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THE  
**HISTORY OF ENGLAND,**

FROM  
THE EARLIEST TIMES  
TO  
THE DEATH OF GEORGE II.

*BY DR. GOLDSMITH.*

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A CONTINUATION

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE REIGN OF GEORGE III. TO THE PEACE  
OF AMIENS, IN 1802.

*BY THE REV. MANLEY WOOD, A. M.*  
OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXON.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

FIRST AMERICAN, FROM THE NINTH LONDON EDITION, CORRECTED.

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VOL. I.

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BOSTON :  
PUBLISHED BY CHESTER STEBBINS.

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1814.

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ADAMS 230.2

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## PREFACE.

FROM the favourable reception given to my Abridgment of Roman History, published some time since, several friends, and others, whose business leads them to consult the wants of the public, have been induced to suppose that an English history written on the same plan would be acceptable. It was their opinion, that we still wanted a work of this kind, where the narrative, though very concise, is not totally without interest, and the facts, though crowded, are yet distinctly seen.

The business of abridging the works of others has hitherto fallen to the lot of very dull men; and the art of blotting, which an eminent critic calls the most difficult of all others, has been usually practised by those who found themselves unable to write. Hence our abridgments are generally more tedious than the works from which they pretend to relieve us; and they have effectually embarrassed that road which they laboured to shorten.

As the present compiler starts with such humble competitors, it will scarcely be thought vanity in him if he boasts himself their superior. Of the many abridgments of our own history hitherto published, none seems possessed of any share of merit or reputation: some have been written in dialogue, or merely in the stiffness of an index, and some to answer the purposes of a party. A very small share of taste, therefore, was sufficient to keep the compiler from the defects of the one; and a very small share of philosophy from the misrepresentations of the other.

It is not easy, however, to satisfy the different expectations of mankind in a work of this kind, calculated for every apprehension, and on which all are consequently capable of forming some judgment. Some may say that it is too long to pass under the denomination of an abridgment; and others, that it is too dry to be admitted as an history: it may be objected, that reflection is almost entirely banished to make room for facts, and yet that many facts are wholly omitted, which might be necessary to be known.

It must be confessed that all those objections are partly true; for it is impossible, in the same work, at once to attain contrary advantages. The compiler, who is stinted in room, must often sacrifice interest to brevity; and, on the other hand, while he endeavours to amuse, must frequently transgress the limits to which his plan should confine him. Thus all such as desire only amusement may be disgusted with his brevity, and such as seek for information may object to his displacing facts for empty description.

To attain the greatest number of advantages with the fewest inconveniences, is all that can be attained in an abridgment, the very name of which implies imperfection. It will be sufficient, therefore, to satisfy the writer's wishes, if the present work be found a plain unaffected narrative of facts, with just ornament enough to keep attention awake, and with reflection barely sufficient to set the reader upon thinking.—Very moderate abilities were equal to such an undertaking; and it is hoped the performance will satisfy such as take up books to be informed or amused, without much considering who the writer is, or envying any success he may have had in a former compilation.



As the present publication is designed for the benefit of those who intend to lay a foundation for future study, or desire to refresh their memories upon the old, or who think a moderate share of history sufficient for the purposes of life, recourse has been had only to those authors which are best known, and these facts only have been selected which are allowed on all hands to be true. Were an epitome of history the field for displaying erudition, the author could show that he has read many books which others have neglected; and that he also could advance many anecdotes which are at present very little known. But it must be remembered, that all these minute recoveries could be inserted only to the exclusion of more material facts, which it would be unpardonable to omit. He foregoes, therefore, the petty ambition of being thought a reader of forgotten books,—his aim being not to add to our present stock of history, but to contract it.

The books which have been used in this abridgment are chiefly Rapin, Carte, Smollett and Hume. They have each their peculiar admirers, in proportion as the reader is studious of historical antiquities, fond of minute anecdote, a warm partisan, or a deliberate reasoner. Of these I have particularly taken Hume for my guide, as far as he goes; and it is but justice to say, that wherever I was obliged to abridge his work, I did it with reluctance, as I scarce cut out a line that did not contain a beauty.

