvenience may possibly be remedied from the magnificent collection of Mr. Rose; or, from the manuscripts of Dr. Campbell, in that gentleman's possession. There are in Mr. Rose's library many valuable tracts on our maritime and other affairs, not to be found in the British Museum, or elsewhere; of which I have already mentioned a striking instance in the ten folio volumes of manuscript minutes, now deposited at the Admiralty.

Neither have I confined my attention solely to the identity of the references. In an historical work, too much care cannot be bestowed on verifying the dates of events. This

## INTRODUCTION.

material omission in the preceding editions, has been supplied in the present, by placing the dates beside the text, so that the reader can be at no loss to discover in what particular year any Naval transaction occurred.

No pains have been spared in rendering the typography correct; and the only liberty I have taken with the original work, consists in the rectification of grammatical errors; in modernizing, without altering, the substance of some of Dr. Campbell's sentences, which were too prolix for the taste of the present generation; and, in the insertion of the names of the persons who were living at the time his history was published, and to whom he refers in their official capacities only.

Such have been the labours and cares bestowed upon the present Edition: and, it is a favourable prognostic of our future exertions, that those who are concerned in the publication of this volume, have strictly discharged, in point of time, their engagements with the public.

It only remains, therefore, to say a few words relative to that part of the work for which I am exclusively responsible. My engagement extends to the correction of such errors as may be found in Campbell; to the introduction of such facts as may have escaped his observation, and which are calculated to shed a stronger light upon our Naval History; and to continue the work from the year 1779 to the battle of Trafalgar.

For this purpose, I have embodied into one volume all my own notes, observations, and researches; by



## INTRODUCTION.

which means, the compositions of Dr. Campbell, and of Dr. Berkenhout, will be kept distinct from mine; a circumstance which could not have been effected if the dissertations and notes had been blended with the writings and notes of these Authors. At the same time, I have minutely abided by the distinct æras selected by Dr. Campbell, in my own volume; so that after having read that division of his history which treats of the Navy of the Ancient Britons, the reader may, by turning to my volume under the same head, discover how far I agree with or differ from the Author in his statements and conclusions: and upon this particular head, it will be found that a very considerable difference exists between us. The same mode is to be observed in relation to every other chapter of Campbell.

The volume, therefore, which I have appropriated for this object is, of itself, an epitome of our Naval History, possessing this advantage, that it does not contain the slightest repetition of what has already appeared in Campbell and Berkenhout. It is a new work; having indeed a reference to those two Authors, but composed entirely of original matter, and abounding in relations and facts, which either could not be known to, or were overlooked by, them. This volume will be followed by my continuation of our Naval History during thirty years of brilliant and unexampled exertion. Of the execution of this portion of the whole work, it would be unbecoming in me to speak. It must be left, as all

## INTRODUCTION.

original compositions are, and ought to be, to the judgment of the public. I have leisure, opportunities, and many facilities; and if my health will only keep pace with these advantages; I am not without the hope that my labours will experience a portion of the public approbation.

H. R. YORKE.

*Gray's-Inn-Square, March 7, 1812.*



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THE  
**L I F E**  
OF  
**DR. CAMPBELL.**

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**D**R. JOHN CAMPBELL, an eminent historical, biographical, and political writer of the last century, was a native of that part of Great Britain called Scotland, and born in the city of Edinburgh, on the 8th of March, 1707-8. His father was Robert Campbell, of Glenlyon, Esq. and captain of horse in a regiment commanded by the then Earl of Hyndford; and his mother, Elizabeth, was the daughter of —— Smith, Esq. of Windsor, in Berkshire\*. Our author was their fourth son; and, at the age of five years, he was brought by Mrs. Campbell to Windsor, from Scotland, which country he never saw afterwards. It was at Windsor that he is supposed to have received the first principles of his education, under the direction and patronage of his uncle, —— Smith, Esq. of that place. At a proper age, he was placed out

\* The Campbells of Glenlyon are a branch of the noble house of Breadalbane, of which a distinct account may be seen in Nisbet's and Douglas's Pccrages. For information concerning the respectable family of the Smith's of Windsor, recourse may be had to Ashmole's Antiquities of Berkshire, and to No. 5800, a Book of Heraldry, in folio, in the British Museum. Mrs. Campbell likewise, and consequently our author, had the honour of claiming a descent from the famous poet, Waller.

as a clerk to an attorney, being intended for the law; but whether it was that his genius could not be confined to that dry study, or to whatever causes besides it might be owing, it is certain that he did not pursue the line of his original designation: neither did he engage in any other particular profession, unless that of an author should be considered in this light. One thing we are sure of, that he did not spend his time in idleness and dissipation, but in such a close application to the acquisition of knowledge of various kinds, as soon enabled him to appear with great advantage in the literary world. What smaller pieces might have been written by Mr. Campbell, in the early part of his life, we are not capable of ascertaining; but, we know that, in 1736, before he had completed his thirtieth year, he gave to the public, in two volumes folio, “The Military History of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough; comprehending the History of both these illustrious persons, to the time of their decease.” This performance was enriched with maps, plans, and cuts, by the best hands, and particularly by the ingenious Claude du Bosc. The reputation hence acquired by our author, occasioned him soon after to be solicited to take a part in the “Ancient Universal History,” a work of great merit, as well as magnitude, though drawn up with something of that inequality which is almost unavoidable, when a number of persons are engaged in carrying on the same undertaking. This history was published at first, we believe, periodically; and five volumes of it, in folio, were completed in 1740. The sixth volume was finished in 1742, and the seventh in 1744\*. A second edition of it, in 8vo. began to be published in 1747, and was carried on monthly, with uncommon success, till the whole was concluded in twenty volumes. For what parts of it the Republic of Letters was more immediately in-

\* *Genl. Mag.* Vol. X. p. 360; Vol. XII. p. 664; Vol. XIV. p. 624.



debted to Mr. Campbell, it is not in our power to determine, excepting that he is understood to have been the writer of the *Cosmogony*, which affords a distinguished proof of his extensive acquaintance with the systems of the ancient philosophers. Whilst our author was employed in this capital work, he found leisure to entertain the world with other productions. In 1739, he published in 8vo. "The Travels and Adventures of Edward Brown, Esq." a book that was so well received as to call for another edition, in two volumes, 12mo. In the same year appeared his "Memoirs of the Bashaw Duke de Ripperda," in 8vo. which were reprinted with improvements, in 1740. These Memoirs were followed, in 1741, by the "Concise History of Spanish America," in 8vo. a second edition of which, if we recollect aright, came out in 1756. In 1742, he was the author of "A Letter to a Friend in the country, on the publication of Thurloe's State Papers;" giving an account of their discovery, importance, and utility. The same year was distinguished by the appearance of the first and second volumes of his "Lives of the English Admirals, and other eminent British Seamen." The two remaining volumes were completed in 1744; and the whole, not long after, was translated into German. This, we believe, was the first of Mr. Campbell's works to which he prefixed his name; and indeed, he had no reason to be ashamed of so doing, for it is a performance of great and acknowledged merit. The good reception it met with, was evidenced in its passing through three editions in his own life time; and since his death, three successive editions have been given to the public, under the inspection of Dr. Berkenhout. When our author had finished the third edition, which is more correct and complete than the former ones, he thus wrote to his ingenious and worthy friend, the Rev. Mr. Hall: "I am certain the Lives of the Admirals cost me a great deal of trouble; and I can with great veracity

affirm, that they contain nothing but my real sentiments, arising from as strict an inquiry into the matters which they relate, as was in my power." In 1743, he published a very curious and entertaining pamphlet, called "Hermippus Revived;" a second edition of which, much improved and enlarged, came out in 1749, under the following title: "Hermippus Redivivus: or, the Sage's Triumph over Old Age and the Grave; wherein a method is laid down for prolonging the life and vigour of man; including a commentary upon an ancient inscription, in which this great secret is revealed, supported by numerous authorities; the whole interspersed with a great variety of remarkable and well-attested relations." This extraordinary tract had its origin in a foreign publication\*; but it was wrought up to perfection by the additional ingenuity and learning of Mr. Campbell, and was founded on the following inscription, said to be preserved in Reineisius's Supplement to Gruter;

ÆSCULAPIO ET SANITATI  
 L. CLODIUS HERMIPPUS  
 QUI VIXIT ANNOS CXV. DIES V.  
 PUELLARUM ANHELITU,  
 QUOD ETIAM POST MORTEM  
 EJUS  
 NON PARUM MIRANTUR PHYSICI.  
 JAM POSTERI SIC VITAM DUCITE.

\* This publication appeared at Coblenz, in the beginning of the year 1743, and was entitled *HERMIPPUS REDIVIVUS, sive exercitatio physico-medica curiosa, de methodo rara ad CXV. annos propagandæ, senectutis per anhelitum puellarum, ex veteri monumento Romano, de prompta, nunc artis medicæ fundamentis stabilita, & rationibus atque exemplis, necnon singulari chymicæ philosophicæ paradoxo illustrata & confirmata. Autore Jo. Hen. Cohausen, M. D. i. c.* 'HERMIPPUS REVIVED, or a curious Physico-medical Dissertation on an uncommon method of prolonging human life to one hundred and fifteen years, by means of the breath of young women, copied from an ancient Roman

From the circumstance here mentioned, which is represented as having been the means of prolonging the life of Hermippus to so great an age, the author raises an hypothesis, and supports it in an admirable strain of grave irony, concerning the salutary nature of the breath of young persons, especially girls and young women. Besides this, he digresses largely concerning the hermetic philosophers and their universal medicine; and relates a variety of stories concerning them, which are excellently calculated not only to amuse his readers, but almost to deceive those who are not sufficiently aware of his intention, and whose judgments are not matured. The writer of this article \* well remembers, that having read the “Hermippus Redivivus,” in his youth, such an impression was made by it upon his imagination, that, though his understanding was not convinced, or his belief engaged, by the reasonings and facts contained in it, he seemed for two or three days to be in a kind of fairy-land. Dr. Mackenzie, a physician at Worcester, and author of a *Treatise on Health*, is said to have viewed Mr. Campbell’s book in a serious light; and to have been so far influenced by it, that he went and lived some time at a female boarding-school, for the benefit of receiving the salutary effects arising from the breath of the young ladies †. Mr. Thicknesse, in a late performance, hath gravely adopted the system of the “Hermippus Redivivus.” It had been asserted, that Mons. Bayle alone possessed the faculty of treating at large upon a difficult subject, without discovering to which side his own sentiments leaned, and that his acquaintance with uncommon books extended farther than

monument, now established on a physical basis, by arguments and examples, and illustrated and confirmed by a very singular paradox in chymical philosophy.’ By Dr. Cohausen of Coblentz.—*Gent. Mag.* vol. 13, p. 279.

\* Dr. Kippis.

† From the information of Sir George Baker, Bart. to whom the fact was told by Dr. Wall, of Worcester.



that of any other man. The *Hermippus* was an essay to shew that such a mode of writing, and such a species of literature, were not confined to Mons. Bayle. This, as our author himself long afterwards informed Mr. Hall, was the true key to the book. In 1756, a translation of it into Italian was published at Leghorn, in 4to. in the introductory preface to which, high commendations are bestowed upon the *Hermippus Redivivus*.

The smaller pieces written by Mr. Campbell, were only an occasional amusement to him, and never interrupted the course of the great works in which he was engaged. In 1744, he gave to the public, in two volumes, folio, his *Voyages and Travels*, on Dr. Harris's plan, being a very distinguished improvement of that gentleman's collection, which had appeared in 1705. So well was this publication of our author received, that a new edition was soon called for, which came out in numbers, and was finished in 1749. The work contains all the circumnavigators from the time of Columbus to Lord Anson; a complete history of the East Indies; historical details of the several attempts made for the discovery of the north-east and north-west passages; the Commercial History of Corea and Japan; the Russian discoveries by land and sea; a distinct account of the Spanish, Portuguese, British, French, Dutch, and Danish settlements in America; with other pieces not to be found in any former collection. The whole was conducted with eminent skill and judgment, and the preface is acknowledged to be a master-piece of composition and information. The time and care employed by Mr. Campbell in this important undertaking, did not prevent his engaging in another great work, with regard to which we have reason to record his learned labours with particular pleasure. The work we mean is the "*Biographia Britannica*," which began to be published in weekly numbers in 1745, and the first volume of which was completed in 1746, as was the second in 1748. By one of

those revolutions to which the best designs are subject, the public attention to the *Biographia* seemed to flag, when about two volumes had been printed; but this attention was soon revived by the very high encomium that was passed upon it by Mr. Gilbert West, at the close of his poem on Education; from which time the undertaking was carried on with increasing reputation and success. We need not say that its reputation and success were greatly owing to our author. It is no disparagement to the abilities and learning of his coadjutors to assert, that his articles constitute the prime merit of the four volumes through which they extend. He was not satisfied with giving a cold narration of the personal circumstances relative to the eminent men whose lives he drew up, but was ambitious of entering into such a copious and critical discussion of their actions or writings, as should render the *Biographia Britannica* a most valuable repository of historical and literary knowledge. This end he has admirably accomplished, and herein hath left an excellent example to his successors. He received the thanks of John, the fifth Earl of Orrery, “in the name of all the Boyles, for the honour he had done to them, and to his own judgment, by placing the family in such a light as to give a spirit of emulation to those who were hereafter to inherit the title\*.” The ingenious Mr. Walpole, speaking of the Campbells, Earls of Argyle, adds, “It is totally unnecessary for me to enter into their characters, that task having been so fully performed by one who wears the honour of their name, and who, it is no compliment to say, is one of the ablest and most beautiful writers of this country †.” The like encomium might be extended to many other articles, several of which are so uniformly complete, and so highly finished,

\* See the article Boyle, (John) Earl of Cork and Orrery, in the *Biographia Britannica*.

† Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors, Vol. II. p. 225.



that it is difficult to ascertain where the preference ought to be given. Were we, however, to select any life from the rest, we should say, that the account of Roger Bacon alone would be sufficient to procure for our author no small degree of reputation. One thing by which he is peculiarly distinguished, is the candour displayed by him with respect to those persons from whom he most differed in religious and political opinions. After he had written the Lives of the Calamys, he was waited upon by the Reverend Mr. Edmund Calamy, to thank him for those articles, and especially for the justice done to his great-grandfather, the first divine of that family. Mr. Calamy was even surprised to find that Mr. Campbell was a member of the Church of England; and still more so, when he learned that our biographer had undertaken the articles of Mr. Baxter and Dr. Conant, on purpose to prevent their falling into hands that might not equally be disposed to pay the testimony due to their respective merits. Indeed, our author has been charged with an excess of candour, in some of the accounts given in the Biographia. But if, in a few instances, there should appear to be any ground for this charge, it ought to be remembered, that his error never proceeded from any intention to flatter or deceive, but from the amiable benevolence of his heart, and from his readiness to discern, and to acknowledge, the talents and the worthiness of men who were of the most opposite principles and parties. It ought also to be remembered, that his candour was not unfrequently the result of superior knowledge; and that it led him into disquisitions, which tended to throw new light on characters and actions.

When the late Mr. Robert Dodsley formed the design of that useful book, "The Preceptor," which appeared in 1748, Mr. Campbell was one of the ingenious gentlemen applied to, to assist in the undertaking; and the parts written by him were the introduction to chronology, and

the discourse on trade and commerce, both of which displayed an extensive fund of knowledge upon these subjects. In 1750, he published, in 8vo. the first separate edition of his "Present State of Europe; a work which had been originally begun in 1746, in the "Museum," a very valuable periodical performance, printed for Mr. Dodsley. There is no production of our author's that hath met with a better reception. It has gone through six editions, and fully hath it deserved this encouragement; for, it is not easy to find a book which, in such a moderate compass, contains so much historical and political information. The perspicuity, the good sense, and the sagacity with which it is written, will ever command attention and admiration, even though some of Mr. Campbell's conjectures and reasonings concerning the future views and interests of the European powers, should happen to be overturned by the late surprising revolutions in the politics of the world. In such high estimation was "The Present State of Europe" held abroad, that the Count de Gisors, one of the most amiable young noblemen of his time, and only son to the Marshal Duke de Belleise, learned English, when at Copenhagen, in order to be able to read it. The next great undertaking which called for the exertion of our author's abilities and learning, was "The Modern Universal History." This extensive work was published, from time to time, in detached parts, till it amounted to sixteen volumes folio; and a second edition of it, in 8vo. began to make its appearance in 1759. The parts of it written by Mr. Campbell, were the histories of the Portuguese, Dutch, Spanish, French, Swedish, Danish, and Ostend settlements in the East Indies; and the histories of the kingdoms of Spain, Portugal, Algarve, Navarre, and that of France from Clovius to the year 1656. It may, without controversy, be asserted, that these parts of "The Modern Universal History," must be reckoned among some of its brightest ornaments. As our author

had thus distinguished himself in the literary world, the degree of LL.D. was very properly and honourably conferred upon him, on the 18th of June, 1754, by the University of Glasgow. With regard to his smaller publications, there are several, we apprehend, that have eluded our most diligent inquiry. The following is an account of all that have come to our knowledge :

In early life, he wrote a little piece, intitled, "A Discourse on Providence," 8vo. the third edition of which was printed in 1748. He published in 1746, in 8vo. "The Sentiments of a Dutch Patriot; being the speech of Mr. V. H\*\*\*n, in an august ASSEMBLY on the present state of affairs, and the resolution necessary at this juncture to be taken for the safety of the Republic, in 8vo." The history of this tract, the design of which was to expose the temporizing policy of the States of Holland, is somewhat amusing. His amanuensis, when he was going to write the pamphlet, having disappointed him, he requested, after tea in the afternoon, that Mrs. Campbell, when she had ordered a good fire to be made, would retire to bed as soon as possible, with the servants; and, at the same time, leave him four ounces of coffee. This was done, and he wrote till twelve o'clock at night, when finding his spirits flag, he took two ounces; with this assistance, he went on till six in the morning, when again beginning to grow weary, he drank the remainder of the coffee; hence he was enabled to proceed with fresh vigour, till nine or ten o'clock in the morning, when he finished the pamphlet, which had a great run, and was productive of considerable profit. Mr. Campbell having succeeded so well in a performance hastily written, expected much greater success from another work, about which he had taken extraordinary pains, and which had cost him a long time in composing; but when it came to be published, it scarcely paid the expence of advertising. Some years afterwards, a book in French was brought to him, that had



been translated from the German, and he was asked, whether a translation of it into English would not be likely to be acceptable. Upon examining it, he found that it was his own neglected work, which had made its way into Germany, and had there been translated and published, without any acknowledgment of the obligation due to the original writer\*.

In 1749, he printed, in Svo. "Occasional Thoughts on moral, serious, and religious Subjects." In 1754, he was the author of a work, in one volume, Svo. intitled, "The Rational Amusement, comprehending a collection of letters, on a great variety of subjects, interspersed with essays, and some little pieces of humour." "The Shepherd of Banbury's Rules," a favourite pamphlet with the common people; and "The History of the War in the East Indies," which appeared in 1758 or 1759, under the name of Mr. Watts, are supposed to have been of Mr. Campbell's composition. Upon the conclusion of the peace at Paris, our author was requested by Lord Bute, to take some share in the vindication of that peace. Accordingly, he wrote, in one volume, Svo. "A Description and History of the new Sugar Islands in the West Indies;" the design of which was to shew the value and importance of the neutral islands that had been ceded to us by the French. As his book was to be presented to the king, he was desired to write a dedication to his majesty, which he wished to decline, because he had hitherto avoided all political disputes, and because his earlier attachments and sentiments had not led him to pay his devoirs to the court of St. James's. However, it was at length determined, that he should present the dedication in manuscript. The following is a copy of it:

\* From the information of Dr. William Watson, who had the account from Dr. Campbell.



To the King's most sacred Majesty,  
 This little WORK,  
 Undertaken by his Royal Commands,  
 and honoured by his gracious Approbation,  
 is humbly inscribed by  
 His Majesty's most dutiful Subject,  
 and obliged Servant.

That PEACE,  
 Which your Majesty's Goodness and Wisdom  
 have given to this Nation,  
 is here shewn to be adequate  
 to the restoring her exhausted Wealth,  
 to the extension of her Commerce,  
 through dominions she hath power to keep,  
 and is inadequate only  
 in the eye of  
 FACTION.

In 1772, he printed in 4to, "A Treatise upon the Trade of Great Britain to America.

By the favour of the Hon. Mr. Daines Barrington, the Rev. Dr. Lorby, and Mr. Reed, the following additional list of Dr. Campbell's smaller publications, has been inserted in a supplementary note to the article in the *Biographia Britannica*.

"The Case of the Opposition impartially stated," 8vo. 1742. In Mr. Reed's copy of this pamphlet, are various corrections and additions in Dr. Campbell's own hand, which appear evidently written with a view to a second impression.

"An exact and authentic account of the greatest White-Herring-Fishery in Scotland, carried on yearly in the island of Zetland, by the Dutch only," 8vo. 1750.

"The Highland Gentleman's Magazine, for January 1751," 8vo.

“ A Letter from the Prince of the Infernal Regions, to a Spiritual Lord on this side the Great Gulph, in Answer to a late invective Epistle levelled at his Highness,” 8vo. 1751.

“ The Naturalization Bill confuted, as most pernicious to these United Kingdoms,” 8vo. 1751.

“ His Royal Highness Frederick, late Prince of Wales, Deciphered : or a full and particular Description of his Character, from his Juvenile Years, until his Death,” 8vo. 1751.

“ A Vade Mecum : or Companion for the Unmarried Ladies : wherein is laid down some Examples whereby to direct them in the Choice of Husbands,” 8vo. 1752.

“ A particular, but melancholy Account, of the great Hardships, Difficulties, and Miseries, that those unhappy and much to be pitied Creatures, the common Women of the Town, are plunged into at this juncture,” 8vo. 1752.

“ A full and particular Description of the Highlands of Scotland,” 8vo. 1752.

“ The Case of the Publicans, both in Town and Country, laid, open,” 8vo. 1752.

In Mr. Barrington's curious collection of papers, relative to the probability of reaching to the North Pole, is a tract, which he received from a learned friend, who permitted him to print it, though not to inform the public to whom they were indebted for the communication. It is entitled, “ Thoughts on the probability, expediency, and utility of discovering a passage by the North Pole.” The writer of this ingenious Essay was Dr. Campbell.

His last grand work was, “ A Political Survey of Britain ; being a series of reflections on the situation, lands, inhabitants, revenues, colonies, and commerce of this island : intended to shew, that they have not as yet approached near the summit of improvement, but that it will afford employment to many generations, before they push to their utmost extent the natural advantages of

Great Britain." This work, which was published in 1774, in two volumes, royal quarto, cost Dr. Campbell many years of attention, study, and labour. As it was his last, so it seems to have been his favourite production, upon which he intended to erect a durable monument of his sincere and ardent love to his country. A more truly patriotic publication never appeared in the English language. The variety of information it contains is prodigious; and there is no book that better deserves the close and constant study of the politician, the senator, the gentleman, the merchant, the manufacturer; in short, of every one who has it in any degree in his power to promote the interest and welfare of Great Britain. An assiduous pursuit of the numerous hints and plans of improvement suggested by our worthy author, would, perhaps, be the only effectual method of preserving and continuing the prosperity of this island, amidst that combination of enemies and misfortunes, with which she is at present surrounded. As the "Political Survey" is so excellent both in its design and execution, it is not surprising that Dr. Campbell should receive the highest testimonies in commendation of it, and that it should engage him in a very extensive correspondence. The correspondence occasioned by it was, indeed, so great, that in a letter to Mr. Hall, dated July 21, 1774, he informed his friend, that it had absorbed a ream of paper; and that he was about to begin upon another ream, which would probably share the same fate.

In the account which has been given of Dr. Campbell's writings, we have mentioned some of the encomiums that have been passed upon his literary merit. Several others might be added; but we shall content ourselves with producing one or two, that happen to be at hand. Dr. Smollet, when doing justice to the eminent writers who adorned the reign of King George the Second, says, "Nor let us forget the merit conspicuous in the works of Campbell,



remarkable for candour, intelligence, and precision\*.” The author of the “Account of the European Settlements in America,” which common fame ascribes to a gentleman of the most distinguished abilities and character, concludes his preface with the following passage: “Having spoken, perhaps, a little too hardy of my materials, I must except the assistance I have had from the judicious collection called Harris’s Voyages. There are not many finer pieces than the history of Brazil in that collection. The light in which the author sets the events in that history is fine and instructive; an uncommon spirit prevails through it, and his remarks are every where striking and deep. The little sketch I have given in the part of Portuguese America, if it has any merit, is entirely due to that original. Where I differ from him in any respect, it is with deference to the judgment of a writer, to whom this nation is much obliged, for endeavouring every where, with so much good sense and eloquence, to rouse that spirit of generous enterprize, that can alone make any nation powerful or glorious.” Dr. Campbell’s reputation was not confined to his own country, but extended to the remotest parts of Europe. As a striking instance of this, we may mention, that in the spring of the year 1774, the Empress of Russia was pleased to honour him with the present of her picture, drawn in the robes worn in that country in the days of John Basiliowitz, Grand Duke of Muscovy, who was contemporary with Queen Elizabeth. To manifest the Doctor’s sense of her Imperial Majesty’s goodness, a set of the “Political Survey of Britain,” bound in Morocco, highly ornamented and accompanied with a letter descriptive of the triumphs and felicities of her reign, was forwarded to St. Petersburg, and conveyed into the hands of that great Princess, by Prince Gregorio Orloff, who had resided some months in this kingdom.

\* History of England, Vol. II. p. 127, 8vo. edition.



The Empress's picture, since the death of our author, was presented by his widow to the late Lord Macartney.

Let us now advert a little to Dr. Campbell's personal history. On the 23d of May, 1736, he married Elizabeth, daughter of Benjamin Vobe, of Leominster, in the county of Hereford, gentleman, with which lady he lived near forty years in the greatest conjugal harmony and happiness. So wholly did he dedicate his time to books, that he seldom went abroad: but to relieve himself, as much as possible, from the inconveniences incident to a sedentary life, it was his custom, when the weather would admit, to walk in his garden, or, otherwise, in some room of his house, by way of exercise. By this method, united with the strictest temperance in eating, and an equal abstemiousness in drinking, he enjoyed a good state of health, though his constitution was delicate. His domestic manner of living did not preclude him from a very extensive and honourable acquaintance. His house, especially on a Sunday evening, was the resort of the most distinguished persons of all ranks, and particularly of such as had rendered themselves eminent by their knowledge, or love of literature. He received foreigners, who were fond of learning, with an affability and kindness, which excited in them the highest respect and veneration; and his instructive and cheerful conversation, made him the delight of his friends in general. On the 5th of March, 1765, Dr. Campbell was appointed his Majesty's agent for the province of Georgia, in North America, which employment he held till his decease. His last illness was a decline, the consequence of a life devoted to severe study, and which resisted every attempt for his relief that the most skilful in the medical science could devise. By this illness he was carried off, at his house in Queen-square, Ormond-street, on the 28th of December, 1775, when he had nearly completed the sixty-eighth year of his age. His end was tranquil and easy, and he preserved the full

use of all his faculties to the latest moment of his life. On the 4th of January following his decease, he was interred in the New Burial Ground, behind the Foundling Hospital, belonging to the parish of St. George the Martyr, where a monument, with a plain and modest inscription, hath been erected to his memory. Dr. Campbell had by his lady seven children, one of whom only survived him, Anne, who, on the 22d of August, 1763, married John Grant, Esq. of Lovat, near Inverness, in North Britain, then Captain in the fifty-eighth regiment of foot, and afterwards his Majesty's Commissary and Paymaster of the Royal Artillery at New York. Mrs. Grant, who was a woman of excellent understanding and taste, which had been cultivated under her father's eye, and who was possessed of the most amiable virtues, died at New York, on the 2d of July, 1778, in the thirty-seventh year of her age. Mr. Grant returning some time after to England, departed this life at Kensington, in the month of November, 1780. Three children were left by Mr. and Mrs. Grant, under the care of their worthy grandmother, the Doctor's widow.

Dr. Campbell's literary knowledge was by no means confined to the subjects on which he more particularly treated as an author. He was well acquainted with the mathematics, and had read much in medicine. It hath been with great reason believed, that if he had dedicated his studies to the last science, he would have made a very conspicuous figure in the physical profession. He was eminently versed in the different parts of sacred literature; and his acquaintance with the languages extended not only to the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin among the ancient, and to the French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch, among the modern, but likewise, to the Oriental tongues. He was particularly fond of the Greek

language. His attainment of such a variety of knowledge, was exceedingly assisted by a memory surprisingly retentive, and which, indeed, astonished every person with whom he was conversant.\* A striking instance of this hath been given by the Honourable Mr. Daines Barrington, in his tract, intitled, "The Probability of reaching the North Pole discussed."† In communicating his ideas, our author had an uncommon readiness and facility; and the style of his works, which had been formed upon the model of that of the celebrated Bishop Sprat, was perspicuous, easy, flowing, and harmonious. Should it be thought that it is sometimes rather too diffusive, it will,

\* Nevertheless, it is stated in the addenda prefixed to the fourth volume of the *Biographia Britannica*, that, "Dr. Campbell looking once into a pamphlet at a bookseller's shop, liked it so well as to purchase it; and it was not till he had read it half through, that he discovered it to be his own composition. This he told the late Mr. David Hume."

Dr. Johnson, in a conversation during his tour, said, "I think highly of Campbell. In the first place, he has very good parts. In the second place, he has very extensive reading; not, perhaps, what is properly called learning, but history, politics, and, in short, that popular knowledge which makes a man very useful. In the third place, he has learnt much by what is called the *vox viva*. He talks with a great many people."

Dr. Johnson one day called on Dr. Campbell, and they talked of Tull's Husbandry. Dr. Campbell said something, and Johnson began to dispute it: "Come," said Dr. Campbell, "We do not want to get the better of one another: we want to increase each other's ideas." This Dr. Johnson took in good part, and the conversation then went on coolly and instructively.—*Boswell's Journal*, p. 405, 406.

† The instance mentioned by Mr. Barrington, regards the accuracy wherewith Dr. Campbell, at the distance of thirty years, remembered the facts related to him by a Dr. Daillie, concerning a voyage towards the North Pole; in which the navigators, among whom was Dr. Daillie himself, went so far as to the 88th degree of north latitude; and might easily have proceeded farther, had not the captain thought himself obliged, by his duty in other respects, to return.



notwithstanding, indubitably be allowed, that it is in general, very elegant and beautiful.

To all these accomplishments of the understanding, Dr. Campbell joined the more important virtues of a moral and pious character. His disposition was gentle and humane, and his manners kind and obliging. He was the tenderest of husbands, a most indulgent parent, a kind master, a firm and sincere friend. To his great Creator he paid the constant and ardent tribute of devotion, duty, and reverence; and in his correspondences he shewed, that a sense of piety was always nearest his heart. "We cannot," said he, in a letter to Mr. Hall, "too much insist on the necessity of religion, not only as securing our happiness hereafter, but as the only safe and certain rule of life, and ten thousand times preferable to the modern notions of philosophy, and ties of honour. I may with great truth say, that the Church Catechism is a much better system of morals than Tully's Offices. There are many fine things in these, and in the works of Seneca; but, in my judgment, none that equal, either in spirit or composition, some of the Collects in our Liturgy." On another occasion, he wrote to the same friend, that he thought there was more good sense, and far better precepts for the conduct of life, in the Wisdom of Solomon, and the Son of Sirach, than in all the Heathen Sages put together; or than could be met with in Lord Bolingbroke, Mr. Hume, or Voltaire. It was our author's custom every day, to read one or more portions of Scripture, in the original, with the ancient versions, and the best commentators before him; and in this way, as appears from his own occasional notes and remarks, he went through the Sacred Writings a number of times, with great thankfulness and advantage.

Such was Dr. Campbell as a writer and as a man. By his works he has secured not only a lasting reputation,



but rendered himself highly beneficial to the public; and, by his virtues, he became prepared for that happy immortality, which awaits all the genuine followers of goodness.

LIVES  
OF  
THE ADMIRALS:  
INCLUDING  
A NEW AND ACCURATE  
NAVAL HISTORY.

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CHAP. I.

The Naval History of the Ancient Britons, before they were invaded by the Romans, and during the continuance of the Roman Empire in Britain, to the coming of the Saxons.

*(Containing the Transactions of about 1740 Years.)*

THE ancient History of Britain, or rather of the Britons, before the coming of Cæsar into this island, is, we must allow, not a little obscure, as well in respect to their exploits by sea, as in regard to the succession of their princes, and the settlement of their civil government at home; but this matter is carried much too far, when it is asserted, that the histories of those times deserve not either reading or notice; that they are mere fables and idle tales, void of all authority or probability.

It is true, that this lofty style is highly taking with critics, who very readily reject what they cannot under-

stand; but this may be sometimes too hastily done, as I conceive it is here. Camden \* disliked the British history of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and his authority drew others to treat it with absolute contempt. But, since his time, through the indefatigable labours of many industrious men, other ancient authors have been published, which plainly shew, that much true history is to be met with, even in that book, though embarrassed with fiction. Besides, it is now out of dispute, that Geoffrey was no forger, or inventor of that history, but that he really translated it out of the British language, in which tongue it is still extant. †

From this history, which in many circumstances is supported by others of better authority, we have various passages in relation to the naval power of the Britons, before Cæsar's expedition. Now, that these are not altogether incredible, must appear from the reason of the thing, on one hand, and, on the other, from what may be cited from writers of unquestionable credit.

Two arguments result from our very situation; for, first, the people, whoever they were, Gauls or Trojans, who planted this country, must have come to it by sea, and, consequently, must have had some skill in maritime affairs, even prior to their settling here. Secondly, the surrounding seas, the convenient ports, and the prospect of the opposite shore, must, doubtless, have encouraged them, when settled here, to practise, and thereby extend that skill in navigation, which, as I have said, they could not but have possessed before they came hither. Hence, I think it might have been rationally

\* Britannia, p. 6, 7. edit: 1594, 4to. See a refutation of Camden's objections in Mr. Thomson's copious preface to his translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's history; and the most learned Sir John Price's defence of that history.

† Usserii Britan. Eecl. Primordia. See also Lewis's British history.

concluded, that our British ancestors had performed something worthy of notice at sea, before the Roman invasion, even though there had been no records to attest their actions.

Polybius \* mentions this island and its commodities; Lucretius † also takes notice of it; and these were both writers elder than Cæsar. The author ‡ of the book *De Mundo*, which goes commonly under the name of Aristotle, speaks of the British islands, and distinguishes between Albion and Hierna, that is, between England and Ireland. Athenæus § tells us, out of Meschion, that the main-mast of King Hiero's great ship was found by a swine-herd in the mountains of Britain, and by Phileas Tauromenites conveyed into Sicily; and Solinus || speaks of an altar engraven with Greek characters, which Ulysses met with in Caledonia. It is not easy to conceive how so remote a country should be so well known in those times, if the British had not both power and commerce by sea. But, to put this matter out of dispute, the learned Mr. Selden ¶ owns himself convinced, even by Cæsar's writings, that the ancient Britons had a considerable sea force, which he conceives was either weakened, or totally destroyed in the defeat which Cæsar gave to the Veneti, to whose assistance it was sent.

Having thus shewn, that, for any thing the critics know to the contrary, the facts preserved by our British historians may be, at least, in some measure true, I shall proceed to mention those that are for my purpose, insisting on such arguments as offer themselves in support of these transactions; there being, as I conceive, as much honour to be acquired from the retrieving truth out of our fabulous stories, as in extracting it from Greek poets, or from

\* Hist. lib. xi.

† De Nat. Rer. lib. iii.

‡ Aristot. opera, tom. ii. p. 206, edit. Aurel. Allobrog. 1606.

§ Deipnosophist.

|| Polyhist. cap. 35.

¶ Mare Clausum, lib. ii. cap. 2.



oriental authors, which has, however, been the business of most of the greatest men famed for learning amongst us. This I say, not to lessen their reputation, or raise my own, but, out of a design to vindicate that of my country; by shewing, that the inhabitants of this island have always been, what I hope they always will be, lords of those seas which surround it.

The first naval expedition, celebrated by British writers, is that of the planting this island by Brito, or Brute, \* of which there is a large, and, in many of its circumstances, no doubt, a fabulous account, in Geoffrey of Monmouth, † but that the story had a ground of truth, may be easily proved. That this island was inhabited as early as this expedition is placed, appears from the trade of the Phenicians, and from its being so populous at the time of Cæsar's invasion. That the story of Brute was no invention of Geoffrey's, is clear, from our having the same account in Henry of Huntingdon, ‡ who did not borrow from him, and in Giraldus Cæmbrensis, § who, though he condemns the British history published by Geoffrey of Monmouth, yet, in the same breath, asserts the story of Brute; and, which is still more to the purpose, from the authority of Saxon writers, whose testimony, in this case, is of unquestionable credit. As to the objection, that foreign writers knew nothing of this, it may in some measure be removed, by observing, that, as they give very bad accounts of their own originals, we need not either wonder at, or regret, their giving none of ours. Besides this, Ammianus Marcellinus || takes notice, that part of the flying Trojans landed in Gaul, whence, our ancient history says, they came hither. If so, then they possessed this island in right

\* A. A. C. 1195.

† Hist. Brit. lib. i. Alured. Beverl. Annal. lib. i. p. 10, 11, 12. Ric. Viti. Hist. Britan. lib. i.

‡ Proem. Hist. & in Epist. ad Guarin.

§ Cambrie Descriptio, cap. 7. apud Camden, Angl. Norman, &c.

|| Hist. lib. xv.

of their naval power; which dominion, as it began in them, so it shall be our principal business to shew it has by their posterity been ever since maintained.

One of the most early exploits after this, was that of King Belinus,\* who is said to have taken the King of Denmark prisoner, and to have obliged him to become tributary. Afterwards, passing with his brother Brennus into Gaul, † they, with the joint forces of that country and their own, invaded Italy, and sacked Rome; after which, ‡ Belinus returned home, and reigned here with great glory. That this story is liable to some exceptions must be owned; and, indeed, what history of so great antiquity is not? But that it is not altogether improbable, appears from hence, that Pausanias, § a learned Greek author, speaking of the expedition of the Gauls under Brennus into Greece, says, that they called their order of drawing up squadrons of horse, three in front, *trimarchia*, which is pure British; for *tri*, in that language, signifies three, and *march* a horse. Gorguntius, || the son of Belinus, attacked the king of Denmark, (which must have been by sea,) slew him, and conquered his country. ¶ These were the exploits of the inhabitants of the southern part of the isle. As for the Scots, they appear to have had a very considerable naval force, by which they held in subjection all the adjacent isles, long before the coming of Cæsar, and this corroborates the other facts strongly.

The commerce of the Britons could not but be very considerable, even in these early times; for, besides the trade they drove with the Carthaginians in the western part of the island, \*\* they also trafficked with the northern nations,

\* Gal. Mon. Hist. Brit. lib. iii. cap. 2. Alured. Beverl. lib. 1. p. 16. Vit. Hist. lib. iii.

† A. A. C. 388.

§ Lib. x.

¶ A. A. C. 375

‡ A. A. C. 387.

|| Hist. Brit. lib. iii. cap. ii.

\*\* Strabo, Georg. lib. 1.

as appears by the flight of Brennus,\* when he quarrelled with his brother, to a king of Norway; for it cannot be supposed he would retire to an absolute stranger, or, if he had, that he should so soon return with a potent fleet. Their intercourse with all the maritime provinces of Gaul is indisputable; nor is it a light argument of their perfect acquaintance with the arts and sciences then known, that the youth of those provinces were sent hither for instruction. But what is most to our purpose, and which clearly demonstrates that, at this time, they had the dominion of their own seas in the most absolute degree is, what Cæsar himself says, † viz. That he could get no information concerning the country, or ports of Britain, because the inhabitants permitted none but merchants to visit their isle, and even restrained those from travelling up into the country. The imposing such rules shews the power of which they were then possessed.

It is indeed objected, that Cæsar and other ancient authors‡ speak but in mean terms of the British vessels; telling us, they were made of wicker covered with hides, which, therefore, were very unfit to have opposed the Roman fleet; and this they suppose to be the reason, that the Britons never essayed to grapple with the Romans at sea. There is, however, nothing solid in this; for one of the reasons why Cæsar inclined to attack Britain was, because its inhabitants succoured the Gauls both by land and sea; the fleets, therefore, that they sent for this purpose, were certainly stout ships, and not the leathern boats which they used in fishing on their own coasts, and to the use of which the Romans afterwards confined them. The true cause why they did not oppose the Romans by sea, was the previous loss of the best part of their fleet,

\* Hist. Brit. lib. iii. cap. 2.

† De Bello Gallico, lib. iv. cap. 18.

‡ De Bello Civil, lib. i. cap. 54. Solin. Polyhist, cap. 35. Lucan. Pharsal. lib. iv.



which they had sent to the assistance of the Veneti.\* As for the Scots,† they were engaged in reducing the isles, which a little before had thrown off their yoke, as their own historian tells us: and, after all, Gildas‡ severely reflects upon this very circumstance of their not drawing together a fleet, which would have been absolutely absurd, if he had known the Britons at that time had no ships of war. To sum up all, Cæsar's own relation § is sufficient to shew, that there is nothing pressing on this objection, but that the Britons made such a defence as their circumstances would allow, and the nature of his attempt required.

This expedition of Cæsar may seem to fall without the limits of this work, since they contended with him not at sea, but on shore. It was, however, a naval expedition on his side, and undertaken chiefly for the sake of securing the dominion of the sea to the Romans; wherefore, I conceive, it will not be thought an unjustifiable digression in me to mention some remarkable circumstances. Cæsar's first expedition from Gaul was with a fleet of eighty ships, and a few gallies, on board of which he embarked two legions. || He attempted to land on the opposite coast of Kent, where he found a British army ready to receive him, who behaved so exceedingly well, that even these Roman veterans were astonished, and, contrary to their usual custom; betrayed a dislike to fighting; whence we may justly infer, that this was not the first time the Britons ever had to do with invaders. The emperor Julian, ¶ a writer of distinguished parts, introduces Julius as leaping from his ship to encourage his

A.A.C.  
52.

\* Selden, *Marc Clausum*, lib. ii. cap. 2.

† *Johan. de Fordun. Scotichron.* lib. ii. cap. 14.

‡ *Epist. de Excidio Britan.*

§ *De Bello Gallico*, lib. v. cap. ii.

*Hist. Brit.* lib. iv. cap. 1. *Vit. Hist.* lib. iv. *Cæs. de Bello Gallico* lib. v

¶ *Cæs. ib.*



frighted soldiers; but Cæsar himself tells us, that it was the standard-bearer of the tenth legion, who, by this desperate action, encouraged the army to gain the shore, from which, with much difficulty, they drove the British inhabitants.\* After this, Cæsar encamped on Barham Downs, where he waited a supply; in which, meeting with some disappointment, the Britons again gave him battle, and, as he owns, were repulsed with difficulty enough; insomuch, that, when he had repaired his fleet, he judged it the wisest thing he could do to return to Gaul; and this accordingly he did, and took the farther precaution of embarking his forces at midnight.† Happy had it been for the Britons, if, after so glorious a contest for the preservation of their freedom, they had concerted proper measures for giving him as good a reception, in case of his making a second attempt; but they were deficient in discretion, though not in valour, and, quarrelling amongst themselves, Mandubratius, a traitor to his country, fled to Gaul, in order to invite him again.‡

A.A.C. 51. Cæsar was at that time returned to Rome, but his lieutenants in Gaul were providing a navy according to his directions, which consisted of no less than 800 sail, on board of which, when he came back, Cæsar embarked a numerous army for Britain. He landed as before in Kent, without meeting any resistance, the Britons being astonished at the sight of ten times the force with which they had before contested. The Romans marched as far as the river Stoure, where, in a short space, the British monarch Caswallen engaged them with a formidable army. In this battle the Romans forced their enemies to retreat; but in the evening the Britons boldly attacked the Roman camp, and, when they found themselves unable to keep it, charged quite through

\* Cæs. de Bello Gallico, lib. iv. cap. 25. Hist. Britan. lib. iv. cap. 3.

† De Bello Gallico, lib. v. Hist. Britan. lib. iv. cap. v.

‡ De Bello Gallico, lib. 5. Hist. Britan. lib. iv. cap. 7, 8.

the forces appointed to defend it, and recovered their fastnesses. Cæsar marching forwards toward the Thames, Caswallan caused the ford where he was to pass to be stuck full of sharp stakes, remaining with his army on the opposite shore, in order to have taken advantage of that confusion this contrivance must have occasioned; but the design was betrayed, and Cæsar passed somewhat higher. The place, however, retains the name of Coway Stakes, near Oatlands, and is another proof that the Britons knew how to exert their force by land and by water. After this, Caswallan managed the war without fighting set battles, till Cæsar stormed his capital, which is supposed to have been Verulam, near St. Alban's, and that some of the British princes submitted to Cæsar, when he also thought proper to make terms,\* which Cæsar readily granted him, that he might be rid of this business with honour, which, if we believe his own commentaries, he effected; but we know Asinius Pollio † said, those memoirs were written with little accuracy, and small regard to truth; and Suetonius, as to this particular action, tells us, that he was fairly beaten by the Britons, ‡ which may derive some credit to what our own histories say of this matter.

On his return to Rome, Cæsar consecrated to Venus a military ornament, embroidered with British pearl, § a circumstance slight in appearance, but of consequence to my purpose, since by this consecration it is intimated, that Cæsar arrogated to himself the dominion of the sea; whence *vincula dare océano*, to give laws to the ocean, and *Britannos subjugare*, to subdue the Britons, became convertible terms with subsequent authors, who all endeavour

\* Hist. Britan. lib. iv. cap. 8, 11. Vit. Hist. lib. iv. Cæs. de Bello Gallic. lib. v.

† Apud Sueton. in vit. Jul. Cæs. cap. 56.

‡ In vit. Jul. Cæs. cap. 25. Lucan Pharsal. lib. xi. Hor. Epod. vii.

§ Solin. Polyhist. cap. 56.

A.A.C to place Cæsar's British expedition in this, as in far the  
 1. most glorious light. \*

Augustus, when he had settled the empire, thought of paying this island a visit, but arriving in Gaul, he heard there of the revolt of the Pannonians, which obliged him  
 A.D. to change his design. † Seven years after, however, he  
 8. resumed it, and came again into Gaul, where ambassadors from Britain met him; and, on their promising to pay tribute to him, he desisted a second time. Finding, next year, that they did not keep their words, he prepared a third time for the invasion of Britain: but the inhabitants prevented him, by sending ambassadors, who offered, in the capitol, sacrifices to the Roman gods; swore obedience in the temple of Mars; promised to pay tribute duly; and, which is more to our purpose, undertook to yield certain duties for the goods by them exported: which is a plain indication, that the Romans chiefly sought an acknowledgment of naval dominion, or superiority at sea. ‡ During the reign of Tiberius, the Britons kept fair with the Romans, by their prudence in this particular; for when some of the soldiers of Germanicus had been wrecked on their coast, they not only received them kindly, but sent them back to him safely. Thus these wise emperors maintained the reputation of the Roman power, without running any further hazards against a people martial in their dispositions, unenervated by luxury, tenacious of liberty, and yet useful as allies. §

The felicity of this country was then, as indeed it generally is, owing to the wisdom, courage, and public spirit of its prince. The name of this excellent monarch was

\* Selden. *Mare Clausum*, p. 1288. int. oper. tom. iv.

† *Hor. Carm. lib. i. od. 35.*

‡ Langhorne's *Introduction to the History of England*, p. 83. The title of this work is *Elenchus Antiquitatum Albionensium*, &c. *Hor. lib. iii. od. 5.*

§ *Tacit. Annal. lib. ii.*



Cunobeline, who reigned many years, and with great <sup>A.D.</sup> reputation; but in the latter part of his life, there fell out <sup>41.</sup> a misfortune in his family, which proved fatal to his subjects. One of his sons, whom the Latin writers call Adminius, behaved so ill, that his father was obliged to banish him; and he, like an abandoned traitor, repaired to Caligula, who had succeeded Tiberius in the empire, and excited him to invade his country in his worthless quarrel.\* Nothing could be more welcome to that vain, and yet pusillanimous prince, than this application: he therefore made such preparations, as if he really intended to subdue the whole island; but weighing very maturely the danger of such an enterprize, resolved to content himself with an imaginary conquest. He sent the letters of Adminius to the Roman senate, as testimonies of the submission of the Britons; he built a mighty watch-tower upon the coast fronting Norfolk, as a monument of his pretended subjugation of the Britons, which, in after times, served for a kind of Pharos, and was called in the language of the natives *Brittenhuis*, *i. e.* *Domus Britannica*, the British house; and, to complete all, he drew down his army to the sea-shore, and having disposed them in battalia, he then commanded them to fill their helmets with cockle and other shells, calling them the spoils of the ocean, due to the capitol, and to the palace; † which act of his, though it sufficiently spoke his vanity, yet it farther demonstrates, that the dominion of Britain and the empire of the ocean were held to be the same thing: and the greater Caligula's folly was, in thus arrogating to himself a victory he had never acquired, the more glorious we must imagine that conquest would have been, the very notion of which made him so vain. Cunobeline did not long outlive this emperor; yet he was

\* Vit. Hist. lib. iv. Hist. Britan. lib. iv. cap. 2.

† Vit. Hist. lib. iv. Sueton. in Calig. cap. 44. Oros. lib. vii. cap. 5.



so happy as to die before the Romans set foot as enemies again in Britain.

He was succeeded by his son, whom the British writers style Gwyder, \* a brave and generous prince, of whom the Latin historians say nothing, because the Romans reaped no great honour by their wars against him. He, in the very beginning of his reign, refused to pay them tribute, on account that some fugitives who fled to the Romans, had not been delivered up; which shews that the Britons were incapable of tamely bearing injuries, even from the lords of the world. Among these fugitives was one Bericus, a man of parts, but a traitor; he encouraged the Emperor Claudius to think of invading and subduing Britain. † Accordingly he sent over his lieutenants, who began and prosecuted the war with success, and afterwards crossing the sea himself, subdued a great part of South Britain, through the valour of his legions, and the intestine divisions of the Britons, who, had they been united, would undoubtedly have compelled him to quit the island. ‡ For this conquest the emperor triumphed, and his lieutenant, A. Plautius, was allowed an ovation. On account of this victory, he was complimented by the poets of his time, as the conqueror of the ocean, and the sovereign of the sea. Suetonius § tells us, that among the spoils of his enemies, he placed a naval crown by the civic, in testimony of his having vanquished the ocean; and Seneca, the tragedian, celebrates this victory in the following lines; || which at once express how high an idea was then entertained of so extraordinary a discovery, and how much glory was supposed to arise from this maritime victory.

*En, qui Britannis primus imposuit jugum,  
Ignota tantis classibus textit freta.*

By him first vanquish'd, were the Britons shewn,  
And Roman navies sail'd through seas unknown.

\* Hist. Britan. lib. iv. cap. 12.

† Matt. Westm. ad. A. D. 44.

‡ Dio. Hist. lib. lx. Sueton. in Claud. cap. 17.

§ In vit. Claud. cap. 17.

|| In Octavia.

Yet we must not suppose, notwithstanding these pompous marks of conquest, that the Britons were absolutely subdued: the contrary of this appears plainly from the British histories; and not obscurely even from the Roman writers. Arviragus, who is supposed to have been the youngest son of Cunobeline, inherited the virtues, as well as the dominions of his father; and after long harassing the Romans as an enemy, consented at last, upon honourable terms, to become their friend. That this martial monarch had rendered himself exceedingly formidable to Rome, might, if all other proofs of it were lost, be deduced from the following passage in Juvenal, where, bitterly inveighing against the gluttony of Domitian, he introduces one predicting, from the taking of an overgrown turbot:—\*

*Regem aliquem capies, aut de temone Britanno  
Excidet Arviragus.—*

Some king you'll take, or from the British throne  
Shall proud Arviragus come tumbling down.

The irony of this passage could not have been sharp or cutting, if this British king had not been a very potent prince, and one whose reputation was at once thoroughly established, and universally known.

Thus are we imperceptibly fallen as low as the reign of Domitian; yet some passages there are remarkable enough to oblige us to return to the mention of those reigns, which intervene between his and that of Claudius. The glorious enterprise of Boadicea, who, in the time of Nero, attempted, and almost achieved, the driving the Romans entirely out of Britain, having no relation to maritime affairs, falls not within my province. Under the reign of Vespasian, who had himself commanded with

\* Sat. iv. Hist. Britan. lib. iv. cap. 14. Vit. Hist. lib. iv. See also Lewis's British History, and Cooper's Chronicle, fol. 96.

A.C. 72. great reputation in this island,\* Julius Agricola was sent to preside here. He was a wise governor, as well as an excellent officer; signalized himself in the beginning of his administration by the reduction of Mona or Anglesey, † with the assistance, however, of British troops, who passed the narrow arm of the sea which divides that island from Britain, on horseback, and thereby surprised the inhabitants, so that they were vanquished as much at least by fear as by force. Under the reign of Titus, Agricola projected a noble scheme, that of fixing and securing the bounds of the Roman empire in Britain, so as to defend its subjects from the inroad of the barbarous nations inhabiting the northern part of the island. ‡ I speak this in conformity to the language of the authors from whose relations I write, and not with any intention of blemishing the reputation of those gallant people, who so worthily defended their liberty against the Romans.

A.D. 85. In the prosecution of this design, Agricola advanced farther north than any of his predecessors had hitherto done; and observing that two estuaries, or intruding arms of the sea, almost cut in sunder one part of the island from the other, he resolved to fortify this isthmus, and thereby shut out the Scots and Picts, which he accordingly performed. § In Latin authors these arms of the sea are called *Glota* and *Bodotria*, which most of our writers render the Friths of Dunbritton and Edinburgh; but they are with greater propriety styled the Friths of Clyde and of Forth.

Having thus secured the Roman province from all danger, he began to make the necessary dispositions for invading Ireland, as well as for examining and subduing the remaining part of Britain. With this view he fitted out a considerable fleet, and ordered it to sail northwards,

\* Tacit. in Agric.

† Tacit. in Agric.

‡ Idem, *ibid.* Vit. Hist. lib. iv.

§ Idem, *ibid.*



looking into all the creeks and bays, in order to gain an exact knowledge of the coast, while himself and the army marched forward by land: this exceedingly alarmed the northern nations, who, as the Roman writers observe, gave all for lost, now the secrets of their sea were discovered. The Caledonians defended themselves with great obstinacy against Agricola, but with indifferent success; and, in the mean time, were terribly harassed by the fleet, which put now into one port, then into another, and at length surrounded the island; and, if we may believe the Roman authors,\* subdued the Orcades, or islands of Orkney. However, it is certain, that after having completed their design, this navy returned to the Portus Trutulensis, or, as it ought rather to be read, Rutupensis, which is conceived to be Richborough near Sandwich. This expedition gained great honour to Julius Agricola, and was looked upon in those days, as a most heroic act, the boundaries of Britain being esteemed by the Romans the very utmost limits of the world, as appears plainly from the accounts we have in Tacitus: and if any doubts remain as to his impartiality, since Agricola was his near relation, we may put the fact out of dispute by citing what Juvenal says on the same topic. †

A.D.  
92.

————— *Arma quidem ultra*  
*Littora Juvernæ promovimus, et modo captas*  
*Orcadas, ac minima contentos nocte Britannos.*

We fame beyond Juverna † have pursued,  
And ev'n the distant Orkneys have subdu'd;  
Our forces now remotest Britons fright,  
In northern climes content with little night.

History informs us, that this expedition of Agricola was in the summer, which accounts for the last line, since in that season the Romans certainly found the days very

\* Tacit. in Agric.

† Sat. ii.

‡ Ireland.



long in the northern part of the isle; whence they concluded, that the inhabitants were content with a slender proportion of rest: which seems to be the true meaning of their being satisfied with a short night. The tyrant Domitian, taking umbrage at the great exploits of this excellent person, recalled him to Rome, and there removed him by poison. \*

Under the reigns of the succeeding emperors, Nerva and Trajan, there happened little of consequence in this island; but the emperor Adrian, who succeeded Trajan, understanding that the northern nations made frequent incursions into the Roman province, came over hither; and, after gaining frequent advantages over them, he resolved to take the same method which Agricola had formerly done, of bounding the frontier province by a wall, or military entrenchment; which he accordingly cast up, and, as the manner of those times was, strongly fortified. This wall is said to have extended about eighty Italian miles, from Eden in Cumberland, to Tyne in Northumberland; though others say, it was from Gabrosentum, now Gateshead, or Gateshend, in the bishopric of Durham, to Carlisle, thereby abandoning a tract of country, seventy miles long and one hundred and forty broad, to the Scots and Picts; yet, on his return to Rome, he caused a new coin to be struck, whereon he is styled, the Restorer of Britain. † In the reign of Antoninus Pius, one Lollius Urbicus acted as his lieutenant in Britain, who was very successful in his wars against the northern nations, ‡ and who, having driven them beyond the Friths of Clyde and Forth, re-edified Agricola's wall, and restored the Roman province to its full extent. About this time, Sejus Saturninus was archigubernus of the

A.D.  
123.

A.D.  
142.

\* Tacit. in Vit. Agric.

† Dio hist. lib. lxxix. Spartian in vit. Adrian. cap. ii. Bed. lib. i. cap. 5.

‡ Jul. Capitolin. in vit. Anton.

Roman fleet here; \* but whether we are to understand thereby, that he was admiral, or arch-pilot, is doubtful. In succeeding times, the Scots and Picts recovered the country they had lost, and gained so many advantages over the Romans, that the emperor Severus came hither in person, and with infinite difficulty repulsed these invaders, losing no less than fifty thousand men in the war; and at last was content to re-edify Adrian's wall, which he fortified with strong towers or bulwarks, assuming thereupon the surname of Britannicus Maximus. † He died at York, and his body being burnt at Ackham, there is still to be seen a great mount of earth raised upon that occasion, and called by the inhabitants Sever's hill. ‡

A.D.  
210.

In the succeeding distractions of the Roman empire, Britain, like the rest of its provinces, fell into the hands of various masters, styled by their adherents, Emperors, and, by the rest of the world, Tyrants. Amongst these, there is one who deserves to be remembered in this history; since, how bad soever his title might be, he made a good prince to the Britons, and which is still more to our purpose, carried the maritime power of this country so high, as not only to vindicate his own independency, but also to strike a terror into the whole Roman empire: it is true, many historians treat him as an usurper, a thing that appears to be a little hard; since those they style emperors had no other title than what they derived from fighting on land, which seems to afford him some colour of right, in virtue of his power by sea. But, be that as it will, his history is sufficient to shew, that the Britons in the Roman provinces were, at this time, remarkable for their skill in naval affairs, and were able to equip such fleets as made them terrible to their neighbours.

\* Pandect. lib. xlv. tit. ad senatusconsult. Trebellian.

† Herod. lib. iii. Spartian in Severo. Dio. histor. lib. lxxvi.

‡ Vit. hist. lib. v. Oros. lib. vii. cap. 16. Eutrop. lib. viii. Bed. lib. v. cap. 5. Langhorn's Introduction to the History of England, p. 179.

A.D.  
388.

Dioclesian and Maximian having shared the empire between them, the latter, who possessed the western parts, finding the coasts much harassed by pirates of several nations, but chiefly Saxons and Franks, made choice of one Caius Carausius, a man of known valour, to command the Roman fleet for scouring the seas. Most writers say, that this man was a Menapian by birth, and of very mean descent: \* certain Scottish authors claim him for their countryman, † and with great appearance of truth. This charge he executed with equal courage and conduct, but, as the Roman historians allege, not so honourably as he ought; yet, if we consider his future actions, and that these writers were the creatures of those emperors against whom he fought, we may safely doubt, whether the character they give Carausius ought to prejudice him in our opinions. They tell us, that, instead of chastising the pirates, as his duty directed, he too frequently admitted them to composition, and, finding this policy discovered, he had recourse to another, neglecting to take them, till they had enriched themselves by a multitude of prizes, and then seizing them, with their ill-gotten wealth, applied it to his own use. Maximian, informed of these practices, conceived a suspicion of his intending to set up for himself; which scheme, if this officer really had in his head, he furthered by endeavouring to prevent it. The method he took, was, by commissioning a person to assassinate Carausius; which failing, this cunning commander improved to his advantage; for, crossing with a strong squadron of ships over into Britain, he there persuaded a great part of the Roman army, and the Britons in general, to embrace his party; and so, assuming the purple robe, he declared himself emperor, and maintained that dignity

\* Nennius apud Camden. in Rom. Britan. Aurel. Victor. cap. 39.

† Fordun. Scotichronicon. lib. ii. cap. 38. See Dr. Stukeley's medallic history of Carausius.



against all the power with which his rivals could oppose him. Besides this island, he held the port of Gessoriacum, now Boulogne, in France, and the adjacent coast, whence he so harassed Gaul, Italy, and Spain, by his fleets, that, however averse Maximian might be to such a partner, he was at length compelled to purchase peace, by owning this man for emperor in Britain: and there are still extant some of his coins, having on one side his head, with this inscription, IMP. CARAUSIUS, P. F. AUG. On the reverse, the portraitures of two emperors joining hands, alluding to this agreement with Maximian. This coin is of silver, and found no where but in Britain. \*

However he acquired the empire, it is on all hands agreed, that he held it very worthily; for, he governed the Britons with great justice and equity, maintained the dominion of the sea against all competitors with much resolution; and, when the northern nations, that is to say, the Scots and Picts, began to vex his subjects with incursions, he made war upon them, and having beaten them in many engagements, he recovered all that the Romans had ever held in Britain, and, as some say, erected, as a mark of his conquest, that celebrated monument of antiquity, called Arthur's Oven; though others affirm this to be a temple of the god Terminus, and erected by another hand. When he had thus signalized his courage and conduct at their expense, he made peace with these nations, wisely foreseeing that he should, some time or other, stand in need of their assistance against the Roman emperors, who, he knew, waited only for a favourable opportunity of disclosing their hatred against him. † He took care likewise, by all means possible, to increase his fleet; and, which shews him to be a very politic prince, he negotiated

\* Eutrop. lib. ix. Bed. hist. lib. i. cap. 6. Aurel. Victor. in Cæsariib. Speed's Chronicle, p. 254.

† Hist. Brit. lib. v. cap. 3. Vit. hist. lib. v. Fordun. Scotichronicon. lib. ii. cap. 37, 38, 39. Bed. lib. i. cap. 6



a treaty with the Franks, and other nations, who were seated on the Thracian Bosphorus, and who were become famous for their power at sea, whereby it was stipulated, that they should send a strong fleet into the Mediterranean, which, passing through the streights of Gibraltar, should join his navy in the British seas, and act in conjunction against the Romans. This certainly is a transaction worthy of being recorded in our naval history, unless we have so far lost the spirit of our ancestors, as to be proud rather of being slaves to Rome, than of contesting the sovereignty of the sea with that haughty people.

The Romans, justly alarmed at so formidable a confederacy, which in an instant deprived them of any safe passage by sea, began to provide for putting a speedy end to this war. In order to this, Constantius and Maximian both applied themselves to raising forces by sea and land. The former undertook to march with an army into the territory possessed by the enemy in Gaul; while the latter, from the naval magazine on the Rhine, fitted out a fleet of a thousand sail. While this was doing, Constantius besieged Carausius in Boulogne, who, having the sea open, defended himself without much trouble, and thereby convinced his enemies, that, while he held this advantage, their siege would be to little purpose; but Constantius having found a way to block up the port by a work of a new contrivance, Carausius had no means of safety left but by breaking through the Roman camp, with a few gallant followers. This he performed in a dark night; and, embarking in a small ship, crossed over to Britain, where he had a strong fleet and a powerful army. He quickly repented of this wrong step, when he was informed, that the very night after his departure, the sea had carried away all the works of the Romans, and left the port open. The next thing Constantius did, was to draw together all the ships that could be had from every part of his dominions, and having stationed strong squadrons on the coast

of Britain, Spain, and Gaul, to prevent Carausius from joining his confederates, he sailed in person with the rest of his fleet through the streights of Gibraltar, to meet the Franks, whom he defeated so absolutely, and pursued his victory so closely, that there was not a man of them left.\* In the interim, Carausius employed his time in preparing the best he could for the defence of Britain; but one Alectus, a considerable officer in his service, and whom he had always treated as an intimate friend, supposing that his death would put him in possession of all his power, treacherously murdered him, when he had reigned seven years, and then assumed the purple.

This Alectus was far from having either the capacity or the fortune of his predecessor, though all our historians agree, that he kept his dominions and his forces. He was for some time superior in power at sea, but he employed that superiority rather as a pirate than as a prince, sending out his squadrons to spoil the adjacent coasts of Gaul, and to interrupt the trade of all the Roman provinces. Constantius saw this with impatience, but at the same time took all the necessary precautions for putting an end to it. At length he found himself strong enough to fight Alectus by sea, and, with this view, sailed from the coast of Gaul towards that of Britain. Alectus, with a navy no way inferior to his, lay then at the Isle of Wight, whence, on the first intelligence of the departure of the Roman fleet, he stood to sea, in order to intercept it; but it so happened, that Constantius, by means of a fog, passed him, and landed safely in Britain; which he had no sooner done, than, from a foresight that the British fleet would infallibly beat his in a fair sea-fight, he caused his ships to be set on fire, that his soldiers might have no hopes of

\* Eutrop. lib. 9. Bed. lib. i. cap. 6. Oros. lib. vii. cap. 25. Paul. Diac. lib. x. cap. 41. Anrel. Vict. cap. 39. Fordun. Scotichronicon. lib. xi. cap. 40.



A.D.  
296.

escaping, but by beating their enemies. Alectus quickly returned to Britain, and put himself at the head of a small body of troops; but perceiving that the hearts of the people were entirely alienated from him, and that he was thereby become inferior on land to those over whom he had a superiority at sea, he grew in a manner distracted, and engaging rashly with Asclepiodotus, who commanded a party of Roman troops, his forces were routed, and himself having thrown away his purple robe, after a desperate defence, was slain. He held the empire, or rather bore the title of emperor, about three years; and there is yet extant a gold coin of his with this inscription, IMP. C. ALECTUS, P. F. AUG: on the reverse, SALUS AUG.\* He seems to have lost himself by his rashness, for he certainly fought before the main body of his troops came up. These consisted of foreigners of all nations, drawn to his service from the hopes of pay; and who, as soon as they knew of his misfortune, resolved to satisfy their expectations by plundering those they came to preserve. With this view they possessed themselves of London, but as they entered the city, a new mischance befel them. Part of the Roman army, severed from the grand fleet at sea, by the mist before mentioned, landed at the mouth of the Thames, and entered the city immediately after them. Upon this an engagement ensued, wherein the foreigners were defeated, and cut to pieces; their commander, whose name was Gallus, endeavouring to save himself by flight, was pushed into and drowned in a little brook, called from thence, in the British tongue, Nant-Gall, and by the Saxons, Walbrook. †

\* Aurel. Victor. in Cæsariib. Eutrop. ubi supra. Eumen. Paneg. Constant. Cæsar. Speed's Chronicle, p. 255. Lewis's History of Britain, p. 120.

† Hist. Britan. lib. v. cap. 4. Spelt Naut-Gallim and Galleborne, in Aaron Thomson's translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth, from which Dr. Campbell has cited. Vit. Hist. lib. v. Camden. Descript.

In succeeding times, when the government of the Roman empire came to be better settled, proper officers were appointed for maintaining both civil and military government in Britain; but, above all, due care was taken of naval affairs, and garrisons were placed in various ports, and particularly to those which follow, viz. Othona, which Caunden took to be Hastings in Sussex; Dubris, which certainly was Dover; Lemmanis, which was either Hythe in Kent, or some place near it, perhaps Limehill; Branodunum, Branchester in Norfolk, not far from the washes; Gariannonum, Yarmouth; Regulbium, Reculver in Kent; Rittupis or Rittupæ, Richborough, near Sandwich; Anderia, Newenden in Kent; and the port of the Adurni, now Alkington or Ederington, near Shoreham, in Sussex.\*

Constantine the Great, as he was born in this island, so he was extremely careful of its concerns.† On his death, and the division of the empire among his sons, it fell to the share of Constantine the eldest. After his murder, his younger brothers, Constantius and Constans, were both here, and Gratianus was by them made general of Britain.‡ The emperor Julian sent over Lupicinus to repress the Scots, in which he was very successful.§ Under the emperors Valentinianus and Valens, Theodosius performed great things in this island; and having recovered the country between the two walls, he erected it into a province by itself, and called it Valentia.|| After this, Maximus was general of the Roman forces in this island, who, having vanquished the Scots and Picts, was

Britan. in Trinobant. Speed's Chronicle, p. 255. Lewis's History of Britain, p. 120.

\* Selden. Mare. Clausum, lib. ii. cap. 6, 7.

† Zozim. Europ. vit. Hist. lib. vi.

‡ Pauli Diaconi hist. lib. xi. cap. 18. Victor in Valentin. Ammion. Marcellini hist. lib. xiv.

§ Bed. lib. i. cap. 1. Ammiani Marcellini, lib. xx.

|| Idem, lib. xxvii. Claudian de bello Getico, et in laud Theodosii.



A.D. 381. declared emperor by his army. He, carrying on great wars on the continent, transported thither the flower of the British youth, which was one principal cause of the misfortune that befel his country; for, after a reign of six years, he was vanquished, and put to death in Italy, and so Britain returned to the obedience of the Roman emperors.\* The emperor Theodosius sent over Chrysanthus, who governed very worthily all the time of his reign. † In the nonage of the emperor Honorius, new disturbances were created by the Scots and Picts, which induced Stilico, who was the emperor's guardian, to send Victorinus to command here; who, having expelled the invaders, re-fortified the wall, and placed a legion in garrison to defend it; the same worthy person took care also to restore the maritime force of the island, whereby he secured it from the insults of those piratical nations, who now began to infest the sea. Claudian, in his panegyric on Stilico, attributes all this to him, because done by his order, and by an officer acting under his authority; for thus he introduces the isle of Britain speaking to his patron :

A.D. 396.

*Me quoque vicinis pereuntem gentibus, inquit,  
Munivit Stilico, totam quum Scotus Iernen  
Movit, & infesto spumavit remige Thetis.  
Illius effectum euris, ne bella timerem  
Scotica, nec Pictum tremere, ne littore toto  
Prospicerem dubiis venientem Saxona ventis. †*

Me too, by neighbours when almost devour'd,  
Thou, Stilico, sustain'd—though Ireland pour'd  
Her Scots abroad, and cover'd all the sea  
With hostile fleets.—But now, restor'd by thee,  
Those Scots, though join'd with Picts, I fear no more,  
Nor dread each changing wind should bring the Saxons o'er.

But when Alarick, the Goth, made his first irruption into Italy, Victorinus, with his legion, was recalled out of

\* Zosim. hist. lib. iv. Fordun. Scotichronicon. lib. ii. cap. 42.

† Pomponius Lætus in Theodosio.

‡ Paneg. secund. de laud. Stilic.

Britain; \* and the affairs of the empire falling continually from bad to worse, the Roman forces he left behind thought themselves at liberty to elect, in conjunction with the Britons, a prince of their own, or as the phrase was in those times, an emperor. Accordingly, they chose and murdered two in less than six months †; then they set up one Constantine, merely for his name's sake, who in a short time aspired to greater things than the bare dominion of Britain. On this account, he, like his predecessor Maximus, assembled the utmost force of the island, and passed there-with over into Gaul, where, by the help of these forces and his fleet, he performed many great things, till the emperor Honorius made war against, and subdued him. ‡ The Britons, in the mean time, were brought to the last extremity by the Scots and Picts; insomuch, that the remainder of the Romans, giving the country for lost, at least for the present, buried their treasures, and transported themselves to other parts. § However, even after this, on their humble application to Honorius, Ætius, general of the forces in Gaul, had orders to send over a legion, which he did, and repeated the same favour some years afterwards. || This last legion was commanded by one Gallio, who, having repaired, or rather rebuilt the wall originally raised by Severus, and fortified the coast against the sudden invasions of the pirates who then infested the British seas, plainly told the people, that the affairs of the empire would not permit them to pass over any more, but that for the future they must think of defending themselves as well as they could; and, after many exhortations to behave with constancy and courage in the

A.D.  
407.A.D.  
418.

\* Camden. Roman. Britan. Gulielm. Malmesbur. de gestis. reg. Ang. lib. i. cap. 1.

† Zos. hist. lib. iv. Bed. lib. i. cap. 9.

‡ Beda, lib. i. cap. 1. Zosim. lib. xi. cap. 13. Oros. lib. vii. cap. 42.

§ Chron. Saxon. ad ann. 418.

|| Pauli Diaconi hist. miscel. lib. xiv.

A.D. 430. cause of their country, he embarked all the Roman troops, and left the Britons to their fortunes. \*

Thus, about four hundred and eighty years, according to the computation of the learned Selden, or four hundred and seventy, as the Saxon chronicle informs us, after the first invasion of this island by Julius Cæsar, the Romans quitted it, and all the rights they could pretend to. † For, this being a voluntary abdication, nothing can be plainer, than that they left the Britons as free as they found them. And, as it is evident, that this nation exercised the dominion over the circumambient seas before the coming of the Romans, who likewise contended, that the possession of this island gave them a title to the like sovereignty, nothing can be more apparent than that it now reverted to the Britons. I say, nothing can be more evident, if we admit that the Romans acquired any right by conquest, which may seem doubtful, since they never subdued the whole island; and if so, the British title to this dominion remained unimpeached. We are next to inquire, what the effects were of this desertion of the isle by the Romans, and in what situation the naval affairs of the Britons remained; when they were thus left to themselves. A difficult task indeed, considering the dubious authority of the authors whom we are to use; but a task necessary to be performed, since, as the dominion of the sea must have rested some where, we shall do our best to shew it rested with them.

The Scots and Picts no sooner understood that the Britons were abandoned by the Romans, than they began to form designs, not only of pillaging, as they were wont to do, the southern part of the island, but, for making an absolute conquest thereof, or at least of a good part of it,

\* Bed. lib. i. cap. 12. Gildas de excid. Britan. Fordun. Scoti-chronicon. lib. iii. cap. 12. Zozim. hist. lib. vi. Chron. Saxon ad. ann. 435.

† Mare Clausum, lib. ii. cap. 9.



which accordingly they attempted with a numerous army, and with a great fleet. The first thing they did, was to demolish the wall, that it might be no obstacle to future incursions; then, landing their forces behind the Britons, they so astonished them with numbers, that they relinquished all thoughts of defence. These inroads having destroyed the chief cities, and interrupted agriculture, a famine ensued, which, however grievous to the Britons in one respect, was yet of service to them in another; for it destroyed multitudes of their enemies, compelled the rest to retreat, and so gave them time to recollect themselves. \* The issue of their deliberations was the sending over the bishop of London into Armorica, or Brittany, in France, to demand assistance of their brethren settled there; and the reason assigned for this, in the British history, is very just and reasonable; for the bishop was charged to represent the chief cause of their weakness, to be the planting of that country, by the emperor Maximus, and the leaving there the greatest part of the British navy. This representation had a proper effect upon the king of Brittany; who, though he could not himself pass over to the assistance of his countrymen, yet he sent over his brother Constantine, with a squadron of stout ships, and two thousand men. This Constantine was crowned their king by the Britons, and by them surnamed the Deliverer, because he fought valiantly and successfully against their enemies, and ruled worthily for ten years. †

I know very well, that many of our best writers reject this Constantine, and would persuade us, that there never was any such prince; but that the whole is a fiction of the author of the British history. This notion, however, is

\* Hist. Britan. lib. cap. 3. Vit. hist. lib. vii. Alured. Beverl. lib. 1. Johan. de Fordun. Scotichron. lib. 3. cap. 11.

† Hist. Brit. lib. vi. cap. 4, 5. Vit. hist. lib. vii. Cooper's Chronicle, fol. 138.



so thoroughly refuted by a very learned writer, who long studied and perfectly understood the British records, that I cannot conceive any impartial critic will censure my following his opinion, when they have carefully perused, and duly weighed his reasons: \* but what chiefly prevailed upon me to follow the British history in this point is, the authority of the Saxon annals, published by the late learned Bishop of London. † For these annals place the retreat of the Romans in 435, and the coming of the Saxons in 443, which is the very year after this King Constantine died; and though these annals do not mention him, yet as they tell us nothing of what passed in that interval, I can see no cause why we should not rather follow the account given us by the British authors, of things which happened in this space of time, than leave such a chasm in our history, merely because other authors, who, none of them profess to write of the succession of the British kings, say nothing of this prince. Especially, since the Scotch historians own him, and there are other convincing proofs, from British records, of his having really reigned here; though perhaps there may be some error as to the length of his reign.

At the time of his decease he left three sons, Constans, Aurelius Ambrosius, and Uter, surnamed Pendragon. Constans, the eldest, was a very weak man, and by his father destined to be a monk; the other two were children. Vortigern, a British nobleman of great power, took Constans out of his monastery, and, to serve his own purposes, made him king. He governed for a time in his name; and when he thought himself strong enough to rule without him, he caused him to be put to death, and then seized the kingdom: the children of Constantine flying to Brittany. This Vortigern it was, who, as the Saxon authors tell us, invited their countrymen over

A D.  
433.

\* See Lewis's Ancient Hist. of Great Britain, p. 157.

† Bishop Gibson.

into Britain. He was, as all writers agree, a very bad prince, who, by his tyrannical government, encouraged the Scots and Picts again to invade the southern parts of the island, and so alienated the minds of his subjects from him, that he durst not rely on their assistance, even for the defence of their country : this is so rational an account of his strong inclination to foreigners, for which he is unanimously upbraided by all our authentic historians, that I cannot doubt its being truth. \* The first Saxons who arrived were Horsa and Hengist, two brothers, with their followers ; by whose assistance Vortigern repulsed the Scots and Picts, and settled himself effectually in the kingdom. To fix them, without whose assistance his security could not continue here, he gave them lands in Kent, where they landed ; as also in the north, after they had beaten his enemies. These Saxons came over in three ships ; but having thriven so well here, Hengist, who was a wise man, prevailed upon the king, first to give him leave to build a castle, and then to bring over a fresh supply of his countrymen, which he accordingly did, in a squadron of eighteen ships. With them came over Rowena, the daughter of Hengist, a very beautiful and artful woman, whom Vortigern married, quitting, for her sake, his former queen, by whom he had three sons ; and inviting over, by her suggestions, a vast number of Saxons, he thereby so irritated the Britons, that they resolved to depose him, which accordingly they did, and set up his son. †

The name of this young prince was Vortimer, a brave and worthy man. He immediately raised an army, and as fast as he could, equipped a fleet, while his degenerate

A. D.  
463.

\* Hist. Britan. lib. vi. cap. 9. Vit. hist. lib. vii. Bed. hist. eccl. lib. i. Gildas de Excidio Britan. G. Malmesb. de gestis reg. Angl. lib. i.

† Chronicon. Saxon. ad. A. D. 449. Witichin: de rebus Saxon. lib. i. Hist. Brit. lib. vi. cap. 10, 11, 12.

father meanly sided with strangers against his subjects. The British writers say, that Vortimer defeated the Saxons in four battles; the first on the river Derwent; the second at Ailesford, in Kent, where Horsa was slain; the third was on the sea-shore, on the loss of which they fled to the isle of Thanet, where they thought they should have been safe; but Vortimer having now revived the spirits of his subjects, and withal gotten together a considerable fleet, the Saxons found themselves obliged to try their fortune in a naval engagement, in which they were beaten for the fourth time, and obliged to fly home, leaving their wives and children behind them in the isle of Thanet: nor had they ever returned if Vortimer had lived; but he was soon after poisoned, by the contrivance of his mother-in-law.\* It is true, the Saxon chronicle takes no notice of any of these battles, except that of Ailesford, wherein they say they were victorious, but acknowledge that Horsa was there killed; which concession, with the circumstance of the Saxons never owning they were beaten at all, seems to support the credit of the British history.

After the death of Vortimer, the Britons unaccountably invited Vortigern again to the throne. He, persisting in his old sentiments, recalled Hengist, who soon brought over such crowds of Saxons, that when the king would have restrained him, it was not in his power; insomuch, that after some fruitless struggles, he at length fled into Wales, and left the best part of the island to their mercy; and thus, as their own writers agree, not more by their own valour, than by the weakness of an uxorious king, the Saxons first seated themselves in Britain.

In this period of time, Aurelius Ambrosius, the second son of Constantine, was become a man, and being invited by the Britons to prosecute his claim to the crown, he got together a good fleet, and embarking thereon ten thou-

\* Hist. Brit. lib. vi. cap. 13, 14. Vit. hist. lib. vii.



A.D.  
481.

sand men, landed at Totness. The first thing he did was to pursue Vortigern, whom he defeated and destroyed; and then turned his arms against the Saxons, whom he defeated also in several battles, and in one of them slew the famous Hengist, either in fight, or, as the British history reports, after he had made him prisoner.\* It is true, there is no notice taken of this in the Saxon annals; but then they say nothing of what happened in that year, but tell us in the next, that Esca succeeded Hengist, which is a circumstance very favourable to the account which we have given, since, as we before observed, there is no instance of their commemorating any defeat, though in setting down their victories they are very exact. Upon this victory, Aurelius made a peace with the Saxons, and was, not long after, at their instigation, poisoned. It is very remarkable, that Paulus Diaconus† mentions this British king, and tells us, that by his valour he supported his sinking country.

A.D.  
500.

Uther, surnamed Pendragon, that is, dragon's head, from his bearing the head of a dragon in his ensigns, succeeded his brother, and carried on the war against the Saxons successfully sometimes, and at others was much distressed by them; so that he was constrained to treat them as the French afterwards did the Normans, that is, to yield them provinces, and content himself with homage, instead of absolute sovereignty, and therefore, under his reign, we find several Saxon principalities established in this island. It likewise appears from the Saxon annals, that several battles were fought against the Britons in his reign, though he is never mentioned; because, in those annals, they speak of no British princes, except such as were by them either beaten or killed. In his reign also the kingdom was invaded from Ireland; but by the cou-

\* Hist. Britan. lib. viii. cap. 5, 6, 7. Vit. hist. lib. vii.

† Hist. Miscel. lib. xvi.



rage of this prince the enemy was repulsed, and the public tranquillity restored; to preserve which, he equipt a very considerable fleet, and this, together with his dominions, he left to his son the famous Arthur. \*

A.D.  
537.

This prince, whose glory, like that of many other martial monarchs, turns more to his prejudice than advantage, by giving an air of fable to his history, and bringing his real deeds in question, through the extravagant pains bestowed by those who recorded them; this worthy prince, I say, achieved great things, and intended greater. Our learned antiquary, Leland, long ago vindicated the reputation of his victories against the cavils of the critics; who, because they do not find things exactly written in barbarous times, when indeed it is well they were written at all, will have them to be absolute fables; as if the memory of facts could not outlive their circumstances, the contrary of which every day demonstrates to be a truth. My design will not permit me to say more upon this subject; nor, indeed, had I said so much, if Arthur had not been one of the most eminent of our naval heroes. For he, as the British history informs us, which Mr. Selden did not disdain to transcribe, annexed to his kingdom of Britain the six insular provinces, viz. Ireland, Iceland, Gothland, the Orcades or Orkneys, Norway, and Denmark, † which throwing off the yoke under the reign of his successor, were once more recovered by King Malgo, though held by the Britons after that but for a little time.

Thus we have brought down the naval history of this ancient nation to the time of its declension, and their being compelled by the Saxons to retire into Wales, and the counties adjacent thereto, where, according to their own

\* Hist. Britan. lib. vii. cap. 24. Vit. hist. lib. vii.

† Hist. Britan. lib. ix. cap. 10. Campbell is here incorrect. The 10th ch. says nothing of Norway and Denmark, but the 11th mentions, that Arthur subdued Norway, Dacia, Aquitaine, and Gaul. Vit. hist. lib. viii.

historians, the Britons for several ages preserved some maritime strength. If any one should esteem this so much time thrown away, and should surmise that it had been better we had begun our history lower, that we might have written with more certainty; the answer is ready, and I hope satisfactory. Many of our wisest antiquaries are of opinion, that we derive our excellent constitution from the Britons, their laws being translated by the command of the Saxon princes, and incorporated with their own. If then their constitution might be the model of ours, why not their naval dominion the source of ours? We are the descendants of the Saxons; but then they were the successors of the Britons, and did not think it beneath them to claim under them in this respect. Thus the glorious King Edward I. in a letter he wrote to the Pope, in asserting his sovereignty over Scotland, derives it from the conquest of Arthur; so that, it seems, his acts were matter of record and history then, though in the eyes of some they pass for fables now. On the whole, therefore, if it be right to trace a title as high as possible, that is, as high as vouchers can be found to support it, we are well justified as to the pains we have taken; and as to the certainty of later records, as we state them in their proper periods, we lose nothing by shewing whence they are derived.

It may not be amiss to observe, that we follow some very great authorities, in paying this respect to the British history. Camden himself, though he suspects it in the gross, yet supports many historical passages in his great work of the description of Britain, from Nennius and other British writers. The Scottish historian Buchanan, though he treats the work of Geoffrey of Monmouth with great contempt, yet acknowledging the history of Arthur, gives more light into some parts of it than any other author. The profound Selden, who studied our antiquities with equal application and judgment, proceeds likewise in

this track. To conclude, the immortal Shakespear, whose works proclaim him as true a patriot as he was a poet, shewed a strong inclination to preserve the memory of our British worthies, by dedicating to their honour several of his plays, such as, the tragedy of King Lear, Cymbeline, Locrine, &c.; and the sublime Milton had thoughts of doing the same, though he seems to have altered his mind when he wrote his history.

If so little certainty occur in what the world has generally esteemed matters of moment, we may very well suppose, that there is less still to be gleaned from ancient writers, within this period, in reference to commerce? Yet something there is, for what was there, save the thirst of gain, that could establish a regular intercourse between countries so distant as Phœnicia and the British isles? Yet such a correspondence there was, nor are we left quite in the dark as to the motives upon which it was founded. The Phœnicians, in those early days the greatest traders in the world, visited these islands for the sake of their tin, which was excellent in its kind, and of which they had great plenty, and for this reason they bestowed upon them the name of Cassiterides, \* the reader will permit me to give him two instances with respect to the commercial spirit of those ages, which are equally instructive and entertaining.

It was in Spain, in which the Phœnicians had potent colonies and fruitful territories, that they fixed the staple of their trade with those islands before mentioned; and so jealous, it seems, they were of having their route to the British Indies discovered, that a ship laden with tin

\* Strabo, Gregor. lib. iii. p. 147. These islands are styled Cassiterides from the Greek word *κασσίτερος*; which signifies tin, just as from the Latin word *stannum* we have formed stanneries to signify tin works. In the like manner, among the Indian nation called the Drangi, there was a city named Cassiteron from its being a great mart for tin. Stephanus, *de urbibus*, also mentions in the Indian sea an island called Cassitera for the same reason.



being chased by a Roman vessel of greater force, the captain and owner wilfully run her on shore, that he might have a chance for drawing his eager enemy into the same misfortune, or at least, be secure of preventing his rich cargo from falling into his hands, and thereby tempt the Romans to think of opening a passage to those islands themselves. This conduct of his was not only approved, but applauded by his countrymen, who made him ample satisfaction for his cargo. We are indebted for this intelligence to Strabo,\* one of the most learned and authentic writers of antiquity. The other passage is to be met with in Solinus,† who assures us, that the inhabitants of the Cassiterides would not part with their valuable commodities for money, but insisted upon having goods for goods. Now this could not arise from a spirit of barbarity, for the use of money was known to the Britons, though the metal they made use of for that purpose was either copper or iron, but flowed from a spirit of traffic; and there is nothing absurd in supposing, that they either re-exported these foreign commodities, or manufactured some of them, and then sold them to other nations;‡ there being no greater skill required for that than for extracting and refining metals.

\* Geogr. lib. iii. p. 175, where we have express mention, that the Romans were exceedingly solicitous to intercept some of these tin ships.

† De Britannis, cap. xxv. He says, they have no markets there, and will not deal with strangers otherwise than by barter. But Strabo, in the place before cited, mentions them as a sober and civilized people, who wore commonly black garments, and particularly an inner or under robe reaching down to their ancles, girt under their breasts with a girdle, and walking commonly with staves in their hands.

‡ I might have cited Strabo also in support of what is here advanced. He informs us, that notwithstanding all the precautions taken by the Phoenicians, this navigation could not be long concealed from the Romans. Publius Crassus was the first of their captains who visited these isles, who found the inhabitants very much addicted to peace and commerce by sea.



The goods and commodities of Britain in those early days were corn, cattle, hides, hounds, pearls, lead, tin, silver, and gold. The two first metals were of their own growth; but, for the two last, I presume they had them from other nations, in exchange. In process of time, when, by their intercourse with the Romans, they were grown more polite, the Britons no doubt extended their trade; and though we have no authorities to enable us to give a distinct account of this matter, yet there is a passage in Tacitus which proves it in the general very strongly; for, he assures us, that the people of Cornwall, by their constant intercourse with traders, became more courteous and civil than the rest of their countrymen.\* And the same observation occurs in another ancient writer;† so that, notwithstanding the obscurity in which this subject is involved, we have the clearest certainty, that our ancestors, even in the most remote ages, knew the value of their native commodities, and, in consequence of that knowledge, procured for their own use those of other nations; and, therefore, these facts, drawn from Greek and Latin writers, whose authorities alone will pass for evidence with the critics, ought at least to have so much weight, as to render what is said to the same purpose in the British history of our intercourse with the northern nations, not either so incredible or ridiculous as some would represent it.

There can be no doubt made, that when the Romans had fully subdued all the southern part of this isle, and had introduced their customs and manners among the natives, they must have made a great change in the face of affairs, by bringing in a more elegant and sumptuous way of living, which consequently was favourable to trade; and we have just reasons to believe, caused abundance of good towns to be erected in places held convenient in that

\* Tacit. in vit. Agric.

† Diodor. Sicul.

respect. \* It is the conjecture of a most learned and judicious prelate, that London, called by the Romans *Augusta*, owed its rise to this; † but, for my part, I rather believe, that it was a fortress and a port too in the time of the Britons, and that it was afterwards altered, re-built, and re-peopled by the Romans. We may form some judgment as to the size of towns in those days, by what several historians relate of the mischief done here, and at Verulam, by the Britons, when they endeavoured to throw off the Roman yoke under Queen Boadicea. They then destroyed both Verulam and London, and in these two places they cut off, as one historian says, seventy thousand, ‡ or, as another affirms, eighty thousand citizens. § Now, at that time, it is agreed, that London was not so considerable a place as Verulam, and besides, the Roman general had withdrawn out of London all who were willing to quit the place; so that, as Tacitus expressly tells us, there were none left behind, except such as, through age and infirmities, were unable to leave it; or such as were so taken with the delights of it, that even the approaching danger could not induce them to leave it. || If, therefore, under these circumstances, such numbers were killed in two places only, we must conclude from thence, that the country, under the obedience of the Romans, was very populous. Yet in succeeding times, when they were blessed with a long and general peace, the Roman dominion much farther extended, and beyond all comparison better set-

\* See what our learned Camden says upon this subject, in his admirable *Britannia*, speaking of the Romans in Britain.

† Bishop Stillingsfleet, in his discourse concerning the antiquity of London, in the second volume of his *Ecclesiastical Cases*.

‡ Tacitus in *Vit. Agric.* See also our excellent countryman Mr. Bolton, in his most judicious and elegant work, entitled, *Nero Cæsar*.

§ Dio in *Xiphilin*, p. 168. See also *Eutrop. Epitom. Hist. Rom. lib. vii.*

|| It is observed by Tacitus, that it was the great opulence of these places which exposed them to the fury of the Britons.

tled, the southern parts of Britain must have attained to a far more flourishing condition.

We have very large, and very accurate accounts of the several colonies planted, the many fortresses raised, and the disposition of the great roads, which, with infinite diligence, and no less skill, the Romans caused to be raised through all parts of England. We have very learned and very curious dissertations upon their inscriptions, coins, and other antiquities, which have escaped the sharp teeth of time, and have been preserved to our day, all which plainly shew, that they were a very ingenious and polite, as well as a great, a wise, and a brave people. \*

But still there seems to be wanting a political view of the Roman government in Britain, and of its effects, towards which, as occasion offered, we have given some hints in this chapter; but the thing most evidently deserves to be considered much more at large; and if it were attempted by any learned and able person, it would, without question, afford both entertainment and instruction.

This would be now a much easier task than in former times, when so little was known of those matters, that must be previously understood, before any certain and distinct notions can be formed about it; but when these matters are tolerably well settled, and when there is no longer any difficulty of obtaining a tolerable view of the state of Britain, while it remained a Roman province, it would be much more useful to endeavour at collecting a rational view of their government, civil and military, the number of the inhabitants of their several towns distinguished into proper classes, the strength of their forces maintained here at different times, the several improvements that were made while they were in possession of the island; for that they did make improvements, their historians affirm, and

\* See the many discourses of our famous antiquaries, Camden, Selden, Burton, &c. but more especially Horseley's *Britannia Romana*.



the monuments still remaining prove; all which would contribute to give the generality of readers better ideas of the Roman power and wisdom, than they are likely to attain from the perusing dry discourses, about the difference of letters upon inscriptions, or the use of this or that instrument in sacrifices.\* That during the flourishing state of the Roman empire, their provinces here had a full share of this prosperity, and that the Britons, who lived in subjection, copied their manners, till they were corrupted by their luxury, which, with the share they had frequently taken in the civil wars of the empire, rendered them an easy prey to barbarous invaders, is commonly known, and well enough understood; but as to the particulars before mentioned, which would enable us to make a comparison between the condition of the people in this island then, and in succeeding times, we know very little, and our want of knowledge in this respect, has been the source of a great variety of errors, that one would wish to see confuted and exposed as they deserve. †

\* I do not pretend to condemn these inquiries, but only intimate my wish they were applied to some more material points.

† What gives me concern is, to see our writers so enthusiastically fond of Roman power, and so unreasonably severe upon the ancient Britons.

## CHAP. II.

The Naval History of the Saxons, from their first seating themselves in this island, to their being subdued by the Danes.

(Containing the space of about 500 Years.)

WE have very copious accounts of the ancient Saxons, before they transported themselves out of Germany, as well in other authors as their own.\* They defended themselves against the Romans with equal firmness and success, manifesting the love of liberty, not only by a generous contempt of death in the field, but also by studiously avoiding luxury in times of peace, for which they are deservedly famous. † On the declension of the Roman empire, they became noted for their piracies at sea, in so much that the emperors were forced to create a new officer here in Britain, called the Count of the Saxon coast, purely to repel their invasions. ‡ In succeeding times, they infested the coasts of France as well as Britain, and began to threaten greater exploits than they had hitherto undertaken. § We must, however, observe that they were styled pirates only by their enemies, who felt the effects of their arms; for as to themselves, they looked on this course of life as a noble and necessary employment, for reasons which will presently appear.

The Saxon writers say, that they were invited into Britain by King Vortigern, in order to assist him against

\* Witichindus de rebus Saxon. Tacit. de morib. German. Sidon. Apollinar. Ammian. Marcellin. Hist. lib. xxviii. Bed. Hist. Eccles. lib. i. cap. xv.

† Tacit. ubi supra. Ammian. Marcellin. lib. xiv. cap. 3.

‡ Notit. dignitat. occid. cap. 72. Imp. Scaliger ad Auson. lib. ii. cap. 6. & Guliel. Camden. in Britan. p. 96.

§ Ethelwerd. Hist. Chronicon. lib. i. 474. Henric. Huntingd. lib. ii. Sidon. Apollinar. lib. viii. Epist. ad Numantium.

the Scots and Picts ; but as we before observed, the British historians differ from them in this particular, and assert, that Hengist and Horsa landing with their forces in Kent, King Vortigern, who was then at Canterbury, sent for them, and received them into his service, without any previous invitation. This account is very natural, and the circumstances attending it highly deserve the reader's notice. As soon as they were brought before him, says my author, \* he cast his eyes upon the two brothers, who excelled all the rest, both in nobility and gracefulness of person ; and having taken a view of the whole company, asked them of what country they were, and what was the occasion of their coming into his kingdom ? To whom Hengist, (whose years and wisdom entitled him to a precedence,) in the name of the rest, made the following answer : “ Most noble king, Saxony, which is one of the countries of Germany, was the place of our birth, and the occasion of our coming was to offer our service to you, or some other prince : for we were driven out of our native country for no other reason, but that the established usage of the kingdom required it. It is the custom of that place, that when it comes to be overstocked with people, our princes from the provinces meet together, and command all the youth of the kingdom to assemble before them ; then, casting lots, they make choice of the strongest and ablest of them to go into foreign climates to procure them a subsistence, and free their native country from a superfluous multitude of people. Our region, therefore, of late being actually overstocked, our princes met, and after lots cast, made choice of the youth whom you see in your presence, and have obliged us to obey the custom that had been established of old : and us two brothers, Hengist and Horsa, they made generals over them, out of respect

\* Hist. Britan. lib. vi. cap. 10. Vit. hist. lib. viii. Chron. Saxon, ad A. D. 443.



to our ancestors, who enjoyed the same honour. In obedience; therefore, to laws so long held sacred, we put out to sea, and under the happy guidance of Woden, (Mercury,) have arrived in your kingdom.”

The Saxon annals acknowledge, that Hengist and Horsa came with no more than three ships, but that the fertility of the British soil, and the vices of the inhabitants, induced them to think of sending for more of their countrymen, in hopes of seating themselves here.\* Another of their historians gives still a fairer and fuller account of this matter. The Saxons, says he, made for some time a civil return to the Britons for their friendship; but by degrees, perceiving the country to be of a large extent, the soil fruitful, and the inhabitants little inclined to feats of arms; considering further, that themselves and many of their brethren were destitute of settled habitations, they began to find fault with their pay, to murmur at the quantity of provisions that were furnished them, and daily increasing their numbers, they at last, on these frivolous pretences, made peace with the Scots and Picts, and in conjunction with them, turned their arms upon the unhappy Britons.† In order to have a just notion of this matter, the reader must be informed, that two Saxon chiefs, Ocha and Ebissa, with forty stout ships, had wasted the Orkneys, and afterwards seated themselves and their followers in the western isles and coasts of Scotland, which, on the invitation of Hengist, they quitted, to share in his rising fortunes.‡ Though most of our writers call these invaders by the common name of Saxons, yet, in truth; there were three German nations whence issued those swarms of foreigners, who now took possession of this island, viz. the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes. The Saxons erected here three principalities, viz. the East,

\* Chron. Saxon. ad A. D. 449.

† Witichindus de rebus Saxon. lib. ix. cap. 2. Vit. hist. lib. vii.

‡ Nennius Hist. Britan.

South, and West Saxons. The Angles were for some time distinguished into East Angles, Mid Angles, Mercians, and Northumbrians. As for the Jutes, they settled in Kent, and in the Isle of Wight; and, in this last-mentioned place, their posterity remained so long unmixed, that, several ages after, the West Saxons called the inhabitants of that island Jutes. \*

For some considerable time from their first settlement, they encouraged fresh supplies, and sometimes whole colonies to come over; but after they had secured their possessions, and fixed their respective principalities, they turned their views entirely to the care of things at home, and very imprudently concluded that keeping up great armies would secure them from foreign invasion. It was nearly three hundred years before they became absolute lords of that part of the island which they called England; † and in this space, one Saxon prince or other entertaining all new comers in his service, with a view of defending his own dominions, or encroaching on those of his neighbours, there were few rovers on the coast. But in process of time the Saxons changed their policy, and by studying to keep the island to themselves, created a greater mischief than that which they endeavoured to avoid; for while they received and employed foreigners in their wars, their intestine divisions did not depopulate their kingdoms, one evil balancing the other. Yet now the consequence of this management, and their altering their conduct, brought upon them a greater mischief; for it drew over such shoals of strangers in hopes of employment and settlement, that the Saxons, in their own defence, were obliged to fortify their coast. They had the example of the Britons before them, they suffered themselves to be distressed for want of a naval strength, not having learned as yet that

\* Chronicon. Saxon. p. 12, 13. Gul. Malmesb. de gestis reg. Angl. lib. i. cap. 1. Henric. Huntingdon. hist. lib. ii. Vit. hist. lib. viii.

† Chronic. Saxon. ad A. D. 743.



unnerring maxim in policy, that power is best preserved by the use of those means by which it was obtained.

In one thing they either followed the old British model, or brought the like custom with them from Germany, viz. allowing a pre-eminence to one of their princes, who, while the rest governed only within their respective dominions, had the superiority over the whole, and thence, by way of distinction, was styled King of the Englishmen.\* This office, in some sort, resembled a dictator, and, like it, was sometimes useful, sometimes detrimental, and at last fatal to the people. Offa, the eleventh king of the Mercians, having attained this dignity, began to shew a disposition of ruling absolutely over his neighbours, for which he was better qualified than any of his predecessors, having parts as well as power, superior to most of his contemporaries. His ambition, however, united the British princes in Wales, and the Saxon kings in England, in an alliance against him; but he baffled their united force as much by his wisdom as by the strength and success of his arms. To secure himself against the incursions of the Britons, he threw up a strong entrenchment, which began near the mouth of the river Dee, and running along the mountains, ended at the fall of the Wye, near Bristol. This stupendous work the Britons called in their own language, *Clawdh Offa*, and the remains of it are still known by the name of Offa's ditch; † and having thus secured himself on this side, he turned his forces against his Saxon neighbours. They, in their distress, applied themselves to Charles the Great, King of France, for protection, who wrote letters in a high style to Offa, exhorting, or rather commanding him to desist from his enterprizes. But these, instead of pro-

A.D.  
755.

\* See Speed's Chronicle in his account of the Saxon government.

† Gulielm. Malmesb. de gestis reg. Angl. lib. ii. Ethelwerd, Chron. lib. ii. cap. 19. Roger Hovend. p. 409.



ducing the desired effect, engaged that magnanimous prince to turn his thoughts on the proper means of securing his dominions from foreign attempts, which he soon saw could no other way be done than by keeping up a naval force. He therefore applied himself to the raising a considerable fleet; which rendered him so formidable, that Charles, who was already very powerful, and who became afterwards emperor, and, in a manner, lord of the continent, was glad to embrace his friendship; and accordingly an alliance was negociated between them by Alcuinus, or Albinus, a person distinguished for his great learning, and other accomplishments, of which we have still remaining many authentic testimonies.\* This step procured Offa both peace and reputation during the remainder of his life; so that in spite of the efforts of his enemies, he died quietly, after a glorious reign of thirty-nine years, leaving to his successors this useful lesson, that he who will be secure on land must be supreme at sea. †

A. D.  
795.

It must be observed, that it was under the reign of this prince that the Danes first set foot in England; and if they had always met with such a reception as they then did, they had very probably abandoned all hopes of fixing here; for they were immediately forced to put to sea, and some of them were slain. ‡ A little after the death of Offa, they began to infest the coast of Northumberland, where they did incredible mischief, spreading themselves over the country like locusts; and when they had eaten up all they could meet with, where they first landed, they hoisted sail for some new place. It happened, unfortunately, that the remains of the Britons had still so inveterate a hatred against the Saxons, that instead of joining with them to

\* Gulielm. Malmesb. de gestis reg. Angl. lib i. cap. 5. Alcuin. oper. in epist. p. 1669.

† Chronicon. Saxon, p. 65.

‡ Ibid. ad A. D. 787.

repress these new invaders, which was certainly their interest, they, on the contrary, assisted them against their old oppressors. Ecgbryht, King of the West Saxons, having raised himself to the sovereignty of England, equipped a fleet, and defeated a Danish squadron of thirty-five ships, at Charmouth, in Dorsetshire, with prodigious slaughter; yet this did not hinder them, two years after, from landing with a vast force in Wales, where they were joined by their confederates, the Britons. King Ecgbryht opposed them both with a fleet and army; and though he was not able to do much by sea, yet coming to a general engagement on shore, he broke entirely the enemy, compelling the Britons to fly to the mountains, and the Danes to their ships.\* This kind of war was long continued, and exceedingly weakened the Saxons. Their authentic chronicle informs us, that King Ethelstan, in the life time of his father, commanded the British fleet, and off Sandwich defeated the Danes in a bloody battle, taking nine of their ships, and obliging the rest to leave the coast; yet soon after they returned with three hundred and fifty sail, and landing, took Canterbury and other places, and afterwards London.† From this time forward the Saxons in a manner abandoned all thoughts of naval affairs, and sought only how to fortify their cities, and defend themselves as well as they could against their barbarous enemies, after they were landed. This was a fatal mistake; for by thus permitting the enemy to land without interruption, small bodies of Danes, whom they might easily have cut off, had they attacked them separately, united themselves into irresistible armies; and being by degrees accustomed to conquest, and driving the inhabitants from the coasts, they at last thought of settling; and being themselves equally proud and lazy, made a kind of slaves of the country people, obliging them to plough, sow, and reap for them as their masters.

\* *Chronicon. Saxon.* ad A. D. 833, 835.

† *Ibid.* ad A. D. 851.



Such was the situation of things during the reigns of Ethelwolf, Ethelbert, and Ethelred; so that when Alfred or Elfred came to the throne, he had, properly speaking, a kingdom without subjects. The country was destroyed; all the cities and great towns demolished; and the people worn out by continual fatigue, having been sometimes compelled to fight nine or ten battles in a year. In short, their wealth, their strength, their spirits were exhausted; and instead of attempting to defend themselves, as they were wont, they began every where to submit to the Danes, and to embrace rather a settled slavery, than a precarious freedom, in a country now become a desert, and where it was a difficult matter to find subsistence, even when for a small time released from the fear of enemies. The king, though in this low condition, did not despair of the public safety, but, with equal vigour and prudence, applied himself at once to the management of the war, and to the conduct of public affairs; so that, in a short time, encouraged by his example, the Saxons began to resume their spirits, and in many battles defeated the Danes, compelling them as often as it was in their power, to quit the country, and when they found this impracticable, permitting them to live amongst them upon reasonable conditions, and in a regular way.\*

A.D.  
871.

There were two maxims which the king steadily pursued, and thereby extricated himself from his troubles. The first was fighting the enemy, if possible, at sea; of which we have frequent instances in the Saxon Chronicle, and almost always with advantage, by the steady pursuit of which method he had constantly a fleet, and considerable numbers of experienced sailors. But, as it was impossible to guard all the coasts of his dominions, and as

\* Asser. Meneven. in Alfræd. Mag. Malmesb. de gestis reg. Angl. lib. ii. cap. 4. Henric. Huntingdon. Hist. lib. v. Roger Hoved. p. 242, in edit. cited above. Ethelwerdi Chronicon. lib. iv. cap. 3. Chronicon. Saxon. p. 82.



the enemy's squadrons were frequently superior to his own, he was sometimes obliged to fight on shore; and in this case he likewise used all imaginable expedition, that the enemy might not have time either to gain intelligence or to get refreshment. His other maxim was, to have always in his court the ablest men, not only in the sciences but also in the arts, and to converse with them frequently and familiarly. By this means he came to the knowledge of many things, by a comparison of informations, of which even those from whom he learned them were ignorant; and, by his superior judgment, so adapted the intelligence he received, as to render his small force successful both at sea and land, against his numerous enemies.

In maritime affairs he was particularly skilful; and, as we have authentic memoirs of his reign, one cannot but be amazed at the sagacity he discovered in providing a kind of ships of a new construction, devised by himself; which gave him infinite advantages over people continually practised in naval armaments, and whose experience, therefore, ought to have rendered them his superiors in navigation. He considered with himself, that as the fleets of these invaders were frequently built in a hurry, hastily drawn together, meanly provided in respect to victuals and rigging, and crowded with men, a few ships of a larger size, built in a new manner, of well-seasoned materials, thoroughly supplied with ammunition and provision, and manned by expert seamen, must at first sight surprise, and, in the course of an engagement, destroy numbers without any great hazard to themselves. In pursuance of this project, he caused a certain number of ships to be built, capable of holding each sixty rowers, and, as in that, double in all other respects to the largest ships then in use. These he sent to sea, with an express prohibition not either to receive or give quarter, but to put to death all who fell into their power: \* instructions

\* Chronic. Saxon. p. 98. Henric. Huntingd. hist. lib. v. Gulielm. Malmesb. de gestis reg. Angl. lib. ii. cap. 4. Rog. Hoveden, p. 241.

perfectly suited to the design on which these ships were fitted out, and to the circumstances the king's affairs then were in. In saying this, we only copy ancient authors, who are loud in the praises of Alfred, and take abundance of pains to possess their readers with high ideas of his wisdom, courage, and other virtues. But it will perhaps, be more satisfactory, the nature of this work especially considered, to examine this matter a little more closely, and thereby convince such as will pay a proper attention, that things were really as these writers have stated them ; and that there was something truly useful, and, at the same time, very extraordinary, in his invention ; which, as we have shewn, was entirely due to his sagacity and penetration.

The learned Sir John Spelman, who wrote an accurate life of this famous prince, seems to be in much uncertainty on this subject : he is not able to determine whether they were ships or gallies ; nor can he well reconcile the height of the vessels to the number of rowers ; but, after having intimated many doubts, and cleared none of them, he leaves the reader in that perplexity into which he brought him.\* In the first place, then, it appears, from good authority, that they were gallies ; which takes away all difficulty about the rowers, since in the Mediterranean these sort of vessels are common, because they are convenient ; for the same reason which inclined King Alfred to make use of them, the facility of running with them close under shore, or up into creeks. That they might be longer, higher, and yet swifter than the vessels in common use, in a duplicate proportion, which is the true sense of what ancient writers say of them, may be easily conceived, and thence their great utility arose. We have seen that, in point of numbers, the king had no hope of equalling his enemies : by this contrivance he removed that difficulty, which seemed otherwise insuperable. For

\* Life of King Alfred the Great, p. 150, 151.



with a squadron of these ships, he was not afraid of attacking twice or thrice the same number of the enemy; because the force of his ships rendered those on board them able to deal with as many as they could grapple with; and in case of the enemy's having either the weather-gage, or some other accidental advantage, their swiftness enabled them to bear away; as, on the other hand, the ports were all their own. As to their instructions, we cannot call them cruel; because whatever their enemies might think of themselves, they were certainly esteemed by the Saxons, and with good reason, enemies to mankind; incapable, as experience had convinced them, of keeping faith, and therefore altogether unworthy of mercy. On the other hand, this severity was necessary for two reasons; first, in respect to self-defence. These ships, though large in comparison of other vessels, were however not large enough to contain prisoners with any safety; for we cannot apprehend that they carried exclusive of rowers, above one hundred and twenty men, if so many. Secondly, it was prudent, for example sake, in order to strike a terror into these rovers, that they might be thereby hindered from infesting this island, and inclined rather to prosecute their designs on some other coast. Add to all this another circumstance preserved to us in the Saxon Chronicle, and Alfred's wisdom will from thence most incontestibly appear. These gallies were built after quite another model than Frisian or Danish ships; \* so that they were wholly strange to the enemy, who for a long time knew not how to board them, though their courage might be great, and themselves, for the age in which they lived, able seamen.

But it is now time to descend to facts, of which some are very well worth the readers notice. † The same year

\* Chronic. Saxon. A. D. 897.

† Henric. Hunting. hist. int. script. post. Bedam. p. 201. Rog. Hoveden, p. 241, 242. Chron. Saxon. p. 98. Chron. Joan. Brompton, int. x. histor. ad A. D. 897.



that a few of these ships were first built, six pirates of an unusual bigness infested the Isle of Wight, and the coasts of Devonshire. The king immediately ordered nine of his new vessels in quest of them, with instructions to get, if possible, between them and the shore. Three of the pirates as soon as they perceived them, ran a-ground, but the other three stood out to sea, and boldly engaged the king's ships. Of these, two were taken, and all the men killed, the third escaped, but with five men only. They then attacked the ships which ran a-ground, and killed a great number of men. At length the tide took them off, but in so battered and leaky a condition, that it was with much difficulty they reached the coast of the South Saxons; where, again running on shore two of their vessels, the men endeavoured to escape, but were taken and carried to Winchester, and there, by order of the king, were hanged. The third vessel, though the men in her were grievously wounded, escaped; and in this single year, not less than twenty ships, with all the men on board them, were destroyed on the south coast only; which sufficiently demonstrates what mighty advantages were derived from this happy invention of the king. If the reader should inquire how this superiority at sea was lost, we must observe that it was very late in the king's life before his experience furnished him with light sufficient for this noble design, which very probably his successors wanted skill to prosecute, though, as will be hereafter seen, they were moved by his example to make great efforts for preserving their territories on shore, by maintaining the sovereignty of the sea.

Though this care of his own fleet was very commendable, yet the concern he shewed for the improvement of navigation, the extending the commerce of his subjects, and the discovering and describing far distant countries, deserves still higher commendation; because the first might be in some measure ascribed to necessity,

and ended only in the good of his own kingdom; whereas the latter was incontestably the fruit of an heroic genius; and might have been of use to all the nations of Europe. It was in order to farther these views, that he kept constantly in his court, at a very great expense, the most eminent men for worth and knowledge of all nations, such as Gauls, Franks, Germans, Frisons, Armoric Britons, besides the inhabitants of every corner of the British isles; of whom he enquired, and from whom he learned, whatever was known in those days, which, the sequel will prove, was more than any of the moderns imagine. Two instances have been transmitted, with authentic circumstances, from his time to ours. The first, his sending certain persons to discover the utmost extent of the Arctic regions, and the possibility of a passage on that side to the north-east. The other, his correspondence with the Indies. Facts so extraordinary in themselves, of such high importance in respect to the subject of which this work treats, and hitherto left in such obscurity by those who ought to have given us a better account of them, that I presume my dwelling upon them will be considered rather as a just tribute to Alfred's glorious memory, and to the honour of this nation, than as a tedious or unnecessary digression.

Sir John Spelman, who, as I before observed, considering the time in which he wrote, hath left us an excellent history of this monarch, tells us,\* that he had been informed, there was in the Cotton library a memorial of a voyage of one Ochter, a Dane, performed, by this king's procurement, for the discovery of a north-east passage. This paper, he says, he could never see; but he judged, and I think with reason, that it contained nothing more than the relation of that voyage, printed in the collections of Hakluyt and Purchas, which are in every body's hands; and, if there had been no better

\* Life of King Alfred the Great, p. 151.



account of the matter, even that would have deserved much attention. There is, however, a much more perfect copy of this relation, inserted in the Saxon version of Orosius, made by King Alfred himself,\* whereby it appears, that Ohtler, for so he is called in this authentic manuscript, was a native of Halgoland, which lies in 66° of north latitude; a man of great substance, of more than ordinary skill in navigation, and perfectly acquainted with the commerce of the north. He surveyed the coasts of Norway and Lapland by the direction of King Alfred, and presented him not only with a clear description of those countries and their inhabitants, but also brought him some of the horse-whale's teeth, which were then esteemed more valuable than ivory, and gave him a good account of the whale-fishing. This probably encouraged the king to send Wulfstan an Englishman to view these northern countries, of which he also gave him a relation. Both these narratives are written with such accuracy in point of geography, so much plainness and probability in respect to facts, and are intermixed with such just and prudent observations, that whoever shall take the trouble of comparing them with what the famous Olaus Magnus, archbishop of Upsal, wrote many hundred years afterwards of the same countries,† will stand amazed, and readily confess, that the age of Alfred was an age of good sense, and far superior in knowledge to those which succeeded it, there being nothing of fable or improbability in what Ohtler or Wulfstan deliver, but all exactly conformable to what

\* There is a fair copy of this among Junius's MSS. in the Bodleian library. The narrative here mentioned, together with a Latin translation of the Saxon original, is inserted in the appendix to the Latin version of Sir John Spelman's life of Alfred, published by Walker, whence these facts are taken.

† The title of this book is, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus, &c.* It was printed originally at Rome in 1555, in folio, and there is an English translation in 1658.



the discoveries of the last and present age have taught us. Hence I must take leave to infer, that what we read of fleets sent so far north by the Britons, is far from being so incredible as some critics would make us believe; for we can hardly imagine, that Alfred should ever think of such an expedition, without some previous informations; and that he might have these from the Britons will appear very probable, if we consider what is related in their histories, and that Asser of St. David's, a learned Briton, was one of this king's most intimate friends, and wrote the memoirs of his reign,\* addressed to himself, which are yet extant.

As to the Indian voyage, it was occasioned chiefly by the king's charity, who, hearing of the distress of the Christians of St. Thomas, resolved to send them relief. The person he made choice of was one Suithelm, called in Latin *Sigelmus*, a priest; who honestly executed his commission, and was so fortunate as to return back, bringing with him an immense treasure of India goods, and amongst them precious stones, perfumes, and other curiosities, of which the king made presents to foreign princes. As the reward of so acceptable a service, *Sigelmus* was made bishop of Sherburn; and William of Malmesbury, in his pontifical history, gives us a distinct account of this voyage, and tells us, it not only struck with wonder such as lived in the time when it was performed, but was considered with admiration even in the age in which he lived, adding, that *Sigelmus* had left to his church several of these Indian curiosities, as unquestionable evidences of so extraordinary a thing. † It is true that Asser of St. David's, whom we before men-

\* The last edition of this venerable work was printed at Oxford, A. D. 1722, 8vo.

† Gul. Malmesb. de gestis pontific. Anglorum, lib. ii. p. 141 of the edition of W. of Malin. in the *Rerum Anglicarum Scriptores post Bedam*, &c. by which I have verified Dr. Campbell's citations.—Y.

tioned, says nothing of this Indian voyage, though he is very particular in whatever relates to the power, splendour, or reputation of that monarch. But it would be a rash and unjust conclusion to argue from his silence, that no such voyage was performed. Asser, as appears from a passage in his memoirs, wrote them in the year 893, at which time Sigelmus was not returned. But it is very remarkable, that under the year 887, which was that wherein Sigelmus set out, Asser celebrates the king's extensive correspondence, and the great court that was paid him by princes, and other persons of eminence, in all parts of the world, and he particularly mentions letters from Abel patriarch of Jerusalem, which he saw and read;\* and these very probably were the very letters which occasioned the king's sending Sigelmus. Add to this, that Asser died soon after the return of this great traveller, who succeeded him in the bishopric of Sherburn;† so that the whole of this narration is perfectly clear, and well connected. It may not be amiss to observe, that these Christians of St. Thomas inhabit the peninsula of India, and that the commodities which Sigelmus is said to have brought back, are precisely those of their country. Sir John Spelman observes farther upon this subject, that the value and use of these curiosities being little known here, the king sought out for artists of all sorts, particularly goldsmiths and jewelers, for the working of them: and such were the defects of those times, and so excellent was the faculty of the king in every thing he turned his hand unto, as that even in those works also, the artificers themselves, and their arts, received improvement from his invention and direction, while they followed his genius, and manufactured that he designed for them.‡ And, as if there

\* Amal. rer. gestar. Ælfredi Magni, p. 58. Chron. Joan. Brompton, ad A. D. 887.

† Gul. Malmesbur. ubi supra.

‡ Spelman's life of Ælfred, p. 204.



was something peculiar in the fortune of this prince, we have still remaining a proof of what is here advanced; I mean, a jewel richly wrought, dug up in the island of Athelney, which was the king's retreat, when he fled from the Danes, in the beginning of his reign, and where he afterwards founded a monastery. This curious relic is yet preserved in the Ashmolean collection of curiosities, and, besides its excellent workmanship, hath a Saxon inscription to this purpose, *ÆLFREDUS ME JUSSIT FABRICARI, i. e. Ælfred directed this to me made.\** Having thus, to the utmost of my ability, cleared and justified these naval expeditions performed near a thousand years ago, I return now to the thread of my history, and to an account of what the Saxons atchieved at sea, after this wise monarch had shewn them the use and importance of a naval force.

A.D.  
901.

Edward succeeded his father Alfred, and proved a great prince; however, his government was disturbed both by intestine divisions, his cousin Ethelwald pretending to the kingdom, and by foreign invasions of the Danes, who, at the request of this Ethelwald, came, in the fourth year of the king's reign, in vast numbers into England. King Edward, finding it impossible to hinder their landing, drew together an army as soon as he could, and followed them into Kent, where he engaged them, and in a bloody battle killed Eric the Danish king, and Ethelwald who had stirred up this war. But, finding that he was still incommoded with new swarms of these northern rovers, he had recourse to his fleet; and, having drawn together a hundred ships upon the coast of Kent, he successfully engaged the enemy, and forced the greatest part of their fleet on shore; and then, landing himself, attacked their forces in a bloody battle, wherein, though he lost abundance of men, yet he entirely defeated his enemies, killing most of their

\* Annal. Ælfredi Magni, p. 170, 171.



chief commanders upon the spot. By degrees he raised his reputation so high, not only by his military exploits, but by his gentle government and wise provision for his subjects' safety, that all the petty princes throughout Britain congratulated him of their own accord on his success, willingly owned him for their lord, and humbly desired his protection. The very Danes, who were settled in the island, took the same method of securing themselves against his arms: but within a very short time from this extraordinary mark of good fortune, he died, and, in no long time after, his younger brother, who had succeeded him.\*

Ethelstan succeeded his brother, and gave early proofs of his being the worthy grandson of the great Alfred. He discovered, from his first ascending the throne, a great dislike to that policy, which his predecessors had used, of suffering the Danes and other strangers, who by force had seated themselves in the island, to become legal possessors in consideration of some small acknowledgment, and a feigned subjection, which was sure to last no longer than till they had a fair opportunity of revolting. This was certainly a right maxim; and one may safely affirm this monarch was the greatest politician, and at least as great a captain as any of the Saxon kings. He wisely judged, that there was no executing his scheme without a considerable force, and therefore he kept his army and his fleet in constant readiness. † At the beginning of his reign he made, or rather renewed, the alliance subsisting between his brethren and Constantine, then king of Scots, conceiving that, as their interests were the same, this would bind him to a due performance of the treaty; in which, how-

A.D.  
935.

\* Chron. Saxon, p. 99.

† Chron. Sax. p. 3. Gul. Malmesbur. de gestis reg. Anglor. lib. ii. c. 6. Hen. Hunting. lib. v. p. 204. Roger Hoveden, p. 242.

ever, he was mistaken; for Constantine suddenly broke it, either out of caprice, or from an apprehension of Ethelstan's power. Immediately upon this the Saxon invaded Scotland with a royal army, and wasted its coasts with a mighty fleet; which brought Constantine to a submission much against his will, as he discovered some years after. As soon as Ethelstan had retired, the Scot began to intrigue with the Britons on one side, and with Anlaff, whom most of our historians style king of Ireland, but who in reality was a Danish prince, settled there by conquest, on the other. In consequence of these negotiations, the Britons marched northwards with a great army, where they were joined by the whole force of the Scots; Anlaff coming, at the same time, to their assistance with a more numerous fleet than had been seen in those seas. Ethelstan, instead of being dejected at the sight of so many and such powerful enemies, resolved to decide the quarrel by attacking them both by sea and land at the same time, which he accordingly performed with equal valour and success. In this battle there fell five kings, and seven Danish chiefs. It was the bloodiest engagement that, till then, had ever happened in this island; and in the Saxon chronicle there is a most elegant account of it. By this grand defeat King Ethelstan effectually carried his point, and rendered himself the most absolute monarch that had ever reigned in Britain.\* The use he made of his victory, was effectually to secure his dominions, by taking from the petty princes such places as he judged to be dangerous in their hands; and, in all probability, he would have thoroughly established the Saxon power, if he had long survived; but he died about a year after, having swayed the sceptre, some say fourteen, others sixteen years.

A.D.  
938.

\* Chron. Saxon. p. 112, 113, 114.



Edmund, his brother, succeeded him in the throne, and found himself under a necessity of contesting the possession of it with his old enemy Anlaff and his associates, whom he defeated, and with whom he afterwards made peace; but, finding that there was no dependence upon the faith either of the Danish or British princes seated in the north, he seized on the kingdom of Northumberland, and added it to his own dominions, giving Cumberland to the king of Scots as his feudatory. He had no great occasion for naval armaments, the fame of his brother's power preserving him from foreign invasions; so that, after a short reign, he left his crown to his brother Edred. \* This prince had scarcely assumed the regal dignity, before he was assailed by his old enemies the Scots and Danes, against whom he had not so great success as his brethren; not through any fault of his, but rather by the treasonable practices of some of his powerful subjects. His nephew Edwy stepped after him into the throne; and, disobliging the monks, they have transmitted to posterity an account of nothing but his vices. † It should seem, however, that, during the reign of all these kings, the naval power of the Saxons was continually increasing, of which we shall see immediate proof; and to this we may ascribe their not being plagued with any of those invasions from the north, which had so much disturbed their predecessors.

A.D.  
941.

Edgar, very justly styled the Great, succeeded his brother Edwy; and, from his first ascending the throne, demonstrated himself worthy of being the heir of Alfred and Ethelstan. He thoroughly understood, and successfully pursued their maxims; for he applied himself, from the beginning of his reign, to the raising a mighty maritime force, and to the keeping in due subjection all

A.D.  
957.

\* Gul: Malmesb. de gest. reg. Ang. lib. ii. c. 7.

† Speed's chronicle, p. 369.



the petty princes. In one thing only he was blameable; that he gave too much into foreign customs, and indulged the Danes in living promiscuously with his own people; which gave them an opportunity of knowing thoroughly the state of all parts of the nation, of which they made a very bad use in succeeding times. In all probability, he was led into this error by his love to peace, which indeed he enjoyed, much more than any of his ancestors had done. But he enjoyed it as a king of this island ought to enjoy it; not in a lazy fruition of pleasure, unworthy a prince; but by assiduously applying himself to affairs of state, and by an activity of which few other kings are capable, even in times of the greatest danger. But it is necessary to enter into particulars, since we are now come to the reign of that king, who most clearly vindicated his right to the dominion of the sea, and who valued himself on his having justly acquired the truly glorious title of Protector of commerce.

As to his fleet, all writers agree, that it was far superior to any of his predecessors, as well as much more powerful than those of all the other European princes put together; but they are by no means of the same mind, as to the number of ships of which it was composed. Some fix it at three thousand six hundred,\* others at four thousand,† and there wants not authority to carry it so high as four thousand eight hundred.‡ However, the first seems to be the most probable number, and therefore to it we shall keep. These ships he divided into three fleets, each of twelve hundred sail, and them he constantly stationed, one on the east, another on the west, and the third on the north coast of the kingdom: neither was he satisfied with barely making such a provision, he would likewise see

\* Roger Hoveden, p. 244. Florent. Wigorn. ad A. D. 975.

† Chron. Joan Brompton.

‡ Matthæus Florileg.

that it answered the ends for which he intended it. In order to this, every year, after Easter, he went on board the fleet stationed on the eastern coast, and sailing west, he scoured all the channels, looked into every creek and bay, from the Thames mouth to the Land's-end, in Cornwall; then quitting these ships, he went on board the western fleet, with which, steering his course to the northward, he did the like, not only on the English and Scotch coast, but also on those of Ireland and the Hebrides, which lie between them and Britain, then meeting the northern fleet, he sailed in it to the Thames mouth.\* Thus surrounding the island every summer, he rendered any invasion impracticable, kept his sailors in continual exercise, and effectually asserted his sovereignty over the sea. As a further proof of this, he once held his court at Chester, where, when all his feudatory princes had assembled, in order to do him homage, he caused them to enter a barge, and sitting four on one side, and four on the other, they rowed, while he steered the helm, passing thus in triumph, on the river Dee, from his palace to the monastery of St. John, where he landed, and received their oaths to be his faithful vassals, and to defend his rights by land and by sea, and then, having made a speech to them, he returned to his barge, and passed in the same manner back to his palace. The names of these princes were, Kenneth, king of Scotland; Malcolm, king of Cumberland: Maccusius, king of Man, and of the isles; and five petty kings of the Britons. When the ceremony was over, the king was pleased to say, that his successors might justly glory in the title of kings of the English, since, by this solemn act, he had set their prerogative above all dispute.† John Fox blamed this speech, as an

\* Hen. Huntingdon, Hist. lib. v. Rog. Hoveden. Annal. p. 244. Alured Beverl. Annal. lib. viii.

† Gul. Malmesb. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 8. p. 31; in the above edit. Florent. Wigorn. ad Ann. Dom. 347. Henric. Hunting. Hist. lib. v.



instance of the king's pride and vanity, \* which was owing to a narrowness of mind; for, surely the king intended no more than to secure his just rights, as his speech declared, and thereby to distinguish between a wise act of policy, and a mere pompous parade.

In the winter, he travelled by land through all parts of his dominions, to see that justice was duly administered, to prevent his nobles from becoming oppressors, and to protect the meanest people from suffering wrong. These were the arts by which he secured tranquillity to himself; while he kept foreigners in awe, and his subjects in quiet. By being always ready for war, he avoided it; so that, in his whole reign, there happened but one disturbance, and that through the intemperate fury of the Britons, who, while he was in the north, committed great disorders in the west. On his return, he entered their country with a great army, and that they might feel the effects of plundering, suffered his soldiers to take whatever they could find; but, when he saw the people reduced to extreme misery, he rewarded his army out of his own coffers, and obliged them to restore the spoils, by which he left those, whom he found rebels, the most affectionate of all his subjects. † Well, therefore, might our ancient historians boast as they did of this prince, and say, that he was comparable to any of the heroes of antiquity. In truth, he far surpassed them; for, whereas many of them became famous by acts of rapine and robbery, he established his reputation on a nobler foundation; that of reigning sixteen years without a thief found in his dominions on land, or a pirate

Roger Hoved. Annal. p. 426. Alured. Beverl. Annal. lib. viii. The speech alluded to is in these words of Alured: *tunc demum quemcunque suorum successorum se gloriari posse regem Anglorum fore, eum tot regibus sibi obsequentibus potiretur pompa talium honorum.*

\* In his acts and monuments.

† Ramulph. Higden. in Polychron. lib. vi.



heard of at sea.\* One thing more I must mention, as being much to my purpose, though slighted by many of our modern writers. It is the preamble of a decree of his, made in the fourteenth year of his reign, wherein his style runs thus: *Ego Edgarus, totius Albivonis Basileus, necnon maritimorum seu insulanorum regum circumhabitantium, &c.* that is, I Edgar, monarch of all Albion, and sovereign over all the princes of the adjacent isles, &c. which plainly asserts his naval dominion. † As he lived, so he died, in peace and full of glory. Happy had it been for his successors, if, with his dominions, they had inherited any portion of his spirit: but, alas! governed by women, and ridden by priests, they quickly broke to pieces that mighty power which he bequeathed them.

A.D.  
975.

His son Edward, a child, succeeded him; but, by the time he had reigned three years, he was, by the contrivance of his mother-in-law, basely murdered, to make way for her son Ethelred, who mounted the throne after his decease, but who was entirely governed by this dowager-queen, his mother. In six years after the death of Edgar, the strength of the nation was so far sunk, that a Danish squadron, consisting of no more than seven ships, infested the coast, and plundered Southampton; ‡ and, in a few years after, they ravaged and burned all the coast, inso-much, that in 991, the king, by the advice of Siricus, archbishop of Canterbury, made a treaty with the Danes, and endeavoured to bribe them by a subsidy of ten thousand pounds, to forbear plundering, which gave the first rise to that infamous tribute called Danegeld. § This produced an effect which might have been easily foreseen, though

A.D.  
978.

\* Roger Hoved. p. 244. Florent. Wigorn. ad A. D. 947. Alured. Beverl. Annal. lib. viii.

† Guliel. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Ang. lib. ii. c. 8. p. 32.

‡ Chron. Saxon. ad A. D. 981.

§ Ibid. 991. Gul. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Anglor. lib. ii. c. 10. Alured. Beverl. lib. viii.

quite contrary to what was intended; for the Danes committed greater rapines than ever, supposing that the worse they treated the king's subjects, the larger sums they should extort, for a promise to be gone. Thus the king was compelled to take that method at last, to which he should have had recourse at first, viz. raising an army, and fitting out a fleet. And now, when he had done this, his general betrayed him, whereby the Danes for that time escaped, though a little after they returned, and were defeated.\* These, however, were but slight mischiefs to those which followed; for, when it is once known that a kingdom is weakly governed, new enemies daily rise. In A. D. 993, came Unlaff, a famous pirate, with a fleet of ninety-three ships, to Stanes, and having wasted the country on both sides the Thames, they went down the river again, and committed new outrages on the coast of Kent. The king sent an army to oppose them, which they beat, and killed the general who commanded it; afterwards they landed in the mouth of the Humber, and committed fresh devastations. The next year Anlaff, duke of Norway, coming before London, with a fleet of ninety-four sail, endeavoured to burn it, but the citizens defended themselves so well, that, at length, he was forced to desist; then marching into Kent and Hampshire, he compelled the country people to furnish horses for his army, which put it in their power to commit such horrid devastations, that the king, being unable to protect his subjects, had recourse to a composition; and having sent commissioners to treat with Anlaff, it was agreed to give him sixteen thousand pounds, on condition that he should never again set foot in England, and, which was rare amongst men of his profession, he religiously kept his word. In A. D. 997, a great fleet of strangers entered the mouth of the Severn, spoiled all the adjacent countries with fire and sword, and afterwards

\* Chron. Saxon. A. D. 992.



destroyed Cornwall and Devonshire, and having collected an immense booty, carried it off to their ships. The next year they committed the like outrages in Dorsetshire, where an army sent to oppose them did but little. In A. D. 999, they came into the Thames, and marching through Kent, the king met them at Canterbury with his forces, so that a battle ensued, wherein, through some ill management, the king was defeated with great loss. This loss seems to have roused the nobility; for, immediately thereupon, it was determined, in a great council, to raise a numerous army, and to fit out a strong fleet, which was accordingly done; but the old management continuing, these mighty preparations, says my author, ended in nothing more than exhausting the purses, and breaking the spirits of the people, whereby their enemies were encouraged to trample on them more and more. The next year the fleet was hindered from acting all the summer by contrary winds, to the great loss and dissatisfaction of the people. In A. D. 1001, new disorders of the same kind happened, and one of the king's admirals deserting with a great part of the fleet, he was constrained again to think of treating, which accordingly he did, and purchased peace for twenty-four thousand pounds; and yet, the very next year, he found himself so straitened, that he had no other way of setting his people at liberty, than by a general massacre of the Danes throughout England. This, however, proved but a temporary as well as barbarous expedient; for, in a few years, they were in as bad a condition as ever, insomuch, that through the fury of the Danes, and the treachery of his nobility, the king was able to do nothing but oppress his subjects, by raising vast sums to be given to their enemies; for, in A. D. 1007, the Danes had thirty thousand pounds at once.\*

\* Chron. Saxon. p. 127—136. Gulielm. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Anglor. lib. ii. c. 10. Hen. Huntingd. Hist. lib. 5. Alured. Beverl. Annal. lib. vijii. c. 114.



These oppressions convinced all the honest and loyal part of the nation, of the necessity of arming themselves, and of exerting their utmost force to rid them of these barbarous guests. In order thereto, a new and general tax was laid, for raising and supporting a fleet and army. According to this scheme, every three hundred and ten hides of land were to find a stout ship, and every eight hides a coat of mail and helmet, by which a great force indeed was raised, and yet, through treachery, great as it was, it had little effect.\* It is plain, that this tax, or subsidy, was imposed with judgment, and by common consent; it grew, therefore, thenceforward, an annual charge upon the people, and is that tax we so often meet with in ancient writers, under the name of Danegeld; and from which Edward the Confessor is said to have freed his subjects. The reader must distinguish this subsidy, raised upon the English nation, from the money occasionally paid to the Danes, though they both go under the same denomination. The first was raised at such times, and in such proportions, as necessity required, and was properly enough called Danegeld, as it was given to pacify those invaders. The second was a regular, settled imposition, not much unlike our land-tax, and was properly called, in the Saxon tongue, Heregyld, *i. e.* soldiers' money, and received the name of Danegeld, because it was originally given to raise a force to withstand the Danes. It amounted to a vast sum in those days; since the Saxon chronicle informs us, that by it, when first imposed, there was a prodigious fleet set on foot, such a one as till then had not been seen. Now, if we take this in a very limited sense, and allow it to signify not a greater fleet than Edgar's, but superior to any of his stationary squadrons, even this would be a very great thing. † The consequence of clearing this point will

\* Chron. Saxon. A. D. 1008.

† Selden. Mare Clausum, lib. ii. c. 11.

appear in the succeeding part of the work; in the mean time let it be observed, that the nation submitted to this grievous tax, in order to maintain a naval force, sufficient to have preserved the dominion of the sea; which, questionless, might have been effected, had the money they gave been faithfully applied. But such were the delays, such the disorder in all their military preparations, that the people were fleeced, the service neglected, and the unfortunate King Ethelred, who, for any thing that appears in history, was a very brave, well-meaning prince, acquired the surname, or rather was stigmatized with the opprobrious nickname of the Unready. This is a disagreeable subject, which nothing but the love of truth, and the desire of preventing such mischiefs, by fairly exposing their causes, could have prevailed upon me to have dwelt on so long. It is my duty as an historian, and, though a little unwillingly, I have honestly performed it.

It would, however, be to no purpose to swell this work with a long detail of the misfortunes which befel this prince, and his son the valiant Edmund; who, for his many hardy acts in the service of his country, was surnamed Ironsides, since these are fully related in all our histories, and indeed there is great reason to suspect, that the stories we meet with therein are rather amplified than abridged. Two things, nevertheless, deserve the reader's notice in this great revolution. The first, that after the spirits of the people had been once sunk, by raising on them a great sum of money to purchase peace, they never afterwards could be revived; but things daily declined, and the chief persons in the realm sought to secure an interest in the conqueror, by betraying those whom they ought to have defended; so that the reduction of England was not so much owing to the number and force of the enemy, though these were very great, as to the treachery of the few, the dejection of the many, and the disputes of both among themselves; their naval force, even when

they were lowest, being more than sufficient to have defended their coasts, had it been properly conducted. But being sometimes betrayed by their admirals, at others distressed for want of provisions, every little accident discouraged them, and any considerable loss disheartened them quite. The conquest of such men could not be hard. The second observation I have to make is this, that Swain, king of Denmark, no sooner found himself superior at sea, than he set up a title to the kingdom, which sufficiently shews, that this island is never longer safe, than while it is the first maritime power; whence the importance of our navy is made too manifest to be denied, and by which we may be convinced, that as our freedom flows only from our constitution, so both must be defended by our fleets.



## CHAP. III.

The Naval History of the Danes, from the peaceable settlement of Canutus on the throne to the restoration of the Saxon line; and from thence to the death of King Harold.

*(Containing the space of about 48 Years.)*

THE writers of our ancient history, being many of them monks, did not well distinguish between foreign nations, but called all the invaders of this kingdom, from whatever quarter they came, Danes, because the first who troubled the Saxons in this way were of that nation. In like manner foreigners called them Normans, which seems to be a contraction of northern men. Their practice of scouring the northern seas, and plundering wherever they came, made them infamous in the eyes of others, though it passed among themselves for an honourable way of making war. The northern nations were always extremely populous; and, when they found themselves crowded, their custom was to equip a squadron of ships, on board of which went some of their chiefs, followed by a body of such men as were willing to run their fortunes. At this time they were pagans; and it must be owned, the structure of their religion was very favourable to these sort of enterprizes, representing them rather as effects of heroism than as acts of robbery. In process of time, as they grew more civilized, they began to change their notions, and effected settlements wherever they found themselves strong enough to make them. It is not our business to enter deeply into their history, since it is evident enough, that they attained their dominion here by their power at sea, which is the only thing that brings them under our notice. But, if it were,

there has been lately published at Copenhagen a very curious history of the acts of the Danes in foreign countries, particularly in England, Scotland, and Ireland, all of which they long harassed, made settlements in all, and were expelled from them all through their making an ill use of their power.\*

When Swain, king of Denmark, invaded this country about the year 1013, it was in revenge of the death of his countrymen; and there were at that time so many great men here of Danish extraction, and the rest were so much disaffected to their natural prince, that the foreign invader soon found encouragement to set up a title by election, as is, though somewhat obscurely, intimated by some of our historians, but plainly and fully asserted by the Danish writers. Indeed, the defection at that time was so general, that Edmund abandoned his kingdom, and retired into Normandy; and, if Swain had lived, it is doubtful whether he might not have kept the possession. But, he dying in the beginning of the next year, the Danes in England declared for Canutus his son, and the Saxons recalled King Edmund. † However, after the death of the last-mentioned prince, Canutus had a strong party who adhered to him, especially among the clergy; so that, at length, King Edmund Ironside, by the persuasion of one Eadric, who had betrayed his father during his whole reign, entered into a treaty with Canutus, whereby it was agreed, that they should reign jointly: after which King Edmund did not live long, and so the whole fell to Canutus by survivorship. Some of our authors indeed write, that Edmund was murdered

\* The title of this curious book runs thus: *Gesta & vestigia Danorum extra Daniam; præcipue in Oriente, Italia, Hispania, Gallia, Anglia, Scotia, Hibernia, Belgio, Germania, & Scelavonia. Maximam partem ipsis scriptorum, non exoticorum minus, quam domesticorum, verbis adumbrata.* Hasniæ, 1741, 8vo.

† Chron. Saxon. p. 144, 145.

by the contrivance of Eadric; but for this there seems to be no solid foundation. The Saxon annals say plainly, that he died on the feast of St Andrew in the year 1016, and that he was buried with his grandfather King Edgar at Glastonbury.\*

Canutus ascended the throne by the general consent of the nation, and, in the second year of his reign, raised an extraordinary subsidy, or danegeld, in order to pay off his fleet. This amounted to 72,000 pounds for the rest of the kingdom, and 11,000 pounds for the city of London; after which he sent back his fleet and forces to Denmark, except forty ships which he kept to guard the coast. He was a very wise and brave prince, and, from the time he assumed the crown, did all that was in his power to conciliate the affection of his new subjects; which he so happily effected, that they served him faithfully in his wars for the recovery of some part of his foreign dominions, which were lost during his stay here. Thus, in 1027, he sailed with a fleet of fifty ships, with English forces on board, into Norway, out of which having driven Olaf, who had set himself up for king, the next year he returned into England. Two years after, he invaded the Scots both by land and sea, and obliged their king to submit to his terms: † and, throughout his whole reign, this prince carried his prerogative in naval affairs as high as, or rather higher than, any of his predecessors, as the learned Mr. Selden justly observes, and very fully proves from records and history. ‡ Indeed it was very easy for him to do so, being king of Denmark and Norway as well as England.

A.D.  
1017.

\* Chron. Saxon. A. D. 1016.

† Pontan. hist. Dan. lib. v. Guliel. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Anglor. lib. ii. cap. 11. Alured. Beverl. annal. lib. viii. Ran. Higden. in Polychron. Chron. Saxon. p. 150—154.

‡ Mare clausum, lib. ii. cap. 12.



A.D.  
1039.

He intended to have made his son Hardiknute, whom he had by Emma, the widow of his predecessor Ethelred, the heir of his kingdoms; but, he being in Denmark at the time of his decease, his eldest son Harold, surnamed from his swiftness Harefoot, found means to raise a party amongst the nobility, and possessed himself of the kingdom. Some writers tell us, that his brother Hardiknute prepared a great fleet with an intent to have invaded his dominions: but, as to this, the Saxon chronicle is silent; nor is there any thing memorable recorded in his reign. It is said, that he raised the danegeld or subsidy for the maintenance of sixteen ships, which was, it seems, the stated tax in the latter part of his father's reign; and, from what follows, it will appear, that this was a very reasonable imposition: but then it must be considered, that, in the days of King Canutus, his English subjects had nothing to fear; and from this circumstance it is probable, that the case was the same under Harold.\* He died after a reign of little more than four years, and was succeeded by his brother Hardiknute, who coming with a large fleet to take possession of the kingdom, he that very year raised the danegeld to sixty-two ships. The following year he levied 21,099 pounds, and fixed the subsidy for the future at thirty-two ships. His uncle Swain being in danger of losing the kingdom of Norway, he sent a fleet from England to his assistance, which did not, however, answer the end he proposed; and a little after he died suddenly at a wedding, and with him ended the dominion of the Danes in England, in less than twenty-eight years after the coming of Canutus to the crown. †

A.D.  
1041.

Edward the Confessor, the son of King Ethelbert and Queen Emma, succeeded his half-brother Hardiknute, and proved a very great prince in the opinion of the

\* Chron. Saxon. p. 154, 155.

† Ibid. p. 155, 156.

monks, and a very weak one in the sentiments of better judges. In the beginning of his reign he kept up a fleet of thirty-five sail; but afterwards falling out with the Earl Godwin and his sons, their quarrels threw the whole kingdom into distraction; insomuch that, in the year 1046, a piratical squadron, consisting of no more than twenty-five ships, commanded by Lothen and Yrling, came to Sandwich, where they landed the forces on board them, who immediately spoiled all the adjacent county, and carried off the prey they took to their ships. Afterwards they retired to the Island of Thanet, intending from thence to have plundered the coast at their leisure; but by this time the militia rose, and not only prevented them from landing, but straitened them so much where they were, that with great difficulty they escaped. Then, falling on the coasts of Suffolk and Norfolk, they committed the same outrages there, and at last sailed away to Flanders with the wealth they had gotten, without meeting with any interruption from the king's ships. The next year the king was himself at sea with a fleet, and was able to do little, Earl Godwin and his sons having almost all the power, while the king had an empty title, with which he was little contented. Swain, Earl Godwin's eldest son, falling out with his family as well as the king, committed great outrages on all the coast. His father too, being disobliged, had recourse to a naval armament, to oppose which, the king fitted out a fleet of fifty sail; but whether it was through the intrigues of the earl, or the weak management of the king, so it happened, that, after all these preparations, a treaty ensued, in consequence of which the earl once more entered the king's favour, and (with his sons) was declared the king's best subject: such was the doctrine of those times! After the death of this great nobleman, his sons Harold and Tostigo succeeded him in his dignities, and used them rather for their own conveniency

than with any respect to the royal authority. It must, however, be owned, that they reduced the Britons, who had taken up arms under their king Griffith, who was killed in the action: yet Tostigo made so bad a governor in Northumberland, where the king had placed him, that the people expelled him; nor could he be restored, though his brother Harold was sent with an army for that purpose; which so disgusted him, that he sailed with a squadron of ships into Flanders, where, like his eldest brother Swain, he turned pirate, and began to think of pillaging by sea that country, the inhabitants of which would not suffer him to plunder them on land. In the midst of these confusions King Edward died as weakly and irresolutely as he lived, without securing the succession to Edgar Atheling, his intended heir, and who had indeed a better title than himself; which threw the nation into great confusion, and gave Harold, the son of Earl Godwin, an opportunity of seizing the crown, to which he had little or no title; \* an act equally fatal to himself and to the people, since it occasioned the Norman invasion, and the absolute exclusion of the Saxon line, the monarchs of which had deserved so well of their country by making good laws, encouraging arts; and defending both by their arms. But, before we proceed to this revolution, it will be necessary to say somewhat of the character of Harold, as well as of his administration; for though he was a very ambitious, and consequently a very bad man, yet he wanted not some qualities that were truly great, and worthy of a prince.

The principal persons about King Edward at his death were such as had been of Earl Godwin's faction, and therefore countenanced a report, spread by Harold, that

\* Gul. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Angl. lib. ii. cap. 13. Hen. Huntingd. hist. lib. vi. p. 210. Roger Hoveden. annal. p. 256. Alured. Beverl. annal. lib. viii. Chron. Saxon. p. 154—171.



the king had appointed him his successor, which we find in the Saxon chronicle : \* and yet, in that very book, there are many things which are inconsistent with this relation, such as the owning that the king sent for his cousin Edward, the father of Edgar Atheling, † and that, after the death of Harold, Edgar should have been king, ‡ though his right was no way helped by that circumstance, but stood just as it did before at the time of King Edward's death. Such as say that Harold took the crown, as being more fit to wear it than an unexperienced boy, like Edgar, seem to speak the truth. § Harold had all the qualities necessary to have rendered him popular in an elective kingdom. He was of a great family, equally allied to the Saxons and Danes, very brave in his person, and well versed in the art of war; but, above all, jealous of the honour of the nation, and very desirous of maintaining his independency on land and sea. || He had, however, many difficulties to struggle with. A great part of the nation were dissatisfied with his title, and paid him an unwilling obedience. William, duke of Normandy, laid claim to his crown, and began to raise an army to support that claim: add to this, that his brother Tostigo, who had quarrelled with the late king and his own father, appeared on the coasts of Yorkshire and Northumberland with a fleet of fifty sail. Earl Edwin encountered him on his landing, defeated his army, and afterwards destroyed a great part of his fleet; so that, with no more than twelve ships, he escaped to Scotland. ¶

\* Chron. Saxon. p. 172. † Ibid. p. 169. ‡ Ibid. p. 173.

§ Rog. Hoved. hist. lib. vi. p. 256. Ingulph. hist. apud. script. post. Bedam. p. 511.

|| Roger. Hoved. annal. prior. Gul. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Ang. lib. ii. cap. ult. Alured. Beverl. annal. lib. viii. p. 122.

¶ Chron. Saxon. p. 172. Roger. Hoved. p. 257. Hen. Huntingd. hist. lib. vii.

On the first news of his brother's invasion, Harold prepared to march northwards, in order to prevent, if possible, the fatal consequences of this man's malice; whom he knew to have both courage and ability, considerable interest at home, and potent allies abroad; nor did he desist from his design on the news of the check he had received by his late defeat, knowing that his restless temper would not suffer him to be long before he endeavoured to revenge this affront. Indeed, he found an opportunity sooner than he could have expected; for, he was scarcely arrived in Scotland, before he heard of a new pretender to his brother's crown. This was Harold Harfager, that is, Fair-haired, king of Norway, who set up a title by descent, and, to support it, put to sea with a fleet of three hundred sail, and a numerous army on board. With him Tostigo joined, and, both sailing up the Humber, landed their forces, and began to direct their march towards York. The two great earls, Edward and Morcar, instantly assembled all the forces they could raise, in order to oppose them. A battle quickly ensued, in which these lords were totally routed, and, in consequence thereof, the king of Norway possessed himself of York. King Harold, no way discouraged at this ill news, ordered a fleet to be fitted out, and in the mean time marched in person against the enemy, who lay in an entrenched camp, which they conceived to be impregnable. But the king, opening the passage at Stanford-bridge, ever since styled Battle-bridge, attacked them with such vigour, that, after a long and bloody dispute, he forced their entrenchments, killed Harold Harfager and Tostigo upon the spot; and, his admirals at sea having like success in beating the Norwegian fleet, Olaf, the son of Harold Harfager, was glad to capitulate, and consent to embark the scattered remains of his army on board twenty vessels, and to give up all the vast spoil they had taken, with the rest of his father's

navy, to the conqueror, which agreement or capitulation was presently put in execution. \*

This was one of the greatest victories that we find recorded by our historians; for, in the beginning of this expedition, the king of Denmark had conquered the Orkneys; and, indeed, considering the force with which he invaded it, there was no small probability of his reducing England. By this defeat, the king entirely frustrated that design, and, besides ridding himself of so formidable an enemy, acquired a vast treasure, and greatly augmented his fleet; but, as success generally shews a man in the truest point of light, so the king, on this occasion, discovered some ill qualities which he had hitherto concealed; for, instead of dividing the rich booty he had taken, or so much as a part of it, amongst his army, he laid hands upon the whole, which greatly weakened their affection to him, and made his soldiers less willing to hazard their lives in the service of so hard a master. On the other hand, the duke of Normandy had been labouring, by a variety of methods, to draw together such an army, and such a fleet, as might enable him to prosecute the title he pretended to the English crown, which at last, by dint of mighty promises to foreigners as well as his own subjects, he accomplished. His forces, consisting of Normans, Flemings, Frenchmen, and Britons, he embarked on board a prodigious number of ships, few of which were of any great force, though all fit enough for transports. September 28th, 1066, he landed safely at Pevensey, in Sussex; and no sooner saw his troops on shore, than he burnt his useless fleet, which he knew was no way able to engage that of the English; and, having done this, and raised a strong fortification, he penetrated farther into the country. † Harold had the news of this expedition quickly

A.D.  
1066.

\* Chron. Saxon. p. 172. Guliem. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Angl. lib. ii. c. 13. p. 57. Roger. Hoveden, p. 443. Ingulf. Hist. p. 512.

† Chroniques de Normandie. Ingulph. Hist. Ord. Vital, &c.



transmitted to him in the north, whence he marched with great diligence with his forces, flushed indeed with their late victory, but by so rude a service much diminished in their numbers, their spirits also abated by discontent. The king, however, taking counsel from the present situation of his affairs, behaved towards them more graciously than he had lately done, and by sending for the nobility, and representing to them the danger to which themselves and their country, as well as himself and his title, were exposed, gained considerable recruits; so that, by the time he arrived at London, his army was again become very considerable, only his soldiers stood in need of refreshment. But Harold, fearing ill effects from delays, and rejecting the proposals made him by an ambassador, sent from Duke William to meet him at London, continued to move on towards Sussex, in order to determine the fate of the kingdom by a decisive battle, notwithstanding his brother Grithus used many prudent arguments to dissuade him, advising him to entrust the army to his care, and to remain at London, in order to take proper measures, in case things went not so well as they could wish.

On the 13th of October the king arrived near Hastings, where the enemy lay encamped; and, though some proposals of peace were again made him, he remained firm to his first opinion, of trusting the entire decision to the sword. The next day, being Saturday, he disposed his forces in order of battle, giving the van to the Kentish troops, and reserving the Londoners for the center, where he fought in person with his two brothers. The duke of Normandy, on his side, did all that could be expected from a great captain, and one inured to arms from his very youth. The contest was long and bloody, suitable to the value of the prize which was to be the reward of the victor; but the Normans, making use of long bows, as yet not well known to the English, had thereby a great advantage, which turned the fortune of the day, and gave them

a victory every way compleat. King Harold, drawing the choicest of his troops about his royal standard, fought it out bravely to the last, falling by a shot he received under the left eye, which pierced to his brain. With him fell his brothers Grithus and Leofrick, and of private men 67,974. We need not wonder that this engagement alone secured the kingdom to Duke William, especially if we reflect on the hard fought battle in Yorkshire but a few months before; for two such actions might well exhaust the strength of a kingdom almost continually harassed, for some hundred years before, by the Danes.\* Yet the Saxons, if they had been well united, might have had at least another struggle; but their intestine factions contributed as much to their ruin as the force of the invader; for one part of the nation adhering to Edgar Atheling, the undoubted heir of the crown, and another inclining to espouse the party of the great Earls Edwin and Morcar, this division disabled both. Thus ended that monarchy, which, from the time of Hengist, had continued about six hundred years; and, as it began through personal valour, so the same spirit was preserved even in its termination; for, as a learned writer of these times informs us, the last King Harold was a man in gentleness of nature equalled by few, in martial virtue surpassed by none, having most of those great qualities that render princes glorious, and who, if the event had corresponded with probability, seemed born to repair the decayed state of his country.† He left behind him four sons. It is very remarkable, that three of these, Godwin, Edmund, and Magnus, had interest enough, after the death of their father, to carry off the greatest part of his fleet, which enabled them to make many attempts, as we shall hereafter see, against the

\* Chron. Saxon. p. 172. Gulielm. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Angl. lib. iii. Hen. Huntingdon. Hist. lib. vi. Roger Hoveden, p. 448. Ingulph. Hist. p. 900, 901.

† Florent. Wigorn. ad A. D. 1066.

power of the Normans; but, proving always unsuccessful, they at length retired to Denmark, where they were kindly received, and where, tormented by a quick sense of their misfortunes, they languished out the remainder of their lives. I should not have taken notice of this circumstance, but that it serves to explain the succeeding part of our history, and shews how the Norman power at sea came to be so low for a considerable time after the conquest, as well as why the northern princes were so ready to give assistance to such as undertook to disturb this new possessor of the English crown; in which scheme, we shall find persons who had very different interests concurred, upon the old maxim in politics, that, in acting against a common enemy, the principles of particular parties may, and, in prudence, ought to be suspended.\*

WE come now to take a view of the commerce of the Saxons, and to enquire into the use they made of that dominion of the sea, to which they set up so loud a pretence. It so happens, indeed, that we have in this respect but very indifferent materials as to direct facts; but, whoever will consider what kind of men the writers of those times were, and how unlikely they were to understand traffic, he will not so readily misconstrue their silence, as some critical writers have done; by which I mean, he will not conclude from thence, that the Saxons had little or no foreign trade, since, if they had ever so much, ecclesiastics were not likely to be the best acquainted with it. However, it may be truly asserted, that the trade of the Saxons was very considerable before the Norman conquest, perhaps more considerable than for some time afterwards; and that this is not either a bold assertion, or a groundless conjecture, we shall be able to make out by

\* Chron. Saxon. p. 173. Gul. Malmesb. Hunting. Hoveden, &c.



a variety of arguments, which, for the honour of our country, deserve to be duly examined.

In the first place, then, let us observe, that the correspondence between our princes and those of the continent, is one good argument in favour of the nation's commerce; for, it cannot be believed, that the greatest princes of Europe would either enter into treaties with obscure and barbarous nations, bestow their daughters on the princes of such people, or receive from them their daughters to be partners in their beds and thrones. Yet we see, that Charles the Great of France entered into an alliance with King Offa, as he also did with the king of Scots; and, as to marriages, Ethelwolf, the father of King Alfred, married the daughter of the Emperor Charles the Bald; King Ethelred married Emma, daughter to the duke of Normandy; and, as to the princesses of England, they were married all over Europe to the most illustrious sovereigns: nay, even in their distress, when the sons of Edmund Ironside fled abroad for protection, one married the emperor's daughter; the other the daughter of the king of Hungary. Now, it is impossible for us to conceive, how the worth and quality of such persons should be known in these distant places, if there had not been an extensive commerce between the subjects of the English kings and those of these princes. Add to this, that Asse-rius Menevensis informs us, that King Alfred's court was constantly crowded with persons of distinction, and that he was extremely careful in procuring the best artists of all kinds from different parts. Again, the public and private buildings of the Saxons demonstrate, that they were neither a rude nor unsociable people, but rather the contrary, since they were exceedingly elegant for the time in which they were raised; and, we know by experience, that this kind of taste is the pure effect of extensive commerce. We may likewise observe, that the very claiming the sovereignty of the sea is a plain indication of our

driving a great trade upon it, since those only desire this dignity who know the importance of it; and, as our claims in this respect are elder, and more explicit than those of any other European nation, we must conclude, that the value of this right was earlier understood here than elsewhere. These are general reasons only; I will now offer some that are clearer and more particular.

We had greater opportunities of understanding naval affairs in this island, than perhaps any other nation ever had; for, before the Roman invasion, the Britons had some skill in navigation, and had fitted out considerable fleets; they afterwards improved in this, as in all other arts, by adding the Latin learning to their own; whence we find them, under Carausius, Maximus, and Constantine, able to bear up against all the maritime force of the Roman empire. The Saxons were not destitute of skill in naval affairs before their arrival here; for we read, that they distinguished time by the ebbing and flowing of tides,\* a kind of knowledge which, notwithstanding all the boastings of the Greeks, Alexander's seamen had not acquired, even when he made his Indian expedition, † and in which it appears, that neither Cæsar, nor any of his soldiers, were well versed at the time of his invading this island. ‡ It was therefore highly natural, when these nations were in some measure mixed together, and by degrees also blended with the Danes; I say, it was highly natural for them to push their genius, for maritime affairs, as far as it would go. And this leads me to another argument, which is drawn from the vast number of ships that it is apparent we had at all times, from the fleets fitted out by the Roman governors, and by the Saxon princes, especially Alfred, Edgar, and Ethelred; since navies cannot be

\* Sidon. Apollinar. lib. viii. Ol. Worm. in Fastis Danicis, lib. i. cap. 2.

† Arrian. Exped. Alex. Mag. lib. xi.

‡ De Bello Gallico, lib. v.

built in a season or two; or, if they could, would prove of little use in a country destitute of seamen. Lastly, our coin is a proof of our commerce. There were under the Saxon kings variety of mints, no less than seven in London, and the laws relating to coinage are very numerous. Now, since silver was never a commodity of our own, it follows, that this coinage must have arisen from the profits, or, to use a modern phrase, from the balance of trade in our favour. I presume I may add to this a law made by King Edgar, for reducing all weights, measures, &c. to one standard. Now this was to remedy an inconvenience that must have crept in, by trading with different nations, and so introducing their measures; and the scope of the law on the other hand proves, that the legislature in those days, had a just respect to commerce, and was inclined to do any thing which might facilitate it; all which, taken together, in my opinion, doth abundantly make good my assertion, and demonstrates, as far as the brevity of this design will permit, the commercial genius of our ancestors the Saxons, to whom we stand indebted for the chief prerogative of our crown, I mean in comparison with the other powers of Europe, and that generous spirit of freedom, which is the soul of our excellent constitution, and which the princes of the Norman line endeavoured, but in vain, to extinguish.

It may not be amiss to remark, upon the publishing this work, I heard some persons of good sense, and great judgment, complain, that in some places I studied brevity too much, and that, particularly, they would be glad to see this point of the Saxon navigation and commerce better explained, not that they at all doubted the truth of what I advanced upon the credit of our most learned and best historians, but that, being pleased with the hints given them upon these subjects, they were inclined to see them more largely handled. And for the sake of such persons, I shall take the liberty of adding some reflections,



which, till I knew that it was acceptable to my readers, I judged it a kind of presumption in me to make.

The vessels built by King Alfred for resisting the Danes, and which were so very serviceable in that respect, appearing to be a very singular and material point; some have wished that I had more plainly described them, which I would most certainly have done, if it had been in my power. Those vessels were built, not only by the direction of the king, but in a new manner, which was of his own invention; and the writers who have preserved an account of them, though they are certainly competent witnesses as to the fact, yet were they very far from being proper judges of the manner. They can tell us what the king did, and what were the effects of his doings; but how, or upon what principles, he constructed these new invented ships of his, was out of their way to enquire, and, consequently, what they could not be expected to declare. This being so, it would be a thing preposterous to pretend to lay it down as certain, that King Alfred's new ships were built in this manner, or in that; all that I intended to suggest, was, that the king built these ships longer than usual, and in such a proportion as made them at once stronger and swifter than any with which that age were acquainted.

The candid and ingenious reader will readily allow, that we had good reason to commend the superior skill of the king, who made that a science which to others was but a trade. There were, no doubt, in that age abundance of shipwrights, who knew how to put vessels together, so as to make them sound and tight, and good sailers too, as things went in those times. Yet it does not appear that the king asked their advice, but on the contrary, he directed their labours, and commanded that ships should be built of a new and very different make from those that were then in use. He was well acquainted with the Danish ships; and saw that though they were

very convenient for transporting troops, yet that very circumstance might be turned to their disadvantage, by employing against them vessels of a different make, longer, higher, stronger, and of a very different proportion in respect to breadth; which is a plain proof that he had made himself master of the principles of ship-building, and knew how to vary the form in constructing vessels, so as to fit them for different uses and services; which, if the ignorance of those times was half so gross as modern writers are willing to represent, was certainly a very great and wonderful discovery.

It is also highly probable, that though the king gave directions to his ship-builders, and perhaps a model of the form in which he would have his new vessels built, yet he did not acquaint them with the principles upon which he went, or explain to them the reasons why vessels built in this new form were swifter and stronger than those of the enemy, but kept that within his own breast, as a great secret of state. His naval architects might be, and in all probability were, men of as great skill and extensive capacities as any of their times; but then their knowledge was of a very different nature from that of the king; they might be great artists in their way, but were still mechanics; and though they knew how to build what were esteemed the best ships in this part of the world; yet were they far enough from penetrating into the causes of things, or apprehending clearly the reasons upon which those rules were founded, by which they were guided in their profession, and which experience had gradually introduced.

We have the greater presumption that this was the true state of the case, from the other circumstance, that the king made great improvements in the art of building ships for traffick. Hence we plainly discern that what he contrived was not the effects of experience, or application of what he had seen or heard others performed, to his own



affairs, or a thing that flowed from a lucky thought which was found to answer upon trial; but arose entirely from his great sagacity, which enabled him to see to the very bottom of his art, and put it in his power to assign the just proportions of vessels destined for any purposes whatever, as his shipwrights were capable of building and equipping vessels of any dimensions, provided they had the draught of such vessels given them, in case they were of a new invention. These trading vessels were, without doubt, of a form differing from those warlike galleys that were fitted out against the Danes, and consequently not near so costly; for broad, large, and capacious vessels, such as are fit for carrying almost all sorts of merchandize, especially bulky and coarse goods, are in every respect far less expensive than vessels built for strength and nimble sailing.

I shall be extremely well pleased if these additional thoughts upon so important a point of history, give the satisfaction desired, which I hope it will; more especially if it be considered, that I propose to treat these points as an historian, and am therefore concerned to state facts clearly, and from good authorities; not to write dissertations upon such subjects as may be fairly presumed to lie equally out of the reach of my own and the peruser's curiosity. Whatever Alfred's skill in naval architecture might be, there is very little room to doubt that the practical part of it continued long after his decease, and proved no inconsiderable cause of the maritime force of his successors. All this time, however, the Danes were exercising themselves in naval expeditions; and as their strength and courage increased, so by the introduction of luxury, and its perpetual companion, civil dissensions, the power and public spirit of the Saxons declined.

It may, however, be remarked in their favour, exclusive of what has been said before upon that subject, that they certainly cultivated the arts of peace and commerce with



equal industry and success. All that part of this island under their dominion was thoroughly peopled, and full of great towns, adorned according to the mode of those times, with fair churches and great monasteries, which were at once testimonies of the piety and wealth of that nation. Their ecclesiastics and nobility frequently travelled into foreign regions, and brought from thence rarities of all sorts to enrich their own country, the flourishing condition of which was what principally allured the Danes, who had the same appetite for riches, though they took a different method of procuring them, and spoiled by force of arms, such as were grown opulent through the long continuance of peace.

We must likewise observe, that the incorporations of cities and boroughs was the work of the Saxons, as manifestly appears from the very terms that are still in use, and which are not to be understood or explained, but from a competent knowledge of their language and history. This is at once a clear and most conspicuous testimony of the true spirit of that government, which, while in its vigour, provided for the safety and prosperity of the people, by securing the liberties and properties, and by encouraging the industry and integrity of all ranks and degrees of men; which was the true reason that the laws of Edward the Confessor, that is, the laws and constitutions of his predecessors, collected and restored by him, were so universally approved and contended for by the English nation, as their peculiar blessings and birth-rights after the conquest, as will be seen in the succeeding chapters.

But above all, traders, artificers, and manufacturers of every kind, were especially protected and encouraged under the Saxon government. They had their respective guilds or societies for regulating and promoting their affairs; and it is very remarkable, that there was no less attention paid to the establishment and extension of these lesser frater-

nities, calculated to maintain order and justice amongst such as got their living by their labour, than of the larger corporations; which is a truth that all who are acquainted with our records and ancient histories will readily admit: and therefore it would be very unnecessary for us to insist longer upon this topic, though it was very material to mention it.

The Danes, after the first fury of war was over, and when they came to be united to, and incorporated with the Saxons, began by degrees to embrace their notions, and visit foreign nations, as well in a commercial as in a hostile manner; and though their historians are more inclined to preserve the memory of the latter than the former, yet there is nothing clearer than this matter of fact, by which the subjects of the Danish monarchs were enabled to pay those prodigious taxes that from time to time were levied upon them, and by which the treasury of Canutus the Great was so amply supplied, that when he took a journey to Rome, he made a more magnificent appearance there than any Christian prince, who in those superstitious times, had honoured that capital with his presence; and is recorded to have spent and given away such immense sums of money as filled all Europe with amazement.

But though the Danes settled in England departed from the manners of their countrymen, yet those who remained at home retained, in a great measure, the martial spirit of their ancestors, and held in the highest contempt every kind of trade except that of war. We shall see, however, that notwithstanding they long kept up a claim to this country, they were never able to recover it; because, after a few disappointments, their naval power sunk, and they were no longer capable of equipping such fleets as were requisite for the undertaking such expeditions. I mention this circumstance here, that the reader may have an opportunity of observing how soon a naval

force is worn out, when employed only to serve the purposes of ambition ; and this, notwithstanding all the care and pains that can be taken to keep up the spirits of a nation, and support an exact discipline ; for Canutus the Great enacted and published a body of laws for that end, which they would certainly have answered, if the thing had been possible in nature. This observation will very much confirm what has been before advanced, in respect to the great fleets that for the course of above a century, were maintained by the Saxons for the defence of their coasts. These were certainly supplied with seamen from the ships employed in commerce, the only effectual and lasting method of maintaining maritime power.

It will not appear any formidable objection to this, that the Danes settled in Normandy grew so strong, as not only to maintain their possession of that country, but to attempt and succeed in their scheme of invading this ; for they had in a great degree altered their measures, and by the conveniency of their ports, fallen into a considerable share of commerce, as appears both from their history and laws. It is true, the old martial spirit reigned amongst their nobility, who still disdained any other profession than that of arms ; yet this did not hinder a great part of their people from addicting themselves to quite another course of life, by which they drew such wealth into that country, as enabled their dukes to live in splendour and magnificence, and furnished them with the means of making such powerful armaments as could never have been set on foot but by princes, whose authority upon such occasions, could extract out of their subjects' coffers those treasures that by their industry they had obtained. The spoils derived from military excursions, and the riches accruing from predatory expeditions, are quickly wasted, and from the instability of fortune, seldom admit of recruits ; but in countries blessed with commerce, though the madness of princes may occa-



sionally lavish away great sums, yet the returns of peace give their subjects an opportunity of recovering again, and of repairing the breaches that have been made by such mistakes.

Hitherto I have treated things more largely than I propose to do in my accounts of the subsequent reigns down to that of Henry VII. because this period hath been much neglected; and, from an unwillingness to search into the records of antiquity, we have been made to believe, that, before the Roman conquest, the inhabitants of Britain were an inconsiderable people, which we have shewn to be very false. But, from the time of William, surnamed the Conqueror, our modern histories are more fruitful; and therefore we may be allowed a greater brevity there. However, we shall take notice of every thing that is material, or that may contribute to the reader's having a just notion of the state our naval affairs were in under the reign of our monarchs respectively, as well as of the remarkable expeditions in their times.

## CHAP. IV.

The Naval History of England during the reigns of the princes of the Norman race, viz. William styled the Conqueror, William Rufus, Henry Beauclerk, and Stephen.

*(Containing the space of about 88 Years.)*

OF all the foreign princes who, in a course of ages, have ascended the English throne, William, duke of Normandy, seemed to promise the best, in regard to the maintenance of the honour and dignity of the crown which he assumed. He was in the prime of his life, if we consider him as a prince, being about forty-three years of age when he came hither; he had been a sovereign from his very childhood, and maintained his right in the duchy of Normandy against the king of France, and other troublesome neighbours, with such constancy and courage, as at length procured him success, and fixed him in the full enjoyment of the dominions left him by his father.\* He had many opportunities of being acquainted with the English, before his coming hither, by the near relation between King Edward the Confessor, and his father Duke Robert; and the long stay that king made in Normandy, whilst the power of the Danes subsisted in England. This occasioned a great intercourse between the English and Normans during the reign of that king, who rendered himself suspected to the former, by his extraordinary kindness to the latter; which might possibly grow from a mixture of fear, as well as love, since he had no other support against the power of Earl Godwin. This it was that induced him to invite Duke William hither in his lifetime; and accordingly he made

A.D.  
1066.

\* Oder, Vital. Guliel. Les Chroniques de Normandie.

him a visit : \* and this was, undoubtedly, the chief motive of his feeding him with hopes of being his heir. As to the title of King William, it is not requisite that we should enter into a minute discussion of it ; and therefore it will be sufficient to observe, that he claimed three different ways. First, by donation from King Edward ; secondly, by right of arms ; whence, in succeeding times, he was surnamed The Conqueror ; and thirdly, by election : to which some have added a fourth title, by grant from the pope ; though this was no more than an approbation of the first. However he came by the crown, he certainly condescended to have his right recognized by the people, and promised solemnly, at his coronation, to govern as his Saxon predecessors had done : though he afterwards did not act quite so conformably to his oath as his subjects expected. To say the truth, he was of a stern and arbitrary disposition, which did not very well agree with the temper of the nation ; and from this discordancy between the king's humour and his subjects' sentiments, as to their own rights, sprung the many disorders which happened during his reign, and the miseries brought thereby upon the people ; of which we have ample accounts in the histories of those times. †

He was too wise a king not to discern the importance of a naval power, and too high-spirited a prince to suffer any of the prerogatives claimed by his predecessors to be at all prejudiced by his conduct. But in the beginning of his reign he found himself, as we have before observed, under great difficulties in this point. He, at his coming from Normandy, assembled all the shipping that could possibly be had, as appears by his delaying his expedition for some time for want of vessels ;

\* Chroniques de Normandie, fol. 54.

† Chronic. Saxon. Ingulph. Histor. Guliel. Malmesb. Henric. Huntingd. Roger Hoveden, Eadmer. Alured. Beverl. Simeon. Dunelm. Joan. Brompton.



as also from the number employed, which was not less than nine hundred; and all these, as we have heard, he burned. The greatest part of the English navy was carried away by the sons of Harold, and other malecontents, so that he could hardly bring together even an inconsiderable fleet; and yet the king resolved to take some care of a matter of such great importance, before his return into Normandy. With this view, he passed into Kent, where the natives, having first procured a recognition of their rights, delivered up to him the castle and port of Dover, which was what he principally wanted. Here he placed a strong garrison; and, having by this time collected some ships, appointed a squadron for the guard of these coasts; and embarked a part of his army, with the chief persons in England, whom he carried with him as hostages into Normandy; intending to come back, as he did, with a greater force, to secure himself against any defection of his new subjects, as well as from foreign invasions, with both which he was threatened. \*

In the third year of his reign, that storm which he had foreseen burst upon his dominions, and, under any other prince but himself, would, in all probability, have been fatal. Our modern historians, especially, relate this so lamely, that their readers can scarcely form any just idea of the danger the nation was in; which is one reason for our giving a detail of it: and besides this, it is of such great consequence to the subject of which we are treating, and so fully proves the impossibility of keeping Britain without a superior force at sea, that it would be inexcuseable in us either to omit or curtail it. Immediately after his return from Normandy, the king began to treat the English somewhat severely; whereupon many of the most considerable persons retired out

A.D.  
1069.

\* Chron. Saxon. ad A. D. 1067. Gul. Malmesb. de gestis reg. Anglor. lib. iii. Hen. Hunting. lib. vii. Ingulph. Hist. p. 900, 901.

of the kingdom; some one way, some another. The two great Earls Edwin and Morcar, with many others of the nobility, and not a few of the clergy, went into Scotland; where Edgar Etheling and his family took shelter, and from whence they very soon invaded the north part of England.\* Other lords fled to Denmark to King Swain II. who had always kept up a claim to the English crown, and who, therefore, readily yielded credit to their assurances, that, if he would but send a force sufficient to give them encouragement, the English, especially in the northern parts, would throw off the Norman yoke, and declare for him. He, therefore equipped a considerable fleet, (some copies of the Saxon chronicle say 240, others make them 300 sail), and sent them under the command of his brother-in-law Osborn, his sons Harold and Canutus, and some of the English fugitives, well provided with all things necessary, and with a considerable body of forces on board: so that nothing less than subduing the whole kingdom was the intent of this expedition. †

A.D. 1069. Few undertakings of such consequence, and wherein so many persons of different interests were concerned, had, in the beginning such good success as that of which we are speaking; for the Danish fleet, having favourable winds and fair weather, came safely into the mouth of the Humber, and there disembarked their forces about the middle of August, A. D. 1069, as we are told by Matthew Paris: ‡ They were immediately joined by Edgar Etheling, the Earls Edward and Morcar, the famous Earl Waltheof, and many other persons of distinction, with a great army, composed of English and Scots, and then moved directly towards York, which

\* Chron. Saxon. A. D. 1068:

† Chron. Saxon. A. D. 1068. Pontanus, hist. Dan. A. D. 1068.

‡ Hist. Angl. vol. i. p. 6.

King William had caused to be strongly fortified. The governor, whose name was Mallet, resolved to make an obstinate defence. With this view he ordered part of the suburbs to be set on fire, that the Danes might not lodge in them on their approach; but, through some negligence, the fire caught the city, and burnt a great part of it before it could be extinguished, which gave the Danes an opportunity of gaining it almost without a stroke; after which they attacked the citadel, took it, and put three thousand Normans to the sword. On this success, as the Danish writers say, Earl Waltheof was left there with a strong garrison, and the main body marched directly towards London.\* The king, however, advanced to meet them with a considerable army, wasting and spoiling the northern countries, which he conceived well affected to the enemy, and, as some alledge, fought with, and gave a check to the invaders: but our gravest historians report the fact quite otherwise. They say, that, finding his troops much inferior to the enemy, he entered into a private treaty with Osborn the Danish general, and offered him an immense sum of money for himself, with free leave to plunder the northern coasts, if he would be content to retire with his forces in the spring; which he accordingly accepted: so the king, spoiling one way, to revenge the infidelity of his northern subjects, and the Danes plundering the other, they, in the beginning of the next year, returned to their fleet in the Humber, and, embarking their forces, returned home.† But Swain, king of Denmark, being soon informed that his hopes were frustrated, by the covetousness and treachery of his brother, rather than by the

\* Pontan. rer. Danicar. hist. lib. v. Hen. Huntingd. hist. lib. vii. p. 369. Simeon Dunelm. A. D. 1069. Chron. Saxon. A. D. 1069. Roger Hoveden, p. 451, 452. Alured Beverl. Annal. lib. ix. p. 129.

† Chron. Saxon. p. 174. Pontanus rerum Dan. hist.



force of the Normans, he banished him, as he well deserved.\* Thus ended an expedition which might have produced another revolution in our affairs, if the king's prudence had not been as great as his courage. The next year, the Saxon chronicles tell us, the Danes landed again in the Isle of Ely, to which abundance of malecontents had resorted; but, being able to do little, Swain made a treaty with the king of England: but his fleet sailing homewards, laden with booty, a great part of it was forced into Ireland, and many of the ships, with all their treasure on board them foundered at sea.† But as to this, the Danish writers are silent.

A.D. 1069. About the same time, the sons of the late King Harold came out of Ireland with a fleet of sixty-five sail, and landed in Somersetshire, where they committed great depredations; till Ednoth, who had been an old servant of their father, marched against them, beat their forces, and obliged them to retire.‡ They made a second attempt the year following, with a fleet of sixty sail, landed near Exeter, plundered and burnt the country; but earl Brien, raising forces, and fighting them twice in one day, forced them again to fly, with the loss of seven hundred men, and some of the principal nobility of Ireland; which so broke the spirits of that nation, as to discourage them from abetting the English fugitives any more;§ so that the sons of Harold, Godwin, and Edmund, retired to Denmark, where they were kindly received, and spent the remainder of their days.

A.D. 1072. These accidents convinced the king of the necessity of having a fleet always ready, and therefore to this he turned his thoughts; and, having collected as many ships as he was able, he employed them to hinder succours from

\* Adam. Bremens. Pontan. lib. v.

† Chron. Saxon. p. 177.

‡ Roger Hoveden, p. 450.

§ Gul. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Anglor. lib. iii.

Coming to the rebels in the Isle of Ely, which gave him an opportunity of entering it by land, and reducing to his obedience, or destroying, all who had taken shelter there. In the seventh year of his reign, he attacked Scotland by sea as well as land, in order to be revenged of King Malcolm, who had constantly assisted all the disturbers of his government, and quickly brought him to accept a peace on the terms he thought fit to prescribe.\* In the tenth year of his reign, it appears that affairs were in better order than they had ever been before, yet it was not long before a great conspiracy was formed in England, and the lords concerned in it invited the Welch to enter the kingdom on one side, while the Danes invaded it on the other. The king was at this time in Normandy, but having early intelligence of what passed in his absence, he quickly returned into England, seized many of the conspirators, and disappointed them in their intended rising. The Danes, however, under the command of Canutus the son of King Swain, came with a fleet of two hundred sail upon the coast, and even entered the mouth of the Thames, but not finding their confederates in the posture they expected, and perceiving that the king had now a navy as well as an army, they retired to Flanders without undertaking any thing. †

A.D.  
1075.

For nine years after, the king remained quiet with respect to the Danes, who were involved in so many troubles at home, that they had no leisure to vex their neighbours. This respite the king employed in securing his foreign dominions against the attempts of the king of France, in taming the Welch, and new-modelling affairs in England, so as to suit them to his own interest and inclination; as also to the raising a better force than hitherto he had fitted out at sea, which in some measure

\* Chron. Saxon. A. D. 1072. Alured. Beverl. Annal. lib. ix.

† Chron. Saxon. p. 183. Hen. Huntingd. Hist. lib. vii. p. 369.

A.D.  
1085.

he effected. In the twentieth year of his reign, when he thought to have taken some rest from his labours, and was busied in settling his affairs in Normandy, he was alarmed with the prospect of new danger, by receiving intelligence that the Danes were making prodigious preparations for the conquest of England. Our writers are far from giving a good account of this matter; for, though they tell us in general, that mighty things were intended, and a vast fleet drawn together, yet they deliver no rational motives for this attempt. Nor are they less deficient in what they say of the issue of the design, viz. that the fleet was detained two years in the harbour by contrary winds, and at last the enterprize was abandoned, when they understood the mighty preparations made in England to receive them. But we meet with a much clearer and more probable story in the Danish authors.

They say, that King Canutus IV. as soon as he was thoroughly settled on his throne, began to form a design of asserting the title, which he believed his father Swain had left him, to the crown of England; to which he was chiefly encouraged by the persuasions of his brother-in-law, Robert, earl of Flanders, who promised him his assistance, and by the incitements of the English refugees, who assured him that their countrymen were quite tired out with the intolerable oppressions of the Normans, and would certainly join him, if he landed with a force sufficient to protect them. Before he absolutely determined to make this expedition, he asked the opinion of his brother Olaus, duke of Sleswick, who advised him to undertake it, as did also the states of the kingdom; upon which he drew together a prodigious fleet, little short of a thousand sail, and put on board them all sorts of ammunition and provision for the great body of troops he intended to embark therein. When all things were ready, he waited some time for his brother Olaus, and at last growing impatient, he went to fetch him out of his duchy,



where he found him plotting his ruin, instead of preparing for the voyage to England, upon which he seized, and sent him prisoner into Flanders. During the absence of King Canutus, the conspirators on board the fleet gave out that the provisions were not wholesome, that several of the vessels were leaky, that the king's mind was changed, and that the best thing they could do was to go every man to his own home, so that, when Canutus returned, he found both his fleet and army dispersed; \* which is certainly a better account of the miscarriage of this undertaking, than the long continuance of cross winds, to which some, or the effects of magical enchantments, to which others, ascribe it.

Certain it is, that King William brought over from Normandy such an army as his subjects till then had never seen; for the maintenance of which, he not only oppressed the nation for the present, but laying hold of the general consternation the people were in, ordered the famous Doomsday-book to be made, wherein, taking an account of every foot of land in the kingdom, he learned, to the last shilling, how low they might be drained. I know some historians place this fact in another light, but I follow the Saxon chronicle, written in his own time, but with a truly English spirit, and therefore, in this respect, the best guide. † To say the truth, this king knew how to make advantage of all things, but particularly of misfortunes; for, in all the rebellions and invasions which happened during his reign, he constantly spared his Normans, and subdued the English by the arms of the English. Thus, on the rumour of this invasion, he first took occasion to

\* Pontan. rerum Danic. Hist. lib. v. p. 197. Gul. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Ang. lib. iii.

† Chron. Saxon. p. 186. Ingulph. Hist. Gul. Malmesb. Mat. Paris. An excellent account of Doomsday-book, the reason why it was made, and its contents, is to be found in Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle, vol. ii. p. 373. in Mr. Hearne's accurate edition.

fill the country with his foreign soldiers, and then pillaged the people for their subsistence, and to fill his own coffers. When the danger was almost over, he sailed to the Isle of Wight, that it might appear he was not destitute of a naval force, in case his enemies resumed their projects, and passed from thence into Normandy. The next year he engaged in a war with France, in which, though he was successful, yet it cost him his life; for, advancing too near the flames of a city which he caused to be burnt, he caught a fever thereby, of which he died on the 9th day of September, 1087, in the twenty-first year of his reign, and the sixty-fourth of his age. The Saxon chronicle tells us, that he was a diligent active prince, and extremely jealous of his sovereignty as king of England. Wales he subdued, and bridled with garrisons, awed Scotland, preserved Normandy, in its full extent, against all the attempts of the French; and, if he had lived two years longer, would have reduced Ireland without employing arms.\* In a word, he was in England a great king, and to his Normans a good duke.

A.D.  
1086.

A.D.  
1087.

WILLIAM II. surnamed Rufus, *i. e.* the Red, from the colour of his hair, succeeded his father, though without so much as a plausible title, his brother Robert having not only the pretence of birth, but likewise a plea of merit much superior to his. William, however, thought he might well attain by fraud what his father had both taken and kept by force; and, therefore, having the good-will of some of the clergy, he wisely determined to procure that of the nation, by distributing among them his father's treasures. To this end he made haste to England; and going to Winchester, where his father's wealth lay, he scattered it abroad in such a manner, that the poorest of the people, in every parish in England, felt the effects of it; so that,

\* Chron. Saxon. p. 190, 191. Alured. Beverl. Annal. lib. ix.

On his coming to London at Christmas, he was received with all imaginable tokens of loyalty and affection.\* He easily discerned, that his brother, Duke Robert, would not fail to give him disturbance, and that, whenever he inclined to do it, a party would not be wanting to assist him in England; he, therefore, to secure himself, in the first place, caressed all the English nobility, and, contrary to his father's maxims, preferred them to the Normans, not out of any love, but because he saw that the Normans were better affected to his brother; yet, whatever the motive was, the thing itself was very beneficial to the people, for it once again put arms into their hands, and thereby gave them a power of obliging their princes to keep their promises longer than they intended. Another expedient of his was of no less advantage; he permitted the English to fit out ships of force, to act against his enemies, and we shall quickly see what profit the king reaped from this indulgence. †

A.D.  
1088.

Robert, the eldest son of the Conqueror, was in Germany when his father died, whence he quickly returned to take possession of the duchy of Normandy, in which he met with no opposition. When he was settled there, he turned his thoughts upon England, where his uncle Odo, earl of Kent, had formed a strong party for the support of his title. They surprised and fortified several castles; and, if Robert, who had a good army in Normandy, and ships enough to transport them, had been as diligent in his own affair as those who abetted his interest here, he had certainly carried his point, and transferred the crown to his own from his brother's head; but he contented himself with sending a few troops hither, which, however, landed without opposition, the king having no navy to oppose

A.D.  
1089.

\* Chron. Saxon. p. 192. Gul. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Anglor. lib. iv. Hen. Hunting. Hist. lib. vii.

† Roger. Hoveden, p. 461, 462. Johan. Brompt. Chron. int. x. script.



A.D. 1090. them. But the English observing, that after this, they began to pass the seas carelessly, attacked them as occasion offered, took their ships, and destroyed multitudes of men; so that, in a little time, Robert was glad to desist from his pretensions to the kingdom; and the king, in the fourth year of his reign, invaded Normandy both by sea and land; but, by the interposition of friends, their differences were composed, and for the present the brothers reconciled.

A.D. 1091. The year following, the king resolving to be revenged on the Scots, who had invaded his dominions while he was in Normandy, prepared to attack them with a considerable land force, and, at the same time, fitted out a great fleet. Duke Robert, who was then in England, was entrusted with the management of this expedition, which was far from answering the expectations raised thereby; for, the fleet not being ready till towards Michaelmas, there happened such storms on the Scottish coast, that abundance of ships were lost, and many more disabled; the army, too, suffered exceedingly by the severity of the weather, and, after all, Duke Robert was glad, by the interposition of Edgar Atheling, to make peace with Malcolm king of Scots, which the king ratified, without intending to keep it.\* After this, little occurs in his reign respecting naval expeditions, except frequent invasions of Normandy, which shews he was superior at sea, and that he might have made a great figure by his maritime power, if he had been so inclined. But he had other views, and was particularly disposed to bring the Welch under subjection; in order to which, he allowed the nobility on the borders to undertake expeditions at their own expense, and, in consequence of that, for their own advantage.

\* Chron. Saxon. p. 197. Alured. Beverl. lib. ix.

A. D.  
1099.

An accident happened in one of these expeditions, which shews how much maritime affairs were then neglected, and how imprudent a thing it is to depend on armies without fleets. Hugh, earl of Shrewsbury, and Hugh, earl of Chester, invaded the isle of Anglesey, and easily subdued the inhabitants, whom they plundered, and used very cruelly; but, in the midst of their success, one Magnus, a Norwegian pirate, came from the Orkneys, which were then subject to the Danes, with a small squadron of ships, and, landing in Anglesey unexpectedly, defeated these insolent invaders, killed the earl of Shrewsbury upon the spot, and carried off all the spoil that he and his associates had taken. Not long after this, King William being informed, that the city of Mans was besieged, he resolved to go to its relief; and, though his nobility advised him to stay till a squadron, at least, could be drawn together, yet he absolutely refused to make any delay, but going on board a small vessel, obliged the master to put to sea in foul weather, for this wise reason, that he never heard a king of England was drowned; and so, landing at Barfleur with the troops he had in Normandy, relieved the place. How-much-soever some commend this action, it was not certainly either prudent or honourable, as expressing rather an intemperate courage, than any sober resolution of maintaining his dignity, which would have been better provided for by keeping a navy in constant readiness.\* This appears also to have been the king's own sentiments; for, on his return to England, the next year, his first care was, to put his marine in a better condition; and, having formed some new projects, he drew together a very considerable fleet, at the same time that he raised a very great army; but, before all things could be got ready, he was taken off by a sudden and violent death. For going to hunt in the New Forest, he was

\* Roger Hoved. p. 465. Alured. Bev. Annales, lib. ix.

shot accidentally by an arrow's glancing against a tree, so that, after fetching one deep groan he died on the spot. The current of our modern histories have fixed this fact on one Sir Walter Tyrrel; but, several ancient writers, speaking of the king's death, do not mention this gentleman; and a contemporary author affirms, he had often heard Sir Walter declare, that he was in another part of the forest at the time of the king's death, and that he knew not how it happened.\* Thus the rumours in one age become history in the next. This accident fell out on the second of August, in the year 1100, when the king had reigned almost thirteen, and lived somewhat more than forty-two years. He was certainly a prince of high spirit, and quick parts, but had little tenderness for his subjects; and, though he made a better king than his father to the English, yet it was merely because he had more need of them, as appeared by the difference of his conduct in time of distress, and when the situation of his affairs was mended through their assistance, for he grew then as careless in performing, as he had been lavish before in promising. So that his death was looked on as a deliverance, though he left the succession unsettled, and all things in confusion.