But though I must warmly subscribe to the learning, elegance, and depth of Mr. Hume's History, yet I cannot entirely acquiesce in his principles. With regard to religion, he seems desirous of playing a double part,—of appearing to some readers as if he revered,

and to others as if he ridiculed it. He seems sensible of the political necessity of religion in every state ; but at the same time he would every where insinuate that it owes its authority to no higher an origin. Thus he weakens its influence, while he contends for its utility ; and vainly hopes, that while free-thinkers shall applaud his scepticism, real believers will reverence him for his zeal.

In his opinions respecting government, perhaps also he may be sometimes reprehensible ; but in a country like ours, where mutual contention contributes to the security of the constitution, it will be impossible for an historian, who attempts to have any opinion, to satisfy all parties. It is not yet decided in politics, whether the diminution of kingly power in England tends to increase the happiness or the freedom of the people. For my own part, from seeing the bad effects of the tyranny of the great in those republican states that pretend to be free, I cannot help wishing that our monarchs may still be allowed to enjoy the power of controlling the encroachments of the great at home. A king may easily be restrained from doing wrong, as he is but one man ; but if a number of the great are permitted to divide all authority, who can punish them if they abuse it ? Upon this principle, therefore, and not from any empty notion of divine or hereditary right, some may think I have leaned towards monarchy. But as, in the things I have hitherto written, I have neither allured the vanity of the great by flattery, nor satisfied the malignity of the vulgar by scandal, as I have endeavoured to get an honest reputation by liberal pursuits, it is hoped the reader will admit my impartiality.

# HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

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## CHAP. I.

### OF THE BRITONS BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF THE ROMANS.

IT is fortunate for mankind, that those periods of history which are the least serviceable, are the least known. It has been the study of many learned men to rescue from obscurity, and throw light upon, those early ages when the Britons were wholly barbarous, and their country uncultivated. But these researches have generally terminated in conjecture; so that from whence Britain was at first peopled, or took its name, is still uncertain. The variety of opinions upon this head serve to prove the futility of all.

It will, therefore, be sufficient to observe, that, this beautiful island, by some thought the largest in the world, was called Britannia by the Romans long before the time of Cæsar. It is supposed that this name was originally given it by the merchants who resorted hither from the continent. These called the inhabitants by one common name of Briths, from the custom among the natives of painting their naked bodies and small shields with an azure blue, which in language of the country was called brith, and which served to distinguish them from those strangers who came among them for the purposes of trade or alliance.

The Britons were but very little known to the rest of the world before the time of the Romans. The coasts opposite Gaul, indeed, were frequented by merchants who traded thither for such commodities as the natives were able to produce. These, it is thought, after a time, possessed themselves of all the maritime places where they had at first been permitted to reside. There,

finding the country fertile, and commodiously situated for trade, they settled upon the sea-side, and introduced the practice of agriculture. But it was very different with the inland inhabitants of the country, who considered themselves as the lawful possessors of the soil. These avoided all correspondence with the newcomers, whom they considered as intruders upon their property.

The inland inhabitants are represented as extremely numerous, living in cottages thatched with straw, and feeding large herds of cattle. Their houses were scattered all over the country, without observance of order or distance, being placed at smaller or greater intervals, as they were invited by the fertility of the soil, or the convenience of wood and water. They lived mostly upon milk, or flesh procured by the chase. What clothes they wore to cover any part of their bodies were usually the skins of beasts; but much of their bodies, as the arms, legs, and thighs, was left naked, and those parts were usually painted blue. Their hair, which was long, flowed down upon their backs and shoulders, while their beards were kept close shaven, except upon the upper lip, where it was suffered to grow. The dress of savage nations is every where pretty much the same, being calculated rather to inspire terror than to excite love or respect.

The commodities exported from Britain were chiefly hides and tin. This metal was then thought peculiar to the island, and was in much request abroad, both in nearer and remoter regions. Some silver mines were also known, but not in common use, as the inhabitants had but little knowledge how to dig, refine, or improve them. Pearls also were frequently found on their shores, but neither clear nor coloured like the oriental, and therefore in no great esteem among strangers. They had but little iron; and what they had, was used either for arms, or for rings, which was a sort of money current among them. They had brass money also; but this was all brought from abroad.

Their language, customs, religion, and government, were generally the same with those of the Gauls, their neighbours of the continent. As to their government, it consisted of several small principalities, each under its respective leader; and this seems to be the earliest mode of dominion with which mankind is acquainted, and deduced from the natural privileges of paternal authority. Whether these small principalities descended by succession, or

were elected in consequence of the advantages of age, wisdom; or valour in the families of the princes, is not recorded. Upon great or uncommon dangers, a commander in chief was chosen by common consent, in a general assembly; and to him was committed the conduct of the general interest, the power of making peace, or leading to war. In the choice of a person of such power, it is easy to suppose that unanimity could not always be found; whence it often happened, that the separate tribes were defeated one after the other, before they could unite under a single leader for their mutual safety.

Their forces consisted chiefly of foot, and yet they could bring a considerable number of horse into the field upon great occasions. They likewise used chariots in battle, which, with short scythes fastened to the ends of the axle-trees, inflicted desperate wounds, spreading terror and devastation wheresoever they drove. Nor, while the chariots were thus destroying, were the warriors who conducted them unemployed. These darted their javelins against the enemy, ran along the beam, leaped on the ground, resumed their seat, stopped or turned their horses at full speed, and sometimes cunningly retreated to draw the enemy into confusion. Nothing can be more terrible than the idea of a charioteer thus driving furiously in the midst of dangers: but these machines seem to have been more dreadful than dangerous; for they were quickly laid aside when this brave people was instructed in the more regular arts of war.

The religion of the Britons was one of the most considerable parts of their government; and the Druids, who were the guardians of it, possessed great authority among them. These endeavoured to impress the minds of the people with an opinion of their skill in the arts of divination; they offered sacrifices in public and private, and pretended to explain the immediate will of Heaven. No species of superstition was ever more horrible than theirs; besides the severe penalties which they were permitted to inflict in this world, they inculcated the eternal transmigration of souls, and thus extended their authority as far as the fears of their votaries. They sacrificed human victims, which they burned in large wicker idols, made so capacious as to contain a multitude of persons at once, who were thus consumed together. The female Druids plunged their knives into the breasts

of the prisoners taken in war, and prophesied from the manner in which the blood happened to stream from the wound. Their altars consisted of four broad stones, three set edge-wise, and the fourth at top, many of which remain to this day. To these rites, tending to impress ignorance with awe, they added the austerity of their manners, and the simplicity of their lives. They lived in woods, caves, and hollow trees; their food was acorns and berries, and their drink water; by these arts they were not only respected, but almost adored by the people. They were admired not only for knowing more than other men, but for despising what all others valued and pursued. Hence they were patiently permitted to punish and correct crimes from which they themselves were supposed to be wholly free; and their authority was so great, that not only the property but also the lives of the people were entirely at their disposal. No laws were instituted by the princes, or common assemblies, without their advice and approbation; no person was punished by bonds or death, without their passing sentence; no plunder taken in war was used by the captor until the Druids determined what part they should seclude for themselves.

It may be easily supposed that the manners of the people took a tincture from the discipline of their teachers. Their lives were simple, but they were marked with cruelty and fierceness; their courage was great, but neither dignified by mercy nor perseverance. In short, to have a just idea of what the Britons then were, we have only to turn to the savage nations which still subsist in primæval rudeness. Temperate rather from necessity than choice; patient of fatigue, yet inconstant in attachment; bold, improvident, and rapacious:—such is the picture of savage life at present, and such it appears to have been from the beginning. Little entertainment, therefore, can be expected from the accounts of a nation thus circumstanced; nor can its transactions come properly under the notice of the historian, since they are too minutely divided to be exhibited at one view; the actors are too barbarous to interest the reader; and no skill can be shown in developing the motives and counsels of a people chiefly actuated by sudden and tumultuary gusts of passion.

## CHAP. II.

FROM THE DESCENT OF JULIUS CÆSAR TO THE RELINQUISHING OF THE ISLAND BY THE ROMANS.