A.D. 1100. HENRY, the youngest son of the Conqueror, from his being bred to learning, surnamed Beauclerk, stepped into the vacant throne, while his brother Robert was in the Holy land. He had a bad title, though varnished with many fair pretences, such as his being born after his father became king, drawing his first breath in England, and having ever shewn a great affection for his countrymen. Yet the favour of the clergy, and particularly the archbishop of Canterbury, was the chief cause of his peaceable

\* A quodam ex suis sagitta occisus, says the Saxon Chron. p. 277. Suger. in vita Ludovici Crassi.



accession; as his being very rich, and knowing well how to distribute his money, gained him, after his accession, many friends. In the very dawning of his reign, he discovered an admirable talent for government, doing more good things than his brother had ever promised. He restored, in a great measure, the Saxon laws; preferred virtuous and able men; eased the people of their taxes; and provided for the security of the seas; promoting also, to the utmost of his power, the trade and navigation of his subjects. Still more to ingratiate himself with the commons, he espoused Matilda, the sister of Edgar, king of Scots, who was niece to Edgar Etheling, the true heir of the Saxon line; all this he did with great sincerity of heart, and not from those principles of Norman cunning, wherein consisted the seeming wisdom of his brother. He carried his affection for the English further still, by doing them justice upon their oppressors; imprisoning the bishop of Chester in the Tower, who had been the principal adviser of William Rufus, in all his arbitrary exactions.\* In consequence of all this, he either had, or ought to have had, the entire affection of his subjects. But his wisdom would not allow him to trust entirely to that; and, therefore, as soon as he understood that his brother Robert was returned into Normandy, and received there in triumph, he provided for the security of his dominions by the most natural method, that of increasing his strength at sea; and giving directions to his officers who had the custody of the coasts, called, in the language of those times, butsecarles, to be vigilant in preventing all persons from coming out of Normandy into England. †

Time plainly discovered the wisdom of the king's precaution; for Duke Robert, who was returned with a great

\* Chron. Saxon. A. D. 1100. Gul. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Ang. lib. v. Matth. Paris, p. 55. Eadmer. Histor. Nover. lib. iii. Alured. Beverl. Annal. lib. ix.

† Roger Hoveden, p. 468, 469. Florent. Wigorn. ad A. D. 1100.

A.D.  
1101.

reputation, and who was a prince endowed with many amiable qualities, quickly renewed his pretensions to the English crown; preparing both a fleet and an army, in order to pass over into England with greater strength, and hopes of better success than he had formerly. All our historians, however, agree, that if King Henry's commanders at sea had done their duty, he would never have set his feet on this island by force. But it so happened, that either out of hopes of profit, or from the natural levity of their dispositions, several of them inclined to the duke; and, as soon as they knew his fleet was at sea, went over, with their ships, into his service, by which means, he landed safely at Portsmouth, with a gallant army. King Henry, however, had not been idle, but had a considerable force about him, when he received this news, upon which he marched directly to Hastings, where he was joined by many of the nobility, though some of these, too, afterwards, went over to his brother. When things were on the point of being determined by arms, and a second battle of Hastings seemed to be the only method of clearing the royal title, the archbishop of Canterbury, and some other great men, interposed, and brought about an accommodation, by which the kingdom was left to Henry, and a pension of three thousand marks was reserved to Robert,\* who, after a stay of six months in his brother's court, returned into Normandy, very well satisfied, though he did not continue so long, perceiving plainly, when it was too late, that he who wanted resolution enough to contend for a kingdom, was not likely to preserve a dukedom in quiet; and this jealousy drew upon him, in process of time, the very thing that he feared, as our historians relate at large, and as I shall briefly shew, so far as it concerns the subject of which I am treating.

\* Chron. Saxon. p. 209. Mal. Paris, p. 98. Gul. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Angl. lib. v. Alured. Beverl. Annal: lib. ix.

After various passages into Normandy, the king, at last, determined to make an absolute conquest of it; pretending, that he was ashamed to see his brother not able to live upon his revenues, though he had not been ashamed to take from him, as a gift, the pension of three thousand marks *per annum*, which he had forced him to accept in lieu of the crown. With this view he raised a great army, and a fleet proportionable, with which he crossed the sea, and, in a short time, conquered the greatest part of his brother's dominions. That stout prince, whose spirit was always superior to his power, resolved to hazard all bravely in the field, rather than remain safe in his person, but stripped of his dominions. Full of this generous resolution, he gave his brother battle, wherein he shewed all the courage and conduct of an experienced commander; yet, in the end, was routed, taken prisoner, and thenceforward never enjoyed either land or liberty more.\* The English writers are fond of remarking, that this conquest of Normandy happened that very day forty years, on which his father, by the battle of Hastings, obtained the crown of England; but, as to what they relate further, of Duke Robert's having his eyes put out, and dying of spite, because the king sent him a robe that was too little for himself, † they are facts, if not false, very doubtful at least, and therefore not hastily to be credited.

As Normandy could not have been conquered without a considerable fleet, so it would quickly have been lost again, if the king had not been superior to his neighbours at sea; for, the king of France was very desirous of setting up William, the son of Duke Robert, and nephew to the king, in the room of his father. This obliged King Henry to

\* Chron. Saxon. p. 213, 214. Mat. Paris, p. 62. Gul. Malmesb: &c.

† This is indeed affirmed by M. Paris, and some other writers of good authority; but the Saxon chronicle is silent, and Malmesbury commends King Henry's kindness to his brother.



make frequent voyages thither, and to be at great expense, as well in gratifying the French lords, as in maintaining an army and fleet for its defence; which did not, however, hinder him from chastising the Welch, when they took up arms against him; or from sending to the assistance of the Christians in the Holy Land, as great succours as any prince of his time.\* Indeed, his remarkable felicity, in attaining almost every thing he undertook, put much in his power; and he had too elevated a soul not to use what he possessed.

A.D. 1120. He received, however, in the twenty-first year of his reign, a very considerable check; for, having settled every thing in Normandy to his good liking, where, for that purpose, he had resided for some years, he resolved to return to England, with all the royal family. His only son William, whom he had made duke of that country, and who was alike the delight of his father, and of the nation, ordered a new ship to be built, for the commodious carriage of himself, and many of his princely relations; these, accordingly, embarked on the 26th of November, the weather fine, and the wind fair. The prince, having made the hearts of the sailors merry, proposed to them a reward, in case they could outsail the vessel in which his father was. In attempting this, they ventured too near the shore, and unfortunately, just as it fell dark, ran upon a shoal of rocks, then known by the name of Shatteras. The boat was presently put out, and the prince, with some few about him, got into it, and might have been yet safe, if, moved by the cries of his sister, the countess of Perche, he had not returned with an intent to take her in, which gave so many an opportunity of crowding into the boat, that it sunk together with the ship, every soul going to the bottom except a butcher, who very strangely escaped,

\* Gul. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Anglor. lib. v. Hen. Hunting. Hist. lib. vii. Alured. Beverl. Annal. lib. ix.

by clinging to the main-mast.\* There perished by this misfortune about two hundred persons, which enables us to give some guess at the bulk and burden of ships in those days. †

Other circumstances in this king's reign, I find none of weight enough to deserve mentioning; I shall therefore content myself with observing, that, by several laws relating to trade, (particularly one which gave every wreck to the owners, if a living thing was found on board,) he manifested his attention to commerce, and his care of maritime affairs. ‡ To this we may add, that the Danish prince of the Orkneys made him frequent presents, as testimonies of his veneration and respect; and, though Morchad, king of Ireland, whom the writers of that country style Murchertus O'Brian, in the beginning of his reign, treated the English but indifferently, yet, on King Henry's threatening to prohibit all commerce with that island, he came to a just sense of his folly, and ever after behaved as became him towards the subjects of so great a prince. § It is in some measure wonderful, that, considering the many and great fatigues this prince underwent, he was not sooner worn out; but, as he was fortunate in all other things, so in this also he was happy, that he enjoyed a longer life and rule than his predecessors, dying on December 2, 1135, after having reigned thirty-five, and lived near sixty-eight years. || He was a monarch of great endowments, improved by an excellent education; who sincerely loved the English, and had always a just regard to the honour of his crown.

A.D.  
1135.

\* Chron. Saxon. p. 212. Gul. Malmesb. Hen. Hunting. Matth. Paris, &c.

† Alured. Beverl. Annal. lib. ix. p. 148. Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle, p. 438. contains a very particular and curious account.

‡ Selden. Jan. Ang. int. oper. tom. iv. p. 1009.

§ Gul. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Angl. lib. v.

|| Chron. Saxon. p. 237. Matth. Paris. Gul. Malmesb. &c.

A.D. 1136. STEPHEN, earl of Blois, nephew, by the father's side, to the late king, and, by his mother, grandson to William the Conqueror, by cajoling the English lords, promising wholly to remit danegeld, and to ease them in other particulars, attained the possession of the English crown, to the prejudice of Maud, the empress, through the same arts precisely, whereby her father had defrauded his brother, Duke Robert. This King Stephen was a prince, who, abating his ambition, had few or no vices; brave in his person, a good officer; and who, in all probability, would have made an excellent king, if he had come to the throne with a better title, and thereby secured a more peaceable possession; but, being involved in wars and disputes almost his whole reign, and having given up or relinquished that tax, by which he should have secured the sovereignty of the sea, which promise he exactly kept, we need not wonder, that we have less to say of him than of the other Norman princes. \*

A.D. 1140. In the third year of his reign, he, with a great fleet, and a considerable army on board, invaded Normandy; and, though Geoffrey, earl of Anjou, the husband of Maud, the empress, did all in his power to defend it, yet he rejoined that dukedom to the English crown, intending to have bestowed it on his son Eustace. However, his affairs had not this prosperous current long; for, after many domestic troubles, his competitor, Maud, landed in England, and laid claim to the crown. Though her retinue was very small, scarcely one hundred and fifty in number, yet she quickly grew strong enough to give the king a great deal of trouble; nay, at length, she became so powerful, that she took him prisoner, and sent him to be kept at Bristol, where, by her orders, he was put into irons, yet afterwards exchanged for her bastard brother, Robert, earl of Glou-

\* Chron. Saxon. p. 238. Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 74, 75. Gul. Malmesb. Hist. Novel. lib. i.



cester. This potent lord, crossing over into Normandy, recovered it for his sister and her son Henry; and then returning, is recorded to have invaded the northern parts of the kingdom, with a fleet of fifty-two sail, which shews how low the maritime strength of the nation was then fallen; and what mighty mischiefs follow from a contested succession, which, however it may end as to princes, is sure to be always fatal to their subjects.\*

Indeed, this reign of King Stephen, if our best histories, and the Saxon Chronicle, especially, be worthy of credit, was most unfortunate for the people, exposing them to such miseries and distresses as in times past they had never felt, and which would hardly meet with any belief now. Amongst all their grievances, this was none of the least, that there was a total stagnation of trade; much counterfeit money; and no security for foreign merchants; remedies for all which are expressly provided by the treaty of peace made with Henry duke of Normandy, by King Stephen, in the eighteenth year of his reign, which was confirmed by the king's charter, whereof an authentic copy is preserved in Holingshed's Chronicle, and no where else. † The king did not live long after this settlement of his affairs, otherwise he would, in all probability, have done his utmost to restore things to a better state, about which, when his mind was employed, he was carried off by a complication of distempers, on October 25, 1154, when he had reigned nearly nineteen years. A great captain, says Matthew Paris, and most of our other historians agree as to his personal qualifications, a good king. Only that ancient and venerable book the Saxon Chronicle, which ends with his reign, sets down nothing but calamities and misfortunes which happened therein; and yet

A.D.  
1154.

\* Gul. Neubrigen. lib. i. cap. 13. Nic. Trivet. Annal. Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle, p. 460.

† Vol. ii. p. 62. edit. 1587. This was given to the editor by Serjeant Fleetwood, then recorder of London, a great antiquary.

this prince had a reputation for piety, and was remarkably kind to the monks. I mention this particularly, to shew the impartiality of that authentic history, which well deserves to be translated from the tongue of our ancestors into modern English, and would afford such as prefer truth to fine language much satisfaction.

ACCORDING to the method I have hitherto followed, I ought to speak now of such discoveries as were made within this space of time, or extraordinary acts performed by private persons; in respect of which, however, I shall not detain the reader long, because, in the first place, we have not much of this kind to note; and, secondly, what there is hath been already examined by Hakluyt and other collectors, and, therefore, may be presumed to be sufficiently known already. Such are the travels of Alured bishop of Worcester, in the year 1058, to Jerusalem;\* the journey of Ingulphus, abbot of Croyland, to the same place, in 1064;† both which are private transactions, and only prove that Englishmen were as forward as any, in those days, in undertaking such journeys as might contribute to the increase either of their knowledge or reputation. As to the expeditions of Edgar Atheling, they are somewhat of a different kind, and are, in some measure, of national importance. His high quality, as the true heir of the English crown, made all his actions very conspicuous during the times in which he lived; and, as he often found it troublesome staying at home, under the eye of such as, to his prejudice, were vested with supreme power, and bore him no good-will, so he chose to signalize his courage abroad, in such adventures as fell in his way. Thus he commanded a body of Normans, which were sent

\* Roger Hoveden, in parte priore Annal. p. 415. Hakluyt, vol. ii. p. 8.

† Ingulph. Histor. ap. script. post Bedam, p. 903, 904. Hakluyt, vol. ii. p. 9.

into Apulia;\* and, returning out of Italy with honour, he then applied himself to Robert duke of Normandy, who treated him with kindness and respect, and with whom he went to Jerusalem, where he likewise gained such great reputation, that first the emperor of Constantinople, and then the emperor of Germany, would willingly have detained him in their courts; but he came back in 1102, and was four years afterwards taken prisoner, with duke Robert, in Normandy.† One of our most famous historians, who was his contemporary, reproaches him severely for his not accepting the offers that were made him abroad, and for his fond attachment to his own country: but, if we consider that his sister was married to the king of Scots, and that her daughter by that king was espoused to King Henry, in whose reign he returned, one cannot think that censure very reasonable; or that his wasting the last years of his life in so obscure a retirement, that we know not where it was, ‡ or when, or how he died, appears more dishonourable to his memory, than to the writers of that age, who were so devoted to power, that they could not so much as do justice to the character of a man obnoxious thereto. Athelard, a monk of Bath, is said by Bale to have travelled through Egypt and Arabia, in search of knowledge: and that, on his return home, which was towards the latter end of the reign of Henry I. he published many learned works. § Leland, a more accurate writer, tells us he was a great traveller, but without any mention either of Egypt or Arabia; though he informs us, that he translated Euclid's Elements out of Arabic into Latin; and that himself had seen another learned work, translated by the same monk,

A. D.  
1130.

\* Gul. Malmesb. de gest. reg. Angl. lib. iii.

† Chron. Saxon. A. D. 1106.

‡ Gul. Malmesb. de gestis reg. Angl. lib. iii. p. 103. Hakluyt, vol. ii. p. 11.

§ Baleus de Script. Britan. p. 133. Hakluyt, vol. ii. p. 15.



from an Arabic treatise, intituled, *Erith Elcharmi*; which deserves to be remarked, because very probably these books were then first brought to the knowledge of learned men here; and therefore this man might be said to travel for public advantage. \* *William of Tyre*, † and *Robert Ketensis*, are both mentioned in *Hakluyt*, from *Bale*, for learned men and travellers, as they were. ‡ The former flourished under King *Henry*, the latter under King *Stephen*; but as to any thing farther capable of recommending their fame to posterity, I find not.

It appears from the renewed charters of the cinque ports, that as they were first incorporated by *Edward the Confessor*, so, during the reigns of the several princes mentioned in this chapter, they were particularly serviceable upon all occasions: whence it is evident, that there was a flourishing trade carried on from this coast, even in these times, and before them. As to the commerce of the river *Thames*, and the city of *London*, there is an ample testimony in the works of *William of Malmesbury*, who flourished under King *Stephen*: for he assures us that it was then frequented by merchants of all nations; and so ample a store-house of all the necessaries of life, that, upon any dearth or scarcity of corn, the rest of the nation was cheaply and conveniently supplied from thence. § The same writer observes as to *Bristol*, that a great trade was driven from thence to *Norway*, *Ireland*, and other places, whence the inhabitants were vastly enriched. || Without doubt, the accession of the *Norman dominions* was of considerable use in respect to trade; as was our former intercourse with the *Danes*; since it enlarged our correspondence with the northern parts of the

\* *Leland's Comment. de Script. Brit.* vol. i. p. 201.

† *Bal. de Script. Britan.* vol. ii. p. 50, 150. *Hakluyt*, vol. ii. p. 16.

‡ *Bal. de Script. Britan.* vol. i. p. 191. *Hakluyt*, ubi supra.

§ *De gest. pontif. Anglor.* lib. ii.

|| *Ibid.* lib. iv.

world, a thing always profitable to a country abounding with valuable commodities or manufactures, as will more clearly appear, even from our concise account of the succeeding reigns.

The reader will observe, that we refer any advantages arising to the inhabitants of this island, from their falling under the same sovereignty with the duchy of Normandy, to the succeeding reigns; since there is nothing more certain, than that under the government of the princes mentioned in this chapter, they suffered severely. William I. provoked by frequent insurrections in the north, and the assistance given by the Scots to such as took arms against him, ruined the northern parts of his territories in such a manner, that they did not recover during this whole period. On the other hand, his son and successor, William Rufus, demolished thirty-six good towns, in the fairest and most fruitful part of England, for the making that which is still called the New Forest. What is ascribed to rage in the one, and wantonness in the other, may perhaps be justly styled the fruits of the same policy in both: for it looks as if the father had a mind to make war a thing more difficult to the inhabitants of the north, by preventing their joining with the Scots so easily, or subsisting their forces conveniently when joined; and the son might possibly be willing to have that coast less populous, that the inhabitants might not be tempted to aim at preventing his return from Normandy, whenever his affairs carried him thither, as otherwise perhaps they might have been.

Both those monarchs seem to have had no tenderness at all for this country, but considered it as a farm, of which it was wisdom to make the most while in their possession. Henry had indeed a heart, if not entirely, yet in a good measure, English: under him the people began to recover again, and grow wealthy, as the king did likewise: for it was in his time that the revenue arising from the crown

lands was adjusted, and fixed to a settled and certain rate, so as that it might be paid, either in money or provisions. As this shews that the people were beginning to grow rich, so by attending his affairs at home as well as he did those abroad, the king grew rich too, insomuch, that at the time of his demise, he actually left in his coffers the sum of one hundred thousand pounds in ready money, exclusive of plate and jewels. This would have coined, in our times, to thrice that sum; but, in reference to its real value, ought to be esteemed about a million. Stephen seized upon all this, and spent it in his wars, with much more. Better had it been, if he had spent it in his follies, for then it would have gone amongst the people, without prejudice to their industry: whereas his reign being a series of troubles, they were so often in arms, that they could attend to nothing else; which was the true source of that misery and poverty before mentioned.

But to understand this, and many of our subsequent reflections perfectly, it will be requisite to say somewhat of the manner of dealing in those days, the nature of payments, and the value of gold and silver. As to the common people, in their ordinary way of trading in the country, they made but little use of money, and yet derived great advantage from the laws enacted for settling its value; since, by those laws, the rates of most saleable goods were likewise settled, by which exchange or barter was very much facilitated; and where commodities could not be brought to balance each other exactly, the difference was paid in money, that is, in silver or gold, according to the rates at which they were then fixed by law, so that none in their open dealings, could be over-reached, cheated, or wronged.

Payments, *ad scalam* and *ad pensum*, were by weight. Twenty shillings were then a pound, and the officers took sixpence over, called Vantage-money. This kind of payment was very ancient: when payment was made *ad*



*pensum*, the payer was to make good the weight, though he had allowed the sixpence over. To prevent fraud in the fineness, as well as weight, part of the money was melted down, called combustion. There were two sorts of payments by combustion; real and nominal. Real, when a sample of the money was put into the furnace: nominal, when a twentieth part of a pound was taken and accepted in lieu of actual combustion. When money paid in was melted down, or the supplement made by adding one shilling to each twenty, the ferme was said to be dealbated, or blanché: so one hundred pounds, thus paid into the exchequer after combustion, was said to be one hundred pounds blank. This was opposed to payments made *numero*, or by tale, which is our modern way. Computations, or at least payments, were made by pounds, marks, half-marks, shillings, pence, &c. silver by marks, half-marks, ounces, and half-ounces of gold. The mark of gold was equivalent to six pounds of silver, or six score shillings: the ounce of gold was equivalent to fifteen shillings of silver; the pound of silver was twenty shillings; the mark of silver thirteen shillings and four pence; the shilling twelvepence. It is requisite to have these notes before our eyes, when we are speaking of what passed in times at such a distance; for, otherwise, it will be almost impossible to prevent falling into great mistakes about subjects of importance; as indeed, several able historians have done, for want of attending carefully to these matters, which, in all probability, they did not conceive so deserving their notice: and yet a disposition to negligence is sometimes as fatal to the reader, as an inclination to falsehood.

But, that I may not seem to expect more caution in others, than I have shewn myself, I think it may not be amiss to give the public some account of the reasons why I suppose, that the sum of one hundred thousand pounds, found in the treasury of King Henry I. was equivalent to

near a million at this time. In order to this, it is necessary to acquaint the reader, that, in the reign of that prince, the king's tenant, who was bound to provide bread for one hundred men, was allowed to compound, by paying one shilling in money. The very learned Bishop Fleetwood, supposes, that this was bread for one meal; but I am inclined to think that it was bread for a whole day: and am induced to think so, because, in countries where this establishment has always prevailed, a ration of bread is still so accounted. In our times, I presume, the value of bread for a day may be computed at about two-pence, or rather more; and consequently, bread for a hundred men will come to sixteen shillings and eight pence: so that what could be then bought for one shilling, would cost almost seventeen now. Yet, if we should hastily conclude from hence, that any given sum of money at that time, ought to be multiplied by seventeen, to find its equivalent in ours, we shall be much in the wrong. For the shilling, in those times, was thrice as heavy as ours; and therefore was, in reality, worth three shillings: so that, in fact, the bread that would now cost sixteen shillings and eight pence, might have been bought then for as much silver as is in three of our shillings. According to this computation, one hundred thousand pounds then, would not be worth quite six hundred thousand now; but if we reflect, that a great part of this sum must have been in gold, and that it is very reasonable to believe the composition was not exactly made, or strictly set, it will appear that the estimation I have made is agreeable to truth; or, at least, not very wide of it.

It may not be amiss, after dwelling so long upon this subject, to explain another point; that is, the difference between the Saxon and Norman money, which in sound was very great, though but very little in fact. The Saxons divided the pound weight of silver into forty-eight shillings, which the Normans divided only into twenty; but

then, the Saxons divided their shilling into five pence only; whereas the Normans split theirs into twelve; from whence it follows, that the number of pence in the Saxon and Norman pound was the same, and the pounds themselves exactly of the same value, as being in reality what the word implies, a pound weight of silver. It has been before observed, that great sums of money were paid in weight; and the reason of it is not hard to be found: for the coin then current was the silver penny, with a deep cross indented on the reverse; so that it might be easily broken into the halfpenny, or farthing. This was convenient enough, therefore, for small matters, but not for great: and for this reason all large payments were by the scale; and in cases of very great moment, it was stipulated that it should be so: just as in succeeding times it was required, that payments should be made in sterling money, and as in ours we use the phrase of good and lawful money of England.

We collect most of these particulars either from old records, monkish historians, or those ancient chronicles in rhyme, which are still preserved to us by the industry and care of a few men of a particular taste, though very little regarded by the many. It is, notwithstanding, very certain, that points of this nature are highly important, to the thorough understanding the most useful and material parts of history: such as comparing the state and conditions, the manners and usages, the felicity and infelicity of past times with our own; without which, historical reading is a mere amusement: which, how much soever it may enable a man to talk, will, notwithstanding, scarcely afford him the capacity of thinking or reasoning better. It is on this account that we see the common people very apt, upon some occasions, to treat learning and learned men with contempt; because they are not able to answer readily such questions as are proposed to them; about matters in common use: and it is this, likewise, that



recommends to them Baker's Chronicle, and other books of a like nature, written in a familiar style, and which descend to things which fall under daily notice; though they are but mean in point of composition, and are very frequently dark and inaccurate; which is indeed a good reason why they should be corrected and set right, instead of being undervalued and wholly neglected by men of parts and knowledge. For, after all, we can never expect to see an English history complete, if there is not full as much respect paid to the discoveries made by antiquaries, as to the greater and more shining events which are recorded by those who make the wars and state intrigues of our monarchs their principal care, and discussing them the great business of their writings.

## CHAP. V.

The Naval History of England, during the reigns of Henry II.  
Richard I. John, Henry III. Edward I. Edward II. Edward III.  
Richard II.

(Containing the space of about 235 Years.)

**HENRY II.** ascended the throne with universal consent on the death of King Stephen, having, besides his kingdom, large dominions on the continent, by various titles, *viz.* Normandy, Aquitain, Anjou, Main, and Tourain, which rendered him extraordinarily powerful. He was about twenty-eight years old at this time, and esteemed as wise and brave a prince as that age produced. His first care was to restore the government to its former state, by rectifying the many disorders which had crept in during the unsettled reign of King Stephen.\* Having performed this, he projected the conquest of Ireland; for which, though he had many pretences, yet he thought fit to obtain the pope's bull, the rather, because the reigning pontiff, Adrian IV. was by birth an Englishman. This favour he easily obtained, for propagating the Christian faith, together with the power and profits of the holy see, as by that instrument appears.† In order to this expedition, the king conferred with his great council at Winchester; but his mother disliking the project, it was for that time laid aside.‡

His next expedition was beyond the seas, in the fifth year of his reign, undertaken at a vast expense, with

A.D.  
1154.

A.D.  
1155.

A.D.  
1159.

\* Gul. Neubrig. Hist. rer. Angl. lib. ii. c. 1.

† Nic. Trivit. annal. vol. 4. p. 28.

‡ Ibid. p. 31.

a great fleet and potent army, for the recovery of the earldom of Tolouse, to which the king claimed a title : but he was not so happy in this as in his other expeditions, though he was so far superior at sea, that his enemies durst not contend with him on that element.\*

A. D.  
1165.

In the eleventh year of his reign, he employed both a fleet and an army against the Welch, and afterwards was engaged in various disputes with the king of France, which obliged him to a long residence in Normandy. † In the sixteenth year of his reign, he caused his son Henry, then about fifteen years of age, to be crowned king in his life-time, ‡ which instead of contributing, as he supposed it would, to his peace and prosperity, proved the cause of very great calamities to himself and subjects.

A. D.  
1169.

About this time, the king resumed his grand design of conquering Ireland, to which he had various incitements. Some pretensions he formed, from its having been anciently subdued by the Britons : another motive was, the injuries done to his subjects by the piracies which the Irish committed, taking and selling English prisoners into slavery : but that which gave him the fairest occasion was the tyranny of Roderick O'Connor, who, assuming the title of monarch of Ireland, oppressed the other princes in the island, and thereby forced them to seek the protection of King Henry. One of these, whose name was Dermot, king of Leinster, being driven out of his dominions, passed over into Normandy, where the king then was, and entreated his assistance, which was readily granted : but the king, like a politic prince, advised him for the present to apply himself to some of his barons, to whom he granted a licence to undertake an expedition in his favour. Accordingly, Robert Fitz-

\* Gul. Neubrig. lib.ii. c. 10.

† Nic. Trivet. annal. vol. i. p. 46.

‡ Gul. Neubrig. lib. ii. c. 25.



Stephens in the month of May, in the year 1169, landed at Wexford, with a very small force: he was immediately followed by Maurice Pendergast; and these, by the assistance of King Dermot, having gained footing in the island, Richard earl of Chepstow, commonly called in our histories Richard Strongbow, who was the chief undertaker, went thither in person, and landed August 25, 1170, at Waterford, with a greater force, and in a short time reduced Dublin and many other places. King Henry, having advice of their unexpected success, began to take umbrage thereat, and published a proclamation, commanding all his subjects to return out of that island by a time prefixed, on pain of confiscation of their estates in England: but they, by assuring the king of their duty, and submission to his will, engaged him to revoke that order, and to come to an agreement with them, whereby he reserved to himself the sea-ports and coasts, and confirmed their inland conquests to the undertakers. The king, however, resolved to go over thither in person, and for that purpose drew together a considerable army, which he embarked on board a fleet of 400 sail, and passed therewith from Milford-haven to Waterford, where he landed October 25, 1171. The appearance of so great a force, and the presence of the king, had such an effect on this country, then torn by intestine divisions, that in a very short time, the king made this great conquest, which he had so long sought, and so vigorously endeavoured, without effusion of blood. Afterwards, keeping his Christmas at Dublin, he there received homage and hostages of the several petty princes, and even of the great King Roderick O'Connor; so that, if his affairs had permitted him to have remained there so long as he intended, he would in all probability not only have effectually reduced Ireland, but also have left it in a quiet and peaceable

A.D.  
1170.A.D.  
1171.

state.\* It was discord arising in his own family that prevented this; for Eleanor his queen, his eldest son, King Henry, his younger sons Richard and Geoffrey, entering into a conspiracy against him, and being supported therein by the power of the king of France, old King Henry was obliged, about Easter, to leave Ireland, and return to Wales; which he did, without suffering any loss, having before settled the English conquests in that island as he thought proper. † Of this war we have a very distinct account, though interlarded with many superstitious circumstances by Gerald Barry, better known by the name of Geraldus Cambrensis, an eye-witness. ‡

A.D.  
1172  
to  
1175.

The king was engaged, by the unlucky accidents before mentioned, in various wars for many years together; in all which he supported himself with undaunted courage, and admirable conduct. In Normandy he defeated the king of France, and the forces of his own son Henry: the loyal nobility of England, in the mean time, not only repulsed the king of Scots, who had invaded the northern provinces of England, but took him prisoner; and the earl of Flanders, who had raised great forces with an intent to have invaded England, was so awed by the king's success, that he was forced to give over his enterprise, and disband his army: and these great things the king was chiefly enabled to perform by his superior power at sea, in which, though some contest happened between him and his son Henry, yet it was quickly over; for the king's fleet destroyed most of the rebels ships, and many of

\* Rog. Hoved. anal. par. post. p. 526, 527. Matt. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 126. Gul. Neubrig. lib. ii. cap. 26. Nic. Trivet. anal. vol. i. p. 57.

† Gul. Neubrig. lib. ii. cap. 27.

‡ There is an English translation of his work in the first volume of Holingshed's chronicle.

their confederates, insomuch that wearied by degrees with repeated disappointments, and brought low by numberless defeats, his enemies were at length content to accept a peace on the terms prescribed them by the king; after which he transported his victorious army on board a royal fleet into England, landing at Portsmouth on May 26, 1175.\* The same year, Roderick O'Connor made a second and more full submission to the king, † who thereupon transferred his title to that island to his son John, who, as some writers report, was crowned king with a diadem of peacock's feathers set in gold, sent to his father by the pope for that purpose. Some part of this story, however, cannot be true; since it appears, from the great seal made use of by this prince, that he never styled himself king, but lord only of Ireland, into which country he also went, several years after, with a considerable army, and continued there some time, though without performing any great matter. ‡

A.D.  
1185.

Even after those times of confusion, and notwithstanding all the expense they had occasioned, the king shewed the greatness of his mind by giving extraordinary assistance to the Christians in the Holy Land, not only by licensing several of his nobility to go thither at their own charges, but also by advancing large sums of money, and furnishing ships and arms. § How much there was of piety in these expeditions, I pretend not to determine; yet certainly the king's intent was good, and this good effect followed it, that his fame, and the reputation of the nation, were spread thereby to the most distant parts

A.D.  
1185.

\* Nic. Trivet. anal. vol. i. p. 67.

† Roder. O'Flaherty in Ogyg. p. 441. Nic. Trivet. anal. vol. i. p. 68.

‡ Camden. Britan. p. 795. Roger Hoved. anal. p. 630. Speed's chronicle, p. 469.

§ Gul. Neubrig. lib. iii. cap. 10. Roger Hoved. anal. p. 641.



of the world, insomuch that the crown of Jerusalem was offered to the king, who, considering the state of his affairs at home, modestly declined it. Indeed, the troubles he had so happily quelled some years before broke out again in the latter part of his reign, when he was as unfortunate as of old he had been happy; insomuch that, after undergoing a cruel reverse of fortune, occasioned chiefly by his being obliged to end these disputes by fighting on land, where his French and Norman lords often betrayed him, he was at length compelled to accept such terms of peace, as France and his rebellious son Richard would afford him; which affected him so sensibly, that it threw him into a fit of sickness, of which he died on July 6, 1189, when he had reigned near thirty-five years, and lived sixty-three.\* He was the first prince of the royal house of Plantagenet, and was possessed of very extensive dominions. He enjoyed England in a fuller and better settled condition than his predecessors, restoring the ancient laws, and abolishing danegeld. He humbled Scotland more than any of his predecessors, kept Wales in strict subjection, subdued Ireland, and held all the maritime provinces of France, even to the mountains which divide it from Spain; so that, as a foreign writer confesses, he justly claimed, and undeniably maintained, his sovereignty over the sea, † which he esteemed the most honourable prerogative of his crown.

A.D. 1189. RICHARD succeeded his father King Henry in all his dominions, as well on the continent as in this island; and, having adjusted all his affairs in France amicably with Philip Augustus, who was then king, he came

\* Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 151. Gul. Neubrig. lib. iii. cap. 25, 26. Roger Hoved. annal. p. 652, 653. Nic. Trivet. annal. vol. i. p. 94. Robert of Gloucester's chronicle, p. 481.

† P. Daniel, histoire de la Mil. Franc. tom. ii. p. 445.

over hither to settle his domestic concerns, that he might be at liberty to undertake that great expedition on which he had set his heart, *viz.* of driving the Saracens out of the Holy Land, in which he was to have King Philip of France and other great princes for his associates. \* Our historians speak of this according to their own notions, and without any respect had to the then circumstances of things: hence some treat it with great solemnity, and as a thing worthy of immortal honour, while others again consider it as a pure effect of bigotry, and blame the king exceedingly for being led by the nose by the pope, and involving himself in so romantic a scheme to the great danger of his person, and the almost entire ruin of his subjects. I must own, that to me neither opinion seems right; yet I should not have expressed my sentiments on this subject, if it did not very nearly concern the matter of this treatise. The power of the Saracens was then exceeding great, and they were growing no less formidable at sea than they had been long at land; so that, if the whole force of Christendom had not been opposed against them in the east, I see very little or no room to doubt of their making an entire conquest of the west: for, since they were able to deal with the joint forces of these princes in the Holy Land, they would undoubtedly have beaten them singly, if ever they had attacked them. How little soever, therefore, the popes are to be justified in their spiritual characters in regard to these croisades, they indisputably shewed themselves great politicians. As to the particular case of England, though it might be hard on those who lived in these times, yet the nation, as a nation, reaped great advantage from it; for it not only excited a martial

\* Matt. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 155. Gul. Neubrig lib. iv. c. 1. Nic. Trivet. annal. vol. i. p. 97. Galfrid. de vino salvo. Roger Hoveden annal. Johan. Brompton, Rad. de Diceto. Ran. Higden in Polychron.

spirit, which in that age was necessary for their preservation; but it also raised a much greater naval force than had ever been set on foot since the coming of the Normans, and withal carried the English fame to such an height, as astonished the whole world, and was the true source of that respect which has ever since been paid to the English flag. But it is now time to return to the expedition.

A.D.  
1190.

The articles of agreement between the two kings, Richard and Philip, are recorded at large in our own and the French historians, as also the naval regulations; \* with which, therefore, I shall not meddle. One thing, however is very observable, that, when King Richard appeared with his fleet before the city of Messina in Sicily, it so much astonished the French king, that he from that moment conceived such a jealousy of King Richard as could never afterward be extinguished. During the stay of our king in this island, a difference happened between him and King Tancred, which occasioned the attacking Messina, and taking it by the English; which, as our writers say, gave no small umbrage to King Philip, though the French historians affirm, that he abetted King Richard, and had a third part of the money paid him by King Tancred for his pains. † However that was, it is certain, that this last-mentioned prince did, by a treaty of composition, agree to give King Richard sixty thousand ounces of gold, four large galleons, and fifteen gallies; by which accession of strength, the English fleet, when the king left Sicily to sail for Cyprus, consisted of thirteen capital ships of extraordinary burden, one hundred and

\* Matthew Paris, Roger Hoveden, and in Hakluyt, vol. ii. p. 20. there is a very large relation in English, drawn from John Fox, who had consulted all our historians.

† *Abrege de l'histoire de France par Mezeray, tom. ii. p. 595.*



fifty ships of war, and fifty-three gallies, besides vessels of less size, and tenders. In their passage to Cyprus they were sorely shaken by a tempest, in which several ships were lost, and a great number of men drowned, among whom were some persons of very great distinction. The ship in which Berengaria, daughter to the king of Navarre, and who was contracted to King Richard, was, with many other ladies of great quality, very near perishing by their being denied entrance into one of the ports of Cyprus by the tyrannical king of that island, whose name was Isaac, and whom most of our historians grace with the high title of emperor. This, with the plundering such ships as were wrecked upon his coast, and making prisoners of such persons as escaped drowning, so provoked King Richard, that he made a descent with all his forces, and in the space of fourteen days, reduced the whole island, taking the king and his daughter and heiress prisoners. Here he received Guy, formerly king of Jerusalem, with several other Christian princes in the east, who swore fealty to him as their protector; and, having left two governors with a considerable body of troops in Cyprus, he sailed from thence with a much better fleet than he brought with him; for it consisted of two hundred and fifty-four stout ships, and upwards of sixty gallies. In his passage to Acon or Ptolemais he took a huge vessel of the Saracens, laden with ammunition and provision, bound for the same place, which was then besieged by the Christian army. The size of this ship was so extraordinary, that it very highly deserves notice. Matthew Paris calls it *Dromunda*, and tells us, that the ships of the English fleet attacked it briskly, though it lay like a floating castle in the sea, and was in a manner impenetrable.\* At length however, they boarded

A.D.  
1191.

\* Hist. Angl. p. 163.

and carried it, though defended by no less than one thousand five hundred men, of whom the king caused one thousand three hundred to be drowned, and kept the remaining two hundred prisoners, who, another writer says, were all persons of distinction. After this victory the king proceeded to Acon, which he blocked up by sea, at the same time that his forces, in conjunction with those of other Christian princes, besieged it by land; so that at length, chiefly by his means, it was taken, though defended by the whole strength of the Saracens under their famous Prince Saladine.\*

A.D. 1191. The French and English took joint possession thereof; but King Philip was so sensible of his glory, being eclipsed by the superior merit of King Richard, that nothing would satisfy him but returning home, contrary to all the stipulations that he had made with the king of England. To this King Richard, with much ado, consented, upon his taking a solemn oath not to invade any of his dominions till King Richard himself should be returned forty days. King Philip left behind him the duke of Burgundy with a body of ten or twelve thousand men, with orders to obey King Richard as captain-general of the Christian forces in the Holy Land, but with private instructions, as our historians surmise, to frustrate, as much as in him lay, all that king's undertakings; which, if it be not true, is at least very probable, since that duke acted as if he really had such instructions. But, notwithstanding this, Richard took Ascalon, Joppa, and other places; reduced the greatest part of Syria; beat the Saracens in several engagements, and, if his confederates had done their duty as well, would infallibly have retaken Jerusalem, which was the principal design of the war. That he

† Gul. Neubrig. lib. iv. cap. 22. Mat. Paris, vol. i. p. 163, 164. Roger Hoveden, Galf. de vino salvo. Mezeray.

really intended it, appears from the testimony of a celebrated French historian, who tells us, that the king had formed a project of acquiring mighty dominions in the east, and had for that purpose given to Guy of Lusignan the kingdom of Cyprus in exchange for his title to the crown of Jerusalem.\* But at length finding himself envied and betrayed by his confederates in the east, and having intelligence that his brother John sought to usurp his dominions at home, he made a treaty with Saladine, and resigned his pretensions to the kingdom of Jerusalem to his near kinsman, Henry earl of Champagne. Such was the conclusion of this famous expedition, which might have ended better, if that mixture of envy and jealousy, which is so rooted in the temper of our ambitious neighbours the French, had not inclined them rather to sacrifice all regard to honour, and all respect to religion, than suffer so great an enterprize, as that of taking Jerusalem would have been, to be atchieved by an English prince. †

The king, having settled his affairs in the best manner he could in the east, endeavoured to make all possible haste home, but met with a sad misfortune in his passage; for being shipwrecked on the coast of Istria, where with great difficulty he saved his life, he thought, for expedition sake, to travel by land through Germany incognito, taking the name of Hugo, and passing for a merchant. But arriving in the neighbourhood of Vienna, he was unluckily discovered, and made prisoner by Leopold duke of Austria, with whom he had formerly had some difference in the Holy Land, and who basely made use of this advantage to revenge his private quarrel. After he had kept him some time, he delivered

A.D.  
1192.

\* Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 165. Nic. Trivet. annal. vol. i. p. 124. Gul. Neubrig. lib. iv. cap. 30. Mezeray, tom. ii. p. 598.

† Galfr. de vino salvo, Roger Hoveden, Gul. Neubrig.



or rather sold him to the Emperor Henry VI. a covetous, mercenary prince, who was resolved to get all he could by him, before he set him at liberty.\* The injustice of this proceeding was visible to all Europe; but the dominions of the emperor and of the Austrian prince were so far out of the reach of England, and withal, the enemies of King Richard were become so numerous and powerful, that, instead of wondering at his remaining fifteen months a captive, posterity may stand amazed how he came to be at all released, especially since so large a ransom was insisted on as one hundred and four thousand pounds; which, however, was raised by the people of England, though with great difficulty, part of it being paid down, and hostages given for the rest. †

A.D. 1194. In the spring of the year 1194, the king returned to England, where he began to rectify all the miscarriages which had happened in his absence; and perceiving that nothing could effectually settle his foreign dominions, but vigorous measures, and a war with the French, whose king acted as perfidiously as ever, he suddenly drew together a considerable fleet, embarked on board thereof, a large body of forces, and, transporting them into Normandy, quickly disappointed all his potent enemy's views; and, after five years war, brought him to think in earnest of peace. ‡ Here, notwithstanding, I must take notice of one thing, which, however slight in appearance, is exceedingly pertinent to my subject; I mean the marriage of Philip Augustus with Iseberga, the daughter of Canutus V. king of Denmark; which match was made with no other view than to engage the

\* Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 172. Roger Hoveden annal. p. 728. Gul. Neubrig. lib. iv. cap. 33.

† Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 173, 174. Nie. Trivet. annal. vol. i. p. 117. Gul. Neubrig. lib. iv. cap. 41.

‡ T. Walsingham hypodigm. Neustriae. Matth. Paris, Roger Hoveden.

Danes in the interest of King Philip, who intended to have employed their naval force against that of the English: \* and sure a clearer proof than this cannot be offered, of our being masters of the balance of Europe, (notwithstanding the personal misfortunes of King Richard,) in virtue of our superiority at sea.

In the course of the war, the king having gained a complete victory in the neighbourhood of Blois, † his troops possessed the enemy's camp and baggage, whereby all the records and charters of France, which then were wont to follow the court wherever it went, came into the hands of the English, and through carelessness were dissipated and destroyed. At last, when King Richard was reconciled to his brother John, and had effectually quelled his foreign enemies, he was taken out of this life by an extraordinary accident. A certain nobleman having found a large treasure hid in his own lands, sent a part of it to the king, who thereupon demanded the whole; which being refused him, he presently besieged this nobleman in his castle; and going too near the walls to give directions for an assault, he was mortally wounded by an arrow: though some say that the wound was not mortal in itself, but was rendered so by the ill management of an unskilful surgeon. ‡ However this might be, he died on April 6, 1199, in the tenth year of his reign, and forty-first of his age. He was a prince very justly surnamed Cœur de Lion, or Lion's Heart; since his courage carried him through all things: and his firmness was such, that it alike bound to him his friends, and daunted his enemies: a strong instance of which we have in the message sent by Philip of France to Earl John, on the king's being

A.D.  
1194.A.D.  
1199.

\* Gul. Neubrig. lib. iv. cap. 26.

† Histoire de France par Mezeray, tom. ii. p. 601.

‡ Matt. Paris Hist. Angl. p. 195. Roger Hovedon, Annal. p. 791. Nic. Trivet, Annal. vol. i. p. 124.

released by the emperor, *viz.* That the devil was now let loose again, and therefore he should take the best care he could of himself.\* Of all our princes, none better understood the value of a naval force, or how to use it; as appears not only by the victories he gained in time of war, but by establishing the laws of Oleron, for the regulating maritime affairs, and by the constant care he took in supporting the ports and havens throughout the kingdom, and encouraging seamen; whereby he drew numbers from all parts of Europe into his service, and by a like vigilance in promoting and protecting commerce. †

A.D.  
1199.

JOHN succeeded his brother by virtue of his will, and not in right of blood: for if that had taken place, the crown would have belonged to his nephew Arthur, the son of his elder brother Geoffrey. From the day of his ascending the throne, he was perplexed with foreign wars, and domestic seditions; and the latter have had such an effect upon our historians, that there cannot be a more difficult task, than even attempting to draw this king's true character. Those who allow him many virtues, are at a loss how to account for several of his actions; and those who deny him any good qualities at all, are still more at a loss to render their relations consistent. That he had very just notions as to maritime force, and was extremely tender of his sovereignty over the seas, is more authentically recorded of him, than of any of our preceding kings: for it appears, that very early in his reign, he, with the assent of the peers at Hastings, enacted, that if any of the commanders of his fleets should meet with ships of a foreign

\* Roger Hoveden, *Annal.* p. 729.

† Joan. Selden. in *dissertat. ad Fletam.* c. ix. *Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl.* p. 191.



nation at sea, the masters of which refused to strike to the royal flag; then such ships, if taken, were to be deemed good prizes; even though it should appear afterwards, that the state of which their owners were subjects, was in amity with England.\* It cannot be supposed, that this striking to the royal flag was now first claimed; but rather that as an old right, it was for the preventing unnecessary disputes clearly asserted. If it had been otherwise, one would imagine that it would prove more still; since no prince, who was not confessedly superior at sea, could ever have set up, and carried into practice, so extraordinary a pretension.† We may therefore conclude, that this, together with his warrant for pressing all ships into service, when he had occasion for transports, with other things of the like nature, were, in consequence of ancient usage, founded on the indubitable rights of his predecessors.

From his entrance on the government, the king of France shewed himself as much his enemy, as ever he had been his brother's, invading his territories on the continent, under pretence of protecting Prince Arthur; but in reality in order to aggrandize himself, and to unite Normandy and other provinces to the French crown. These stirs obliged King John to pass frequently into Normandy, with considerable armies, where sometimes he did great things, and sometimes little or nothing. Our historians, generally speaking, charge the king roundly with negligence, and want of spirit; ‡ whereas the king, in his days, attributed all his losses to the want of fidelity in his barons. § The best way to learn truth, is to consult unprejudiced writers; and in this case it must be owned,

A.D.  
1200.

\* Selden *Mare Clausum*, vol. ii. c. 26.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Roger Hoveden. *Polyd. Virgil.*

§ See the reign of this prince in *Speed's Chronicle.*

that the French historians describe King John as a fierce and active prince; and particularly ascribe the great victory he gained at Mirabell, to his extraordinary expedition, marching night and day with his forces to the relief of his mother. \* It seems therefore, most probable, that the great men in those times were in fault; and that they suffered themselves to be persuaded, that the humbling of their prince might prove the means of their own exaltation. This conduct of theirs lost the king the greatest part of his French dominions, and was also the cause of the disputes between him and his barons at home, who always thought themselves well entitled to their privileges, and yet seldom saw it convenient to yield the king their obedience. When by their help he might have preserved his territories on the continent, they denied their assistance; and yet, when they were torn from him, they clamoured at the loss. This so exasperated the king, who was certainly a prince of a very high spirit, that he resolved to conquer them, and make one experiment more of the fidelity of his subjects. In order to this, he assembled a great army, and provided a numerous fleet, which he never wanted, in order to pass into Normandy: but, when all was ready, and the nobility seemed thoroughly disposed to behave as became them, the archbishop of Canterbury, and William Marshal, earl of Pembroke, came, and in the name of the pope, forbade him to proceed. † The king unwillingly obeyed; and yet, repenting of this step, he, the next day, put to sea with a few faithful subjects, hoping that the rest, either out of fear or shame, would have followed: but in this he was disappointed; for they not only remained where they were, but, by sending after the king's small squadron, prevailed on many to come back, so that

A.D.  
1201.A.D.  
1206

\* Histoire de France, par Mezeray, vol. ii. p. 611.

† Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl.

the expedition was entirely frustrated; which filled the nation with murmurs, and particularly distasted the seamen, of whom no less than fourteen thousand were come from different parts of the kingdom, in order to serve on board the royal fleet. \* This, at the same time that it shews King John's misfortune, demonstrates also how great our maritime force was in those days, and what wise regulations subsisted, since such a number of seamen could be so easily drawn together. Our best writers agree, that the conduct of the archbishop and the earl of Pembroke, was the effect of their engagements with France; and in all probability, the great view of France in this transaction, was to distress the king in this tender point, and prevent his being able to assemble such a naval force for the future. But in this their policy failed them, for the king always kept the hearts of the seamen; and by doing so he defeated the attempts of his enemies, though he had the whole force of France to struggle with abroad, and was never free from the effects of their fraud at home. This is an extraordinary fact, and of the highest importance to my subject; therefore, I shall endeavour to make it out in such a manner, as to leave the reader no colour of doubt; and by so doing, shall effectually prove, that though a king may be undone by trusting to his army, he cannot but be safe if he is secure of his fleet.

The kingdom, or, as it was then properly styled the dominion of Ireland, belonged to King John before he attained the realm of England, and had remained more obedient to him than any other part of his territories: but now troubles began there; and such accounts were transmitted of the insolence of some of the lords proprietors, and of the devastations committed by the native Irish, hitherto unsubdued, that the king resolved to go over in person and reduce it. † For this purpose, the king

A.D.  
1209.

\* Roger Hoveden, Annal.

† Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 230.



ordered a great army to be levied, and drew together a prodigious fleet, little short of five hundred sail, with which he passed from Pembroke in Wales, into Ireland, where he landed on May 25, 1210. The fame of his coming, and the appearance of so great a force as he brought with him, so terrified the inhabitants of the sea coast, and low countries, that they immediately came and submitted. On his arrival at Dublin, twenty of the Irish chiefs came in, and swore fealty to him; and having thus performed much in a peaceable way, he, by force of arms, achieved the rest, reducing the king of Connaught, besieging and taking the castles of many rebellious lords, and forcing them either to yield or to quit the kingdom. When things were brought to this pass, he thought of civil establishments; ordered the whole realm to be for the future governed by the English laws; and appointed sheriffs and other legal officers in every county. At his departure, he constituted John de Gray, then bishop of Norwich, governor of Ireland, a very wise and prudent man, who pursuing the king's plan, brought that nation into a settled state.\* This certainly shewed not only the spirit and temper of the king, but the utility of his fleet, without which he could not have entered on this expedition with such honour, or have finished it with so great success; especially at a time when at home things were in so bad a situation.

A.D. 1212. On his return, he found the Welch in rebellion, his barons disaffected, and the king of France contriving an invasion. His spirits were far from being broken by these crosses; for, as to the Welch, he hanged up their hostages; † and, with a royal army, would have entered into, and subdued their country, if he had not been well in-

\* *Annal. Hibern. ap. Camd. Nic. Trivet. Annual. vol. i. p. 154. Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. vol. i. p. 230, 231. Thom. Walsingham, Hypodigm. Neust.*

† *Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 231. R. Wendover.*

formed, that some of his principal lords intended either to destroy him in that expedition themselves, or else deliver him up to the enemy.\* He thereupon first dismissed his army, and then took hostages of the noblemen he most suspected. Soon after, the French invasion terrified the nation; the pope having absolved the king's subjects from their allegiance, and given the kingdom of England to Philip Augustus of France. This monarch, well pleased with so noble a present, raised a prodigious army, and brought together, some say thirteen hundred ships, in order to embark them for this island.† On the other hand, King John was not slack in his preparations; he shewed his diligence in collecting a force equal to that of the enemy, and his magnanimity in dismissing a part of them, that the rest might have the greater plenty of provisions; yet, after this was done, he encamped sixty thousand men on Barham Downs, having a larger fleet riding along the coast than had been seen in those times, and, in this posture, he waited for his foes.‡ But the pope's legate coming over, and promising to deliver him from this danger, if he would submit himself and his kingdom to the see of Rome, he, to prevent effusion of blood, and, perhaps, fearing the treachery of his barons, consented thereto, and the pope immediately prohibited King Philip to proceed.§ He too, notwithstanding his great power, obeyed, though with an ill will; yet resolved to make some use of this mighty armament, and therefore turned it against the earl of Flanders, sending the best part of his fleet to waste the coasts of that country, while himself with a great army entered it by land. King John was no

A.D.  
1213.A.D.  
1213.

\* Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 231.

† Mezeray, vol. ii. p. 622. Matth. Paris, vol. i. p. 231. Nic Trivet Annal. vol. i. p. 157.

‡ Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 234.

§ Nic. Trivet. Annal. vol. i. p. 157, 158. Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 237. Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle, p. 507.

sooner informed of this, than he ordered his navy, under the command of his brother, the earl of Salisbury, to sail to the assistance of his ally. He, finding the French fleet, part riding in the road, and part at anchor, in the haven of Dam, in Flanders, first attacked and destroyed those without, and then landing his forces, fell upon the French in the harbour by sea and land, and after an obstinate dispute, took them all, sending home three hundred sail, well laden with provisions, to carry the news of the victory, and setting all the rest on fire. So fortunate was this prince at sea, because his sailors were loyal, who was so unlucky on shore, through the treachery of his great men.\*

A.D.  
1214.

Thus delivered from his present apprehensions of the French, the king began to think of passing once again beyond the seas, in order to recover his rights; but met with so many difficulties and disappointments, that it was long before he could carry his design into execution. At last, in the month of February, 1214, he, without the assistance of his barons, embarked a great army on board a powerful fleet, and therewith sailed to Rochelle, where he landed, and was well received, the greatest part of the country submitting to him immediately. For some time he carried on the war against the French prosperously; but, fortune changing, and his allies being beaten in the fatal battle of Bovins, he was constrained, about Easter, the next year, to agree to a truce, the rather, because his subjects in England began to rebel.† In the month of November, he returned into this kingdom, where he found things in a much worse condition than he expected. The barons, in his absence, had time to confer together, and had reduced their demands into form; so that the king

A.D.  
1215.

\* Nic. Trivet. *Annal.* vol. i. p. 157. Mezeray, vol. ii. p. 623. Matth. Paris, *Hist. Angl.* p. 238.

† *Chroniques Abreges des Rois de France*, p. 79. Mezeray, vol. ii. p. 625.



quickly found, that he either must grant what they asked, or, if he ventured to refuse them, must have recourse to the sword. At first he chose the latter; but he quickly found, that the barons were likely to be too powerful for him; and therefore, in a meadow between Egham and Staines, called Runnemedede, *i. e.* the Mead of Council, he granted that charter in the sight of both armies, which since, from the importance of its contents, and the solemnity with which it was made, hath been called *MAGNA CHARTA*, or the Great Charter. \* Yet, repenting of this soon after, he endeavoured to frustrate what he had done; but, the barons were too powerful for him, and reduced him to such straits, that at length he was constrained to fly to the Isle of Wight, where he lived in a manner little different from that of his predecessor King Alfred, when he fled from the Danes. Yet, in all his distresses, his seamen remained faithful; and now, when he had not a house in which he could sleep with safety on shore, he found a sanctuary from all dangers in his ships, in which he frequently chased the vessels of his disloyal subjects, and, by landing on the coasts, spoiled their estates; and thus subsisted the few loyal persons who stuck to him, at the expense of his and their enemies. †

In the mean time, the barons, plainly perceiving their want of a head, resolved to invite over Lewis, son to the king of France, who had married King John's niece, in order to shelter themselves against the resentment of that monarch, by setting his crown on the head of this young prince. Not only Lewis, but King Philip, his father, relished this proposal exceedingly; and, assembling a fleet of six hundred and ten sail at Calais, the prince, with a numerous army, landed in Kent. ‡ The city of London.

A.D.  
1216.

\* Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 255, 256, &c.

† R. de Wendover.

‡ Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 281. Nic. Trivet. Annal. vol. i. p. 165, 166. Mezeray, vol. ii. p. 629.

long alienated from the king in affection, declared immediately for the invader, received him with joy, and swore allegiance to him as their sovereign. In the mean time, King John was no ways idle; he endeavoured to maintain himself in Kent, where he had a considerable army; but, finding many of his barons unfaithful, and his forces not strong enough to hazard a battle, he garrisoned some castles, and particularly that of Dover, that he might be able to protect his fleet, and then marched to Winchester, where he soon drew together a much greater force than his enemies expected. Breaking out from thence like a tempest, he laid waste the estates of his rebellious barons, in spite of the foreign assistance they had received; and, having acquired a vast booty, he came with it to Lynn, in Norfolk, which had signalized its loyalty to him in his utmost distress, as most of the ports in the kingdom did; but, marching from thence into Lincolnshire, his carriages were lost in the washes, and himself and his army narrowly escaped.\* At Swine's head abbey, he was attacked by a distemper which proved fatal to him, but what that distemper was, is very difficult to say. Some affirm, that it was the effect of grief, † others call it a fever, ‡ others a flux, § and others a surfeit; || but many of our first writers, and the most authentic foreign historians, affirm, that he was poisoned by a monk, which it is certain his son Henry I believed. This end had the troubles of King John, at Newark, to which place he was carried in a horse-litter, on October 18, 1216, when he had reigned nearly eighteen years.\*\*

\* Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 287.

† Johan. de Wallingford.

‡ Polyd. Virgil.

§ Thom Otterborn.

|| Matth. Westmonast.

¶ See this point cleared in the close of King John's reign, in Speed's Chronicle.

\*\* Nic. Trivet. Annal. vol. i. p. 165. Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 288. Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle, p. 512, 513.

We have already shewn how vigorously this king maintained his sovereignty of the sea, and left more express tokens thereof to his successors, than any of the kings who reigned before him. To this we must add, that he was a great encourager of whatever had a tendency to the support of maritime strength, or the ease and increase of trade. He granted more and larger charters to cities and boroughs than any of his predecessors; and, by thus strengthening the liberties of the people, he incurred the hatred of his ambitious barons.\* He settled in 1199 the rates of necessaries, and effectually punished all kind of fraud in commerce.† To him, likewise, was owing many regulations in respect to money, and the first coining of that sort, which is called Sterling. One cannot, therefore, help doubting, when we consider that he was the author of our best laws, whether those writers do him justice, who declare, that King John was one of the worst of our kings. He stood on bad terms with the monks; and at that time they penned our histories, which is a sufficient reason against his obtaining a good character, even though he had deserved it. So much of his fame, however, as may result from the respect he had to naval affairs, we have endeavoured to vindicate; and shall do the same good office (as indeed it is our duty to do) to every other prince, in whose favour authorities may be produced against common opinion.

HENRY III. a child between nine and ten years of age, succeeded his father immediately in his dominions, and in time became also the heir of his misfortunes. At first, through the care of the earl of Pembroke, his guardian, he was very successful, that wise nobleman shewing the barons, that now they had nothing to fear from King John;

A.D.  
1216.

\* Speed's Chronicle, p. 506.

† Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. i. p. 129. Camden's Britan. in Striveling. Roger Hoveden Annal.



and themselves also, by this time well knew, they had very little to hope from King Lewis, who put French garrisons into all the castles that were taken by the English lords, and gave glaring proofs of his intention to rule as a conqueror, in case he could possess himself of the kingdom. \*

A.D.  
1217.

In a short time, therefore, the royalists grew strong enough to look the enemy in the face; which the French so little apprehended, that, with an army of twenty thousand men, they had marched northwards, and besieged Lincoln. The city quickly fell into their hands; but the castle, being very strong for those times, made an obstinate defence; and, while they were engaged before it, the earl of Pembroke with his forces came to offer them battle. The barons, who adhered to King Lewis, and were certainly best acquainted with the strength of their countrymen, advised the French general to march out and fight; but he, suspicious of their integrity, endeavoured to secure his forces in the city. The royalists first threw a considerable reinforcement into the castle, and then attacked the enemy in the town. The struggle was very short, the French and their confederates being quickly beaten, almost without bloodshed; and the victorious army so exceedingly enriched by their plunder, that they called this battle Lewis-fair, as if they had not gone to a fight, but to a market. The consequences of this battle brought the French prince and his faction so low, that he was glad of a truce, which might afford him time to go back to France for succours; and, this being granted, he passed over accordingly to Calais, many of the barons deserting him in his absence. †

A.D.  
1217.

He did not stay long abroad, but, providing with the utmost diligence a considerable recruit, embarked on board a fleet of eighty stout ships, besides transports, and imme-

\* Matth. Paris, *Hist. Angl.* p. 292.

† Nic Trivet. *Annal.* vol. i. p. 168. Matth. Paris, *Hist. Angl.* p. 296. Mezeray, vol. ii. p. 631.

diately put to sea. Hubert de Burgh, governor of Dover castle, assisted by Philip de Albanie and John Marshall, resolved to encounter him with the strength of the cinque ports, and accordingly met him at sea with forty sail of ships. The English, perceiving that the French had the advantage of them both in ships and men, made use of their superiority in skill; so that, taking advantage of the wind, they ran down many of the transports, and sunk them, with all the soldiers on board; their long bows also did them notable service; and, to prevent the French from boarding them, they laid heaps of lime upon their decks, which the wind, blowing fresh, drove in the faces of their enemies, and in a manner blinded them; so that, declining the dispute, they, as fast as possible, bore away for the shore, and, landing at Sandwich, Lewis, in revenge for the mischief their ships had done him, burnt it to the ground.\* The English were every way gainers by this engagement, as, on the other hand, it entirely ruined the affairs of Lewis, who was now forced to shut himself up in London, where very soon after he was besieged; the English fleet, in the mean time, blocking up the mouth of the Thames. He quickly saw how great his danger was, and how little reason he had to expect relief. In this situation, he did all that was left for him to do; that is to say, he entered into a treaty with the earl of Pembroke, whereby he renounced all his pretended rights to the kingdom of England, and provided the best he could for himself and his adherents; which freed the kingdom from the plague of foreigners;† and remains an incontestable proof, that as nothing but our intestine divisions can invite an invasion, so, while we retain the sovereignty at sea, such attempts in the end must prove fatal to those who undertake them.

\* Annal. Waverl. Thom. Walsingham Hypodigm. Neustricæ.

† Mezeray, vol. ii. p. 631.

The importance of this engagement will excuse our dwelling upon it so long, as well as our taking notice here of some lesser circumstances relating thereto. One Eustace, who had been in his youth a monk, but for many years had exercised the trade of a pirate, and had done the English, in particular, much mischief; fell now into their hands, and, though he offered a large sum of money for his ransom, yet it was refused, and he put to death. There are some differences in our ancient historians as to the year in which this famous sea-fight happened, which it will be necessary to clear up, because any error therein would affect most of the subsequent dates. In the first place, Matthew Paris fixes on the very day, and assures us, that it was gained on the feast of St. Bartholomew; 1217. \* Trivet places it in the same year, and gives us the reason why Eustace the monk, was so severely dealt with. He, like an apostate as he was, says my author, went from side to side, and, of a wicked monk, became a very devil, full of fraud and mischief. As soon, therefore, as he was taken, his head was struck off, and, being put upon a pole, was carried through a great part of England. † Yet Holingshed places it under the year 1218, ‡ and the French historian Mezeray, in 1216. § These errors, however, are easily rectified, since it is certain, that the treaty of peace followed this victory, and we find it bore date September 11, 1217. ||

The same wise governors, who had so happily managed the king's affairs hitherto, and had so wonderfully delivered him out of all his difficulties, shewed a like diligence in establishing the tranquillity of the realm, and cultivating a correspondence with foreign princes; of which various testimonies occur in Mr. Rymer's collection of treaties,

\* Hist Angl. p. 298.

† Annal. vol. i. p. 169.

‡ Vol. ii. p. 201.

§ Abregé de l'histoire de France, vol. ii. p. 631.

|| Rymer's Foedera, vol. i. p. 222. edit. secunda.



whence it is incontestably evident, that they were extremely tender of trade, and of the dominion of the sea. \* In order, however, to keep up the martial spirit of the nobility, and perhaps to prevent their breaking out into rebellions at home, leave was given them to take the cross, and to make expeditions into the Holy Land. † Thus the earls of Chester, Winchester, and Arundel, went at one time, the bishops of Winchester and Exeter at another, with many followers, so that, when they came into Syria, there were not fewer English there than forty thousand men, of whom very probably not many returned home. ‡

A.D.  
1218.A.D.  
1227.

The desire King Henry had to recover the provinces taken from him by the king of France, and the clear title he thought derived to him from the treaty made with Lewis, who was now king, induced him, more than once, to solicit that prince to restore them, and to send over small supplies of forces into the places which he still held. All this produced nothing considerable; so that, at last, the king resolved to go over, as his predecessors had done, with a great fleet, and a numerous army. With this view, large sums were demanded, and given by parliament, and such a force assembled, as the nation had scarcely ever seen; but, when the forces marched about Michaelmas to Portsmouth, in order to embark, the fleet provided for that purpose appeared so insignificant, that it became necessary to postpone the expedition till the next spring, a thing highly prejudicial to the king's affairs, and much more so to his reputation. § The next year the king actually invaded

A.D.  
1229.

\* The reader may find a multitude of instances in support of this in the first volume of the *Fœdera*, and not a few in the second volume of *Hakluyt*.

† *Matth. Paris*, p. 303. *T. Walsingham. Ypodigma Neustriæ.* p. 463. *Annal. Waverl.* p. 184. *Nic. Trivet. Annal.* vol. i. p. 171.

‡ *Hakluyt*, vol. ii. p. 31—38.

§ *Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl.* p. 363. *Tyrrel*, vol. ii. p. 867. *Holingshed*, vol. ii. p. 211.

A.D. 1230. France, and might, if he had pushed this war with vigour, have recovered the dominions of his ancestors; but, being entirely governed by his mother, and her second husband, he consumed both his time and money in pompous entertainments; so that the French, coming down with a considerable body of forces, compelled him, after he had been there from April to October, to embark and sail home again, without adding any thing either to his honour or to his dominions.\* This mistake had terrible effects; for it emboldened such of the lords as were disaffected, and gave the common people a mean opinion of their sovereign, which is, generally speaking, the consequence of all such miscarriages.

A.D. 1240. His brother, Richard earl of Cornwall, who was naturally an active prince, and therefore little pleased with the king's management, resolved about the year 1240, to take upon him the cross, and to lead a body of succours into the Holy Land. With him went the earl of Salisbury, and many other persons of distinction; and not long after, Simon, earl of Leicester, and John, earl of Albemarle, followed his example. Thus, in times of great supineness in the administration here, the honour of the nation abroad was supported by the valour and activity of private persons.† Disputes with the barons continued to embroil the kingdom, and to hinder the king from thinking of foreign affairs; but, in 1242, the king resumed his project of reducing Gascony under his dominion. To this he was chiefly excited by his mother, a high-spirited haughty woman, who had contributed much to his father's misfortunes. Accordingly, having with much ado obtained money of his parliament for that purpose, the king, with

\* Nic. Trivet. *Annal.* vol. i. p. 183. T. Wikes's *Chronicle*, p. 41. H. Knyghton, p. 2439. Tyrrel, vol. ii. p. 870.

† Matth. Paris, *Hist. Angl.* p. 536. *Annal. Waverl.* p. 201. T. Walsinghami *Ypodigma Neustriæ*, p. 465. *Annales Monast. Burton*, p. 292.

a small force, passed over into France, where, so long as his money lasted, he kept up a kind of war, more detrimental to himself than to the enemy. \*

By this strange sort of management, the naval force of the kingdom was impaired to such a degree, that the Normans and Britons were too hard for the cinque ports, and compelled them to seek relief from the other parts of the kingdom, who, in the first year of this king's reign, had performed such extraordinary things. One William Marshall, of the noble family of Pembroke, having, by some means or other incurred the king's displeasure, became a pirate, and fortifying the little island of Lundy, in the mouth of the Severn, did so much mischief, that at length it became necessary to fit out a squadron to reduce him, which was accordingly done, and he suffered by the hand of justice at London: † yet the example did not deter other discontented persons from practices of the like nature.

An idle desire of making his son Edmund, king of Sicily, drew the king into vast expenses, and yet produced nothing glorious in the least degree to the nation, any more than another expedition he made for the recovery of Normandy, in 1260, which ended in a dishonourable treaty; whereby, for the sake of certain sums of money, he renounced all title to those countries which had been the patrimonial possessions of his ancestors; and thenceforward left the dukedoms of Normandy and Anjou out of his titles. ‡ On his return home, he met with fresh griefs, and greater disturbances than ever. The barons grew quite weary of a king entirely directed by foreigners, and who thought of nothing but providing

A.D.  
1260.

\* Nic. Trivet. Annal. vol. i. p. 194. Fabian, p. 50, 51. Grafton, p. 124.

† Matth. Paris, Hist. Angl. p. 584. Holingshed's Chronicle, p. 230.

‡ Gul. Rishanger in continuat. Matth. Paris, p. 989. Chron. T. Wikes, p. 54. Annal. Waverl. p. 214. Rymer's Foedera, vol. i. p. 668.



for his favourites, at the expense of his people. The cinque ports, ever steady in his father's interest, revolted from him, sided with the barons, and fitted out a considerable fleet for their service; but as these were times of great licence, so in a very short period, the inhabitants of these ports forgot the motives on which they took arms, and began to consider nothing but their private interest, taking indifferently all ships that fell into their hands, and exercising an unlimited piracy on foreigners, as well as the king's subjects. By their example, something of the same nature was practised on the coast of Lincolnshire; for certain malecontents having seized the Isle of Ely, plundered all the adjacent countries, and carried to this receptacle of theirs all the booty they acquired. At length, however, by the industry and valour of Prince Edward, they were reduced; and the same worthy person, partly by persuasion, and partly by force, brought the inhabitants of the cinque ports to return to their duty.\*

A.D.  
1266.

The confusion of the times, however, was such, and the king's temper so timid, so irresolute, and in all cases so little to be depended on, that the gallant Prince Edward, with his brother Edmund, and many other persons of the first distinction, took the cross, † and went against the Saracens. A stronger instance there could not be of the low and exhausted state of the kingdom, than the equipage with which these princes went; for their squadron consisted of no more than thirteen ships, on board of which there were embarked but one thousand men: and yet, on his coming into the east, the very fame of Prince Edward drew to him a considerable force, with which he performed many noble acts, insomuch, that the infidels despairing of any success against him in the field, had recourse to a base assassination, which likewise failed

A.D.  
1269.

\* *Annal. Waverl.* p. 221. *Gul. Rishanger contin. Hist. Angl.* p. 1004.

† *Nic. Trivet. Annal.* vol. i. p. 229. *Chronica de Mailros.* p. 241. *T. Walsinghami Ypodigma Neustriæ,* p. 471.

them.\* On his recovery, the prince finding that he should not be able to do any great service to the Christian cause in those parts, settled his affairs in the best manner he could, in order to return home: in the mean time, the king his father, in the last years of his life, enjoyed more peace than he had formerly done, which was in some measure owing to a change in his conduct; having learned by experience, that to govern a kingdom was a painful office, and required more application than hitherto he had bestowed upon it. But what seems to have been the chief cause of this short calm, after so high a storm, was the death of his principal opposers, all of whom King Henry out-lived, and the uneasy circumstances in which they left their heirs: so that, upon the whole, the fire of sedition might in this case, be said to extinguish for want of fuel, and the king to die in peace, because the power of disturbing him was exhausted.

He ended his life on November 16, 1272, when he had reigned somewhat more than fifty-six years, and lived sixty-six.† He was a prince of but moderate endowments, which rendered him unable to govern without assistance, and made him also too prone to an implicit confidence in such as were about him. In the first years of his reign, while the famous Hubert de Burgh, earl of Kent, was at the head of the administration, there seems to have been great care taken of commerce, which must have been very considerable, to supply the prodigious expenses of his foreign expeditions, or rather journeys; in one of which he carried over no less than thirty large casks of specie, as also the mighty sums employed by the

\* *Annal. Waverl.* p. 225, 226. *Nic. Trivet. Annal.* vol. i. p. 232. *Gul. Rishanger in cont. Hist. Angl.* p. 1007. *Hakluyt*, vol. ii. p. 36.

† *Nic. Trivet. Annal.* vol. i. p. 236. *H. Knyghton*, p. 2461. *Annal. Waverl.* p. 226. *T. Walsingh. Ypodigma Neustriae*, p. 472. *Chron. Mailros*, p. 242. *Chron. Godstov.* p. 99. *Chron. W. Thorn*, p. 1920. *Chron. T. Otterbourne*, p. 77—80.



several adventurers in the holy wars, who constantly mortgaged their lands at setting out, and spent the money they raised beyond the seas. Besides all this; we find that whenever any respite from troubles would allow it, this was a most luxurious age; and the king's kindness for foreigners, especially the Poitevins, enabled them to carry away vast sums; and his brother, Richard, earl of Cornwall, is said to have lavished much treasure in attaining the pompous title of king of the Romans; which enormous expense did not however hinder his living and dying a very rich man: so that some way or other, vast sums must, by the balance of foreign trade, have centered here, otherwise such large draughts could not have been supplied; and yet we are pretty certain, that the policy of this king's time did not reach to any of those refined arts of creating an appearance of wealth by altering the value of the current coin, which have been since found out. Better arguments than these to prove a balance of trade in favour of that age, can hardly be produced, and therefore we must allow, that such a balance there was; though doubtless, under a better government, and a more settled state of things, it might have been much larger. But the mistakes of former are, or at least should be, lessons to later ages.

A.D.  
1274.

EDWARD I. surnamed Longshanks, though he was at his father's decease in the Holy Land, was readily and unanimously acknowledged his successor; nor did there happen any disturbance, notwithstanding he delayed his return to July 25, 1274. In his passage home he visited Pope Gregory X. and King Philip of France; stayed some time at his city of Bourdeaux, and having thoroughly settled his affairs abroad, arrived here with an established reputation as well for wisdom as courage, which perhaps was the principal reason that all ancient animosities seemed buried in oblivion, and his barons shewed as



great alacrity in obeying him, as they had discovered obstinacy in thwarting his father. He, on the other hand, manifested a great spirit of forgiveness, and addressing himself to the government with equal spirit and diligence, quickly gave a new face to public affairs. The desire he had of settling the realm in perfect tranquillity, engaged him to spend some time in making new laws, and composing old differences amongst potent families; in regulating affairs with the king of Scots, and in providing for the security of the English frontiers towards Wales, by redressing the grievances complained of by the Welch, and heaping favours upon David, brother to Llewelin, who ruled over all Wales. Yet this peace did not continue long, and the nature of our work leads us to shew how it was broken, and what were the consequences of that breach. \*

Llewelin was a wise and warlike prince, more potent than any of his predecessors, but withal excessively ambitious, filling his mind with vain hopes founded on old prophecies, and furthered, in all probability, by his intrigues with some of the English barons. These notions induced him to decline paying homage to King Edward; and to endeavour to strengthen his interest by marrying the daughter of Simon Mountford, late earl of Leicester, that determined enemy of the royal family. This lady, coming to him by sea from France, (for when came mischief into this island from another quarter?) was taken at sea by some ships from the port of Bristol, and, with her brother, brought to the king, who treated her very kindly. In order to put an end to these disputes, Edward entered Wales with a great army, and at the same time harassed the coast with his fleet, which brought

A.D.  
1276.

\* Walter Hemingford, *Historia de rebus gestis Edw. I. Edw. II. and Edw. III.* vol. i. p. 1—4. Nic. Trivet. *Annal.* vol. i. p. 237, 238, 239. *Chronicon. Godstovianum MS.* p. 100. *Mat. Westm. Chron. Dunelm.*

the proud Llewellyn so low, that he yielded to a peace on very hard terms; in consequence of which, however, the king, from a royal generosity, sent him his wife.\* Not long after he broke out again, and in conjunction with his brother David, committed such devastation in the English marches, that the king was obliged to turn against him the whole force of the kingdom; and, having slain him in battle, added Wales to his dominions, and declaring his young son Edward, just born at Caernarvon, † prince thereof, put an end to the British line. His policy in securing his conquest is worthy of observation: for first, to awe the people, he distributed the inland parts amongst his nobility; and next, to prevent their giving in to the Welch customs, he established the English laws, and appointed sheriffs and other legal officers in those parts; lastly, for his own security, which he judged depended on a naval force, he kept all the ports of the principality in his own hands, encouraging the inhabitants in their application to inland trade and foreign commerce, more than any of their native princes had done, ‡ that they might become true subjects of an English king, rich and free.

A.D.  
1282.

A.D.  
1289.

In the seventeenth year of the king's reign fell out the death of Alexander king of Scots, which afforded Edward another opportunity of displaying his wisdom, and of extending his power. This prince had for his first wife Margaret, the king's sister, by whom he had a son, who died young, and a daughter named Margaret, who was married to the king of Norway, to whom also she bore a daughter, called Margaret likewise, whom the Scots,

\* Walter Hemingford, vol. i. p. 5. Nic. Trivet. Annal. vol. i. p. 248.

† Thomas Walsingham, Hist. Angl. p. 40—52. H. de Knyghton, lib. iii. cap. 1. p. 2464. Annal. Waverl. p. 234, 235. Chron. Dunstaple, p. 432, 433, 494, 507. Chron. T. Otterbourne, p. 81, 82.

‡ Walter Hemingford, vol. i. p. 8—13. Nic. Trivet. Annal. vol. i. p. 256—259. Chron. Godstovian, ubi supra.



with the consent of King Edward, acknowledged for the heiress of their crown. She, in her passage from Norway, going on shore in the Orkneys, died there; whereupon many competitors for the Scottish diadem appeared, \* who agreed to submit the decision of their respective titles to King Edward. These were Eric, king of Norway; Florence, earl of Holland; Robert le Brus, lord of Anandale; John de Baliol, lord of Galloway; John de Hastings, lord of Abergavenny; John Comyn, lord of Badenoch; Patrick Dunbar, earl of Marche; John de Vesci, for his father; Nicholas de Soules, and William de Ros: and great consequences King Edward drew from this reference, which put the whole island into his power, and gave him a pretence for keeping a strong squadron of ships upon the northern coast, in right of his sovereignty over those seas, which, though always claimed, had not been exercised by some of his predecessors. † After much consultation, and with great solemnity, the king pronounced his judgment in favour of Baliol, as descended from the eldest daughter of David earl of Huntingdon, notwithstanding Robert le Brus was somewhat nearer in descent, though by a younger daughter; who therefore, holding himself injured, still kept up his claim, which perhaps was not disagreeable to Edward, who thought nourishing dissensions in that kingdom necessary to preserve peace in his own. ‡

A.D.  
1292.

Notwithstanding these arduous affairs at home, King Edward was far from neglecting his concerns on the continent, where he still preserved the duchy of Guienne,

\* H. Knyghton, lib. iii. cap. 1. p. 2468. Chron. T. Otterbourne, p. 32—89. Chron. Dunstaple, p. 594, 595. Hector Boeth, Hist. Scot. lib. xiii. fol. 291.

† John de Fordun, Scotichron. vol. iii. p. 782. Walter Hemingford, vol. i. p. 29. Nic. Trivet. Annal. vol. i. p. 267.

‡ Walter Hemingford, vol. i. p. 37, 38. Nic. Trivet. Annal. vol. i. p. 273, 274. Hector Boeth. Hist. Scot. lib. xiv. Thomas Walsingham, Hist. Angl. p. 59.



and some other dominions, to which he passed over when occasion required, and contrary to the usage of his predecessors, took all imaginable care to preserve the friendship of France, which in the end he found impracticable, and that his rights were only to be defended by force. \*

A.D. 1293. An extraordinary act of French insolence gave rise to the bloody war which broke out in the twenty-first year of King Edward's reign, and of which I shall exhibit a distinct account from proper authorities. The first grounds of the quarrel are very differently reported both by our own and foreign historians; but the relation given us by Walter of Hemingford is more circumstantial, and much more probable than any of the rest, and therefore from him (especially as it has never appeared in English,) we shall insert it.

“ In the year 1293, a fatal contention happened between  
 “ the English seamen of the cinque ports and the mariners  
 “ of the French king in Normandy, which began thus :  
 “ An English ship putting into a Norman port, remained  
 “ there some days; while they lay at anchor, two of the  
 “ crew went to get fresh water at a place not far distant  
 “ from the shore, where they were insulted by some  
 “ Normans of their own profession; so that coming from  
 “ words to blows, one of the Englishmen was killed, and  
 “ the other flying to the ship, related what had happened  
 “ to his fellow-sailors, informing them that the Normans  
 “ were at his heels. Upon this they hoisted sail and put  
 “ to sea; and though the Normans followed them, they  
 “ nevertheless escaped, but with some difficulty: where-  
 “ upon the inhabitants of the English ports sought assist-  
 “ ance from their neighbours; and the enemy, on the  
 “ other hand, retaining still the same disposition, in-  
 “ creased their strength daily, and chased all English

\* Dupleix, tom. ii. p. 363, 369. Mezeray, tom. ii. p. 777. Thomas Walsingham, p. 60. T. Wikes's Chron. p. 125, 126. Nic. Trivet, Annal. vol. i. p. 274.

“ ships. In these excursions, having had the fortune to  
“ meet six, and to take two English vessels, they killed  
“ the sailors, hung up their bodies at the yard-arm, with  
“ as many dogs; sailing in this manner for some time on  
“ their coasts, and signifying to all the world thereby  
“ that they made no sort of difference between an  
“ Englishman and a dog.

“ This, when it came to the ears of the inhabitants  
“ of the English ports, by the relation of those that  
“ escaped, provoked them to take the best measures  
“ they could to revenge so signal an affront; and having  
“ in vain cruized at sea, in order to find out the enemy,  
“ they entered the port of Swyn, and having killed and  
“ drowned abundance of men, carried away six ships;  
“ many acts of a like nature succeeding this on both  
“ sides. At last, wearied by this piratical war, they  
“ by messengers who passed between them, fixed a  
“ certain day to decide this dispute with their whole  
“ strength: this day was the fourteenth of April, and  
“ a large empty ship was fixed in the middle, between  
“ the coasts of England and Normandy, to mark the  
“ place of engagement. The English, against the time  
“ appointed, procured some aid from Ireland, Holland,  
“ and other places; and the Normans drew to their  
“ assistance the French, Flemings, and Genoese. At  
“ the appointed day both parties met, full of resolution;  
“ and as their minds boiled with rage, so a like spirit  
“ seemed to agitate the elements: storms of snow and  
“ hail, and boisterous gusts of wind were the preludes  
“ of an obstinate battle; in which at length God gave  
“ the victory to us; many thousands being slain, besides  
“ those who were drowned in a large number of ships  
“ which perished: the victorious English carrying off  
“ two hundred and forty sail; and with these they  
“ returned home.

“ When King Philip received this news, though his  
 “ brother Charles had been the author of the battle,  
 “ yet he sent ambassadors to the king of England, de-  
 “ manding reparation for the wrong done him, by pu-  
 “ nishing such as were concerned, and by the payment  
 “ of a vast sum for the losses which his merchants had  
 “ sustained. To them the king prudently answered,  
 “ that he would enquire into the matter, and return his  
 “ resolution by messengers of his own. Agreeably to  
 “ this promise, he sent to desire the French king, that  
 “ time and place might be fixed for commissioners on  
 “ both sides, to meet and enquire into the circumstances  
 “ of the fact, in order to its being amicably adjusted:  
 “ but this the French king refused; and, by the advice  
 “ of his nobility, summoned the king of England to  
 “ appear, and answer for what had passed, in his court,  
 “ on a day assigned. The day came, and the king  
 “ not appearing, a new summons was issued, wherein  
 “ the king was cited to appear on another day, under  
 “ pain of forfeiting all his dominions beyond the seas.  
 “ The king, before this day elapsed, sent his brother  
 “ Edmund earl of Lancaster, and the earl of Leicester,  
 “ with instructions for the making an end of this busi-  
 “ ness; yet these ambassadors, though they produced  
 “ proper credentials, were not heard, nor even admitted;  
 “ but judgment was given, that the king should lose  
 “ Aquitain, and all his transmarine dominions for his  
 “ contempt in not appearing.”\*

Such is the account given by Hemingford, which is  
 clear and exact, and very agreeable to what we find in  
 the best French authors, particularly Father Daniel,  
 who very candidly relates, and very honestly blames,  
 this violent procedure.† But what followed was so

\* *Historia de rebus gestis Edward I. &c.* vol. i. p. 39, 40, 41.

† *Histoire de France*, v. iv. p. 358.



very base, that, though I own it is somewhat beside my purpose, I cannot help relating it. By the interposition of the French queens, a treaty was set on foot with Prince Edmund for the accommodating all differences. By this treaty it was agreed, that, to save the honour of King Philip, a few French troops should be admitted into certain forts and cities, and that, after this mark of submission, they should be withdrawn; and, letters of safe conduct being granted to King Edward, he should pass the seas, and settle all things in a personal conference with the French king; the troops to be recalled, and the sentence vacated in forty days, in consequence of the before-mentioned submission. All this being fairly executed by King Edward, when the time was elapsed, and the French troops were required to evacuate the towns, King Philip roundly declared, that he was unacquainted with the treaty, and that he would by no means comply therewith.\* Such was the policy of France of old, and such the honourable means by which her monarchy was extended!

A.D.  
1294.

The resentment of the king for this base usage shewed itself in various treaties with foreign princes, as also by sending a speedy relief to Gascony under his nephew the earl of Richmond, attended by Lord St. John and Admiral Tiptoff.† At the same time, to secure the seas, and prevent any descents on his coast, the king fitted out three fleets well provided with men and ammunition; one from Yarmouth, which was commanded by John de Botecourt; another from Portsmouth, under the direction of William de Leibourne; the third, which had the care of the western coast, under the command

\* Walter Hemingford, vol. i. p. 42, 43. Nic. Trivet. annal. vol. i. p. 276, 277. T. Walsingham, p. 61.

† Nic. Trivet. annal. vol. i. p. 279. Walter Hemingford, vol. i. p. 51. Histoire de France, par J. de Serres, p. 174.

of a valiant knight of Ireland.\* In some of the copies of Trivet's annals, this admiral is said to be of the illustrious house of Ormond. †

A.D. 1294. All these fleets did good service. That of Portsmouth, about Michaelmas, sailed into the mouth of the Garronne, and, having disembarked the troops on board, took several places from the French: ‡ yet next year, the French king having hired a great fleet, some of our writers say not less than 300 sail, they stood over to the English coast, and landing the troops on board suddenly near Dover, by the assistance of Sir Thomas Turberville, a traitor, took the town, and burnt it; but were quickly afterwards forced to fly to their ships, with the loss of A.D. 1295. 800 men. § In the mean time, the Yarmouth fleet made a descent in Normandy, burnt the town of Cherbourg, and spoiled a rich abbey. || The Portsmouth squadron also on the coast of Flanders took fifteen sail of Spanish merchantmen, richly laden, and brought them into A.D. 1296. Sandwich. ¶ To balance this, there happened an unforeseen stroke at Berwick, where, the English fleet rashly entering the harbour, the Scots destroyed four ships, and the rest with some difficulty escaped. \*\*

A.D. 1297. In the twenty-fifth year of his reign, the king made great preparations for invading Flanders; and notwithstanding he met with many interruptions from his barons and clergy, yet, by the latter end of August he sailed from Winchelsea with a mighty fleet, having a

\* Nic. Trivet. annal. vol. i. p. 279.

† See the MS. of Trivet in the library of Merton college in Oxford.

‡ Walter Hemingford, vol. i. p. 56. Nic. Trivet. annal. vol. i. p. 280.

§ Walter Hemingford, vol. i. p. 59. Nic. Trivet. annal. vol. i. p. 284, 285. H. Knyghton, p. 2503, 2504. Mezeray, vol. ii. p. 789.

|| Nic. Trivet. annal. vol. i. p. 284.

¶ Thom. Walsingham, hist. Angl. p. 64.

\*\* Walter Hemingford, vol. i. p. 90. Thom. Walsingham, Hist. Angl. p. 66. H. Knyghton, p. 2512.

gallant army of between fifty and sixty thousand men on board, and landed at Sluys in Flanders, on the twenty-seventh of the same month, where a very unlucky accident fell out. The squadron from the cinque ports, quarrelling with the Yarmouth mariners, suddenly fell to blows; so that, notwithstanding the king's interposition, a desperate engagement followed, wherein twenty ships of the Yarmouth squadron were burnt, most of the men on board them lost, and three of the largest ships in the navy, one of which had the king's treasure on board, were driven out to sea, and, not without much difficulty, escaped.\* This was an ill beginning; and indeed nothing answerable to the force employed therein was done through the whole expedition; yet in one respect they were fortunate; for, the French having formed a scheme for burning their whole navy in the harbour of Dam, it was luckily discovered, and the English fleet, putting to sea, escaped.† The king's confederates abroad also fell from their promises; and the Flemings, to whose assistance the English came, making a sudden defection, the king was next year obliged to return to England, as well on account of these miscarriages, as to quiet his barons, and to repress the Scots, who at the instigation of the French, took up arms, and invaded the kingdom.‡

The king, according to his disposition of entertaining peace on the continent if possible, while he had affairs of moment to employ him nearer home, was content, notwithstanding the injuries he received, to make a peace with King Philip, which in the twenty-seventh year of his reign was confirmed,§ and by the mediation

A.D.  
1299.

\* Nic. Trivet. Annal. vol. i. p. 304. Walter Hemingford. vol. i. p. 146.

† Nic. Trivet. Annal. vol. i. p. 305. Holingshed's Chronicle, p. 304.

‡ Walter Hemingford, vol. i. p. 148.

§ Walter Hemingford, vol. i. p. 168, 169. Annal. Abington. Nic. Trivet. annal. vol. i. p. 314, 315.



A.D.  
1303.

of Pope Boniface VIII. made more explicit by a treaty ; wherein it was stipulated, that the king of England should marry the French king's sister, and his son Prince Edward the daughter of the said king ; and that the duchy of Aquitain should be put into the hands of the pope, until the matters in difference between the two kings should be enquired into, and settled, with many other articles to be seen at large in Rymer's collection.\* This truce, indifferently performed on the part of the French, subsisted to the thirtieth year of the king, and then a peace was concluded between the two crowns, of which the third article contained a reciprocal engagement, that neither of the contracting parties should afford any manner of aid or assistance to the enemies of the other, or suffer the same to be given, in any way whatever, in any of the territories or places under their power, and that they should forbid the same to be done on pain of forfeiture of body and goods to the offenders, &c. I mention this article particularly, because, in consequence of it, there fell out the clearest proofs of the king of England's absolute sovereignty of the sea, that could be desired or wished ; a clearer proof, perhaps, than the whole world can shew, in respect to the prerogative of a prince with regard to other princes. † It happened thus :

The war still continuing between Philip the Fair and the Flemings, that prince thought fit to send a great fleet to sea under the command of a Genoese nobleman, whose name was Reyner Grimbaldi, (most of our writers call him Grimbaltz), to whom he gave the title of admiral ; and who, under colour of this commission, took several ships of different nations, bound for the ports of Flanders, laden with various kinds of goods. Upon this, complaints were made to the kings of Eng-

\* *Fœdera*, tom. ii. p. 840.

† *Ibid.* p. 941.

land and France, who jointly appointed commissioners to hear and determine the matters contained in them.

To these commissioners, therefore, a remonstrance was presented in the name of the procurators of the prelates and nobles, and of the admiral of the English seas, and of the communities of cities and towns, likewise of the merchants, mariners, strangers resident, and all others belonging to the kingdom of England, and other territories subject to the said king of England; as also the inhabitants of other maritime places, such as Genoa, Catalonia, Spain, Germany, Zeland, Holland, Frizeland, Denmark, Norway, &c. setting forth, that whereas the kings of England, by right of the said kingdom, have from time to time, whereof there is no memorial to the contrary, been in peaceable possession of the sovereignty of the English seas, and of the islands situate within the same, with power of ordaining and establishing laws, statutes, and prohibitions of arms, and of ships otherwise furnished than merchantmen used to be; and of taking security, and giving protection, in all cases where need shall require, and of ordering all other things necessary for the maintaining of peace, right, and equity, among all manner of people, as well of other dominions as their own, passing through the said seas, and the sovereign guard thereof; and also, of taking all manner of cognizance in causes, and of doing right and justice to high and low, according to the said laws, statutes, ordinances, and prohibitions, and all other things, which to the exercise of sovereign jurisdiction in the places aforesaid may appertain; and whereas A. de B. (Lord Coke \* says his name was de Botetort) admiral of the said sea, deputed by the said king of England, and all other admirals deputed by the said king of England, and his ancestors, formerly kings of England, have been in peaceable possession of the said sovereign guard, with power of juris-

\* Instit. lib. iv. c. 22.

diction, and all the other powers before mentioned, (except in case of appeal, and complaint made of them to their sovereigns the kings of England, in default of justice, or for evil judgment,) and especially of making prohibitions, doing justice, and taking security for good behaviour from all manner of people carrying arms on the said sea, or sailing in ships otherwise fitted out and armed than merchant ships used to be, and in all other cases where a man may have reasonable cause of suspicion towards them of piracy, or other misdoings; and, whereas the masters of ships, of the said kingdom of England, in the absence of the said admirals, have been in peaceable possession of taking cognizance, and judging of all facts upon the said sea, between all manner of people, according to the laws, statutes, prohibitions, franchises, and customs; and, whereas, in the first article of the treaty of alliance, lately made between the said kings at Paris, the words following are set down, viz. First of all it is agreed and concluded between us, the envoys and agents above mentioned, in the names of the said kings, that they shall be to each other, for the future, good, true, and faithful friends and allies, against all the world, (except the church of Rome,) in such manner, that if any one, or more, whosoever they be, shall go about to interrupt, hinder, or molest the said kings, in the franchises, liberties, privileges, rights, or customs, of them and their kingdoms, they shall be good and faithful friends, and aiding against all men living, and ready to die, to defend, keep, and maintain, the above mentioned franchises, liberties, rights, and customs, &c.; and that the one shall not be of counsel, nor give aid or assistance in any thing whereby the other may lose life, limb, estate, or honour. And whereas Mr. Reyner Grimbaltz, master of the ships of the said king of France, who calls himself admiral of the said sea, being deputed by his sovereign aforesaid, in his war against the Flemings, did (after the above mentioned alliance was made and ratified, and



against the tenor and obligation of the said alliance, and the intention of those who made it,) wrongfully assume and exercise the office of admiral in the said sea of England, above the space of a year, by commission from the said king of France, taking the subjects and merchants of the kingdom of England, and of other countries, passing upon the said seas, with their goods, and did cast the men so taken into the prisons of his said master the king of France, and, by his own judgment and award, did cause to be delivered, their goods and merchandizes to receivers established for that purpose, in the sea-ports of the said king, as forfeit and confiscate to him; and, his taking and detaining the said men with their said goods and merchandizes, and his judgment and award on them as forfeit and confiscate, hath pretended in writing to justify before you, the lords commissioners, by authority of the aforesaid commission for the office of admiral by him thus usurped, and against the general prohibition made by the king of England, in places within his power, in pursuance of the third article of the before mentioned alliance, containing the words above written, and hath therefore required, that he may be acquitted and absolved of the same, to the great damage and prejudice of the said king of England, and of the prelates, nobles, and others before mentioned; wherefore the said procurators do, in the names of their said lords, pray you, the lords-commissioners before mentioned, that due and speedy delivery of the said men, ships, goods, and merchandizes, so taken and detained, may be made to the admiral of the said king of England, to whom the cognizance of this matter doth rightfully appertain, as is above said, that so, without disturbance from you, or any one else, he may take cognizance thereof, and do what belongs to his aforesaid office; and that the aforesaid Mr. Reyner may be condemned, and constrained to make due satisfaction for all the said damages, so far forth as he shall be able to do the same; and, in default thereof, his said

master, the king of France, by whom he was deputed to the said office, and that, after due satisfaction shall be made for the said damages, the said Mr. Reyner may be so duly punished for the violation of the said allowance, as that the same may be an example to others for time to come. \*

Thus far the remonstrance, on which other writers having largely insisted, let us content ourselves with making a few obvious reflections. I. It appears from this paper, that the dominion of the sea had not only been claimed, but exercised and possessed, by the kings of England, for time immemorial, which is sufficient to give some credit to the facts which we have related from the British history; for, as to the times since the Roman invasion, they were, in an historical sense, within memory. II. It is clear, from hence, what the dominion of the sea was, viz. a jurisdiction over the vessels of all nations passing thereon for the common benefit of all, for the preventing piracies, the protection of commerce, and the decision of unforeseen disputes. III. It is no less apparent, that this was an exclusive jurisdiction, in which no other potentate had any share; which must have been founded either in common consent, or in superiority of strength, either of which afforded a good title. IV. We see, by this remonstrance, that the dominion of the sea resting in the king of England, was a point not only known to, but maintained by, the Genoese, Spaniards, Germans, Hollanders, Danes, and, in short, by all the maritime powers then in Europe; which is sufficient to evince, that trade was far from being at a low ebb; and that the prerogative of the crown of England, in this respect, had been hitherto so exercised, as to render it a common advantage. V. We perceive, that foreigners were so jealous of the assuming

\* Selden's *Mare Clausum*, lib. ii. cap. 27, 28. Coke's *Instit.* lib. iv. cap. 22.

temper of the French princes, that they would not admit the commander in chief of their naval force to bear the title of admiral, which they apprehended to include a title to jurisdiction; and, therefore, would have this Reyner Grimbaltz styled only master of the ships to the king of France. VI. We must observe, that the commissioners, to whom this remonstrance is addressed, neither had, nor claimed any naval jurisdiction whatsoever, but were appointed to hear and determine whether King Edward's prerogative, as sovereign of the sea, had been invaded by this Reyner Grimbaltz, in contravention of the first article of the treaty between the crowns of England and France, whereby the contracting parties covenanted to maintain each others prerogatives; and, consequently, the French king was bound to maintain this prerogative of King Edward, which gave occasion to the commission. VII. We owe the knowledge of this whole affair not to our historians, but to our records; whence we may safely deduce this consequence, that the want of facts to support such a jurisdiction throughout preceding reigns, ought not to be urged as a just objection; because, as I once before hinted, most of those who applied themselves to writing history, were very little acquainted with these matters.