THE Britons, in the rude and barbarous state in which we have just described them, seemed to stand in need of more polished instructors; and indeed whatever evils may attend the conquest of heroes, their success has generally produced one good effect, in disseminating the arts of refinement and humanity. It ever happens, when a barbarous nation is conquered by another more advanced in the arts of peace, that it gains in elegance a recompense for what it loses in liberty. The Britons had long remained in this rude but independent state, when Cæsar, having overrun Gaul with his victories, and willing still further to extend his fame, determined upon the conquest of a country that seemed to promise an easy triumph. He was allured neither by the riches nor the renown of the inhabitants; but being ambitious rather of splendid than of useful conquests, he was willing to carry the Roman arms into a country, the remote situation of which would add seeming difficulty to the enterprise, and consequently produce an increase of reputation. His pretence was, to punish these islanders for having sent succours to the Gauls while he waged war against that nation, as well as for granting an asylum to such of the enemy as had sought protection from his resentment. The natives, informed of his intention, were sensible of the unequal contest, and endeavoured to appease him by submission. He received their ambassadors with great complacency, and having exhorted them to continue steadfast in the same sentiments, in the mean time made preparations for the execution of his design. When the troops destined for the expedition were embarked, he set sail for Britain about midnight, and the next morning arrived on the coast near Dover, where he saw the rocks and cliffs covered with armed men to oppose his landing.

Finding it impracticable to gain the shore where he Ant. Ch. first intended, from the agitation of the sea, and the im- 55. pending mountains, he resolved to choose a landing-place of greater security. The place he chose was about eight miles far-

ther on, some suppose at Deal, where an inclining shore and a level country invited his attempts. The poor, naked, ill-armed Britons, we may well suppose, were but an unequal match for the disciplined Romans, who had before conquered Gaul, and afterwards became the conquerors of the world. However, they made a brave opposition against the veteran army; the conflicts between them were fierce, the losses mutual, and the success various. The Britons had chosen Cassibelaunus for their commander in chief; but the petty princes under his command, either desiring his station, or suspecting his fidelity, threw off their allegiance. Some of them fled with their forces into the internal parts of the kingdom; others submitted to Cæsar; till at length Cassibelaunus himself, weakened by so many desertions, resolved upon making what terms he was able, while he yet had power to keep the field. The conditions offered by Cæsar, and accepted by him, were, that he should send to the continent double the number of hostages at first demanded, and that he should acknowledge subjection to the Romans.

The Romans were pleased with the name of this new and remote conquest, and the senate decreed a supplication of twenty days in consequence of their general's success. Having, therefore, in this manner rather discovered than subdued the southern parts of the island, Cæsar returned into Gaul with his forces, and left the Britons to enjoy their customs, religion, and laws. But the inhabitants, thus relieved from the terror of his arms, neglected the performance of their stipulations; and only two of their states sent over hostages according to the treaty. Cæsar, it is likely, was not much displeased at the omission, as it furnished him with a pretext of visiting the island once more, and completing a conquest which he had only begun.

Accordingly, the ensuing spring he set sail for Britain with eight hundred ships; and arriving at the place of his former descent, he landed without opposition. The islanders being apprised of his invasion, had assembled an army, and marched down to the sea-side to oppose him; but seeing the number of his forces, and the whole sea, as it were, covered with his shipping, they were struck with consternation, and retired to their places of security. The Romans, however, pursued them to their retreats, until at last common danger induced these poor barbarians



ans to forget their former dissensions, and to unite their whole strength for the mutual defence of their liberty and possessions. Cassibelaunus was chosen to conduct the common cause; and for some time he harassed the Romans in their march, and revived the desponding hopes of his countrymen. But no opposition that undisciplined strength could make was able to repress the vigour and intrepidity of Cæsar. He discomfited the Britons in every action: he advanced into the country, passed the Thames in the face of the enemy, took and burned the capital city of Cassibelaunus, established his ally Mandubratius as sovereign of the Trinobantes; and having obliged the inhabitants to make new submissions, he again returned with his army into Gaul, having made himself rather the nominal than the real possessor of the island.

Whatever the stipulated tribute might have been, it is more than probable, as there was no authority left to exact it, that it was but indifferently paid. Upon the accession of Augustus, that emperor had formed a design of visiting Britain, but was diverted from it by an unexpected revolt of the Pannonians. Some years after he resumed his design; but being met in his way by the British ambassadors, who promised the accustomed tribute, and made the usual submissions, he desisted from his intention. The year following, finding them remiss in their supplies, and untrue to their former professions, he once more prepared for the invasion of the country; but a well-timed embassy again averted his indignation, and the submissions he received seemed to satisfy his resentment: upon his death-bed he appeared sensible of the overgrown extent of the Roman empire, and he recommended it to his successors never to enlarge their territories.