But there is one thing more relating to this affair, which deserves particular attention; and that is, the plea put in by Reyner Grimbaltz, in answer to this remonstrance. He did not dispute the king of England's sovereignty; he did not plead any power derived to himself from the French king's commission; but, what he insisted on was, the third article of the treaty before mentioned, which he would have to be thus understood; that, King Edward having contracted not to give any aid or assistance, or to suffer any aid or assistance to be given to the enemies of King Philip; and, having also actually issued out a prohibition, forbidding any such practices, it followed, in his opinion, that all such as, after this prohibition, relieved the



Flemings, by merchandize or otherwise, were to be esteemed enemies, of whatsoever nation they were; and, that he, having taken none but the persons and goods of such, conceived himself to have a permission so to do, by virtue of the said prohibition; whereby King Edward, according to his interpretation, had signified, that he would not take it as an injury done to him, although the ships of such offenders should be taken in his seas by the French king's officers. I shall not enter into the reasonableness or validity of this defence, the issue of which is not known; but content myself with observing, that it contains the clearest concession, on the part of France, that can be desired; because this man derives the legality of his own actions, if they were legal, not from the commission of the prince he served, but from the king of England's prohibition; so that, in reality, he asserts himself to have acted under the English sovereignty, and from thence expected his acquittal. \*

Many other instances of this king's claiming and exercising the sovereignty of the sea might be produced, if they were at all necessary; but, as at that time, the title of our kings was no way contested, it is not necessary to detain the reader longer on this head. The remainder of his life was spent in subduing Scotland, on which he had particularly set his heart, as appears, by his directing his dead body to be carried about that country, till every part of it was brought under his son's dominion. In this temper of mind he died, in a manner in the field; for he caused himself to be conveyed from Carlisle to a village called Burgh upon Sands, where he deceased on July 17, 1307, in the thirty-fifth year of his reign, and the sixty-ninth of his age. †

\* Selden, ubi supra. Molloy, de jure maritimo & navali, cap. v.

† Walt. Hemingford, vol. i. p. 237, 238, 239. Nic. Trivet. Annal. p. 346, 347. Chron. Godstovian, p. 103. T. Walsingham Hist. Angl.

He was, undoubtedly, one of the bravest and most politic princes that ever sat on the English throne. He rightly judged, that he could never be formidable abroad till he had established unanimity at home; which was the reason that, at such an expense of blood and treasure, he annexed Wales for ever to his dominions, and endeavoured, with such earnestness, to add Scotland to them likewise; which, if he had lived, he would, in all probability, have done; and then, no doubt, the French would have felt the weight of his whole power; for, though he was too wise to be diverted from the prosecution of his designs by any of the arts of his enemies, yet he was a monarch of too great spirit to bear the injustice done him by France, longer than the situation of his affairs required. As he set the state in order at his first coming to the throne, so he left the government thoroughly established at the time of his decease; which, with a numerous army and potent fleet, he consigned to his son, who resembled him very little either in his virtue or his fortune.

EDWARD II. succeeded this monarch in the throne, with the general satisfaction of the nation. His first care was to solemnize the marriage, concluded for him by his father, with the Princess Isabella, daughter to the French king; and for that purpose he passed the seas, and went to Paris, where he was very magnificently received, and the ceremony of his nuptials was performed with extraordinary splendour. His marriage over, he returned to England with his new queen, and was crowned on the feast of St. Matthias with all imaginable testimonies of joy and affection from the people. But this fair weather was soon over; for he shortly after bringing back his favourite, called by most of our writers Gaveston, but whose true name seems to have been

A.D.  
1307.

A.D.  
1308.

Piers, or Peter de Gaberston, a Gascon, the barons took such an offence thereat, and at the extravagant marks of royal favour he afterwards received, that more than one civil war happened upon his account, which hindered the king from applying himself to the care of his concerns abroad, as well as the nobility from rendering him those services to which they were heartily inclined. These jealousies and disputes ended not but with the death of the king's minion, by whom they were occasioned, and who, falling into the hands of the lords, had his head struck off without any form of justice. It is highly probable, that the French counsellors about the queen were the chief instigators of this fact, at least as to the manner of doing it; and yet, after it was done, they inflamed the king's discontents, and by thus dividing this nation, kept their own quiet.\*

A. D.  
1313.

In the year 1313 Robert le Brus, king of Scotland, invaded England with a great army, which roused the king from his lethargy, and obliged him to provide for the nation's safety, and his own honour. The next year therefore he assembled the whole strength of the realm, and marched therewith northward, intending to have reduced the whole kingdom of Scotland, according to his father's directions upon his death-bed; but those disasters, which always attend princes when on ill terms with their subjects, waited on this unfortunate expedition; so that in a general engagement on June 24, 1314, the English were entirely defeated, though the king discovered much personal courage, and, when all fell into confusion, was with difficulty prevailed upon to fly. He

A. D.  
1314.

\* Walter Hemingford, vol. i. p. 242. Contin. anal. Nic. Trivet. per Adam Murimuth, vol. ii. p. 5. Thom. Walsingham, p. 95—101. Mezeray. H. Knyghton, p. 2532. Thom. de la Moor, vit. Edward II. p. 593. T. Otterbourne, p. 109, 110. Johan. Trekelowe, anal. Edward II. p. 1—18. Anonym. Monach. Malmsburiens, vit. Edward II. p. 95—106.



certainly meant to have attempted, at least, the repairing this misfortune, by invading Scotland with a new army; but his reputation was so much injured by his late defeat, and his nobility were so unwilling to fight under his banners,\* that all his endeavours came to nothing; and he had besides the misfortune to see not only the northern parts of England ravaged, but Ireland also invaded by the Scots, whom his father had left in so low a condition, and so little likely to defend their own, instead of offending others.

This design of the Scots upon Ireland was very deeply laid, and nothing less was intended than an entire conquest of the island. For this purpose King Robert le Brus sent over his brother Edward, who took upon him the title of king of Ireland; and who landed in the north with six thousand men, attended by the earls of Murray and Monteith, Lord John Stuart, Lord John Campbell, and many other persons of distinction; and, by the assistance of the native Irish, quickly reduced a great part of the country. This war lasted several years, King Robert going over thither at last in person; and in all probability had carried his point, if it had not been for the hasty temper of his brother. Sir Edmund Butler, in the beginning of these stirs, had with the English forces done all that in a very distracted state of affairs could be done, for the preservation of the island, till such time as the king sent over Lord Roger Mortimer with a very small force to repress the invaders; who engaging Edward le Brus in the famous battle of Armagh, which the Scots very imprudently fought be-

A.D.  
1318.

† Adam Murimuth, *annal.* vol. ii. p. 15. Hector Boeth. *Hist. Scot.* lib. xiv. p. 302. Thom. Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.* p. 105. T. Otterbourne, p. 110. H. Knyghton, p. 2533. Johan. Fordun, *Scotichronicon*, vol. iv. p. 1007. Monach. Malmesburiens, vit. Edward II. p. 146, 147. Johan. Trokelowe, *Annal. Edw. II.* p. 24—26. Fabian's *chronicle*, p. 167.

fore they were joined by King Robert and his forces, the English gained a complete victory; \* the pretended King Edward being slain upon the spot, his head carried by the Lord Birmingham into England, and there presented to King Edward. After this all matters in Ireland were so well settled, that the king had thoughts of retiring thither, when sinking under his misfortunes; and had probably done so, if he had remained master of the sea.

A.D.  
1323.

The king drew these troubles upon himself, by suffering his new favourites the Spensers to guide him in all things, since by this he equally disgusted his nobility and his own family. A dishonourable treaty he had made with Scotland was another ground of discontent; and, while things went so ill at home, there wanted not some causes of disquiet abroad. Charles IV. of France, brother to Queen Isabel, pretending to take umbrage because King Edward did not assist at his coronation, sent his uncle Charles de Valois into Guyenne, a great part of which he quickly reduced, and grievously distressed Edmund earl of Kent, the king's brother, who was sent to defend that province; insomuch that he agreed with the French general to come over, and persuade his brother to give King Charles satisfaction, or else to render himself, if the king of England was inflexible, prisoner of war; by which capitulation, he preserved the few towns the English still retained in Guyenne, though he thereby paved the way, perhaps involuntarily, for his unfortunate brother's deposition and destruction. †

A.D.  
1324.

\* Chron. Hibern. Adam Murimuth. vol. ii. p. 28, 29, 49, 53. Johan. Trokelowe, annual. Edward II. p. 33, 44. J. Fordun, Scotichronicon, vol. iv. p. 1008, 1009. T. Walsingham, p. 107, 111. Hector Boeth. Hist. Scot. lib. xiv. p. 305.

† Mezeray, abregé de l'Hist. de France, tom. ii. p. 341. Le Gendre, Hist. de France, tom. iii. p. 431. Adam Murimuth, vol. ii. p.

As soon as King Edward was informed of what had passed, he took it extremely to heart, banished the French who were about the person of the queen, and had thoughts of entering immediately into a war with that crown: but, finding it impossible to obtain supplies from his parliament, he suddenly changed his purpose, and resolved to send over Queen Isabella to treat with her brother, and to endeavour to accommodate the differences which had happened between them; and upon this errand she accordingly went. By her applications the French king was not only drawn to pass by what had given him offence, but was likewise induced to give him the dukedom of Aquitain, and the earldom of Poictou to Prince Edward his nephew, on condition that he came and did him homage for them in person; though to preserve appearances, letters of safe conduct were also sent to the king, that he, in case he so thought fit, might also go over to France, and take possession of those countries.\* When King Edward had considered these conditions, and consulted with his favourites, he resolved to send over the prince to his mother, in order to the due execution of the treaty. This was all the queen and her party wanted; for no sooner was the heir of the crown in France under their tuition, than immediately they began to negotiate a treaty of marriage between him and the daughter of the earl of Hainault, directly contrary to his father's instructions; and, at the same time, made all the necessary dispositions for invading England, as soon as this marriage was brought about. † The king,

A.D.  
1325.A.D.  
1326.

62. T. de la Moor, vit. Edward II. p. 596. Thom. Walsingham, p. 122.

\* Paul Æmyle, Hist. des rois de France, p. 497. P. Daniel, Hist. de France, tom. iv. p. 45—47. Rymer's foedera, tom. iv. p. 195.

† Adam Murimuth, vol. ii. p. 63. Thom. de la Moor, vit. Edward II. p. 598. Thom. Walsingham, 123.



having intelligence of these proceedings, sent positive orders to the queen and his son to return home; and, on their refusal, proclaimed them enemies to the kingdom, and at the same time began to act vigorously against France; sending orders to his admiral to cruize on the French coasts, particularly to the constable of Dover castle, and warden of the cinque ports; who executed his commands so effectually, that, in a short time, a hundred and twenty sail of ships belonging to Normandy were brought into the English ports.\* This had such an effect upon King Charles, that, in appearance at least, he abandoned his sister: though a French historian intimates, that it was rather occasioned by her too great familiarity with Roger Lord Mortimer. However it was, the queen retired first into Guyenne, and went thence with her son, the prince, to the court of the earl of Hainault, where she openly prosecuted her design of attacking her husband, in support of which, she had formed a strong party in England!

The king on his side provided the best he could for his defence, which however did not hinder her landing with three thousand men, at Orewell in Suffolk, a little before Michaelmas: an inconsiderable force in proportion to the design, and yet it is hard to conceive even how these were landed; without the connivance at least of such as had the command of the king's fleet: which may with the greater reason be suspected, since immediately after her arrival the earl of Lancaster, and most of the nobility, came in to her assistance; so that the king, seeing himself deserted, was forced to retire, or rather was compelled to fly into Wales; where finding himself abandoned by those about him, he went on board a small ship, intending to retire into Ireland; but after

\* Polydor. Virgil, lib. xviii. Thom. Walsinghami Ypodiguz Neustrie, p. 507, 508. Mezeray, tom. ii. p. 813, 814.

tossing to and fro a whole week, he landed again in Glamorganshire, where for some time he lay hid.

At last being discovered, he was carried prisoner to Monmouth, and thence to Kenilworth-castle, belonging to the earl of Lancaster, where he remained till his queen and the counsellors about her took a resolution of forcing him to resign his crown; which, by authority of parliament, was placed on the head of his son.\* He did not survive long after this, but was conveyed from place to place under the custody of Gournay and Mattra-vers, who in the end brought him to Berkley castle, where he was basely murdered on September 21, 1327, when he had reigned twenty-years, and with small ceremony buried at Gloucester.† With the character of this prince we shall meddle very little: his enemies have left us reports enough, in relation to his vices, and we have also some accounts of him from less prejudiced pens. As to maritime concerns, during his reign, they were certainly on the decline, as they will always be when the state is discomposed: yet, as far as the distractions in his affairs would give him leave, he shewed himself a friend to trade, and remarkably careful of wool, the staple commodity of the kingdom, as appears by his charter, the 13th of his reign, granted for that purpose, and other authentic proofs.‡

EDWARD III. called, from his birth-place, Edward of Windsor, ascended the throne in his father's lifetime, being entirely governed by the queen his mother, and

A.D.  
1328.

\* Adam Murimuth, vol. ii. p. 69. Thom. Walsingham, p. 125—127. Thom. de la Moor, p. 600.

† Chron. Godstoyian, p. 109. Adam Murimuth, vol. ii. p. 70. Thom. Walsinghami Ypodigma Neustrie, p. 509. Thom. de la Moor, vit. Edward II. p. 602, 603. Barnes's Hist. of Edward III. H. Knyghton, p. 2551. Grafton's Chronicle, p. 218, 219.

‡ Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. i. p. 142.

A.D.  
1330.

her favourite Roger Mortimer. He married Philippa, daughter to the earl of Hainault, who was also crowned queen. In the beginning of his reign there happened many things which were far from promising those glorious events that afterwards followed. For, first, he made an unfortunate war against the Scots, which was succeeded by a disadvantageous treaty; then passing over to France, he, by the advice of his mother and her counsellors, did homage to Philip, son of Charles de Valois, then styling himself king, to the prejudice of his own title to that crown. We may add to this, the cutting off his uncle Edmund earl of Kent's head, for a pretended treason, in endeavouring to set his brother King Edward on the throne again; though it was well known he was dead. But as by degrees he began to act according to his sentiments, he easily wiped off these imputations, due rather to the tenderness of his age, than to any fault of his mind. For in the fourth year of his reign, when the king himself was but twenty years of age, he, at a parliament held at Nottingham, went in person, and at the hazard of his life seized Mortimer in his mother's bed-chamber, caused him to be carried to London, where, by his death, he in some measure atoned for the crimes he had committed in his lifetime.\*

Thenceforward King Edward ruled like a great prince, and one who had his own honour, and the reputation of his people at heart. He first turned his arms against the Scots, who had done incredible mischiefs in the north; and resolving to repair the dishonour he had sustained during the weak administration of his mother,

\* Adam Murimuth, vol. ii. p. 76. Walter de Hemingford, vol. ii. p. 271. Chron. Godstovian, p. 110. Robert de Avesbury, Hist. Edwardi, vol. iii. p. 8, 9. H. Knyghton, p. 2556—2559. T. Walsinghami Ypodigma Neustriæ, p. 510, 511. Wilhelmi Wyrcesti Annales, p. 429.



He prepared both an army and a fleet for the invasion of that country; and though the latter suffered grievously by storm on the Scottish coast, whereby most of his great ships were wrecked, and the rest rendered un-serviceable, yet he persisted in his design of expelling David Brus, and restoring Edward Baliol; which at length, with infinite labour, he effected, and received homage from the said Edward, as his grandfather, Edward I. had from John Baliol: David Brus, who had succeeded his father in the kingdom of Scotland, retiring into France with his queen, where they were kindly received. In this step of securing Scotland, previous to any expeditions beyond the seas, King Edward imitated his grandfather, as he seems to have done in most of his subsequent undertakings; having always a special regard to the maintenance of a stout fleet, and securing to himself the possession as well as title of lord of the seas, which enabled him to assert, whenever he thought fit, his rights abroad, and effectually secured him from apprehending any thing from the efforts of his enemies at home. While he was laying these solid foundations of power, he thought it not at all beneath him to make use of such temporary expedients as were proper to serve his purpose, and to enable him to maintain his right to the crown of France, whenever he should think fit to claim it.\*

As this war was of great importance to the nation, as well as to the king, and carried our naval force to a greater height than ever it arrived at before, it will be necessary to enter into a distinct, though concise detail of its causes, as well as of the circumstances attending it.

\* Adam Murimuth, vol. ii. p. 79—84. T. Otterbourne, p. 115—117. Monach. Malmesburiens, p. 246, 247. Robert de Avesbury, p. 21—23. H. Knyghton, p. 2563—2565. Hector Boeth. Hist Scot. lib. xv. p. 312--316. J. Fordun Scotichronicon, vol. iv. p. 1021; 1022.

Philip the Fair, king of France, left behind him at his decease, three sons, who all swayed the sceptre of that kingdom in their turns. The eldest of these, Lewis X. reigned twenty-six years, leaving his queen big with child, who after his decease brought forth a son, called John; but the child died at a week old, and Philip, the late king's brother, succeeded, who reigned also twenty-six years. On his demise, Charles IV. surnamed the Fair, claimed and enjoyed the crown twenty-eight years; and deceasing in the year 1328, left his queen, Jane, pregnant, who was afterwards delivered of a daughter named Blanch; and immediately thereupon King Edward set up his title to the succession: thus he acknowledged that the salique law excluded the females; but he maintained, that the males descending from those females were not excluded by that law, because the reason whereon it was founded did not reach them. The peers of France however, decided against him, and acknowledged Philip de Valois, cousin to the deceased prince, as the next heir male, and seated him on the throne. This was in 1328; and King Edward being at that time in no condition to vindicate his rights by force, seemed to acquiesce; and being afterwards summoned to do homage for the countries he held in France, he made no difficulty, as we before observed, of complying; and even performed it in person with great magnificence.\*

But afterwards, being better informed as to the validity of his pretensions, and finding that several foreign princes were ready to abet his claim, he resolved to do himself justice by force of arms, in case he could obtain it no other way. With this view, he entered into a treaty with the Emperor Lewis of Bavaria, the earl of Hainault, the duke of Brabant, and other princes; and having pro-

\* Mezcray, *Abregé de l'Histoire de France*, vol. iii. p. 3—12. P. Daniel *Histoire de France*, tom. iv. p. 62—72. Continuat. Adam Murimuth, *Holingshed's Chronicle*.

ceeded thus far, the king next wrote letters to the pope and cardinals, setting forth the injury that was done him, and his resolution to do himself right. At length, these previous endeavours having served no other purpose than that of giving the French king time to strengthen himself, Edward, by the duke of Brabant, made his claim to the French crown, and spent the next winter in disposing all things for the obtaining it by force, issuing his orders for raising a very numerous army, and for drawing together a great fleet; his allies in like manner sending their defiances to the French king, and making great preparations for fulfilling their promises to the king of England, which nevertheless they did but slenderly.\* And thus was this great war begun, in speaking of which; we shall concern ourselves no farther than with the naval expeditions on both sides.

The principal confederate, or at least the confederate of principal use to our monarch, was James Arteville, a brewer of Ghent; for this man so well seconded the king's endeavours, that he drew to him the hearts of the Flemings, whom King Edward had already made sensible of the importance of the English friendship, by detaining from them his wool.† However, they durst not shew their inclinations till such time as the king sent the earl of Derby with a considerable force, who made themselves masters of the Isle of Cadsand; upon which most of the great cities in Flanders declared against the French, and invited King Edward thither.‡ The French, however, struck the first blow at sea: for having, under colour of

\* T. Otterbourne, Chron. p. 118—123. Robert de Avesbury, p. 27—44. H. Knyghton, p. 2569. Fabian's Chronicle, p. 214, 215.

† Froisart, Chron. cap. xxix. fol. 18. Mezeray, Abregé de l'Histoire de France, tom. iii. p. 14. P. Daniel, Histoire de France, tom. iv. p. 90. Chroniques de Flandres, par J. Meir. Inventaire gen. de l'Hist. de France, par J. de Serres.

‡ Froisart, cap. xxx. T. Walsingham. Hist. Angl. p. 136. H. Knyghton, p. 2570. Paul Æmyle, p. 512, 513.



sending relief to the Christians in the Holy Land, assembled a squadron of large ships, they sent them over to the English coast, where they took and burnt Southampton; and yet in their retreat they lost three hundred men, and the son of the king of Sicily who commanded them: \* so that upon the whole, this, though an apparent hostility, could scarcely be styled an advantage.

A.D.  
1338.

In 1338, King Edward by the middle of July drew his numerous army down to the coast of Suffolk, and at Orwell embarked them on board a fleet of five hundred sail, with which he passed over to Antwerp. On his arrival, he was received with great joy by the allies, particularly the Emperor Lewis; but the subsidies he paid them were excessive; nor could he immediately make use of their assistance, the French king declining a battle. † In the mean time, by the advice of the Flemings, he assumed the arms and title of king of France; but while the king spent his time in marches and countermarches, in which, however, he gained some advantages over the enemy, the French, and their allies the Scots, did a great deal of mischief on the English coasts with their fleet. ‡ The town of Hastings they ruined, alarmed all the western coast, burnt Plymouth, and insulted Bristol; all which was owing to the king's employing the greatest part of his naval force abroad, and the remainder in the north, to awe the Scots: yet, in two instances, the English valour

A.D.  
1339.

\* T. Walsinghami Ypodigma Neustriæ, p. 512. Fabian's Chronicle, p. 206. Dupleix, Histoire de France, tom. ii. p. 451. Le Gendre, Histoire de France, tom. iii. p. 449. The king, in his letters to the pope, takes notice of the ships being those intended for the Holy Land, and which the reader may meet with in Walter of Hemingford, T. Walsingham, and others.

† T. Otterbourne, p. 129. Monach. Malmesburiens, vit. Edward III. p. 248. W. Hemingford, vol. ii. p. 282. Froisart, cap. xxxii.

‡ Robert de Avesbury, Hist. Edward III. p. 41. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 356. Gio. Villani, lib. xi. cap. cviii. Paul Æmyle, p. 516. Chronique Abregé du Tillet, p. 104.

and naval force appeared with great lustre. A squadron of thirteen sail of French ships attacked five English, who defended themselves so valiantly, that, though they lost the *Edward* and the *Christopher*, two of the largest, yet the other three escaped, notwithstanding the superiority of the enemy.\* The mariners of the cinque ports also, taking advantage of a thick fog, manned out all their small craft, and ran over to Boulogne, where they did notable service; for they not only burnt the lower town, but destroyed four large ships, nineteen galleys, and twenty lesser vessels, which lay in the harbour, and consumed the dock and arsenal, filled with naval stores. †

In 1340, King Edward returned to England, in the month of February, in order to hold a parliament to provide for the expenses of the war, wherein he succeeded to the utmost extent of his expectations; and, in return for the readiness expressed by his subjects to assist him, he made many good laws, and granted great privileges to merchants. ‡ After this, with a strong fleet, he passed over into Flanders, and gave the French a terrible defeat at sea. As this is one of the most remarkable events in this period of our history, and as there are various discordances in the relations thereof published by modern authors; I think it may not be amiss to give the reader that distinct and accurate account which is preserved in Robert of Avesbury, who lived and wrote in those days; and who besides, fortifies what he says, by annexing the account published by royal authority, within four days after this battle; which detail I am the more inclined to copy, because I find in it several circumstances, particularly respecting the king's conduct, which are not to be met with elsewhere.

\* H. Knyghton, p. 2573. Fabian's Chronicle, p. 206. Stow's Chronicle, p. 235. Froisart, cap. xxxvii. fol. 21—23.

† Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 357.

‡ Walter Hemingford, vol. ii. p. 313, 319. T. Walsingham, p. 147. Cotton's Abridgment of the Records, p. 21. H. Knyghton, p. 2576.

A.D.  
1340:

“ It happened,” says my author, “ that, on the Saturday fortnight before the feast of St. John the Baptist, the king was at Orewell, where there were forty ships, or thereabouts, preparing for his passage into Flanders, where he was going to his wife and children, whom he had left in the city of Ghent, as well as to confer with his allies about the measures necessary to be taken for carrying on the war, intending to sail in two days time; but the archbishop of Canterbury sent to give him intelligence, that Philip de Valois, his competitor for the crown of France, having had notice of his intended passage, with much diligence, and as much privacy as the nature of the thing would admit, had assembled a great fleet, which lay in the port of Sluys, in order to intercept him: wherefore he advised his majesty to provide himself with a better squadron, lest he and those with him should perish.

“ The king yielding no belief to his advice, answered, that he was resolved to sail at all events. The archbishop upon this, quitted his seat in council, obtaining the king’s leave to retire and delivered up to him the great seal. His majesty sent, therefore, for Sir Robert de Morley, his admiral, and one Crabbe, a skilful seaman, and gave them orders to inquire into the truth of this matter, who quickly returned, and brought him the same news he had heard from the archbishop: upon which the king said, ye have agreed with that prelate to tell me this tale, in order to stop my voyage; but, added he angrily, I will go without you; and you who are afraid, where there is no ground of fear, may stay here at home. The admiral and the seamen replied, that they would stake their heads, that if the king persisted in this resolution, he and all who went with him would certainly be destroyed; however, they were ready to attend him even to certain death. The king having heard them, sent for the



“ archbishop of Canterbury back, and with abundance  
 “ of kind speeches, prevailed upon him to receive the  
 “ great seal again into his care; after which the king  
 “ issued his orders to all the ports both in the north and  
 “ south, and to the Londoners likewise, to send him aid;  
 “ so that in the space of ten days, he had a navy as large  
 “ as he desired, and such unexpected reinforcements of  
 “ archers and men at arms, that he was forced to send  
 “ many of them home; and with this equipage he arrived  
 “ before the haven of Sluys on the feast of St. John the  
 “ Baptist.

“ The English perceiving, on their approach, that the  
 “ French ships were linked together with chains, and  
 “ that it was impossible for them to break their line of  
 “ battle, retired a little, and stood back to sea. The  
 “ French, deceived by this feint, broke their order, and  
 “ pursued the English, who they thought fled before  
 “ them: but these, having gained the sun and wind,  
 “ tacked, and fell upon them with such fury, that they  
 “ quickly broke, and totally defeated them; so that  
 “ upwards of thirty thousand French were slain upon  
 “ the spot, of whom numbers through fear, jumped of  
 “ their own accord into the sea, and were miserably  
 “ drowned. Two hundred great ships were taken, in  
 “ one of which only, there were four hundred dead  
 “ bodies. The day after this victory was gained, it was  
 “ published in London by the voice of the people, which  
 “ is said to be the voice of God: but though the rumour  
 “ thereof, through the distance of places, was uncertain,  
 “ yet, on the Wednesday following, the king’s eldest son  
 “ had perfect intelligence thereof at Waltham, as appears  
 “ by the following authentic account;” that is, the nar-  
 rative by authority published, as before mentioned, by  
 Prince Edward.\*

\* Robert de Avesbury, p. 34, 35, 36. Fabian, p. 210, 211.

We have also many remarkable particulars in relation to this battle, in other writers. The lord Cobham was first sent by the king to view the French fleet, which he found drawn up in line of battle; and, having given the king an account of the vast number and great force of their ships, that brave prince answered, "Well, by the assistance of God and St. George I will now revenge all the wrongs I have received." He ordered the battle himself, directing his ships to be drawn up in two lines; the first consisting of vessels of the greatest force, so ranged, that between two ships filled with archers, there was one wherein were men at arms, the ships in the wings being also manned with archers; the second line he used as a reserve, and drew from thence supplies as they became necessary. The battle lasted from eight in the morning till seven at night; and even after this, there was a second dispute; for thirty French ships endeavouring to escape in the dark, the English attacked them under the command of the earl of Huntingdon, and took the *James of Diep*, and sunk several others. The king behaved with equal courage and conduct throughout the whole fight, giving his orders in person, and moving, as occasion required, from place to place.

The French fleet, some authors say, had three, others, four divisions, one of which consisted of the Genoese ships. They were extremely well provided with arms and ammunition, and abundance of machines for throwing stones, with which they did a great deal of mischief; but they were less dextrous in managing their ships than the English, and this seems to have been one great cause of their defeat. The victory, however, cost the English a great deal of blood; for a large ship and a galley, belonging to Hull, were sunk, with all on board, by a volley of stones; and in a great ship, which belonged to the king's wardrobe, there were but two men and a woman that escaped. In all, the English lost about four thou-

sand men, and amongst them the following knights: Sir Thomas Monthermer, Sir Thomas Latimer, Sir John Boteler, and Sir Thomas Poinings.\*

The account the French writers give us of this battle, contains likewise some remarkable passages. They tell us, that there was a great dissention among their chief commanders. † The French had two admirals, Sir Hugh Quieret and Sir Peter Bahuchet; the former would have come out and fought, but the latter was for remaining within, and defending the haven; and, persisting in this opinion, he detained the ships so long in the port, that at last they could not get out. As for the Genoese, they were under an admiral of their own, whose name was Barbarini, who, with his squadron, stood out to sea as soon as the English approached, and behaved very bravely, carrying off some part of his squadron; which was all that escaped. Sir Hugh Quieret was killed in the engagement, and Sir Peter de Bahuchet was hanged at the yard-arm for his ill conduct. ‡ To take, as much as may be, from the honour of the English, these writers report, that the victory was chiefly owing to the Flemings, who joined the English fleet a little before the battle began; and they likewise magnify the loss which the English received, computing it at ten thousand men, adding also, that King Edward was wounded in the thigh. § On the whole, it appears to have been a very hard-fought battle; and the victory seems entirely due to the skill and courage of the English sailors, who were more adroit in working their ships, as the men at arms were more ready in boarding than the French, and the archers also did excellent service. King Edward kept

\* Walter Hemingsford, vol. ii. p. 319—321. Froissart, chap. l. fol. 50. T. Walsingham, p. 148. H. Knyghton, p. 2578. Du Chesne, lib. xv. p. 651. Grafton, p. 242, 243.

† Mezeray, vol. iii. p. 16. P. Daniel, Histoire de la milice Franc. tom. ii. p. 468. Froissart, chap. li. lii.

‡ Le Gendre, tom. iii. p. 455. J. de Serres.

§ Histoire de France, vol. i. p. 491.



the sea three days to put his victory out of dispute, and then, landing his forces, marched to Ghent, in order to join his confederates. \*

A.D.  
1340.

The French king acted now on the defensive, putting garrisons into all his strong places, that whatever the English and their allies won might cost them dear. Hereupon King Edward, with a very numerous army, invested Tournay; from which siege he sent King Philip a challenge, offering to decide their quarrel either by a single combat between themselves, or of a hundred against a like number; which King Philip refused for two reasons; because the letters were addressed to Philip de Valois, and therefore seemed not to concern him; as also, because King Edward staked nothing of his own, and yet required Philip to hazard his all. Both these letters are preserved in one of our old historians. † At last, after the siege had continued three months, King Edward, perceiving that his foreign auxiliaries daily dropped away, while the French king's army of observation became gradually stronger and stronger; he was content to make a truce for some months; (which was afterwards renewed,) and then returned to England, ‡ having got a great deal of honour by his naval victory, and no less experience by his disappointment before Tournay; which convinced him, that, in all foreign confederacies, an English monarch is no farther considered than for the sake of his treasure, with which he is sure to part, though without any certainty of meeting with a proper return.

But if these foreign expeditions excessively harassed the nation; and cost immense sums of money, yet it must be

\* Chron. Godstovian, p. 112. Cont. Nic. Trivet. & Adam Murimuth, Annal, vol. ii. p. 96. T. Otterbourne, p. 129.

† Robert de Avesbury, p. 60, 61.

‡ Contin. Nic. Trivet. & Adam Murimuth, Annal. vol. ii. p. 96. Walter Hemingford, vol. ii. p. 324. Froissart, chap. lxiii. fol. 35. H. Knyghton, p. 2578. T. Walsingham, p. 159. Gaguin. Hist. Franc. lib. viii. p. 138, 139.

owned, that King Edward had always an eye to his subjects' welfare, and was very attentive to whatever might promote their commerce. He had, from the beginning of his reign, made several good laws for the regulation of trade, and preserving to the nation the benefit of their wool; but now his long residence in Flanders having given him an opportunity of observing the great profits made by the Flemish manufacturers, who then wrought up almost all that commodity; he wisely contrived to draw over great numbers of them hither, by insisting on the difficulties they laboured under at home, where their country was the seat of war, and the great advantages they might reap by transporting themselves into England, where he was ready to afford them all the encouragement they could desire; and from his endeavours, in this respect, sprung, though not wholly, yet in a large degree, that great, that lucrative manufacture, which has been since productive of such mighty advantages to the English nation.\* Yet, in other respects, the king discovered severity enough in his temper, by displacing and imprisoning most of his great officers, and obstinately persisting in levying vast sums to be lavished away in useless confederacies, and a fruitless prosecution of his claim to the French crown. But it is time to return from these reflections, however natural, to the business of this treatise.

In the year 1342 the war was renewed, on account of the contested succession to the duchy of Brittany, King Edward supporting the cause of John de Montford, who was owned by the nobility against Charles de Blois, declared duke by the French king, who was his uncle. On this occasion, a considerable body of English troops was sent over into that duchy under the command of Sir Walter de Manny, who performed many gallant exploits both by land and sea, though to no great purpose, the French king

A.D.  
1342.

\* Stow. Holingshed, Speed, Brady.



having it always in his power to pour in as many French troops as he pleased; so that the party of Charles de Blois prevailed, though against right, and the inclination of those who were to be his subjects.\* King Edward, on advice thereof, sent over a new succour under the command of the earls of Northampton and Devonshire.

The French king, having notice of the intended supply, sent Lewis of Spain, who commanded his fleet, which was made up of ships hired from different nations, directing that it should lie near the island of Guernsey, in order to intercept the English squadron in its passage. This fleet consisted of thirty-two sail, of which nine were very large ships, and three stout gallies, and had in them three thousand Genoese, and a thousand men at arms, commanded under the admiral by Sir Carolo Grimaldi and Antonio Doria. The English fleet consisted of ordinary transports, about forty-five sail in all, having on board five hundred men at arms, and a thousand archers, under the command of the earls of Northampton and Devonshire. The French squadron attacked them unexpectedly at sea, about four in the afternoon, and the fight continued till night, when they were separated by a storm. The French and Genoese kept the sea, their vessels being large, with four or five prizes: but the rest of the English fleet, keeping close to the shore, found means to land the forces which they had on board, who shortly after took the city of Vannes, and performed other notable services:† Towards winter the king passed over with a great army into Brittany, and besieged three principal places at once, yet with-

\* Mezeray, vol. iii. p. 17. *Histoire de France, écrite par ordre de M. de Harley, P. president du parlement de Paris, vol. i. p. 494. Paris edit. 1720. Froissart, cap. lxxx, lxxxi. H. Knyghton, p. 2581. T. Walsinghami Ypodigma Neustriae, p. 515.*

† Holingshed's Chronicle, vol. ii. p. 363. We find the continuation of Trivet's Annals cited there in support of these facts; yet, we meet with nothing relating to this matter in the continuation published by the reverend Mr. Anthony Hall, printed at Oxford, 1724.



out success; for, the duke of Normandy, the French king's eldest son, coming with a great army to their relief, a negotiation followed, which ended in a cessation of hostilities for three years; which, however, was but indifferently kept, notwithstanding the pope interposed, as far as he was able, in order to have settled an effectual peace. \*

In 1345, the war being already broken out with France, the king determined to sail over to Flanders, in order to accomplish his great design of fixing that country firmly to his interest, either by obliging the earl to swear fealty to him as a sovereign, or else to deprive him of his dominions. While, therefore, he lay in the harbour of Sluys, a council was held of his principal friends in Flanders, on board his great ship the Catharine. At this council assisted James d'Arteville the brewer, who, by the strength of his natural eloquence, ruled all the Netherlands, and ruined himself by going into the king's project. He, when his countrymen, the Flemings, demanded a month's time to consider of the propositions that had been made to them, undertook that all things should go to the king's wish; yet, finding a great faction raised against him by one Gerard Dennis, a weaver, he accepted of a guard of five hundred Welchmen from the king. This, however, proved of little signification; for, in a sudden tumult of the people, a cobbler, snatching up an axe, beat out his brains.

The king was still at Sluys with his fleet when this unfortunate accident happened; at which, though he was much moved, yet he was forced to dissemble his resentment, and to accept of the excuses made him by the cities of Flanders. † Attributing, however, all to the arts of the French, he resolved once again to attempt the conquest of

A. D.  
1345.

\* Walter Hemingford, vol. ii. p. 359. Contin. Nic. Trivet. Annal. vol. ii. p. 97. Froissart. Thom. Walsingham, Chronic. Godstovian.

† Froissart, chap. cxv. Gio. Villani, p. 855. Duplcix, tom. ii. p. 473. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 368. Stowe, Speed.

that kingdom, and to employ therein the utmost force of his own. Our historians give us a very copious account of this war; there is, consequently, the less need that I should insist upon it here; I will, therefore, content myself with giving a succinct detail of the English forces employed in this expedition, and a more particular recital of what was remarkable in the siege of Calais, which, as it was in part formed by a naval force, falls more immediately under the design of this treatise.

A.D.  
1346.

In the midst of the summer of the year 1346, the king drew his navy, consisting of one thousand ships, to Portsmouth, and shortly after arrived at Southampton with his army, composed of two thousand five hundred horse, and thirty thousand foot. These he quickly embarked, the fleet sailing thither for that purpose, and on the fourth of June he put to sea, intending to have landed in Guyenne; but, being driven back by a storm on the coast of Cornwall, and, the French writers say, put back thither a second time, he at last determined to make a descent on Normandy, where, at La Hogue, he safely disembarked his forces, and began very successfully to employ them in reducing the strongest cities in the neighbourhood; after which, he spread fire and sword on every side, even to the very gates of Paris. The French king, provoked at so dismal a sight, as well as with the news that the earl of Huntingdon, with the English fleet, destroyed all the coast almost without resistance; resolved, contrary to his usual policy, to hazard a battle, which he accordingly did on the 25th of August, and received that remarkable defeat, which will immortalize the little town of Cressy. Of this victory I chuse to say nothing, since my subject will not allow me to say of it what I could wish.\* It was so entire, that for the present it left the king without enemies; and so much

\* Walter Hemingford, vol. ii. p. 381. Rob. de Avesbury, p. 123. Contin. Nic. Trivet. & Adam Murimuth, Annal. vol. ii. p. 99. Froissart, chap. cxxx. T. Walsingham, p. 166.



the effects of true courage, that, though Philip had quickly after an army of one hundred and fifty thousand men on foot, yet they had no stomach to fight again.

After this victory, the king, on the last day of August, appeared before Calais, and formed a siege that lasted eleven months; and which, if we had leisure to dilate on all the circumstances attending it, would appear little inferior to the fabulous siege of Troy, or the reduction of Tyre by Alexander the Great. The king knew that he was to reduce a place strong by nature and art, well supplied with ammunition and provisions, furnished with a numerous garrison, full of expectation of relief from King Philip, who was not far from thence with his mighty army before mentioned. These difficulties, instead of discouraging Edward, inflamed him with a desire of overcoming them. He invested the place regularly by land; fortified his lines strongly; and within them erected, as Froissart, a contemporary writer, tells us, a kind of town for the conveniency of his soldiers; wherein were not only magazines of all sorts for the service of the war, but vast warehouses also of wool and cloth for supplying the sinews of war by a constant trade at two settled markets; his troops all the while being exactly paid, and doing their duty cheerfully.

As for the fleet which blocked up the place at sea, it consisted of seven hundred and thirty-eight sail, on board of which were fourteen thousand, nine hundred and fifty-six mariners. Of these ships, seven hundred sail belonged to his own subjects, and thirty-eight to foreigners; so that there seems to be no reason for putting us on a par with our neighbours for hiring ships; since it is as evident, that we were then able to fit out great fleets from our own ports, as that our enemies were able to do nothing but by the assistance of the Genoese, and other foreigners. The French king made some shew of relieving this place, by approaching within sight of Calais at the head of a mighty

A.D.  
1347.



army, the loss of which he was determined, however, not to venture. The garrison of Calais, and the citizens, seeing themselves thus deceived, had no other remedy left than to submit to the mercy of a provoked conqueror, which, in the most abject manner, they sought, and were, at the queen's entreaty spared. Thus ended this glorious siege, wherein the English monarch triumphed over his enemy by land and sea, carrying his own and the nation's fame to the utmost height, and forcing even his enemies to acknowledge, that nothing could equal the courage and conduct of himself, and his renowned son, the Black Prince, but the courtesy and generosity of their behaviour. \*.

A.D.  
1349.

The king, having carried his point in taking Calais, was content, at the earnest entreaty of the pope, to make a truce for a year; and the first use the French made of this, was, to attempt recovering by fraud what they knew it was in vain to attempt by force. The king had bestowed the government of Calais on Aymeri de Pavia, whom soon after some French noblemen persuaded to accept of 20,000 crowns, and to deliver up this important fortress. † King Edward, being informed of the design, passed with great secrecy from Dover to Calais, with 300 men at arms, and 600 archers; and, being received by night into the forts, he was ready to repulse the French troops under the command of the count de Charnay, who came, with 1200 men, to surprise the place. The combat was long and doubtful; but, at last, it ended in the total defeat of the French, who, instead of taking the fortress, were all either killed, or made prisoners. The king and Prince Edward were

\* Rob. de Avesbury, p. 136—141. Histoire de France, vol. i. p. 503. Mezeray, p. 29. Froissart, vol. i. c. 133. T. Otterbourne, p. 132. H. Knyghton, p. 2595.

† Duplex, tom. ii. p. 488. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 31. P. Daniel, tom. iv. p. 175.

both in this action, and both in some danger, especially the king, who at length took Sir Eustace de Ribeaumont, the knight with whom he fought, prisoner, and rewarded him for his valour with a rich bracelet of pearl: \* and thus, as Robert de Avesbury remarks, the deceit of the deceivers proved fatal to themselves. †

In the month of November 1349, a squadron of Spanish ships passed suddenly up the Garonne; and finding many English vessels at Bourdeaux laden with wine, they cruelly murdered all the English seamen, and carried away the ships, though in time of full peace. King Edward having intelligence that a squadron of Spanish ships, richly laden, were on the point of returning from Flanders; he drew together at Sandwich a squadron of fifty sail, on board which he embarked in person about midsummer, having with him the prince of Wales, the earls of Lancaster, Northampton, Warwick, Salisbury, Huntingdon, Arundel, and Gloucester, with many other persons of distinction. They met with the Spanish fleet on the coast near Winchelsea, which consisted of forty-four very large ships, styled caracks: they were out of comparison bigger and stronger than the English vessels; and yet the latter attacked them with great boldness. The Spaniards defended themselves resolutely, and chose at last death rather than captivity, refusing quarter, though it was offered them. Twenty-four of these great ships, laden with cloth, and other valuable goods, were taken, and brought into the English harbours, and the rest escaped by a speedy flight. To perpetuate the memory of this victory, the king caused himself to be represented on a gold coin, standing in the midst of a ship with a sword drawn, thinking it an honour

A.D.  
1350.

\* Contin. Nic. Trivet. & Adam Murimuth, *Annal.* vol ii. p. 101. Froissart, Mezeray, P. Daniel.

† *Hist. Edward III.* p. 181—183.

to have his name transmitted to posterity as **THE AVENGER OF MERCHANTS.**\*

It would be beside or rather beyond our purpose to record all the glorious expeditions of this reign, which would require a volume to do them right. In order to connect such passages as fall properly under our pen, we shall observe, that, on the death of Philip the French king, his son John succeeded in the throne, who in the beginning of his reign bestowed the duchy of Aquitain upon the dauphin; which so provoked King Edward, that he gave it, with the like title, to his son the prince, and sent him with a small army of veteran troops to maintain his title. With these forces, on September 19, 1356, he won the famous battle of Poitiers, in which he took the king of France and his youngest son Philip prisoners, and with them the flower of the French nobility, with whom, towards the close of the year, he landed in triumph at Plymouth; from whence he proceeded to London, where he was received with the utmost respect by the citizens, having at their head Henry Picard, then lord mayor, who afterwards entertained the kings of England, France, Scotland, and Cyprus, at dinner. †

A.D.  
1356.

The taking of their king brought the French affairs into great disorder, which was increased through their own dissensions, and occasioned such a terrible fluctuation in their councils, that King Edward, believing himself ill dealt with in the negotiations they had set on foot for the deliverance of the king, resolved to

\* Contin. Nic. Trivet. & Adam Murimuth, annal. vol. ii. p. 102. Rob. de Avesbury, p. 184, 185. T. Walsingham, p. 169. H. Knyghton, p. 2601. Fabian, p. 228. Villani, lib. i. cap. 99.

† Continuat. Nic. Trivet. & Adam Murimuth, Annal. vol. ii. p. 107. Robert de Avesbury, p. 210.—252. Anonym. Hist. Edward III. c. lvi. T. Walsingham, p. 172. Froissart, c. clxiv. Paul Æmyle, p. 540. Dupleix, tom. ii. p. 504.



quicken them by invading France with a more potent army than hitherto he had employed against them; and, accordingly, embarked at Sandwich, October 24, 1359, on board a fleet of 1100 sail, and the next day landed his army on Calais sands, consisting of near an hundred thousand men. The dauphin, with a great army, kept about Paris, but could not be drawn to a battle; which, though it lost him some reputation, yet it certainly preserved France; for King Edward perceiving that though he was able to take their greatest cities, and to plunder their richest provinces, yet it was by no means in his power to preserve his conquests; resolved to put an end to so destructive a dispute, which, though it raised his glory, served only to ruin two great nations; and, from this generous view, concluded the peace of Bretigny, so called from its being signed at that place, May 8, 1360.

By this treaty King Edward, for himself and successors, renounced his title to the kingdom of France, the duchy of Normandy, and many other countries; the French, on the other side, giving up to him all Aquitain, with many countries depending thereupon, as also the town and lordship of Calais, with a considerable territory thereto adjoining.\* By this treaty, King John obtained his liberty, and was conveyed in an English fleet to Calais in the month of July following. King Edward, who was in England at the time the French king went away, passed also over to Calais in the month of October, where, upon the twenty-fourth, the treaty was solemnly ratified after the performance of divine service; and the kings mutually embracing, put an end to all their differences: John proceeding from thence to Paris,

A.D.  
1360.

\* Rymer's *Foedera*, tom. vi. p. 229. Contin. Nic. Trivet & Adam Murimuth, *Annal.* p. 113. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 59. P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 81.

and King Edward returning on board his fleet to England.\*

A.D.  
1364.

This peace lasted as long as the French king lived, who, in 1364, came over into England again, under pretence of treating with King Edward, but in reality out of respect to an English lady; and died here soon after his arrival. His son, the dauphin, succeeded him, by the name of Charles V. surnamed The Wise; and from the instant he mounted the throne, projected the breach of the late treaty, and the depriving King Edward of the advantages stipulated thereby, which has been always a great point in French wisdom.† The war, however, did not break out till the year 1369. The pretence then made use of by the French was, that the prince of Wales had raised some illegal taxes in his French dominions, of which the nobility of those provinces were excited to complain to the French king, and to demand redress as from their sovereign lord.

A.D.  
1369.

The French historians themselves admit, that this was mere pretence, and that King Charles had secretly disposed all things for expelling the English out of France; and when his mines were ready, directed the Count de Armagnac, and others of prince Edward's barons, to spring them, by presenting their petition: upon which he summoned the prince of Wales to answer before his court of peers at Paris. This was a direct breach of the treaty of Bretigny, whereby the provinces in question were absolutely yielded to the king of England. The prince, on receiving this summons, declared that he would come to Paris with his helmet on his head, and sixty thousand men to witness his

\* Froissart. chap. ccxiii. T. Walsinghami Ypodigma Neustriæ, p. 524. Fabian. p. 243.

† Paul Æmyle, p. 548, 549. Gaguin. Hist. p. 155, 156. Dupleix, tom. ii. p. 536.

appearance. The French king, who expected such a return, immediately declared that the territories of the king of England in France were forfeited for his contempt; of which sentence he gave King Edward notice, by so contemptible a messenger as a scullion.\* To such an act as this, he was prompted by the confidence he had in a scheme of his own, for invading and destroying England. In order to this, he had been for some years purchasing ships all over Europe; so that at length he drew together a prodigious fleet, on board of which he was preparing to embark a numerous army; when he had advice that the duke of Lancaster and the earl of Warwick, with a considerable body of English forces, were landed in the neighbourhood of Calais, and in full march towards him. This obliged him to abandon his design, and to make use of his forces to defend his own country, which they performed indifferently, though they were lucky in another respect; for the Count de St. Pol disappointed a design the duke of Lancaster had formed, of burning the whole French fleet in the port of Harfleur. †

King Edward in the mean time conceiving himself, by this series of unprovoked hostilities, entirely freed from his stipulations in the treaty concluded with King John, resumed the title of king of France; and having received great supplies of money from his parliament, made mighty preparations for invading France; and, for the present, several squadrons were sent to sea to cruize upon the enemy. One of these, on the coast of Flanders, took twenty-five sail of ships laden with salt. ‡ These

A.D.  
1371.

\* Froissart, chap. cexlii. Du Cheyne, p. 699. Mezeray, tom. ii. p. 78, 79, 80.

† Contin. Nic. Trivet. & Adam Murimuth, Annal. vol. ii. p. 123. Anonym. vit. Edward III. cap. lix. Froissart, chap. cclxix. T. Walsingham, p. 183. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 82, 83. P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 171.

‡ Anonym. Histor. Edward III. cap. lx. Froissart, chap. cexcii. fol. 177. T. Otterbourne, p. 147. Jacob. Meyer, Annal. Flandr. lib. xiii. p. 190.



ships were commanded by one John Peterson; and having brought this cargo from Rochelle, thought to shew their bravery by attacking the earl of Hereford with his small squadron, and so drew upon themselves this misfortune. The same year, the French formed the siege of Rochelle, the news of which gave King Edward great disquiet: he therefore immediately ordered the earl of Pembroke, a young nobleman of great courage, to sail with a squadron of forty ships, and such forces as could be drawn together on a sudden to its relief.\* Henry, king of Castile, having notice of this embarkation, and fearing if the English succeeded, that they would again deprive him of his kingdom, which was claimed by the duke of Lancaster in right of his wife; fitted out a stout fleet consisting of forty sail of great ships, and thirteen tight frigates, which, well-manned, under the command of four experienced sea-officers, he sent to cruize before the entrance of the port of Rochelle, in order to intercept the English fleet.†

The earl of Pembroke arriving on midsummer-eve, before Rochelle, engaged this fleet, but with indifferent success; the Spaniards having ships of war, and he only transports: however, being parted in the night, he lost no more than two store-ships. The next day, he renewed the fight, wherein he was totally defeated; all his ships being taken or sunk, and himself sent prisoner into Spain. On board one of his ships were twenty thousand marks in ready money, which were to have been employed in raising forces; but, by this accident, went to the bottom of the sea. French writers pretend, that the besieged were not displeased with this misfortune which befel the English; and, as a

\* Contin. Nic. Trivet. & Adam. Murimuth, Annal. vol. ii. p. 127, 128. T. Walsingham, p. 186. Anonym. Histor. Edward III. cap. lx. p. 439.

† Paul Æmyle, p. 550, 551. Dupleix, tom. ii. p. 566. Le Gendre, tom. iii. p. 547.

proof of this alledge, that they gave them no assistance : the contrary of which appears from our authors, who give us a list of the Rochellers who perished in this fight.\*

This loss was attended with that of Rochelle, and the greatest part of Poictou; which so raised the spirits of the French, that they besieged the strong city of Touars, which they brought to a capitulation on these terms; that if, by the feast of St. Michael, they were not relieved by King Edward, or one of his sons, then the place, with all its dependencies, should be rendered into the hands of the French. The principal person employed by the French in this expedition, was one Sir John Evans, a native of Wales, who had forsaken his country through some discontent. This man was an excellent officer, both by land and sea, and was now recalled from the island of Guernsey, upon which he had made a descent, and had almost reduced the place, to perform the like service in Poictou.† I mention this to shew, that the French began now to have some power at sea, which is the natural consequence of their maintaining a lingering war with us.

King Edward had all this time been preparing a vast number of transports, and a stout fleet, in order to transport his army to Calais; but now, having intelligence of the terms on which the city of Touars had capitulated, he resolved to employ his forces and his fleet for its relief. With this view he embarked a considerable body of troops on board a fleet of 400 sail; and, to shew the earnest desire he had of saving so important a place, he went in person with the prince

A.D.  
1372.

\* T. Walsinghani Ypodigma Neustriæ, p. 529. *Wilhelmi Wyrcester Annales*, p. 437. T. Otterbourne, p. 147. *Froissart*, chap. cccxviii. *Gaguin. Hist.* p. 158. *Mezeray*, tom. iii. p. 87, 88, P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 189.

† *Froissart*, chap. 305. *Holingshed*, vol ii. p. 407.

of Wales, the duke of Lancaster, the earl of Cambridge, all three his sons, and many of his nobility; but all his endeavours were to no purpose; for, embarking the beginning of August, the fleet was so tossed by contrary winds, that, after continuing at sea about nine weeks, the king found himself obliged to return to England, where, as soon as he landed, he dismissed his army; by which untoward accident, Touars was lost.\* From this instance, it is apparent, that, notwithstanding the utmost care and diligence in fitting out fleets, and in spite of all the courage and conduct of the most accomplished commanders, expeditions of this kind may easily fail; and, in such cases, the consequence generally is the same which fell out here: the people murmured at the vast expense, and began to suggest, that, now the king grew old, fortune had deserted him.

A.D.  
1373.

The king, notwithstanding these repeated disappointments, still kept up his spirits, and resolved to make the utmost efforts for restoring his affairs in France: but being grown far in years, and withal much worn with fatigue, he contented himself with sending the duke of Lancaster, with a great fleet, and a good army on board, to Calais. The French writers, and indeed most of our historians, say, it consisted of 30,000 men; but Froissart, who lived in those times, and knew very well what he wrote, affirms they were but 13,000, *viz.* 3000 men at arms, and 10,000 archers. They might indeed be increased after their arrival, and probably they were so. At the head of these forces, the duke of Lancaster passed through the heart of France

\* Cont. Nic. Trivet. & Adam Murimuth, Annal. vol. ii. p. 128. Anonym. Hist. Edward III. cap. lx. Both these writers, however, say, this expedition was for the relief of Rochelle. Froissart, chap. cccv. Agentre, Hist. de Bretagne, liv. vii. chap. ii. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 89.



to Bourdeaux, in spite of all the opposition the French could give him, who made it their business to harass him all they could in his march, though they were determined not to fight.\* Thus far the expedition was equally successful and glorious; but in the latter end of it the army, by continual fatigue, began to diminish, and the duke of Lancaster was glad to conclude a truce, which was prolonged from time to time so long as the king lived. In these last days of his life, he grew feeble in body and mind, and was (as many of our historians say) governed in a great measure by a mistress and her favourites.

His glorious son the Black Prince, lingered also for several years with a dropsy, and a complication of distempers; so that we need not wonder at the wrong turn the English affairs took in France, if we consider the advantage the French then had in the art and cunning of Charles V. who was certainly one of the ablest princes that ever sat upon the throne. In all probability the sense King Edward had of this great change in his affairs, and his foresight of the miseries that would attend a minority in such troublesome times, might possibly hasten his death, which happened on June 21, 1377, in the fifty-first year of his reign.†

A.D.  
1377.

In the course of this reign we have taken notice of the great jealousy the king expressed for his sovereignty of the sea; but, if we had mentioned every instance thereof, it would have swelled the account beyond all reasonable bounds: some special cases, however, it may not be amiss to touch here. In the peace made by him with King John, wherein Edward renounced

\* Cont. Nic. Trivet. & Adam Murimuth, Annal. vol. ii. p. 129. Froissart, chap. cvi. T. Walsinghami Ypodigma Neustriæ, p. 529. T. Otterbourne, p. 147.

† Contin. Nic. Trivet. & Adam Murimuth, Annal. vol. ii. p. 138. T. Walsingham, p. 192. H. Knyghton, p. 2629. W. Wyrester, Annal. p. 440.

all title to Normandy, he expressly excluded all the islands dependent thereupon, that he might preserve his jurisdiction at sea entire.\* In his commissions to admirals and inferior officers, he frequently styles himself sovereign of the English seas, asserting that he derived this title from his progenitors, and deducing from thence the grounds of his instructions; and of the authority committed to them by these delegations.† His parliaments likewise, in the preambles of their bills, take notice of this point, and that it was a thing notorious to foreign nations, that the king of England, in right of his crown, was sovereign of the seas.‡ He was also, as we have before shewn, very attentive to trade, and remarkably careful of English wool, the staple of which he managed with such address, that he long held the principal cities of Flanders attached to his interest, contrary to the duty they owed to their earl, whom he more than once engaged them to expel.§

Yet for all this, his conduct in the last years of his life was fatal to the naval power of this nation: for by long wars, and frequent embargoes, he mightily injured commerce; while, on the other hand, the French king was all this while assiduous in his endeavours to cultivate a maritime force in his dominions; in which he so far succeeded, that he became this way a formidable enemy to the English, || as will be seen in our account of the next reign. But before I part with this, I must take notice, that not only the state was exceedingly exhausted by the king's French wars, but that prince himself also driven to such necessities, that he thrice pawned his crown; first, in the seventeenth year of his reign, beyond the seas; ¶ again, in the twenty-fourth, to Sir John Wesenham, his

\* Thom. Walsingham, ad xxxiv. Edvardi III.

† Rot. Scotiæ. 10 Ed. III. membran. 16.

‡ Rot. Parl. 46 Ed. III. num. 20. § Mezeray, vol. iii. p. 86.

|| Histoire de la milice Francoise, par P. Daniel, tom. ii. p. 448.

¶ Pat. Pars. 1. An. 17 Ed. III.

merchant; \* and yet again, in the thirtieth of his reign, to the same person, in whose hands it then lay eight years, through the king's inability to redeem it. † Neither is this a slight report, or a story taken from private memoirs, but appears in our records; and ought, therefore, to be a caution to succeeding monarchs, not to lay too great a stress on their foreign expeditions; which, though sometimes honourable in appearance, have been always in effect ruinous to their predecessors.

RICHARD II. from the place where he was born styled Richard of Bourdeaux, the son of the famous Black Prince, succeeded his grandfather in the kingdom with general satisfaction, though he was then but eleven years old. He was crowned with great solemnity; and, being too young to govern himself, the administration naturally devolved upon his uncles, and particularly John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, then styled king of Castile and Leon. ‡ While the great men in England were employed in adjusting their interests, and getting good places, the French king's fleet, consisting of fifty sail of stout ships, under the command of admiral de Vienne, infested our coasts; and a body of troops landed in Sussex, by whom the town of Rye was burnt. This was in the latter end of June, within six days after King Edward's decease; of which the French having notice, they then took courage to attempt greater things. On the 21st of August they landed in the Isle of Wight, pillaged and burnt most of the villages therein, and exacted a thousand pounds of the inhabitants for not burning the rest; and afterwards, passing along the coast, they landed from time to time, and destroyed Portsmouth, Dartmouth, and Plymouth,

A.D.  
1377.

\* Pat. Annal. 24. membran. 21.

† Claus. Annal. 30 Ed. III. Com. de Term. Hil. 38 Ed. III. ex parte rem. regis.

‡ Contin. Nic. Trivet. & Adam Murimuth, Annal. vol. ii. p. 140, 141. T. Walsingham, p. 195—197. H. Knyghton, p. 2639.



to the great dishonour of the lords about the young king, who were so much employed in taking care of themselves, that they had little time to spare, and perhaps as little concern for the affairs of the nation; so that if private persons had not interposed, matters had gone still worse: for though Sir John Arundel drove the French from Southampton with loss, yet they burnt Hastings, and attempted Winchelsea, which was defended by the abbot of Battel. At Lewes they beat the prior, with such troops as he had drawn together; and having killed about a hundred men, not without considerable loss on their side, re-embarked their forces, and returned home.\*

In some measure to wipe off the shame of these misadventures, a considerable fleet was at length sent to sea, under the command of the earl of Buckingham, who had with him many gallant officers, and who intended to have intercepted the Spanish fleet in their voyage to Sluys; with which view he twice put to sea, and was as often forced into port by contrary winds, so that his project came to nothing.† The duke of Lancaster, on a promise to defend the nation against all enemies for one year, got into his hands a subsidy granted by parliament for that purpose; yet he executed his trust so indifferently, that one Mercer, a Scots privateer, with a small squadron, carried away several vessels from under the walls of Scarborough castle; and afterwards adding several French and Spanish ships to his fleet, began to grow very formidable, and greatly disturbed the English commerce.‡

In times of public distraction private virtues are commonly most conspicuous. There was one Alderman John Philpot, of London, who with great wealth and a fair

A.D.  
1378.

\* Froissart, chap. 327. Vita R. Richardi II. a Monach. de Evesham Script. p. 2, 3. T. Otterbourne, p. 148.

† Contin. Nic. Trivet. & Adam Murimuth, Annal. vol. ii. p. 141. T. Walsingham, p. 208, 209.

‡ Stowe, p. 281. Holingshed, vol. ii. 419. Speed.

reputation, had a very high and active spirit, and could hardly digest the affronts daily done to his country by the French admirals and the Scots pirates. This man, at his own expense, fitted out a stout squadron, on board which he embarked a thousand men at arms, and then went in quest of Mercer, whose fleet, superior in force, and flushed with victory, he engaged and totally defeated, taking not only his ships with all the booty on board them, but also fifteen Spanish vessels, richly laden, which a little before had joined Mercer, besides all the prizes he had carried from Scarborough. For this glorious act, Alderman Philpot, according to the strange policy of those times, was called before the council, and questioned for thus manning a squadron without legal authority; but he answered the earl of Stafford so wisely, and justified himself so fully, that the lords were content to dismiss with thanks, a man whose virtues were more illustrious than their titles.\*

But as there could be no dependence on these extraordinary remedies, the parliament provided in some measure for the security of navigation, by the imposition of certain duties. The very learned Sir Robert Cotton says, these impositions were by strength of prerogative only, † the contrary of which appears clearly by the record, which is still extant. But before we speak of these, which in their own nature are the strongest proofs of our sovereignty at sea, it will be necessary to observe what former kings had done in this respect.

In King John's time, as we find it recited upon record in subsequent reigns, the town of Winchelsea was enjoined in the sixteenth year of his reign, to provide ten good and large ships for the king's service at Poictou; ‡ at another

\* Vit. R. Ricardi II. p. 6. T. Walsingham, p. 211. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 419.

† Answers to Reasons for Foreign Wars, p. 46.

‡ Ex. Johan. Eversden. Pat. An. 3 Ed. I. m. 26.

time, twenty; Dunwich and Ipswich being to find five each, and other ports in proportion, all at their own expense. \* Edward I. had from the merchants a twentieth, and afterwards a seventh, of their commodities: † he imposed a custom of a noble upon every sack of wool, ‡ which in his son's time was doubled. In Edward II.'s time we find, that the sea-ports were for twelve years charged to set out ships, provided with ammunition and provision, sometimes for one month, sometimes for four, the number of ships more or less, according as occasion required. § Edward III. heightened the subsidy upon wool to six and forty shillings and four pence a sack, ¶ being seven times the first imposition. As for ships, he enjoined the sea-ports frequently to attend him with all their strength. ¶ In the thirteenth year of his reign, he obliged the cinque ports to set out thirty ships, half at his cost, and half at theirs, the out-ports furnishing fourscore ships, and the traders of London being commanded to furnish ships of war at their own expense. \*\* Complaint being made on account of these hardships, to parliament, †† no other answer could be had, than that the king would not permit things to be otherwise than they were before his time; ††† that is, would not permit his prerogative to be diminished. By these methods he raised his customs in the port of London, to a thousand marks per month. §§ These were certainly hardships, and hardships that would not have been borne under any other pretence.

\* Rot. Claus. An. 26. H. III.

† Rot. Vasconiaë, An. 22. Ed. I. m. 8.

‡ Ex. Historia Johan. Eversden. See Brady's History in that king's reign.

§ Rot. Scot. An. 2 Ed. II. m. 17. Rot. Scot. An. 12 Ed. II. m. 8. Rot. Pat. An. 4 Ed. II. Dors. Claus. An. 17 Ed. II. m. 2.

¶ See Brady's History. Molloy de jure maritimo, p. 289.

¶ Claus. An. 1 Ed. III. Rot. Scot. eod. An.

\*\* Rot. Scot. An. 13 Ed. III. m. 13.

†† Rot. Scot. An. 10 Ed. III. †† Rot. Alman. An. 2 Ed. III. m. 2.

§§ Claus. An. 5 Ed. III.



But now, under the minority of King Richard II. when things could not be carried with so high a hand, and yet the necessity of maintaining a constant squadron at sea for the security of the coasts was apparent; a new order was taken, equally agreeable to justice and reason, for imposing certain duties on all ships sailing in the north seas, that is, from the mouth of the river Thames northwards. These duties were to be levied not only on merchants, but on fishermen, and on those belonging to foreign nations, as well as to English subjects. It consisted in paying sixpence per ton; and such vessels only were excused as were bound from Flanders to London with merchandize, or from London to Calais with wool and hides. Fishermen, particularly such as were employed in the herring fishery, were to pay sixpence per ton every week; other fishermen a like duty every three weeks; ships employed in the coal trade to Newcastle, once in three months; merchantmen sailing to Prussia, Norway, or Sweden, a like duty: and for the collecting these impositions, six armed vessels were to be employed.

As for the authority by which this was done, it will best appear by the title of the record, which runs thus: "This is the ordinance and grant by advice of the merchants of London, and of other merchants to the north, by the assent of all the commons in parliament, the earl of Northumberland, and the mayor of London, for the guard and tuition of the sea coasts under the jurisdiction of the admiral of the north seas, \* &c." This, as I observed before, is the clearest proof that our sovereignty of the sea in those days was admitted by all nations, otherwise this ordinance would not have been submitted to, about which it appears, there was no kind of scruple or apprehension, since so small a force was appointed to collect it.

\* Rot. Parl. An. 2 Ric. II. part ii. art. 39. in schedula.

A.D. 1378. In 1378, the earls of Arundel and Salisbury passed with considerable forces into France, where, being able to perform little, they, in their return, were attacked at sea by a Spanish squadron. Part of the English fleet seems not to have engaged; and my author charges Philip and Peter Courtney, who commanded the ships that fought, with temerity. However it was, they both behaved very gallantly; and Philip escaped, though much wounded. As for Peter, he was taken with a few of his men, who were never heard of afterwards; and as there perished in this fight, abundance of Devonshire and Somersetshire gentlemen, it was looked upon as a very great misfortune.\* It was, however, followed with a greater. The duke of Lancaster, with a very numerous army and a very potent fleet, sailed to the assistance of the duke of Bretagne, about midsummer; and having spent near a month in a fruitless siege of the town of St. Malo, which he missed taking by his own negligence and ill conduct, he returned to England with little reputation to himself, the French fleet in the mean time having spoiled the coasts of Cornwall. †

A.D. 1379. The foes of the French court very naturally applied themselves for assistance to England, and seldom failed to obtain it, though it was not often that either we or they were gainers by it in the end. The king of Navarre, who had shewn himself a bitter enemy to the house of Valois, and who met hitherto with but indifferent success in a great variety of intrigues and enterprizes into which he had entered, at last addressed himself to King Richard, and offered to put the fortress of Cherburgh, in Normandy, into his hands; which was accepted, and with some difficulty obtained in the month of October, 1379. In the

\* Cont. Nic. Trivet. & Adam Murimuth, Annal. vol. ii. p. 143. Vit. R. Ricardi II. p. 6. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 419.

† T. Walsingham, p. 212, 213. Vit. R. Ricardi II. p. 7. Contia. Nic. Trivet. & Annal. vol. ii. p. 144.



latter end of the same year, Sir John Arundel, going with a considerable reinforcement to Bretagne, was shipwrecked, part of his squadron being driven on the coasts of Ireland, some on the Welch shore, and others into Cornwall; so that himself and a thousand men at arms perished. This loss, and the uneasiness following upon it, occasioned the calling of a parliament.

The next year, however; new supplies were sent under the command of the earl of Buckingham, Sir Robert Knollys, and Sir Hugh Calverly, to Calais, and from thence passed through the heart of France into Bretagne, where the duke employed them in the siege of Nantes, a city which refused to acknowledge him; and, taking very little care to supply them with necessaries, they were by degrees reduced to such misery, that the English soldiers were glad to return in small companies through France, not in a hostile way, but begging their bread; which ought to have put an end to all these inconsiderate expeditions, that served only to waste the strength of the nation, and to expose us to foreigners; for, in the mean time, the French gallies burnt Gravesend, and plundered the whole Kentish coast.\*

A.D.  
1380.

In 1383, a new kind of war broke out, which, though inconsiderable in its consequences, ought not to be passed over in silence. There was at this time a schism in the church of Rome; Urban IV. was owned in that city, and Clement VII. was acknowledged for pope at Avignon. The several princes of Europe consulted their own advantage in the choice they made of these pontiffs; and, as the French had owned Clement, the English grew very warm on the behalf of Urban. He, therefore, to serve his own interest, and to heighten their zeal, proclaims a croisade against his opponents, and constitutes Henry

A.D.  
1383.

\* Contin. Nic. Trivet. & Adam Murimuth, *Annal.* vol. ii. p. 147—150. T. Otterbourne, p. 150. W. Wyrcester, *Annal.* p. 441. Mezeray, vol. iii. p. 111, 112.



Nevil, bishop of Norwich, his general in England. This prelate, a man of noble birth, was of a fit character for such an enterprize, having a high spirit, a resolute courage, and a very intriguing genius. He, knowing that the Flemings were then in arms against their earl, and that they were naturally inclined to the English, resolved to make use of his commission to over-run, if possible, that country. Passing over with this view to Calais, he there suddenly assembled fifty thousand foot and two thousand horse, with whom, and a good fleet attending, he suddenly fell into Flanders, where he cut to pieces a body of twelve thousand men, belonging to the earl; took Dunkirk, Gravelines, Mardyke, and other places, and at length besieged Ypres, his fleet proceeding with like good fortune at sea. But the French king marching a great army into Flanders, and the Flemings beginning to fall off, the bishop of Norwich was glad to retire, and, after all his short-lived successes, to return with a handful of men into England.

A. D.  
1384.

The next year, the French fitted out several squadrons to infest the English coast, in which they were but too successful, while our intestine divisions hindered us from taking that due care of our affairs, which our great strength at sea enabled us to have done; yet the inhabitants of Portsmouth, to shew the martial spirit of this nation was not quite extinguished, fitted out a squadron at their own expense; which, engaging the French with equal force, took every ship, and slew all, but nine persons, on board them, performing also other gallant exploits before they returned into port.\* So very apparent it is, that, if our affairs go wrong, this ought to be ascribed to the rulers, and not to the people, who are naturally jealous of our national glory, and ever ready

\* T. Walsinghami Ypodigma Neustriæ, p. 535. T. Otterbourne, p. 156, 157. Vit. R. Ricardi II. p. 44, 45. Dupleix, tom. ii. 605, 606. P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 308, 309.

enough to sacrifice, as is indeed their duty, both their persons and properties for its defence.

The French king, Charles VI. was, in the year 1385, persuaded to revive his father's project of invading England, in order to compel the English to abandon the few places they still held in France. With this view, he at a prodigious expense, purchased ships in different parts of Europe, and, by degree, drew together a very great number; an author of credit, who lived in those times, says, twelve hundred and eighty-seven sail; inso-much that, if it had been necessary, they might have made a bridge from Calais to Dover.\* On the other hand, King Richard prepared a numerous army, and also drew together a powerful navy; yet, after all, there was no great matter done; for the French king's uncles, the dukes of Berry and Burgundy, fell at variance upon this head; and the design was so long protracted, that, at last, they were obliged to lay it aside for that year. † Mezeray seems to attribute this to the duke of Burgundy; ‡ but Father Daniel ascribes it to the duke of Berry; § however, it was not entirely given over, but rather deferred till the succeeding spring, when the French sailed a second time, partly through the treachery of the duke of Bretagne, and partly through the cowardice of admiral de Vienne. This man had been sent with a fleet of sixty ships to Scotland, in order to excite and enable the inhabitants of that kingdom to make a diversion; but he behaved there very indifferently, for he declined fighting the English, when they destroyed all the country before them, and entered into an amour with a princess of the royal blood; which, says Mezeray, the barbarous Scots, being strangers to French gallantry, took amiss, and

A.D.  
1385.A.D.  
1386.

\* Histoire de Charles VI. A. D. 1385.

† Froissart, vol. iii. cap. xxv.

‡ Abregé de l'Histoire de France, vol. iii. p. 129.

§ Histoire de la milice Françoise, vol. ii. p. 448.



shewed their resentment in such a manner, as obliged him to leave their country very abruptly. On his return he reported the English army to consist of ten thousand horse, and a hundred thousand foot, which struck the French with terror. As for the duke of Bretagne, on some private distaste, he clapped up the constable of France in prison, who was to have commanded the forces that were to be transported in this mighty fleet, which new disappointment frustrated the whole design.

Father Daniel is just enough to acknowledge, that it is doubtful whether the duke, by this act of treachery, did the English or the French most service; since, if this design had miscarried, the greatest part of the nobility of France, who were embarked therein, must have necessarily perished. As it was, a great number of ships belonging to this huge fleet, in sailing from the haven of Sluys, were driven on the English coast and taken; and the year before, the earls of Arundel and Nottingham, with the English fleet, had attacked a great number of French, Spanish, and Flemish merchantmen; and, having beaten their convoy, took upwards of a hundred sail. Thus this wild scheme ended in the destruction of the naval power of France; which, as it is in itself unnatural, so, whenever it receives a considerable check, it is very hard to be restored again, as Father Daniel tacitly acknowledges; for, he owns, that during the remainder of the reign of Charles VI. as also during that of Charles VII. which takes in upwards of half a century, they attempted little or nothing by sea, and not much in the succeeding fifty years.\*

A.D. 1386. The expedition of the duke of Lancaster into Spain, deserves to be mentioned in a work of this nature; for, though it be true, that it did not concern the kingdom of England, yet, as the whole naval strength of the nation

\* Histoire de la milice Francoise, vol. ii. p. 448. Stowe, Holingshed, Speed, Brady, Tyrrel, &c.



was employed therein, and as the reputation of the English arms was spread thereby over all Europe, it would be unpardonable to omit it. The duke's title, notwithstanding the slight put upon it by some authors, was in reality a very good one; he claimed in right of his second wife Constantia, who was the daughter of Peter the Cruel, king of Castile; whereas the possessor of that crown was of a bastard line. The king of Portugal was likewise in his interest, and sent into England seven gallies and eighteen ships, to join the duke's fleet, which was a long time in preparing.

At length, about midsummer, 1386, he embarked with twenty thousand men, and the flower of the English nobility, himself commanding the army, and Sir Thomas Piercy the fleet. The first exploit they performed was the relieving Brest, at that time besieged by the French, by which the duke gained great reputation; after this, embarking again with fresh provisions, and some recruits, they arrived at the port of Corunna, or, as our sailors call it, the Groin, on August 9, and there safely landed their forces.\* The king of Portugal behaved like a good ally, and many of the Spanish nobility acknowledged the duke for their king; yet the war, at the beginning, was not attended with much success, great sickness wasting the English army; and, through the precaution of John, king of Castile, the country was so destroyed, that a famine ensued, which proved of still worse consequences to the duke's affairs. By degrees, however, the soldiers recovered their health, and the duke, who had himself endured a sharp fever, resumed his spirits, and continued the war with fresh vigour, and with better fortune. John, king of Castile, seeing his dominions destroyed, and the French, who had promised him great succours, very slow in per-

\* *Marianæ Hist. Hispan. tom. ii. lib. xviii. cap. x. p. 155. M. Furia y Sousa, lib. iv. cap. 11. T. Walsingham, p. 321, 322. II. Knyghton, p. 2670. Vit. R. Ricardi II. p. 70, 71.*

forming, wisely entered into a negotiation, which quickly ended in a peace. \*

A.D.  
1389.

By this treaty, King John paid the duke about seventy thousand pounds for the expenses of the war, and assigned him and his dutchess an annuity of ten thousand pounds. The eldest daughter of the duke married Henry, prince of Asturias, King John's heir; and the duke's second daughter espoused the king of Portugal. After this agreement made, the duke, with the remains of his army, which an eminent French writer says, might amount to about a sixth part of the forces he carried abroad, † returned into England towards the end of the year 1389; and a little after, the king was pleased to honour his uncle with the title of duke of Aquitain. ‡

A.D.  
1394.

In 1394, an insurrection in Ireland obliged the king to pass over thither, being attended by the duke of Gloucester, the earls of March, Nottingham, and Rutland. In this expedition, he had better fortune than in any other part of his life; reducing most of the petty princes to such straits, that they were glad to do him homage, and give him hostages; but, at the request of the clergy, he returned too hastily, in order to prosecute heretics, when he might have subdued his rebels, and settled that kingdom. This mistake in his conduct proved afterwards fatal to his crown and life. § The disputes he had with his nobility at home, inclined the king to put an end to all differences abroad; and, therefore, after a long treaty, it was agreed, that King Richard should espouse the princess Isabella, though but a child between seven and eight years old.

\* Ferrera's Hist. de Espan. p. viii. § 14. De la Clede, Hist. de Portugal, tom. i. p. 336. T. Walsingham, p. 342. W. Wyrcester, Annal. p. 442.

† Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 134.

‡ T. Walsinghani Ypodigma Neustriæ, p. 544. T. Otterbourne, p. 177, 179.

§ Chron. Hibern. A. D. 1394.



A.D.  
1396.

On this occasion, he passed over to Calais, where he had an interview with the French king; and, having espoused this young princess on October 31, he soon after brought her home, and caused her to be crowned, but very little to the people's satisfaction, who fancied there was something ominous in the loss of part of her portion, in the short passage between Calais and Dover, in a sudden storm.\* Some time after, he was drawn into a much more unpopular act, by giving up the fortress of Cherburgh to the king of Navarre, and the town of Brest to the duke of Brittany; and the disturbances which followed these measures in England, encouraged the Irish to rebel.† In the first fury of these people they cut off Roger Mortimer, earl of March, governor of Ireland for King Richard, and presumptive heir of the crown. The news of this so much provoked the king, that he determined to pass over into that island; in order to chastise the authors of so black a fact. With this view, he drew together a considerable army, and a fleet of two hundred sail, with which he safely arrived at Waterford, in the spring of the year 1399.‡

The king had some success in this, as he had in his former expedition, it being the constant foible of the Irish to be wonderfully struck with the presence of a prince, and the pomp of a court. But his success was quickly interrupted by the mortifying news of his cousin, Henry of Lancaster, being landed in England, and in open rebellion. This young nobleman, styled in his father's lifetime first earl of Derby, and then duke of Hereford, had ever been of a martial disposition, and had attained to great military skill, by serving in Prussia under the Teu-

A.D.  
1399.

\* Rymer's foedera, tom. vii. p. 802. T. Walsinghami, p. 353. Vit. R. Ricardi II. p. 128, 129. P. Æmyle, p. 601. Du Tillet, p. 309.

† Chron. Hibern. A. D. 1395.

‡ T. Walsingham, p. 356. T. Otterbourne, p. 197. Chron. Hibern. A. D. 1399.



tonic knights. He had been very indifferently treated by King Richard, yet had no thoughts of pretending to the crown, when he first returned home; but, finding the people universally disaffected, the king in Ireland, and himself surrounded by a number of brisk and active young noblemen, he grew bolder in his designs, though he still acted with much caution. The king, on the first advice of this rebellion, returned into England, where he no sooner arrived, than all his spirits failed him, insomuch, that the first request he made to the earl of Northumberland was, that he might have leave to resign his kingdom.\* The precedent of his grandfather, Edward II. was too recent to leave the rebels any scruple of making use of the king's pusillanimous temper; they, therefore, brought him up prisoner to London, where he was committed to the Tower; and, shortly after, by authority of parliament, deposed, when he had reigned twenty-two years, and was in the thirty-third year of his age.†

A.D.  
1400.

After this his life was of no long continuance; for, being carried from place to place, he at length ended his days at Pomfret castle, in the year 1400; but how, or with what circumstances, is not clearly known to posterity. Some say, that hearing of the misfortunes which attended his friends, who endeavoured to restore him, and had miserably lost their lives in the attempt, he refused sustenance, and starved himself; others, with greater probability, affirm, that with hunger and cold, and other unheard of torments, his cruel enemies removed him out of their way;‡ and, to this opinion Camden inclined, who, in

\* Vit. R. Ricardi II. p. 151—155. T. Walsingham, p. 358, 359. T. Otterbourne, p. 201—206. Chron. Godstovian, p. 126. Fabian, p. 345.

† Attested copies of all these proceedings, from the original records in the Tower, the reader will meet with in H. Kynghiton, col. 2743—2762.

‡ T. Walsingham, p. 363. Vit. R. Ricardi II. p. 169. T. Otterbourne, p. 228, 229.

speaking of Pomfret castle, says it is a place *principum cæde & sanguine infamis.*\*

THE history of our commerce within this period of time would be equally curious and useful, if carefully and impartially collected from our records and histories. What I have to offer on this head, is only the fruit of my own reflections upon some remarkable passages, that, in the composition of this history, appeared of too great importance, in reference to the subjects under my consideration, to be passed by without notice, amongst a long train of common events. Such observations, I conceive, may be of more use, because, generally speaking, our writers upon political arithmetic, have very rarely carried their researches so high as these times, from a notion, very probably, that there was not much in them to their purpose; in which, however, I must confess myself of a very different sentiment, being fully satisfied, that many points of the greatest consequence might be very much enlightened, if due attention were paid to such occurrences, in these times, as any way regard our foreign and domestic trade, the scarcity and plenty of coin, and the different state of the finances of our several monarchs; for all which, though there may not be sufficient materials to compose a complete history, yet there are more than enough to convince us, that the vulgar opinion of the poverty of our ancestors, in past times, is very far from being founded in truth, but is rather the consequence of an ill-grounded complaisance for our own age.

We have before observed, that Henry I. left behind him a very large sum of money at his decease; his grandson, Henry II. reigned about the same space of time, that is, four months short of thirty-five years, as his grandfather reigned four months more than that number of years.

\* Descript. Brit. p. 83.



Their tempers were much alike with respect to economy; that is to say, both of them were inclined to collect and leave behind them as much wealth as they could; the former for the sake of establishing his family; the latter that he might make a provision for the expedition into the Holy Land, which he certainly had very much at heart. But Henry II. at his demise, left in gold and silver, exclusive of jewels and other curiosities, the sum of nine hundred thousand pounds; which would be a thing altogether incredible, if we had not as good authority for this as for any historical fact whatever.\* It is indeed true, that some writers have represented him as an avaricious, and even rapacious prince; but the facts which they assign to prove this, are such as will scarce satisfy an impartial reader. He levied, from time to time, considerable sums upon the Jews, who were the monied people of those days; he had considerable aids from his nobility; and he kept bishoprics, and other ecclesiastical benefices in his hands for several years together. His predecessors, however, had done as much without acquiring any such treasure; and, therefore, we may conclude from this fact, that the nation was become much richer.

It is said, and very truly said, that coin or ready money is the PULSE of a state. If it beat high and even, there is no reason to question the health of the body politic; but, if it grow low, and intermit, even wise men may be allowed to doubt as to the public safety. We may, therefore, safely collect that the trade of this kingdom was very much increased during the course of this reign, though we had no other argument to prove it; since, in the same space of time, and without having recourse to any extra-

\* The words of Matthew Paris, my author, are these: "Inventa sunt plura quam nongenta millia librarum in auro & argento, præter utensilia & jocalia & lapides pretiosos." The will of this great monarch is preserved in the Liber Niger Scaccarii, published by Hearne; but in this we find none but charitable legacies.



ordinary methods, this monarch was able to leave, after bestowing very considerable sums in ready money for the holy war, a treasure nine times as great as that of his grandfather, though he was looked upon as the richest prince of his time.

The beginning of King Richard's reign was very fatal to the estates and revenues of the crown, as the latter end of it was excessively burdensome upon his people; yet, those who, from the difficulty of paying his ransom, would infer, that this kingdom was grown wretchedly poor, and that the wealth of the nation was nothing then to what it is now, are far from being so much in the right as they may imagine; as will appear from hence, that Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury, when he desired the king's leave to withdraw from the administration, gave this as his reason, viz. that there had been levied upon his subjects, in the years 1195 and 1196, the sum of one million, one hundred thousand marks; \* which I have the authority of an ingenious and judicious writer to bear me out in affirming, was equal to eleven millions in our times. † So that it was not the poverty of the kingdom which made

\* Roger Hoveden, p. 767, 768, assures us, the scope of that prelate's letter to the king was, to shew how much the wealth of England was exhausted, and, as a proof, added, "Quod infra biennium proximo præteritum, adquisierat ad opus illius undecies centena millia marcarum argentide regno Angliæ." Robert de Brunne, in his Chronicle, informs us, that, though the sums levied were large, yet, the king's visible necessity, and the bad behaviour of King Philip, of France, made the nobility contribute cheerfully to their master's assistance, as well in their persons, as out of their purses.

† The author referred to in the text is Dr. Davenant, who, in his discourse on grants and resumptiions, p. 112, not only says what I have mentioned, but farther, that what was given to King Richard, was more than was really levied on the people in any two years of King William's war. If so, why might not the whole necessary supplies have been raised, which could not (the difference of times considered) have been in any degree so oppressive as what our ancestors endured, rather than a debt created, which has proved ever since an accumulating burden?

the impositions of those days seem insupportably hard; but the impositions themselves were so excessive, and so often repeated, that at last they really made the nation poor.

Another thing to be observed, in regard to this reign, is the tax, or rather subsidy given in wool, which is the first time any thing of that nature occurs in history; though, without all doubt, wool was long before one of the principal staple commodities of this country. If we look into this affair carefully, we shall find something in it very different from what is commonly understood; for, it was not a tax imposed upon wool for leave to export it; a thing frequent in succeeding times, and which, for any thing we know, might not have been altogether new even then; it was not a grant to the crown of a certain quantity of wool, which was the land-tax of those times, and very commonly granted to his successors; but, it was a loan taken from the Cistercian monks, who then exported the wool of this island to Flanders, and other countries, the produce of which, for that year, was received to the king's use, in order to complete his ransom, and was to be repaid; and, perhaps, the different accounts we have of the sum to which that amounted, might be owing, in some measure, to this manner of raising it. But, however these things may stand, there is nothing clearer than that the vast sums raised in this reign must have been brought into this island by foreign trade, that is, by the produce of our commodities and manufactures. The latter, without question, were very inconsiderable in comparison of what they have since been, and yet not altogether so inconsiderable as is commonly thought; but, as for our staple commodities, we certainly had them then as well as now; and, I believe, there is some reason to think that they were not only exported in very large quantities, but were also vended in foreign markets, at very high prices; that is,



the proportion of things in those times, and in these, being duly weighed and considered. \*

In the reign of King John, if we may believe most of our historians, there was nothing but oppression and taxes; and immense sums of money, from time to time, levied upon the nation; which, however, is a proof there was money in the nation, as the great number of seamen he had constantly in employment shews there must have been trade. The Cistercian monks were still the exporters of wool; and, that this was no inconsiderable thing, may appear from hence, that they charge the king with taking from them by violence, in the course of a few years, sixty-six thousand pounds. It may be, he only took by violence what they had before got by fraud; for, why such vast sums were to rest in the hands of religious men, when the public treasury was empty, it will be hard to render a just reason. The same king is said to have imprisoned an archdeacon of Huntingdon, till he extorted from him twenty-two thousand marks; this might be injustice in the king; but public affairs could not be well regulated, when a clergyman of his rank was able to pay so much. † If King John had not bore so hard upon the priests and

\* Two things principally contributed, in those days, to turn the scale of trade in our favour: First, we were not given to refined luxury; if we indulged in any extraordinary degree, it was in our native and unpurchased blessings, which made our wants the less. And, secondly, commerce not being so extensive, some of our staple commodities were highly valued, and from thence brought in the more money.

† Matth. Paris, Ralph Coggeshale, and John Eversden, are the chief authors of what is reported of King John's excessive taxations; and the first of these speaks of him in a manner so full of indecency, that one naturally suspects so angry a writer of sometimes making free with truth. An unmarried clergy, immensely rich, was equally repugnant to the principles of sound policy and of the gospel; the king, therefore, might well take somewhat, from their immense revenues, for the public service, without deserving to be thought either tyrant or infidel; though these charitable authors have pawned their credit with posterity, that he was both.



monks, they would have furnished, or, at least, they would have allowed him a better character in their chronicles; if he had been more indulgent to his nobility, they might possibly have been more loyal; but, if he had not shewn himself a lover of trade, and a kind master to the commons, he would not have had the seamen, the sea-ports, and the trading towns at his devotion, London only excepted; and, amongst other provocations given to her, it was no small one, that this monarch favoured the out-ports; so that the trade of Boston, in Lincolnshire, approached, in some degree, to that of London; as appears from the customs in both during this reign.

It has been hinted, that our manufactures were not quite so low at this time as they are generally represented; and, it looks like a proof of this, that in the nineteenth year of Henry III. there passed a law for regulating some branches of the weaving business; and, it appears from this very law, that the branches regulated thereby were different kinds of broad cloth. This does not, indeed, shew when we began to make cloth; for, without doubt, this could not be then a new manufacture; but, it plainly shews, that we had it in a good degree of perfection, above a hundred years before most of our histories speak of its introduction into England.\* In this king's reign arose the first complaints about clipping of money, which not only produced a standard, † but also a new regulation; which, though it proved a remedy for the evil, was accounted almost as

\* Some circumstances relative to this manufacture are mentioned in the reign of Henry II. nor does it then appear to be a new thing, but rather the contrary. It was in this reign, if not sooner, introduced into Scotland; which put the government on contriving methods to prevent wool being carried thither from any of the northern counties, but with very little success.

† There is some diversity in our old historians, and much more amongst our modern critics, about this matter; we will give the truth as near, and in as few words as we can. King John is by some reckoned the author of our standard, but this must be with regard to fineness, especially the sterling, or esterling, which was the name of a penny made of good silver, being introduced in his reign. As to

great an evil as that which it was intended to cure. In short, the taking money by tale, as is the custom now, and which first began to grow into a custom then, was prohibited, and people were directed to pay and receive by weight, in the manner that has been before described.

There are few princes who have sat upon this throne, whose behaviour we find represented in a worse light to posterity than that of this monarch; for he had the misfortune, like his father, to be upon bad terms with the barons and the clergy; who, not contented with keeping him a beggar all his life, have transmitted his memory to succeeding times, with as heavy a load of infamy upon it as was in their power. It is, indeed, out of doubt, that King Henry did levy large sums upon his people, which Matthew Paris, who lived in his time, and wrote the history of his reign, has very dexterously magnified, by reckoning the same tax sometimes over and over again.\* Upon the whole, he tells us, in the period of forty-one years, (he reigned in all fifty-six) he had been the spoiler of the kingdom; that he had not taken less than nine hundred and fifty thousand marks: yet the reader has seen, that King Richard levied considerably more than this sum in two years. He might very well want extraordinary supplies, if what the same monk, in another weight, Thomas Rudborn tells us, William the Conqueror ordained, A. D. 1083, that a penny should weigh thirty-two grains of wheat out of the midst of the ear; and the statute 53 H. III. says the very same thing; but, however, there was a distinction, though not a difference. It was found by experience, that grains of wheat differed in weight; that those kept for the king's balance were affected by the weather, and that no certainty could arise while this method was continued. It was agreed, therefore, that twenty-four pieces of brass, equal in weight to the thirty-two grains of wheat, should be substituted, as an easy number to divide; and thenceforward, the penny-weight was said to contain twenty-four grains.

\* When an historian writes with a visible leaning to one side, the reader, to set things straight, must lean a little to the other. King Henry might have, and, to be sure, had great faults; but there was the less need to exaggerate them. Matthew Paris furnishes matter



place,\* inadvertently tells us was true, that the whole ordinary revenue of the crown, fell considerably short of sixteen thousand pounds a-year.

If we should conclude from these clamours, from the meanness of the king's circumstances, and from the distresses to which King Henry was driven, that the nation was quite exhausted, and that the nobility and clergy, who always complained, and often rebelled, were plundered and pillaged till they had nothing left to subsist them, we should be extremely mistaken. The king's brother, Richard earl of Cornwall, laid up out of his estate, near two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, with a part of which, he purchased the diadem of Germany. We are also told, that the Lord Warine, who is said to be the wisest, and yet not affirmed to be the richest baron in England, disposed, by will, of two hundred thousand marks, which he had by him in money; † so that private men (if the nobility in those times might be so called) were really very rich, though their king was often in a state of downright want. In short, property was in those days strangely divided; and though, by the balance of trade, vast sums were brought into the nation, yet a very

for his own refutation: he acknowledges, the nobility were always rebellious, and yet blames the king for loving strangers: he exclaims against his avarice, and owns he gave away all he could obtain.

\* It is in a manner by accident, that Matthew Paris lets us into this important point; for, inveighing against the papal oppression, he says, that the revenue of the alien clergy in England, amounted to no less than seventy thousand marks *per annum*, when the king's ordinary income came to scarce a third part of that sum; which, considering the largeness of the king's family, was, even in those days, a very pitiful thing.

† Mat. Paris, p. 908. n. 10. I cite the place so particularly, because Sir William Dugdale, in his baronage, vol. i. p. 561. after making very honourable mention of this Warine de Muntchensi, and, speaking particularly of his great riches, sets down what he disposed of by his will at no more than two thousand marks, which is visibly a mistake, as he quotes the very same author that I do, and the very same edition.



great part of these came into the coffers of the monks and of the Jews; and as for the remaining produce of domestic industry, it was almost wholly swallowed up by the barons and the priests.