Tiberius followed the maxims of Augustus; and, wisely judging the empire already too extensive, made no attempt upon Britain. Some Roman soldiers having been wrecked on the British coast, the inhabitants not only assisted them with the greatest humanity, but sent them in safety back to their general. In consequence of these friendly dispositions, a constant intercourse of good offices subsisted between the two nations; the principal British nobility resorted to Rome, and many received their education there.

From that time the Britons began to improve in all the arts which contribute to the advancement of human nature. The first art which a savage people is generally taught by their politer neighbours is that of war. The Britons, thenceforward, though not wholly addicted to the Roman method of fighting, nevertheless adopted several of their improvements, as well in their arms as in their arrangement in the field. Their ferocity to strangers, for which they had been always remarkable, was mitigated; and they began to permit an intercourse of commerce even in the internal parts of the country. They still, however, continued to live as herdsmen and hunters,—a manifest proof that the country was as yet but thinly inhabited. A nation of hunters can never be populous, as their subsistence is necessarily diffused over a large tract of country, while the husbandman converts every part of nature to human use, and flourishes most by the vicinity of those whom he is to support.

The wild extravagances of Caligula, by which he threatened Britain with an invasion, served rather to expose him to ridicule, than the island to danger. The Britons therefore, for almost a century, enjoyed their liberty unmolested, till at length the Romans, in the reign of Claudius, began to think seriously of reducing them under their dominion. The expedition for this purpose was conducted in the beginning by Plautius and other commanders, with that success which usually attended the Roman arms.

A.D. 43. Claudius himself, finding affairs sufficiently prepared for his reception, made a journey thither, and received the submission of such states as, living by commerce, were willing to purchase tranquillity at the expense of freedom. It is true that many of the inland provinces preferred their native simplicity to imported elegance, and, rather than bow their necks to the Roman yoke, offered their bosoms to the sword. But the southern coast, with all the adjacent inland country, was seized by the conquerors, who secured the possession by fortifying camps, building fortresses, and planting colonies. The other parts of the country either thought themselves in no danger, or continued patient spectators of the approaching devastation.

Caractacus was the first who seemed willing, by a vigorous effort, to rescue his country, and repel its insulting and rapacious conquerors. The venality and corruption of the Roman prætors

and officers, who were appointed to levy the contributions in Britain, served to excite the indignation of the natives, and give spirit to his attempts. This rude soldier, though with inferior forces, continued, for about the space of nine years, to oppose and harass the Romans; so that at length Ostorius Scapula was sent over to command their armies. He was more successful than his predecessors. He advanced the Roman conquests over Britain, pierced the country of the Silures, a warlike nation along the banks of the Severn, and at length came up [50.] with Caractacus, who had taken possession of a very advantageous post upon an inaccessible mountain, washed by a deep and rapid stream. The unfortunate British general, when he saw the enemy approaching, drew up his army, composed of different tribes, and, going from rank to rank, exhorted them to strike the last blow for liberty, safety, and life. To these exhortations his soldiers replied with shouts of determined valour. But what could undisciplined bravery avail against the attack of an army skilled in all the arts of war, and inspired by a long train of conquests? The Britons were, after an obstinate resistance, totally routed; and a few days after Caractacus himself was delivered up to the conquerors by Cartismandua, queen of the Brigantes, with whom he had taken refuge. The capture of this general was received with such joy at Rome, that Claudius commanded that he should be brought from Britain, in order to be exhibited as a spectacle to the Roman people. Accordingly, on the day appointed for that purpose, the emperor, ascending his throne, ordered the captives, and Caractacus among the number, to be brought into his presence. The vassals of the British king, with the spoils taken in war, were first brought forward; these were followed by his family, who, with abject lamentations, were seen to implore for mercy. Last of all came Caractacus, with an undaunted air and a dignified aspect. He appeared no way dejected at the amazing concourse of spectators that were gathered upon this occasion, but, casting his eyes on the splendours that surrounded him, "Alas!" cried he, "how is it possible that a people possessed of such magnificence at home, could envy me an humble cottage in Britain?" When brought into the emperor's presence, he is said to have addressed him in the following manner: "Had my moderation been equal to my birth and for-

tune, I had arrived in this city not as a captive but as a friend. But my present misfortunes redound as much to your honour as to my disgrace ; and the obstinacy of my opposition serves to increase the splendours of your victory. Had I surrendered myself in the beginning of the contest, neither my disgrace nor your glory would have attracted the attention of the world, and my fate would have been buried in general oblivion. I am now at your mercy ; but if my life be spared, I shall remain an eternal monument of your clemency and moderation." The emperor was affected with the British hero's misfortunes, and won by his address. He ordered him to be unchained upon the spot, with the rest of the captives ; and the first use they made of their liberty was to go and prostrate themselves before the empress Agrippina, who, as some suppose, had been an intercessor for their freedom.

Notwithstanding these misfortunes, the Britons were not subdued, and this island was regarded by the ambitious Romans as a field in which military honour might still be acquired. The Britons made one expiring effort more to recover their liberty in the time of Nero, taking advantage of the absence of Paulinus [59.] the Roman general, who was employed in subduing the Isle of Anglesey. That small island, which was separated from Britain by a narrow channel, still continued the chief seat of the Druidical superstitions, and constantly afforded a retreat to their defeated forces. It was thought necessary therefore to subdue that place, in order to extirpate a religion that disdained submission to foreign laws or leaders ; and Paulinus, the greatest general of his age, undertook the task. The Britons endeavoured to obstruct his landing on that last retreat of their superstitions and liberties, both by the force of their arms and the terrors of their religion. The priests and islanders were drawn up in order of battle upon the shore, to oppose his landing. The women, dressed like furies, with dishevelled hair, and torches in their hands, poured forth the most terrible execrations. Such a sight at first confounded the Romans, and fixed them motionless on the spot ; so that they received the first assault without opposition. But Paulinus, exhorting his troops to despise the menaces of an absurd superstition, impelled them to the attack, drove the Britons off the field, burned the Druids in the same fires they

had prepared for their captive enemies, and destroyed all their consecrated groves and altars.

In the mean time the Britons, taking advantage of his absence, resolved by a general insurrection to free themselves from that state of abject servitude to which they were reduced by the Romans. They had many motives to aggravate their resentment; the greatness of their taxes, which were levied with unremitting severity; the cruel insolence of their conquerors, who reproached that very poverty which they had caused; but particularly the cruel treatment of Boadicea, queen of the Iceni, drove them at last into open rebellion. Prasatagus, king of the Iceni, at his death, had bequeathed one half of his dominions to the Romans, and the other to his daughters; thus hoping, by the sacrifice of a part, to secure the rest in his family: but it had a different effect; for the Roman procurator immediately took possession of the whole; and when Boadicea, the widow of the deceased, attempted to remonstrate, he ordered her to be scourged like a slave, and violated the chastity of her daughters. These outrages were sufficient to produce a revolt through the whole island. The Iceni, being the most deeply interested in the quarrel, were the first to take arms; all the other states soon followed the example: and Boadicea, a woman of great beauty and masculine spirit, was appointed to head the common forces, which amounted to two hundred and thirty thousand fighting men. These, exasperated by their wrongs, attacked several of the Roman settlements and colonies with success. Paulinus hastened to relieve London, which was already a flourishing colony; but found on his arrival that it would be requisite for the general safety to abandon that place to the merciless fury of the enemy. London was therefore soon reduced to ashes; such of the inhabitants as remained in it were massacred; and the Romans, with all other strangers, to the number of seventy thousand, were cruelly put to the sword. Flushed with these successes, the Britons no longer sought to avoid the enemy, but boldly came to the place where Paulinus awaited their arrival, posted in a very advantageous manner with a body of ten thousand men. The battle was obstinate and bloody. Boadicea herself appeared in a chariot with her two daughters, and harangued her army with masculine firmness; but the irregular and undisciplined bravery of her troops was un-

able to resist the cool intrepidity of the Romans. They were routed with great slaughter; eighty thousand perished in the field, and an infinite number were made prisoners; while Boadicea herself, fearing to fall into the hands of the enraged victor, put an end to her life by poison. Nero soon after recalled Paulinus from a government, where, by suffering and inflicting so many severities, he was judged improper to compose the angry and alarmed minds of the natives. After an interval, Cerealis received the command from Vespasian, and by his bravery propagated the terror of the Roman arms. Julius Frontinus succeeded Cerealis both in authority and reputation. The general who finally established the dominion of the Romans in this island was Julius Agricola, who governed it during the reigns of Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian, and distinguished himself as well by his courage as humanity.