In the glorious reign of Edward I. we find many things worth observing; and first, as to the coin; for though the fineness thereof, had been established in the reign of his grandfather, and various regulations made in his father's long administration; yet, in his time it was, that the matter was entirely settled, and put into such a condition, as that in succeeding reigns the manner only has been susceptible of change. This was done in the seventh year of his reign, when he fixed the weight of his round silver penny at the twentieth part of an ounce Troy, whence our denomination of a penny-weight: as to the fineness, it remained the same as before; that is, there were eleven ounces two penny-weights of fine silver, and eighteen penny-weights alloy\* in a pound of silver, which was coined into two hundred and forty pence. However, in the twenty-eighth year of his reign, he reduced his penny somewhat; and this was the first variation of its kind from the Saxon times. It was the weight and purity of his coin that tempted the Jews over hither, in greater numbers than ever, to exercise their laudable trades of usury and clipping; for which last offence, he hanged two hundred and eighty of them at once; and having, in

\* It is now hardly to be expected, that any clear account should be gained of the motives on which this change was made: but, by the smallness of it, there is good reason to conclude, that it was rather for the service of the state, than to serve a turn. But it is time to shew what this change was. The pound of silver, hitherto accounted equal to twenty shillings, was now raised to twenty and three-pence: the shilling (or rather twelvepence) weighed two hundred and sixty-four instead of two hundred and eighty eight grains; and in short, silver was, by this means, raised from twenty pence to twenty pence farthing an ounce.

vain, endeavoured to moderate the rigour of their exertions, he at length banished them out of his dominions, to the number of fifteen thousand, to prevent their preying upon the industry of his subjects; having exhorted them more than once, by proclamation, to apply themselves to honest labour, or to the exercise of lawful trades, and to forbear fleaing his people. In 1299, the king settled as a dowry, upon Margaret, daughter to the King of France, eighteen thousand livres *per annum*, which amounted to four thousand five hundred pounds sterling: so that four French livres were then worth an English pound; \* which is a point of great consequence towards understanding the transactions of those times.

In this king's reign there were certain silver mines wrought in Devonshire, to considerable profit; in the twenty-second year of his reign, they produced, from the twelfth of August to the last of October, three hundred and seventy pounds weight of silver; the next year five hundred and twenty one pounds and a half; in the twenty-fourth year seven hundred and four pounds: they yielded afterwards more, but how much more is not said; nor have we any account when they were worn out. † We may form some judgment of the course of trade in his time from hence; that, having occasion to borrow a large sum of money, for carrying on his wars against the Welch, he took up eight thousand marks from the city of London, and one thousand from the port of Yarmouth. In reference to the wealth of private men, there is a particular fact recorded that gives us some light. The judges were found to have been guilty of corruption, and were fined amongst

\* This comparative value of coin is a subject hitherto hardly considered, and yet ancient histories are unintelligible, without a due regard being had to it.

† These mines were opened again in Queen Elizabeth's time, and have been also wrought since, but have not answered the cost of working.



them one hundred thousand marks, of which, Sir Edward Stratton paid thirty-four thousand.\* There was, in his reign, a great clamour against foreign merchants, who now began to keep houses and warehouses of their own in the city of London, whereas before, they lodged in some citizen's house, who was their broker: and to this the citizens would very willingly have reduced things again, but the king and his council held, that it was for the public benefit they should remain as they were; and with this they were forced to be satisfied.

In the reign of Edward II. we meet with very little to our purpose, unless it should be thought so, that, upon the deposing of this unhappy monarch, the allowance settled for his maintenance in prison was one hundred marks a-month, or eight hundred pounds a-year: yet this monarch had given to the Lady Theophania, a French woman, who was nurse to his Queen Isabella, an estate of five hundred pounds a-year. † The taxes in his reign were very inconsiderable.

In the reign of Edward III. *anno Domini* 1331, the king granted a protection to one John Kent, a cloth-weaver, who came over from Flanders, and at the same time, invited over fullers and dyers; ‡ from whence, it has been supposed, that clothing was then introduced into this kingdom, which is directly contrary to truth, that trade having been here long before; indeed, so long before, that there is no record extant to shew when it was introduced. As King Edward was a very martial prince in his temper, and his

\* Matt. Westmon. p. 414. n. 10. Knyghton, col. 2466. Thomas Wayland, who was the most guilty, lost his whole estate,

† My author, for the first of these facts, is Thomas Walsingham, and, for the latter, Mr. Rymer, both unquestionable in such points.

‡ Rymer's *foedera*, tom. iv. p. 496. There is very little room to doubt, that the true reasons of these encouragements were, first of all, instructing our own people to the utmost perfection, in this capital art, and next, drawing over the workmen here, that, as we rose in that manufacture, our neighbours might also gradually decline.



reign almost a continued series of wars, there were successive impositions levied upon his subjects, and these amounting to such vast sums as very clearly prove, that, at the beginning of his reign, England was far richer than in the times of any of his predecessors.

Some attempts have been made to settle, by the help of the taxes in this reign, the manner in which they were levied, and the produce of them, the value of our wool: and, without doubt, something very near the truth may be discovered, if we proceed cautiously. In the year 1338, the laity\* granted him one half of their wool, and the clergy nine marks a sack upon their best wool. We know not what number of sacks the king received; but it is said, that he sent over ten thousand sacks into Brabant, which produced him four hundred thousand pounds, that is, at the rate of forty pounds a sack one with another: and, from this, some writers think themselves warranted to compute the produce of our wool in foreign markets, at least at forty pounds a sack; and by the help of this calculation, they estimate our annual exportations at a very large sum. We will shew first, what this is, and then consider whether it be right, or whether the price should not be reduced.

When it is said, that we know not what quantity of wool the king received by that grant, it is to be understood, that we know it not from the historians who mention this grant; but it appears from the records, that it amounted to twenty thousand sacks.† Those who made the computation, of which we have been speaking, compute the exportation of wool that year at forty thousand sacks; which amounts to one million six thousand pounds; and the aid to the king comes to half that money,

\* The computations mentioned in the text, are to be found in the historical account of taxes, p. 106.

† By this method of receiving taxes in kind, the king became, in some measure, a merchant; and that to his great profit.

which they say, is amazing and prodigious: and indeed, well they might. But, when a grant was afterward made to the king of thirty thousand sacks of wool, we find it estimated far lower, viz. at six pounds a sack, the very best; the second sort at five, and the worst at four pounds a sack; which, however, was exclusive of the king's duty or custom. This computation was, certainly, very fair; and this grant to the king, was in the nature of a land-tax; which is the reason that the produce of it was computed at the rate wool sold here, though there is no manner of doubt, that, by exporting and selling it abroad, the king made much more of it. We will try, however, if it be not practicable to extract something more certain out of the facts mentioned by ancient authors, because, if it could be done, it would be very satisfactory.

A certain writer has preserved the state or balance of the English trade, as found upon record in the exchequer, in the twenty-eighth year of this monarch; and there is no reason to suspect its authenticity.\* In this, the export of wool, is set down at thirty-one thousand, six hundred and fifty-one sacks and a half, valued at six pounds a sack; but then the duty is excluded. It appears also, from this account, that a considerable quantity of cloth, both fine and coarse, and of worsted also, was exported. We cannot, therefore, doubt, that when the commons granted King Edward thirty thousand sacks of wool, it was at least, as much as giving him one hundred and fifty thousand pounds in money, out of their pockets. But, if we are inclined to know what it brought the king, we may, perhaps, find the means of discovering it. In the last year of his reign, the citizens of York complained,

\* This account was published in a treatise, entitled, *The circle of commerce*, p. 119, 120, written by Mr. Edward Misselden, and printed in 1633. After drawing from it the remarks mentioned in the text, I thought it would be for the conveniency of the reader, and render my observations more perspicuous, if a place were allowed this curious paper in the notes.

that a German lord \* had seized thirty-six surples of their wool, which they valued at one thousand nine hundred pounds, for a debt, due from the king; and, according to this reckoning, wool was worth, in that country, thirteen pounds a sack, and something more: so that the aid granted to the king, could not produce much less than four hundred thousand pounds, which was a very large sum for those days.

The balance of the English trade in the 28th year of Edward III. as said to be found upon record in the exchequer.

## EXPORTS.

	£.	s.	d.
One and thirty thousand six hundred fifty-one sacks and a half of wool, at six pounds value each sack, amount to .....	189,909	0	0
Three thousand six hundred sixty-five fells, at forty shillings value, each hundred at six score, amount to	6,073	1	3
Whereof the custom amounts to.....	31,624	1	1
Fourteen last, seventeen dieker, and five hides of leather, after six pounds value the last .....	89	5	0
Whereof the custom amounts to.....	6	17	6
Four thousand seven hundred seventy-four cloths and a half, after forty shillings value the cloth, is..	9,549	0	0
Eight thousand and sixty-one pieces and a half of worsted, after six shillings and eight-pence value the piece, is .....	6,717	18	4
Whereof the custom amounts to.....	215	13	7
Exports	294,184	17	2

## IMPORTS.

	£.	s.	d.
One thousand eight hundred thirty-two cloths, after six pounds value the cloth .....	10,992	0	0
Whereof the custom amounts to.....	91	12	0
Three hundred ninety-seven quintals and three quarters of wax, after the value of forty shillings the hundred or quintal .....	759	10	0
Carried up	11,843	2	0

\* This foreign nobleman had served the king in his wars, and pretended so much money was due to him; he had also ships in our ports, with goods on board, which the citizens, thus injured, desired might be seized.



	£.	s.	d.
Brought up	11,343	2	0
Whereof the custom is.....	19	17	0
One thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine tons and a half of wine, after forty shillings value per ton	3,659	0	0
Whereof the custom is.....	182	0	0
Linen cloth, mercery and grocery wares, and all other manner of merchandize.....	22,943	6	10
Whereof the custom is.....	285	18	3
	<hr/>		
Imports	38,970	13	3
	<hr/>		
Balance	255,214	13	8

N. B. The totals do not answer the particulars exactly; but, at this distance of time, it is impossible to aim at correcting them with any degree of certainty.

BUT we must not part with this account, without drawing from it some other observations. We find the whole imports of that year computed at something less than thirty-nine thousand pounds, whereas the exports amounted to above two hundred and ninety-four thousand pounds; so that the clear balance, in favour of this nation, was above two hundred and fifty-five thousand pounds. Yet, this is not all; we must consider, that in this account there is no notice taken of lead and tin, probably because the accounts relating to them might not be brought into the exchequer, that is, not into the exchequer at Westminster; which will raise the account very considerably; insomuch, that there seems very good reason to believe, the intrinsic value of the coin in those days, being compared with ours, the whole balance of trade fell very little, if at all, short of nine hundred thousand pounds, as our money is now reckoned; which is, indeed, a very large sum, and much beyond what those, who had never looked into these matters, could possibly have imagined. Yet, the probability, at least, if not the truth, of this computation, might be shewn in another way; that is, from the consideration of the immense sums that were consumed by this monarch in

foreign wars and alliances, which it is impossible this nation could ever have furnished, if the balance of trade had fallen any thing short of what it appears to be from the foregoing computation.

That commerce was very much the object of King Edward's attention, and his parliaments, very fully appears from the many acts made within the compass of his reign for its regulation. It is, indeed, true, that several of these laws are contradictory; that what was established in one year, was sometimes overturned in the next; that frequent alterations were made in the staple; that the customs were sometimes high, sometimes low; and that the standard of money was twice varied. But, notwithstanding all this, the former assertion will still remain unimpeached, since there can be nothing clearer, that that even these variations arose from the regard that was paid to commerce; and, perhaps, the alteration in the coin was made necessary from the conduct, in that particular, of our neighbours. We likewise find, that, towards the latter end of this king's reign, there were great frauds and impositions committed in obtaining licences\* for the exportation of goods, and in other respects, of which complaints were made in parliament against the Lord Latimer, the king's chamberlain, and Richard Lyons, of London, merchant, for which they were convicted and punished.

King Edward III. was the first of our princes who coined grosses or groats, so called from their being the grossest or greatest of all money, the silver penny having been till then the largest coin in use. The purity of the standard he never debased; but, in the twentieth year of

\* An inquisitive reader may consult Barnes's history of this reign; but the records are still fuller and clearer. It would be of infinite service to the nation, if the facts they contain were digested into chronological order, and made public. This would effectually refute many gross mistakes universally believed, and disclose many new truths.

his reign, he saw reason to make it lighter; so that, instead of twenty shillings, the pound of silver, was raised to the value of twenty-two shillings and sixpence, and, in the twenty-seventh year of his reign, the value of a pound of silver was raised to twenty-five shillings. The reader will observe, that the shilling was imaginary then, as the pound is still, or rather it was a denomination of money, and not a coin. He also first coined the noble, half-noble, and quarter-noble, in gold; for, before his time, none of our kings had stamped any gold. He likewise called in all clipped money, and prohibited base coin; which shews, that what he did in altering the weight of his coin was for the conveniency and benefit of his subjects, who, by the increase of their trade, stood in need both of gold coin, and of larger pieces of silver, and not with any intention to enrich himself at their expense; though the contrary is asserted by an ancient historian, who charges William Eddington, bishop of Winchester, and lord-treasurer, with consulting the king's profit more than that of the kingdom, by advising him to coin groats that were not so heavy as they should be. There was also some variation in the value of gold in his time, a pound of that metal coined going sometimes for fifteen, then for little more than thirteen, afterwards for fourteen pounds of their money; but, at length, the king raised it again to its old price of fifteen pounds,\* which, all things considered, is pretty near the proportion that it now holds, only King Edward's gold was somewhat finer than our coin is at present.

In the reign of Richard II. we find a great many laws relating to trade; and, it appears to have been a great controversy then, whether foreign merchants should, or

\* As one shilling was nearly equal to three of ours, an ounce of gold, then worth twenty-five shillings, was in fact at three pounds fifteen of our money; so that the proportions between gold and silver have not altered very much since that time.



should not, be allowed to vend their commodities freely in London, and other corporations. The sense of the legislature, as appears from their laws, was in favour of the foreign merchants; but, the clamour still continued, and parliaments were seldom held without petitions for the redress of this, which was called a grievance. It was also desired, that the staple of wool might be removed from Calais to some town in England; and Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, and chancellor of England, a nobleman esteemed to be very knowing in points of this kind, declared publicly in parliament, that the king's subsidy on wools yielded a thousand marks a year more, when the staple was in England, than when it was fixed at Calais, which is a proof that the exportation was greater.\*

As the foreign wars in this reign were of little consequence, and prosecuted with no great vigour; so, whatever sums were levied upon the people, and in what manner soever they were dissipated by their profuse prince, yet this being all amongst themselves, and the balance of foreign trade continuing, and perhaps increasing, the wealth of the nation could not but be prodigiously augmented; to which some writers attribute the broils and disturbances of this reign, in which, if there be any truth, it must have been owing to the unequal distribution of property. This, indeed, is certain, that the commons complained loudly of oppression from the lords and from the lawyers; as, on the other hand, both the nobility and the commons were highly incensed against the clergy, on account, as they alledged, of their haughtiness and avarice; but, the churchmen suggested, that the luxury of the age was so great, that, notwithstanding their vast estates, the expenses of the nobility exceeded their income, and was

\* The family of this chancellor had acquired an immense estate by trade; and other instances of a like kind might be given in those times.

the principal cause that inclined them to form cabals, for alienating and dividing amongst themselves the revenues of the church.

As to the coinage in this reign, it remained in a great measure, -at least, upon the same foot as in the former, and therefore there is no need of dwelling upon it; one thing, however, deserves to be insisted upon, which is this; the great luxury of these times had so visibly increased the importation of foreign commodities, that it was taken notice of in parliament; and in the last year of King Richard's reign a law passed, by which it was provided, that every merchant should bring into the Tower of London, an ounce of foreign gold coin for every sack of wool exported, or pay thirteen shillings and four pence for his default, and to give security for the performance of this, before he was allowed to export the wool into foreign parts. There was also a law made in this reign, allowing every person to make cloth of what length and breadth he would; so that in those days they thought it very practicable to encourage the clothing manufactory, without restraining the subject from transporting wool, and this upon the plain principle of doing nothing that might sink the price of this staple commodity, which brought in continually such vast supplies of bullion, and which it is likely they knew not how to obtain, in case the exportation of wool had been put under any severe restriction. \*

These observations on a period of so great extent, in which it may be easily conceived, that matters of this nature must have suffered many changes and alterations, cannot but be acceptable, inasmuch as they greatly contribute to the illustration of the principal points with which our history is concerned; for naval force, and the sovereignty of the sea, being the result of extensive com-

\* It may deserve the consideration of an able statesman, whether some use might not be still made of this maxim of our ancestors.

merce, whatever contributes to explain the rise and progress of that, must shew how these are to be kept, as well as demonstrate in what manner they have been obtained.

Within this period there happened, or at least there are said to have happened, some extraordinary discoveries, of which, therefore, we ought to speak. First, then, it is affirmed, that America was discovered by the Welch, about the year 1170. The story is thus told: that on the death of Owen Guyneth, dissensions arose among his sons; one of them, whose name was Madock, resolved to trust the safety of himself, and such as were with him, rather to the mercy of the seas, than to the uncertain issue of a civil war; and, therefore, embarking with his followers, on board a few ships well victualled, he put to sea in search of new countries. Accordingly he sailed due west, till such time as he left Ireland to the north, and then continued his voyage till he came to a large, fruitful, and pleasant country. After some time spent therein he returned home, and reported the happy effects of his voyage, and the large possessions which every man might acquire who would go with him. He at length prevailed with as many of both sexes as filled ten ships, and with these he returned to his new plantation; but neither he nor his people were heard of more. \* It must be confessed, that there is nothing here which absolutely fixes this discovery to America; though it must likewise be owned, that the course before set down might very possibly carry him thither. The great point is, to know how far the fact may be depended upon; and in relation to this, I will venture to assure the reader, that there are authentic records in the British tongue as to this expedi-

\* Hakluyt, vol. iii. p. 1. Meredith ap Reece, a Cambrian bard, who died A. D. 1477, composed an ode in his native language on this expedition, from which the particulars above mentioned are taken; and this was prior to Columbus's discovery; so that fact could never have encouraged the framing of this fable, even supposing it to be so.



tion of Madock's, wherever he went, prior to the discovery of America by Columbus; and that many probable arguments may be offered in support of this notion, that these Britons were the discoverers of that new world, is also true, though at present we have not opportunity to insist upon them.

Some reports there are concerning great discoveries in the north, made by a friar of Oxford, one Nicholas de Linna. Of this man, the famous John Dee, who was both a great antiquary and a skilful mathematician, informs us, that in the year 1360, being the thirty-fourth of Edward III. he sailed, in company with several of his countrymen, to the northern islands, and there leaving his associates, he travelled alone, and drew up an exact description of all the northern countries, with their surrounding seas; which book he entitled, *Inventio Fortunata*: or, A Discovery of the Northern Parts, from the latitude of fifty-four degrees, to the Pole; and presented it at his return to King Edward. However, for the better settling these discoveries, he returned no less than five times into those northern regions. To render this odd story somewhat more probable, Mr. Dee remarks, that from the haven of Lynn in Norfolk, of which this friar was both a native and an inhabitant, to Iceland, was not above a fortnight's sail, and in those days a common thing, as appears particularly by a charter granted to the town of Blakeney, in Norfolk, by King Edward III. exempting the fishermen of that port from attending his service, on account of their trade to Iceland.\* This is, in some measure, confirmed by the testimony of that famous geographer, Gerard Mercator, who confesses that he borrowed his description of the northern countries from one who owned his having them from this friar of Oxford, whom he well describes, though he does not name him. Yet it must be acknow-

\* Hakluyt, vol. ii. p. 121.

ledged, that Leland speaks very largely of this Nicholas of Lynn, who, according to his account, was a Carmelite, and a great astrologer; but in all his eulogium there is not a syllable concerning his travels, though he concludes with saying, that his works sufficiently praised him.\* John Bale transcribes this account of Leland's exactly, but gives us a much more copious detail of the friar's writings; and yet, even in his list, we meet with nothing as to this *Inventio Fortunata*; though on the other hand we must allow, that Bale says he wrote other things which he had not seen. †

The discovery of the Island of Madeira, is likewise attributed to one Macham, an Englishman; which is thus reported by several of the Portuguese writers. They say that this man, having stolen a lady with whom he was in love, intended to have carried her into Spain, but being by a storm driven out to sea, after much tossing and danger of his life, was forced into this island, in which the harbour where he lay at anchor is to this time called Machico. On his going ashore with the lady and some of his servants, the ship's crew took the opportunity of sailing, and got safe into some Spanish port. In a very short time after, the lady, who was extremely sea-sick, and not a little fatigued by what she was forced to undergo on shore, died; and her disconsolate lover, having first erected and consecrated a little chapel to the holy Jesus, buried her therein. After paying this duty to the lady, whose love for him cost her the loss of life, Macham addressed himself to the contriving his escape, which he effected by hollowing a large tree, and making thereof a canoe, in which himself, and those that were with him, passed over to the opposite shore of Africa, where, being taken prisoners by the Moors, they were sent by way of present to the king of Castile. This accident, is by some,

\* Commentar. de Script. Britan. vol. ii. p. 347.

† Script. Britan. vol. i. p. 468.

placed in the year 1344; but by others, and I think with reason, somewhat later. It is remarkable that we are indebted for this account to foreigners, who can hardly be supposed any way prejudiced in our favour against themselves.\*

We might add here, some accounts of the expeditions made to Jerusalem, Barbary, and Prussia, by some famous Englishmen; as also the beginning of our commerce with the Hanse-towns; but as to the former, it would swell our work too much with things already mentioned by others; and as to the latter, it may with equal propriety be reserved for the close of the next chapter, to which, therefore, we refer it.

\* Hakluyt, vol. ii. p. 1. from Antonio Galvano.



## CHAP. VI.

The Naval History of England, during the reigns of Henry IV  
Henry V. and Henry VI. of the House of Lancaster.

*(Containing the space of about 60 Years.)*

A.D.  
1399.

**H**ENRY IV. called sometimes Henry of Bolingbroke, from the place of his birth, and sometimes Henry of Lancaster, from his father's dukedom, was crowned on the 13th of October, 1399, and his title generally acknowledged. When he came over against King Richard, it was from France, and most of our historians affirm, that he received considerable assistance from thence; which, however, French writers deny.\* Certain it is, that, after the death of his unfortunate predecessor, the duke of Orleans, then director of the public affairs in that kingdom during the lunacy of Charles VI. treated King Henry as a murderer and usurper, though he had been formerly his friend; yet, in all probability, this was rather out of policy than from any motive of justice; for all the use the French made of it was, to attempt upon the English possessions on the continent.† King Richard being born, and for some time bred at Bourdeaux, his countrymen the Gascons discovered a strong resentment of his ill usage, and seemed disposed to revolt. To soothe this humour of theirs, the French assumed this appearance of indignation, in hopes that they would immediately have put themselves under their protection.‡ But Mezeray justly observes, that the advantages they drew

\* Polydor. Virgil. Hist. lib. xxi. Histoire de France, par le P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 395.

† Abregé de l'Histoire de France, par Mezeray, vol. iii. p. 140.

‡ P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 396.

from the English commerce hindered them from hastily taking this step, and disposed them to receive the lord Piercy for their governor, who was sent over with that title by King Henry. \* Not long after, King Richard's young queen was sent back to France, with the whole of her fortune, and all her jewels; and thereupon, the truce between the two nations was renewed for twenty-six years; which shews how little of reality there was in the concern expressed by the French court for the cruel death of King Richard. †

In 1403, the king, who was then a widower, married Joan, the daughter of Charles king of Navaree, and very lately widow to John Montford, duke of Brittany, which proved the cause of great disasters to this kingdom; for the inhabitants of that duchy, conceiving an ill opinion of this marriage, and being powerful at sea, suddenly landed in the west, and burnt Plymouth, at a time when the king's hands were full, through the conspiracy of the earl of Northumberland, and other great lords. ‡ This, however, did not remain long unrevenged; for the inhabitants of Plymouth having fitted out a squadron under the command of William de Wilford, admiral of the narrow seas, he seized forty ships laden with iron, oil, soap, and wine, and then burnt the like number in their harbours, reducing the towns of Penmarch and St. Matthew, and wasting with fire and sword a great part of the coast of Brittany. § Admiral de Castel, who commanded the enemy's fleet, in the mean time attempted to land in the Isle of Wight; but, failing of success there, he steered for Devonshire, where, actually landing, he briskly at-

A.D.  
1403.A.D.  
1404.

\* Abregé de l'Histoire de France, tom. iii.

† Froissart, cap. exix. P. Daniel, tom. v. J. Rossi, Antiquarii Warwicensi, Historia regum Angliæ, fol. 106. b.

‡ T. Walsingham, p. 367, 369. W. Wyrcester, Annal. p. 452. Chron. Godstoviani, p. 131, 132.

§ T. Walsinghami Ypodigma Neustriæ, p. 561. Stowe, p. 329. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 524.

tacked Dartmouth, but was defeated by the country militia, with the loss of four hundred men, and two hundred taken, among whom were himself and two other persons of distinction; yet his squadron, and the Flemings, still infested the coast, took many ships, and, to shew their inveterate hatred to the English nation, most inhumanly hanged all the seamen who fell into their hands.\* In the mean time, the French, without any regard to the treaty subsisting between the two crowns, invaded the duchy of Guyenne, and sent an army of twelve thousand men, with a fleet of one hundred and forty sail, to the assistance of Owen Glendour; these forces they safely disembarked in Milford Haven; but the Lord Berkeley, and Henry Pay, who commanded the squadron of the cinque ports, attacked them in that port, where they took fourteen, and burnt fifteen of the French vessels, which so frightened those on board the rest, that soon after they fled home. †

A.D.  
1405.

About the same time, the earl of Kent sailed, with a considerable fleet, to the coast of Flanders, where he cruised for some time upon the enemy, the Flemings being then subject to a prince of the house of France; at last, entering the port of Sluys, they found four ships lying at anchor, took three Genoese merchantmen, of a very large size, at the entrance of the haven, though not without a gallant resistance; after which they searched all the ports on the Norman coast, and, making descents in several places, burnt at least six and thirty towns, and then, with an immense booty, returned in triumph to Rye. ‡ Some mariners belonging to the port of Cley, in

\* T. Walsingham, p. 370. T. Otterbourne, p. 247, 248. Argentre, liv. x. chap. v.

† T. Walsinghami Ypodigma Neustriæ, p. 566. Stowe, p. 333. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 531.

‡ T. Otterbourne, p. 253, 254. Fabian, p. 382. Hall. fol. 24. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 528.



Norfolk, sailing on the north coast in a stout bark, took, near Flamborough-head, a Scots ship, having on board Prince James, duke of Rothesay, and heir apparent to that crown, to which he afterwards succeeded, by the name of James I. Him, with his attendants, an earl, and a bishop, they sent to King Henry at Windsor, who kept him there as a prisoner indeed; but, during his captivity, used him in all respects as a prince. The Scots writers treat this as a plain breach of faith; but the French historians instruct us better; they acknowledge they had lately renewed their treaties with Scotland, for the usual purpose of annoying England; and, in such times of public disturbance, this prince ought to have been furnished with letters of safe conduct, since he was going to France, an enemy's country, which every day infested the English coasts by their fleet.\* In support of Owen Glendour, the Welch malecontent, the French court sent another squadron on the coast of Wales, of which only thirty arrived, the rest being taken by the English; and, a short time after, the famous Henry Pay, admiral of the cinque ports, surprised the Rochelle fleet, consisting of one hundred and twenty sail of merchantmen, richly laden, and took them all. These exploits, in vessels belonging to merchants, shew, that, beyond all contradiction, trade in those days was not altogether so inconsiderable a thing as by most of our modern writers we are taught to believe. †

The king, in 1407, narrowly escaped the fate of the Scots prince. He had spent part of the summer at Leeds castle, in Kent; and, his affairs calling him into Essex, he ventured to sail from the port of Queenborough with only five ships: in his passage, he was attacked by certain

A.D.  
1407.

\* T. Walsinghami Ypodigma Neustriæ, p. 566. J. Fordun, Scotichron. Continuat. p. 1162. J. Major de gestis Scotorum, lib. v. fol. 125, 126. Hector Boeth. Hist. Scot. lib. xvi. p. 339. P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 404, 420.

† T. Walsingham, p. 376. Stowe, p. 334. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 553.

French privateers, who, after a very brisk engagement, took every vessel but that in which the king was, and carried them to their own coasts.\* This taught that monarch, by experience, the necessity of keeping better fleets at sea; and, therefore, he ordered a very strong one to be fitted out the next year, under the command of the earl of Kent, who effectually scoured the narrow seas, and, when he had cleared our own coasts, stood over to Brittany, where he boldly landed in the little island of Briehac, and there attacked a town of the same name, in which, the privateers had taken shelter, took it by storm, and put them all to the sword; but in this action, received himself a wound, which proved mortal. † In 1410, an English fleet of ten sail, under the command of Sir Robert Umfreville, went against the Scots, and, sailing up the Forth, spoiled the coasts on both sides, ravaging the country, burning all the ships in their harbours, and amongst the rest the largest they had, called the Grand Galliot in Blackness, carrying away fourteen ships, and such a vast quantity of corn, as reduced the price of that commodity, which was then very high in England; whence, the admiral obtained the surname of Robert Mendmarket. ‡

Whenever the French affairs were in a tolerable condition, they were constantly forming schemes to the prejudice of the English, which, generally speaking, were defeated by the breaking out of their own domestic troubles. King Henry, therefore, wisely held intelligence with both the factions in that kingdom, aiding sometimes the one, and sometimes the other. Thus, he this year, sent a considerable body of auxiliaries to the assistance of the duke of Burgundy, with whom they entered Paris. The service they did, made it so evident, that the king of

\* Hall, fol. 26. Grafton, p. 431. Stowe, p. 334.

† T. Otterbourne, p. 264. Chron. Godstovian, p. 134. Cooper's chronicle, fol. 254. Hall, fol. 28.

‡ Hall, fol. 26. Stowe, p. 338. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 536.

England's assistance was the surest method of turning the balance in favour of any party in France; that the opposite faction, headed by the dukes of Berry and Orleans, sent their agents to London, who entered into a treaty with King Henry, by which, they acknowledged his right to the dutchy of Guyenne, and promised their homage to him for the lands and castles they held therein, and the king, on the other hand, undertook to send them a considerable succour, which he performed.\* These troops embarked in the month of July, 1412, under the command of Thomas, duke of Clarence, the king's son. It appears, by our histories, that great expectations were raised by this expedition; insomuch, that there was some talk of recovering France: but these notions quickly appeared to be very ill founded; for, upon the landing of the duke of Clarence, with his troops, in Normandy, they were informed, that the duke of Orleans, and the rest of the princes, to whose assistance they came, had made a treaty with the king and the duke of Burgundy; so that nothing was left for them but to go home again. The duke of Clarence, justly provoked by such usage, first ravaged Lower Normandy, and Anjou, and, then entering the dutchy of Orleans, lived there at discretion, till such time as the duke came to an agreement of allowing three hundred and twenty thousand crowns of gold for the expenses of their voyage, part of which he paid down, and sent his brother into England, as an hostage for the rest.† This treaty was particular with the duke of Orleans: for, as to the war with France, it still went on, and Sir John Pendergast, who commanded the fleet in the narrow seas, took a great many French ships, laden with provision; which, says my author, got him little

A.D.  
1412.

\* Rymer's *foedera*, vol. viii. p. 733. Duplex, tom. ii. p. 699. P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 500, 501. T. Otterbourne, p. 268—270.

† P. Æmyle, p. 607. Gaguin, p. 194. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 181. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 540. Hall, fol. 31, 32.



reputation with the nobles, but much love from the people, who, by this means, enjoyed plenty of French commodities at a very cheap rate. This admiral had, some years before, felt the severe effects of that envy which was borne him by the nobility; for having had the command of a squadron intended to scour the seas from pirates and privateers, which he worthily performed, yet, when he returned, a complaint was made, that himself had taken such extraordinary rewards for his services, as rendered him little better than a pirate. Upon this, he took sanctuary at Westminster, where, for some time, he lay in a tent in the church-porch; but at last, he had justice done him; and now, when his country required the service of a stout and able seaman, he was called again to command.\* Things being in this uncertain state, King Henry, worn out by continual labours, and not a little grieved by his late disappointments, deceased, as is generally said, of a leprosy, on the 20th of March, 1413, in the 46th year of his age, and the 14th of his reign.† He was a monarch (even his enemies allow) of great courage and wisdom; and, if he did not promote trade and naval power so much as some of his predecessors, it ought rather to be ascribed to the disorder of those times, than to any want, either of will or capacity in the prince.‡

A.D.  
1413.

HENRY V. from his birth-place, styled Henry of Monmouth, succeeded his father; and, in the beginning of his reign, shewed a laudable inclination to do all that could be expected from him for his people's good.§ It happened, that the wealth and state, as well as the pride and

\* T. Walsinghami Ypodigma Neustriae, p. 571. T. Otterbourne, p. 271. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 530.

† T. Walsingham, p. 382. Chron. Godstovian, p. 135. W. Wyrcester, annales, p. 452. Stowe, p. 342.

‡ P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 507.

§ Thom. de Elmham, vita & gesta Henrici quinti Anglorum regis, cap. xiv. Tit. Liv. in vit. Henry V. p. 6. Chronicon Godstovian, p. 136.

ambition of the clergy, had raised a strong spirit of resentment against them throughout the nation; to divert which, it is generally believed, that the archbishop of Canterbury inspired the king with an eager desire of subduing France, to which, it was no difficult matter to persuade him that he had a clear right. Indeed, the condition that kingdom was in, might seem to invite such an attempt. The king was oftener out of than in his senses: the whole nation was divided into two factions; the duke of Burgundy at the head of one, and the duke of Orleans at the other: two Dauphins died, one soon after the other, by poison; and the third was but a child. However, King Henry concealed his design for some time, and even treated of a marriage between himself and the Princess Catharine, daughter to King Charles VI. In 1415, the French king sent his ambassador hither, with very advantageous proposals, who had their final audience of the king on July 6; when, if Father Daniel is to be believed, Henry would have been content to have concluded a truce for fifty years; but the archbishop of Bourges insisted absolutely on a definite peace, and so these negotiations were broken.\* Some of our writers mention a strange story of the dauphin's provoking the king, by sending him a present of tennis-balls; which, however, is very improbable, considering the youth of that prince, and the known apprehension all France had of the English power. The French writers seem to give a better account of this matter: they tell us that the first flash of lightning before this dreadful storm, was an angry letter written to the French king, with this address: "To the most serene Prince Charles, our cousin and adversary of France; Henry, by the grace of God, king of England and of France, &c." This letter was dated July 28, from Southampton: and the French king returned an answer in the same angry style, dated the 23d of the next month; so that, thenceforward, the war,

A.D.  
1415.

\* Histoire de France, tom. v. p. 536. Tit. Liv. vit. Hen. V. p. 6.

though not actually begun, was looked upon, as declared on both sides.\*

A.D.  
1415.

King Henry acted with greater caution, and with more military prudence than most of his predecessors. The design he had formed, was not that of ravaging the country, or seizing some of the provinces of France, but making an entire and absolute conquest of the whole realm; which he knew was not to be undertaken without a numerous army, a very great fleet, and these constantly supported by competent supplies of money. He, therefore, drew together six thousand men at arms, twenty-four thousand archers, the rest of his infantry completing the army to, at least, fifty thousand men. That these might be transported with the greater conveniency, he hired, from Holland and Zealand, abundance of large ships; which, with those belonging to his own subjects, rendezvoused in the month of August at Southampton, where the whole fleet appeared to consist of no less than sixteen hundred sail. As to supplies, his parliament being wrought, more especially by the arts of the clergy, into an high opinion of this expedition, furnished him liberally: so that, with all the advantages he could desire, the king embarked his mighty army, which he landed safely in Normandy, without meeting with any resistance.† He was attended by his brothers, the dukes of Clarence and Gloucester, his uncle, the duke of York, and most of the nobility of England.‡ It is remarkable, that though the constable of France had a very numerous army, with which he might well have disputed the landing of the English, yet he chose to retire; for which conduct of his, he was afterwards questioned in a court-martial: but, he justified himself, by producing his

\* Mezeray, vol. iii. p. 192. Thom. de Elmham, p. 29, 30. Fabian, p. 390. Hall, fol. 9. b. Grafton, p. 448, 449.

† T. Otterbourne, p. 276. W. Wyrester Annal. p. 453. Chron. Godstovian, p. 136. T. Walsinghami Ypodigma Neustriæ, p. 582.

‡ Thom. de Elmham, cap. xviii. Tit. Liv. p. 7. Polydor. Virgil. lib. xxii. Speed, p. 630.



orders from court, directing him not to hazard a battle on any terms whatever, but to leave the English, if they were so inclined, to waste their force in long marches, and tedious sieges. Would to God, says my author, this maxim had been as steadily pursued as it was wisely laid down!\* The policy of France, therefore, is to cheat us whenever they make peace, and to destroy us when we break with them by means of a dilatory war; which, though troublesome to them, becomes soon insupportable to us; and thus their cunning gives them advantages, which they never could derive from the force of their arms.

The first enterprize of importance undertaken by the king, was the siege of Harfleur, a sea-port town of great consequence at that juncture; well fortified, and in which, the French had a numerous garrison. It was invested both by land and sea; and though it was defended with great resolution, it was at last taken, for want of relief. The French, however, succeeded in their policy thus far, that by this siege, the English army was exceedingly wasted; insomuch, that, by the time the place was taken, one half of it was absolutely destroyed. On due consideration of this, it was resolved, in a council of war, to leave a garrison of English at Harfleur, and to march through Picardy to Calais, with the rest of the army.† This passage appeared extremely dangerous, since the French army was, by this time, not only in the field, but also at their heels. The English forces, according to the French writers, consisted of two thousand men at arms, and eleven thousand archers. Our authors say, there were but nine thousand in the whole; whereas, the French were, at least, three, if not five times their number. To prevent the needless effusion of blood, King Henry was contented to have made peace on very reasonable terms; but this

A.D.  
1415‡

\* Histoire de France, tom. v. p. 538.

† Thom. de Elmham, cap. xxii. et seq. Tit Liv. p. 11—15. T. Walsingham, p. 391, 392. Stowe, p. 348, 349. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 552. Speed, p. 631.

was refused by the French, who flattered themselves, that they should be able to make him and all his army, prisoners.\* In consequence of this obstinacy of theirs, a decisive battle was fought on October 25, A. D. 1415, in the plains of Agincourt; wherein, the French were entirely defeated by the English, through the bravery of their troops, says Father Daniel, and the wise conduct of their officers.† There fell in the field, seven princes of the blood, and five were made prisoners, the flower of the nobility of France, no less than eight thousand gentlemen, and about ten thousand common men; about fourteen thousand being taken prisoners. The English lost, as our writers alledge, about four, the French say sixteen hundred; and amongst them, the duke of York and the earl of Oxford.‡ A French manuscript § of that time, mentions a circumstance, no where else so particularly recorded, viz. that King Henry lost his baggage, even to his crown and jewels; a great body of peasants having forced the English camp, during the heat of the engagement. Father Daniel says, very judiciously, that nothing but arrogance, imprudence, and temerity, were visible in the conduct of the French: whereas, the English behaved with the utmost coolness and address, as well as the most determined valour. || After this victory, the king continued his march to Calais; and in a short time, passed into England with the chief of his

\* Tit. Liv. p. 15. Dupleix, tom. ii. p. 712. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 193. P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 540. Speed, p. 631.

† Histoire de France, tom. v. p. 541, 542.

‡ Thom. de Elmham, cap. xxvii—xxix. Tit. Liv. v. p. 17—20. The Batayll of Agynk Corte, an ancient MS. in rhyme, in the Cotton. library. Vitellius, D. xii. 11. fol. 214. Mezeray, Stowe, &c.

§ This MS. is of those times, and is in the library of the Abbe Baluze. It seems to be a kind of factum for the seigneur de Gaucourt, against the seigneur d'Etouteville. The former of these gentlemen was taken in Harfleur; and, to procure his liberty, traced out the effects belonging to the king, so that most of them were recovered.

|| Histoire de France, tom. v. p. 546.

prisoners: the next year, the French had leisure to recover themselves a little, notwithstanding a new misfortune that befel them, little inferior to that of the loss of this battle; for the duke of Burgundy pushed his resentment so far; as to make a treaty with King Henry, and to acknowledge him for king of France; as appears by his letters and treaties, which are preserved in Mr. Rymer's most valuable collection.\*

A.D.  
1416.

The first attempt of the French, for the repair of their late dishonour, was their besieging Harfleur by land and sea. In order to this, they made a treaty with the Genoese; who, in consideration of large subsidies, furnished them with a very considerable fleet, in which were many vessels of an extraordinary size; by the same prevailing argument, the French also drew considerable succours from the king of Castile; and, having thus raised for the present a great maritime force, they attempted Southampton and the Isle of Wight, but without success; after which, their fleet returned again to the siege, or rather, blockade of Harfleur. The place was gallantly defended by the earl of Dorset, whom the king had appointed governor there; but, at last, he was brought to such straits, that, without relief, it was evident the town must have been lost. King Henry directed, therefore, an army of twenty thousand men to be drawn together; and, having embarked them on board a fleet of four hundred sail, sent them under his brother John, duke of Bedford, to attack the French navy. This service he performed with courage and conduct; for, having gained the advantage of the wind, he attacked the French with such vigour, that, after a long and bloody dispute, he entirely defeated them, taking or sinking five hundred sail, and amongst them three of those large ships which had been furnished by the Genoese, and which, by the French and their Ita-

\* Fodera, vol. ix.



lian allies, it was believed the English would not have had courage enough to engage. Not long after, the French army retired from before Harfleur, and the earl of Dorset, with his garrison, which was now reinforced, made excursions through all Normandy. \* In 1417, the earl of Huntingdon being sent to sea with a strong squadron, met with the united fleets of France and Genoa, which he fought and defeated, though they were much superior to him, not only in number, but in the strength and size of their ships; taking the bastard of Bourbon, who was the French admiral, prisoner, with four large Genoese ships, and on board them a quarter's pay for the whole navy; so great in those days, and so well directed too was the English power at sea! †

There being now sufficient security for the safe landing of troops in France, the king, in the spring of the year, began to make mighty preparations for passing the sea, with such an army as might speedily and effectually decide the fate of this dispute, by giving him the possession of that country, as well as the title. As he was a more prudent undertaker in these matters than any of his predecessors, and bid infinitely fairer for both getting and keeping the French crown than they ever did, it will be proper to give a succinct detail of this grand expedition; the rather, because it has a near connection with our subject, the dominion of the sea. His army consisted, in part, of troops in his own immediate pay, and, in part, of forces raised by his barons. Of the first, there were sixteen thousand, four hundred men; of the latter, nine thousand, one hundred, and twenty-seven; and, of this army, about a fourth part was horse. To transport them from Dover,

\* Thom. de Elmham, cap. xxxii. Tit. Liv. p. 25—31. T. Walsingham, p. 394. S. Dupleix. tom. ii. p. 719. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 196. P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 551, 552.

† Thom. de Elmham, cap. xxxvi. T. Otterbourne, p. 278. Stowe, p. 353. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 553.

a navy was prepared of one thousand, five hundred ships, of which two were very remarkable. They seem to have been both admirals, and were equally adorned with purple sails, embroidered with the arms of England and France; one was styled the King's Chamber, the other his hall; from whence it plainly appears, that he affected to keep his court upon the sea, and to make no difference between his palace and his ships royal. They embarked on July 28, and landed in Normandy, August 1. \* As soon as the army was safely disembarked, he dismissed his fleet, keeping only a few small vessels for transporting his artillery, which shewed, that he did not intend to return hastily, and before his business was half finished, into England. Before the end of the year, he totally subdued Normandy, and a great part of the adjacent countries. As fast as he reduced the great cities, he put garrisons into them; such of the French as submitted, he received into his protection; but, where he became master of countries by force, he bestowed the lands in them as he thought fit, for the encouragement of English adventurers; and, in the space of two years more, he, by a slow and regular war, reduced the greater part of France to his obedience, and, at length, forced the unfortunate monarch, Charles VI. to beg a peace almost upon any terms; † a thing that none of his ancestors had been able to accomplish, and which this king chiefly performed by awing his enemies with fleets on their coasts, at the same time that he invaded their countries by land, as appears in the larger histories of his life, by us often quoted, and in the English collections from them, published by Godwin, in his history of the life and reign of this victorious king.

A.D.  
1417.A.D.  
1418.

By this treaty, dated May 21, 1420, King Henry's title to the crown of France was acknowledged by general

A.D.  
1420.

\* Thom. de Elmham, cap. xxxviii. Tit. Liv. p. 31—33. T. Otterbourne, p. 279. Fabian, p. 396. Hall, fol. 23. b. Grafton, p. 464.

† P. Æmyle. p. 617, 618. Gaguin, p. 200. Dupleix, tom. ii. p. 735.



consent; and, on account of his espousing the Princess Catharine, daughter to Charles VI. it was stipulated, that he should be declared heir of France after the decease of King Charles; and, on account of his weakness and infirmity of mind, should govern the kingdom, during his life-time, with the title of regent.\* As for the dauphin, he was declared incapable of succeeding to the crown; and, afterwards, on a civil prosecution, he was attainted and convicted for the murder of the duke of Burgundy, (upon the precedent set in attainting King John,) rendered incapable of all successions, particularly that of the kingdom of France, and was also adjudged to perpetual banishment.† The two kings, Henry and Charles, with their two queens, and a splendid court, continued, for some time after these regulations were made, at Paris; from thence King Henry went into Normandy, where he held an assembly of the states; and, then, passing through Picardy to Calais, he came to Dover, with his new queen, on February 2, 1421.‡ The intent of this journey is very truly stated by the French historians, who say, that it was purely to obtain a fresh supply of treasure and men, his wars having already exhausted all that before this time had been transported thither,§ a circumstance worthy of attention!

A. D. 1421. As soon as the king's design was answered, and he had obtained, notwithstanding the extreme poverty of the kingdom, a very large sum of money, he immediately

\* Thom. de Elmham, cap. xc—xcii. Tit. Liv. p. 85, & seq. Mezeray, vol. iii. p. 209. Le Gendre, tom. iii. p. 628. Rymer's *Fœdera*, tom. 9. p. 394. Stowe, p. 360. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 573. Spced, p. 641.

† See remarks on this treaty, and on King Henry's causing coin to be struck, on which he is styled *Rex Francorum*. *Histoire de France par Pere Daniel*, tom. v. p. 583, 585.

‡ Thom. de Elmham, cap. cviii, cix. Tit. Liv. p. 91. *Chron. Godstovian*, p. 143.

§ Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 211.



recruited his army; and, having ordered a considerable fleet to be drawn together, passed over into France, leaving Queen Catharine behind big with child. The dauphin, Charles, had still a considerable party, many strong towns, as well as some large provinces, under his obedience; and, during King Henry's stay in England, had acquired both power and reputation, by defeating a great part of the English army, killing the duke of Clarence, and several other persons of great distinction, on the spot; which moved King Henry, at his return, to use his utmost diligence in the prosecution of the war, that the kingdom might be entirely reduced, and the dauphin compelled to withdraw, for his personal safety, into Italy. \* While he was thus employed, the queen, who remained at Windsor, brought him a son; and, as soon as she was able to travel, followed him into France, where she had an interview with her father, at Paris; in which city, both courts continued for some time; but, the king, ever vigilant and active, in the month of June took the field, in order to raise the siege of Cosne, on the Loire, before which the dauphin lay. In this expedition, he harassed himself so much, that he found a great alteration in his health, which hitherto had been, apparently at least, almost unprejudiced by his fatigues. Through his want of rest, and still continuing an assiduous application to business, an inflammatory fever followed, which proved fatal to him at Vincennes, the French writers say, on the twenty-eighth, our authors, on the last of August, 1422. † He enjoyed his senses to the very last, and died with as much glory as he had lived, employing his last breath in giving such directions

A.D.  
1422.

\* Thom. de Elmham, cap. cxvii, & seq. Tit. Liv. p. 92. T. Walsingham, p. 404. P. Æmyle, p. 618. Gaguin, p. 201. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 213. P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 593, 594.

† T. Walsingham, p. 407. Thom. de Elmham, cap. cxxvii. Tit. Liv. p. 95. W. Wyrcester, Annal. p. 455. Dupleix, tom. ii. p. 754. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 214. Stowe, p. 362. Speed, p. 648.

as were necessary for the safety of both his kingdoms; and experience shewed, that, if his rules had been strictly and steadily pursued, his family might have been as much indebted, for the preservation of France, to his wisdom, as they were for the possession thereof to his courage and conduct. He was indisputably one of the best and greatest, as well as bravest princes that ever sat on the English throne; and would, in all probability, have provided effectually for the peace and prosperity of his English subjects, if he had lived to finish his wars. As it was, he performed a great deal in so short a reign as nine years and a half, considering also, that he was but in the thirty-fourth year of his age when he died.

It may be supposed, that the dominion of the sea was fully maintained under so enterprising a prince, and one who was so remarkably jealous of his rights; I say, this might have been well supposed, though there had been no express evidence of it; which, however, is far from being wanting. He took occasion to have his title and authority in this respect mentioned in the preambles to acts of parliament;\* he maintained strong squadrons at sea, and on the coasts, humbled all the maritime powers of Europe in his time, on account of the succours they gave the French, and thereby drew great advantages to his subjects, especially from the trade of Flanders, which, by a close alliance with the duke of Burgundy, he in a manner absolutely secured to them. Yet, for all this, the nation was excessively distressed, as well through the interruption of foreign commerce, as by the immense taxes levied upon them for the support of his wars; insomuch, that in the eighth year of his reign, his chancellor bewailed to him in parliament the feebleness and poverty of the people, as himself expressed it, and besought him to apply the only remedy which could preserve them from ruin, a

\* Selden's *Mare Clausum*, lib. ii. cap. xxiii.



speedy peace, and putting a stop to his expenses; which the king promised; and, indeed, he could not but be sensible of the truth of what the chancellor said, since he had been obliged to pawn his own imperial crown of gold to Henry, bishop of Winchester, for what in these days would be thought a very inconsiderable sum of money.\* All this he did to obtain his French dominions, which, in his son's time, the wisest men in England thought more expedient to lose than keep, time and experience having always justified this fundamental maxim of English policy, that the subjects wealth can have no other source than trade, and the majesty of the crown no better support than a firm trust in the people's love, and, in consequence of their extensive commerce, a constant, as well as superior power at sea. This is the voice of nature in making our country an island; the dictates of sound reason, shew, that all force is lessened by an unnecessary extension; and this lesson is taught us, not only by our history in general, but by the occurrences under every reign; the reader, therefore, must not be surprised to find me frequently inculcating what ought always to be remembered, and what at every turn, notwithstanding we are, alas! but too apt to forget.

HENRY VI. from the place of his birth, styled, Henry of Windsor, succeeded his father, before he was a year old, under the tuition of his uncles, all men of great experience and abilities. † Of these, Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, was protector of England; Thomas, duke of Exeter, had the custody of the king's person; and John, duke of Bedford, was regent of France. It was not long before Henry became king of France, as well as of England; for, the French king, Charles VI. dying on Octo-

A.D.  
1422.

\* Sir Robert Cotton's answers to reasons for foreign wars, p. 59.

† Thom. de Elmham, cap. exxix. Tit. Liv. p. 95. Chron. Godstovian, p. 145. T. Walsingham, p. 407.



ber 21, 1422, he was proclaimed at Paris, though the French immediately owned the dauphin, who was now called Charles VII.\* In the beginning of his reign, things went better than could well have been expected under an infant prince; for, Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, took care to supply his brother, in France, both with money and men; and, the duke of Bedford, on his side, taking all imaginable methods to preserve the friendship of the dukes of Burgundy and Brittany, maintained himself, by their assistance, in the possession of all the dominions which were left to his son by King Henry V.; and, if the same union had continued, must have constantly preserved them; for, the French king, Charles, was never strong enough to have dealt with such confederates; but, it was not long before this harmony was dissolved. The duke of Gloucester, who was protector of England, took Jaqueline, dutchess of Hainault, from her husband, the duke of Brabant, married her, and, in her right, pretended to large dominions in the Low Countries, which he sought to recover by the help of an English fleet and army. These measures disgusted the duke of Burgundy, who was extremely concerned for what had happened to his cousin the duke of Brabant; and, resenting his ill usage and dishonour, became, thenceforward, disaffected to the English, and shortly after totally deserted them.† On November 6, 1429, King Henry was crowned king in England; and, in the latter end of 1431, he was crowned king of France, at Paris, where he remained for two years; yet, during that space, his affairs rather declined than amended; and, after his departure, and the death of his uncle, the wise and brave duke of Bedford, which happened in 1435, they

\* Dupleix, tom. ii. p. 756. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 215. Le Gendre, tom. iv. p. 1. Stowe, p. 363. Speed, p. 651.

† Dupleix, tom. ii. p. 784, 785. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 236, 237. Le Gendre, tom. iv. p. 6.

fell into a rapid decay, so that they grew daily worse and worse\*

In the succeeding year, the duke of York was named regent of France; but, being hated by many of the great men in England, he was so disappointed in the supplies which he should have carried over into that kingdom, that, before his arrival, Paris fell into the hands of the French. The duke of Burgundy also, in the month of July, laid siege to the town of Calais with very great forces, which obliged the lord-protector to think of relieving it from England: accordingly, he raised a potent army, which he embarked on board a fleet of five hundred sail, and, landing near Calais, marched directly to fight the enemy. The Flemings, however, raised the siege precipitately, and retired into their own territories, whither the regent pursued them with his army; and, after living in the country at discretion, for some time, he returned again into England.† Towards the latter end of the year 1437, the earl of Warwick was sent regent into France, in the room of the duke of York, and, which is very remarkable, was shipped and unshipped seven times before he made his voyage: he dying shortly after, the duke of York was sent again in his place, where, notwithstanding these supplies, the English affairs continually declined; so that, in 1445, a peace was concluded, and King Henry was content, on very mean conditions, to marry a French princess, whose name was Margaret, the daughter of the duke of Anjou, much to the displeasure of the nation, and which was attended with the worst consequences imaginable. A lingering war, and an insidious peace, had deprived the English of all their conquests in France, except Calais, and a very few other

A.D.  
1436.A.D.  
1437.A.D.  
1445.A.D.  
1451.

\* Chron. Godstovian, p. 145. W. Wyrcester, annal. p. 455—457. Cooper's chronicle, p. 258, 259.

† P. Æmyle, p. 624, 625. Gaguin, p. 217, 218. Dupleix, tom. ii. p. 810—812. Polydor. Virgil. lib. xxiii. p. 619, 620.



places; and, though the nation was sensible of the mighty expense which attended the keeping them, yet they saw, with grief, the loss of cities and provinces purchased, and so dearly! with the blood and the treasure also of their ancestors.\*

A.D.  
1457.

The French were not content with this; but, having still in view, the reduction of the English power, they meditated, even in a time of peace, a descent upon this kingdom, which they afterwards executed. As this is a matter chiefly respecting the naval history of England, I think myself not only at liberty, but even obliged, to set it in the clearest light. The reigning French king, Charles VII. was, without question, one of the wisest men, and one of the ablest princes of his age; he saw, with terror, the English power at sea, and with shame, his own incapacity to dispute therewith. In order to remedy this, he made a treaty, offensive and defensive, with Christiern I. king of Denmark, by virtue of which, that prince was obliged to furnish him, on certain conditions, with at least forty good ships, and between six and seven thousand men, to be employed against England: yet, by another article in this treaty, this, for which alone, it was made, was entirely defeated. The French king had engaged, that the then king of Scots should give satisfaction to the Danes, with whom he had long had a difference; and, not being able to bring this to bear, the Danes refused to furnish any auxiliaries. In the mean time, the queen of England, like a true French woman, had entered into a secret negotiation with the king of Scots; and, finding that he was like to be too hard pressed by the English, she thought a French invasion might at once serve her purposes, and save her friends. With this view, she applied herself to her relations in France, who easily prevailed upon the court, to enter

\* Rymer's foedera, vol. xi. p. 59. Stowe, p. 383. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 624. Speed, p. 661.



into this measure. A fleet, accordingly, was fitted out in Normandy, and in the month of August, 1457, they made a descent on the coast of Kent, and disembarked one thousand, eight hundred men, about two leagues from Sandwich; to which place, they had orders to march by land, while the fleet attacked it by sea. † We have a very circumstantial relation of this whole affair, in Father Daniel's history; and, indeed, I think a more distinct account than any I have met with of the like nature in our historians. He owns, however, that the English, notwithstanding their being surprised, defended themselves with incomparable valour, and that, though the town was burnt and pillaged at last, yet it cost a great deal of blood, which might, perhaps, balance the booty acquired by it. The reflection he makes upon it is a little partial. "Thus," says he, "a prince, whom the English, thirty years before, called in contempt, king of Bourges, was now powerful enough to insult them in their own island, and to menace their country with the same mischiefs which they had heretofore brought upon France."\* As if there had been no difference between surprising the town of Sandwich, that was quitted the next day, and the gaining possession of Paris, and keeping it for many years. However, his zeal for his country, may well excuse a greater error than this.

The French made also some other attempts upon the coast, and the Scots entered and plundered the borders: † but these accidents, far from producing the effects which the queen and her partizans expected, served only to heighten that general disaffection which now began to discover itself; and from whence, it was but too visible, that the councils of this French queen would undo the pious, innocent, well-meaning prince, her husband. The

\* P. Daniel, tom. vi. p. 292. Fabian, p. 462. Hall, fol. 88. a. Grafton, p. 630.

† Duplex, tom. ii. Buchanan, lib. xi. Hall, fol. 89. b.

A.D.  
1458.

favourers of the house of York, had, with infinite pains, cultivated an interest with the sea-faring people, and amongst the inhabitants of Ireland. The former, they persuaded, that all attention to the coasts was neglected, and into the latter, they infused the strongest resentment of their present oppressions and apprehensions of final destruction. The famous earl of Warwick, the then great support of the house of York, had procured himself to be made admiral; and to shew his diligence in that office, and his concern for the English honour, caused several squadrons to put to sea, to the officers of which, he gave such instructions as he thought proper. One of these squadrons, on Trinity Sunday, 1458, fell in with the Spanish fleet, who, treating them as enemies, they quickly and warmly returned their hostilities, and after a long and sharp dispute, took six of their ships, laden with iron and other merchandize, and either sunk or drove on shore, twenty-six more.\* This exploit, many of our historians confound with that which follows, and which was subsequent thereto in point of time. Though we cannot exactly fix its date, yet, by a certain circumstance, it unquestionably appears they were distinct enterprizes, the former being performed only by ships of the earl of Warwick, whereas, the latter was by him atchieved in person.†

This great nobleman had, by authority of parliament, been appointed captain of Calais; but the queen having, with much artifice and flattery, drawn him to court, thought to have prevented his going back to his charge, by procuring him to be suddenly murdered. An attempt of this sort was actually made in the palace, from which the earl narrowly escaped, and flying immediately to a

\* Fabian, p. 464. Stowe, p. 404. Speed, p. 668.

† Compare the accounts given by Mr. Burchet and Echard with that of Rapin, and with the relation of the succeeding story in Hollingshed.



little vessel he had in the river, he therein transported himself to Calais, where he had a very strong squadron of stout ships. With fourteen sail of these, he shortly after put to sea, in order to scour the coasts, and to hinder the queen from receiving any succours from France, as also to aid, if occasion should so require, the duke of York and his party. It so fell out, that, sailing through the channel, he met with five very large ships, richly laden; three of these were Genoese, and two Spanish; he attacked them, though they were exceedingly well provided both with men and ammunition, as appeared by their defending themselves two days; at length, however, they were beaten, two escaping by flight, and the other three falling into his hands, were carried into Calais, where their cargoes, valued at upwards of ten thousand pounds, were converted into money, to the great profit of the inhabitants of that place. In this engagement the earl lost about fifty men, and the enemy near a thousand.\*

Thenceforward, there were scarcely any measures kept; the duke of York retiring into Ireland, and many of the principal nobility to Calais, where the earl of Warwick still kept a great fleet, and had besides such an interest in all the sea-faring people of England, that the king found it impossible to make use even of the little naval power that remained, against this formidable lord. The queen, however, sent down the Lord Rivers to Sandwich, with directions to equip as strong a squadron as he possibly could, in order to deprive the earl of Warwick of his government of Calais; but when these ships were almost ready, the earl sent Sir John Dineham, an officer of his, who surprised this squadron in port, and not only carried away all their ships, but also their commander, Richard Lord Rivers, and Anthony Woodville, his son, who remained long prisoners at Calais. † After this, one

\* Stowe, p. 404. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 648. Speed, p. 668.

† Fabian, p. 465—467. Hall, fol. 91. Grafton, p. 635, 639.



Sir Baldwin Fulford undertook to burn the earl's fleet in the haven of Calais, which quickly appeared to be but a vain enterprize. At last, the duke of Exeter being made admiral, and having information that the earl of Warwick had sailed with his fleet for Ireland, stood to sea with the royal navy to intercept him; but when the earl of Warwick's fleet appeared, the sailors on board the king's shewed so much coldness, that it was not judged safe to fight; and the earl of Warwick, on the other hand, being tender of the lives of his countrymen, and unwilling to destroy any of the king's fleet, passed by without molesting them. But he did not afterwards shew the same moderation, when, on an invitation from the Kentish men, he resolved to make a descent in their country; for Sir Simon Mountford, being then warden of the cinque ports, and lying with a very strong squadron at Sandwich, to oppose his landing, he attacked, defeated, and destroyed the greatest part of them; and amongst the rest, Sir Simon himself perished.\* After this, little remarkable happened in naval affairs, during the remainder of this long, but unfortunate reign, which ended strangely; for, after the duke of York had been defeated and killed in battle, his son Edward, earl of March, by the assistance of the earl of Warwick, made himself master of the city of London; where, by the general consent of the nation, he was acknowledged for their lawful prince, and King Henry deposed, after holding, though very unsteadily, the English crown near thirty-nine years.†

LET US NOW proceed, as we did at the close of the last chapter, to some commercial observations on events that happened within this period. Upon the great revolution in the government, made by deposing King Richard, and

\* Stowe, p. 407. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 652. Speed, 669.

† Hall, fol. 101. b. Grafton, 656, 657. Cooper's Chronicle. Polydor. Virgil, lib. xxiii.

setting up his cousin, Henry of Bolingbroke, the parliament desired that the new king would resume whatever had been profusely thrown away, either in the dotage of Edward III. or by King Richard II. in the wantonness of his youth, and this with a view that the king might be the better able to live upon his own, without having recourse continually to impositions upon his subjects. This good as well as reasonable advice, however, had not such an effect as was expected; for Henry IV. received frequent supplies from parliament; and, in the eighth year of his reign, such a tax was imposed, as, to prevent the knowledge of it, or rather of the manner of raising it from coming to posterity, the house of commons desired, that after the accounts of such as had received it were once examined, they should be destroyed, that what they had been moved to by their zeal for once, might not pass into a precedent for succeeding times. The great exportation of wool, upon which, from time to time, he had considerable subsidies given him, must have made a very large addition to his revenue; and in this respect, for reasons with which we are unacquainted, he very much favoured the Italians, allowing them to export wool, paying no higher a tax than his own subjects.

The coin, in his time, received no alteration whatever; but in the second year of his reign, he was obliged to prohibit a kind of base coin, which had gained a currency through his dominions, to the great prejudice of his subjects. These were brought from abroad, chiefly on board the Genoese galleys, and were from thence called galley-halfpence. About two years afterwards, he directed new money to be coined, but precisely after the old standard, in respect as well to fineness as weight.

After all the care and pains used to settle the revenue in the former reign, by which, no doubt, it was much improved; King Henry V. found his income but very limited; even with the assistance of his customs, the



revenue of Wales and Cornwall, and the casual profits arising to the crown: for in the third year of his reign, it did not amount to quite fifty-seven thousand pounds *per annum*; and therefore to augment this, upon the petition of the commons, he took ten thousand pounds a year out of the pensions that were then subsisting.

All the vast supplies that he received for carrying on the war with France, were swallowed up in that war: and the absence of the king with the principal nobility, the frequent embargoes upon shipping, and the gradual declension of commerce, brought the nation lower, and made the people poorer than they had been at any time within the remembrance of persons living in that age. He made very few laws relating to trade, which I do not mention at all to his discredit; but only to shew that commerce was then much sunk: for when it was brisk and lively, petitions to parliament were frequent, and these were commonly attended to, and were of course followed with statutes; and when any of these, as it very often happened from very different causes, were found inconvenient, they were by new laws repealed.

This monarch found it necessary, in the ninth year of his reign, to raise the value of silver, from two shillings and a penny, to two shillings and sixpence per ounce: but it does not appear that he debased the coin; on the contrary, he prohibited the currency of suskins and doitkins, which had been brought in by foreigners. This king, after his victory at Agincourt, and peace with France, ordered a silver coin to be struck, with this style or inscription, *Rex Angliæ regens, & hæres Franciæ*; i. e. king of England, regent and heir of France. A gold coin, called a *salus* or salute, of the alloy of sterling, value twenty-two shillings, with the angel saluting the Virgin Mary on one side, the one holding the arms of England, and the other the arms



of France, with the king's titles, and *Christus vincit*, *Christus signat*, *Christus imperat*, on the reverse. But in the next reign, this silver coin, which was called a blanch, or white money, to distinguish it from the salus, or yellow money, coined at the same time in France, being found not to be so fine as it ought to have been, that is, not of the alloy of sterling; was also prohibited by order of the parliament in 1423.

The reign of Henry VI. was a continued series of profusion and mismanagement; so that when he had sat upon the throne twenty-eight years, his ordinary revenue was sunk to five thousand pounds *per annum*, and he owed at that time, three hundred and seventy-two thousand pounds. This occasioned a resumption at the request of the commons, and the same remedy for the same causes was repeated over and over again, but without any great effect. He mortgaged the customs of London and Southampton, to the cardinal of Winchester, and engaged by an indenture for bettering his security, to turn the trade chiefly to those ports. In the thirty-first year of his reign, he seized all the tin at Southampton, and sold it for his own use; he granted licenses to foreign merchants, to transport wool, notwithstanding the statutes; he raised the price of silver to three shillings and three halfpence an ounce; but it does not appear he debased the coin, unless the making of brass money in Ireland can be so called, which he certainly did.

It appears from our records, that while the house of Lancaster possessed the throne, extraordinary favour was shewn to the Hanse-towns; the inhabitants of which had great privileges granted to them here, and were thereby enabled to engross, or, as they styled it, to manage a good part of our trade: \* the rest was in a

\* Molloy de jure maritimo, p. 341.

manner absorbed by Florentines, and other Italians; \* which was partly owing to the necessities of Henry V. during his French wars, and partly also to the weak administration under his son, especially in the latter part of his reign, when, through the influence of the queen, the interest of foreigners, a fit interest for an intriguing busy woman to support, was constantly promoted. This occasioned frequent tumults in the city of London, and was one great cause of that strange revolution in favour of the house of York; who, as we before observed, made their court to the people, by shewing a strong aversion to strangers, and by cherishing the seamen, of whom little care had been taken in this last reign. How things instantly changed after King Henry's deposition, and how the English resumed again the sovereignty of the sea, will be shewn in the next chapter, from foreign writers as well as our own.

\* Fabian, p. 459. Hall, fol. 87. b. Grafton, Stowe, and the rest of our old historians; who discourse very copiously on this subject.

## CHAP. VII.

The Naval History of England during the Reigns of Edward IV.  
Edward V. and Richard III. of the House of York.

(Containing the space of about 25 Years.)

**E**DWARD IV. son to Richard, duke of York, and, by his grandmother, heir to Lionel, duke of Clarence, third son of King Edward III. and consequently prior in title to the line of Lancaster, whose ancestor was John of Gaunt, fourth son to the same King Edward, assumed the crown on March 4, 1461, being then about twenty years of age.\* He was compelled to fight for his crown, before he had well put it on; and though, in the battle of Towton, which was fought on Palm-Sunday after his accession, he totally defeated King Henry, who was constrained to fly into Scotland, yet his queen, passing over into France, procured their assistance, under the command of the famous Peter de Breze, who, in the former reign, had taken Sandwich; but, through the affection which all the inhabitants of the sea-coast bore to the house of York, she was disappointed in her purpose, and forced, after entering Tinmouth-bay, to put again to sea, and retire that way into Scotland.† About this time, the earl of Kent, who was abroad with a stout navy, scoured all the coast, and, landing in Bretagne, with ten thousand men, took and burnt the town of Conquet, ravaged the island of Rhé, and carried off a great booty.‡

A.D.  
1461.

A.D.  
1462.

\* W. Wyrcester, Annal. p. 489. Hall, fol. 101. b. See the claim of Richard duke of York, in his speech to the House of Lords, in Hall, fol. 95. Grafton, p. 658.

† Fabian, p. 473, 493. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 666. Speed, p. 676.

‡ Grafton, p. 659. Stowe, p. 416. Rapin questions this fact, because not taken notice of by the French historians; which seems no just exception, while Bretagne was subject to its own duke.



This early care of the sea, shews the temper and genius of this prince, and how fit he was to sway the English sceptre; yet he treated his predecessor Henry but indifferently; causing him to be brought prisoner to the Tower, and there kept very strictly, though he was of a blameless life, and generally revered as a kind of saint by the people.\* The defection of the earl of Warwick, whose power had greatly contributed to gain him the crown, was very near taking it from Edward again; yet, whence that defection grew, is not easily known. I must confess, this is not properly my business; but, inasmuch as the great power of this earl of Warwick sprung from his being admiral and captain of Calais, it may not be amiss to remark the errors that are crept into almost all our histories concerning him; the rather because the matter is new, and not only affects our own, but some, also, of the most accurate among foreign historians.

The story we are told is, that the earl of Warwick was sent into France to treat of a marriage between King Edward and the Lady Bona, of Savoy, sister to the queen of France; and that, while he was absent on this embassy, the king married the Lady Grey, daughter to the Lord Rivers, by Jaqueline, dutchess of Bedford.† But, Mr. Hearne has published some memoirs of this reign, written by a person who not only lived therein, but was also well acquainted with the king, and the principal persons in his court.‡ He vouches the thing to be quite otherwise; and that this story was devised in after times to hide the truth. According to him, the earl of Warwick had not been in France before the king's marriage, which was on the 1st of May, 1463; but, four years afterwards, viz. in 1467, he was sent to treat with King Lewis, with whom he

\* Stowe, and all our abbey chronicles.

† Polyd. Virgil, lib. xxiv.

‡ Printed at the end of Thomæ Sprotti Chronica, 8vo. Oxford, 1719.

began to hold privately some intelligence, for the restoring King Henry, to whose party the French had always been inclined. \* Indeed, this seems to be the truth, and accords much better with facts and dates than the other story; since it is not easy to conceive, how a man of the earl of Warwick's violent temper, should dissemble his resentment so many years together. †

The true cause, therefore, of his quitting the king, was his immeasurable ambition, and the apprehensions he was under that the new queen's kindred would supplant him and his friends; and this, notwithstanding the great offices of which he was possessed, and which, as my author says, brought him twenty thousand merks *per annum*. ‡ The means he used to distress the king was, drawing off his brother, the duke of Clarence, whom he married to his own daughter, and then retired with him to Calais. On this occasion, the fleet stuck to the earl against the king, having been long under his command. This circumstance enabled him to return speedily into England, where he, and his son-in-law, the duke of Clarence, soon raised a powerful army, and marching to Warwick, surprised the king's forces, beat them, and took him prisoner. §

A.D.  
1469.

Edward, however, escaped shortly after, and drove the earl and duke to such distresses, that they were forced to join their party to that of the deposed King Henry; and even this helped them very little: for, after several disputes, in which the king had the better, the duke retired into France, and the earl went on board his fleet, with which he sailed to Calais; and

A.D.  
1470.

\* Anonymous Chronicle, just mentioned, p. 297—299.

† 1497.

‡ Ibid, p. 300.

§ Memoires de Philip de Comines, liv. iii. chap. iv. P. Daniel, tom. vi. p. 414. Polydor. Virgil. lib. xxiv. Stowe, p. 422. Edward was not taken prisoner, but embarked at Bishops-Lynne, in Norfolk, and landed near Alcomar, in Friezeland. There is great confusion in this part of Dr. Campbell's history, and what follows shews, that he has made two events of one.



being there refused entrance, put into several harbours in Normandy, where he met with all the favour and assistance he could desire, from the French king.\* While an army was providing to be, by the earl of Warwick, transported into England, part of his fleet cruized upon the Flemings, and took many of their ships, because the duke of Burgundy, their sovereign, sided with King Edward, whose sister he had married. The duke, to revenge this ill usage, drew together a great fleet, and, therewith sailing to the mouth of the Seine, blocked up the earl of Warwick's ships in their harbour. Towards the beginning of the month of September, 1470, the French king furnished the earl of Warwick, the duke of Clarence, and Queen Margaret, all now of one party, with great succours, not only of men, but of ships, which enabled them to force their passage: so that landing on the 13th of September, some at Plymouth, others at Dartmouth, they quickly drew together so great a strength, and withal brought so many of the king's court to desert him, that Edward fearing his person might be betrayed, fled with such of his friends, as he could best trust, to Lynn in Norfolk, and in getting thither ran very great hazards. † There, on the third of October, he embarked on board an English ship, and his friends on board two Dutch hulks, intending to have passed over into Flanders; but some ships, belonging to the Hanse towns, attacked him: nor was it without great difficulty that his small squadron got clear, and at last landed him safe in Zealand. His queen, whom he left big with child, and in the utmost distress, took shelter in the sanctuary at Westminster,

A.D.  
1470.

\* Philip de Comines, liv. iii. chap. v. Dupleix, tom. iii. p. 62, 63. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 314. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 674.

† Fabian, p. 500. Hall, fol. 17—19. Speed, p. 681. Philip de Comines, tom. i. p. 154.



where she brought forth her eldest son, afterwards the unfortunate Edward V.\*

As soon as the king's flight was known, Henry VI. was released from his imprisonment, and again seated on the throne; Edward proclaimed an usurper, and many of his favourites put to death as traitors; his own brother the duke of Clarence concurring in all these measures; for which the crown was entailed upon him and his heirs, in case the male line of King Henry should fail. † Edward, however, still kept up his spirits, and though he found himself disappointed in the only friend, to whom he trusted, his brother-in-law, Charles, duke of Burgundy, who durst not provoke both England and France, by openly assisting him; yet he resolved to venture, with the small train he had about him, and in a few ships which were lent him, to return into his own country. ‡ This was certainly acting like an English king, who ought rather to die in the field, asserting his right, than disgrace himself and his subjects, by living long as an exile in foreign parts.

A.D.  
1470.

His whole force consisted but in four ships of war, and fourteen transports, on board of which were embarked about two thousand men. § He intended to have landed in Norfolk, but a storm prevented him, and obliged him after some days tossing at sea, to run with a small squadron into the port of Ravenspur in Yorkshire, from whence he marched directly towards York, declaring at this time, as the first monarch of the Lancastrian line had done in the like case, that he sought no more than his inheritance as duke of York, and that he was content King Henry should wear the

A.D.  
1471.

\* Grafton, p. 688, 690. Stowe, p. 422. Cooper's chronicle, fol. 267.

† Fabian, p. 301. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 677. Speed, p. 681.

‡ Philip de Comines, tom. i. p. 163. P. Æmyle, p. 666. Habington's Hist of Edw. IV. in Kennet, vol. i. p. 447.

§ Hall, fol. 24. b. Stowe, p. 412. Gaugin, lib. x. p. 260, 261.

crown: but, as soon as he found himself at the head of a considerable army, he laid aside this pretence, resumed his royal title, and in the famous battle of Barnet\* defeated and killed the potent and ambitious earl of Warwick, who from his success acquired the surname of Make-king. † Shortly after he defeated Queen Margaret, and her son the prince of Wales, at Tewksbury, ‡ where the latter lost his life. §

In the mean time, the fleet was still in very bad hands. The bastard Fauconbridge, who commanded under the earl of Warwick, held it in the name of King Henry, but in reality to his own use. His first project was the taking and plundering of the city of London in the king's absence, in order to which he brought his ships into the mouth of the river Thames, and landed himself with 17,000 men, with whom he boldly attacked the place, and was as gallantly received, the citizens defending themselves with such resolution, that he was forced to retreat with great loss. || Soon after he gave up the fleet, and submitted himself to the king; who knighted him, and made him vice-admiral; which honour, however, he did not long enjoy; for, entering into some new intrigues, he was detected, and lost, very deservedly, his head. ¶

A.D.  
1474.

King Edward had no sooner settled affairs at home, and restored the peace and naval power of England, than he thought of revenging himself on the

\* April 14, 1471.

† Fabian, p. 503, 504. Hal. fol. 28, 29. Grafton, p. 703—705. Polydor. Virgil. Hist. lib. xxiv.

‡ May 5, 1471.

§ Stowe, p. 424. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 688. Speed, p. 684. Habington, p. 453.

|| This man's name was Thomas Nevil, son to Lord Fauconbridge, created by this king Edw. IV. earl of Kent. Hall, fol. 33. Speed, p. 685.

¶ Stowe, p. 424.

French for the trouble they had given him; for which a fair occasion offered, by the breaking out of a war between Lewis XI. and Charles duke of Burgundy.\* To the assistance of the latter, he passed over with a mighty army, attended by a fleet of five hundred sail, with which, in the month of July, 1475, he entered the road to Calais, where he disembarked his forces. This sufficiently shews the great maritime strength of England in these times, when the king, after such an unsettled state, and so many revolutions as had lately happened, was able in a year's space to undertake such an expedition as this, and that too with so great a force. †

When he came to take the field, however, he did not find that assistance from his allies which he expected; and therefore, though at the beginning he pretended to no less than the entire conquest of France, yet, on King Lewis's desiring to treat of peace, he was content to enter into a negociation, which ended much to his satisfaction, and all things considered, to the honour of the English nation; for the French king gave very large sums by way of present to the English soldiers, and discovered, by various other acts, such a terror at the English name, as might serve instead of many victories. ‡ This peace is generally styled the peace of Amiens, from the place where it was treated; and the curious reader may find it at large in Rymer's collection, § as well as some remarkable circumstances relating thereto in Philip de Comines, and in the most authentic of the French writers. ||

A.D.  
1475.

\* Philip de Comines, liv. iv. ch. v. P. Æmyle, p. 669. Gaguin, lib. x. p. 267.

† Fabian, p. 508. Grafton, p. 719. Cooper's chronicle, fol. 267. b. Polydor. Virgil. lib. xxiv.

‡ Duplex, tom. iii. p. 87. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 327. P. Daniel, tom. vi. p. 461—463.

§ Foedera, tom. xii. p. 17.

|| Philip de Comines, liv. iv. Gaguin, lib. x. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 327, 328.



In consequence of this treaty, the king received an annual pension from France, of 50,000 crowns, which he looked upon, not without reason, as a kind of tribute; and applied a great part of it to the repair of his navy, for which he always shewed a great concern, and, by keeping squadrons continually at sea, held the timorous Lewis XI. king of France in continual terrors, who, to secure his own quiet, distributed annually, vast sums amongst the privy council of England.\* A war with Scotland, gave the king an opportunity of displaying his force, by sending a great army, under the command of his brother the duke of Gloucester, into that country, and a powerful fleet upon its coasts, which so terrified the Scots, that they obliged their prince to accept of such proposals as were made to him.† After the coming back again of the duke of Gloucester, the king's affairs began to take a less fortunate turn. He had created great troubles at home by removing his brother the duke of Clarence, not without strong suspicions of injustice.‡ He had crossed the humour of the nation, in refusing succour to the Flemings, who were the natural allies of the English, and from whom they annually gained large sums by the balance of trade. Add to all this, that it became every day more and more apparent, that the French king never intended to perform the most essential points of the last peace, particularly that relating to the marriage of the dauphin with the Princess Elizabeth, which perplexed the king exceedingly, and at last determined him to break with this perfidious monarch.

A.D.  
1480.

A.D.  
1482.

A.D.  
1483.

In this war he resolved to rely chiefly on his own strength at sea, and not at all on the promises of his

\* Fabian, p. 509. Hall, fol. 46, 47. Grafton, Holingshed.

† Stowe, p. 432. Speed, p. 689. *Lesliæ de rebus gestis Scotorum*, lib. viii. p. 321, 322. Buchanan, lib. xii. p. 399, 400.

‡ Hall, fol. 50. b. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 703. Habington, p. 475.

allies, by whom himself and his predecessors had been so often deceived; and of which he had a recent example in the conduct of the Emperor Maximilian, who, notwithstanding the king had lately sent a squadron of stout ships, under Sir John Middleton to his assistance, had not only made a peace, but entered into a close union with France, which highly provoked the king.\* The pains King Edward took in disposing all things for a French war, and especially in drawing together a numerous fleet, was so highly agreeable to his people, that they seemed heartily inclined to bear the expense which such an expedition must have brought upon them. The care, however, of so important an enterprize, joined to his unusual fatigue in providing every thing for undertaking it, threw that monarch into a sudden illness, when his fleet and army were almost ready, which brought him unexpectedly to his end on the ninth of April, 1483, after he had reigned somewhat more than twenty-two, and had lived very little above forty-one years.† The French writers will have it, that he died of chagrin at the dauphin's marriage; because, from the treaty of Amiens, he had always stiled his eldest daughter Elizabeth, dauphiness:‡ but Mezeray very honestly owns, that his death was a great deliverance to France, and freed her from the terror of beholding once again an English army, under a victorious king, at the gates of Paris.§

He was, though too much addicted to his pleasures, a very wise, as well as a very fortunate prince; had

\* Grafton, p. 473. Stowe, p. 431. Speed, p. 689. Corps diplomatique du droit des gens, tom. iii. p. xi. p. 100. Rapin, vol. i. p. 625.

† Hall, fol. 59—61. Grafton, p. 755. Coöper's Chronicle, fol. 268. b. Polydor. Virgil. lib. xxiv.

‡ Duplex, tom. iii. p. 130. P. Daniel, tom. vi. p. 551, 552. Le Gendre, tom. iv. p. 106, 107.

§ Abregé de l'histoire de France, tom. iii. p. 346.

true notions of naval power, and of the consequences of an extensive commerce. The former he maintained throughout his whole reign, and the latter he encouraged as much as his domestic troubles gave him leave to do. He made several treaties with foreign powers, Denmark, Burgundy, the Hanse towns, very serviceable to the merchants, and one with Henry king of Castile, A. D. 1466, and another in A. D. 1467, which proved very beneficial to his people. He reformed many abuses that had crept in during the civil wars. He prevailed on the several companies to be at the expense of rebuilding London-wall; and the emulation of finishing the parts assigned them, in the speediest and strongest manner, caused the whole to be very quickly finished. At this time Bishopsgate was sumptuously rebuilt by the Esterlings. Indeed his principal maxim was maintaining a good correspondence with the city of London, to which he constantly adhered; and of which he found the good effects in his adversity, as well as prosperity; as is well observed by Philip de Comines,\* who attributes to this his restoration, after the potent earl of Warwick had driven him out of his dominions; and one of the last acts of his life was an extraordinary compliment to that city, of which we have a long account in our old chronicles. † In one thing he was singularly happy, that he died in full possession of the hearts and affections of his subjects.

A. D.  
1483.

EDWARD V. succeeded, or rather seemed to succeed his father, for he never had any thing more than the shadow of royalty; and even this did not continue above the term of ten weeks, through the ambition of his uncle, Richard duke of Gloucester. My subject does not lead me to say much of this matter, which, I must own, appears to me

\* Memoires, tom. i. lib. iii. chap. 7.

† Fabian, p. 512. Grafton. p. 757. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 705.



one of the darkest parts of our history; for though I am far from thinking that Buck in his panegyric, rather than history of King Richard, hath written all things according to truth; yet, I must own, that I do not believe he errs more on one hand, than Sir Thomas More, in his history of Edward V. on the other; which history, however, has been the ground-work of all succeeding stories.

Thus much of certainty, undoubtedly, there is, that immediately after the death of Edward IV. Richard, duke of Gloucester, assumed the office of protector, and caused the young prince to be proclaimed; after which, on various pretences, he cut off several great persons, who were the principal friends of his deceased brother's queen; and, having thus paved the way for his own promotion, he next infused into the people's minds a bad opinion of the late monarch's administration, and some doubts as to the legitimacy of his children; which, by the help of the duke of Buckingham's management of the lord-mayor and citizens of London, was improved into a popular demand, that the young prince should be laid aside, and Richard, instead of protector, declared king; which, at first he refused, but was quickly prevailed upon to change his mind, and accept. \*

RICHARD III. was proclaimed the 22d of June, 1483, and crowned upon the 6th of July following, together with Anne, his queen, and his title effectually confirmed by a parliament called in January following. † This act is perhaps the best drawn piece, considering the design it was to cover, that is extant in any language; and many

A.D.  
1483.

\* Stowe, Holingshed, Speed. Sir Thomas More is transcribed in these three histories; and as for Buck's laboured apology, it is to be met with in the first volume of the complete History of England, by Bishop Kennet.

† Fabian, p. 516. Hall, fol. 1. Cotton's Abridgment of the Records, p. 709.

of our modern historians might have avoided the gross mistakes into which they have fallen about this prince, if they had carefully considered it. But Sir Thomas More's rhetoric had so much warmed them, that, generally speaking, they confound the duke of Clarence's treason with the duke of Gloucester's pretensions, which, though they might be as bad, yet certainly they were not the same. \* Clarence, in framing his title to the crown, was obliged to set aside that of his elder brother King Edward; which put him upon alledging, that the king was not in reality the son of Richard, duke of York; † but as Richard, duke of Gloucester, was under no necessity of doing this, so he was much too wise a man to attack his mother's honour without cause.

We find, therefore, nothing of this in the before-mentioned act of parliament, but a title of quite another kind. The right of King Edward is clearly acknowledged, but his marriage with Queen Elizabeth is declared to be null; not, as Sir Thomas More says, because of the king's marriage before God, to Lady Elizabeth Lucy, a matter which had been long before cleared up, but in respect to a pre-contract, or rather marriage, between the king and Lady Eleanor Butler, daughter to the earl of Shrewsbury, which was proved by a bishop, ‡ in consequence of which all his posterity were illegitimate. Then again, as to the posterity of the duke of Clarence, which were still in Richard's way, they were set aside on account of their father's attainder, which could not have been alledged, if Richard had questioned King Edward's right. The case then, in few words, stood thus: the crown of England had been entailed by parliament on the posterity of the

\* Compare Buek's History with the rest, and consider the authorities produced on both sides.

† See the grounds of the duke of Clarence's attainder, in Stowe, p. 430.

‡ Philip de Comines, liv. vi. chap. 9. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 346.



duke of York, in the reign of King Henry VI.; this duke left three sons, Edward, George, and Richard; Edward, by virtue of that entail, claimed and enjoyed the crown, but (as this act says) left no lawful issue; George, in the life-time of his brother Edward had been attainted of treason, by which his family became incapable of succeeding; and therefore, Richard, duke of Gloucester, was called to the throne, as the next heir in the parliamentary entail.\*

An indifferent title he had at best; but this did not hinder his making a good king, I mean in a political sense; for he made wise laws, governed the people gently, and took all imaginable care to promote trade, and to preserve the superiority of the sea. In all probability, these were the effects of his refined policy for the strengthening of himself and his family; but, be that as it will, the nation was undoubtedly the better for it; yet all his wisdom did not preserve him, because he suffered himself to be deceived by appearances, and to quit the prudent care which, at the beginning of his reign, he had taken for the guard of the English coasts, at that very juncture when it became most necessary; and, as this is a point of great consequence to the subject I am upon, it will be necessary to enter into a distinct detail of the earl of Richmond's expedition, which, as it is taken from foreign historians, will, I hope, prove both agreeable and instructive to the reader.

We have already shewn how the quarrel between the houses of York and Lancaster began, by Henry IV.'s assuming the crown, on the deposition of King Richard II. Henry, earl of Richmond, was, by his mother's side, held a descendant of the house of Lancaster, and had been in the battle of Tewksbury, with Queen Margaret and Prince Edward; after that signal defeat, he retired into Bretagne, where he was well received by Francis II.

\* See this at large, in Speed, p. 711.



A.D. 1483. then duke thereof, and protected throughout the reign of Edward IV. notwithstanding all the intrigues of that crafty prince to get him into his hands. \* Richard III. sent his agents to the duke, promising vast sums, if he would deliver up Earl Henry, but to no purpose; which arose from this secret reason: there were great factions at that time in Bretagne, the duke being entirely governed by his minister, a man of low birth, though of strong parts, and high spirit, whose name was Peter Landois; which induced the nobility to confederate themselves against him. This statesman, having good intelligence in England, knew perfectly the scheme that was set on foot for placing Earl Henry on the throne, and uniting the two houses of York and Lancaster, by marrying the said earl to the Princess Elizabeth, eldest daughter to Edward IV. He likewise knew, that the duke of Buckingham, and some other very great persons, were engaged in that design, which he resolved, therefore, to promote, not doubting but that, when Henry should be once seated on the English throne, he would speedily enable the duke, his master, to quell his rebellious barons.

As soon, therefore, as he was informed that the duke of Buckingham's designs were ripe for execution, he furnished the earl of Richmond with a fleet of fifteen sail, on board which were embarked about five thousand men; † but King Richard, having early intelligence of the duke of Buckingham's project, and of his negotiations with the earl of Richmond, took effectual care to disappoint both. The duke's forces he defeated by surprise, made himself master of his person, and beheaded him. ‡ As to the earl's landing, he prevented that

\* Hall, fol. 33. b. Grafton, p. 712, 713, 737. Philip de Cominès, liv. vi. chap. 9. Argentre, liv. xii.

† Hall, fol. 16. b. Speed, p. 720. Argentre, Histoire de Bretagne, liv. xii. Dupleix, tom. iii. p. 148.

‡ Grafton, p. 824—826. Stowe, p. 465. Polydor. Virgil, lib. xxv.

likewise by keeping a strong squadron at sea, and guards on all the coasts; so that, when the earl with his little fleet approached the Welch shore, he saw it was impracticable to land, and therefore bore away to Dieppe, where he safely arrived, and from thence went by land into Bretagne.\* Thus we see of what consequence such precautions are in times of danger, and how very possible it is for an English prince to hinder invaders from setting foot in his dominions: but if his measures on this occasion, demonstrated the wisdom of King Richard, his subsequent behaviour was of a quite different kind; for immediately upon the earl's retreat, he dismissed his forces, laid up and unrigged his fleet, as if, after escaping so great a danger, he meant to invite a greater; at least so it proved, and might have been easily foreseen. But let us now return to the earl of Richmond.

He found things on his coming back much altered in the court of Bretagne; for events will ever change the measures of those who suffer their councils to be governed by expectations of profit, rather than regard to principle. Peter Landois, who had been his warmest friend, was now become his bitterest enemy; for perceiving that the earl's designs were frustrated, the duke of Buckingham dead, the countess of Richmond confined, and England quietly submitting to Richard, he suddenly changed his politics; and since he could not reduce the confederate lords by the help of an English king of his own making, he resolved to have recourse to an English king then reigning, and therefore entered into a treaty with Richard, for putting the earl of Richmond into his hands. † But doctor Richard Morton, bishop of

\* Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 745. Argentre, ubi supra. Mezeray, tom. iv. p. 357. P. Daniel, tom. vi. p. 601.

† Hall, fol. 21, 22. Grafton, p. 832. Rapin, vol. i. p. 643. Argentre, liv. xii.



Ely, a firm friend to the house of Lancaster, then in exile in Flanders, having discovered this design, gave timely notice of it to the earl of Richmond, advising him to fly immediately into France, which he did, and yet very narrowly escaped, a troop of horse, sent to retake him, missing him but an hour.

A.D.  
1484.

He was well received by the French king, Charles VIII. who promised him his protection and assistance: nor had he been long at his court, before the earl of Oxford, who was a prisoner at Calais, prevailed upon the governor of that strong place to embrace his interest, and to go with him into France, in order to concert measures for a new invasion of England. \* Some of the French historians say positively, that King Charles furnished Henry of Richmond with four thousand men: Father Daniel says, they were choice troops; † but our English writers speak of no more than two thousand, nay, and insist, that these were hired with money which the earl borrowed. ‡

A.D.  
1485.

However it was, with this insignificant force embarked on board a very scurvy fleet, the earl ventured to put to sea on the first of August, 1485, from the port of Havre de Grace, and landed at Milford-haven on the eighth of the same month. He was quickly joined by great bodies of the Welch, and, passing the Severn at Shrewsbury, met with many of his English friends, and then marched directly into Leicestershire, where he knew King Richard lay with his army. § Upon this followed a decisive battle, fought near the town of Bosworth, on the 22d of August,

\* Stowe, p. 467. Speed, p. 721. P. Æmyle, p. 682. Gaguin. Chalons Histoire de France, tom. ii. p. 220.

† Philip de Comines, indeed, very modestly acknowledges this aid to have consisted but in three thousand Normans, and those the very refuse of the people, liv. vi. chap. ix. P. Daniel, tom. vi. p. 602.

‡ Hall, fol. 27. a. Stowe, p. 468. Speed, p. 722.

§ Fabian, fol. 519. Grafton, p. 849, 850. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 759.



wherein King Richard, fighting gallantly, was slain with his sword in his hand, after a short reign of two years and two months, whierein he shewed himself a better king than most of our historians are willing to represent him. An exemplary instance of this was his suffering his nephew Edward Plantagenet, earl of Warwick, son and heir to his brother, George duke of Clarence, to live quietly and freely in Yorkshire, though one of the first acts of his successor, was to shut up this unhappy youth in the Tower, where he was afterwards beheaded for no greater crime than desiring freedom.

IN the reign of these monarchs of the house of York, there were no grievous taxes drawn from the subject: when Edward IV. wanted money, he had recourse to an expedient (which, whatever it might be in law, was certainly not amiss in politics) of sending for persons in easy circumstances, and, having opened to them his occasions for money, and his reasons for supposing they could supply him, desired they would give him what they pleased; by which he raised money without aid of parliament by a kind of prerogative, styling such a voluntary contribution **BENEVOLENCE**. As he was a debonair prince, this method, odd as it was, brought him in very considerable supplies. Amongst others that, in this manner, he once summoned, was a gentlewoman of London, esteemed rich in those times, to whom having stated his case in a free and familiar manner, he asked her what she would give him? "My liege," answered she, "for the sake of that sweet and comely face, you shall have twenty pounds." The king being extremely well pleased with this testimony of her good-will, gave her a kiss; which royal favour procured him another twenty pounds. He is likewise said to have made use of the personal affections of his subjects, in borrowing considerable sums; which, however, was attended

with no small dislike, and was, therefore, laid aside by one of his successors.

We are told by Stowe, in his chronicle, that this monarch sought some private advantage in the alterations which he directed to be made in the coin; but, it is very justly observed by Bishop Nicholson, that this imputation upon his government is ill founded. It is, indeed, very certain, that this king directed, that all the bullion received for staple commodities at Calais, should be coined in the mint there; but then, as appears by the indentures, it was of the same weight and fineness with that of his predecessors. Another great antiquary, I mean Sir Robert Cotton, says much in praise of King Edward, for restoring the state of our coin, which had been greatly injured in the preceding reign; and, for saying this, he is censured by Bishop Fleetwood, who shews, that the money coined by Edward IV. was not either better or worse than that of Henry VI. But, notwithstanding this is certainly very true, yet the former observation might be true likewise.

We have seen, that, in the reign of King Henry, there was great indulgence shewn to strangers, and more especially to Italians; and, we have likewise seen, that it was by these people that great sums of base money were brought into and circulated through the kingdom; and, as there is no doubt that this was publicly prohibited, and effectually restrained by Edward IV. so we may reasonably conclude, that for this, and for the coining great sums, as well in silver as in gold, of due weight and fineness, by which the occasion and necessity of using these adulterated coins was taken away, he afforded just ground for Sir Robert Cotton's remark. In his reign, the Lord Hastings was appointed master of the king's mints in England, Ireland, and France; and he coined largely in the several mints of all the three kingdoms. Sir John Davis assures us, that it was Edward IV. who first introduced a difference between the English and the Irish coin, so that



the former was worth a fourth part more than the latter. Upon whatever motives he did this, and whether the doing it was laudable, or otherwise, we dare not decide; but, however, there is no doubt at all, that the custom was pursued by his successors; so that, in succeeding times, an Irish shilling was worth no more than nine-pence in England, and the same proportion held in all their other coins.