Agricola, who is considered as one of the greatest characters in history, formed a regular plan for subduing and civilizing the island, and thus rendering the acquisition useful to the conquerors. As the northern part of the country was least tractable, he carried his victorious arms thither, and defeated the undisciplined enemy in every encounter. He pierced into the formerly inaccessible forests and mountains of Caledonia; he drove onward all those fierce and untractable spirits who preferred famine to slavery, and who, rather than submit, chose to remain in perpetual hostility. Nor was it without opposition that he thus made his way into a country rude and impervious by nature. He was opposed by Galgacus at the head of a numerous army, whom he defeated in a decisive action, in which considerable numbers were slain. Being thus successful, he did not think proper to pursue the enemy into their retreats; but, embarking a body of troops on board his fleet, he ordered the commander to surround the whole coast of Britain, which had not been discovered to be an island till the preceding year. This armament, pursuant to his orders, steered to the northward, and there subdued the Orkneys; then making the tour of the whole island, it arrived in the port of Sandwich, without having met with the least disaster.

During these military enterprises, Agricola was ever attentive to the arts of peace. He attempted to humanize the fierceness of those who acknowledged his power, by introducing the Roman

laws, habits, manners, and learning. He taught them to desire and raise all the conveniences of life, instructed them in the arts of agriculture, and, in order to protect them in their peaceable possessions, he drew a rampart, and fixed a train of garrisons between them and their northern neighbours; thus cutting off the ruder and more barren parts of the island, and securing the Roman province from the invasion of a fierce and necessitous enemy. In this manner the Britons, being almost totally subdued, now began to throw off all hopes of recovering their former liberty; and, having often experienced the superiority of the Romans, consented to submit, and were content with safety. From that time the Romans, seemed more desirous of securing what they possessed than of making new conquests; and [78.] were employed rather in repressing than punishing their restless northern invaders.

For several years after the time of Agricola, a profound peace seems to have prevailed in Britain; and little mention is made of the affairs of the island by any historian. The only incidents which occur, are some seditions among the Roman legions quartered there, and some usurpations of the imperial dignity by the Roman governors. The natives remained totally subdued and dispirited: the arts of luxury had been introduced among them, and seemed to afford a wretched compensation for their former independence. All the men who had a passion for liberty were long since destroyed; the flower of their youth were draughted out of the island to serve in foreign wars; and those who remained were bred up in servitude and submission. Such, therefore, were very unlikely to give any disturbance to their governors; and, in fact, instead of considering their yoke as a burthen, they were taught to regard it as their ornament and protection. Indeed, nothing was likely to shake the power of Rome in the island, but the dissensions and distresses of the Romans themselves; and that dreadful period at last arrived.

Rome, that had for many ages given laws to nations, and diffused slavery and oppression over the known world, at length began to sink under her own magnificence. Mankind, as if by a general consent, rose up to vindicate their natural freedom; almost every nation asserting that independence which they had been long so unjustly deprived of. It was in these turbulent

times that the emperors found themselves obliged to recruit their legions from the troops that were placed to defend the frontier provinces. When the heart of the empire was contended for, it was not much considered in what manner the extremities were to be defended. In this manner the more distant parts of the empire were frequently left without a guard; and the weakness of the government there frequently excited fresh insurrections among the natives. These, with a thousand other calamities, daily grew greater; and, as the enemies of the Roman people increased, their own dissensions among each other seemed to increase in the same proportion.

During these struggles the British youth were frequently drawn away into Gaul, to give ineffectual succour to the various contenders for the empire, who, failing in every attempt, only left the name of tyrants behind them. In the mean time, as the Roman forces decreased in Britain, the Picts and Scots continued still more boldly to infest the northern parts; and crossing the friths, which the Romans could not guard, in little wicker-boats covered with leather, filled the country, wherever they came, with slaughter and consternation. When repulsed by superior numbers, as was at first always the case, they retired with the spoil, and watched for the next opportunity of invasion, when the Romans were drawn into the remoter parts of the island.