In the short reign of King Richard III. there was but one parliament called, and but one tax granted, which was a tenth upon the clergy. At the same time, the king, of his own accord, gave life, as one of our antiquaries expresses it, to another law, by which the subject was forever freed from BENEVOLENCES, which is said to have flowed from an evil intention in that prince, to captivate the minds of the people by this extraordinary shew of self-denial. It is very possible it might be so, but, perhaps, it would be very difficult to find any evidence to prove it. It is a dangerous thing to put bad constructions upon such actions as are visibly good, either in kings or in private men. If this monarch was really guilty of one half of the crimes with which some of our historians have been pleased to charge him, there was no need of misrepresenting what had the appearance of right in his conduct, in order to render him a monster. All that I incline to add further upon this subject is, that such as are determined to believe the worst of him must be contented with what is said in our chronicles, public histories, and memoirs; for, as to the statute-books and records, they bear no testimonies of his being either an oppressor or a tyrant; yet, I readily allow, what vindicates his public, cannot be extended to justify his private character, because both history and experience sufficiently teach us, that a very bad man may be a very good king; but, then it is necessary that he should reign long, in order to be so esteemed.



As to the history of our trade during this period, it is better preserved than in any other, because, perhaps, it now began to grow more considerable. A great variety of laws we have relating thereto, and a long charter preserved in Hakluyt, whereby King Edward IV. grants large privileges to the English merchants settled in the Netherlands. Some of our historians, it is true, blame that prince for suffering certain sheep, out of Herefordshire, to be transported into Spain; whence they would have us believe, arose that plenty of fine wool, for which that country hath been since renowned. But this, perhaps, is in some degree vanity in us, since nothing is more certain than that the Spanish wool was, long before, in some request; so that, in the thirty-first year of Henry II. the weavers of London had it granted to them, upon their petition, that wherever they could discover cloth entirely fabricated of Spanish wool, or even with a mixture of Spanish wool, they were authorised to carry it before the mayor of London, who was to cause it to be burnt.\* At this time, however, the prevailing notion was here, that without our wool, the best cloths could not be made; and, indeed, if there had been no excellence in their fleece, a few of our sheep had been no fit present for one king to make, or the other to receive.

The history I mention is contained in a little treatise, preserved in Hakluyt, † entitled, *De politica conservativa maris*, written in verse, and, as it seems from his preface, never before printed, though written copies were pretty common. We know not by whom, or exactly when, it was composed, and yet we may come pretty near the time, for it is said, in the close, to have been examined and approved by the wise baron of Hungerford; which nobleman lost his head at Salisbury, in 1466, being the sixth of

\* Hall's Chronicle in the reign of Edward IV. fol. vii. a edit. 1550. Grafton, p. 668.

† Collection of Voyages, vol. i. p. 187.

Edward IV.\* consequently, this book must have been written some time before, probably about the beginning of that king's reign. There is a particular title to every chapter; that to the general introduction runs thus:

“ Here beginneth the prologue of the processe of the libel of ENGLISH POLICIE, exhorting all ENGLAND to keep the SEA, and namely, the NARROWE SEA; shewing what profite commeth thereof, and also what wor-ship and salvation to ENGLAND, and to all ENGLISH-MEN.”

In this introduction the author shews both the utility and the necessity of England's preserving the dominion of the sea; and tells us, that the Emperor Sigismund, who came over hither in 1416, and went into France with Henry V. advised him to keep the two towns of Dover and Calais, as carefully as he would his two eyes. The author next explains to us the device on our nobles, a gold coin first struck in 18th of Edward III. introducing his remarks thus:

“ For foure things our NOBLE sheweth unto me,  
“ King, ship, and sword, and power of the sea.”

In his first chapter, this writer gives us a very clear and exact account of the commodities of Spain and Flanders, and of the commerce between those countries; wherein he remarks, that neither country could live without the other; that the Spanish wool cannot be wrought by the Flemings, without a mixture of English; and, besides this, that, from their situations, the trade between these two countries must be altogether precarious, if both were not at peace with England. This is the author's main point, and he urges it very sensibly. The Low Countries were then, what the United Provinces were in the last century, viz. the centre of the commerce of Europe; and

\* Stowe's Annals, p. 419.

therefore, while Calais, as well as Dover, was in our hands, that commerce could not be carried on but by our permission, which was expressed by King Edward's gold noble.

The second chapter treats of the commodities and trade of Portugal; wherein he observes, that the inhabitants of Portugal were always our friends, and that a very advantageous trade had ever subsisted between the two nations, the stream of which, he complains, began now to be turned into Flanders. He speaks of the commerce, and of the piracies carried on by the inhabitants of the dutchy of Bretagne; and exclaims grievously at the outrages they were wont to commit on the English coasts, particularly on the maritime towns of Norfolk, and then tells us a remarkable story of what happened in the time of Edward III. The merchants, he says, represented to that prince, that notwithstanding the peace between him and the duke of Bretagne, the privateers of that dutchy took their vessels; of which the king, by his ambassadors, complained to the duke, who, in answer, said, that these privateers belonged to the ports of St. Michael and St. Malo, which, though in his dominions, he could not say were under his obedience, being inhabited by a sort of people who would do what they pleased; upon which the king directed Dartmouth, Plymouth, and Fowey, to be fortified, and gave the inhabitants leave to fit out privateers, to cruize upon the coast of Bretagne. This expedient soon answered his purpose, by bringing the subjects of the duke into such distress, that he was glad to undertake for the future good behaviour of his two lawless towns, that he might be rid of the troublesome visitants who daily distressed his coasts from our three towns.

The commodities of Scotland, hides, felts and wool, and her commerce with Flanders, make the subject of the fourth chapter. He shews that the Scots wool was then in the same, that is, in as low esteem as the Spanish, and



unfit to be wrought without a mixture of English; for the truth of which he appeals to the knowledge and experience of our manufacturers and merchants; adding, they well knew in what school he was taught these secrets. He further observes, that household stuff, haberdasher's wares, and all utensils of husbandry, even to cart-wheels and wheel-barrows, were by the Scots ships carried home, in return for their staple commodities; from whence he infers, that England, being possessed of the narrow seas, and a superior naval force, may, at all times, awe Spain and Scotland, by the interruption of that commerce, without which they could not subsist.

In the fifth, he treats of the trade of Prussia, Germany, and the Hanse-towns, and of the inland countries dependant upon them. The commodities and trade of Genoa employ the sixth; whence it appears, that at this time they carried on the trade of Africa, and the Indies; that is to say, imported Indian and African commodities here; and, in return, exported wool and woollen commodities, and all this in certain very large ships, in those days called carracks. The trade of Venice and Florence follows next, to which the author seems no great friend, as supposing that the balance thereon was greatly in their favour, and that the things bought of them were mere instruments of luxury. Much pains is taken in this chapter to shew the advantages that foreigners had in trade over English natives; and what frauds were committed by the Italian bankers, and by the factors of that nation employed here.

The trade of Flanders takes up the eighth chapter; wherein great complaints are made of the insolence of ships belonging to the Hanse towns, and of the folly of English merchants lending their names to cover foreigners' goods imported hither. In the ninth, we see a copious and exact account of the commodities and commerce of Ireland, except that the author speaks confidently of gold

and silver being found there, which time hath not verified. Towards the conclusion, there is a project of the then earl of Ormond, suggesting, that, if one year's expense in the maintenance of French wars were employed in the reduction of Ireland, it would answer the purpose effectually, and produce a very considerable profit annually to the English nation. Yet this, as the writer complains, was slighted, from views of private profit, to the great detriment of the public.

The old trade carried on to Iceland from Scarborough, and of late years from Bristol to the same place, is described in the tenth chapter; at the close of which the author discourses of the importance of Calais. In the eleventh chapter, he descants on the naval power of King Edgar, and the mighty fleets of King Edward III. and Henry V. who, he says, built larger and stronger ships than any of their predecessors. The twelfth and last chapter is a concise recapitulation of the principal matters spoken to before, with a pathetic exhortation to English statesmen thoroughly to consider the importance of these points, and especially the great one of maintaining our power or sovereignty at sea, on which, he says, the peace, plenty, and prosperity of this island essentially depend.

One cannot help wondering, on the perusal of this piece, that no pains has ever been taken to make it more useful, by re-publishing it, either in modern verse, or as it now stands, with notes, since it is evidently written with equal science and spirit; so that it is not easy to say, whether it gives us a better idea of the author's head or heart. Besides, it is a full proof that trade was then a very extensive and important concern, which will appear more clearly to the reader, if he considers the different value of money then and now.

It likewise shews, that the reasons and grounds of our naval dominion were then as thoroughly understood, and as clearly and plainly asserted, as ever they have been

since ; which is the reason that Mr. Selden cites this book as a remarkable authority, both in point of argument and antiquity. \* But we are now coming into brighter times, wherein that spirit of commerce, which this author so earnestly wished for, began really to appear ; and when there seemed to be a contest between private men, and those in the administration, who should serve the public most ; a spirit to which we owe our present correspondence with all parts of the world, our potent and stately fleet ; and, above all, our numerous plantations, the chief support of our maritime strength, as well as the most considerable branch of our trade still remaining.

\* *Mare Clausum*, lib. ii. chap. xxv.



## CHAP VI.

The Naval History of England, under the Reign of Henry VII. including the memoirs of such eminent seamen as flourished in his time.

A.D.  
1485.

**H**ENRY VII. was crowned king on the field of battle, the diadem of King Richard being found among the spoils.\* By what title he held the regal dignity, is difficult to determine. In his own days, he would not suffer it to be drawn into question, and posterity have not much considered it since.† As to descent, he could scarce be accounted of the royal family; for his father was of Wales, his mother of the house of Beaufort, descended, indeed, of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster; but so as to be legitimate only by an act of parliament, with an express exception in that very act, as to the crown.‡ By conquest, he could not be king; for no people conquer themselves, and his army at Bosworth, were Englishmen, as well as King Richard's.

His clearest, and therefore his best title then, must be marriage, which he had not, till some time after; for though he was solemnly crowned on the thirtieth of

\* It was placed upon his head by Sir William Stanley, afterwards Lord Chamberlain of his household, and brother of Thomas Lord Stanley, created by this monarch, earl of Derby, in regard to the near relation in which he stood to the king; being married to his majesty's mother. Hall, fol. 34. Grafton, p. 852. Stowe, p. 470. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 760, 779. Dugdale's Baronage, vol. ii. p. 248.

† See what the celebrated Lord Bacon hath thought fit to deliver, upon this head, in his admirable history of this prince, in his works, vol. ii. p. 268—271. edit. 1753.

‡ T. Walsingham, hist. Angl. p. 353. Cotton's abridgment of the records, p. 363. Tyrrell's history of England, vol. iii. p. 959. Speed, p. 727. Dugdale's baronage, vol. ii. p. 123, 237.

October, yet he did not marry the Princess Elizabeth till the eighteenth of January, 1486.\* He was generally esteemed the wisest monarch of his time, and was, without all doubt, an accomplished prince; to which, the difficulties he went through in his youth, must have contributed not a little; for he was an exile before he was a man, and at the head of his party by that time he was at years of discretion. He had great obstacles to surmount, even after his accession to the throne; for the common people were generally fond of the house of York, and the dutchess of Burgundy took care to furnish them with variety of pretenders of that line: yet, such was the care King Henry took of his coasts, and so wisely did he provide for the security of the sea, that his enemies could scarce ever set foot directly in this kingdom; which was the reason that Simnel went first to Ireland, and Perkin Warbeck into Scotland, where, having procured assistance, he thence invaded England.†

Another strain of his policy was, his keeping up a martial spirit among his own subjects, at the expense of his neighbours, repaying, thereby, the French in their own coin. Thus, he privately assisted the duke of Bretagne with a considerable body of troops, under the command of the Lord Woodville, uncle to the queen; and, when the French king expostulated on this head, he excused himself, by saying, that lord, transported forces into Bretagne without his consent or permission. Soon after, he openly assisted the Britons against the French, because he saw, that these expeditions were pleasing to his own people, and served his purposes at the same time. On the same principles, he threatened an open rupture with France, for which, he provided a very formidable army, and a

A.D.  
1482.

\* Fabian, p. 527. Speed, p. 729. Cooper, fol. 269. b.

† Stowe, Holingshed, Speed, Rapin, but, above all, Lord Bacon's history of his reign, and his finished character of Henry VII.

numerous fleet; and yet, his real view was not so much attacking the French king, as drawing aids from his own parliament; which, on this expectation, and upon this only, they were inclined to give. He transported, however, his forces to Calais, took the field, and, having terrified the French, made such a peace as satisfied him, and so returned home, keeping, however, his squadrons at sea; for though he loved peace, yet it was his fixed maxim, that he might keep it, to be in constant readiness for war; which was the reason that, during his reign, the marine was in better condition than under any of his predecessors. The cares of government took up his whole time, and left no room, either for thoughts or expenses of pleasure.\*

The French historians say, that, of all our English kings, this wise monarch was best inclined to them, and most observant of his treaties; which they ascribe to his gratitude, for the succours afforded him in France, when he came over against King Richard.† I will not deny, that some truth there may be in this, and yet I am inclined to believe, that the chief motive, which so strongly bound him to affect peace abroad, was the almost continual intestine divisions among his subjects at home, which might have created him, even more uneasiness than they did, in case the malcontents had been supported by so powerful a prince as the French king.

Besides, it was the policy of Henry VII. to divert the spirits of his subjects from war to trade, which he both understood and encouraged. His long residence in Bretagne, had given him an opportunity of acquiring a much greater skill in maritime affairs, than most of his

\* Hall, fol. 12—28. Grafton, Stowe, Rymer's *foedera*, tom. xii. p. 497.

† Gaguin, lib. xi. P. Daniel, tom. vii. p. 19. Du Tillet, *Recueil des Traités*, Godefroy, *supplement au memoires de Philip de Comines*, chap. vii.



predecessors; and this was so well known, that eminent seamen, even in foreign countries, frequently on that account, addressed themselves to him for his favour and protection. Amongst the rest, the famous Christopher Columbus, who rendered his name immortal, by the discovery of America, and who sent his brother Bartholomew hither, in order to have prosecuted that glorious expedition for the benefit of this nation; nor was it any fault in this wise king that he did not; though some modern writers, not only without, but against all authority assert, that King Henry rejected his proposals. I shall here give a concise account of that affair, of which, I shall have occasion to speak again, in the memoirs of John Cabot, who, though he did not undertake to make discoveries till after the return of Columbus, yet saw the continent of the new world earlier than he, as will be fully proved in its proper place.

Experience shews us, that there are certain seasons remarkably favourable to particular arts. This age of which we are speaking, had been so to navigation, which then prospered exceedingly under different states, but principally under the Portuguese: they had discovered, or rather were discovering, a new route to the East Indies, by going entirely round the great continent of Africa, which, from the consequences even of those endeavours, rendered them so much richer and more powerful than their neighbours, that, by an emulation, natural amongst great men, the thoughts of all the active wits in Europe, were turned towards undertakings of this kind.

Christopher Columbus, by birth a Genoese, but of what family is very uncertain, and I think, very immaterial, had a head excellently turned for such enterprises; by nature, he was sagacious, penetrating, and resolute; he

\* See this matter largely discussed, in a book published some years ago, entitled, A compleat history of Spanish America.

derived, from education, such knowledge as enabled him to make the best use of his experience; and his ardent passion, for the science of navigation, had inspired him, from his early youth, with a desire of engaging in distant and dangerous voyages. Abundance of lucky circumstances concurred, in giving him still greater advantages than any of his contemporaries; but, as to the story of his having the first hint of an undiscovered continent in the west, from the papers of an old pilot, who died in his house, while he resided in the island of Maderia, I entirely agree with Sir William Monson,\* that it is mere calumny, and for this reason, that, if Columbus had really received any such information, he would scarcely have embraced some opinions, which exposed his projects to many plausible objections, and which, nevertheless, he retained to the last. It is by no means clear, though we have a life of him written by his son, and collected partly from his own writings, when he first entertained thoughts of finding out countries hitherto undiscovered. It seems, however, to have been pretty early in his life, because it appears, from notes of his own, that he had undertaken several voyages with a view of fixing, from the lights of experience, his speculative notions on this subject.

When he had thoroughly methodized his scheme, and rendered it, as he thought, probable and practicable, he first propounded it to the state of Genoa in the year 1482; but, it was not accepted, because they were then engaged in such an extensive commerce as they scarcely knew how to manage, and were, therefore, afraid of launching out into new projects. Columbus offered it next to the king of Portugal, who was much too wise a prince not to discern the benefits which might arise from such a discovery, or the strength of those reasons which were urged by Columbus, to shew that the design was feasible; he, therefore,

\* Naval Tracts, p. 493.

appointed commissioners to treat with him about this undertaking, who dealt with that worthy man very basely; for, having, as they thought, drawn out of him his whole secret, they advised the king, while they entertained Columbus with objections, to fit out a ship, which, under colour of going to the Cape de Verd islands, might attempt the execution of what he had proposed; but, the issue of this contrivance was as unlucky, as that in itself was dishonourable; for, the fraud coming to the ears of Columbus, he was so disgusted thereby, that he determined to quit Portugal, and to seek protection in some more generous court. \*

It was towards the close of the year 1484, that he came to a resolution of going himself into Spain, and it was the next year that, after meeting with some difficulties there, he sent his brother Bartholomew into England, where Henry VII. had but just ascended the throne. A man could scarcely be more unfortunate than Bartholomew Columbus was in this voyage. He was first taken by pirates, who stripped him to the skin, and obliged him, for some time, to earn a sorry living, by labouring at the oar. When he had made his escape from them, he found means to get into England, and to come to London, but, in so poor a condition, and so worn by a lingering ague, that he wanted both opportunity and spirits to pursue the design he came about. †

A.D.  
1485.

As soon as he had recovered a little, he applied himself to the making maps and globes; and, discovering thereby a more than ordinary skill in cosmography, he came to be known; so that, at last, he brought his design to bear, and was actually introduced to the king, to whom, on the 13th day of February, 1488, he presented a map of the world of his own projecting, and afterwards entered into a

A.D.  
1488.

\* See the life of Christopher Columbus, by his son, in Churchill's collection of voyages, vol. ii. p. 557, 688.

† Lord Bacon's History of Henry VII. vol. ii. p. 336.



negotiation on the behalf of his brother. The king liked the scheme so well, that they came sooner to an agreement than Christopher had brought things to a point in Spain ; though, by a new series of cross accidents, Bartholomew was not able to carry any account of this to his brother, before he had actually discovered the American islands in the service, and for the benefit of the crown of Spain, \* which he did in 1492.

As we have these facts from the son of Don Christopher Columbus, and the nephew of Bartholomew, who published his father's life in Spain, I think the authority cannot be doubted, according to all the rules of evidence laid down either by lawyers or critics. Add to this, that the map made by Bartholomew Columbus was actually in being in the reign of Queen Elizabeth ; which is such a corroborative proof, as puts the matter out of dispute, † and shews, that we have at least as good a title as the Spaniards, from our agreement with the first discoverer of a passage to this new world. If they plead the success of their expedition, we may alledge our prior contract ; and, if this should fail us, and their title be approved, we have then, as I hinted before, a better title than they, (even according to their own method of arguing,) to the continent of America, in regard to which, our success in discovering was prior to theirs.

I know, as was hinted before, certain writers have made some coarse and bitter reflections upon King Henry for his dilatoriness in this matter, by which they think we have suffered so much ; but, when all things are more maturely weighed, perhaps we shall meet with no just grounds for these censures ; for, first, it does not appear that the king delayed this affair at all, though it be true, that Bartholomew Columbus spent a long time in negotiating it ; and,

\* Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. iii. p. 2, 3. Purchas's Pilgrims, vol. i. book ii. p. 9. Harris's Voyages, vol. i. p. 3.

† See the Life of Christopher Columbus, as before cited, p. 575.

the reason was, because the king had then many arduous affairs upon his hands, such as the attempt of Perkin Warbeck, an expedition into Scotland, his breach with France, and voyage thither, all which fell out within that space; and, secondly, it does not seem to manifest, as these people imagine, that we are really such mighty sufferers by the Spaniards having the start of us in this expedition; for which many reasons might be offered; but, there is one so obvious, and withal so clear and so conclusive, that it seems to supersede the rest. Spain, at the time she undertook this discovery, was one of the greatest maritime powers in Europe, though, since her possession of the Indies, she is become one of the most inconsiderable.

But it may be said, that, if we had first seized and settled these countries, we should have acted otherwise; yet, this is not only a bare supposition, but, at the same time, a very improbable one. The heat of the climate, the luxuriancy of the soil, the profit of mines, &c. would have affected us, or indeed any other people, as much as it did them; so that, upon the whole, we have but little reason either to blame King Henry's conduct, or to repine at that of Providence. The Spaniards have purchased Mexico and Peru too dearly, at the expense of their naval power; we are really richer in virtue of our northern colonies, which have so prodigiously increased our industry, our commerce, and our shipping.

The great care the king had of maritime affairs, induced him to make, in the eleventh year of his reign, a treaty with the king of Denmark, whereby he secured to his subjects, and particularly to the inhabitants of Bristol, the trade to Ireland, which they long before enjoyed, but in which they had of late suffered some disturbance. By the stipulations in this league it was agreed, that the English were to furnish the inhabitants of that island with all kinds of provision, with coarse cloth and other commodities,

A.D.  
1496.

without let or hindrance from the king of Denmark. This was a special privilege granted to no other nation, and, it is very probable, would not have been granted to us, if the Danish commerce had not been a declining state, of which we have an authentic account in the work of a very ancient writer. The care of these affairs brought to the king's notice that celebrated Venetian, Sir John Cabot, who, in his service first discovered the continent of America, and that country which is now called Newfoundland;\* of him, therefore, we will give a more particular account at the close of this reign.

While this Sir John Cabot was thus employed in the prosecution of the expedition before mentioned, Bartholomew Columbus had passed from Spain to the West Indies, where he acquainted his brother with the disposition of the English court, and the reason there was to apprehend, that it would not be long before other adventurers would endeavour to interfere in his discoveries. † This quickened the admiral; and, on his returning into Spain, he gave such hints to that court and ministry, as induced them to take all imaginable pains to secure the great seamen of every nation in their service, which, in some respect, answered their purpose, since Magellan, who discovered the passage into the South seas, which has been of such infinite service to the Spaniards, was by this policy detached from his duty to his king and country for the sake of pay; and this was likewise the case of Sebastian Cabot and others. ‡ In so short a time as four years after John Cabot's first voyage, we find, that King Henry granted his letters-patent to Hugh Elliot and Thomas Ashurst, merchants of Bristol, and others, for set-

A. D.  
1502.

\* *Fœd. Dan. xi. Hen. VII. art. iv. quod in tabula legationis MDCII. etiam habemus. Rymer's Fœdera, tom. xii. p. 381. Seldeni Mare Clausum, lib. ii. cap. 32.*

† *Herrera's General History of the West Indies, vol. i/ p. 136—139.*

‡ *Herrera, Hackluyt, Purchas, Sir William Monson's Naval Tracts.*



ling colonies in newly discovered countries; which grant bears date the 9th of December, 1502,\* and is another proof of this monarch's assiduity in promoting commerce; he never, indeed, suffered any opportunity of that sort to escape him.

Philip of Austria, who succeeded to the kingdom of Castile, sailed from the Low Countries into Spain, together with his queen, in 1506; but, meeting unhappily with a storm, they were driven on the English coast, and, being exceedingly fatigued, they would, contrary to the advice of the wisest persons about them, land at Weymouth; of which, the king having notice, he sent, under colour of respect, the earl of Arundel, with three hundred horse, to attend them, who brought the royal guests from thence by torch-light, and conducted them to his own house.† Some months they were detained by the extraordinary civilities paid them; and after their departure, it appeared, how great use a wise prince may make even of the slightest accidents. In this short space, the king did a great deal for himself, and not a little for his subjects: he prevailed upon King Philip to put into his hands Edmund de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, nearly related by his mother to the royal line,‡ and he likewise concluded a very advantageous treaty of commerce between the crowns of England and Castile,§ which proved afterwards of great importance.

A.D.  
1506.

As to the remaining part of his reign, it was spent in peace, and in cares of a nature which by no means recommend them to our notice, farther than as the mention of them may prove admonitory to other princes. He had, all his days, been of a very frugal disposition, and had

\* Rymer's *foedera*, vol. xiii. p. 37.

† Hall, fol. 57. b. Grafton, p. 943. Polydor. *Virgil*. lib. xxvi. p. 776. *Marianæ historia de rebus Hispaniæ*, lib. xxviii. cap. xvi. p. 592. *Petri Martyris epistol*. lib. xix. epist. 296, 300.

‡ Stowe, p. 484. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 793. Lord Bacon's history of this reign, vol. ii. p. 350. Ferrera's *hist. de Espan*. p. xii. § 16.

§ Rymer's *foedera*, vol. xiii. p. 142.

also shewn a singular dexterity in the art of filling his coffers: but in the latter part of his life, this grew upon him to a very great degree: and as covetous princes never want fit instruments, so this king found in Empson and Dudley two such as scarcely ever had their fellows. They put him upon such severe and unreasonable extensions of penal laws, as made him rich as a man, but poor as a prince, since, by wringing out their wealth, he effectually lost the hearts of his subjects. Another misfortune was, that these grievances fell upon the most eminent traders in those times.

Thus Sir William Capel, an opulent citizen, who had been mayor of London, suffered many years persecution and a long imprisonment, besides great losses. Out of Thomas Knesworth, at the expiration of his mayoralty, with his two sheriffs, the king and his ministers squeezed one thousand four hundred pounds. Christopher Hawes, an eminent mercer, and Alderman of London, broke his heart through vexation; and Sir Lawrence Ailmer, a great merchant, and who had been mayor, remained a prisoner in the tower, till he was delivered in the next reign.\* These acts would have appeared flagrant oppressions in any other prince: but Henry made many wise laws for the public good; and such laws interfering sometimes with the methods men had been in a habit of practising for private profit, he took always advantage of the highest offenders, as yielding most to his coffers, and, from the terror of their punishment, impressing universal obedience; for, in most of his prosecutions, the welfare of the state was the apparent object, and the due execution of the laws the invariable pretence. He was, therefore, the laws being made by parliament, a rigid prince, but, acting ever by law, escaped the odium of being a tyrant.

\* Fabian, p. 530, 536. Hall, fol. 57. a. fol. 59. b. Grafton, p. 942, 946. Stowe, p. 485. Speed, p. 750. Lord Bacon in his history, p. 352.

Yet, in some things, the king shewed a magnificent spirit, particularly in building that noble chapel at Westminster, which bears his name, and which cost him fourteen thousand pounds. About the like sum he laid out in the construction of a new ship, called *THE GREAT HARRY*,\* and which, properly speaking, was the first ship of the royal navy; for though he, as well as other princes, hired many ships, exclusive of those furnished by the ports, when he had occasion to transport forces abroad, yet he seems to have been the only king who thought of avoiding this inconveniency, by raising such a naval force as might be, at all times, sufficient for the service of the state; † a design worthy of his wisdom to project, and of being in some degree perfected under the more fortunate reign of his son.

As to the concern which this prudent monarch shewed for trade, some hints of it have been already given; and to these, upon the review of our work, a few farther instances may be added. In the year 1487, the archbishop of Canterbury, who was also lord high chancellor of England, opened the parliament with a speech, in which, amongst other things, he told them, that the king recommended to their serious consideration, trade and manufactures. ‡ Accordingly, several wise laws were made in that respect; and, in the treaties that were concluded with foreign princes, he was remarkably careful to make such provisions as turned highly to the benefit of the

\* Stowe's Annals, p. 484. This famous vessel was burned by accident, at Woolwich, in the evening of the 28th of August, 1553. Holingshed's Chronicle, vol. ii. p. 1090. Strype's Memorials, vol. iii. p. 22.

† The king foresaw an increase of commerce would make larger vessels necessary, and therefore began to build, and let out such to hire for the advantage of, and by way of example to, his subjects. An instance of royal attention that merits reflection!

‡ This was the famous Cardinal Morton. *Godwini de Præsul. Angliæ Commentar. Cantab. 1743, fol. p. 131.* Bacon's History of Henry VII. p. 289. Parliamentary History, vol. ii. p. 417—419.



nation.\* There is the less wonder to be made at this, because the king himself was not only very well acquainted with the advantages arising from foreign traffic, speculatively as a statesman, but knew them experimentally likewise, being a very extensive trader himself, and that in more ways than one. †

As he found it requisite for him to have a certain number of ships of his own, so, when these were not employed, or likely to be employed, he was content to let them out to merchants for hire. He was very ready, on the same principle, to assist with considerable sums of money, such as undertook any new trade, or set up any new manufacture, provided he had a share in the profit proportionable to the risque he run. He also sold licences for dealing in prohibited commodities, either by importing or exporting; for the managing of which extraordinary and new-devised branches of his revenue, ‡ his principal instrument was Edmund Dudley, Esq. a man of quick parts, and whose genius was wonderfully extensive. He was nobly descended; a lawyer, no doubt, and a serjeant at law, but no judge, as some of our historians make him. He was of the king's privy council, and speaker of the house of commons in this king's last parliament; which shews his general interest was great, as well as his power. He suffered, in the next reign, as the king's adviser and instrument; which was hard, for the king governed by his own lights, and saw not with others eyes. Ministers he had, and very able ministers too, who served him well, and he never disgraced them; but still they were his ministers, and not his masters.

\* Rymer's *Fœdera*, tom. xii. p. 374, 378, 389, 571, 701.

† In this, as in building large ships, he was willing to shew his subjects the way.

‡ Sir Richard Empson's book of accounts had been seen by Lord Bacon; that between the king and Dudley, both of them most exactly kept, came into the hands of Sir R. Cotton.

Whatever distaste might be taken to some of these practices, it is very certain that the king ingratiated himself by others; and that, till within the four last years of his reign, he was very popular in London; to which, perhaps, it might not a little contribute, that he not only accepted the freedom of the merchant-taylors' company, but dined also publicly in their hall; wearing the dress, taking the seat, and doing the honours of the table, as if he had been their master.\* This condescension was acceptable to numbers; and the laws he passed from time to time, for promoting manufactures, encouraging manufacturers, giving ease to mechanics, prohibiting the importation of foreign goods for luxury, exciting merchants of all nations to frequent England, and purchase its commodities, with his complaisance and fair language, abated the sense of his strictness in other respects. Besides, it was his manner to intermix smiles with his severities, and to reward oftener, and with more alacrity, than he punished. Thus he knighted many of the citizens in the field; received them kindly at court; and communicated all good news to them with much familiarity and confidence.

In respect to the taxes imposed in his reign, they were not very large or burdensome. It is true, that having repealed the laws of his predecessor, he thought himself at liberty to demand an aid of his subjects, by way of BENEVOLENCE; for which he assigned this reason, that it would be a means of exempting the poorer sort of people from feeling the weight of a burden they were least able to bear. It is not at all improbable, that he was induced to take this step from that experience he learned in the beginning of his reign, that nothing so soon disposed the populace to insurrections, as the levying new

\* Speed, p. 736. from the records in the company's hall.

taxes, how moderate soever.\* But this new method, likewise, had its inconveniencies, though he was far enough from pushing it to a degree of oppression; since the money which was raised under this title in the whole city of London, did not amount to quite ten thousand pounds.

In one thing he shewed his mercantile principle extremely. He demanded a loan of the city of London for a certain time, and with some difficulty obtained six thousand pounds; but paying it very exactly, when he had occasion for a greater sum, it was raised with ease; and this too being punctually paid, he there rested his credit, reserving the confidence he had established for any real necessity that might require it, the former loans being rather out of policy than for relief. † The wealth of the nation certainly increased extremely during his pacific reign; it was the large estates of the merchants that exposed them to be pillaged by his instruments of iniquity; and as for the nobility, he was not without some reason jealous of their great power, and their great fortunes. When he seized upon Sir William Stanley's effects, who was younger brother only to the earl of Derby, he found they amounted to forty thousand marks in ready money and jewels, besides an estate in land, of three thousand pounds a year.

At the marriage of Arthur, prince of Wales, with the infanta Catherine, all who assisted at it were most magnificently dressed; Sir Thomas Brandon, an officer of the king's household, wearing a gold chain of the value of fifteen hundred pounds; yet the fortune he gave the princess Margaret, his daughter, when she married the

\* His colour was, that by this means the tax was set by affection upon substance; while those in mean condition, of which themselves were left to judge, were exempted from the burden.

† Some authors say, that, on his first application, he could borrow but three thousand pounds.



king of Scots, was no more than thirty thousand nobles, or ten thousand pounds; and the allowance stipulated for the Lady Anne, his wife's sister, when she married Lord Thomas Howard, did not much exceed one hundred and twenty pounds a year.\*

He was the first of our monarchs who coined shillings; and they were very large and fair, there being but forty in a pound weight of silver. His coin in general, both gold and silver, was of due weight and fineness; but when he made his expedition to Boulogne, he either coined, or tolerated a base kind of money, called dandiprats, † which perhaps was a right piece of policy; but it proved a bad precedent, and afforded his son a colour for sinking the value of his money beyond all example.

The treasure left by this prince in his coffers, at the time of his decease, not only exceeded what had ever been amassed by his predecessors, but surpassed beyond comparison what any of his successors have ever seen in their exchequers; for the Lord Chief Justice Coke tells us, it amounted to five millions three hundred thousand pounds, most in foreign coin, and too much of it acquired by methods unworthy of a king, and more especially so wise a king as he was. ‡ The judicious and curious Lord Bacon, who wrote this monarch's life with much care, and had great opportunities of being informed, reduces this sum much less; for he says, there was a tradition of his leaving eighteen hundred thousand pounds hid in secret places, under his own lock and key, in his palace at Richmond, where he deceased; and this he accounts, and very justly, to be (for those times especially) a vast

\* Stowe's Annals, p. 483, where many particulars may be found of a like nature.

† Sir Robert Cotton's Discourse of Foreign Wars, p. 53. Nummi Britannici Historia, p. 47. Fleetwood's Chron. Preciosum, p. 47.

‡ Fourth Institute, chap. xxxv. where he cites the close roll, An. 3 H. VIII.

wealth.\* But we can settle this point with more certainty, and on still better authority. The great and accurate antiquary, Sir Robert Cotton, asserts, he left behind him four millions and a half in bullion, exclusive of wrought plate, jewels, and rich furniture. These sums are not set down in figures, from which mistakes often arise, but in words at length; and, as Sir Robert affirms nothing without a voucher, so, in respect to this, he has given the best that could be desired, viz. the book of accounts kept between the king and Mr. Dudley. † It is possible this wide difference may be, with probability, reconciled, by supposing eight hundred thousand pounds to stand on Sir Richard Empson's account, as Sir Robert Cotton speaks only of Mr. Dudley; and then the sum will agree with the record cited by Sir Edward Coke. The fixing this fact is very material, as it shews how much more wealthy the nation then was, than it has been ever esteemed to be.

A.D.  
1509.

Our historians tell us, that King Henry intended to have made a thorough change in his measures, and to have relieved his people from all the grievances of which they complained, when he was taken off by death, on the 22d of April, 1509, in the twenty-third year of his reign. ‡ He was allowed by his contemporaries to have been one of the wisest princes of the age in which he lived; § and his memory hath been commended to the reverence of posterity, by the inimitable pen of the great Lord Chan-

\* Life of Henry VII. in the second volume of his works, p. 353.

† Answer to the Reasons for Foreign Wars, p. 53. See also Dr. Davenant's Grants and Resumptions, p. 250.

‡ Hall, fol. 60. b. Grafton, p. 947, 948. Stowe, Holingshed, Speed, Lord Bacon, in his History of this prince, p. 353.

§ Thuan. Hist. lib. i. G. F. Biondi, Hist. delle Guerre Civili d'Inghilterra. Johan. Major de gestis Scotorum, lib. vi. P. d'Orleans, Hist. des Revol. d'Angleterre, tom. ii. p. 341. Marsollier, Histoire de Henri VII. dit le sage ou le Salomon d'Angleterre; Par. 12mo. 2 vol. P. Daniel, Hist. de France, tom. vii. p. 183, 184.

cellor Bacon, who, in doing justice to this king's abilities, has shewn his own; as, by freely censuring his errors, he has set a noble example to English historians, to be more solicitous about truth than the reputation of themselves as writers, or the glory of those whose actions they record; an example which succeeding ages have rendered the more difficult to follow, since, as corruption increases, it not only enervates the will, but also both weakens and misleads the judgment; whence, as good histories become rare, they become consequently more valuable.



HISTORICAL MEMOIRS  
OF  
SIR JOHN CABOT.

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THE Venetians, throughout the whole century, and, indeed, for some ages before, were by far the most general traders in Europe, and had their factories, in most of the northern kingdoms and states, for the better managing their affairs.\* In England, especially, many of them settled, at London and Bristol particularly; and, in this last place dwelt John Gabota, Gabot, or, as our writers usually call him, John Cabot, of whom we are to speak. He had been long in England, since his son Sebastian, who was born at Bristol, was old enough to accompany him in his first voyage: † he was, it seems, a man perfectly skilled in all the sciences requisite to form an accomplished seaman, or a general trader; and, having heard much of Columbus's expedition, he addressed himself to the king, with proposals for making like discoveries, in case he met with due encouragement.

A.D.  
1495.

His offer was readily accepted; and, the king, by letters-patent, dated March the fifth, in the eleventh year of his reign, granted to him, by the name of John Cabot,

\* Libel of English polity in keeping the narrow sea, chap. vii—ix. in Hakluyt, v. 1. p. 193. Sir Willium Monson's Naval Tracts, p. 442, 443. P. Charlevoix, Histoire de la Nouvelle France, tom. i. p. 4.

† Petri Martyris ab Angleria de novo orbe, dec. iii. lib. vi. Lopez de Gomora Historia general de las Indias, lib. ii. c. iv. Navigazioni et Viaggi raccolti da M. Gio. Batt. Ramusio, tom. iii. in proemio.

citizen of Venice, and to his three sons, Lewis, Sebastian, and Sanctius, leave to discover unknown lands, and to conquer and settle them, with many privileges, reserving only to himself one fifth part of the neat profits, and, with this single restraint, that the ships they fitted out should be obliged to return to the port of Bristol.\* Though these letters-patent were granted in 1495, yet it was the next year before they proceeded to set out any ships; and then John Cabot had a permission from the king to take six English ships in any haven of the realm, of the burden of two hundred tons and under, with as many mariners as should be willing to go with him. †

In consequence of this license, the king, at his own expense, caused a ship to be equipped at Bristol: to this, the merchants of that city and of London, added three or four small vessels, freighted with proper commodities; which fleet, sailed in the spring of the year 1497. ‡ Our old chronicle-writers, particularly Fabian, § tells us of a very rich island, which John Cabot promised to discover; but in this, they seem to mistake the matter for want of thoroughly understanding the subject of which they were writing. John Cabot was too wise a man to pretend to know, before he saw it, what country he should discover, whether island or continent; but what he proposed was, to find a north-west passage to the Indies: so that he appears to have reasoned in the same manner that Columbus did, who imagined that, as the Portuguese, by sailing east came to the west coast of the Indies, so he, by sailing west, might reach their opposite shore. This, with his discovering the island of Baccaloes, or Newfoundland, was certainly the source of this story.

A.D.  
1497.

\* Rymer's *Foedera*, tom. xii. p. 595. Hakluyt's *Collection of Voyages*, tom. iii. p. 4.

† *Ibid*, p. 5.

‡ *Fabian's Chronicle*, as hereafter cited.

§ *Ibid*, Stowe.

John Cabot, having his son Sebastian with him, sailed happily on their north-west course, till the 24th of June, 1497, about five in the morning, when they first discovered land, which John Cabot, for that reason, called *Prima Vista*, that is, first seen. Another island, less than the first, he styled the island of St. John, because it was found on the feast of St. John Baptist. He afterwards sailed down to Cape Florida, and then returned with a good cargo, and three savages on board, into England, where it seems he was knighted for this exploit, since on the map of his discoveries, drawn by his son Sebastian, and cut by Clement Adams, which hung in the privy gallery at Whitehall, there was this inscription under the author's picture; *Effigies Seb. Caboti Angli, filii Jo. Caboti Venetiani, militis aurati, &c.* \*

This was a very important discovery, since, in truth, it was the first time the continent of America had been seen, Columbus being unacquainted therewith till his last voyage, which was the year following, when he coasted along a part of the isthmus of Darien. It is somewhat strange, that our English writers have delivered these matters so confusedly, especially such as lived under the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I. and consequently in and near the time of his son; yet, so inaccurate are their relations, that some have been induced from thence to doubt, whether John Cabot made any discoveries at all. † The reverend Mr. Samuel Purchas, to whose labours the world is so much indebted, discovers a good deal of distaste that America should be so called from Americus Vesputius, and asserts, that it ought rather to be called Cabotiana or Sebastiana, because, says he, Sebastian Cabot discovered more of it than Americus, or

\* Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. iii. p. 6. Purchas's Pilgrims, vol. iii. p. 461. 807.

† Lediard's Naval History, vol. i. p. 86.



Columbus himself.\* In Stowe † and Speed, ‡ we find this very discovery ascribed wholly to Sebastian, without any mention of his father; and yet, in Fabian's Chronicle, who lived in those days, we have these two remarkable passages :

“ In the thirteenth year of King Henry VII. (by means  
 “ of one John Cabot, a Venetian, which made himself  
 “ very expert and cunning in the knowledge of the circuit  
 “ of the world, and islands of the same, as by a sea card,  
 “ and other demonstrations reasonable, he shewed,) the  
 “ king caused to man and victual a ship at Bristol, to  
 “ search for an island, which he said he knew well was  
 “ rich, and replenished with great commodities; which  
 “ ship, thus manned and victualled at the king's cost,  
 “ diverse merchants of London ventured in her small  
 “ stocks, being in her, as chief patron, the said Venetian.  
 “ And, in the company of the said ship, sailed also out  
 “ of Bristol, three or four small ships, freighted with slight  
 “ and gross merchandizes, as coarse cloth, caps, laces,  
 “ points, and other trifles; and so departed from Bristol  
 “ in the beginning of May, of whom, in this mayor's time,  
 “ returned no tidings.”

Under the fourteenth year of the same king's reign he tells us, “ There were brought unto him,” *i. e.* Henry VII. “ three men taken in the new-found island; these, says he were clothed in beasts' skins, whom the king kept a time after; of the which, about two years after, I saw two apparelled after the manner of Englishmen, in Westminster-palace, which, at that time, I could not discern from Englishmen, till I was learned what they were; but, as for speech, I heard none of them utter one word.”

Thus, it appears from the best authority that can be desired, that of a contemporary writer, this discovery was made by Sir John Cabot, the father of Sebastian; and,

\* Pilgrimage, p. 602. † Annals, p. 480. ‡ Chronicle, p. 744.

indeed, so much we might have gathered, if we had wanted this authority; for, Sebastian Cabot being, as we shall see hereafter, alive in 1557, it is plain, that, at the time this voyage was made, he could not be above twenty years old, when, though he might accompany his father, yet, certainly he was too young to undertake such an expedition himself.\* It is probable that John Cabot died in England, but when or where is uncertain, at least for any thing I have read.

There is, indeed, another account of this affair, which supposes, that Sir John Cabot, with his son Sebastian, sailed for the discovery of a north-west passage, before this expedition, by the royal authority, and that in this voyage they had sight of the island which was afterwards called Newfoundland. To this opinion I should also incline, if it could be clearly reconciled to the authorities which have been produced, and considered with the greatest attention. At all events, whichever be the true account, this man, Sir John Cabot, was the original discoverer; of which honour he ought not to be despoiled even by his son, of whom we shall also give some memoirs in their proper place. At present, we will conclude with remarking, that the offer of Christopher Columbus, the favour shewn to his brother Bartholomew, and the encouragement given to Sir John Cabot and his family, do the highest honour to the memory of Henry VII. and fix the revival of our commercial spirit to, his reign.

\* This detail has been collected from Mr. Thorne of Bristol's Letter to Dr. Leigh; which Mr. Thorne, was the son of the merchant of Bristol, who, in conjunction with Mr. Elliot, fitted out the Cabots; as also from Sebastian Cabot's own accounts, and from the remarks of Hakluyt, Eden, and Purchas.

## CHAP. IX.

The Naval History of the Reign of Henry VIII. including the Memoirs of such eminent Sea-Officers as flourished therein.

**T**HERE never was, in any period, a prince who ascended the English throne, of whom his subjects formed greater hopes than those that were entertained of Henry VIII. at his accession. He was then about eighteen years old, of strong natural parts, heightened by an excellent education; and, though he afterwards discovered a good deal of obstinacy in his temper, yet, in the dawn of his reign, he shewed himself very inclinable to listen to good advice; and, his father left him as able counsellors as perhaps any monarch ever had about him. His first acts were conformable to his subjects hopes; he delivered such as his father unjustly kept in confinement; and, in their stead, Empson, Dudley, and their creatures, were imprisoned.\* Yet even these were not destroyed, as some have suggested, by a hasty and rigorous prosecution, but were left to the ordinary course; and after that, as they deserved, to the due severity of the law, their great knowledge in which they had so flagrantly abused to the ruin of others. † Dudley, during his confinement in the Tower, composed

A.D.  
1509.

\* Fabian, p. 538. Hall, fol. 1. Grafton, p. 951. Stowe, p. 487. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 799. Cooper. Godwin's Annals, p. 1—5. Life of this prince by Edward, Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, in the complete History of England, vol. ii. Bishop Burnet, in his History of the Reformation, vol. i. and the rest of our celebrated Historians.

† See a very sensible and pathetic speech of Sir Richard Empson to the lords of the council, on his being called before them on April 23, 1509, in Lord Herbert of Cherbury's Life of Henry VIII. p. 3. not wrote for him by that nobleman, as some imagine, the substance of it having long before appeared in our old chronicles, such as Grafton, p. 952. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 803. See this case at large in Anderson's Reports, p. i. p. 152—158.



a very extraordinary book, entitled, *The Tree of the Commonwealth*, wherein he shewed a prodigious capacity as a statesman, and from which (though, for ought I know, it was never published) many pestiferous schemes have taken their rise, his family having held the reins of government here for nearly half a century. In other respects, the king shewed himself a very gracious prince, having a like sense of his own dignity, and of his duty towards his people.

A.D. 1511. In the year 1511, the king of Arragon and Castile demanded assistance against the Moors; whereupon King Henry, who was desirous of maintaining to the utmost the glory of the English nation, sent him one thousand five hundred archers, under the command of Sir Thomas Darcy, with whom went abundance of gentlemen, of the best families of the kingdom, volunteers. They sailed from Plymouth, escorted by a squadron of four royal ships, and landed happily, on the 1st of June, in the south of Spain; but, the politic king, who wanted nothing more than their appearance to bring his enemies to terms, instead of employing, dismissed them with a few presents, and so they returned into England, without encountering any other hazards than those of the sea.\* The same year, the king sent a like aid to the dutchess of Burgundy, under the command of Sir Edward Poynings, which met with better success; for, after having answered effectually the ends for which they were sent, they returned with small loss, and much honour, to their native country.†

A.D. 1512. Notwithstanding what had so lately happened in Spain, the artful Ferdinand, by the assistance of the pope, who cajoled King Henry with fair words and fine promises, drew him to make war on France, in hopes of recovering the dominions of his ancestors. With this view, King

\* Hall, fol. 11. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 808. Ferrera's *Hist. de Espan.* p. xii. § 16.

† Grafton's *Chronicle*, p. 958. Stowe, p. 483. Cooper, fol. 274.

Henry was persuaded to send a numerous army, under the command of the marquis of Dorset, by sea, into Biscay, in order to penetrate that way into the dutchy of Guyenne; this expedition had worse consequences than the former; Ferdinand never intending that these troops should act against the French, but, by their remaining for some time in his country, sought an opportunity of over-running Navarre, to which he had no title, while the French, awed by the English army, durst not move to its assistance. But, during the time he made this conquest, sickness destroyed numbers of the English; so that, shortly after, they were constrained to return.\* In August, the same year, there happened a bloody engagement between the English and French fleets, of which we shall give the reader, hereafter, a distinct account; and, the Sovereign, † the largest ship in the English navy, being burnt therein, the king built another of still greater burden, called Henry Grace de Dieu. ‡ In the month of March, 1513, another royal fleet put to sea, which, engaging the French on the 25th of April, the admiral was killed; which loss was soon repaired, and the French driven to take shelter in their ports. § In August, the king went in person with a great army into France, where he made some conquests, while his admiral spoiled the French coasts, as he also did the next year; so that the French king was glad to obtain peace; upon the conclusion of which he married Mary, who was sister to our King Henry, but did not long outlive his marriage. ||

A.D.  
1513.

\* Gabriel Chappuy, *Histoire du royaume de Navarre*, p. 620. *Marianæ Historia de rebus Hispaniæ*, lib. xxx. p. 583. Hall, fol. 17.

† Called, in other accounts, the Regent.

‡ Grafton, p. 970. Stowe, p. 490. Herbert.

§ Hall, fol. 23. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 816. Godwin's Annals, p. 12.

|| H. Velleii in Gaguini Append. p. 321—323. Dupleix, tom. iii. p. 262—265. Rymer's *Fœdera*, tom. xiii. p. 413—423. Grafton. Stowe, p. 495, 496.



A.D. 1515. Francis I. succeeded him, between whom and the Emperor Maximilian, King Henry kept as even as he could, sometimes assisting the emperor, and sometimes seeming to favour the French king, who prevailed on him, in 1520, to pass over to Calais, in order to have an interview with him; and, it followed accordingly, between the towns of Ardres and Guines. Our historians give us long descriptions of the pomp and splendour which accompanied this meeting; but, a short passage in a French writer seems to me better worth transcribing than any thing they have said. He tells us, that at this interview, King Henry caused an English archer to be embroidered on his tent, with this sentence under him; *Cui adhæreo præest; i. e.* "He shall prevail, with whom I side;" which, says the judicious historian, was not only his motto, but his practice as long as he lived. \* In 1522, there arose new differences between this monarch and the French king, which were not a little heightened by the coming of the Emperor Charles V. who paid great court to Henry, and persuaded him to send over a numerous army into France, which he did shortly after under the command of Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk, who wrought the French infinite mischief, without doing his country much good. During this war, the emperor's fleet acted in conjunction with the English, whereby the French were driven to great distress, and the Scots, being engaged in their interest, suffered also very severely; but, when the king evidently saw, that, by his assistance, the Emperor Charles was become too powerful, and affected to manage all the affairs of Europe at his will, he wisely withdrew his auxiliaries, and pursued such a conduct as seemed most likely to restore the balance of power. †

A.D. 1525. In 1525, a peace was concluded with the French king upon very advantageous terms; and, soon after, Cardinal

\* Abregé de l'histoire de France par Mezeray, tom. iv. p. 494.

† Hall, Herbert, Godwin, Duplex.



Wolsey went over into France, and had a conference with that prince. Thenceforward, the king's thoughts were much taken up with his domestic affairs, and with alterations in religion; so that, except some disputes with Scotland, wherein their king received such a check as broke his heart, \* there happened nothing material till the year 1544, when King Henry joined once more with the emperor against the French; whereupon, Sir John Wallop was sent into France, and a considerable force marched into Scotland under the earl of Hertford, Sir John Dudley, Viscount Lisle, wasting the coasts, in the mean time, with a great fleet. † In the midst of the summer, the duke of Suffolk entered the French dominions with a great army, and laid siege to Boulogne, which was also blocked up at sea by the admiral Viscount Lisle, who, after the place was taken, was constituted governor thereof, the king and his forces passing from thence into England. ‡ The next year the French fleet made several attempts on the English coast with indifferent success; to revenge which, the Viscount Lisle landed in Normandy, and burnt all the adjacent country. §

A.D.  
1544.

In 1546, the French made an unsuccessful attempt upon Boulogne, the earl of Hertford, and Viscount Lisle, having obliged them either to come to a battle or to raise the siege; they chose the latter; and, after some other attempts at sea, which were unsuccessful, a peace ensued, which lasted as long as the king lived, || he deceasing in

A.D.  
1546.

\* Grafton, p. 1143. Corps diplomatique, tom. iv. p. i. 458. Buchanan, lib. xiv. p. 475, 476.

† Stowe, p. 585. Speed, p. 782. Leslei de rebus gestis Scotorum, lib. x. p. 472.

‡ Hall, fol. 258. b. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 964. Godwin's Annals, p. 190.

§ Dupleix, tom. iii. Mezeray, tom. iv. p. 633. Grafton, p. 1276.

|| Commentaires de Montluc, tom. i. p. 237. Memoires du Bellay, liv. x. Hall, fol. 260. Corps Diplomatique, tom. iv. p. ii. p. 305.

the night of the twenty-eighth of January following,\* 1546-47, in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and the thirty-eighth of his reign, † exceedingly regretted by the bulk of his subjects, many of whom celebrated his praises afterwards in their learned writings; such as our famous antiquary John Leland, Sir Richard Morison, Sir Thomas Chaloner, Becon, in his preface to his Policy of War, Udal, in his preface to Erasmus's Paraphrase on the New Testament, and many others. Neither are foreigners wanting in paying a proper tribute of respect to the memory of this prince, a few of whom we shall remark at the bottom of the page. ‡

The principal events only of this monarch's administration, and those, too, but very succinctly, have been touched here, to avoid repeating again the same things, in the memoirs of those eminent sea-officers who flourished in his reign. But, before we come to these, it may not be amiss to speak somewhat as to the merit of this prince, in having a special and very commendable regard to the grandeur, security, and prosperity of his dominions; his attention to merchants, discoverers, and others, who aimed at public utility, in different manners; as also, to make some short remarks upon those acts of his government, for which he has been both generally and severely censured. What I shall offer on these heads, I have collected, by a diligent perusal of the statutes passed in, and the public acts of his time, which are still remaining; charters of cities, towns, and corporations; the solemn assertions of intelligent contemporary writers, and other authentic evidences on which the reader may depend, in regard to the facts.

\* Hall, fol. 263. Grafton, p. 1282. Stowe, p. 593. Speed, p. 784. Godwin, p. 207. Burnet, in his History of the Reformation, vol. ii. p. 350.

† Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 977.

‡ Thuas. Hist. lib. iii. § 2. Du Chesne, Hist. Angl. liv. xix. P. Jovius in elog. lib. vi.

It was to this great monarch we owed the deliverance of this realm from the temporal as well as spiritual dominion of the papal see, which, at this time, drew half a million *per annum* from hence. He added the titles of Defender of the Faith, and king of Ireland, to the crown, which he made supreme in all causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil. Scotland he humbled to the dust, and built the strong citadel of Carlisle, to keep the Scots in awe. Other kings had possessed Wales; he reduced it into order, civilized the people, and with the appellation gave them all the privileges of English subjects. He improved on the act which his father obtained, for giving a sanction to the Star-chamber, by causing its decrees to be inserted into statutes. He, by authority of parliament, framed a court of wards, and a court of augmentations. He reduced into a consistent regularity almost every branch of our domestic policy. By an act of parliament, the pay and punishment of soldiers was settled, which, in effect, was the first act against mutiny and desertion. By his prerogative, and at his own expense, he laid the foundation, and settled the constitution of the present royal navy. But, notwithstanding these additional forces, he kept up a martial spirit amongst, by putting arms into the hands of all, his subjects, exacting also the legal services of the seamounts and cinque-ports. He was at great pains to repress the humour of preferring grazing to tillage, which spread, as well as continued, that depopulation, by which it was introduced. He took care that provisions should be both plentiful and cheap. He made laws for the planting and preservation of timber. He caused so much of Hounslow-heath as belonged to him to be leased and improved. Several good laws were made in his time for procuring and maintaining a breed of sound, well-sized, and serviceable horses. The poor had a legal maintenance assigned them. Power was given to magistrates to set idle people to work, and vagabonds, especially gypsies,



were severely punished. Most of the defects, which were many, in respect to laws against murder, were removed. The manner of proceeding against pirates was settled. For the common benefit of the subject, the making and the maintaining high-ways and bridges was adjusted by statute. Watermen were regulated; deeds of bargain and sale were directed to be enrolled; the security of property was enlarged by the acts respecting wills and testaments; usury was restrained, and legal interest fixed at ten *per cent.* which, though a high rate to us, was far below what the Jews in former, and the Italians in these times exacted.

The laws made in his time, for the facilitating and support of inland navigation, clearly demonstrate, that the importance of large rivers began to be understood, and esteemed more than during the civil wars, when public welfare gave way to private interest. The Thames, the Ouse, the Exe, the rivers of Southampton, the Severn, &c. were freed from wears, and other obstructions; on the same principle, an act passed for rendering the river of Canterbury deeper, in order to its becoming navigable. The illegal tolls, and other oppressive duties on the Severn, were suppressed, that the great communication, by that noble river, might be as free as possible. The making of cables, and other hempen manufactures, which had been the principal stay of Bridport, in Dorsetshire, was secured to that place by statute. More than one law was passed to prevent the harbours in Devonshire and Cornwall from being injured and choaked up by the stream-works of the tin-mines. An act was also passed in favour of the port of Scarborough; and, with regard to Dover, the haven being in a manner spoiled, the king expended between sixty and seventy thousand pounds, out of his own coffers, in building a new pier, and other necessary works. Some favours he likewise granted, out of consideration to their harbour, unto the inhabitants of

Pool. But not to dwell upon a subject that might employ a volume, let us barely mention his founding the two royal yards of Woolwich and Deptford, the cradles of Britain's naval power; and, his founding at the latter, his noble marine guild, or fraternity of the Trinity, denominated from thence of Deptford strond. These were manifest proofs of his acquaintance with, and attention to, the real and essential interests of his subjects; it may, indeed, be said, that many of these, being acts of the legislature, ought not, therefore, to be ascribed singly to this prince; which, in regard to any other reign, would be a good objection. But though, in such matters, parliaments, in other times, did what they pleased, almost without the king, yet Henry did what he pleased with parliament, and parliament studied to please him. Other histories will shew, and very truly too, what evils flowed from this source. It is my felicity to have no concern, but to prove, that some good things came likewise through this channel, which is certainly a point of justice to do, if I had abilities to perform it.

He was likewise very solicitous in providing for the security of his dominions, that whatever share he thought fit to take in the affairs of the continent, his crown might be at all times safe, and the public tranquillity in no danger. His militia and his navy were always ready for service; but to give them leisure to arrive, he covered all his havens with fortresses. Guines, for the protection of Calais, he rendered impregnable; and made Boulogne strong enough to resist all the force of France. He constructed a strong castle on the Isle of Portland, and built another at Hurst, to guard Southampton, and the adjacent coasts; the two forts called Cowes, for the guard of the Isle of Wight; Camber castle, to defend Winchelsea and Rye; as South Sea castle was erected to secure Portsmouth; Sandgate, Walmer, Deal, and Sandown castles, were all raised by him to preserve the



cinque ports; as was that of Queenborough, to cover the other side of Kent. Nor did he overlook or neglect the more distant parts of this island, as the strong and costly castles of Pendennis, and St. Mawes, in Cornwall, clearly witness. We may think the less of these fortifications, by seeing most of them sinking into ruins, being suffered, through neglect, to moulder and decay; but they were once works of wonder for all that, cost Henry immense sums, and in his own days were both useful and honourable, whatever, through a change of circumstances, they may be now. He was magnificent in his palaces, such as Bridewell, and Whitehall, here in his capital; Beaulieu, in Essex; Nonesuch, in Surrey; Chelsea, and Hampton-court, in Middlesex; Dartford, and Greenwich, in Kent; and Windsor castle, in Berks, which he much improved. These buildings were expensive, encouraged artists, gave employment to multitudes, and, by the king's example, spread a spirit of this sort over all England, as Leland, and other contemporary writers remark, and praise him for it exceedingly; and of what passed in their own times, we cannot be so good judges as they, in respect to the safety those fortresses procured, or the good effects which the king's taste in building and other polite arts produced.

Though dreaded by his clergy, and little beloved by the old nobility, Henry was revered by the gentry, whom he employed and advanced, and had the affections of the commons, to whom he was kind. He made laws for regulating measures, for improving the woollen and worsted manufactures, and for preventing frauds in pewter, by which exportation was prevented. He was an enemy to monopolies, and to the oppression of incorporated companies, whom he restrained from making bye-laws, but with the assent of the chief justices. He caused the fees of apprentices, at being bound and made free, to be fixed by a statute; and also declared bonds taken by masters from



their apprentices, that when they had served their times they would not set up their respective crafts, to be void. In respect to foreigners exercising trades, of which, in those days, there were in London many thousands, which occasioned much heart-burning, many tumults, and one great insurrection; he directed a strict inquiry in the Star-chamber, and then converted the decree made there, into a law, by authority of parliament. As this has been liable to misinterpretation, as a measure destructive to industry, it may be proper to set it in a true light. These strangers took no English apprentices or servants; they undersold by debasing wares; they did not bear a share in taxes or public services; they affected to live in communities, and to hold meetings for supporting their interests against the natives; and when they were grown rich by these and such like arts, they went home with their wealth, and left their nephews or servants here, in possession of their trades. All the hardships put upon them by the king's law was, to set them on a level, in all these respects, with his own subjects. He was also a lover of learned men, and an encourager of learned professions. He founded the royal college of physicians, granted them extensive privileges by charter, which was supported by a statute; and he, in like manner, exempted surgeons from being on juries, or serving offices, as being, in its consequences, detrimental to society. He invited over Hans Holbein, and other ingenious foreigners, rewarded them liberally, and encouraged all new inventions, of which, if we had room, we could give a considerable catalogue, that were introduced under his auspices, or at least during his reign; which, having lasted almost thirty-eight years, must have brought in manners, as we shall see it actually did, that had a very strong effect upon the fortune and condition of the nation.

Mr. Robert Thorne, a merchant of Bristol, in the year 1527, addressed himself to the king by a letter, wherein

he represented what great advantages the emperor, and the king of Portugal drew from their colonies, and, in a very pathetic strain, exhorted him to undertake discoveries towards the north, concerning which he gave many hints, supported by very plausible reasons. \* The king understanding that this gentleman had great experience, as well as a very penetrating judgment, yielded to his request, and ordered two ships to be well manned and victualled for this expedition, of which Mr. Thorne himself had the direction. The issue, however, of this voyage, is very uncertainly recorded; all we know of it is, that one of the ships employed therein was lost, and that the other returned home without discovering any north-west passage, though certainly no care or pains were wanting, in such as were concerned. Mr. Thorne, the principal undertaker, lived to be afterwards mayor of Bristol, and dying in a good old age, with a very fair reputation, lies buried in the Temple church. †

In 1530, Mr. William Hawkins, of Plymouth, father of the famous Sir John Hawkins, Knight, and himself esteemed one of the ablest seamen of his time, fitted out a stout tall ship, says my author, at his own expense, called the Paul of Plymouth, of the burden of two hundred and fifty tons, in which he made three voyages to the coast of Brasil, touching also on the coast of Guinea, where he traded in slaves, gold, and elephants' teeth, opening thereby the channel of that rich and extensive commerce, which has been since carried on in those parts. ‡

\* Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. i. p. 212.

† Hall, fol. 158. b. Herbert's Hist. of Hen. VIII. in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 85. Hakluyt, vol. i. p. 220. Purchas's Pilgrims, vol. iii. p. 306—309. Weever's Funeral Monuments, p. 443. Though Fuller, in his Worthies, under Bristol, p. 36, speaking of the great beneficence of this truly eminent and worthy person, intimates, that he lies buried in St. Christopher's, near the Exchange, London.

‡ Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. iii. p. 700.



Less successful, though undertaken with greater hopes, was the famous voyage of Mr. Hore, of London, a worthy merchant, and one of the most remarkable men of his time. His person was tall and graceful, his knowledge solid and extensive, his behaviour insinuating and polite; all which is necessary to be observed; since, by his discourses on the honour and profit of discoveries in North America, he inspired no less than thirty gentlemen, of family and fortune, with a desire of sharing in the fatigues of his intended voyage.\* They equipped two ships, one called the Trinity, of one hundred and forty tons, commanded by Mr. Hore; the other the Minion, of less burden; and on board these there embarked, in all, one hundred and twenty persons.

They sailed from Gravesend, on the 30th of April, 1536, and, without any remarkable accident, arrived on the coasts of Newfoundland, where, while they were intent on discoveries, they were reduced to such distress for want of food, that some of them, when on shore, killed and ate their companions. At last, when they were on the point of being all starved, a French ship arrived, well furnished with provisions, of which they made themselves masters, and returned therein to England, but in such a miserable condition, though they were not out above seven months, that Sir William Butts and his lady did not know their own son, who was one of the company, but by an extraordinary wart on his knee. Some months after, arrived the Frenchmen whom they had spoiled, and made a great clamour at court, about the wrongs they had received; into which King Henry having made a strict inquiry, he was so much moved at the miseries these brave men had suffered, that he generously repaid the French to their satisfaction, out of the treasury, and promoted several of those who returned from this disastrous voyage; amongst the rest, Mr. Armigal Wade, who was, many years after,

\* Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. iii. p. 129, and 704.



clerk of the council to himself, and his son, Edward VI. \* One thing more I must remark, before I quit this subject, and that is, that the Reverend Mr. Hakluyt, from whom we have these particulars, rode two hundred miles, in order to take them from the mouth of Mr. Butts, the only surviving person of those who had made this voyage. †

The English commerce, during the reign of this prince, extended itself very much, especially towards the new-discovered lands in the north, to which, by degrees, a regular trade was fixed; and in the Levant, encouraged by the great intercourse between the king and the two maritime states of Italy, Venice and Genoa. In proof of this, I will give the title of a patent granted by this monarch to a Genoese, to execute the office of a consul of the English nation, in the Isle of Chio, the original of which is still preserved in the library of the Society for propagating Christian knowledge. It runs thus: “*Exemplar: literarum pat. Henrici regis octavi, in quibus concessit Benedicto Justiniani mercatori Genuensi, officium sive locum magistri protectoris, sive consulis; infra insulam sive civitatem de Scio. Teste rege apud Chel-sehith, quinto die Octobris reg. xxiii.*”

It seems, indeed, to have been the king's maxim, as may be gathered from the state papers of his reign, which have reached our times, to have made use of all his foreign negotiations for the furtherance of trade, to which his agents, Ley, and Pace, the former employed in Spain, and the latter in Venice and the Swiss cantons, had a strong inclination. As to Pace, he had formed a plan for enlarging our foreign trade into the Turkish dominions, which was hindered from coming to the king's notice, by the arts of Cardinal Wolsey, who first decried him as a madman, and then by his ill usage made him really such. ‡

\* Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. iii. p. 130.

† Ibid, p. 131.

‡ Strype's Memorials, vol. i. in the Appendix. Herbert. Burnet. Wood's Athen. Oxoniensis, vol. i. col. 29.

After doing, as indeed it was our duty to do, justice to this monarch's intentions, which, with respect to foreign affairs, were always what they ought to be; that is, he meant to preserve the independency of the sovereigns of Europe, and make himself the umpire of their differences; we must next, in justice to our subject, say somewhat of the consequences that attended his interfering so much as he did, with the affairs of the continent, and of the high price he paid for that reputation which he attained. But, previous to this, let it be observed, that such as have censured him for changing sides, as the history of his reign plainly shews he did, are in the wrong to ascribe it to the inconstancy of his temper, since, as that learned antiquary, Sir Robert Cotton, truly observes, \* it ought rather to be placed to the account of his allies.

When the Emperor Maximilian entered into a league with this monarch, he promised to assist in person, to recover for him the crown of France, and to repel the tyrannical king who then wore that crown; he promised likewise the dutchy of Milan to him and his heirs-male, to be held as a fief of the empire; and, as if this had not been enough, he likewise assured him the reversion of the imperial crown, and the Roman empire. But, when he had served his turn; he left King Henry to serve himself how he could. Yet this usage did not hinder him from entering into a confederacy with Charles V. who fed him with the hopes, that, when by their joint support the constable of Bourbon should be put into possession of the kingdom of France, he should do homage for it to King Henry; yet afterwards, through his assistance, their affairs being in a prosperous condition, and the French king in the greatest distress, when Mr. Pace, the king of England's ambassador, desired farther assurances, they were plainly refused; so that, to break with such allies

\* In his Discourse of Foreign War, London, 1690, 8vo. p. 90.



as these, ought not to draw any imputation upon his character.

The times in which he lived, and the temper of those princes with whom he had to deal, may furnish some excuse for his conduct; and perhaps the secret engagements of his ministers, by the means of pensions or promises from foreign powers, might, if they could be thoroughly exposed, justify the king still farther, by proving, that he was misled in those measures which induced him to take such steps for maintaining his interest and grandeur abroad, as deeply distressed and impoverished his subjects here at home.

That immense treasure his father left behind him, was quickly consumed in the great expeditions he undertook; in the transporting vast armies to the continent; the maintaining them in the field and in garrisons; and the high subsidies granted to his allies, while he was fighting all the time in other men's quarrels, and got little or nothing, at least that was worth keeping, for himself. When all that mass of money was gone, he demanded, and received such assistance from his parliament, as none of his predecessors had obtained. To all this they added that prodigious grant of the estates of all the religious houses in this realm, which at that time amounted to one hundred and fifty thousand pounds *per annum*, and which were vested in the crown for ever. Besides these legal impositions, this king acquired no small sum, by methods which had no better support than the stretch of his prerogative; to mention only a few:

In the fourteenth year of his reign, he had a loan of ten *per cent.* out of the personal estate of such of his subjects as were worth from twenty to three hundred pounds, and twenty marks from such as were worth more. This, indeed, was only borrowed, and they had privy seals for their money; but the parliament kindly interposed four years after, and released his majesty from the



obligation of paying so much as a farthing of those debts. Neither must it be forgotten; that, in collecting this loan, the value of every man's estate was put upon his oath; so that every subject was in jeopardy either of poverty or perjury.

In the seventeenth year of his reign he had another great loan, in which an oath of secrecy was administered to the commissioners, and they were empowered to tender the like oath to such as came before them; though this was styled an amicable grant, yet the commissioners, to quicken men in their offers, threatened them with imprisonment of their persons, and confiscation of their estates. In the thirty-sixth year of his reign, he demanded, and received a loan of eight pence in the pound, of such persons as were worth from forty shillings to twenty pounds; and one shilling in the pound, from such as were worth more; by which it appears, that as he fell early into necessity, notwithstanding the rich exchequer that he came to, so he was not long out of necessity, after that prodigious accession to the royal revenue, made by the confiscation before mentioned, of the abbey-lands.

The worst of all was, that, when he found himself pressed for money, he took the most detrimental way of raising it, which was that of practising upon his coin. It may, however, seem doubtful, whether the alteration he made in the first year of his reign, was with this view. He did, indeed, coin forty-five shillings out of a pound of silver, by which he raised that metal to three shillings and nine pence an ounce; but, as the standard was not altered, it is not at all improbable, that the motives upon which he made this alteration might be honourable enough. But, in the latter end of his reign, his conduct in this respect became inexcusable, because highly detrimental to his people.

The first stroke of this bad policy was in the thirty-fourth year of his reign, when he not only divided the

pound into forty-eight shillings, by which, if the coin had remained in its former purity, silver would have been raised to four shillings an ounce, but added also two ounces of base metal in the pound, instead of eighteen pennyweights, which raised it nine pence halfpenny an ounce more. Not contented with this, in the thirty-sixth year of his reign, he coined money that was but half silver; and though some of the chronicles of those times say, that by this he raised it to four shillings an ounce, yet, in fact, he brought it up to eight shillings. In the next year he gave the finishing stroke, by coining money that had but four ounces of silver in the pound weight; so that silver was then at twelve shillings an ounce, the consequence of which was, that, after his death, his shilling fell to nine pence, and afterwards to sixpence; that is, people would take them for no more.

It is to be observed, that the greatest part of this money was coined into testons, which, though they were never called shillings, yet passed in his time for twelvepence; they are said to have been of brass, covered with silver; and these were the pieces that fell first to nine pence, and then to sixpence; and, a piece of that value being found very convenient in change, they were coined of good silver at that rate, in succeeding times, and from hence came the word tester. He made, likewise, some alterations in his gold coins; all which was occasioned by his foreign wars, and other expensive measures, which forced him upon these methods, unknown to any of his royal predecessors, even in the times of their greatest necessities.

It is inconceivable what strange as well as what bad effects this debasement of the coin produced, and which, as the common people, for want of discernment, were unable to ascribe to its proper cause, they were led from thence into a variety of errors, which naturally ren-

dered them desirous of very improper measures, which they vainly hoped would prove remedies. All things of a sudden grew extravagantly dear, as indeed how should it be otherwise? for, let a prince be ever so powerful, he cannot change the nature or even the value of things, nor will his debasing his coin sink the worth of the commodities or manufactures, that are to be purchased with it.

At first, such alterations will create great confusion, which cannot but be detrimental to private property; yet, by degrees, men will be taught to set up their natural against the regal prerogative; and, when they find money of less value than it should be, they will insist upon having more money. But, notwithstanding experience points them to this remedy in their private dealings; yet, as all men are buyers as well as sellers, it is easy to perceive, that, in such a situation of things, a general clamour will arise about the dearness of necessary commodities, which may be, as it then was, attributed to false causes, which occasioned not only ineffectual remedies to be applied, but such as were also injurious, heightening old, and being also productive of fresh inconveniencies.

To this may be ascribed many of the complaints that are to be met with in the historians of those times, and many of the laws too that were founded on popular conceit; and which, though they were enacted to give public satisfaction, were repealed again in succeeding reigns, when they were felt to be public grievances. If, as the Roman poet observes, there is a pleasure in beholding storms and tempests when we are safe, and out of their reach, there is certainly much greater satisfaction in contemplating the political foul weather of former times, which we are not only exempt from feeling, but which our present happy constitution secures us from any apprehension that we, or our posterity shall ever feel. But, this satisfaction may be still heightened, by a ra-



tional reflection upon what passed in those times, on the connection between mistakes in policy, the mischiefs created by them, and the misconstructions that were sometimes put on these, by those who suffered them.

It is the power of making these remarks, and of setting things, even of the nicest nature, in their true light, that is one of the greatest advantages attending freedom. In times past, no doubt, there might be many who had heads clear enough to make these, or perhaps better reflections; but they were obliged to conceal them, because reasons of state would have made that a crime, which was commendable in itself, but which, notwithstanding that, will never be commended but amongst a free people. The measures that we have censured and exposed, were certainly marks of the power, the excessive power of the prince by whom they were taken, and who, it is very probable, did not foresee the consequences that would attend them; they served some immediate purpose; and he who is urged by an ambitious will, when he is possessed of absolute power, will seldom look farther. But those who live under milder princes, and in better times, will discern from such histories, the dangers to which a people must be always exposed, who want the safeguard of a legal constitution, which may defend them from having those privileges, bestowed upon them by God, torn from them at the will of one of their fellow-creatures.

But it is time to pass from these matters, to the glorious seamen, to whose memories we have undertaken to do right, and of whom several flourished in this martial reign, that are but very slightly mentioned in those histories, where we might reasonably have expected the best accounts of them. As far as the narrowness of our limits will permit, we will endeavour to supply that defect here, beginning with

SIR EDWARD HOWARD, LORD HIGH ADMIRAL OF ENGLAND, AND KNIGHT OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER.

IF the advantage of an illustrious descent add, as we commonly suppose it does, to the reputation of great achievements, then the memory of this very gallant and worthy man will have a double right to our respect. He was a second son of the most noble house of Norfolk, and derived, from the example of his father, those qualities which most adorn the highest titles, untainted loyalty, and invincible courage. He began early to testify his inclination to the sea-service, since we find him employed in the Flanders expedition in 1492, when King Henry VII. thought fit to assist the duke of Burgundy against his rebellious subjects. As we purposely omitted an account of that expedition in his reign, let us, as was our intention then, insert it here.

The Flemings, naturally a brave people, and fond of freedom, grew uneasy under the yoke of the house of Austria, and, under the command of the baron de Ravenstein, began to throw it off. In order to this, they seized the town and harbour of Sluys, from whence they fitted out abundance of vessels of pretty considerable force; and, under colour of pursuing their enemies, took and plundered vessels of all nations without distinction; and, as the English trade to Flanders was then very extensive, their ships suffered at least as much as any other; which was the true reason why King Henry, upon the first application of the duke of Burgundy, sent a squadron of twelve sail under the command of Sir Edward Poynings, with whom went out Sir Edward Howard, then a very young man, to learn the art of war. The duke of Saxony, in consequence of his alliance with the duke of Burgundy, marched with an army into Flanders, and besieged Sluys

by land; and Sir Edward Poynings thereupon blocked it up with his fleet by sea.

The port was defended by two strong castles, which the Flemings, who had nothing to trust to but force, defended with unparalleled obstinacy; insomuch, that though Poynings attacked them constantly every day for twenty days successively, yet he made no great impression, till at last, through accident, the bridge of boats, by which the communication between the castles was preserved, took fire; whereupon the besieged were glad to surrender their city to the duke of Saxony, and their port and castles to the English.\* In this expedition, Sir Edward was made a knight for his extraordinary bravery, of which he gave frequent instances during that long reign, and so thoroughly established his reputation, that King Henry VIII. on his accession made choice of him for his standard-bearer, † which in those days was considered not only as a mark of particular favour, but as a testimony also of the highest confidence and greatest respect.

In the fourth year of the same reign he was created lord high admiral of England, ‡ and in that station convoyed the marquis of Dorset into Spain, of whose expedition we have already spoken, as also of the manner in which it ended. The lord admiral, after the landing of the forces, put to sea again; and, arriving on the coasts of Bretagne, landed some of his men about Conquet and Brest, who ravaged the country, and burnt several of the little towns. This roused the French, who began immediately to fit out a great fleet, in order to drive, if possible, the English from their coasts; and, as this armament was very extraordinary, King Henry sent a squadron of five-and-twenty tall ships, which he caused to be fitted out under his own

\* Hall, fol. 17, 22. Polyd. Virg. p. 584. Lord Bacon's History of Henry VII. vol. ii. p. 304, 305.

† Pat i. H. VIII. p. 1. m. 24.

‡ Pat iv. H. VIII. p. 2.



eye at Portsmouth, to the assistance of the admiral. \* Among these were two capital ships; one called the Regent, commanded by Sir Thomas Knevet, master of the horse to the king; and the other, which was the Sovereign, by Sir Charles Brandon, afterwards duke of Suffolk. When these vessels had joined the admiral, his fleet consisted of no less than forty-five sail, with which he immediately resolved to attack the enemy, who were by this time ready to come out of the harbour of Brest. † Authors differ much as to their number, though they agree pretty well as to the name of the admiral, whom they call Primauguet; yet, it seems they agree in a mistake; for, the historians of Bretagne assure us, they have no such name in that province, and that undoubtedly it ought to be Porsmoguer. ‡

Whatever his name was, or whatever the force of his fleet might be, which our writers say consisted of thirty-nine, and the French only of twenty sail, he was certainly a very brave man. The ship he commanded was called the Cordelier, which was so large as to be able to carry twelve hundred fighting men, exclusive of mariners. At this time there were nine hundred on board; and, encouraged by their gallant officer, they did their duty bravely. Sir Thomas Knevet, in the Regent, which was a much less ship, attacked and boarded them. The action lasted for some time with equal vigour on both sides; at last, both admirals took fire, and burnt together, wherein were lost the two commanders, and upwards of sixteen hundred valiant men. § It seems this accident struck both fleets

\* Hall, fol. 21. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 815. Herbert, p. 11.

† Histoire de France, par P. Daniel, tom. vii. p. 313.

‡ We have this from the last cited author, who certainly judges right; for, from the Sieur Porsmoguer our old chronicles took Sir Pierce Morgan, which is the name they have thought fit to bestow on the French admiral, as the reader may see in Hall, fol. 22. a. and Grafton, p. 970.

§ Godwin's Annals, p. 10. H. Velleii in Gaguini Appendix, p. 318, 319. Dupleix, tom. iii. p. 263.

with amazement; so that they separated without fighting, each claiming the victory, to which probably neither had a very good title.

In the beginning of the next April, the admiral put to sea again with a fleet of forty-two men of war, \* besides small vessels, and forced the French into the harbour of Brest, † where they fortified themselves, in order to wait the arrival of a squadron of galleys from the Mediterranean. Sir Edward Howard, having considered their posture, resolved, since it was impossible to attack them, to burn the country round about; which he accordingly performed, in spite of all the care they could take to prevent it; and yet, the French lay still under the cover of their fortifications, and of a line of twenty-four large hulks lashed together, which they proposed to have set on fire, in case the English attempted to force them to a battle. ‡ While the admiral was thus employed, he had intelligence that Mr. Pregent, with the six galleys from the Mediterranean, were arrived on the coast, and had taken shelter in the bay of Conquet. This accident induced him to change his measures; so that he now resolved first to destroy the galleys, if possible, and then to return to the fleet. Upon his advancing to reconnoitre Pregent's squadron, he found them at anchor between two rocks, on each of which stood a strong fort; and, what was likely to give him still more trouble, they lay so far up in the bay, that he could bring none of his ships of force to engage them. The only method, therefore, of which he could think, was to put the bravest of his sailors on board two galleys, which were in his fleet, and with these to venture in, and try what might be done against all six. §

\* Grafton, p. 971. Stowe, p. 491. Cooper, fol. 275.

† A. D. 1512.

‡ Hall, fol. 22. b. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 816. Rapin, vol. i. p. 721.

§ Herbert, p. 13. *Memoires du Bellay*, liv. i. Dupleix, tom. iii. Losing his life thus unhappily, as observed by Mr. Austis, before he

This being resolved on, he went himself, attended by Sir Thomas Cheyne, and Sir John Wallop on board one of them; and sent Lord Ferrers, Sir Henry Sherburn, and Sir William Sidney on board the other; and, having a brisk gale of wind, sailed directly into the bay; where, with his own galley, he attacked the French admiral. As soon as they were grappled, Sir Edward Howard, followed by seventeen of the bravest of his sailors, boarded the enemy, and were very gallantly received; but, it so happened, that, in the midst of the engagement, the galleys sheered asunder; and, the French, taking that advantage, forced all the English upon their decks overboard, except one seaman, from whom they quickly learned, that the admiral was of that number.\* Lord Ferrers, in the other galley, did all that was possible for a very brave man to do; but, having spent all his shot, and perceiving, as he thought, the admiral retire, he likewise made the best of his way out of the harbour. †

We have, in a certain noble writer's accurate history, some very singular circumstances relating to this unlucky adventure. He says, that Sir Edward Howard having considered the posture of the French fleet in the haven of Brest, and the consequences which would attend either defeating or burning it, gave notice thereof to the king, inviting him to be present at so glorious an action; desiring rather that the king should have the honour of destroying the French naval force, than himself; ‡ a loyal, generous proposition; supposing the honour, not the danger, too great for a subject; and measuring (no doubt very justly)

could have notice that his master had honoured him with his order. Register of the Garter, vol. ii. p. 275.

\* Godwin, Stowe, Speed. Father Daniel says, he died of a wound he received in the former engagement, which is a plain mistake.

† This lord, was Sir Walter Devereux, knight of the garter, ancestor of the old earls of Essex, and of the present viscounts of Hereford.

‡ Lord Herbert's life and reign of Henry VIII. A. D. 1513.



his master's courage by his own; the only standard men of his rank and temper of mind ever use.

But, his letter being laid before the council, they were altogether of another opinion; conceiving it was much too great a hazard for his majesty to expose his person in such an enterprise; and, therefore, they wrote sharply to the admiral, commanding him not to send excuses, but to do his duty. This, as it well might, piqued him to the utmost; and, as it was his avowed maxim, That a seaman never did good, who was not resolute to a degree of madness, so he took a sudden resolution of acting in the manner he did. When he found his galley slide away, and saw the danger to which he was exposed, he took his chain of gold nobles which hung about his neck, and his great gold whistle, the ensign of his office, and threw them into the sea, to prevent the enemy from possessing the spoils of an English admiral. Thus fell the great Sir Edward Howard, on the 25th of April, 1513, a sacrifice to his too quick sense of honour in the service, and yet, to the manifest and acknowledged detriment of his country; for, his death so dejected the spirits of his sailors, that the fleet was obliged to return home; which, had he lived, would not have happened.

There never certainly was a braver man of his, or consequently of any family, than this Sir Edward Howard; and yet, we are assured, that he was very far from being either a mere soldier, or a mere seaman, though so eminent in both characters; but, he was what it became an English gentleman of so high quality to be; an able statesman, a faithful counsellor, and a free speaker. He was ready at all times to hazard his life and fortune in his country's quarrels; and yet, he was against her quarrelling on every slight occasion, or against her interests. He particularly dissuaded a breach with the Flemings, for these wise and strong reasons; that such a war was prejudicial to commerce abroad; that it diminished the cus-

toms, while it increased the public expenses; that it served the French, by constraining the inhabitants of Flanders to deal with them against their will; and, that it tended to the prejudice of our manufactures, by interrupting our intercourse with those by whom they were principally improved.\*

Thus qualified, we need not wonder he attained such high honours, though he died in the flower of his age. Henry gratified his ardour with titles, and such-like rewards; making him admiral of England, Wales, Ireland, Normandy, Gascoigne, and Aquitain, for life, and causing him to be chosen knight of the garter; † believing, that he should thereby command, as indeed he did, not only the utmost service Sir Edward could do, but also all the force and interest of his potent family; which, however, that prince ill requited, as we shall see in the next life. This Sir Edward Howard, married Alice, widow to Sir William Parker, Knight, and daughter of William Lovel, Lord Morley, by whom he had no issue.\* He was, as soon as the news of his unfortunate death reached the ears of his royal master, succeeded in his high office by his elder brother.

SIR THOMAS HOWARD, AFTERWARDS EARL OF  
SURREY, AND DUKE OF NORFOLK, &c.

IF we spoke first of the younger brother, it was in respect to his dignity, and to its date; for, though the junior son, he was the elder admiral; in point of merit

\* Lloyd's State Worthies, p. 141.

† Ashmole's Order of the Garter, p. 713. The king of Scots, in a letter to King Henry VIII. May 24, 1513, speaks thus: "And, surely, dearest brother, we think more loss is to you of the late admiral, who, deceased, to his great honour, than the advantage might have been in winning all the French gallies."

‡ Baronagium Angliæ, fol. 2, 17. MS. in my possession.

they were equal. Thomas, earl of Surrey, restored afterwards to the title of duke of Norfolk, treasurer to Henry VIII. and, the father of both these brave men, spared not either himself, or his sons, when the service of the crown and his country required it. In the third year of this king's reign, a Scots seaman, Sir Andrew Breton, or Barton, with two stout vessels, one named the Lion, the other Jenny Perwin, ranged on the English coasts, and interrupted all navigation. His pretence was, letters of reprisals granted him against the Portuguese, by James III. late king of Scots, (whom his rebellious subjects murdered;) and, under colour of this, he took ships of all nations, alledging they had Portuguese goods on board.\* On complaint of these grievances to the privy-council of England, the father of our admiral, then Earl of Surrey, said, "The narrow seas should not be so infested, while he had estate enough to furnish a ship, or a son capable of commanding it." †

Upon this, two ships were immediately fitted out by the two brothers, as I conceive, at their own, or at their father's expense; ‡ and, my reason for it is, because, had they gone with the king's commission, they would probably have had a squadron. Besides, they needed no commission; for, pirates being *hostes humani generis*, enemies to mankind, every man is at liberty to act against them; and, on this very principle, King Henry justified this action. § Indeed, most of our historians overturn these arguments, by styling Sir Edward Howard, lord-admiral, and saying his brother served under him on this occasion. The latter may be true, on account of Sir Edward's experience; but, as to the former, it is plainly erroneous; as appears by the

\* Hall, fol. 15. Leslei de rebus gestis Scotorum, lib. viii. p. 355. Buchanan, xiii. p. 424, 425.

† Lloyd's State Worthies, p. 143.

‡ Grafton, p. 960. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 811.

See his answer to the Scotch king's remonstrances.



date of his patent in the succeeding year. \* On the whole, I think it most likely, this was a private expedition, with the knowledge and consent of the king, but not by his special commission, or immediate authority, as will quickly appear by still stronger testimony.

The lords having been some days at sea, were separated by a storm, which gave Sir Thomas Howard an opportunity of coming up with Sir Andrew Barton in the *Lion*, whom he immediately engaged. † The fight was long and doubtful; for Barton, who was an experienced seaman, and who had under him a determined crew, made a most desperate defence; himself cheering them with a boatswain's whistle to his last breath. The loss of their captain was the only thing that could induce them to submit, which at last they did; and were received to quarter and fair usage. ‡ In the mean time, Sir Edward fought; and took the consort of the *Lion*, which was likewise a strong vessel, and exceedingly well manned. Both these ships, with as many men as were left alive, being in number one hundred and fifty, they brought, the 2d of August, 1511, into the river Thames, as trophies of their victory. The men were sent to the archbishop of York's palace, now called Whitehall; where, for some time they remained prisoners, but afterwards were dismissed, and sent into Scotland. §

King James IV. who then governed the Scots, exceedingly resented this action, and instantly sent ambassadors to Henry, to demand satisfaction; on which the king gave this memorable answer: "That punishing pirates was never held a breach of peace among princes." || King James, however, remained still dissatisfied; and, from that

\* 4 Henry VIII. p. 2.

† Godwin's Annals, p. 8. Cooper's Chronicle, fol. 276. b.

‡ Stowe's Annals, p. 489.

§ Herbert's Life of Henry VIII. p. 7.

|| Hall, fol. 15. b. Sir William Drummond's History of the Five James's, p. 139.

time to his unfortunate death, was never thoroughly reconciled to the king or English nation. I reserved this remarkable event for the life of Sir Thomas, because the ship of Sir Andrew Barton became his prize, and I thought it by no means proper, to repeat the story in both lives; as to Sir Edward's being made admiral, in preference to his elder brother, it must have arisen from his greater acquaintance with naval affairs, or from the family's desiring to have the eldest son always at hand, to assist his father, who, besides his many high employments of lord-treasurer, earl marshal, and lieutenant of the north, had the jealousy of the potent Cardinal Wolsey to contend with.\*

Sir Thomas Howard accompanied the marquis of Dorset in his expedition against Guyenne; which ended in King Ferdinand's conquering Navarre; and the commander-in-chief falling sick, Sir Thomas succeeded him, and managed with great prudence, in bringing home the remains of the English army.† He was scarcely returned, before the ill news arrived of his brother the lord-admiral's death; whereupon the king instantly appointed him his successor. Sir Thomas returned his master sincere thanks, as well for this mark of his confidence, as for affording him an opportunity of revenging his brother's death. The French ships were at that time hovering over the English coasts, but Sir Thomas quickly scoured the seas, so that not a bark of that nation durst appear; and, on the 1st of July, 1513, landing in Whitsand-bay, he pillaged the country adjacent, and burnt a considerable town.‡ The king was then engaged in Picardy, having the emperor in his service; and this induced James IV. to invade England with a mighty army, supposing he should find it in a manner defenceless; but Thomas, earl of Surrey, quickly con-

\* Lloyd's State Worthies, p. 131. Burnet's History of the Reformation, vol. i. b. i.

† Grafton, p. 962.

‡ Hall, fol. 24. b. Stowe, p. 491. odwin's Annals, p. 12, 13.



vinced him of his mistake, marching towards him with a powerful army, which strengthened as it moved. Sir Thomas Howard returning, on the news of this invasion, landed five thousand veterans, and made haste to join his father. The earl of Surry despatching a herald to bid the Scots king battle, the lord-admiral sent him word, at the same time, that he was come in person to answer for the death of Sir Andrew Barton; which evidently shews, how far that was a personal affair. This defiance produced the famous battle of Flodden-field, which was fought the 3th of September, 1513, wherein Sir Thomas Howard commanded the van-guard, and, by his courage and conduct, contributed not a little to that glorious victory in which King James fell, with the flower of his army, though not without the slaughter of abundance of English.\*

King Henry thought himself so much obliged at that time to the Howards, for this and other services, that, at a parliament held the next year, he restored Thomas, earl of Surrey, to the title of Norfolk, † and created the lord-admiral earl of Surrey, who took his seat in the house of peers, not as a duke's son, but according to his creation. ‡ These favours were from the king; for, as to the cardinal minister, he made the duke of Norfolk so uneasy, as high-treasurer, that, in the course of a very few years he was glad to resign that high charge to his son.

The war being ended with France, the admiral's martial talent lay some time unemployed; but certain disturbances in Ireland calling for redress, the active earl of Surrey was sent thither, with a commission as lord-deputy, § where he suppressed Desmond's rebellion; humbled the O'Neals

\* Grafton, p. 984. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 829. Speed, p. 755. See an original letter of Queen Catharine to her lord (Henry VIII.) dated Voborne, the 16th of September, 1513, acquainting him with the news of this great victory, in Sylloge epist. à variis Angl. princip. script. p. 106.

† A. D. 1514.

‡ Pat. V, Hen. VIII. p. 2. m. 11. Journal of Parliament, cod. anno.

§ A. D. 1519.



and O'Carrols; and, without affecting severity or popularity, brought all things into good order, leaving, when he quitted the island, peace and a parliament behind him,\* and carrying with him the affections of the people, though he performed not all he intended, the cardinal grudging the honour he had already acquired, and resolving to hinder, at all events, his gaining more. †

The pretence for recalling him was, the breaking out again of a French war. Before it was declared, the French ships of war interrupted (according to custom) the English trade, so that we suffered as their enemies, while their ambassadors here treated us as friends. The lord admiral, on his arrival, remedied this inconvenience; he immediately fitted out a small squadron of clean ships, under a vigilant commander, who soon drove the French privateers from their beloved occupation, thieving, to their old trade of starving. ‡ In the spring, Sir William Fitz-Williams, as vice-admiral, put to sea, with a fleet of twenty-eight men of war, to guard the narrow seas; § and it being apprehended, that the Scots might add to the number of the king's enemies by sea as well as by land, a small squadron of seven frigates sailed up the Frith of Forth, and burned all such vessels as lay there, and were in a condition of going to sea. || In the mean time, the admiral prepared a royal navy, with which that of the Emperor Charles V. was to join; and as it was evident that many inconveniencies might arise from the fleets having several commanders in chief, the earl of Surréy, by special commission from Henry VIII. received the emperor's commission to be admiral also of the navy, which consisted of one hundred and eighty tall ships. This commission is dated at London,

\* A. D. 1521.

† Hall, fol. 70, 90. b. Herbert, p. 40, 41. Cox's History of Ireland, p. 208. Speed, p. 762.

‡ Grafton, p. 1052, 1053. Stowe, p. 514. Speed.

§ A. D. 1522.

|| Hall, fol. 92, b. 94. a. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 873. Stowe, p. 515.

June 8, 1522, in the third year of his reign over the Romans, and seventh over the rest of his dominions, and is very ample. \*

With the united fleets, the admiral sailed over to the coast of Normandy, and, landing some forces near Cherbourg, † wasted and destroyed the country; after which they returned. This seems to have been a feint; for, in a few days, the admiral landed again on the coast of Bretagne a very large body of troops, with which he took and plundered the town of Morlaix; ‡ and having gained an immense booty, and opened a passage for the English forces into Champaign and Picardy; § he first detached Sir William Fitz-Williams with a strong squadron to scour the seas, and to protect the merchants, and then returned to Southampton, where the emperor embarked on board his ship, and was safely convoyed to the port of St. Andero, in Biscay. || In the fourteenth of King Henry's reign, the good old duke, his father, being quite tired out with cares, resigned his office of lord-treasurer, and the king thereupon conferred it on his son, the earl of Surrey. ¶ He was also entrusted by the king with the army raised to invade Scotland; and, in the station of general, did good service against the duke of Albany, whereby all the deep designs of the French were frustrated. On the death of his father, he was once more appointed to command an army against the Scots; in which affair he acquitted himself with as much honour, justice, and bravery, as any man ever did. \*\*

\* Lord Herbert has inserted it at large in his History, p. 49.

† June 13, 1522.

‡ July 1.

§ Grafton, p. 1063. Cooper's Chronicle, fol. 270. Godwin's Annals, p. 56.

|| Herbert, p. 50. Rapin.

¶ Pat. 14. Hen. VIII. p. 1.

\*\* Hall. Buchanan, lib. xiv. Leslæi de rebus gestis Scotorum, lib. ix.



He afterwards attended the king into France, and was sent principal ambassador to the French king, at such time as that monarch was proceeding to an interview with the pope. \* In the twenty-eighth year of King Henry, he assisted the earl of Shrewsbury in suppressing a formidable rebellion, covered with the specious title of the Pilgrimage of Grace, and throughout his whole life approved himself an honest and active servant to the crown, in all capacities; yet, in the close of his reign, the king was wrought into a persuasion, that this duke of Norfolk, and his son, Henry earl of Surrey, were in a plot to seize upon his person, and to engross the government into their own hands, with many other things devised by their enemies, but altogether destitute of proof. For these supposed crimes, he and his son were imprisoned, and, as was but too frequent in that reign, attainted almost on suspicion. † Henry, earl of Surrey, the most accomplished nobleman of his time, lost his head in his father's presence; nor would the duke have survived him long, (a warrant being once granted for his execution,) if the king had not died at that critical juncture, and thereby opened a door of hope and liberty.

After all these sufferings, he survived King Edward VI. and died in the first year of Queen Mary, at the age of sixty-six, ‡ when his attainder was repealed, and the act thereof taken from amongst the records. § He was unquestionably, as able an admiral, as great a statesman, as

\* Hall, fol. 206. b. 211. b. *Memoires du Bellay*, liv. iii. iv. *Dupleix*, tom. iii. p. 391, 393.

† *Herbert's Life of Henry VIII.* p. 565. His misfortunes were owing chiefly to the resentment of his dutchess, the daughter of Edward duke of Buckingham, and the falsehood of his female favourite, the former accusing, and the latter betraying him.

‡ A. D. 1554.

§ See the act of repeal, 1mo *Mariæ*, and the character of both the duke and his son, in Sir Walter Raleigh's Preface to the *History of the World*.



fortunate a general, and as true a patriot, as any in that age. But it is now time to come to his successor in the command of the navy.

SIR WILLIAM FITZ-WILLIAMS, AFTERWARDS  
EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON, AND KNIGHT OF THE  
GARTER.

HE was descended not only of an ancient and honourable, but also of a famous and noble family; his ancestors having been summoned to parliament, as barons, to the time of Edward III. Sir Thomas Fitz-Williams, the father of our admiral, married Lucia, daughter and co-heiress to John Nevil, Marquis Montacute, by whom he had two sons, Thomas, who was slain at the battle of Floddenfield, and this William.\* Being the younger son, he, from his nonage addicted himself to arms, and particularly to the sea-service, which in those days became a distinct and regular profession, King Henry having a navy-office, commissioners, &c. which his predecessors had not. He also fixed settled salaries for his admirals, vice-admirals, captains, and seamen; so that under him naval affairs underwent a very great change, and we have had a constant series of officers in the royal navy ever since. How soon Mr. Fitz-Williams went to sea, does not appear from any memoirs now extant, but most certainly it was in the reign of Henry VII.; for in the second of Henry VIII. he was appointed one of the esquires of the king's body.

In 1513, he had a command in the fleet which fought the French off Brest; and, behaving very bravely there, received a dangerous wound in the breast, by a broad arrow. This did not hinder his being present at the siege

\* From the collections of R. Glover, Somerset.

of Tournay, the same year, where, distinguishing himself in an extraordinary manner, in the sight of his prince, he was honoured with knighthood, \* and thenceforward constantly employed at sea, where he made himself equally useful to his prince, and grateful to the seamen. Of these, we are assured, he knew and called every one by name, never taking a prize but what he shared amongst them, or suffering more than two months to elapse, before they were fully paid their wages. The merchants were remarkably friends to him, on account of his constant attention to their concerns; and the king highly esteemed him for the punctuality with which he executed his orders, and his wonderful expedition in whatever he undertook.

He executed the office of vice-admiral, during the absence of the earl of Surrey, then lord-lieutenant of Ireland, in 1520, and convoyed the king, when he passed over to France, in order to an interview with Francis I.; and two years after, on the breaking out of a war with that prince, Sir William, with a good fleet, was sent to protect our trade, and to molest the enemy, which he did effectually; but was not quite so successful in 1523, when he had orders to prevent the duke of Albany from passing with French succours into Scotland; for though he once dispersed the duke's fleet; and actually took some of his ships, with several persons of distinction on board; yet, that cunning prince escaped him with the rest, by this artifice: he pretended to abandon his enterprize, relanded his forces, and ordered the ships to be laid up; but, as soon as he understood the English admiral was returned to his own coasts, he instantly re-embarked his troops, and continuing his voyage, notwithstanding it was the winter season, arrived safely in his own country. † In

\* Hall, fol. 23. a. 45. a. Herbert's Life of Henry VIII. p. 334. Stowe, p. 490, 491.

† Buchanan, lib. xiv. p. 448. Leslæi de rebus gestis Scotorum, lib. ix. p. 406, 407. Drummond, p. 180.

the sixteenth of Henry VIII. we find Sir William preferred to be captain of Guines castle, in Picardy; in the next year, he was sent ambassador into France, and executed his commission with such success, that he was from that time more and more in the king's favour. \*

After the fall of Cardinal Wolsey, to whom our admiral was no great friend, we find him an active man in parliament, and made use of by the king to excuse Bishop Fisher to the house of commons. † In the twenty-seventh of the same reign, he was again employed in an embassy to France; and in the succeeding year, being already treasurer of the household, chancellor of the dutchy of Lancaster, and knight of the garter, the king, by letters patent, raised him to the dignity of admiral of England, Ireland, Wales, Normandy, Gascoine, and Aquitain; ‡ and by other letters patent soon after created him earl of Southampton; all which he is said to have merited by his steady loyalty, and by his great skill and indefatigable application in maritime affairs, to which he from his youth had been addicted. §

Shortly after, the king raised him still higher, to the post of lord privy seal, in which quality we find that, with John, Lord Russell, who succeeded him as high admiral, he passed over into France, where the war was again broke out, with two troops of horse; which shews his martial spirit, and how loth he was to quit the service of his country in a military way. ||

It seems his constitution was by this time much broken through continual fatigues, and therefore he made a will, whereby, among other legacies, he bequeathed the king his master, his best collar of the garter, and his rick George, set with diamonds. ¶

\* Grafton, p. 1109. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 892.

† Hall, fol. 189. a.

‡ Pat. 28 Henry VIII. p. 2.

§ MS. Collections of Sir Thomas Wriothesley.

|| Hall, fol. 243. b.

¶ Spert, qu. 16.



Yet, on the breaking out of a war with Scotland, to which his friend and old companion in arms, Thomas, duke of Norfolk, was immediately ordered, with a numerous army, our brave captain would not remain behind, but, with a brisk body of horse and foot, joined him, and led the van; yet, this proved but the last flashings of his heroic flame, since at Newcastle, overcome by his disease and with fatigue, he breathed his last, to the great regret of his royal master, as well as of his general, who commanded his banner to be borne, as it had hitherto been, in the front of the army, all the rest of the expedition, as a mark of the respect due to his memory. \* By his countess, Mabel, daughter to Henry, Lord Clifford, he had no issue to inherit his virtues or his honours; but he left behind him a natural son, Thomas Fitz-Williams, *alias* Fisher. † As to his age at the time of his decease, we find no note thereof, either in books or in records; but it is probable, that he did not exceed sixty, according to the course of his preferments. He seems to have been one of the first seamen raised to the honour of peerage in this kingdom.

As to the remaining admirals in King Henry's reign, they were, John, Lord Russel, and the Viscount Lisle, so well known to posterity by the title of duke of Northumberland, as the supreme director of all things in the reign of Edward VI.; and, as a fatal example of the issue of boundless ambition in the beginning of the succeeding reign. But, the reader will find such ample accounts of them elsewhere, ‡ and their naval achievements contain so little worthy of notice, that I rather

\* Grafton, p. 1268.

† Dugdale's Baronage, vol. ii. p. 105.

‡ In Dugdale, Collins, and other peerages of England, as well as in the general histories, and particualar memoirs of these reigns, and in Strype's and other collections of original papers relating to those times.

proceed to the transactions under the next king, than detain my readers with a jejune detail of things of little consequence, especially, considering the narrow bounds into which we are to bring such an infinite variety of important matter.

## CHAP. X.

The Naval History of England, under the Reign of Edward VI. with an account of such eminent Seamen as flourished in his time.

A.D. 1547. **T**HIS young prince, at the decease of his father, was but in the tenth year of his age; however, on the 20th of February following, he was crowned, to the great joy and satisfaction of the nation, who were in hopes a milder government would succeed under the auspices of an infant prince, assisted by ministers, whose chief, indeed, whose only support, must be the affections of the people. \* The scheme of administration, laid down by the will of King Henry VIII. was held to be impracticable, † because it made such a division of power, as rendered the conduct of public affairs extremely difficult, if not impossible; and, therefore, to remedy these inconveniencies, the earl of Hertford, uncle to the young king, created soon after duke of Somerset, was declared PROTECTOR, or chief governor, that the nation might have some visible head; after which, as a manifestation of his authority, followed various promotions: amongst the rest, Sir Thomas Seymour, the protector's brother, was created baron of Sudley, and raised to the great trust of lord-high-admiral. ‡ One would have thought, that, in the dawn of such a government, peace

\* Fabian, p. 535. Grafton, p. 1283. Stowe, p. 593. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 979. Speed. Godwin's Annals, p. 211. Journal of this monarch's reign, written by himself, p. 3, printed by Bishop Burnet at the end of the second volume of his History of the Reformation. Strype's Memorials, vol. ii. p. 12.

† The reader may see his testament in Rymer's *Fœdera*, tom. xv. p. 110, the authenticity of which has been however questioned.

‡ Grafton, p. 1283. Life of King Edward VI. by Sir John Hayward, in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 275, & seq. Strype, vol. ii. book 1.



had been more advisable than war; but, we find the great counsellors in those days thought otherwise; for, one of the first things they resolved, was, to commence war against Scotland; to which, probably, they might be provoked by the passage of a strong squadron of French gallees through the narrow seas, which were going to block up the castle of St. Andrew's,\* and to which they were certainly encouraged by the distracted state of the Scots affairs, the government being weakened by a minority, and the nation divided and distracted by factions. †

The preparations made by the protector for his expedition into Scotland, looked as if he intended rather an absolute conquest of that country, than to compel the marriage of Mary, queen of Scots, to the young King Edward. ‡ Both the brothers took a share in this expedition; the protector commanded in person the land army, which consisted of ten thousand foot, six thousand horse, and a fine train of artillery; it being allowed to be, in all respects, the best equipped force that for many years had been set on foot in this kingdom. § With this also, the fleet, fitted out by his brother's care, corresponded; consisting in all of sixty-five sail, of which thirty-five were ships of force, the rest were store-ships and tenders, the whole commanded by the Lord Clinton, as admiral of the north sea, and Sir William Woodhouse as vice-admiral; which arrived before Leith about the time the English army penetrated by land. ||

The protector, who was by no means a cruel man, endeavoured to have prevented bloodshed, by sending very amicable letters to the Scotch governors, wherein he

\* Stowe, p. 594. Thuan. Hist. lib. iii. § 5. Buchanan, lib. xv.

† Leslæi de rebus gestis Scotorum, lib. x. Keith's History of the Church and State of Scotland, p. 52.

‡ Grafton, p. 1284. Godwin's Annals, p. 214.

§ Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 980. Speed, p. 804.

|| Hayward. Buchanan, lib. xv. Keith, p. 53.

shewed, how much it would be for the interest of both nations, that this match should take place; and how little it was for the benefit of Scotland to remain in that dependency on France, in which she had continued for a long course of time. The governor, or protector of Scotland, James Hamilton, earl of Arran, who was entirely in the French interest, shewed this letter to none but his own creatures, who advised him, since he had a very numerous army, with the flower of the nobility in the field, not to listen to any conditions of peace, but to force the English to a battle; which very bad advice he complied with, and told the rest of the lords about him, that the protector's letter contained only threatenings and reproaches.\*

A.D.  
1547. This strange conduct brought on a decisive engagement on the 10th of September, 1547, which, in the English histories, is styled the battle of Musselburgh, † but the Scotch writers call it the battle of Pinky. ‡ It was fatal to the Scots, notwithstanding their superiority in numbers, their army consisting of upwards of thirty thousand men; but, they were so eager to fight, that they all despised the precautions usually taken as to ground and other circumstances. Nay, they were so fool-hardy, as to expose themselves to the fire of the English fleet, which galled them extremely; and, therefore, we need not wonder that they were totally defeated, leaving fourteen thousand dead on the place, and eight hundred noblemen and gentlemen prisoners; after which victory, the protector burnt Leith, and so returned in triumph. §

The Lord Clinton, with his fleet, continued longer in those parts, with a design, as it appeared, to extirpate

\* Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 890. Speed, p. 804. Keith, p. 55.

† Grafton, p. 1286. Stowe, p. 594. Cooper, fol. 338. b. See King Edward's journal of his reign, p. 5.

‡ Buchanan, lib. xv. Keith, p. 54. and the rest of the Scotch historians.

§ Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 990. Speed, p. 805. Hayward.



entirely the naval force of the Scots. He had before, in the reign of Henry VIII. been employed for the same purpose, and had executed his commission with great diligence, carrying off the Salamander and the Unicorn, two very fine ships, and all other vessels that were worth taking.\* He now perfected this scheme of destroying, by burning, all the sea-ports, with the small craft that lay in their harbours, and searching every creek, and all the mouths of rivers, with such diligence, that it is said he did not leave one ship of force or burden in all that kingdom. † In 1548, the lord-high-admiral, with a very stout fleet, sailed hence upon the Scotch coasts, to prevent their repairing their harbours, and to do what further mischief he was able. But he was less successful; for, though he made two descents with considerable forces, yet he was repulsed in both. ‡ The great hardships the people suffered had made them desperate; so that, notwithstanding the vast expense England had been at, and the complete victory the protector had gained, the Scottish queen being escaped into France, and great succours coming from thence into Scotland, the English were obliged after two years to make peace, both nations having suffered exceedingly by the war; which proved, however, advantageous enough to France, who, as usual, made her uses of each, and performed her agreements with neither. §

The unnatural quarrel between the protector and his brother, the lord-high-admiral, was the chief cause of the nation's misfortunes; for, while they endeavoured with all their force to destroy each other, public affairs were neglected, those who might have prevented these disorders, from the same principle of selfish ambition, studying

A.D.  
1548.

\* Stowe's Annals, p. 586, 587.

† Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 995. Leslæus, lib. x. Buchanan, lib. xv.

‡ Hayward, Godwin, Keith.

§ Grafton, p. 1310, 1314. Godwin, p. 220, 240. Thuan. lib. v.



rather to increase them, with a view to ruin both.\* What the crimes of the admiral really were, most of our historians seem to think very uncertain; we only know, that he was charged, among other things, with a design of seizing the king's person, of marrying the Princess Elizabeth, and forming thereby some title to the crown. On this accusation, whether well or ill founded, he was attainted, without a trial, by act of parliament; † a proceeding altogether inexcusable, because thereby posterity stand deprived of seeing the evidence on which public justice is said to be founded. The protector set an edge on the sentence passed by this law by signing the warrant, in conjunction with the rest of the lords of the council, for the admiral's execution, though his majesty's uncle, and his own brother; ‡ and this, we are told, he did to gratify his wife. §

A.D.  
1549.

\* Hayward, p. 301. Godwin, p. 226. Innumerable instances of this sort occur in the collection of state papers published by Dr. Haynes. No person, how great soever their quality, seems to have been exempt from the perplexities attending this unhappy business; even the king submitted to be examined; and, his confession, as it is styled, with that of the Lady Elizabeth, the marquises of Dorset and Northampton, Sir Robert Tyrwhyt and his lady, the earl of Rutland, and other persons of distinction, are there to be met with, printed from the originals. The marriage of the lord-admiral with the dowager queen, and the disgust it gave the protector, or rather the dutchess, his consort, appears to have been the original cause of these disputes; and, perhaps the reader will incline to my opinion, when he has perused two letters from that princess to her lord, both without date, and the confession of Wyghtman, servant to that nobleman, which he will find in p. 61, 62, 68, 69, of that work. See the king's journal, in Burnet, p. 4.

† Grafton, p. 1291. Stowe, p. 596. The charge, containing thirty-three articles, with the answer of the lord-admiral to the three first, (for he would answer no more, neither would he sign those,) are printed in the collection of records in the second volume of Burnet's History of the Reformation, p. 158—196.

‡ March 20, 1549.

§ Hayward, p. 301, 302. Cooper's Chronicle, fol. 344. a. See the warrant for the admiral's execution in Burnet, p. 164.

The truth seems to be, that the lord-protector, Somerset, was an honest but weak man; meant well, yet seldom knew his own meaning; and, as such men generally are, was therefore governed, in most cases, by other people's counsels; whereas the admiral is allowed to have had quick parts, great courage, and a much better capacity for governing; but, his turbulent spirit, gave the common enemies of his family, and the nation's quiet, an opportunity of detaching him from his brother's interest, and thereby creating those misfortunes which were not only fatal to him and the protector, but to the kingdom also.\* I cannot forbear remarking, that the events of this short reign afford the most useful lessons to English ministers: private views governed all the great men in these times; and, to this they sacrificed the welfare of the king and kingdom. For this, one, not out of regard to justice, but for the same dirty purposes, brought the other to deserved punishment; and, by degrees, they all became victims to national vengeance, though their successors were not at all warned by their examples, but trod still in the same slippery paths, till a similarity of conduct brought them also to similar ends!

The French, who were now governed by Henry II. a young enterprising prince, laid hold of this opportunity, while the English were engaged in a Scotch war, and divided by civil dissensions, to deprive them of the few, but important places, which they still held in France. To colour their proceedings, they set up the following pretence: that Boulogne was not absolutely yielded to King Henry VIII. but conditionally only, by way of mortgage for a certain sum of money, which, they said, had been tendered him more than once by their late king, Francis I. and, consequently, they had an equity of redemption,

A.D.  
1550.

\* Stowe. Holingshed. Speed. Godwin's Annals, p. 225—229. Burnet, in his History of the Reformation, vol. ii. p. 99, 100, and, in general, all our historians who write without bias.



which they thought might justify them in any measures that should appear necessary for the making themselves masters of the place. In saying this, I am not governed by English authorities, much less by English prejudices, but follow the accounts given by their best historians, and who relate the sequel of the matter thus: The French king, under pretence of adding to the magnificence of his public entry into Paris, and the queen's coronation, drew a considerable body of forces into the neighbourhood of that city, and into Picardy; then, departing suddenly from his capital, he came to Abbeville, where his forces rendezvoused, and marched from thence with all expedition to Boulogne, where he attacked and carried some of the forts, and distressed the place so much, that it was found impracticable to keep it.\* Our writers say, that these forts were taken by treachery; and, it appears, by the representations made in King Edward's name to the emperor, that the whole of this transaction was contrary to the law of nations, there being, at the time it happened, no war declared. †

A.D. 1550. Another attempt the French likewise made upon the islands of Jersey and Guernsey, which they invaded with a strong squadron of men of war, and two thousand land forces. The English court, having notice of this attempt, and knowing those islands to be but indifferently provided, sent thither a small squadron, under the command of Commodore Winter, with eight hundred men, as a reinforcement, on board a few transports. At his arrival, he found the ports blocked up, and himself under the necessity either of desisting from his enterprise, or attacking the French, notwithstanding their superiority. He, like a brave man,

\* J. de Serres, p. 701. Mezeray, tom. iv. p. 657. Histoire de France par P. Daniel, tom. viii. p. 20.

† See the king's journal, p. 6. Grafton, p. 1310. Stowe, p. 597. See the instructions sent to Sir Philip Hoby by the duke of Somerset, Strype's Memorials, vol. ii. p. 164.



chose the latter, and executed this design with such courage and conduct, that, having killed them near a thousand men, he obliged the enemy to embark the rest on board some light vessels, in which they fled, abandoning their ships of force; and all these he caused to be set on fire. This defeat so nettled that vain nation, that our authors say, they forbade the speaking of it, with all its particulars, under pain of death; for which report, one would imagine there must have been some foundation, since we find no traces of this story in any of their own writers.\*

The misfortunes attending the English, by taking the forts about Boulogne, having served the purpose of the duke of Somerset's enemies, in fixing a grievous charge upon him, for which he was sent to the Tower, and divested of his protectorship; they then thought proper to make a treaty with France, whereby the town of Boulogne, and its dependencies, were sold for four hundred thousand crowns, and the French took possession of them in the spring of the year 1550. † In this treaty, the Scots were included; and, for the managing thereof, Edward, Lord Clinton, who had been governor of the territory now yielded to France, was made lord-high-admiral for life, and had large grants made him of lands from the king. ‡

A. D.  
1550.

\* Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 1055. Godwin's Annals, p. 233. Speed, p. 811. Fox's Acts and Monuments, vol. ii. p. 671.

† F. Leonard, tom. ii. p. 472. Rymer, tom. xv. p. 211. Thuan. Hist. lib. vi. § 6.

‡ Grafton, p. 1314. Strype's Memorials, vol. ii. p. 230. Leslæus, lib. x. p. 506. Hayward. King Edward's Journal, p. 13. Among others, as the King's Journal, p. 11. and Strype, vol. ii. p. 194, inform us, who were rewarded for accomplishing this business, was Anthony Guidoti, an Italian merchant, who lived at Southampton. He had a present of one thousand crowns, a yearly pension of one thousand crowns, and a pension of two hundred and fifty crowns was bestowed on John Guidoti, his son. He had the honour of knight-hood conferred on him, and, about a year after, was appointed the

It is not to be wondered, that a treaty so far from being honourable to the nation, was very ill received at home; and yet, it must be acknowledged, that it was not near so inexcusable as some would represent it. We have already shewn, with what injustice the French made war upon King Edward; and, it is but reasonable to add, that when his ambassador applied to the emperor for assistance, and represented the great things that his father had done for the house of Austria, the pains he had taken to solicit the electors to set the imperial crown on the head of Charles V. and how much the English nation had been impoverished by the wars against France, purely on his behalf; a very uncourteous and rude answer was given. The emperor took notice of the great change that had been made in religion, which, he pretended, put it out of his power to yield the aid that was desired; and therefore insisted, that, as the price of his friendship, all things should be restored again to their former state. After this, when matters were come to extremity, it was proposed, on the part of King Edward, that the emperor should take the town of Boulogne into his hands, to remain as a deposit till the king was of age; but, that was likewise rejected, unless the old religion was restored.\* We may from hence perceive the integrity of those ministers, who chose rather to sacrifice their interests with the nation, than injure the protestant religion; and, at the same time we may discern, how little the friendship of foreign and of popish powers is to be depended upon, when the interests of England alone are at stake.

king's merchant, had a licence to export woollen cloths, kersies, lead, tin, &c. under certain restrictions; and to import velvet, cloth of gold, wine and oil; paying only the same duties as the merchants of England. See likewise Rymcr's *Fœdera*, tom. xv. p. 227, 228.

\* Hayward's *Life of Edward VI.* in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 310, 311. Bishop Burnet's *History of the Reformation*, vol. ii. p. 131, 139, 140. Strype's *Memorials*, vol. ii. b. i. chap. xxiii.



After this peace, there grew a closer and more considerable intercourse between the French and English courts, which gave such offence to the emperor, that he suffered his subjects in Flanders to cruize in the English seas, which afforded the French a pretence for acting in the same manner; but, upon complaint that the navigation of the narrow seas was exceedingly disturbed, the king ordered Lord Henry Dudley, with four men of war and two light ships, to put to sea, in order to protect our merchants; which, however, he performed but indifferently.\* On the 22d of May, in the preceding year, the lord marquis of Northampton, accompanied by the earls of Rutland, Worcester, and Ormond; the lords Lisle, Fitzwater, Bray, Abergavenny, and many gentlemen of rank; carrying with him the collar, and other habiliments of the most noble order of the garter, with which he afterwards invested Henry II. went over to France as the king's ambassador, and there concluded a treaty for the marriage of his master to the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of that monarch; who, in the month of July following, despatched Monsieur le Mareschal de St. Andre with a very great retinue into England, to present the ensigns of the order of St. Michael to the king, as also to treat of various affairs; though, it is highly probable, the French were not very sincere in these negotiations.

Some time after they began to raise jealousies in England of the emperor's proceedings, because he had fitted out a great fleet, without assigning any particular cause for it; † but, the next year, things took a new turn; for the French continuing their piratical practices, under one pretence or other, seized many English ships, so that loud

A.D.  
1553.

\* King Edward's Diary, March 26, 1552. Hayward's life of that Prince in Kennet. Strype's Memorials, vol. ii. b. ii. chap. x.

† King Edward's Diary, p. 26, 27, 30. Hayward, p. 318. Strype's Memorials, vol. ii. p. 266, 267, 289, 290. Burnet, vol. ii. p. 177. Rymer, tom. xv. p. 293:



complaints were made to the king; and, upon examination it appeared, that the merchants had suffered by their depredations, in the space of twenty months, to the full amount of fifty thousand pounds. Upon this, his ministers at the court of France had orders to make very sharp representations, which they did, but with little effect; \* so that things remained pretty much in this situation, that is, tending to a rupture, to the time of the king's death, which happened on the 6th of July, 1553; but, whether by poison, † as some have pretended, or by a consumption, ‡ as is generally thought, I pretend not to determine.

He had then reigned nearly six years and a half, and was not quite sixteen. He was certainly, for his years, a very accomplished prince; of which he has left us many, and those unquestionable proofs, in his writings.

This reign plainly shews, that the personal character of a prince, however amiable, as much governed by his ministers as his subjects, is to them of no great importance. The forms of government were kept up; parliaments were called and sat; nothing was heard but the highest pretensions to purity in religion, and zeal for the public good; while those who made them, shewed very little regard to either, in what is the surest test of men's principles, their actions. Under colour of reformation, several useful charities were given to the crown, as if they had been superstitious foundations, that the crown might give them away again to such as, for that very purpose, had branded them with so offensive an appellation. Against this, Archbishop Cranmer

\* The reader will find various instances in the King's Journal, p. 62—66. Strype, vol. ii, p. 332. Hayward, and other writers.

† See an extract of a journal kept by one in those times, in Strype, vol. ii. p. 429. Hayward, p. 326, 327. Burnet, p. 221. Heylin's History of the Reformation, p. 138, 139.

‡ Grafton, p. 1324. Hollingshed, vol. ii. p. 1083. Godwin, p. 253. Cooper, fol. 358, though he says, and he lived in those times, that many were punished for reporting this prince was poisoned; and that the rumour thereof was spread throughout the kingdom.

struggled, but in vain; those who had their interests in view prevailed; the crown had the scandal, and they the benefit. All bishops had not the sanctity, nor the sincerity of Cranmer. There were amongst them some who accepted rich sees, in order to grant away their revenues. All this time the commons were grievously taxed, the exchequer was like a sieve, which received all, and retained nothing. Errors in administration at home produced misfortunes abroad; these created expenses, and, which is worse, unavailing expenses; so that, by an authentic account preserved amongst the Cecil papers, it appeared, that from the thirtieth of the last, to the close of this reign, which is not quite fifteen years, there had been spent in foreign wars, and about foreign concerns, upwards of three millions sterling. Boulogne was the great prize we got; and this, watching their opportunity, the true characteristic of French policy, we were forced to restore for four hundred thousand crowns; and, the poor young king, who was not so much as indulged with the trifles necessary for his childish occasions, died in debt.

The great power and immense fortunes which these aspiring courtiers sacrificed the public welfare to secure, were, as such acquisitions commonly are, of short duration. The Seymours destroyed each other; those who assisted the protector to remove the admiral, took advantage of the weakness this occasioned, to depress first, and then utterly to ruin him, under the specious pretence of concern for the commonwealth, for which, in truth, they had far less regard than he. The two great dukes of Suffolk and Northumberland, who rose upon his fall, as they built upon the same sandy foundation of mere human policy, had the same unfortunate ends upon a scaffold; and, the practices they employed for aggrandizing, became the cause of the overthrow of their respective families, in their own times; and, consequently, they had the unpleasant spectacle of the subversion of their ambitious



schemes, to embitter their last moments, before their own eyes. So dangerous and so destructive a thing it is for the grandees, in any nation, to abuse their elevated rank, and employ that power with which they are entrusted for the common good, to serve their private views, at the expense of a great people, who, with some justice, though, perhaps, with too indecent a violence, testify a pleasure in their misfortunes, and behold with satisfaction the desolation of those houses (how noble or ancient soever) that were cemented with blood, and founded on oppression. If those whom their own abilities, the favour of their prince, or the confidence of the people, lift into high places, would read the history of their own countries, and reflect seriously on the melancholy catastrophes of such, who, by an abuse of their talents, presumption on their power, or abandoning their patriotism when it had raised them to places, have fallen headlong from the pinnacle of preferment, without so much as pity attending their miserable dejections; it would infallibly keep them in the safe path, and exempt them from sharing the like fate.

But even in this reign, though they were but short, there were, however, some gleams of sunshine. In such affairs as interested no faction, and more especially in such as came before the king in council, and were of a nature fit for him to examine, or to be explained to him, things took another and a better turn; it may be, those refined politicians who were about him, as towards the close of his reign he had some who might have read lectures to Machiavel, there might have been somewhat of art in this. For if, in things discussed in his hearing, all is thoroughly canvassed, and the right judgment given, how should a very young king suspect, that in other cases, even before the same men, different, and it may be opposite notions, were adopted? The best minds are easiest deceived. But let us return to the history, and close it with some



of those pleasing prospects which may relieve us, after our late sad, but, at the same time, useful and necessary meditations.

As to his care of trade, we have as many instances of it, in every kind, as can be desired. In 1548, he passed an act for laying the Newfoundland trade entirely open, and for removing various obstacles by which it had been hitherto cramped.\* The very same year, the merchants at Antwerp, complaining of certain hardships under which they suffered, the king's ambassadors interposed; and, when the regency of that city suggested to them, that it was strange the king of England should more regard a company of merchants, than the friendship of a great emperor, King Edward's agent, whose name was Smith, answered roundly, that his master would support the commerce of his subjects, at the hazard of any monarch's friendship upon earth.†

We have a very distinct and particular account of the advantages derived to the city of Antwerp from the residence of the English merchants there, which, for the reader's instruction, as well as satisfaction, we will insert, from a very scarce and curious piece, addressed to Sir Robert Cecil, then secretary of state to Queen Elizabeth, and afterwards earl of Salisbury and lord-high-treasurer of England.

“ Philip, surnamed the Good, duke of Burgundy and of  
 “ Brabant, &c. gave privileges to the English nation in  
 “ the Low Countries, which happened in the year 1466,  
 “ which privileges, the town of Antwerp confirmed the 6th  
 “ of August in the same year; giving to them besides, a  
 “ large house, which is now called the Old Burse; and  
 “ afterwards, by exchange, another more goodly, spacious,  
 “ and sumptuous house, called the Court of Lier, which

\* See Hakluyt, p. iii. p. 131.

† Strype's Memorials, vol. ii. p. 108, 109.

“ the company enjoyed till the said town was yielded up  
 “ to the duke of Parma, in the year 1585.

“ At the abovesaid first concordate and conclusion of  
 “ privileges with the town of Antwerp, or not long  
 “ before, there were not, in all the town, above four  
 “ merchants, and those also no adventurers to the sea;  
 “ the rest of the inhabitants or townsmen were but mean  
 “ people, and neither able nor skilful to use the feat or  
 “ trade of merchandize; but did let out the best of their  
 “ houses to Englishmen, and other strangers, for cham-  
 “ bers and pack-houses, contenting themselves with some  
 “ corner, for their profits sake; but, within these late  
 “ years, the concourse and resort of foreign merchants to  
 “ that town was so great, that house-room waxed scant,  
 “ rents were raised, tolls, excises, and all other duties to  
 “ the prince and town, wonderfully increased; and the  
 “ Antwerp men themselves, who a few years before were  
 “ but mean artificers; or lived by husbandry and keeping  
 “ of cattle, whereof one gate of that city to this day  
 “ beareth the name, and had but six ships belonging to  
 “ their town, and those for the river only, that never  
 “ went to sea, began to grow exceeding rich; so that  
 “ some fell to the trade of merchandize, and others em-  
 “ ployed their substance in building.

“ Then their old rotten houses, covered with thatch,  
 “ were pulled down; their waste ground, whereof there  
 “ was store within the town, was turned into goodly  
 “ buildings, and fair streets; and their shipping increased  
 “ accordingly. Thus prospered not only those at Ant-  
 “ werp, but all other towns and places thereabouts; so  
 “ that in our memory that now live, the said town was  
 “ grown to such wealth, strength, and beauty, as never  
 “ was known the like in so short a time; and no marvel,  
 “ for, within the compass of fifty years, an house that  
 “ was worth but forty dollars a year, grew to be worth  
 “ three hundred dollars a year; and an house that was



“ let out for sixty dollars, came afterwards to be let for  
 “ four hundred dollars; yea, some houses in Antwerp  
 “ were let for six hundred, some for eight hundred dollars  
 “ a year rent, besides their havens for ships to come and  
 “ lade and discharge, within the town. Their public  
 “ stately buildings and edifices, erected partly for orna-  
 “ ment, and partly for the ease and accommodating of  
 “ the merchant, were so costly and sumptuous, as he  
 “ that hath not seen and marked them well, would not  
 “ believe.”

This shews abundantly how great a right King Edward had to insist upon all his subjects' privileges in that city, where their residence was a thing of such prodigious consequence. We must not imagine, however, that so wise a prince as the Emperor Charles V. was not very well acquainted with this, of which we have an instance within the compass of King Edward's reign, A. D. 1550. For when, after all the supplications of the citizens of Antwerp, and the intercession of several great princes on their behalf, he remained fixed in his purpose of introducing the inquisition into that city; yet, upon the bare mention that this would infallibly drive the English not only out of Antwerp, but out of the Low Countries, he very prudently desisted. \*

With like care, the king prosecuted the wrongs done to his trading subjects by the French, and very graciously received a memorial, wherein certain methods were laid down for encouraging and increasing the number of seamen in his dominions, and for preventing the carrying on a trade here in foreign bottoms. † Some notice there are of other projects of a like nature, in his own diary, which shew, that if he had lived to have had a sufficient experience; he would have been extremely careful of maritime

\* Burnet's History of the Reformation, vol. ii. p. 161. Grimston's History of the Netherlands, p. 286, 287.

† Barnaby's Information to Secretary Cecil, MS.



affairs; and very ready to have contributed to the ease and advantage of his subjects. \* But, the disorders which happened in his short reign, as well as his immature death, prevented his doing the good which he intended.

We must ascribe to these disorders, and to the boundless ambition of that great duke, who, taking advantage of the king's minority, directed all things with almost absolute sway, that such heavy taxes were laid upon the people, who were far from being in a condition to bear them; that lands to so great a value were taken from the church, to the use, as was pretended, of the crown, and then granted away to favourites; and, above all, that the very worst part of his father's politics should be pursued, and the coin still more and more debased; for in the third year of his reign, under pretence of redressing this evil, there was a new standard introduced, somewhat better in appearance than the last coinage in his father's reign, for now, instead of four ounces, there were six ounces of fine silver in each pound of metal; but then the number of pieces was increased from forty-eight to seventy-two, and consequently, the nominal value of silver was raised from four shillings to six shillings an ounce; but, in reality, continued at the same rate as before, that is, at twelve shillings an ounce, which was incredibly grievous to the people; yet, two years afterwards this method was changed, and the finishing stroke given to all practices of this nature, by coining the same number of shillings, that is, seventy-two out of a pound of metal, in which there was but three ounces of silver; so that, while the nominal value remained the same, and those who knew no better, believed that silver was still at six shillings an ounce; it was, in fact, so long as the money of this coinage remained current, at twenty-four shillings an ounce. Yet, one advantage followed from thence, which

\* See the King's Diary, published by Burnet.

was, that the grossness of the imposition made it quickly discernable; and therefore the next year's money was coined pretty near the old standard, before it had been practised upon by his father; but then there were sixty shillings in the pound weight, which brought the price of silver to five shillings an ounce. And this began that emendation of our coin, which was completed under Queen Elizabeth, by the advice of the same minister who procured this last alteration in the time of King Edward.

In this monarch's reign, the Levant trade grew more extensive; \* and that to the coast of Guinea, and other parts of Africa, was first discovered, and prosecuted with success, by Mr. Thomas Wyndham. † We may add to these proofs of the flourishing of naval power under this young prince, the attempt made for discovering a north-east passage, ‡ which will lead us to speak of the most accomplished seaman who lived in his time, and whose memory deserves, for his industry, penetration, and integrity, to be transmitted to posterity: I mean the celebrated and justly famous

### SEBASTIAN CABOT.

THIS gentleman was the son of that eminent Venetian pilot, Sir John Cabot, of whom we have given some account heretofore. He was born at Bristol, about the year 1477; and, therefore, Mr. Strype is mistaken, when he tells us he was an Italian; into which he was led by the name he met with in the MS. from whence he copied his remarks, viz. *Sebastiano Cabato*, § an inaccuracy common enough with our old writers, who affect to vary

\* Churchill's Voyages, Introduction.

† Ibid, vol. v. 146.

‡ Eden's History of Travel, p. 224.

§ Grafton, p. 1323, says, he was born at Bristol, and that he was the son of a Genoese. Strype's Memorials, vol. ii. p. 402.

foreign names strangely, a folly with which the French are still infected, insomuch, that it is a difficult thing to understand English proper names, even in their latest and best historians. Sebastian was educated by his father, in the study of those parts of the mathematics, which were then best understood, especially arithmetic, geometry, and cosmography; and by that time he was seventeen years old, he had made several trips to sea, in order to add to his theoretical notions, a competent skill in the practical part of navigation; and in like manner were bred the rest of his father's sons, who became also eminent men, and settled abroad; one in Genoa, the other at Venice.\*

The first voyage of consequence in which Sebastian Cabot was engaged, seems to have been that made by his father, for the discovery of the north-west passage, of which we have given some account before.† This was in 1497, and certainly first taught our seamen a passage to North America; but, whether Sebastian Cabot did not, after the decease of his father, prosecute his design, and make a more perfect discovery of the coasts of the new found land, is a great doubt with me, because I find such incongruous relations of this voyage in different authors.‡ For instance, the celebrated Peter Martyr, who was intimately acquainted with Sebastian, and wrote in a manner from his own mouth, says, that the voyage wherein he made his great discovery towards the north, was performed in two ships, fitted out at his own expense; § which by no means agrees with his father's expedition, wherein were employed one stout ship of the king's, and four belonging to the merchants of Bristol. || Besides this, a very intelligent Spanish writer, who is very exact

\* Remarks on Hakluyt's MS. † In the Life of John Cabot, p. 312.

‡ As appears, by comparing the accounts in Hakluyt with those in Purchas, and in the History of Travel, by Eden.

§ Decad. iii. cap. 6.

|| Fabian's MS. Chronicle, A. D. 1497.



in his chronology, tells us, that when Cabot sailed at the expense of King Henry VII. in order to make discoveries towards the north, he passed beyond Cape Labrador, somewhat more than fifty-eight degrees of north latitude, then, turning towards the west, he sailed along the coast to thirty-eight degrees, which agrees very well with our accounts of John Cabot's voyage; \* but Ramusio, the Italian collector, who had the letter of Sebastian Cabot before him when he wrote, speaks of a voyage wherein he sailed north and by west, to sixty-seven degrees and an half, and would have proceeded farther, if he had not been hindered by a mutiny among his sailors. †

The writers in those days had no precision; they set down facts very confusedly, without much attending to circumstances, and were still less solicitous about dates, which gives those who come after them much trouble, and yet seldom attaining any certainty; which, I must acknowledge, is the case here. It is, however, probable, that Sebastian made more than one, perhaps, more than two voyages into these parts, by virtue of King Henry VII.'s commission; and if so, he well deserved the character Sir William Monson has given of him, ‡ and of his important discoveries, which the reader will be pleased to see in his own words; the authority of the writer, from his perfect knowledge of the subject, being of as much weight as the facts he mentions.

“ To come to the particulars, (says he,) of augmenta-  
 “ tion of our trade, of our plantations, and our disco-  
 “ veries, because every man shall have his due therein,  
 “ I will begin with Newfoundland, lying upon the main  
 “ continent of America, which the king of Spain chal-  
 “ lenges as first discoverer; but as we acknowledge the

\* Lopez de Gomora Hist. des Ind. Occident. lib. ii. cap. iv.

† In his preface to the third volume of his excellent collection.

‡ In the large collection called Churchill's Voyages, vol. iii. p. 396; and his character, p. 401.

“ king of Spain the first light of the west and south-west  
 “ parts of America, so we, and all the world must confess,  
 “ that we were the first that took possession, for the  
 “ crown of England, of the north part thereof, and not  
 “ above two years difference betwixt the one and the  
 “ other. And as the Spaniards have, from that day and  
 “ year, held their possession in the west, so have we done  
 “ the like in the north ; and though there is no respect,  
 “ in comparison of the wealth betwixt the countries, yet  
 “ England may boast, that the discovery, from the year  
 “ aforesaid to this very day, hath afforded the subject  
 “ annually, one hundred and twenty thousand pounds,  
 “ and increased the number of many a good ship, and  
 “ mariners, as our western parts can witness, by their  
 “ fishing in Newfoundland. Neither can Spain challenge  
 “ a more natural right than we to its discovery; for in  
 “ that case we are both alike.

“ If we deal truly with others, and not deprive them of  
 “ their right, it is Italy that must assume the discovery  
 “ to itself, as well in the one part of America, as in the  
 “ other. Genoa, and Christopher Columbus by name,  
 “ must carry away the praise of it from Spain ; for Spain  
 “ had not that voyage in agitation, or thought of it, till  
 “ Columbus not only proposed, but accomplished it. The  
 “ like may be said of Sebastian Cabot, \* a Venetian, who,  
 “ by his earnest intercession to Henry VII. drew him to  
 “ the discovery of Newfoundland, and called it by the  
 “ name of *Bacallos*, an Indian name for fish, from the  
 “ abundance of fish upon that coast.”

This shews plainly the great sagacity and unbiassed im-  
 partiality of this ingenious author, who points very justly

\* This affords a farther and more direct proof of my conjecture,  
 that Sebastian Cabot made more than one voyage in the service of  
 Henry VII. since, from what our author says, it looks as if he had  
 not only found the country, but established the fishery of Newfound-  
 land.



to those advantages (and these not inconsiderable,) which had, even in his time, accrued to this nation from these discoveries; and fairly prescribes to Italy, the honour of producing those incomparable persons by whom they were made; for, though he is a little mistaken in the name, ascribing to Sebastian, what was due to Sir John Cabot, yet he is right as to the fact, for Sir John was a citizen and native of Venice; which fully justifies his compliment to ITALY, the MOTHER OF SCIENCE, and the NURSE OF THE FINE ARTS.

¶ If this worthy man had performed nothing more, his name ought surely to have been transmitted to future times with honour, since it clearly appears, that Newfoundland hath been a source of riches and naval power to this nation, from the time it was discovered, as well as the first of our plantations; so that, with strict justice, it may be said of Sebastian Cabot, that he was the author of our maritime strength, and opened the way to those improvements which have rendered us so great, so eminent, so flourishing a people. Yet have we no distinct accounts of what he advised, or what he performed, for upwards of twenty years together, wherein, certainly, so able a man could never have been idle. The next news we hear of him is in the eighth of King Henry VIII. and our accounts then are none of the clearest. \*

It seems that Cabot had entered into a strict correspondence with Sir Thomas Pert, at this time vice-admiral of England, who had a house at Poplar, and procured him a good ship of the king's, in order to make discoveries; † but it looks as if he had now changed his route, and intended to have passed by the south to the East Indies; for he sailed first to Brazil, and missing there of his purpose, shaped his course for the islands of Hispaniola

\* See Wheeler's Discourse of Trade; and Captain Luke Fox's Account of the North-West Passage.

† Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. iii. p. 498.



and Porto-Rico, where he carried on some traffic, and then returned, failing absolutely in the design upon which he went, not through any want either of courage or conduct in himself, but from the fear and faint-heartedness of Sir Thomas Pert, his coadjutor, of which we have abundant testimony from the writings of a person who lived in those times.\*

This disappointment, in all probability, might dispose Sebastian Cabot to leave England, and to go over to Spain, where he was treated with very great respect, and raised as high as his profession would admit; being declared pilot-major or chief pilot of Spain, and, by his office, intrusted with the reviewing all projects for discovery, which, in those days, were many and important. His great capacity, and approved integrity, induced many rich merchants to treat with him in the year 1524, in relation to a voyage to be undertaken at their expense, by the new-found passage of Magellan, to the Moluccos; which, at length, he accepted, and of which we have a clear account in the writings of the Spanish historian Herrera. †

He sailed, says he, about the beginning of April, 1525, first to the Canaries, then to the islands of Cape Verde, thence to Cape St. Augustine, and the island of Patos or Geese; and near *bahia de Todos los Santos*, or the bay of All Saints, he met a French ship. He was said to have managed but indiscreetly, as wanting provisions when he came to the said island; but, there the Indians were very kind, and supplied him with provisions for all his ships; but, he requited them very indifferently, carrying away with him, by force, four sons of the principal men. Thence he proceeded to the river of Plate, having left

\* See the dedication of a piece called, *A Treatise of New India*, published in 1555, by Mr. Richard Eden, and addressed to the great duke of Northumberland. Gonsalvo de Oviedo *Hist. Ind. Occid.* lib. xix. cap. 13.

† *Decad. iii. lib. iii. cap. 2.*

ashore, on a desert island, Martin Mendez, his vice-admiral, Captain Francis de Rojas, and Michael de Rodas, because they censured his management; and, in conclusion, he went not to the Spice Islands, as well because he had not provisions, as by reason the men would not sail under him, fearing his conduct of the vessel in the Straits. He sailed up the river of Plate, and, about thirty leagues above the mouth, found an island, which he called St. Gabriel, about a league in compass, and half a league to the continent towards Brazil. There he anchored, and, rowing with the boats three leagues higher, discovered a river he called *San Salvador*, or St. Saviour, very deep, and a safe harbour for the ships on the same side, whither he brought up his vessels, and unloaded them, because at the mouth of the river there was not much water. Having built a fort, and left some men in it, he resolved to proceed up that river with boats and a flat-bottomed caravel, in order to make discoveries, thinking that, although he did not pass through the Straits to the Spice Islands, his voyage would not be altogether fruitless. Having advanced thirty leagues, he came to a river called *Zarcarana*; and, finding the natives thereabouts a good-natured rational people, he erected another fort, calling it *Santi Spiritus*, *i. e.* of the Holy Ghost; and his followers by another name, viz. Cabot's Fort.

He thence discovered the shores of the river Parana, which is that of Plate, where he found many islands and rivers, and, keeping along the greatest stream, at the end of two hundred leagues came to another river, to which the Indians gave the name of Paraguay, and left the great river on the right, thinking it bent towards the coast of Brazil; and, running up thirty-four leagues, found people tilling the ground; a thing which, in those parts, he had not seen before. There he met with so much opposition, that he advanced no farther, but killed many Indians, and they slew twenty-five of his Spaniards, and took three that



were gone to gather palmetos to eat. At the same time Cabot was thus employed, James Garcia, with the same view of making discoveries, had entered the river of Plate, without knowing that the other was there before him. He entered the said river about the beginning of the year 1527, having sent away his own, which was a large ship, alledging, that it was of much too great burden for that discovery, and with the rest came to an anchor in the same place where Cabot's ship lay, directing his course, with two brigantines and sixty men, towards the river Parana, which lies north and north-west, arrived at the fort built by Cabot.

About one hundred and ten leagues above this fort, he found Sebastian Cabot himself in the port of St. Anne, so named by the latter; and, after a short stay there, they returned together to the fort of the Holy Ghost, and thence sent messengers into Spain. Those who were despatched by Sebastian Cabot were Francis Calderon and George Barlow; who gave a very fair account of the fine countries bordering on the river La Plata, shewing how large a tract of land he had not only discovered, but subdued; and producing gold, silver, and other rich commodities, as evidences in favour of their general's conduct. The demands they made were, that a supply should be sent of provision, ammuniton, goods proper to carry on a trade, and a competent recruit of seamen and soldiers; to this the merchants, by whom Cabot's squadron was fitted out, would not agree, but chose to let their rights escheat to the crown of Castile; the king then took the whole upon himself, but was so dilatory in his preparations, that Sebastian Cabot, quite tired out, as having been five years in America, resolved to return home; which he did, embarking the remainder of his men, and all his effects, on board the biggest of his ships, and leaving the rest behind him.\*

\* Herrera Decad. iii. lib. v. cap. 3. See also an account of this expedition in Churchill's Voyages, vol. i. in the introduction.



It was the spring of the year 1531, when Cabot arrived at the Spanish court, and gave an account of his expedition. It is evident enough, from the manner in which the Spanish writers speak of him, that he was not well received, and one may easily account for it. He had raised himself enemies by treating his Spanish mutineers with so much severity; and, on the other hand, his owners were disappointed by his not pursuing his voyage to the Moluccos; he kept his place, however, and remained in the service of Spain many years after, and at length he was invited back again to England. \* We have no account how this was brought about in any author now extant, and, therefore, I shall offer to the reader's consideration a conjecture of my own, which he may accept or reject, according as it seems to him probable or improbable.

Mr. Robert Thorne, an English merchant at Seville, whom we have mentioned before with commendation, was intimately acquainted with Cabot, and was actually one of his owners in his last expedition; † it seems, therefore, not at all unlikely, that he, after his return from Newfoundland, might importune Cabot to think of coming home; and, what seems to add a greater appearance of truth to this conjecture, is Cabot's settling at Bristol, when he did return to England, of which city Mr. Thorne was an eminent merchant, and once mayor. ‡ These transactions fell out towards the twenty-fourth year of the reign of Henry VIII. about which time, as I suppose, Sebastian Cabot actually returned, and settled with his family here.

In the very beginning of King Edward's reign, this eminent seaman was introduced to the duke of Somerset, then lord-protector, with whom he was in great favour, and by whom he was made known to the king, who took a

\* Hakluyt's Voyages, p. iii. p. 7. See also the preface to the third volume of Ramusio.

† Hakluyt's Voyages, p. 726.

‡ See p. 328.

great deal of pleasure in his conversation, being much better versed in the studies to which Cabot had applied himself than, his tender years considered, could have been expected; for he knew not only all the ports and havens in this island and in Ireland, but also those in France, their shape, method of entering, commodities and incommodities, and, in short, could answer almost any question about them that a sailor could ask.\* We need not wonder, therefore, that with such a prince Cabot was in high esteem, or that in his favour a new office should be erected, equivalent to that which he had enjoyed in Spain, together with a pension of one hundred sixty-six pounds, thirteen shillings, and four-pence, which we find granted to him by letters-patent, dated January 6, 1549, in the second year of that king's reign, by a special clause in which patent this annuity is made to commence from the Michaelmas preceding. † It was in this year that the emperor's minister d'Arras, in the name of his master, signified to Sir Thomas Cheyne and Sir Philip Hoby, the English ambassadors then at the court of Brussels, his imperial majesty's request, that the king would send over thither our famous seaman, as he could be of no great service to the English nation, who had little to do with the Indian seas, and more especially as he was a very necessary person to the emperor, was his servant in the capacity of grand pilot of the Indies, and to whom he had granted a pension, and that in such a way as the emperor should at some convenient opportunity declare unto the king's council. But we have no accounts that this application was in any shape complied with. ‡

He continued thenceforward highly in the king's favour, and was consulted upon all matters relating to trade, par-

\* Burnet's History of the Reformation, vol. ii. p. 225.

† Hakluyt's Voyages, p. iii. p. 10. Rymer's Fœdera, tom. xv. p. 181.

‡ Strype's Memorials, vol. ii. p. 190.



ticularly in the great case of the merchants of the Steel-yard in 1551; of which it will be fit to insert a short succinct account here, since it has escaped the notice of most of our historians, though it gave, in some measure, a new turn to the whole state of our commerce.

These merchants are sometimes called of the Hanse, because they came from the Hanse-towns, or free cities in Germany; sometimes Almain, from their country; they settled here in or before the reign of Henry III. and imported grain, cordage, flax, hemp, linen cloth, wax, and steel, whence the place in Dowgate-ward, where they dwelt, was called the Steel-yard; which name it still retains. The kings of England encouraged them at first, and granted them large privileges; amongst others, that of exporting our woollen cloths; they had likewise an alderman, who was their chief magistrate; and, in consideration of various grants from the city, they stood bound to repair Bishopsgate, and were likewise under other obligations. By degrees, however, the English coming to trade themselves, and importing many of the commodities in which these Germans dealt, great controversies grew between them; the foreigners, on all occasions, pleading their charter, which the English merchants treated as a monopoly not well warranted by law.

At last the company of merchant-adventurers, at the head of which was our Sebastian Cabot, on the 29th of December 1551, exhibited to the council an information against these merchants of the Steel-yard, to which they were directed to put in their answer. They did so; and after several hearings, and a reference to the king's solicitor-general, his counsel learned in the law, and the recorder of London, a decree passed on the 24th of February, whereby these merchants of the Steel-yard were declared to be no legal corporation; yet licences were afterwards granted them, from time to time, for the exportation and importation of goods, notwithstanding this



decree, which remained still in full force and virtue.\* The great offence objected to them was, that whereas, by their charter, they were allowed to export goods at one and a quarter *per cent.* custom, which gave them a great advantage; they, not content with this in direct violation of that charter, covered other foreign merchants, so that in one year they exported forty-four thousand cloths, and all other strangers but one thousand one hundred. These merchants of the Steel-yard being immensely rich, ventured now and then upon such tricks as these, and then, by paying a round sum, procured a renewal of their charter.

In the month of May, 1552, the king granted a licence, together with letters of safe conduct, to such persons as should embark on board three ships, to be employed for the discovery of a passage by the north to the East Indies. Sebastian Cabot was at that time governor of the company of merchant-adventurers, on whose advice this enterprize was undertaken, and by whose interest this countenance from the court was procured.† The accounts we have of this matter differ widely; but, as I observe, there is a variation in the dates of a whole year, so I am apt to believe, that there must have been two distinct undertakings; one under the immediate protection of the court, which did not take effect, and the other by a joint stock of the merchants, which did. Of the first, because it is little taken notice of, I will speak particularly here; for the other will come in properly in my account of Sir Hugh Willoughby. When, therefore, this matter was first proposed, the king lent two ships, the *Primrose* and the *Moon*, to Barnes, lord-mayor of London, Mr. Garret,

\* Minutes of these proceedings are to be found in King Edward's Diary; and the decree at large in Mr. Wheeler's Treatise of Commerce, p. 94.

† Strype's Memorials, vol. ii. p. 504, but Mr. Strype's remark, that these were the ships which went with Sir Hugh Willoughby, is wrong.

one of the sheriffs, and Mr. York and Mr. Wyndham, two of the adventurers, giving bond to the king to deliver two ships of like burden, and in as good condition, at Midsummer, 1554. In consideration also of the expense and trouble of Sebastian Cabot, his majesty made him a present of two hundred pounds.\*

A year afterwards, this grand undertaking was brought to bear; and thereupon, Sebastian Cabot delivered to the commander-in-chief those directions, by which he was to regulate his conduct; the title of which ran thus: “Ordinances, instructions; and advertisements, of and for the direction of the intended voyage for Cathay, compiled, made, and delivered by the right worshipful Sebastian Cabot, Esq. governor of the mystery and company of the merchant-adventurers for the discovery of regions, dominions, islands, and places unknown, the 9th of May, in the year of our Lord God, 1553.”† This shews how great a trust was reposed in this gentleman by the government, and by the merchants of England; and, the instructions themselves, which we still have entire,‡ are the clearest proofs of his sagacity and penetration, and the fullest justification of such as did repose their trust in him.

Many have surmised that he was a knight; whence we often find him styled Sir Sebastian; but, the very title of those instructions I have cited proves the contrary, as also the charter granted by King Philip and Queen Mary, in the first year of their reign, to the merchants of Russia, since styled the Russia Company; whereby, Sebastian Cabota is made governor for life, on account of his being principally concerned in fitting out the first ships employed in that trade;§ but, so far from being styled

\* Strype's Memorials, vol. ii. p. 402.

† These are yet in the hands of the Russia Company.

‡ In Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. i. p. 226.

§ Ibid, p. 267, where the charter is at large.



knight, that he is called only, one Sebastian Cabota, without any distinction at all. \* Indeed, he is styled Sebastian Cabot, Esq. in the letters-patent bearing date at St. James's, November 27, 1555, in the second and third years of Philip and Mary, wherein their majesties are pleased to grant him an annuity of one hundred and sixty-six pounds, thirteen shillings, and four-pence, during his natural life; as he also is in the letters-patent dated at Westminster, May 29, 1557, the third and fourth of the same reign, when these princes were pleased to permit him to surrender the former patent, and, as a reward of his great merit, to grant him the like annuity as before, not only during his life, but also to continue the same to William Worthington, Esq. a friend, no doubt, of Cabot, for his natural life likewise. † After this we find him very active in the affairs of the company in the year 1556; and, in the journal of Mr. Stephen Burroughs, it is observed, that on the 27th of April, that year, he went down to Gravesend, and there went on board the Search-thrift, a small vessel fitted out under the command of the said Burroughs for Russia, where he gave generously to the sailors; and, on his return to Gravesend, he extended his alms very liberally to the poor, desiring them to pray for the success of this voyage. We find it also remarked, (which shews the cheerful temper of the man,) that, upon his coming back to Gravesend, he caused a grand entertainment to be made at the sign of the Christopher, where, says Mr. Burroughs, for the very joy he had to see the towardness of our intended discovery, he entered into the dance himself. ‡ This, except the renewing his patent, is

\* The words in the charter are: "And, in consideration, that one Sebastian Cabota hath been the chief setter forth of this voyage, therefore," &c.; which authentic declaration of his merit does him more honour than any titles could have done.

† Rymer's *Fœdera*, tom. xv. p. 427, 465.

‡ Hakluyt's *Voyages*, vol. i. p. 274, 275.



the last circumstance relating to Cabot that I can meet with any where; and, as it is certain, that a person of his temper could not have been idle, or his actions remain in obscurity; so I look upon it as certain, that he died some time in the next year, when, if not fourscore, he was, at least much upwards of seventy.

He was unquestionably one of the most extraordinary men of the age in which he lived; and who, by his capacity and industry, contributed not a little to the service of mankind in general, as well as of this kingdom; for, he it was who first took notice of the variation of the compass, which is of such mighty consequence in navigation, and concerning which the learned have busied themselves in their inquiries ever since.\* An Italian writer, famous for making the most judicious collection of voyages which has hitherto appeared, celebrates Sebastian Cabot as his countryman;† yet, as he was, if we believe himself, ours both by nature and affection;‡ and, as we owe so much to his skill and labours, I thought it but just to give his memoirs a place here amongst those of the most eminent British seamen; the rather, because he has been hitherto strangely neglected by our biographers as well as by our general historians. §

It is likewise fit to say somewhat of Sir HUGH WILLOUGHBY, admiral of that expedition into the northern seas, which produced the important discovery of the trade to Archangel. I have before observed, that the original of this undertaking sprung from Sebastian Cabot, whose settled opinion it had always been, that there were streights near the north pole, answerable to those of Magellan. It was by him proposed to

\* Stowe's Annals, p. 811. Varenus's Geography, p. 837.

† Gio. Battista Ramusio in the preface to his third volume.

‡ Strype's Memorials, vol. iii. p. 319.

§ One might have wondered at his being omitted in the General Dictionary, if there had been an article of DRAKE.

King Edward VI. so early as in the year 1551; in the month of February, the next year, he obtained two ships from the king, the *Primrose* and the *Moon*; and, the terms on which he was to have these leading him to confer with some principal merchants, the result of their conferences was, the changing his scheme; insomuch, that it was agreed to build three new ships, and to fit these out by a joint stock, to which such as had a good opinion of the voyage might contribute, at twenty-five pounds a share. This once settled, the ships were built with wonderful celerity; and that which was called the *Admiral*, was sheathed with lead, to preserve her from the worms. The whole of this joint stock amounted but to six thousand pounds; and yet this money was so well employed, that, by the beginning of May, 1553, they were ready to sail.\*

The *Admiral* was called the *Bona Esperanza*, of the burden of one hundred and twenty tons, commanded by Sir Hugh Willoughby, Knight; the *Edward Bonaventure*, of one hundred and sixty tons, commanded by captain Richard Chancellor; the third, the *Bona Confidentia*, of ninety tons, Cornelius Durfurth, master. May 10, 1553, they sailed from Ratchiffe, and on the 18th of the same month, cleared from Gravesend. The admiral Sir Hugh Willoughby, had all the qualities that could be desired in a commander; he was descended of an honourable family, was a man of great parts, much experience, and unconquerable courage, yet unfortunate in this undertaking. In the beginning of the month of August, he lost the company of captain Chancellor, and about the same time first discovered Greenland, though the Dutch endeavour to deprive us of that honour. His utmost progress was to seventy-two degrees of north latitude; and then finding the weather intolerably cold, the year far spent, and his

\* See the account of this voyage in Latin, by Clement Adams. Hakluyt, vol. i. p. 243.

ships unable to bear the sea, he put into the haven of Arzina, in Lapland, on the 18th of September, and there provided the best he could to have passed the winter. It appears by a will, which was found in his ship, that Sir Hugh, and most of his company, were alive in January, 1554, but soon after they were all frozen to death; their bodies being found the next summer, by Russian fishermen, who repaired to that coast; as also the original journal of Sir Hugh, from whence these particulars are taken. \* As for captain Chancellor, he was so fortunate as to enter the river of St. Nicholas, where he was well received, and had, soon after, access to John Basilowitz, then great duke of Muscovy, which gave us an entrance into that country.

\* Hakluyt, p. 232.



## CHAP. XI.

The Naval History of England during the Reign of Queen Mary; together with such Transactions as relate to Foreign Commerce, or Remarkable Discoveries.

A.D.  
1553.

THOSE who were about, and in the confidence of, King Edward, at the time of his decease, prevailed upon him to set aside his sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, and to call to the possession of his throne, his cousin, the Lady Jane Grey, who was married a little before to the Lord Guildford Dudley, son to the great duke of Northumberland; but notwithstanding the time they had during the king's sickness, to concert their project, and to provide for the support of their designs, they were so much at a loss, that they did not immediately publish his death; but on the 8th of July, 1553, they sent for the lord mayor of London, and directed him to bring with him six aldermen, six merchants of the staple, and as many of the merchant-adventurers, whom they acquainted with the king's death, and the manner in which he had disposed of the crown, requiring them to keep it secret; which they did for two days, and then proclaimed Lady Jane \* queen of England, &c. I mention this circumstance, to shew in what estimation traders then were.

Among the rest of the precautions taken by the duke of Northumberland and his party, one of the principal was, his sending a squadron of six ships, with orders to lie

\* Life of Queen Mary, written by George Ferrars, Esq. in Grafton's Chronicle, p. 1324, 1325. Stow, p. 609, 610. Speed, p. 813, 815. See the proclamation, as drawn by the curious pen of the learned Sir John Throckmorton, that service having been declined by Sir William Cecil, afterwards the great lord treasurer Burleigh, in the collection of records to Burnet's History of the Reformation, vol. ii. p. 239.

before the port of Yarmouth, to prevent the Lady Mary, as he styled her, from making her escape beyond the seas; which, however, proved the ruin of his design; for these ships were no sooner seen before the town of Yarmouth, than Sir Harry Jernegan went off in an open boat, and exhorted the seamen to declare themselves for Queen Mary, which they immediately did. This, with the lord warden of the cinque ports proclaiming the queen in Kent, contributed chiefly to put an end to the struggle; so that on the 19th, she was proclaimed at London; and the unfortunate Lady Jane became a prisoner, in the very same place where a little before she had kept her court. \*

In the beginning of her reign Queen Mary acted with great temper and moderation, releasing the duke of Norfolk, who had remained a prisoner all this time in the tower, from his confinement; imprisoning, indeed, such as had taken arms against her, but proceeding to no greater severities till after Wyatt's rebellion; when, falling into the hands of Hispaniolized counsellors, she began to act with that cruelty which is so deservedly esteemed the blemish of her reign. That she was naturally a woman of better temper, appears by remitting part of a tax granted to her brother King Edward, by his last parliament; and that she had a just respect to the honour of the English nation is clear, from the great pains she took to rectify all the disorders which had crept into the government during the duke of Northumberland's despotic administration. † But all her good qualities were blasted

\* Stowe, p. 611, 612. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 1087. Speed, p. 817. Godwin, p. 268, 271. See also the journal of the privy council of this queen's reign, in Haynes's Collection, p. 156; in which, among other things, that princess is said to have published a proclamation of defiance against the duke of Northumberland, with the promise of one thousand pounds a year, in land, to any nobleman who should apprehend him; and lesser rewards, in proportion to the quality of the person who performed that service.

† Strype's Memorials, vol. iii. p. 31, 32, 33.



by her persisting obstinately in her resolution to marry Philip, prince of Spain, contrary to the general inclination of her people.

A.D.  
1551.

In pursuance of this unhappy measure, the consequence also of her bigotry, commodore Winter was sent with a strong squadron to fetch the ambassadors sent by Charles V. to conclude the match. \* On the arrival of Mr. Winter at Ostend, the emperor sent him a very fine gold chain, which, at his return to England, he shewed to Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, who, after looking at it for some time, said, "For this gold chain, you have sold your country;" which expression had like to have cost them their lives. † It was the coming of these ambassadors, which induced Sir Thomas Wyatt to take up arms, and begin that rebellion which first endangered the queen's safety, and at last brought him to the block. ‡ Notwithstanding this, she caused a fleet of twenty-eight sail to be equipped, the command of which she gave to the Lord William Howard, created baron of Effingham, in the first year of her reign, § and lord high admiral, who was now by special commission || constituted lieutenant-general, and commander-in-chief of her royal army. He was sent to sea under pretence of guarding the coast, but in reality his squadron was designed to escort Prince Philip, which was, however, a needless care, since his own fleet consisted of one hundred and sixty sail; with this naval force he entered the narrow seas, his admiral carrying the Spanish flag in his main top, a thing which gave such offence to the gallant admiral of England, that he saluted him with a shot, and obliged him to take in his colours, before he would make his compliments to the prince; a circumstance worthy of im-

\* Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 1106. Strype's Memorials, vol. iii. p. 59. Burnet, vol. ii.

† See his trial, preserved in Holingshed.

‡ Stowe. Burnet. Strype.

§ Pat. i. M. p. 7.

|| Rymer's Foedera, tom. xv. p. 382.



mortal REMEMBRANCE, and, one would think too, of IMITATION.\*

The queen was, at this time, about thirty-eight years old, entirely at her own disposal, and, if we may judge from her conduct, somewhat in a hurry for a husband, which will appear the more excuseable, if we consider that she had been disappointed nine or ten times, if not more. † She seems, besides, to have had a natural inclination towards this marriage, as being herself a Spaniard, by her mother's side, and always remarkably affected to that nation; and yet, by the care of her council, very reasonable articles were drawn, for preventing the evils apprehended there from this match. ‡ Prince Philip landed at Southampton the 19th of July, and, passing on to Winchester, there espoused the queen, on the 25th of the same month, being the feast of the Spanish patron St. James. § As the nation was displeas'd, at the celebration of their nuptials, so their discontents grew higher and higher, insomuch, that the queen never had a pleasant hour, or her subjects a quiet minute, from her wedding-day, though many projects were set on foot to pacify them. To this end, the Spanish artisans were forbid to open shops here, severe justice was done on several, who, in resentment of insults, had killed some of the English; and a great many carts, laden, as it was said, with gold and silver, were driven through the streets to the Tower. ||

A.D.  
1554.

\* Sir W. Monson's Naval Tracts, p. 243. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 1118. Speed, p. 324.

† Strype's memorials, vol. iii. p. 129.

‡ These are but imperfectly published in Holingshed; but the original was copied by a careful hand, and is in the Cotton library, Julius, f. vi. and are likewise published in Rymer's *Fœdera*, tom. xv. p. 377.

§ Grafton, p. 1343. Holing. vol. ii. p. 1118. Cooper, fol. 366. Ferrara's *Hist. de Espan.* p. 13. sec. 16. M. Turquet, liv. xxviii. p. 1340, 1341.

|| Stowe's *Annals*, p. 625. Burnet, vol. ii. p. 286.

A.D. 1556. All these arts, however, could not dissipate the jealousies which the English had conceived, nor were they or their queen at all satisfied, when the Emperor Charles V. resigned the crown of Spain to King Philip. They easily foresaw that this would occasion his remaining almost constantly abroad, which would be attended with the most fatal consequences to their affairs, since, without communicating and receiving direction from him, the council could, or at least would, do little or nothing here at home.\* After the emperor's resignation, in his passage from Flanders to Spain, he put into an English port, where he was received, with great respect, by the lord high admiral, who could not, however, prevail upon him to visit the queen, his daughter; but to excuse it, he wrote her a very long letter, perplexed and ambiguous, very evidently speaking that disorder of mind under which he laboured. This letter is dated the 20th of September, 1556, and seems to have been chiefly intended to palliate the absence of his son.†

A.D. 1557. About this time, the court had information of some treacherous designs in respect to the queen's dominions in France. These places were equally objects of the attention of both nations. The government of Calais, and its dependencies, was the most profitable employment the crown had to give. It was of great utility as a staple to which foreign merchants resorted to purchase English commodities, which were there vended annually to a very large amount. It was held of still greater consequence, as one of the keys of the Channel, Dover being the other.‡ The French again considered this fortress, and the forts

\* See this grievance strongly stated in the minute of an order made by Queen Elizabeth in council, on her accession, in the Diary of Sir W. Cecil, (Lord Burleigh,) Cotton library, Titus, c. 10.

† Strype's Memorials, vol. iii. p. 307.

‡ Calais, while in our hands, was entirely inhabited by English; had a mayor and aldermen, with other franchises; a mayor of the staple. Children born there were not reputed aliens. Its inhabitants



belonging to it, as a bridle in their mouths, an inlet into their kingdom, by which the English could enter their country at pleasure, and as a standing monument of their being once masters of the realm. On all these accounts they were, in peace as well as war, plotting how Calais and its district might be recovered.\* For this reason, every overture on that subject, was well received, come from whom it would.

The principal instrument in this business, and who wrought for them most effectually, has escaped the notice of all our writers. His name was John de Fontenay, sieur de Briteville, a gentleman of Normandy, who having, in 1545, murdered the king's advocate, took refuge in Calais: this man, as a proper return for the protection shewn to such a criminal, began quickly to contrive a plan for surprising the place. He communicated this to, and received encouragement from, Francis I. and upon his memoir, and the subsequent informations he gave, the French took their measures, till it fell into their hands; when Henry II. rewarded this John de Fontenay with letters of abolition, and gave him also three thousand crowns, to pay the *intérêt civil*, which is, in the nature of our appeal, brought by the children of the person whom he assassinated. The truth of this fact stands therefore upon indisputable testimony.†

But the court of France did not solely rely on him; they, on the contrary, listened also, as has been before remarked,

A.D.  
1557.

grew so rich as to excite envy at home, though, being English, all the wealth they acquired there of course entered here. See Cotton's Records, p. 140, 172, 309, &c.

\* I du Tillet, *chronique abrégée des rois de France*, p. 106, 107. A. du Chesne, *antiquités des Villes de tout la France*, p. 467. Seipio Duplex, *Histoire de France*, tom. iii. p. 577.

† *Antiquitez de Caen*, p. 95. The project of recovering this place was concerted by the constable Montmorency, but he being taken at the battle of St. Quintin, it was executed (as will appear hereafter) by his rival the duke of Guise.



to the informations, and gladly received the propositions of English traitors, and amongst these, to one for betraying this place. King Philip made this known to his queen and her ministers, offering at the same time, any assistance that might be requisite for their defence, it being too well known, that the garrisons in Calais and the forts were but weak.\* The council acted very unluckily upon this tender point. They refused the king's succours, from an apprehension they might seize these places for him, and considering these treacherous negotiations in a time of full peace, as so injurious and so insulting to the nation, that they advised the queen to make war upon France. Accordingly an herald was sent to Henry, as the custom was then, to defy him in the queen's name, which was most solemnly performed at Rheims. The reasons publicly assigned for this, that it might appear entirely an English quarrel, were these, that he had assisted the late duke of Northumberland and his adherents; that Dudley and Ashton, traitors, had been by him received, and were gratified with pensions; and that Stafford had been countenanced by him in attacking the castle of Scarborough.† But, notwithstanding all these points were notoriously true, it was believed, that the queen would not have declared war, but, from the solicitations of her consort Philip, which made it exceedingly disagreeable to the common people, and the parliament discovered a backwardness in supporting it.

It was stipulated by the articles of marriage, that the queen's dominions should not be engaged in any war, particularly with the crown of France, on account of any disputes that might arise between the French and King Philip; and yet, when the Spaniards thought it adviseable to break with the French king, Henry II. the queen and

\* Grafton's chronicle, p. 1352.

† Godwin's Annals, p. 326. Strype's Memorials, vol. iii. chap. xlv. p. 358.

her council were prevailed upon to forget that article and the interests of England, and to enter into a war, both with Scotland and France. To bring this to pass, King Philip himself came over, and remained the best part of the spring in England, where he concerted such measures as he thought would infallibly ruin the French. On his return into Flanders, and drawing his forces to the frontiers, the Earl of Pembroke passed from hence with a gallant body of troops, consisting of between ten and eleven thousand men, and had the honour to contribute greatly to the total defeat of the French forces before the town of St. Quintin, in the famous battle fought there on the 7th of July, 1557, and assisted soon after in taking of the town by storm.\*

But while these brave men gained honour abroad, their country suffered severely at home; for the Scots not only harassed the borders, but also, by the advice and assistance of the French, fitted out abundance of privateers, which disturbed the commerce, and particularly alarmed all such as were concerned in the Iceland trade, then of very great consequence. To quiet the apprehension of the merchants, Sir John Clere, vice-admiral of England, was sent with a fleet of twelve sail to annoy the Scots, and to preserve the Iceland fleet: with this view, he made a descent on the island of Pomona, one of the Orkneys, on the 12th of August, 1557; but the next day, the Scots, to the number of three thousand men, fell upon him; defeated the forces he had landed; killed three of his captains; took all his artillery; and, to complete the misfortune, the boat in which he fled overset, so that himself, with several others, were drowned. The rest of the fleet, discouraged by this unlucky accident, abandoned their design, and returned home, which encouraged the Scots to raise a great army,

\* Grafton, p. 1352, 1353. Hollingshed, vol. ii. p. 1134. Speed, p. 829. Thuan. hist. lib. 19. sec. 4. Mezeray, tom. iv. p. 705. P. Daniel, tom. viii. p. 198.

and to threaten a dangerous invasion; but their own domestic dissensions, as was commonly the case with that people, rendered their projects abortive, and preserved the nation from receiving any further damage on that side.\*

A. D.  
1558.

The succeeding winter proved fatal to the English possessions in France, those small remains of the great conquests which her Henrys and Edwards had made. The duke of Guise, at this time, governed all in France; who, being well informed of the strange policy of the English, trusting in the winter, the defence of Calais, rather to its situation than to its garrison, resolved to make use of that season to surprise it. The war with Spain, gave a colour for his drawing together a great army on the frontiers; and, under pretence of disturbing the English navigation, he directed abundance of ships to be fitted out from all the ports of France, with secret directions to join before Calais, in the beginning of the month of January. On the 1st of that month, he threw himself, with a choice body of troops, before the place, or rather behind it, towards the sea; where, attacking the forts of Niculay and the Rysbank, he, after a vigorous defence, made himself master of them; after which, he assaulted the town, and, in a week's time, forced it to capitulate; the Lord Wentworth, who commanded therein, having no stronger garrison than five hundred men.†

Thus, in eight days, the English lost a place which they had held two hundred and ten years, and which had cost Edward III. eleven months siege before he became master of it. Some of our historians, and especially the

\* Strye's Memorials, vol. iii. p. 429. Leslæus, lib. x. Buchanan, lib. xvi.

† Grafton, p. 1354, 1355. Stowe, p. 631, 632. Godwin, p. 330, 331. Lord Burleigh's Diary in Murdin's collection of state papers, p. 747. Thuan. hist. lib. xx. sec. 3. Dupleix. tom. iii. p. 576, 577. P. Daniel, tom. viii. p. 210.



memoir-writers of those times, attribute this misfortune to treachery, and stab several noble characters with imputations of this sort, according as their prejudices led them; but there does not appear the least ground for these reports, any more than for suggesting that the Lord Gray, who was governor of the castle of Guisnes, betrayed it;\* since the French writers very candidly acknowledge, that he made not only a good, but a desperate defence, so that if he had either commanded a numerous garrison, or had entertained any hopes of relief, he would have infallibly preserved the place. As it was, he surrendered upon honourable terms,† which is more than can be said for the governor of the fortress of Hames, who, seized with a sudden panic, yielded it up before the French had attacked it.‡ The news of these disasters struck the queen with despair, which is not wonderful; but, that they should so dispirit the nation, as to engage the council to write in such a dejected strain as they did to King Philip, on his moving them to attempt the retaking the place, is really strange; and I think it can be accounted for no other way than by supposing, that, on the one hand, they were weary of the mighty expense which these possessions annually cost England; and were, on the other, willing to lay hold of so favourable an opportunity, to demonstrate to the king, the mischief this war had done them, and how utterly incapable they were, of prosecuting his projects any longer. §

In order to shew the probability of what I have suggested, and to give my readers the clearest idea of the real importance of this place, it may not be amiss to observe, that at such time as the French King Francis I.

\* Grafton, p. 1357—1359. Stowe, p. 632. Godwin, p. 331, 332.

† Thuan. hist. lib. xx. sec. iii. Dupleix, tom. iii. p. 577, 578. P. Daniel, *histoire de France*, tom. viii. p. 216.

‡ Grafton, p. 1360. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 1140.

§ See the copy of the council's letter, dated February 1, 1557 Cotton library, Titus, b. 2.

was prisoner in Spain, there wanted not some, who advised King Henry VIII. to lay hold of this opportunity of parting with this fortress, and all he held in France, supposing that by such a step he might add to his profit, without diminishing his honour; but, upon a debate in his privy council, it was resolved to keep it. \* This is certain, that the expense of preserving Calais was very great, not amounting to less, during the time we held it, than three millions. How to compute the advantages we derived from it, I confess, is not easy to say; but surely the indifference with which Queen Elizabeth and her ministers treated it, and the little inclination we have since shewn to get it into our own possession, may render what I have advanced credible. † Add to this, that in those days the house of Austria was almost as formidable as the house of Bourbon is now; which made the greatest part of Europe afraid of it, and of it only. How well this apprehension was conducted, and with what address the English ministry managed this general inclination, so as to render the weakness of other states the cause of weakening Spain to such a degree as she has never recovered, I shall hereafter have occasion to shew. In the mean time, let us return to the last, indeed the only, naval expedition in this reign.

A. D.  
1558.

The war still continued between the French and Spaniards, with the utmost animosity; and the former, being

\* This fact is taken from a letter of the archbishop of Canterbury to Cardinal Wolsey.

† See Strype's Annals, vol. i. p. 26. The French made an offer of Calais to Queen Elizabeth, by their ambassadors at London, in 1560, prior to the treaty of Edinburgh, after having first tried how far threats would operate, in case she would recall her forces out of Scotland, which she had sent to the assistance of those of the reformed religion, in that Kingdom; but her majesty, as we are told, which shews in what estimation she held it, shrewdly replied, that for the sake of a paltry fishing-town, she would never desert those she had taken under her protection. Camdeni Annal. Elizabethæ, edit. T. Hearne, vol. i. p. 64.

earlier in the field, in 1558 began to gain great advantages in the Low Countries; but growing upon this too warm, as is common with the French, they attacked Count Egmont, near Gravelin, whose army made a gallant resistance, till such time as the English squadron, then cruising in the narrow seas, hearing the incessant noise of their artillery, and having the advantage of the wind, approached the field of battle, which was close to the sea side, and bringing their guns to bear upon the left wing of the French, they did such terrible execution, as quickly decided the fate of the day, and forced two hundred of the enemy to fly to the English ships for quarter. This battle was fought on the 3d of July, and was of infinite consequence to King Philip. In the mean time, the queen caused a considerable navy to be drawn together, in order to make a descent upon France. The ships were not fewer than two hundred and forty sail; but there were great uncertainties about the time, place, and manuer of acting, occasioned by the king's feeding Queen Mary with hopes of his coming over to England, which it is more than probable he never intended.

At length, the Lord Clinton, then lord high admiral, put to sea with a stout fleet, in the month of July, and landed seven thousand men in Lower Bretagne, where they took the town of Conquet, and soon after re-embarked. Before they reached the English coast, they were joined by a squadron of thirty sail of Spanish ships, which induced the admiral to think of taking Brest; but, arriving on the coast of Bretagne a second time, they found the whole country in arms, so that they were constrained to abandon their enterprize, and to lay aside all thoughts of action for this year. \*

\* Grafton, p. 1363, 1364. Stowe, p. 633. Godwin, p. 334. Thuan. Hist. lib. xx. sec. 9, 10. Duplex, tom. iii. p. 583, 584. P. Daniel, tom. viii. p. 232.



A.D.  
1558.

This disappointment, joined to the coldness of her husband, the calamities which the war had brought upon her native country, and the general discontent of her subjects, greatly affected the queen's tender constitution, now in a manner worn out by a dropsy; yet this distemper was not the immediate cause of her death; but rather a kind of infectious fever, which raged excessively in the autumn of this year, especially among the better sort. According to the accounts in some of our old chronicles, it differed little from a plague.\* While she laboured under her last sickness, King Philip entered into a treaty with the French king, wherein at first he pretended to insist strenuously on the restitution of Calais; but, it afterwards appeared, that this was only for form's sake, and in order to obtain better terms for himself; the poor queen was wont to say in her languishing condition, that as yet they knew not her distemper, but that, if after she was dead they opened her, they would find Calais written in her heart.† Worn with her disease, and excruciated by her griefs, she expired the 17th of November, 1558, the parliament then sitting.

We have said somewhat as to her character before; but, it may not be amiss to observe, that, in the latter part of her reign, and especially after the death of Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, lord-chancellor, and her prime-minister, things went but indifferently in parliament; where, but a few weeks before her death, one of the members for the city of London made a long speech in the House of Commons, wherein he fully and freely laid open all their grievances, and entered into a particular detail of the state of the nation; affirming amongst other things, that the city of London was then worth less by three

\* Cooper's Chronicle, fol. 377. Stowe's Annals, p. 684. Dr. Haddon's Answer Apologetical to Hierome Osorius, (who alledged the queen was poisoned,) fol. 28.

† Grafton, p. 1365, 1366. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 1162. Speed, p. 330. Godwin's Annals, p. 340, 341. Lord Burleigh's Diary, in Murdin's collection, p. 747.

hundred thousand pounds than at the death of King Edward. \* We need not wonder, therefore, that this princess was very little regretted; especially, if we consider, that, throughout her whole reign, she put herself at the head of a party both in church and state, and thereby exceedingly provoked the body of her people.

It may not be amiss to observe here, that by the hardships the nation underwent, in consequence of the queen's foreign marriage, they were for that reason cured of their unreasonable attachment to the house of Burgundy, which, from the time that Maximilian married the heiress of the last duke, to the death of Queen Mary, cost England, in the bare expense of wars and subsidies entered into, or granted on their behalf, six millions of our money, exclusive of the inexpressible advantages derived to them from our trade, of which enough has been said in the former reign. To this we must justly ascribe, in a great measure, the putting our commerce upon a right foot, by which I mean, taking it out of the hands of foreigners in the Steelyard, and out of the hands of an exclusive company here at home, which had been impracticable, or, which comes to the same thing, never had been thought practicable, if, through the distresses brought upon us by Queen Mary's administration, our political system had not been changed; and the bringing this to pass, ought in justice to be ascribed to Sir William Cecil, who, being little employed, though much regarded by that princess, spent most of his leisure time in making himself entirely master of the practical as well as speculative knowledge relative to coin and commerce, which, with so much credit to himself and glory to his sovereign, he exerted in the next reign. For, as it was the bane of Queen Mary's government, that she was

\* Sir Thomas Smith reports this in his oration on the question, whether it would be more expedient for the nation, that Queen Elizabeth should marry a native or a foreigner? which the reader may meet with at large in the Appendix to his Life, by John Strype, N. iii. p. 7.

entirely guided by foreign councils, so it was the principal source of her sister's fame and felicity, that her views were entirely English, as were those of her minister before mentioned, whose maxim it was, that his mistress could not be great, and himself secure, from any other means than by consulting for, and procuring the common benefit of the nation.\*

Some things, however, were done under the reign of King Philip and Queen Mary for the benefit of trade. King Edward's decree against the merchants of the Steelyard was enforced by an act passed in the parliament of the 24th of October, in the first year of the queen's reign; and the privileges this company pretended to were entirely taken away for this just and wise reason; because, that though they were said to be for the benefit and advancement of commerce, yet they were found in effect to be prejudicial thereto, by maintaining in these merchants a monopoly; by secreting the mystery of traffic from the natives of this realm; and, by establishing a kind of foreign republic in the metropolis of this kingdom. Notwithstanding which, this princess was prevailed upon, some say in consequence of her alliance with the emperor, to suspend the execution of this act for three years, and to discharge the German merchants from paying any other duties than those they were accustomed to pay in the time of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. †

The Russia Company, or, as it was then called, the Muscovy Company, was established by the charter which has been mentioned before, with a particular view to the discovery of new trades, and, in this respect, the wisest

\* See his character drawn by the inimitable pen of the learned Camden, vol. iii. p. 773—775. Sir Robert Naunton's *Fragmenta Regalia*. Life of William, Lord Burleigh. Lloyd's *State Worthies*, p. 473.

† The letters patent for this purpose bear date at Westminster, January 15th, 1554. Rymer's *Foedera*, tom. xv. p. 364. A *Treatise of Commerce*, &c. by John Wheeler, London, 1601, quarto.



and most useful establishment that was ever founded. It was, therefore, farther encouraged by an act in the eighth of the next reign; and, so lately as in the time of William III. another act passed, whereby the company are obliged to admit as a member, and to a joint participation of all their privileges, any subject of this realm who requests the same, paying for such admission five pounds; so that this society stands on a broad bottom, and cannot be charged with any of those inconveniencies which may be justly imputed to other companies. \* The first Russian ambassador sent hither was in this reign, and was received with great respect, having his first public audience of King Philip and Queen Mary on the 25th of March, 1557. †

We find also, that several letters were written to princes and states, in favour of our merchants, by the direction of their majesties; and, by the favour of King Philip, there was a considerable intercourse with Spain, and with all the provinces subject to his Catholic Majesty throughout Europe; which, though it might possibly be the effects of his policy, in order to gain the affections of the English, yet it was certainly of great advantage to private persons, quickened the spirit of trade, and added somewhat to the public stock. It must, however, be allowed, that these favours did by no means balance the inconveniencies which arose from the influence of foreign councils, much less would they have made us amends, if the intrigues of this enterprising prince had taken effect; for, that he had thoughts of adding England and Ireland to his other hereditary dominions, and of awing them by

\* See their case on their petition in 1741.

† Stowe's Annals, p. 630. Godwin, p. 324, 325. Strype's Memorials, vol. iii. p. 373. The letters of these princes to the emperor of Russia, with a copy of the first privileges granted by that monarch to the English merchants, their charter, and a discourse at large of the extraordinary reception the Russian minister met with in England, the reader will find in Hakluyt's noble collection, vol. i. p. 258, 265, 267, 285.

Spanish garrisons, is very certain; though the war with France, and the queen's early death, prevented such schemes from being carried into execution.\* This, as it was very fortunate for us, so it was such a heavy disappointment to him, that, as we shall see in the succeeding part of this work, he exerted all his address, and employed his utmost power, to atchieve by force what he had failed of obtaining by fraud; and thereby ruined his own maritime strength, and increased ours much beyond what could otherwise have been by our utmost industry effected.

As to discoveries, there were not many attempted in this short term. Stephen Burroughs, as we before observed, was fitted out to prosecute Sir Hugh Willoughby's attempt, to find a passage by the north to the East Indies; but he failed, though he passed as far as the straits of Weygatz. † Captain Richard Chancellor, who had so happily begun an intercourse between us and Russia, and procured such ample privileges for our merchants from the Czar, made two other voyages into his dominions, which were very successful; but, in returning from the last, he was unfortunately lost on the coast of Scotland, in the latter end of the year 1556. ‡ The next year, the Russia company sent Captain Anthony Jenkinson into Muscovy, who the year following passed, with infinite labour and incredible danger, into Bucharua; having traversed the countries bordering on the Caspian sea, and so was actually the first discoverer of the Persian trade, by the way of Muscovy. §

\* See Lord Keeper Bacon's speech, in d'Ewes's Journal, An. 1 Elis.

† Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. i. p. 282.

‡ Stowe, p. 629. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 1132. Godwin, p. 324.

§ Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. i. p. 324, 336.

## CHAP. XII.

Containing the Naval History of England under the auspicious Reign of Queen Elizabeth; an account of the many Discoveries made, and Plantations settled, during that space of time, with the measures pursued for the advancement of Trade; including also Memoirs of the famous Admirals, and eminent Seamen, who flourished in that glorious Period.

ON the demise of Queen Mary, one would have thought there needed no mighty consideration in order to settle the succession, since, according to the will of King Henry, which had been hitherto obeyed, as well as the laws of nature and of the land, the Lady Elizabeth became immediately queen. The ministry in the late reign, however, seem to have been in some doubt about taking this step; and, very probably, if the parliament had not been sitting, they might have made some attempt to have secured their own power at the expense of the public peace; but, it fell out more happily for the nation; so that, after a short consultation, they resolved to give notice to the House of Lords of their mistress's demise; and, upon this, orders were immediately given for proclaiming Queen Elizabeth.\*

A.D.  
1558.

There never was, perhaps, a kingdom in a more distressed condition than England at the accession of this princess. It was engaged in a war abroad for the interest of a foreign prince; at home, the people were divided and distracted about their religious and civil concerns. Those of the reformed religion had been lately exposed to the flames;

\* Additions to Fabian, p. 566. Grafton, p. 1367. Cooper's Chronicle, fol. 377. The celebrated Lord Burleigh's Diary of the reign of this princess, in Murdin's collection, p. 747. Stowe. Holingshed, vol. ii. Speed, and other historians.



and those of the Roman communion found themselves now in a declining state. On the continent, we had no allies; in this very island, the Scots were enemies, and their queen claimed the English crown. The exchequer was exhausted; most of the forts and castles throughout the kingdom mouldering into ruins; at sea we had lost much of our ancient reputation; and, a too sharp sense of their misfortunes, had dejected the whole nation to the last degree.\*

Elizabeth was about twenty-five years of age, had quick parts, an excellent education, much prudence, and withal, what she inherited from her father, a high and haughty spirit, qualified by a warm and tender affection for her people, and an absolute contempt of those pleasures, by the indulging which princes are too commonly misled. Her wisdom consisted in good sense, rather than refined maxims; and her policy seems to have risen no higher than to this plain rule, of steadily minding her business. From the moment she became a queen, she never suffered herself to forget the station in which God had placed her. She received the compliments on her accession with majesty; and she supported her dignity even in her dying moments. The subsequent part of this history will shew, that this character is drawn from her actions; and that I have been no more inclined to flatter her, than to asperse some of her royal predecessors; though, if authorities could support scandal, I might have cited not a few to countenance both.

But let us see by what steps this great queen and her able ministers extricated their country from the misery in which it was involved; and restored this realm not only to a settled and flourishing condition, but raised her glory higher than in her most happy times she ever stood;

\* Gul. Camden, *Annal.* vol. i. p. 27. Strype's *Annals*, vol. i. p. 2, 3, and the speech of Lord-keeper Bacon, in Sir Simonds d'Ewes's *Journal*, p. 11.

laying the foundation of that extensive power which she has since enjoyed; and which she may always enjoy, if there be not wanting honest men at the helm, or if the spirit of the nation co-operate constantly with that of her rulers.

The first act of the queen's government was asserting her independency. She made an order in council, in the preamble of which it was recited, that the distresses of the kingdom were chiefly owing to the influence of foreign counsels in the late reign; and, therefore, the queen thought fit to declare, that she was a free princess, and meant so to act, without any further applications to Spain, than the concerns of her people absolutely required. \* On the 21st of November, when she had worn the crown but three days, she sent orders to Vice-Admiral Malyn, to draw together as many ships as he could for the defence of the narrow seas, and for preventing likewise all persons from entering into, or passing out of the kingdom, without licence; which he performed so strictly, that in a short time the council were forced to relax their orders, and to signify to the warden of the cinque ports, that the queen meant not to imprison her subjects, but that persons might pass and repass about their lawful concerns. †

A.D.  
1558.

With like diligence, provision was made for the security of Dover, Portsmouth, and the Isle of Wight; ‡ so that by the end of the year, the kingdom was out of all danger from any sudden insult, and the queen at leisure to consider how she might further strengthen it, so as to render all the projects of her enemies abortive. Her entrance on government had the same appearance of wisdom, as if she had been years upon the throne; and the hopes raised by

\* Cotton library, Titus, cap. 10. See the queen's instructions to Guido Cavalcanti, dated the 29th of January, 1558-9, in Dr. Forbes's Collection of State Papers, vol. i. p. 34.

† Strype's Annals, vol. i. p. 6.

‡ See Sir William Cecil (Lord Burleigh's) Diary, in the Cotton library, Titus, cap. 10.

her first actions, were supported and even exceeded by the steadiness of her conduct; so that, by a firm and uniform behaviour, she secured the reverence and affection of her subjects at home, and established a character abroad that prevented any immediate enterprizes upon her dominions, in that feeble and fluctuating condition in which she found them.

A.D.  
1559.

In the month of April, 1559, peace was concluded with France, and therein, amongst other things, it was provided, that, after the term of eight years, the French should render to the queen the town of Calais, or pay her fifty thousand crowns by way of penalty. In this treaty, the dauphin, and the queen of Scots were also included; but this was very indifferently performed; for the French immediately began to send over great forces into Scotland, where they intended first to root out the Protestant religion, and then to have made themselves entirely masters of the kingdom. \* This proceeding so alarmed the nobility of Scotland, that many of them had immediate recourse to arms; and, not finding their own strength sufficient, applied themselves for protection to Queen Elizabeth, who, foreseeing the consequence of suffering the French to fix themselves, and establish an interest in Scotland, determined to send thither the assistance that was desired, both by land and sea. †

\* *Corps Diplomatique du droit des gens*, tom. v. p. i. p. 28. Buchanan, lib. xvi. xvii. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 1184. Camden, vol. i. p. 42. Mezeray, tom. v. p. 15, 16; and the rest of the French historians, who all own this project of their King Francis II. But the best account of the treaty of Chateau Cambresis, is in Dr. Forbes's *Collection of State Papers*, vol. i. to which we refer the reader.

† See the queen's letter to the duke of Norfolk, dated December 30, 1559, in Haynes's *Collection of State Papers*, p. 217, 218; the articles agreed to on the part of that princess, by the duke of Norfolk with Lord James Stuart, and others of the nobility, when she condescended to take the realm of Scotland and the confederate lords under her protection, dated February 27, 1559; Lord Grey's instructions on his entering that kingdom, and other papers relating to this im-



In the mean time, a strict but legal inquiry was made into the loss of Calais, in the late reign. The Lord Wentworth, on whom many aspersions had fallen, was fairly tried, and honourably acquitted by his peers; but the captains Chamberlain and Harleston were condemned, though the queen thought fit to pardon them.\* As for Lord Grey, his gallant defence of the fortress, wherein he was governor, exempted him from any prosecution; instead of which he was appointed commander-in-chief of the forces that were to march into Scotland. The fleet was commanded by Admiral Winter, which sailed up the Frith of Forth, blocked up Leith by sea, while the army of the Scots lords, and the English auxiliaries, under Lord Grey, besieged it by land; and in a very short time, forced the French garrison to capitulate, whereby all the designs of France on that side were entirely broken, † and the queen left to look to her own concerns; which she did with such diligence, that in two years religion was restored; the principal grievances felt under the former government, redressed; base money taken away; the forts throughout the kingdom repaired; and trade brought into a flourishing condition.

But, above all, the navy was the queen's peculiar care; she directed a most exact survey of it to be made; a very strict inquiry into the causes of its decay; and the surest means by which it might be recovered. She issued orders for preserving timber fit for building; directed many pieces of brass cannon to be cast; and encouraged the making gun-powder here at home, which had been hitherto brought from abroad, at a vast expense. For the security

A.D.  
1561.

portant business. Keith's History of the Church and State of Scotland, vol. i. p. 113. Sir James Melvil's Memoirs, p. 28, 29. Stowe, p. 641. Speed, p. 834.

\* Stowe, p. 639. Camden, vol. i. p. 43. Strype, vol. i. p. 26.

† Buchanan, lib. xvii. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 1187. Thuan. Hist. lib. xxiv. sec. iv. Lord Burleigh's Diary, in Murdin's Collection, p. 750.

of her fleet, which generally lay in the river Medway, she built a strong fortress called Upnore castle. The wages of the seamen she raised; enlarged the number, and augmented the salaries of her naval officers; drew over foreigners, skilled in the arts relating to navigation, to instruct her people; and, by the pains she took in these affairs, excited a spirit of emulation among her subjects, who began every where to exert themselves in like manner, by repairing of ports, and building vessels of all sizes, especially large and stout ships, fit for war as well as commerce. From all which, as Mr. Camden tells us, the queen justly acquired the glorious title of the RESTORER OF NAVAL POWER, and SOVEREIGN OF THE NORTHERN SEAS; insomuch, that foreign nations were struck with awe at the queen's proceedings, and were now willing respectfully to court a power, which had been so lately the object of their contempt.\*

A.D.  
1562.

The civil dissensions in the kingdom of France, which gave the court a pretence for oppressing those of the reformed religion, whom they called Huguenots, produced in the year 1562, very destructive consequences to their neighbours. A general spirit of rapine and confusion having spread itself through the inhabitants of that extensive kingdom, and the greatest crimes meeting with impunity, such as dwelt on the sea coast, and who were mostly Huguenots, fitted out ships to annoy their enemies; upon which the court-party did the like; so that, at last piracies were frequent, and the English trade suffered thereby so intolerably, that, at length, the queen resolved to interpose.\* The French protestants had long sued to her for

\* Camdeni Annales, vol. i. p. 86, where he somewhat exceeds the truth when he says the queen, with the assistance of her subjects, might fit out a fleet that would require twenty thousand seamen, since, in 1582, all the sea-faring people in her realm did not exceed fourteen thousand, two hundred, and ninety-five. Sir William Monson's Tracts, p. 279. Strype's Annals, vol. i. p. 375.

† See her manifesto, still extant in Stowe's Annals.

protection, and offered to put the port of Havre de Grace; then called Newhaven, into her hands; which she at length accepted, and sent over Ambrose Dudley, earl of Warwick, in the month of September, 1562, with a considerable fleet, and a good body of troops on board, who entered into the town, and kept possession of it till the 29th of July following.\*

The taking into our hands this place proved of infinite detriment to the French; for, the court having declared all English ships good prize, so long as the queen held that port, she found herself obliged to issue a like proclamation; whereupon, such numbers of privateers were fitted out from English ports, and from Newhaven, that the spoil they made is almost incredible.† For example, we are told, that one Francis Clarke equipped, at his own expense, three frigates; and, after a cruize of six weeks, brought into Newhaven no less than eighteen prizes, which were valued at upwards of fifty thousand pounds.‡ The main motive to this conduct was, to revive a naval enterprising spirit amongst her subjects, the promoting ship-building, and preventing her neighbours from gaining an ascendancy at sea, as they would certainly have done, if, in order to redress the nation's wrongs, she had had recourse to negotiation. A maritime power injured, instead of expostulating, immediately makes reprisals, and thereby extorts apologies from the aggressors made sensible of their past mistake.

But, by degrees, this spirit of privateering grew to such an height, that the queen, for her own safety, and the

\* F. Leonard, tom. ii. p. 571. Davila, lib. iii. Thuan. lib. xxiii. sec. 4. Strype's Annals, vol. i. p. 367. Forbes's State Papers, vol. ii. Lord Burleigh's Diary, in Murdin's Collection, p. 753, 754.

† Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 1196. Camden, vol. i. p. 94. Speed, p. 835.

‡ Stowe's Annals, p. 653.



honour of the nation, was obliged to restrain it; \* those who had fitted out ships of force, from a disposition natural enough to privateers, plundering indiscriminately, all vessels that came in their way. In the month of July, also in this year, the queen directed a small squadron of ships to be fitted out, viz. the Lyon, the Hoope, the Hart, Swallow, and a bark, named the Hare, of which, Sir William Woodhous, knight, was appointed vice-admiral, under a pretence of guarding the narrow seas, which were then said to be greatly infested with pirates; but, in reality, as appears from his instructions, to lend what assistance he possibly could to the malecontents in France; which none of our historians, at least that we can discover, have remarked. Some of these vessels were, in the November following, such as the Hart, Swallow, Hare, &c. judged requisite, by the duke of Norfolk, the earl of Pembroke, and the Lord Admiral Clinton, to remain at Portsmouth, not only for the security of the coast, and keeping the channel clear during the winter; but, for the conveniency of transporting troops, money, provisions, and ammunition, as also for the conveying to, and receiving letters from, Newhaven. † And, as we are told, the Hare having on board Sir John Portinarie, a famous engineer, in her passage to the last-mentioned place, was attacked by a French ship of ninety tons and upwards, which, they notwithstanding took, and which proved to be laden with wine, and carried her in with them, on the twenty-fifth of the same month. ‡

\* She was under the necessity of sending an extraordinary ambassador to his Catholic majesty, to excuse these piracies, and to restrain them for the future, by a proclamation. *Camdén Annales Eliz.* vol. i. p. 98.

† Haynes's State Papers, p. 504. Forbes's State Papers, vol. ii. p. 171.

‡ Stowe's Annals, p. 652. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 1197. Strype's Annals, vol. i. p. 367.

Philip II. of Spain, from the time of Queen Elizabeth's accession to the throne, had dealt with her very deceitfully; sometimes pretending to be her firm friend, at others, seeking every occasion to injure and molest her subjects; which he had more frequent opportunities of doing, from the great commerce they carried on in Flanders.\* What served also to heighten the people's hatred against the Spaniards, was, the cruelty and treachery with which they had treated Captain Hawkins and his crew in the West Indies; an insult the queen could but very ill bear, though, as things were circumstanced, she could not well resent it, all trade to the Spanish West Indies being in some respect, repugnant to treaties.† Yet, while these things disturbed the nation's tranquillity, in a certain degree, France and the Low Countries were much more grievously torn through religious disputes, which, by degrees, kindled a civil war.‡ The Protestants being the weakest, and withal, the most injured party, the queen was inclined to favour them, and to afford them some assistance, though she was not willing absolutely to break either with the most Christian or with the Catholic king.

A.D.  
1567.

The latter had sent the duke of Alva to govern the Netherlands, who was a fierce and a cruel man, but withal, a person of great courage, an able captain, and a consummate statesman. This duke, as he was a bitter enemy to the Protestants, so he had conceived, probably on that account, as keen a hatred against Queen Elizabeth, which he soon found occasion to discover. Towards the end of the year 1568, some merchants of Genoa, intending to have set up a bank in the Low Countries, procured a

A.D.  
1568.

\* Camden, Burnet, Rapin.

† Purchas's Pilgrims, vol. iv. p. 1177.

‡ Memoires de Castelnau, liv. i. Commentaires de Montluc, tom. ii. liv. v. Dupleix, tom. iii. Le Clerc's Histoire des Provinces Unies. tom. i. liv. i.



licence from the king of Spain, to transport thither, a very large sum in ready money, on board certain ships belonging to the province of Biscay. These ships were chased in their passage by some French privateers, and were forced to take shelter in the ports of Plymouth, Falmouth, and Southampton; where, by the queen's order, their vessels were protected, and those on board them well treated, till, at the request of the Spanish ambassador, the money was brought ashore.

A. D.  
1573.

Cardinal de Chatillon, who was at the same time here as a refugee, informed the queen that this money did not belong, as was pretended, to the king of Spain, but to private merchants; and that in case she gave leave for transporting it into the Netherlands, the duke of Alva would certainly seize it, in order to carry on some of his dark designs. The queen, by the advice of her very wise and able minister Cecil, resolved to defeat this scheme, by taking the money to her own use, promising to re-pay it immediately, if it should appear to be the king of Spain's treasure, and to compensate the Genoese merchants for the time she kept it, with just interest, if it was theirs.\* This was highly resented by King Philip and the duke of Alva; the former, by his ambassador, endeavoured to get secretary Cecil assassinated, tampering also with the duke of Norfolk, and the earl of Ormond, to raise disturbances, both in England and Ireland; in which, however, he failed: but the duke of Alva, according to the violence of his temper, seized all the English effects in Flanders, and permitted his frigates and privateers to cruize on the English coast.† The queen made reprisals in her turn, and allowing her subjects to fit out ships, they pursued this trade of privateering with so much eagerness and

\* Stowe, p. 662. Camden, vol. i. p. 175. Bentivoglio, part i. lib. v. Thuan. lib. xlv. sec. xi. M. Turquet, tom. ii. p. 1432.

† Lord Burleigh's Diary in Murdin's Collection, p. 766, 707. Bentivoglio, p. 1. lib. v.



success, that at length they began not to distinguish friends from foes; \* upon which, her majesty was compelled to issue a proclamation, forbidding the purchase of any ship, or effects taken by these privateers. Soon after which, these disputes were compromised, and peace restored, though it did not last long, both the Spaniards and the English being generally inclined to break it. †

In the midst of all these difficulties, the queen took every opportunity to encourage her people in prosecuting new schemes of trade abroad; or pursuing what might be an improvement of their lands at home. With this view, she sometimes contributed ships, sometimes gave money, at others; entered into partnership; in short, she neglected nothing which might shew her maternal tenderness for all her subjects. ‡ She likewise afforded, in a very delicate conjuncture, a shining proof of her generosity, in directing a strong squadron of her ships to escort Anne of Austria, in her voyage from Flanders into Spain, notwithstanding the bad terms whereon she then stood with King Philip. § Her treaties with France, which seemed to exclude all fear of danger, did not hinder her from fortifying Portsmouth thoroughly, in which it quickly appeared, that her precaution was far from being the effects of a needless timidity; for the French soon fitted out a considerable fleet, pretending to take some offence at the supplies she had sent the Huguenots, as if it was contrary to the treaties between them; but when it appeared, that her majesty had provided effectually, against any attempts they were able to make, they were glad to desist, and even to make greater professions of friendship than before; which disposed the queen to send over the earl of

\* Murrin's State Papers, p. 257, 274.

† Meteren, Histoire des Pays Bas. liv. iii. F. Strada, lib. vii. Grimstone's History of the Netherlands, b. ix. p. 460.

‡ Camdeni Annales, vol. ii. p. 220, 221. Ferreras Hist. de Espana, p. 15. sec. xvi. Sir Richard Hawkins's Observations, p. 22.

Worcester to the christening of the French king's daughter.

A.D.  
1576.

This proved unlucky for the Huguenots, who having fitted out abundance of rovers from Rochelle, they stopt and visited vessels of all nations approaching the French coast; amongst the rest, they seized a bark with part of the earl of Worcester's baggage, which they took, and killed three or four people.\* This being reported to the queen, she issued her orders by the lord high admiral, to scour the narrow seas; who appointed William Holstock, Esq. comptroller of the navy, with three light frigates; and three hundred and sixty men on board, to perform this service; which he did with such industry and effect, that between the Northforeland and Falmouth, he took twenty privateers of several nations, with nine hundred men on board them, and sent them as they were taken, to Sandwich, Dover, Newport, and Portsmouth. He likewise re-took, and set at liberty, fifteen merchant-men, by them made prize; and all this, within so short a time as six weeks, returning into Portsmouth in the middle of the month of March. Among these prisoners, were three persons who were known and proved to be of the crew of that vessel which had plundered the earl of Worcester's baggage, and therefore they were immediately tried and hanged as pirates; but the rest were ransomed.† A few years after, the nation found itself under the like difficulties, though from another quarter.

The provinces of Zealand and Holland had now delivered themselves from the Spanish bondage, and were growing considerable in the world by their maritime power. This, however, had a bad effect on the disposition of the common people, who became insufferably

\* Stowe, p. 674. Camden, vol. ii. p. 270, 275. P. Daniel, tom viii. p. 750.

† Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 1257. Strype's Annals, vol. ii. p. 171, 172. Thuan. lib. iv. sec. viii.



insolent to all their neighbours, and particularly to us, who had been their principal benefactors. Their pretence for this was, our corresponding with the inhabitants of Dunkirk, who were their enemies. At first, therefore, they took only such ships as were bound to that port; but by degrees they went farther, and committed such notorious piracies, that the queen was again forced to send the comptroller of the navy, Mr. Holstock, with a small squadron to sea, who quickly drove the Dutch frigates into their harbours, and sent two hundred of their seamen to prison. The queen, not satisfied with this punishment, sent Sir William Winter, and Robert Beale, Esq. to demand restitution of the goods taken from her subjects, which, however, they did not obtain; and, on this account, the Dutch factors here suffered severely. \*

But as for such refugees of all nations, as fled hither for the sake of religion, she not only received them kindly, but granted them various privileges, in order to induce them to stay, and fix here the manufactures in which they had laboured in their own countries. This policy succeeded so well, that Colchester, Norwich, Yarmouth, Canterbury, and many other places were filled with those industrious foreigners; who taught us to weave variety of silk and worsted stuffs, while many also from Germany were sent into the north, where they employed themselves in mining, making salt-petre, forging all sorts of tools made of iron, which were arts absolutely unknown to us before their arrival; and which, for ages to come, might have continued so, but for the wisdom and public spirit of the queen and her ministers. The French and Spaniards, who were sensible of the advantages we gained, and the losses they suffered, by the

\* Stowe, p. 681. Holingshed, vol. ii. p. 1262. Camdeni annales, vol. ii. p. 303, 304. Grimstone's history of the Netherlands, b. x. p. 192.



retiring of their artificers into this island, had recourse to severe laws in order to prevent it, which were so far from answering the end, that they drove people over faster than they came before; so that we may truly say, our extensive trade was a blessing bestowed by God, for the countenance we afforded in those their dismal days of distress, to the afflicted Protestants in France and Flanders.\*

The growth of this kingdom's power and commerce being so conspicuous, left King Philip of Spain, the most penetrating prince of his time, no room to doubt, that his projects for assuming the supreme dominion of Europe, or at least the absolute direction of it, would be rendered entirely abortive, unless some method could be contrived for ruining England at once. While he meditated this design, and took various steps towards it, he found himself daily more and more irritated, by the pains the queen took to frustrate his schemes, and to diminish the power which had been derived to him from his father the Emperor Charles V. † We have shewn how, during the administration of the duke of Alva in the Netherlands, differences had arisen between the court of England and the king of Spain's subjects there; and how, after much warmth shewn on both sides, these matters were, in some measure, accommodated in 1573. That accommodation was so far from being the effect of any cordial disposition in either of these powers, that it was a mere act of policy on both sides; neither having as yet brought those things so far to bear, as were requisite for accomplishing their respective designs. ‡

\* Mezeray, Strada, Camden, Strype, Stowe, Holingshed, Speed, and, in general, all the writers of those times, particularly such as have made the progress of the reformation the subject of their writings; though, after all, the point has never been so thoroughly and particularly discussed as it deserves.

† Camden, Strype, Rapin.

‡ Hugo Grotius in hist. Belg.

The Catholic king had three points in view, not for distressing only, but for destroying Queen Elizabeth, and utterly subverting the English state.\* The first of these was, uniting against her, under colour of religion, most of the princes and states abroad, which by the assistance of the pope, joined to his own extensive influence, he in a good measure effected; carrying (as we shall hereafter see) his distaste so far, as to practice even with the little republics in Germany, to disturb our commerce, and to affront our government. His second point was, perplexing the queen at home, by countenancing the popish faction; and by maintaining, at a vast expense, such fugitives as fled from hence; † in which he was likewise for some time successful; the peace of the kingdom being broken, its strength enervated, the government, nay, the queen's life, often in danger by those restless spirits, who were as assiduous in the blackest cause, as if their industry had been prompted by the most honourable motives. The last thing King Philip had at heart, was the providing, as secretly as might be, such a force, as, with the assistance of his other schemes, might enable him to make himself entirely master of England at once; to which end he with great diligence sought to increase his maritime power; and, upon the pretence of his wars in the Netherlands, to keep under the command of the prince of Parma, one of the ablest generals that, or perhaps any age, ever produced, such an army in constant readiness there, as might be sufficient to atchieve this conquest, when he should have a fleet strong enough to protect them in their passage. In the

\* The reader may find a more copious detail of the political motives to the invasion in 1588 in Strype's annals, vol. iii. p. 512.

† There are in the collections published by Strype, Haynes, and Murdin, lists of the names of persons of quality and others, to whom the king of Spain assigned pensions on that account. See p. 242, 244, in the latter. Dr. Birch's memoirs of the reign of Elizabeth, vol. i. p. 203.



prosecution of these deep-laid projects, Philip met with many favourable circumstances, which might, and very probably did, strongly flatter his hopes, particularly the death of the queen of Scots, that deeply stained the character of Elizabeth in foreign courts, and his own acquisition of the kingdom of Portugal, by which he gained a vast accession of naval strength.\*

Queen Elizabeth and her ministers were too penetrating, and had too quick as well as certain intelligence, to be at all in the dark as to the purpose of the king of Spain; and their prudence was such, that by every method possible, they worked to disappoint him, without disclosing their apprehensions to the world. With this intent, they laboured to convince foreign states that King Philip was a common enemy, and that he aimed alike at subduing all his neighbours; which being a thing strictly true, and, at the same time, nearly concerning themselves, had undoubtedly a proper weight.† In the next place, pains were taken to cultivate a closer correspondence with his discontented subjects in the Netherlands, and to furnish them with money, and secretly with other aids; whereby they were enabled to give some check to his power both by sea and land. Our own privateers were allowed to pass into the West-Indies, where they carried on an illicit trade, not more to their own profit than the public benefit; for by this means they gained a perfect acquaintance with the ports, rivers, and fortresses in the West Indies, with the nature of the commerce transacted there, the method of sharing it by fair means, or of destroying it by force.‡ Thus, notwithstanding their immense wealth and extensive domi-

\* Camden, Stowe, Speed, Strye, Bentivoglio, p. xi. lib. 4. Grimstone's Hist. of the Netherlands, lib. xiii. M. Faria y Sousa, lib. v. cap. 3.

† Strye's annals, vol. iii. p. 424. as also such letters in the Cabala as relate to the years 1587 and 1588.

‡ Stowe, Hollingshed, Speed, Hakluyt, Purchas.



nions, the English were, in some measure, a match for the Spaniards in all places, and at all points.

But still the great secret, by which the queen defeated all King Philip's political inventions, seems to have been scarcely known to most of the writers who have undertaken to acquaint us with the transactions of her reign. It was in reality this: she discovered the principal instruments he intended to make use of for her destruction; but, instead of exposing or destroying them, she contrived so to manage them by her creatures, as to make them actually fulfil her purposes, though they remained all the time tools and pensioners to Spain. Thus, she caused the ambassador Mendoza, whose arts might have been otherwise dangerous, had he remained here, to be so wrought on as to forfeit his character, by suborning persons to murder Secretary Cecil, and to spread libels in the night through the streets, reflecting on herself.\* The Spanish emissaries, employed to seduce her people, in order to form a strong party on any invasion, she took care to engage in plots against her person; whereby they became speedily obnoxious to a legal conviction, and so were brought to an ignominious death, equally terrible and shameful to the popish faction. This appears clearly from the case of Parry, and other conspirators, with whom her secretaries played till their treasons were ripe, and then seized and convicted them; and thus, at last, after all the pains the king had taken, she escaped an invasion, by procuring such notions to be infused into the prince of Parma's head,

\* Camden, Stowe, Speed: and more particularly, in the *Life of Lord Burleigh*, written by one of his servants, and published by the Rev. Mr. Peek, in the first volume of his *Desiderata Curiosa*. Bishop Carleton's *Remembrances*, chap. vii. p. 73. Strype's *Annals*, vol. iii. book i. chap. 14. The queen's declaration, upon sending him away, is in the Appendix, No. xxiv. p. 43. Mendoza is said to have fallen into extreme disgrace, after his return to Spain, living retired like an hermit, abandoned by all the world. Dr. Birch's *Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, vol. ii. p. 123.

as inclined him rather to seek his own, than his master's advantage; by which she reaped a double benefit, that prince being soon after poisoned; and so his particular schemes were likewise cut short.\* But it is time to return to our more immediate subject; the pains and precautions taken by the queen and her ministers to put the nation into such a state of defence, both by land and sea, as might give the people courage, and strike the enemy with a strong sense of danger; the rather, because these facts seem hitherto not to have been extremely well understood.

The queen's apprehensions of the Spaniard's designs, were certainly conceived much earlier than most of our historians imagine, as appears from the state papers in her reign; among which, from the year 1574, we meet with nothing more frequent than instructions for viewing fortifications; examining the condition of our forts; enquiring into the strength and posture of our militia; taking frequent musters; and, in fine, forming from all these enquiries, a brief state of the military and naval power of her dominions, of which I have seen many in ancient MSS.; amongst them one in 1575, whereby it appears, that the able men throughout England, were computed to be one hundred and eighty-two thousand nine hundred and twenty-nine, by which were intended serviceable men; and of such as were armed, and in a continual capacity of acting, there were sixty-two thousand four hundred and sixty-two; and of light horse, two thousand five hundred and sixty-six. I have likewise an account of the royal navy, in 1548, by which it appears, that it consisted of no more than twenty-four ships, of all sizes. † The largest was called the Triumph, of the burden of

\* Carleton's Remembrances, chap. viii. p. 90. Stowe's Annals, p. 746. Holingshed. Speed. Grimstone's History of the Netherlands, lib. xiii. p. 1020, 1061.

† E. Codice Antiq. MS. penes Sam. Knight, S. T. P.



a thousand tons; the smallest was the *George*, which was under sixty tons. At the same time, all the ships throughout England; of an hundred tons and upwards, were but one hundred and thirty-five; and all under an hundred, and upwards of forty tons, were six hundred and fifty-six.

It is, therefore, singularly strange to find a late writer, who ought certainly to be as well acquainted with the state of the navy as any man, give us the following list,\* under so amazing a title as,

WHAT OUR NAVY WAS IN 1573.

	Guns.	No.	
Of	100	1	} 59 of the line of battle, as they might be reckoned in those days.
From	80 to 60	9	
From	58 to 40	49	
From	38 to 20	58	
From	18 to 6	29	
		146	

Though nothing is easier than to discern at first sight, that this account is absurd and improbable, yet another writer has copied it implicitly; and, no doubt, by degrees, it would gain credit, though I dare say there is an error of an hundred years, at least, in the title of this state of the navy. That it is absolutely false, may appear from hence; that, in an estimate in the office of ordnance, the guns on board the queen's ships, in 1578, are computed to be five hundred and four; † whereas, according to the foregoing state, they must have been five years before, as we see, no less than five thousand ninety-nine, which, if we compare with the number of cannon in the Spanish armada, being but two thousand six hundred and thirty, as appears by a list printed by authority of the Spanish court, we shall

\* Mr. Burchet, in his preface to his *Naval History*. See also *Lediard's Naval History*, vol. i. p. 160.

† *E codice antiq. ante citat.*



have a proper idea of the accuracy of this computation; which I have been forced to treat in this manner, to prevent so strange a fact from being longer imposed even on the most inattentive peruser.\*

As I find authority has so great weight with some people, that they will not be brought to believe that the naval strength of England was so inconsiderable at this time, I have thought it necessary to insert *verbatim*, the list before mentioned in this edition, and to add some remarks, which will, I think, put the matter beyond all dispute.

THE NAMES OF HER MAJESTY'S SHIPS, WITH THE NUMBER OF MEN AND FURNITURE REQUISITE FOR THE SETTING FORTH OF THE SAME, A. D. 1578.

I. TRIUMPH.		Bills	-	-	170
1. Men, 780, whereof		Mariners	-	-	200
Mariners	-	450	3. Burden	-	900
Gunners	-	50			
Soldiers	-	200	III. WHITE BEAR.		
2. Furniture			Men, Furniture, and Burden, as		
Harquebus	-	250	the last.		
Bows	-	50	IV. VICTORY.		
Arrows, sheaves of		100	1. Men, 500, whereof		
Pikes	-	200	Mariners	-	330
Corslets	-	100	Gunners	-	40
Mariners	-	200	Soldiers	-	160
3. Burden	-	1000	2. Furniture		
II. ELIZABETH.			Harquebus	-	200
1. Men, 600, whereof			Bows	-	40
Mariners	-	300	Arrows, sheaves of		80
Gunners	-	50	Corslets	-	80
Soldiers	-	200	Mariners	-	160
2. Furniture			3. Burden	-	803
Harquebus	-	200			
Bows	-	50	V. PRIMROSE.		
Arrows, sheaves of		100	Men, Furniture, and Burden, as		
Pikes	-	230	the last.		

\* Strype's Annals, vol. iii. p. 221 in the Appendix.

VI. MARY ROSE.

1. Men, 350, whereof	
Mariners	200
Gunners	50
Soldiers	120
2. Furniture	
Harquebus	125
Bows	30
Arrows, sheaves of	60
Pikes	100
Bills	120
Corslets	50
Mariners	160
3. Burden	600

VII. HOPE.

Men, Furniture, and Burden, as  
the last.

VIII. BONAVENTURE.

1. Men, 300, whereof	
Mariners	160
Gunners	30
Soldiers	110
2. Furniture	
Harquebus	110
Bows	30
Arrows, sheaves of	60
Pikes	90
Bills	100
Corslets	50
Mariners	100
3. Burden	600

IX. PHILIP AND MARY.

Men, Furniture, and Burden, as  
the last.

X. LYON.

1. Men, 290, whereof	
Mariners	150
Gunners	30

Soldiers	-	110
2. Furniture and Burden as the		
	two last.	

XI. DREADNOUGHT.

1. Men, 250, whereof	
Mariners	140
Gunners	20
Soldiers	30
2. Furniture	
Harquebus	30
Bows	30
Arrows, sheaves of	50
Pikes	50
Bills	60
Corslets	40
Mariners	30
3. Burden	400

XII. SWIFTSURE.

Men, Furniture, and Burden, as  
the last.

XIII. SWALLOW.

1. Men, 200, whereof	
Mariners	120
Gunners	20
Soldiers	60
2. Furniture	
Harquebus	75
Bows	25
Arrows, sheaves of	50
Bills	60
Corslets	30
Mariners	70
3. Burden	350

XIV. ANTELOPE.

Men, Furniture, and Burden, as  
the last.

XV. JENNET.

Men, Furniture, and Burden, as  
the two last.





Mariners	-	30	The sum of all other, as well mer-
Burden	-	60	chant ships as others in all
			places of England, of 100 tons
			and upwards
			- 135
XXIV. GEORGE.			
1. Men, 50, whereof			The sum of all barks and ships of
Mariners	-	40	40 tons and upwards, to 100
Gunners	-	10	tons
Soldiers, none			There are besides, by estima-
2. Furniture			tion, 100 sail of hoyes; also of
Harquebus	-	12	small barks and fishermen an
Bows	-	10	infinite number; so as the num-
Arrows, sheaves of		20	ber, through the realm, can-
Pikes	-	15	not be less than 600, besides
Bills	-	20	London.
Mariners	-	30	

There cannot be fuller evidence expected for the authenticity of this list, than the visible conformity between it and all the lists of the queen's ships of war, published in the relations by authority during that reign, and by Sir William Monson, in his naval memoirs; with one of which, containing the state of the navy at the queen's demise, the reader will find an opportunity of comparing it hereafter. On the other hand, that there could be no such fleet at the time the before mentioned abstract is dated, will still farther appear from the following considerations: That the building and maintaining it was utterly inconsistent with the state of the public revenue at that time; that there is not the least mention of any such force in any of the histories of those times; that all the lists of ships published by authority directly contradict it; so that, unless we can believe the wisest and most active men in that age were totally ignorant of what it most imported them to know, we must conclude, that this abstract certainly belongs to another period, or that it is a downright chimera; but, the former appears to me infinitely more probable than the latter.

A.D.  
1587.

It must give every candid and attentive reader a very high idea of the wisdom and fortitude of Queen Elizabeth and her ministers, when he is told, that, during the whole time Spain was providing so formidable an invasion, they were assiduously employed in cherishing the commerce and naval power of England, without suffering themselves to be at all intimidated, either by the enemy's boasts, or by the intelligence they had of his great strength and vast preparations. \* To distress King Philip in bringing home his treasures from the West Indies, many adventurers were licensed to cruise in those seas, and the queen herself lent some ships for this purpose. † To delay the invasion as much as possible, or, if it had been practicable, to defeat it, the queen sent a stout fleet under Sir Francis Drake, in 1587, to Cadiz, where that admiral performed rather more than could be expected; for, he forced six gallies, which were designed to have guarded the port, to shelter themselves under the cannon of their castles; and then burnt a hundred ships and upwards in the bay, all of which were laden with ammunition and provisions. From thence he sailed to Cape St. Vincent, where he surprised some forts, and entirely destroyed the fishing craft in the neighbourhood.

Arriving at the mouth of the Tayo, and understanding that the Marquis de Santa Cruz lay hard by with a squadron of good ships, he challenged him to come out and fight; but, the marquis, who was one of the best seamen in Spain, adhering closely to his master's orders, chose rather to let Drake burn and destroy every thing on the coast, than hazard an engagement. Sir Francis having done

\* Stowe, Speed, Bohun, Lord Bacon's character of Queen Elizabeth.

† Sir William Monson's Naval Tracts, p. 169, 170. Sir Francis Drake Revived, London, 1643, 4to. p. 2. Prince's Worthies of Devon, p. 239. Hakluyt. Purchas. Camden. Lord Burleigh's Diary of this reign, in Murdin's Collection of State Papers, p. 782, 783.

this, steered for the Azores, where he took a large ship, homeward bound, from the East Indies, which added as much to his profit, as his former glorious exploits had done to his reputation; and so returned home in triumph.\* This expedition delayed the Spaniards for some months; but, in the spring of the next year, this enormous fleet, being almost ready, King Philip gave orders that it should rendezvous at Lisbon, in order to pass from thence to England.

His Catholic majesty presumed so much on the force of this extraordinary fleet, superior certainly to any thing that had been fitted out for ages before, that instead of concealing its strength, he caused a very accurate account of it to be published in Latin, and most of the languages spoken in Europe, except English.† This piece was dated May 20, 1588, and, according to it, the most happy Armada (for so it was styled therein) consisted of one hundred and thirty ships, making in all fifty-seven thousand, eight hundred, and sixty-eight ton; on board of which there were nineteen thousand, two hundred, and ninety-five soldiers; eight thousand, four hundred, and fifty mariners; two thousand and eighty-eight slaves; with two thousand, six hundred, and thirty pieces of cannon. Besides, there was a large fleet of tenders, with a prodigious quantity of arms on board, intended for such as should join them. There were also on board this fleet, one hundred and twenty-four volunteers of quality, and about one hundred and eighty monks of several orders.

A.D.  
1588.

\* Stowe, p. 808. Sir William Monson's Naval Tracts, p. 170. M. Turquet, Histoire d'Espagne, liv. xxxiii. p. 113, 114. Lord Burleigh's Journal of the reign of Elizabeth, in Murdin's Collection of State Papers, p. 785.

† The title in Spanish runs thus: "La felicissima Armada que el Rey Felipe nuestro senior mando Junlaren el puerto de la Ciedad de Lisboa en el Reyno de Portugal: en anno de mille quinientos y oçenta y ocha. Hecha per Pedro de Pas Salas."



The command of the whole was originally designed to have been vested in the above mentioned marquis de Santa Cruz, a nobleman of known valour and great experience, of which he had given high proofs in the famous battle of Lepanto; but he dying, the duke of Medina Sidonia, Don Alphonso de Gusman, was appointed in his stead, rather on account of his superior quality than his distinguished merit; under whom served Don Martinez de Ricalde, an old experienced Biscayneer, who had the direction of all things, and by whose advice the general was entirely led. These great officers repaired to Lisbon in the latter end of the month of May, and, in a few days after, their navy was in a condition to sail.\* But it is now time to return to the dispositions made in England for warding off so dangerous a blow.

In the first place, the queen took care to give proper information to all foreign states, of the nature and intent of this project of the king of Spain; pointing out to them, not her own, but their danger, in case that monarch should prevail; which method being as prudently carried into practice, as it was wisely contrived, the king of Denmark, at the request of her ambassador, laid an embargo on a very strong squadron of ships, hired for the use of King Philip, in his dominions. † The Hanse towns, determined enemies at that time to England, retarded, however, the ships they were to have sent to Spain; which, though a very seasonable act of prudence then, proved fatal to them afterwards. King James VI. of Scotland, buried all his resentments for his mother's death, and steadily adhered to his own, by following the queen's interests. The French were too wise to afford the Spaniards any help; and the Dutch fitted out a considerable navy,

\* Stowe, p. 745. Camden, vol. ii. p. 571. Speed, p. 858. Ferrara's *Historia de Espana*, p. 15. sec. xvi. M. Faria y Sousa, lib. v. cap. vii. Dupleix, tom. iv. p. 173. Bentivoglio, p. 2. lib. iv.

† Camden, vol. ii. p. 586. Strype's *Annals*, vol. iii. 524. Stowe.

for the service of the queen, under the command of Count Justin of Nassau. \*

The English fleet was commanded by Charles Lord Howard, of Effingham, then high-admiral, who had under him for his vice-admiral, Sir Francis Drake; for his rear-admiral, Sir John Hawkins, and abundance of experienced officers, who had signalized their courage and conduct; their orders were to lie on the west coast, that they might be ready to receive the enemy. Lord Henry Seymour, in conjunction with Count Nassau, cruized on the coast of Flanders, the better to prevent the prince of Parma from making any descent, as it was expected he would attempt to do, with the army under his command.

A.D.  
1558.

In regard to a land force, the queen had three armies; the first consisted of twenty thousand men, cantoned along the south coast; another of two and twenty thousand foot, and a thousand horse, which was encamped near Tilbury, under the command of the earl of Leicester; the third, which was made up of thirty-four thousand foot, and two thousand horse, all chosen men, was for the guard of the queen's person, their commander being the Lord Hunsdon, a brave, active, and resolute nobleman, the queen's near relation. †

The Spanish fleet sailed from the river of Lisbon, on the 1st of June, N. S. with as great pomp, and as sanguine hopes, as any fleet ever did. The king's instructions to the duke of Medina Sidona were, to repair to the road of

\* Camden, vol. ii. p. 586. See an original letter from that prince to the queen, dated Edinburgh, August the 4th, 1588, full of the warmest expressions of friendship, respect, and esteem, offering to march at the head of all the forces of his kingdom, to her assistance, against the enemies of her country, in Rymer's *Fœdera*, tom. xvi. p. 18. It is also to be met with in Dr. Birch's *Memoirs of that Princess*, vol. i. p. 55. Mezeray, tom. v. p. 320. P. Daniel, tom. ix. p. 297. Le Clerc, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, tom. i. p. 140.

† Stowe, p. 744. Speed, p. 859. Camden, vol. ii. p. 564. Bentivoglio, p. 11. lib. iv.

Calais, in order to be joined there by the prince of Parma; and then to pursue such further orders as he should find in a sealed letter, delivered to the general, with his instructions. It was further recommended to him, to keep as close as possible to the French shore, in order to prevent the English from having any intelligence of his approach; and, in case he met our fleet, he was to avoid fighting, to the utmost of his power, and to endeavour only to defend himself. But, in doubling the North Cape, the fleet was separated by foul weather, which obliged the general to sail to the Groyne, where he re-assembled his ships, and had intelligence that the English fleet, believing their expedition laid aside, was put into Plymouth.

Upon this he held a council of war, to consider whether they should adhere strictly to the king's order, or embrace this favourable opportunity of burning the English fleet in their harbour. After a long debate, wherein many were of a contrary opinion, it was resolved to attempt the English fleet; and this chiefly at the instigation of Don Diego Flores de Valdez, admiral of the Andalusian squadron. The pretence, indeed, was very plausible; and, but for an unforeseen accident, they had certainly carried their point. The first land they fell in with was the Lizard, which they mistook for the Ram's-Head, near Plymouth; and, being towards night, stood off to sea, till the next morning. In this space of time, they were descried by a Scots pirate, one Captain Fleming, who bore away immediately for Plymouth, and gave the lord admiral notice; which proved the utter ruin of their design, as well as the sole cause of the preservation of the English fleet. \*

The season was so far advanced, and the English had so little intelligence of the departure of the Spaniards, that

\* Stowe, p. 747. Sir William Monson's Naval Tracts, p. 172. Speed, p. 860.



their fleet was not only returned into port, but several of their ships also were already laid up, and their seamen discharged. The admiral, however, sailed on the first notice; and, though the wind blew hard into Plymouth sound, got out to sea, but not without great difficulty. \* The next day, being the 20th of July, they saw the Spanish navy drawn up in a half-moon, sailing slowly through the channel, its wings being nearly seven miles asunder. The admiral suffered them to pass by quietly, that, having the advantage of the wind, he might the better attack them in the rear; which he performed with equal courage and success; and though Don Martinez de Ricalde did all that it was possible for a brave officer to do, yet they were put into the utmost disorder, and many of them received considerable damage. More had been done, but that a great part of the English fleet lay at too great a distance, so that the admiral was forced to wait for them.

The night following, a Dutch gunner, who had been ill-treated by some Spanish officers, set fire to the ship, on board which was their treasure; nor was it without great difficulty that the flames were extinguished. The greatest part of the money was put on board a galleon, commanded by Don Pedro de Valdez, which soon after sprung her foremast; and, being thus disabled, and the night very dark, fell into the hands of Sir Francis Drake, who sent her captain to Dartmouth, and left the money on board, to be plundered by his men. † The next day was spent by the Spanish general in disposing his fleet, issuing orders to his officers, and despatching an advice-boat to hasten the duke of Parma, by giving him an account of the great loss he had already suffered, and the

\* Camden, vol. ii. p. 571. Phoenix Britannicus, 4to. 1731, p. 346. Strype, vol. iii. Meteren, lib. xv. fol. 302. Grotii Histor. Belg. lib. i. p. 118.

† Stowe's Annals, and Sir William Monson's Naval Tracts. Grimstone's History of the Netherlands, book xiii. p. 1002. Bentivoglio, p. 11. lib. iv.

extreme danger he was in. On the 23d they fought again, with variety of success; which, however, demonstrated to the Spaniards, that the mighty bulk of their ships was a disadvantage to them, their shot flying over the heads of the English, while every bullet of theirs took place.

On the 24th, the English were able to do little, for want of ammunition; but a supply arriving in the evening, the admiral made all necessary dispositions for attacking the Spaniards, in the midst of the night, dividing his fleet into four squadrons; the first, commanded by himself; the second, by Sir Francis Drake; the third, by Admiral Hawkins; and the fourth, by Captain Martin Forbisher; but, a dead calm prevented the execution of this design. On the 25th, one of the Spanish ships was taken; and, on the 26th, the admiral resolved to make no further attempts upon them, till they should enter the straits of Dover, where he knew Lord Henry Seymour, and Sir William Winter, waited for them, with a fresh squadron. He also took this opportunity of knighting Lord Thomas Howard, Lord Sheffield, Roger Townsend, Admiral Hawkins, and Captain Forbisher, for their gallant behaviour throughout the engagement.\*

A.D. 1588. The wind favouring the Spanish fleet, they continued their course up the channel, with the English ships close in their rear. The strength of the Spaniards had not only alarmed, but excited the courage of the whole nation; in-somuch, that every man of quality and fortune was ambitious of distinguishing himself, by appearing upon this occasion against the common enemy. With this public-spirited view, the earls of Oxford, Northumberland, and Cumberland, Sir Thomas Cecil, Sir Robert Cecil, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Thomas Vavasor, and many others, fitted out ships at their own expense, and went most of them in person, to attend the admiral. Men of lower

\* Camden, vol. ii. p. 576. Stowe, p. 744. Speed, p. 861. Reidanus, l. viii. p. 173. Memoirs of the earl of Monmouth, p. 51.



rank, shewed their zeal and loyalty, by sending ammunition and provisions; and so unanimous were all men against these foreigners, that even the papists, whom the Spaniards expected to have found in arms, were glad to wipe away the aspersions which had been thrown upon them, by serving as common soldiers.

When, therefore, the Spanish fleet anchored on the twenty-seventh of July before Calais, the English admiral had with him near a hundred and forty ships, which enabled him to gall the enemy extremely. But perceiving, on the twenty-eighth, that the Spaniards had so disposed their large ships, that it would be a very difficult matter to put them again into disorder; he resolved to practice an expedient long before in contemplation, in case the enemy should have come up the river Thames, which was converting some of their worst vessels into fire-ships. This method he accordingly pursued, filling eight large barks with all sorts of combustible matter, and sending them under the command of the Captains Young and Prowse, about midnight, into the thickest part of the Spanish fleet, where they speedily began to blaze; and, as the admiral had foreseen, obliged the navy to separate, and each ship by steering a separate course to seek its own safety.

The next day a large galeass ran ashore on the sands of Calais, where she was plundered by the English. Desirous, however, of attempting somewhat, the Spaniards again rendezvoused near Graveline, where they waited some time, in hopes the prince of Parma would have come out; but in this they were disappointed, whether through the want of power or of will in that great general, is uncertain. At last, finding themselves hard pressed by the English fleet, which continued to make a terrible fire upon them, they made a bold attempt to have retreated through the Straights of Dover; but the wind coming about, with hard gales at north-west, drove



them on the coast of Zealand, but soon after veering to the south-west, they tacked and got out of danger. The duke de Medina Sidonia took this opportunity of calling a council of war, wherein, after mature deliberation, it was resolved, that there were now no hopes left of succeeding, and therefore the most prudent thing they could do was to drop their design, and to save as many ships as possible.\*

This resolution being once fixed, was immediately carried into execution; and the whole Spanish navy made all the sail they could for their own coast, going north about, which exposed them to a variety of unforeseen dangers. The English admiral very prudently sent Lord Henry Seymour, with a strong squadron, to cruise on the coast of Zealand, to prevent any danger from their joining with the prince of Parma, and afterwards left them to pursue their course. When the Spanish fleet arrived on the Scots coast, and found that care was every where taken they should meet with no supply; they threw their horses and mules overboard, and such of them as had a proper store of water, bore away directly for the bay of Biscay, with the duke of Medina Sidonia, making in all about twenty-five ships. The rest, about forty sail, under the command of the vice-admiral, stood over for the coast of Ireland, intending to have watered at Cape Clear. On the second of September, however, a tempest arose, and drove most of them ashore, so that upwards of thirty ships, and many thousand men, perished on the Irish coast.

Some likewise were forced a second time into the English channel, where they were taken, some by the English, and some by the Rochellers. Several very

\* Camden, Stowe, Monson, Strype, Speed, p. 862. Discourse concerning the Spanish fleet invading England in the year 1588, &c. originally written in Italian, by Petruccio Vbaldino of Florence, London, 1690, quarto, p. 15.

large vessels were lost among the western isles, and upon the coast of Argyleshire. Out of these about five hundred persons were saved, who came into Edinburgh in a manner naked; and, out of mere charity, were clothed by the inhabitants of that city, who also attempted to send them home to Spain: but, as if misfortunes were always to attend them, they were forced in their passage upon the coast of Norfolk, and obliged to put into Yarmouth, where they staid till advice was given to the queen and council, who, considering the miseries they had already felt, and not willing to appear less compassionate than the Scots, suffered them to continue their voyage\*.

Thus, in the short space of a month, this mighty fleet, which had been no less than three years preparing, was destroyed and brought to nothing. Of one hundred and thirty ships there returned but fifty-three or four, and of the people embarked there perished twenty thousand men at least. We may best form an idea of their loss, from the precaution taken by King Philip to hide it, which was, publishing a proclamation to prohibit mourning. As to the courage and constancy he expressed upon this occasion, I should be loth to contradict many great authorities; yet this is certain, that the Lord-treasurer Burleigh received intelligence of another kind, viz. that the king should say after mass, "That he would spend the wealth of Spain, to one of those candlesticks upon the altar, rather than not revenge himself upon the English." † His future conduct agreed so exactly with

\* Stowe's annals, p. 749. Strype's annals, vol. iii. p. 226 in the appendix. Meteren, liv. xv. fol. 305, 306. Bentivoglio, p. xi. lib. iv. Certain advertisements out of Ireland, concerning the losses and distresses which happened to the Spanish navy, London, 1588, quarto. Lord Burleigh's journal of the reign of Elizabeth, in Murdin's collection of state papers, 788.

† Strype's annals, vol. iii. p. 525. Camdeni annal. vol. ii. p. 586. Speed, p. 862.

this threatening, that we may well conclude, if he did not say, he thought so, and was therefore far from being so unmoved at this disaster as is commonly reported. What might in some measure justify his resentment, was the falling out of this mischief through the breach of his orders, which is well remarked by a writer of our own; for, if the king's instructions had been pursued, it is more than probable that Queen Elizabeth's government had run the utmost hazard of being overturned.

The duke of Medina Sidonia escaped punishment through the interest of his wife; but as for Don Diego Flores de Valdez, whose persuasions induced the general to take that rash step; he was arrested as soon as he set foot on shore, and conducted to the castle of St. Andero, after which he was never heard of more. The same writer, from whom we have this particular, remarks also an error in the conduct of the English, viz. that they did not attack the Spanish fleet after it arrived before Graveline; which, however, he assures us, was not through any fault in the admiral, but was occasioned through the negligence of some under-officers, who had the direction of the military stores, and had been too sparing of powder and ammunition; otherwise, he tells us, it was thought the duke de Medina Sidonia, at the persuasion of his confessor, would have yielded both himself and his ships, which, it seems, were in that particular not at all better provided. This would have been a conquest indeed, a conquest equally glorious and important, the loss of which ought to teach posterity not to be too hasty in censuring great officers, or too remiss in punishing little ones. In the present case, this mischance seems to have been covered by the many favours bestowed by Providence, and the offenders to have escaped through that general joy which



their deliverance from so great an evil diffused through the whole nation. \*

It seems to be injurious to the reputation of those brave men, who on this occasion atchieved such great things, to give no account of the force of the English fleet, which, however, I find not in any of our general historians; a deficiency which I shall endeavour to supply, by adding a list collected at that time, and which, for any thing I know, has not hitherto been published. †

A LIST of the ENGLISH FLEET in the year 1588.

Men of war belonging to her majesty .....	17
Other ships hired by her majesty for this service .....	12
Tenders and store-ships .....	6
Furnished by the city of London, being double the number the queen demanded, all well manned, and thoroughly provided with ammunition and provision. ....	16
Tenders and store-ships .....	4
Furnished by the city of Bristol, large and strong ships, and which did excellent service .....	3
A tender .....	1
From Barnstaple, merchant-ships converted into frigates .....	3
From Exeter .....	2
A stout pinnace .....	1
From Plymouth, stout ships every way, equal to the queen's men of war ..	7
A fly boat .....	1
Under the command of Lord Henry Seymour, in the narrow seas, of the queen's ships and vessels in her service .....	16
Ships fitted out at the expense of the nobility, gentry, and commons of England .....	43
By the merchant-adventurers, prime ships, and excellently well furnished .....	10
Sir William Winter's pinnace .....	1
	143

In all 143

\* Sir William Monson's naval tracts, p. 172, 173. Stowe, p. 748. Camden, vol. ii. Metereu, lib. xv. fol. 308. Bentivoglio, p. xi. lib. iv. p. 115—118.

† Communicated to me by the Rev. D. Knipe, canon of Christ church, Oxon.

A.D.  
1589.

THE queen having intelligence that the Spaniards, which was an evident mark of resentment, meditated a second attempt upon her dominions, resolved, like a wise princess, to find them work at home; in order to which, in the spring of the year 1589, she expressed her royal intention of assisting Don Antonio to recover his kingdom of Portugal.\* The expedition was undertaken partly at the queen's charge, and partly at the expense of private persons. Her majesty furnished six men of war, and sixty thousand pounds: Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Norris were joint commanders, who with their friends adventured fifty thousand pounds: the rest was defrayed by London, the Cinque Ports, Ipswich, Harwich, Newcastle, &c. and the whole navy consisted of one hundred and forty-six sail: † to which also the Dutch, as much interested as we, joined a small squadron. ‡

The first exploit this armament performed was landing near Corunna, commonly called the Groyne; which place they attacked, burnt the adjacent country, together with many magazines of naval stores, defeated a great body of Spaniards, and then re-embarked their forces, and sailed, as they had at first designed, for the river of Lisbon. § On their arrival before Peniche, the troops were landed, the place quickly surrendered to Don Antonio, and from thence Sir John Norris with the earl of Essex, and the whole army, marched immediately by land towards Lisbon, where they expected to have met the fleet under the command of Sir Francis Drake; but he, finding it impossible to proceed up the river with safety to her majesty's ships, staid at the castle of Cascais;

\* Stowe, p. 752. Camden, vol. iii. p. 600, 601. M. Faria y Sousa, lib. v. cap. 3.

† Stowe, Speed, p. 863. Strype, vol. iii. p. 538.

‡ Camden, vol. iii. p. 601. Le Clerk, tom. i. liv. iv.

§ Sir William Monson's naval tracts, p. 174. Birch's memoirs of Elizabeth, vol. i. p. 53.

which place he took, and also seized sixty sail of ships belonging to the Hanse-towns, laden with corn and ammunition, which, with about one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, were the principal fruits of this voyage.\* It was indeed intended to have gone to the Canaries; but by this time the soldiers and sailors were so weakened with sickness, that it was thought more expedient to return. In their passage home they landed at Vigo, took and plundered it, and, having made some addition to their booty; reached England; Sir Francis Drake arriving at Plymouth on the 21st of June, and Sir John Norris with the rest of the fleet, on the third of July, after having been about ten weeks abroad. †

This expedition was inexpressibly destructive to the Spaniards, disappointed all their designs, weakened their naval force, and spread a mighty terror of the English arms through their whole dominions. But, as to any advantages which the proprietors reaped, they were but very inconsiderable, and the generals met with a cold reception in England; Sir John Norris charged Sir Francis Drake with breach of his promise; and Sir Francis accused him of expecting from a fleet services that were impracticable. The chief grounds of their miscarriage were in those days, when men could best judge, held to be these: First, they were but indifferently manned and victualled, of which misfortune they were very sensible before they were out of the Channel. Secondly, their landing at the Groyne was contrary to their instructions; gave the men an opportunity of drinking new wines, and

\* See all the before-cited authors, who write copiously of this affair, and yet memoir-writers ascribe this miscarriage to the variance between our generals. See also Sir Francis Drake's letter to the Lord-treasurer Burleigh, dated the 2d of June, 1589, in Strype's annals, vol. iv. p. 3.

† Stowe's annals, p. 757. Speed, Camden. Birch's memoirs, vol. i. p. 60, 61. Ferrara's hist. de Espana, p. xv. sec. 16.



exposed them to a great and unnecessary loss. Thirdly, the disagreement of the generals before Lisbon, defeated the remaining part of their design, and obliged them to think of coming home sooner than they intended, or was necessary; whereas, if, in pursuance of their instructions, they had sailed directly to the coast of Portugal, and landed their forces there; it is more than probable they had effectually placed Don Antonio upon the throne of Portugal; which would have given a deadly stroke to the power of Spain, and must have greatly promoted the interest, and extended the commerce of England.\*

A.D.  
1589.

The disappointments which happened in this voyage, did not discourage either the queen or her subjects from pursuing the war by sea; and endeavouring, as much as possible, to ruin the maritime force of Spain, and augment their own. In order to this, her majesty settled a part of her revenue for the ordinary supply of the navy, amounting to about nine thousand pounds a year; and, by expressing a very high esteem for such young lords and other persons of distinction as had shewn an inclination to the sea-service, she encouraged others to undertake yet greater things. † Amongst these, the earl of Cumberland particularly distinguished himself, by fitting out a stout squadron in the summer of the year 1589; with which, he sailed to the Tercera islands, where he did the Spaniards incredible mischief, and obtained considerable advantages for himself and for his friends. The island of Fayal he reduced; took the city and castle thereon; from whence he carried forty-five pieces of cannon; forced the island of Graciosa to a

\* Sir W. Monson's Naval Tracts, p. 174, 175. Stowe's Annals, p. 757; in which we find that, on their return, the soldiers and sailors thought of making themselves amends for their disappointments by plundering Bartholomew fair.

† Camden. Sir R. Naunton in his fragmenta regalia. Lord Bacon in his character of Queen Elizabeth.

composition, and seized several rich ships; among the rest one, the cargo of which, was valued at upwards of an hundred thousand pounds, which, in his return, however, was lost in Mount's-bay, on the coast of Cornwall.\*

In 1590, Sir John Hawkins and Sir Martin Forbisher were at sea with two squadrons, and by impeding the return of the Spanish Plate-fleets from America, and other services, kept King Philip entirely employed at home, though his thoughts were still busy in contriving another expedition against England. The succeeding year, Lord Thomas Howard, second son to the duke of Norfolk, sailed with a squadron to the islands, in hopes of intercepting the Spanish fleet from the West Indies, which now was forced to return home. In this, he had probably succeeded, if his force had been greater; but having no more than seven of the queen's ships, and about as many fitted out by private adventurers, he very narrowly escaped being totally destroyed by the Spaniards: for King Philip, knowing the dismal consequences that must have followed, in case his Plate-fleet was intercepted, resolved to employ that force which was intended against England for its relief; and, accordingly, sent Don Antonio Bassan, an experienced seaman and an excellent officer, with a fleet of forty-five sail, to attack Lord Thomas Howard, who very narrowly escaped them. His vice-admiral, Sir Richard Grenville, in the *Revenge*, was taken through his own obstinacy; for, when the enemy was in sight, he would not be persuaded, that it was the armada, but insisted that it was the American fleet, and so was surrounded. He sold his life and his ship, which was the only one of the queen's taken in the war, dearly; for a man of war, called the *Ascension*, of Seville, and a double fly-boat, full of men, sunk by his side. The *Revenge* was so battered, that she could not be carried to Spain, but foundered at sea, with

A.D.  
1590.A.D.  
1591.

\* Hakluyt's *Voyages*, vol. ii. p. 2. p. 157. Purchas's *Pilgrims*, vol. iv. p. 1142. Sir William Monson's *Naval Tracts*, p. 176.



two hundred Spaniards on board; and as for Sir Richard Grenville, he died two days after of his wounds. The next day after the fight, the Plate-fleet arrived, which shews the uncertainty of expeditions of this kind; for had it come but one day sooner, or had the armada been one day later, the English had possessed themselves of an immense treasure. The Spaniards, however, gained very little by their dear-bought success; for, in their return home, near one hundred vessels were wrecked, and the greatest part of the wealth on board them was lost, while Lord Thomas Howard, with his little fleet, still kept the sea, and by picking up stragglers, saved a great part of the expenses of his expedition.\*

A.D. 1591.  
to  
1594. In 1591, the earl of Cumberland made another expedition; and in 1592, Sir Martin Forbisher, and Sir John Burroughs infested the Spanish coast, and did much mischief. In 1594, the queen sent a small squadron to sea, under the command of Sir Martin Forbisher, to reduce the port of Brest in Bretagne, which the king of Spain had taken, by the assistance of the leaguers in France, from King Henry IV. A place that, if it had been long kept, must have been very troublesome to that monarch, and would have given the Spaniards great advantages against us. It was strong, as well by situation as by the art and expense employed in fortifying it, and had besides, a numerous garrison of Spanish troops. Sir John Norris, with a small English army, formed the siege by land; Sir Martin Forbisher, with only four men of war, forced an entrance into the harbour, and having thus blocked up the place by sea, landed his sailors, and, in conjunction with Sir John Norris, stormed the fort, which, though gallantly defended, was taken, but with the loss

\* Camden, vol. iii. p. 637, 638. Sir William Monson, p. 178, 179. Carew's Survey of Cornwall, fol. 62. Sir Walter Raleigh's true Report in Hakluyt, vol. ii. p. 169. Linschotten's Voyages, book i. chap. 99. Sir Richard Hawkins's Observations, p. 10.



of abundance of brave men, and amongst them may be reckoned Sir Martin himself, who died of the wounds he received in that service. The same year, Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Hawkins sailed on their last expedition into the West Indies. \*

The Spaniards, who seldom abandon any design they once undertake, were all this time employed in assembling and equipping another fleet for England; and, as an earnest of their intentions, in the year 1595, Don Diego Brochero, with four gallies, arrived in Mount's-bay in Cornwall, and, landing with all his men, burnt three little places, *viz.* Mouse-hole, Newlin, and Penzance, with a neighbouring church, but without killing or taking so much as a single man.† This, however, alarmed the nation, and engaged the queen to undertake an invasion of the Spanish dominions, to prevent any such future visits to her own; in order to which, a stout fleet and a numerous army were provided, under the most experienced officers of those times.

A.D.  
1595.

The true design of this expedition was, to destroy the Spanish fleet in the port of Cadiz, and to make themselves masters of that rich city. The force employed was very great, not less in all than one hundred and fifty sail, of which, one hundred and twenty-six were men of war; but of these, only seventeen were the queen's ships, the rest were hired from traders, and fitted for this voyage. On board this mighty fleet were embarked upwards of seven thousand men.‡ The joint commanders of the expedition were, the earl of Essex and the lord high-admiral (Howard,) assisted by a council of war, composed

A.D.  
1596.

\* Camden, vol. iii. Stowe, p. 809. Hakluyt, vol. iii. Fuller's Worthies in Yorkshire, p. 233. Sir William Monson's Naval Tracts.

† Camden, vol. iii. p. 697. Carew's Survey of Cornwall, fol. 115.

‡ Stowe, p. 771. Speed, p. 868. Sir William Monson's Account of the Wars with Spain, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, p. 28. Vere's Commentaries, p. 24.

of the following honourable persons, *viz.* Lord Thomas Howard, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Vere, Sir George Carew, and Sir Conyers Clifford. There was, besides, a Dutch squadron, under the command of Admiral Van Duvenvoord, consisting of twenty-four ships, well manned and victualled. This navy lay for some time at Plymouth, till all things could be got ready, and then, on the first of June, 1596, sailed for the coast of Spain, with a fair wind, and the good wishes of all their countrymen.\*

In their passage they were divided into five squadrons; and, whereas in former expeditions, great inconveniences had happened by the enemy's having early intelligence: in this they were so happy as to arrive in sight of Cadiz on the twentieth of the same month, before they were either looked for, or so much as apprehended. They found the town indifferently well fortified, and defended by a strong castle. In the port were fifty-nine Spanish ships, amongst them many laden with treasure, and nineteen or twenty gallies. It was resolved the same day, in a council of war, to have landed all their forces at St. Sebastian's; but, when they came to attempt it, that was found impracticable. After this, some time was lost before their coming to another resolution, which was owing to the joint command; for the earl of Essex, who was young and warm, affected to dictate; and, on the other hand, the admiral, who had as much courage, and a great deal more experience, could not brook being treated in such a manner.

At last it was determined to attack the ships in the haven, before any attempt was made upon the town; whereupon a new difficulty arose, which was, who should command this attack; first demanded by the earl of Essex, then given to Sir Walter Raleigh, lastly chal-

\* Camden, vol. iii. p. 720, 721. Sir William Monson's Naval Tracts, p. 184. Hakluyt, vol. i. p. 607. Meteren, liv. xviii. fol. 390. Bentivoglio, p. iii. liv. iii.



lenged and enjoyed by the vice-admiral Lord Thomas Howard. In the execution of it some errors were committed by the English, through the too great heat and emulation of their commanders; but others much more gross and fatal by the Spaniards, who, when they found themselves compelled to fly, did it without any of those precautions whereby they might have provided for their safety; for, instead of running their ships ashore under the town, where they would have been covered by their own artillery, and where at least their men might have gone ashore in safety; they ran them up the bay as far from the enemy as possible, by which means part fell into the hands of the English, and the rest were burnt.\*

In the mean time, the earl of Essex landed his men quietly, the enemy deserting a strong fort, from which they might have done him much mischief; three regiments also were sent to make themselves masters of the causeway, which unites the island to the main. This they performed with very small loss, but afterwards quitted it again, which gave the gallies an opportunity of escaping; another oversight for which no account can be given. The lord admiral, hearing the earl was landed, landed also with the remainder of the forces, doubting much whether his lordship could have kept the place; and, while the two generals were employed in reducing the city, Sir Walter Raleigh was sent to seize the ships in the harbour of Port-real, to prevent which the duke of Medina Sidonia caused them to be set on

\* See the relation at the end of the first volume of Hakluyt's Voyages, said to be written by a person who was in the expedition; as also a better copy of the same relation in Stowe's Annals, p. 771. See likewise Sir William Monson's account and observations on this voyage in his Traacts, p. 184. Ferrera's Hist. de Espana, p. xv. sec. 16. Mayerne. Turquet, Hist. d'Espagne, liv. xxxvi. p. 281.



fire and burnt, whereby twenty millions were buried in the sea. \*

A.D. 1596. The city and its forts they possessed for a fortnight; and the earl of Essex was very desirous of being left there with a garrison, however small; which was, notwithstanding over-ruled by the council of war, and then it was agreed to sail to Faro, in the kingdom of Algarve, where they found the place deserted by its inhabitants, and void of any thing that could be made plunder. To repair this disappointment, the earl of Essex was for sailing to the Azores, and there waiting for the East-India ships; but in this too he was over-ruled, because there was a great complaint of the want of provision and ammunition on board their fleet. In their return, they looked into the ports of the Groyne, St. Andero, and St. Sebastian's, where they expected to find ships, but met with none; and after this nothing remarkable happened till their arrival in England, which was on the eighth of August the same year. They brought with them two galleons, one hundred brass guns, and an immense booty, the desire of keeping which is conceived to have hindered them from performing more. But with respect to the damage done the Spaniards, it is not easy to form any computation. However, this we know, that they burnt eleven men of war, forty ships from the Indies, four large merchant-men, and many magazines of ammunition and provision; so that, notwithstanding the people might murmur here at home, about the miscarriage of this voyage, as from the writings in those times it manifestly appears they did, yet, taking all things

\* Camden, vol. iii. p. 725. Stowe, p. 774. Speed, p. 870. Sir Walter Raleigh's relation of the action at Cadiz, in his genuine remains, published by his grandson, p. 25. Vere's Commentaries, p. 42.

together, it answered very well, and distressed the enemy excessively.\*

In the spring of the year 1597, the king of Spair fitted out a fresh armada from Lisbon, composed not only of his own ships and gallies, but also of all that he could take up and hire in Italy or elsewhere. On board of these he embarked a great body of troops, especially of the Irish, intending to have invaded both England and Ireland; but the winds disappointed him, scattered his fleet, and thirty-six sail were cast away. In the mean time the queen resolved to fit out another fleet under the command of the earl of Essex, with an intent to intercept the Plate fleet near the Azores, after burning such vessels as were in the harbours of the Groyne and Ferrol. This fleet consisted of forty men of war, and seventy other ships, to which the Dutch added ten men of war, under Sir John Van Duvenvoord, who was knighted in the former expedition.†

A.D.  
1597

They sailed from Plymouth the ninth of July; but a storm arising, they were forced back thither again, and did not sail the second time till the seventh of August. They used their best endeavours to perform the first part of their instructions, but finding it impracticable, they thought it expedient to steer for the islands, which accordingly they did. In this voyage, Sir Walter

\* Compare Sir William Monson's Remarks, with the apology of the earl of Essex, as also with the account given of this business by Mr. Oldys, in his excellent Life of Sir Walter Raleigh. See likewise the different relations of this expedition by the earl of Essex, Sir Anthony Standen, Sir Christopher Blunt, and the Lord Admiral Howard, in Dr. Birch's Memoirs of Elizabeth, vol. ii. p. 45—55. Letters of thanks were written to the Lord Admiral, on his arrival at Plymouth, and to the earl of Essex, and Mynheer Van Duvenvoord at Portsmouth, by order of the queen, for their great services on this occasion. See Lord Burleigh's Diary, in Murdin's Collection, p. 809.

† Ferrera's Hist. de Espana, p. 15. sec. 16. Meteren, liv. 19. fol. 403. Camden, vol. iii. p. 797, 738.



Raleigh's ship sprung her mast, which however did not hinder him, when he had repaired his loss, from proceeding to the place of rendezvous, which was in the island of Flores. He had scarcely begun to wood and water there, before the earl of Essex sent him orders to follow him to Fayal, which island the general himself intended to attempt. Raleigh obeyed him; but not finding Essex on his arrival, and perceiving that the people were securing their goods, throwing up retrenchments, and making every other preparation necessary for their defence; he, with the advice of his officers, resolved, in case Essex did not arrive in four days, to attempt the reduction of the island, which accordingly he performed; but, though he got reputation by this exploit, yet he lost the general's friendship; so that a coldness thenceforward prevailed, which afterwards increased to open opposition and the most rancorous hatred.\*

After Essex's arrival, they sailed together to Graciosa, which immediately submitted. Here the general intended to have staid; and, if he had done so, undoubtedly it had answered his purpose, and he had taken the whole Spanish fleet; but, being too easily brought to alter his purposes, he took another method, which gave the Spaniards, who arrived next day, an opportunity of proceeding for Tercera, with the loss of no more than three ships, which were taken by Sir William Monson.† The rest of the fleet, consisting of about thirty-seven sail, arrived safely in the port of Angra, which was well defended by several forts; so that, on mature deliberation, it was judged impracticable to attempt any thing there with reasonable hopes of success.

\* See Sir William Monson's Reflections upon this Expedition; the Life of Sir Walter Raleigh before cited; and Stowe's Annals, p. 783.

† Stowe, p. 783. Speed, p. 870. Vere's Commentaries, p. 45—67. See the relation of this voyage by the earl of Essex, Lord Thomas Howard, Lord Montjoy, Sir Walter Raleigh, &c. in Purchas, vol. iv. p. 1935.



The earl of Essex, vexed at this disappointment, resolved to do somewhat of consequence before he returned, and, therefore, landing, surprised the town of Villa Franca, and plundered it; after which he re-embarked his forces, and prepared for his return home.\* In his passage, he had the good luck to take a very rich Spanish ship, which fell into his fleet, mistaking it for their own, and had taken another in the same manner, but for the imprudence of a Dutch captain, who firing hastily upon her, frightened her away. In the mean time, the Spaniards were meditating great designs. The absence of the English fleet gave them an opportunity of sending out their squadrons from the Groyne and Ferrol. With these they intended to have made a descent in Cornwall, and to have possessed themselves of the port of Falmouth; in which, leaving a strong garrison, they thought next of intercepting the English fleet in their return, when they knew it must be weakened by so rough and troublesome an expedition, in which so long a period of time had been spent, and their ships were to return so late in the year.

This design, as it was wisely laid, so it was well conducted; the Spanish admiral joined his squadrons as he intended, and proceeded with them to the islands of Scilly, almost within sight of our shore. There he thought fit to call a council of war, in order to give his officers necessary instructions as to the intended descent. But it so happened, that while his captains were on board, a very high storm arose, which hindered them for a long time from getting back to their respective ships; and afterwards entirely separated their fleet, tossing them to and fro, sometimes towards our coast, sometimes on their own. In this storm, eighteen capital ships were lost; several forced into English ports were taken; and the Spanish admiral's

\* See a copious account of this expedition written by Sir Arthur Gorges, who was employed therein, in the fourth volume of Purchas's Pilgrims, p. 1938.

schemes thereby entirely disconcerted. Nor did our fleet escape the fury of this tempest, but were terribly beaten; however, their ships being light and strong, and manned by able seamen, they, with much difficulty, reached our western coast, in the latter end of the month of October.\*

The compass of this work, I confess, ought to deter me from digressions; but, as the principal intention of it is to give the reader a just and impartial notion of the conduct of our naval affairs, under every reign; so I think myself obliged to make a few short reflections on the facts before set down, in order to shew how little we stood indebted for safety to the management of our own commanders, or to the faults of our enemies; and how much we owe to the care of Divine Providence, which a heathen would have called the fortune of Queen Elizabeth.

This expedition to the Azores might have proved, if well managed by us, the ruin of the Spanish power, and, as it was managed, had very nearly been fatal to our own; so much depends on the conduct of commanders, and so little regard ought there to be had to high titles and great quality, where the safety of a nation is at stake! The earl of Essex was chosen for this command from court motives, such as his birth, interest, and personal accomplishments, though he wanted almost all the qualities requisite for a commander in chief. His courage was hot and fierce, but not resolute or lasting; his wit was quick, but his judgment slow and unsettled; and besides all this, he was deficient in experience. Sir William Monson, who went the voyage with him, and who appears enough inclined to favour him, owns that their miscarriage was entirely owing to his lordship's incapacity; who was unable to form any right resolution himself, or to pursue steadily any measures recommended to him by those who were more knowing

\* Camden, Stowe, Speed, Rapin.



than himself. \* Sir Walter Raleigh fell into disgrace with him; and, as Sir William Monson says, had smarted severely, if the earl had not been afraid of being called to an account for it in England; and all this for doing his duty, for performing the only important service done in the whole expedition. This demonstrates that the earl had no view but to his own particular glory; and, that the public service was to be postponed, whenever it came in competition therewith. By this management, that Plate fleet escaped, which, if it had been taken, would have ruined the Spaniards, and made us.

A.D.  
1598.

His subsequent attempts to repair his own honour, and to make a shew of that resolution which he really had not, delayed the return of the fleet, and gave the Spanish admiral an opportunity of invading England, which an accidental storm prevented. So much is due to truth, and to the interest of the nation; nor would I have this looked on as flowing from any pique to the memory of the earl of Essex, who was certainly a popular nobleman, endowed with many virtues; but where the public suffers, an historian ought to spare no man, however supported by the favour of his prince, or magnified by the folly of the people. †

In 1598, the earl of Cumberland fitted out a squadron of eleven sail at his own expense, with which he first attempted to intercept the Lisbon fleet, in its passage to the East Indies. Being disappointed in that, he sailed to the Canaries, where he made a descent on the island of Lancerota; plundered it, and then proceeded to America, where he promised himself great things. The place he

A.D.  
1598;

\* Sir William Monson's Naval Tracts, p. 191.

† The reader may be convinced of the truth of what is above asserted, by comparing the relation of Sir Arthur Gorges, before cited, with Sir William Monson's account in his Naval Tracts; and what is said on the same subject by Mr. Oldys, in his Life of Sir Walter Raleigh.



fixed upon was the island of Puerto Rico, where he landed and took the capital, with small loss. This city he determined to keep; therefore, he refused a very large ransom offered him by the inhabitants, whom he turned out, and then thought of fortifying the place, with an intent to have cruized from thence upon the Spanish coasts; but he was quickly convinced that the design was impracticable; diseases spreading amongst his soldiers and seamen, to such a degree, that he was obliged to abandon his conquest, and to return home with very great reputation, rather than any considerable reward. \*

A.D. 1599. In 1599, there was a great fleet fitted out by the queen's command; but it seems rather with an intent to watch the Spaniards, than to undertake any other enterprize of importance; since after remaining about three weeks in the Downs, it was again laid up. Yet the equipping this fleet, had a great effect upon Spain, and all the powers of Europe; for it was drawn together in twelve days time, well victualled, and thoroughly manned, which shewed the strength of our maritime power, and how much it was improved since 1588. † The next year, being 1600, Sir Richard Levison was sent to intercept the Plate fleet; which design, though it was well contrived, and wisely executed, yet failed. ‡ In 1601, the same admiral was employed in Ireland, where he did good service, in obliging the Spaniards, who had landed a considerable body of forces, to relinquish their design, and withdraw out of that island. §

A.D. 1602. In 1602, the same admiral, in conjunction with Sir William Monson, was employed in an expedition for inter-

\* Camden, vol. iii. p. 778. Stowe, p. 788. Purchas's Pilgrims, vol. iv. p. 1150—1157.

† Sir William Monson's Naval Tracts, p. 195. Stowe, p. 788. Speed, p. 377. ‡ Sir William Monson's Naval Tracts, p. 196.

§ Stowe, p. 798. Itinerary of Fynes Moryson, b. ii. p. 134. Camden, p. 887.

cepting the galleons, which had infallibly taken effect, if the Dutch had sent their squadron, agreeably to their engagements with the queen. \* Notwithstanding this disappointment, they continued on the coast of Portugal, and at length resolved to attack a galleon, which lay with eleven gallies, in the road of Cerimbra; which, as it was one of the most gallant exploits performed in the whole war, deserves to be circumstantially related. The town of Cerimbra was large, and well built with free-stone, defended by a good citadel, well furnished with artillery. Above the town, on the top of a mountain, stood an abbey, so fortified as to command the place, the citadel, and the road. The galleon was moored close to the shore, so as to defend by its fire, part of the citadel and part of the town; the gallies had so flanked and fortified themselves, that they were able to make a great fire upon the English fleet, without receiving any damage themselves, till such time as our ships were just before the town. Yet, in spite of these and many other advantages, the English admirals resolved to attack them, which they did on the 3d of June. A gale of wind blowing fresh about two in the morning, the admiral weighed, and made the signal for an attack. The vice-admiral did the like, and soon after they fell upon the enemy with great fury; and though the Spaniards defended themselves with much resolution, yet in the end several of the gallies were burnt, the garrison driven from the castle, and the rich galleon, for which all this struggle was made, taken, with about a million of pieces of eight on board. † On the 4th, taking the benefit of a fair wind, they returned to England.

Frederic Spinola, in the *St. Lewis*, sailed from Cerimbra, with the rest of the gallies that had escaped, viz. the *St. John Baptist*, the *Lucera*, the *Padilla*, the *Philip*, and

\* Sir William Monson's *Naval Tracts*, p. 198. Camden, p. 893.

† Sir William Monson's *Naval Tracts*, p. 199—201. Camden, p. 893—895. Fuller's *Worthies in Lincolnshire*, p. 163.



the *St. John*, for the coast of Flanders, and on the 23d of September, entered the British channel. \* Sir Robert Mansel was cruizing there, with two or three men of war, and four Dutch ships, to intercept them. The enemy first discovered two of the Dutch ships, and resolved to engage them. But, before they could put this design in execution, perceiving one of the queen's, they stood off the remainder of the day, hoping, by advantage of the night to gain their intended port. The admiral, and the other ships, with the two Dutch men of war, chased them from eight in the morning till sun-set, when the gallies altered their course for the English shore, and came so near it, that some of the slaves got off their chains, leaped overboard, and swam to land. They then very unhappily, ran into the place where one of her majesty's ships, and the Hollanders, lay at anchor. Sir Robert foreseeing that the gallies must fall in with those ships, in order to make them still keep that course, steered a little out of the way, to get between them and the coast of Flanders. The ship which they thus fell in with, was the *Answer*, Captain Broadgate, who fired upon them very briskly, as the Dutch did likewise. The enemy, however, did not fire so much as a single gun, but made the best use they could of their oars; and, steering at random, one of them in the night, came directly upon the admiral; who, discharging all his guns, brought down her main-mast; when, hearing a most lamentable cry, he offered those who were in her, quarter. The other five gallies came to her assistance, at whom he discharged a broadside, but what execution it did, could not be discovered. One of the Dutch ships falling foul of the galley called the *Lucera*, carried away her rudder, and so disabled her, that she sunk immediately, with all that were on board.

\* *Johnstoni, rerum Britanmicarum Hist. lib. ix. p. 309.* Winwood's *Memorials*, vol. i. p. 401, 412, 413, 435, 436, 438, 439. Sir William Monson's *Naval Tracts*, p. 203.



By a like accident, the Padilla split in pieces; and the Dutch vessel, who was the occasion of the disaster, narrowly escaped sharing the same fate. A third was cast away through carelessness of the sailors, in her endeavouring to reach Calais. Two put into Newport. Spinola, in the Admiral, with a very valuable cargo, got safe, though with difficulty, into Dunkirk; and after refitting the three gallies, carried them to Sluys.\* The year following, he was killed in an engagement with the Dutch, leaving behind him the character of a very brave and gallant commander. †

This was the last great exploit performed by sea, in this reign; for the queen, now far in years, and worn out with the cares and fatigues of government, died on the 24th of March following, in the forty-fifth year of her reign, and in the seventieth of her life; when she had settled the Protestant religion throughout her kingdom; had restored the crown to its ancient reputation; supported her allies with the greatest firmness; and humbled her enemies, so as to compel them to think of soliciting for peace. ‡

A. D.  
1603.

\* Camdeni Annal. Eliz. p. 895. Hugon. Grotii Hist. Belgic. sub Anno 1602. He gives all the honour to his countrymen, but with how little reason will appear hereafter, from a very curious and authentic paper written by Sir Robert Mansel.

† Card. Bentivoglio Guerra de Flandra, p. 531. H. Grotii Annal. & Hist. A. D. 1603. Meteren Nederland. Hist. fol. 500.

‡ Camden. Lord Bacon, in his Character of Queen Elizabeth, and in his Discourse of Peace and War. Stowe. Speed. See also a very curious letter, of Mr. afterwards Sir Ralph Winwood, and Secretary of State to the duke de Tremouille, acquainting him with the demise, and some other extraordinary particulars of this illustrious princess, in Winwood's Memorials, vol. ii. p. 460, 461. Dr. Birch's Memoirs of that Reign, vol. ii. p. 508. Moyser's Memoirs of the Affairs of Scotland, p. 309. See a very particular and accurate relation of the last sickness and death of this great queen, left us by her near relation, Sir Robert Cary, afterwards earl of Monmouth, in his Memoirs, p. 172.

THE NAMES OF SUCH SHIPS AS HER MAJESTY LEFT  
AT HER DEATH.

NAMES OF SHIPS.	Ton- nage.	Men in har- bour.	Men at sea where of	Mari- ners.	Gun- ners.	Sol- diers.
Elizabeth Jonas	900	30	500	340	40	120
Triumph	1000	30	500	340	40	120
White Bear	900	30	500	340	40	120
Victory	800	17	400	268	32	100
Mer-Honneur	800	30	400	268	32	100
Ark Royal	800	17	400	268	32	100
Saint Matthew	1000	30	500	340	40	120
Saint Andrew	900	17	400	268	32	100
Due Repulse	700	16	350	230	30	90
Garland	700	16	300	190	30	80
Warspight	600	12	300	190	30	80
Mary Rose	600	12	250	150	30	70
The Hope	600	12	250	150	30	70
Bonaventure	600	12	250	150	30	70
The Lyon	500	12	250	150	30	70
Nonpareil	500	12	250	150	30	70
Defiance	500	12	250	150	30	70
Rainbow	500	12	250	150	30	70
Dreadnought	400	10	200	130	20	50
Antelope	350	10	160	114	16	30
Swiftsure	400	10	200	130	20	50
Swallow	330	10	160	114	16	30
Foresight	300	10	160	114	16	30
The Tide	250	7	120	88	12	20
The Crane	200	7	100	70	10	20
Adventure	250	7	120	88	12	20
Quittance	200	7	100	70	10	20
Answer	200	7	100	70	10	20
Advantage	200	7	100	70	10	20
Tyger	200	7	100	70	10	20
Tramontain		6	70	52	8	10
The Scout	120	6	66	48	8	10
The Catis	100	5	60	42	8	10
The Charles	70	5	45	32	6	7
The Moon	60	5	40	30	5	5
The Advice	50	5	40	30	5	5
The Spy	50	5	40	30	5	5
The Merlin	45	5	35	26	5	4
The Sun	40	5	30	24	4	2
Synnet	20	2				
George Hoy	100	10				
Pennyrose Hoy	80	8				



Her attention to trade appears in many instances; of some of which it may not be amiss to treat more particularly. The merchants of the Hanse Towns complained loudly, in the beginning of her reign, of the ill treatment they had received in the days of Edward and Queen Mary; to which she very prudently answered, "That as she would not innovate any thing, so she would protect them still in the immunities and condition she found them;" which not contenting them, their commerce was soon after suspended for a time, to the great advantage of the English merchants; for, they trying what they could do themselves therein, their adventures and returns proving successful, they took the whole trade into their hands; and so divided themselves into staplers and merchant-adventurers; the one residing constantly at some one place, the other keeping their course, and adventuring to other towns and states abroad, with cloth and other manufactures. This so nettled the Hanse, that they devised all the ways that a discontented people could, to draw upon our new staplers or adventurers the ill opinion of other nations and states; but, that proving of too small force to stop the current of so strong a trade as they were now run into, they resorted to some other practices.

They applied themselves to the emperor, as being a society incorporated into the empire; and, upon complaint, obtained ambassadors to the queen to mediate the business; but, these returned *re infecta*. Hereupon the queen caused a proclamation to be published, that the merchants of the Hanse should be treated and used as all other strangers in her dominions, in point of commerce, without any mark of distinction. At last, the Hanse Towns prevailed so far in virtue of their German connections, as to gain an imperial edict, whereby the English merchants were prohibited all commerce in the empire; this was answered by a proclamation,\* in consequence of which,

\* The imperial edict of the Emperor Rodolph II. bears date the 1st of August, 1597, which, together with her majesty's proclamation of



sixty sail of ships were taken in the river of Lisbon, laden with contraband goods for the use of the Spaniards. These ships the queen intended to have restored, as sincerely desiring to have compromised all differences with those trading cities; but, when she was informed that a general assembly was held at the city of Lubeck, in order to concert measures for distressing the English trade, she caused the ships and their cargoes to be confiscated; only two of them were released to carry home the news, and that the queen had the greatest contempt imaginable for all their proceedings. \*

After this, Sigismond, king of Poland, interposed in their behalf, sending hither an ambassador, who, talking in a very high style, the queen, in her answer, told him plainly, that the king, his master, made no right estimate of his own power, and that himself was very little fit for the employment in which she found him. † Thus were we ridden for ever of these incorporated foreign factors; and our own merchants established in the right of managing our commerce. In the latter end of her reign, some disputes happening with the king of Denmark, and he most unadvisedly seizing the English ships that were in his ports; the queen sent one Dr. Parkins to demand an immediate and adequate satisfaction; which he did in so peremptory a style, that the Dane was glad to compound the matter for forty thousand dollars, which he paid her majesty, and which she caused to be proportionably divided among the merchants who were injured. ‡

These are instances of her noble spirit in obtaining redress of grievances in foreign countries, even in the the 13th of January following, may be met with at large in Wheeler's Treatise of Commerce, p. 80, 93.

\* Camden, vol. iii. p. 604, 606, 748, and the other historians of her reign. Wheeler's Treatise on Commerce. Molloy de Jure Maritimo, book ii. chap. xii.

† See the memorable reply of that princess upon this occasion, at large, in Speed, p. 871.

‡ Stowe, p. 787. Lord Burleigh's Diary, in Murdin's Collection.

most perilous times, and when her affairs were in the utmost embarrassment. As to her care of trade and navigation within her own dominions, we have already mentioned many particulars; however, it may not be amiss to observe, that, in 1563, an act was made for the better regulation, maintenance, and increase of the navy; \* and, in 1566, there was a law to enable the master, wardens, and the assistants of the Trinity-house, to set up beacons and sea-marks. † The same year, there passed an act for incorporating, and more effectually establishing, the company of merchant-adventurers. ‡ In 1571, there likewise passed an act for the increase of mariners, and for the maintenance of navigation, and more especially for recovering the trade to Iceland, which began then to decay, and in which there had been employed annually upwards of two hundred sail of stout ships. § In 1585, the queen erected, by her letters-patent, a new company, for the management of the trade to Barbary; || and, in the year 1600, she incorporated a society of merchants trading to the East Indies, ¶ whence the present East India Company is derived, as will be hereafter shewn.

Besides these numerous marks of her royal favour, and strict attention to the commerce of her subjects, the queen afforded others continually; by sending envoys and agents to the Czar, to the Shah of Persia, to several great princes in the East Indies; and, in short, wherever her interposition could be of any use to open, to promote, or to recover any branch of traffic, as appears by all the histories that are extant of her reign. \*\* It may be said, and, which is

\* See the Statute, anno 1, Eliz cap. v.

† Anno 8, Eliz. cap. xiii.

‡ Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. i. p. 369.

§ Anno 22, Eliz. cap. vii.

|| Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. ii. p. 114.

¶ Dated at Westminster, December 31, A. R. 43. and recited at large in Purchas, vol. i. lib. iii. p. 144.

\*\* Camden, Bacon, Osborne, Stowe, Holingshed, Speed, Rapin. See the letters addressed to those princes by the queen, on that head,



more, may be said with truth and justice, that, in the midst of these great things done for industry and trade, the prerogative was carried very high; many monopolies erected, and several exclusive privileges granted, which have been found injurious to trade. But the discussing these points belongs to general history. The queen levied taxes sparingly, and helped out her revenues by what were then styled rights of the crown. Monopolies were the invention, at least had the countenance, and turned to the profit of her ministers; who, for a time, deceived their mistress into the support of them; but, when she understood the nature and extent of them, she gave them up. As to the statutes prejudicial to trade, there were some founded in popular error, from which no age is exempt; things themselves have changed their circumstances, if not their nature, that what was or might be judged right then, may be plainly wrong now.

But the peculiar glory of Queen Elizabeth's reign in this respect, was the great care she took of the coin, which, as we have shewn, was shamefully debased in the reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI.; and, though her sister had put an entire stop to this bad practice, yet the circumstances of her affairs were very far from being such as to admit her taking any measures towards an effectual amendment, the base coin continuing to have a currency, though it began to sink in its value; which, however, did not hinder foreigners from pouring in vast quantities of that mixed money, to the great detriment of the nation, and this, notwithstanding that princess expostulated with her neighbours upon that subject, and her doing all she could to hinder it.\* But, immediately, after the accession of

at length, in Hakluyt, vol. i. p. 333, 339, 375, 418. vol. ii. p. 138, 203. vol. iii. p. 852.

\* Camden. Annal. Eliz. vol. i. p. 75; 76. Stowe, p. 646, 647. Strype's Annals, vol. i. chap. xxii. p. 264, 265. Lord Burleigh's Diary, in Murdin's Collection, p. 751.



Queen Elizabeth, the Lord Burleigh and Sir Thomas Smith, whose papers upon that head are yet extant, interposed with the queen, and shewed her clearly the bad consequences of a debased coinage; and shewed her farther, that it was not the short ends of wit, or some slight and temporary devices, that could sustain the expense of a great monarchy, but sound and solid courses. I make use of their expressions, which, though not elegant, are very emphatic. They, therefore, exhorted her to pursue the steps of her great-grandfather Edward IV. and rejecting all expedients as ineffectual in themselves, and unworthy of her, to strike at the root of the evil. Admirable and solid counsels!

She took their advice, and, by a proclamation in the second year of her reign, called in all the debased money, directing it to be marked with a greyhound, portcullice, lion, harp, rose, or fleur-de-lys, to distinguish the several intrinsic value of the pieces, it being her design to refine the coin, not according to the legal, but natural estimation of money; and, therefore, she directed, that foreign coin and money should be brought to her mint, as there was from eight thousand to twenty-two thousand pounds every week, and the like quantity of gold in Spanish pistoles, for the space of about six months; when she repaid her subjects the full value of the silver in new money of that standard, which has since continued, and which was fixed after mature deliberation, and, with a just regard to the value silver and gold had obtained in foreign countries at that time. In the very next year, the majority of her council were for undoing all again, by introducing a fresh debasement; but the Lord Burleigh, then Sir William Cecil, and secretary of state, withstood this, as he did every other project of that kind so long as he lived, with such vehemence of speech, and with such strength of argument, as kept the queen steady to her first measure.

When this great undertaking was thoroughly perfected, the queen took occasion to tell her people, in a proclamation, that she had now conquered that monster which had so long devoured them; and, it is very wisely recited in the preamble of an act of parliament, in the fifth year of her reign, "That, by her great goodness, new money had been coined of the same fineness as in the time of her noble progenitors." Neither was this famous act, as she herself called it upon another occasion, forgotten in the inscription placed upon her monument; where, after mention being made of restoring religion to its primitive sincerity, and establishing a lasting tranquillity, it follows, that she reduced the coin to its just value. Hence we may perceive how great an action this was, and of what lasting benefit to the kingdom.

It may, however, contribute not a little to our satisfaction, if we inquire what quantity of coin, both gold and silver, there might be in the nation towards the close of her reign, that is, at the beginning of the last century; because it is of very great consequence to have a just notion of what was the nation's stock in ready money at that period, when our great foreign commerce began. We have, indeed, an authentic account of her entire coinage in silver, amounting to above four millions and a half; but then, if we consider that she re-coined almost all the silver specie of the kingdom, and that there was a small alteration in the standard in the latter end of her reign, which raised silver from five shillings to five and two-pence an ounce, which occasioned a new fabrication, so that much of the former coin came into the mint again as bullion; we may, with the judicious Dr. Davenant, estimate the silver coin at that time in this kingdom at two millions and a half; to which, if we add the gold of her own and her predecessors coin, and estimate this at a million and a half, we may be pretty sure that we are not much wide of the



truth; and that, one hundred and fifty years ago, the current coin of England amounted in the whole to four millions or thereabouts.

As the restoring the coin was, in effect, putting the first wheel in motion, so, this being thus early set right, all the subordinate parts of general commerce began quickly to resume their respective forces; and, the willingness which the queen shewed upon every occasion to facilitate whatever designs were formed for improving her dominions, employing her subjects, and venting the produce of their industry, had such effects, that by degrees, one thing opening a way to another, the face of affairs totally changed. All the complaints that were formerly made, gave place to a general approbation of the queen's government amongst the better part of her subjects, that is, amongst those who were willing to help themselves by their honest and cheerful endeavours to enlarge their properties, and to turn to the utmost advantage the laudable desire, which their sovereign expressed, of encouraging whatever could be invented for the promoting their welfare, and augmenting the public stock.

This disposition in the queen excited a like spirit throughout the whole nation. Not only persons bred to trade, and some of the middle gentry of the kingdom, launched out into expeditions for discoveries, and planting new-found countries; but, even persons of the first distinction became encouragers and adventurers in those designs; such as the Lord-treasurer Burleigh, the earl of Warwick, the earl of Leicester, &c. and some of them actually engaged in the execution of such projects, amongst whom were the earls of Cumberland, Essex, and Southampton, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Richard Grenville, Sir Humphry Gilbert, Sir Robert Dudley, &c.\* And, therefore, we need not wonder at the surprising increase of our

\* Hakluyt's, Monson's, and Purchas's Collections consist chiefly of instances of this sort.



maritime power, or the number of remarkable undertakings of this sort, within so short a period of time. Let us mention only a few. In 1575, Sir Humphry Gilbert attempted the discovery of a north-west passage: In 1577, Sir Martin Forbisher sought one the same way.\* Pet and Jackman sailed on a like design, in 1580, by the direction of the governor and company of merchant-adventurers. † An expedition was undertaken, at a great expense by Sir Humphry Gilbert, in order to settle Florida; nor did it miscarry through any error of the undertaker. ‡ The great Sir Walter Raleigh would have settled Virginia in 1584, if prudence, industry, and public spirit could have effected it; but, though he failed in the extent, yet he was not totally defeated in his hopes, since he laid the foundation of that settlement, which hath since so happily succeeded.

\* Hakluyt's Voyages, vol. iii. p. 32.

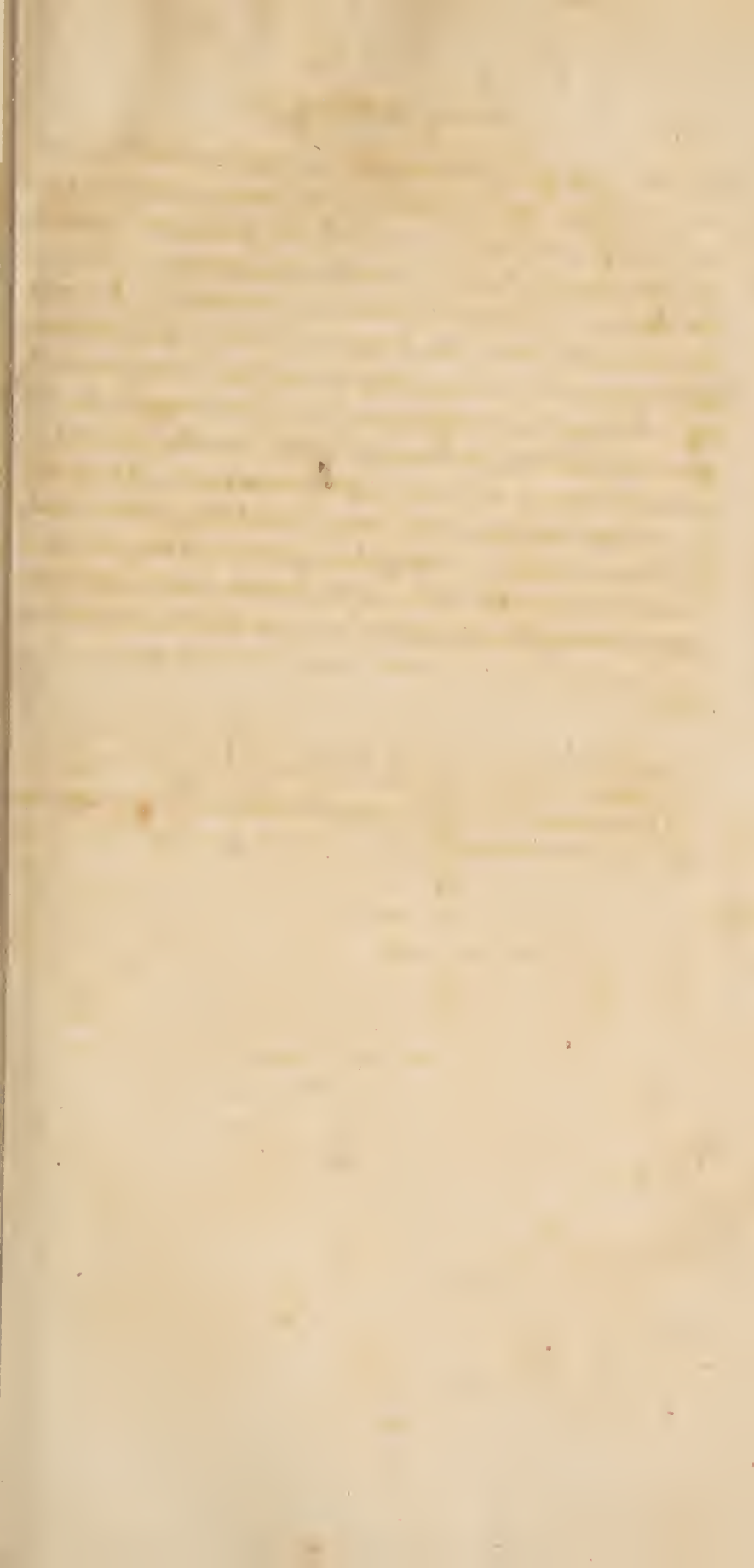
† Camden, vol. ii. p. 360, 361.

‡ See a full account of this matter, in Sir George Peckham's relation, who was concerned therein.

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END OF VOL. I.

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