These enterprises were often repeated, and as often repressed, but still with diminishing vigour on the side of the defendants. The southern natives being accustomed to have recourse to Rome, as well for protection as for laws, made supplications to the emperors, and had one legion sent over for their defence. This relief was, in the beginning, attended with the desired effect; the barbarous invaders were repulsed and driven back to their native deserts and mountains. They returned, however, when the Roman forces were withdrawn; and although they were again repulsed by the assistance of a legion once more sent from Rome, yet they too well perceived the weakness of the enemy, and their own superior force.

At length, in the reign of Valentinian the Younger, the empire of Rome began to tremble for its capital; and, being fatigued with distant expeditions, informed the wretched Britons, whom their own arts had enfeebled, that they were now no longer to



expect foreign protection. They accordingly drew away from the island all the Romans, and many of the Britons who were fit for military services. Thus, taking their last leave of the island, they left the natives to the choice of their own government and kings. They gave them the best instructions the calamitous times would permit, for exercising their arms, and repairing their ramparts. They helped the natives to erect anew a wall of stone built by the emperor Severus across the island, which they had not at that time artisans skilful enough among themselves to repair. Having thus prepared for their departure in a friendly manner, the Romans left the island, never more to return, after having been masters of it during the course of near four centuries.

It may be doubted whether the arts which the Romans planted among the islanders were not rather prejudicial than serviceable to them, as they only contributed to invite the invader, without furnishing the means of defence. If we consider the many public ways, and villas of pleasure that were then among them, the many schools instituted for the instruction of youth, the numberless coins, statues, tessellated pavements, and other curiosities that were common at that time, we have no doubt but that the Britons made a very considerable progress in the arts of peace, although they declined in those of war. But, perhaps, an attempt at once to introduce these advantages will ever be ineffectual. The arts of peace and refinement must rise by slow degrees in every country ; and can never be propagated with the same rapidity by which new governments may be introduced. It will take, perhaps, a course of some centuries before a barbarous people can entirely adopt the manners of their conquerors ; so that all the pains bestowed by the Romans in educating the Britons, only served to render them a more desirable object of invasion, and dressed them up as victims for succeeding slaughter.

## CHAP. III.

## THE BRITONS AND SAXONS.

THE Britons being now left to themselves, considered their new liberties as their greatest calamity. They had been long taught to lean upon others for support; and that now taken away, they found themselves too feeble to make any opposition. Far from practising the lessons they had received from the Romans, they aggravated their misfortunes with unavailing complaints, which only served to render them still more contemptible. Unaccustomed both to the perils of war and to the cares of civil government, they found themselves incapable of forming or executing any measures for resisting the incursions of their barbarous invaders. Though the Roman soldiers were drawn away, their families and descendants were still spread over the face of the country, and left without a single person of conduct or courage to defend them. To complete the measure of their wretchedness, the few men of any note who remained among them were infected with the ambition of being foremost in command; and, disregarding the common enemy, were engaged in dissensions among each other.

In the mean time the Picts and Scots, uniting together, began to look upon Britain as their own, and attacked the northern wall with redoubled forces. This rampart, though formerly built of stone, had been some time before repaired with sods; and, consequently, was but ill fitted to repress the attacks of a persevering enemy. The assailants, therefore, were not at the trouble of procuring military engines or battering rams to overthrow it, but with iron hooks pulled down the inactive defenders from the top, and then undermined the fortification at their leisure. Having thus opened to themselves a passage, they ravaged the whole country with impunity, while the Britons sought precarious shelter in their woods and mountains.

In this exigence the unhappy Britons had a third time recourse to Rome, hoping to extort by importunity that assistance which was denied upon prudential motives. Aëtius, the renowned general of Valentinian, had, about that time, gained considerable ad-

vantages over the Goths, and seemed to give fresh hopes of restoring the Roman empire. It was to him they applied for succor, in a strain of the most abject solicitation. "The Barbarians," said they, "on the one hand, drive us into the sea; the sea, on the other, drives us back upon the Barbarians. We have only the hard choice left us, of perishing by the sword, or being drowned in the deep." Such, however, were the calamities of the Romans themselves, surrounded as they were by myriads of savage nations, that they could yield no assistance to such remote and unserviceable allies.

The Britons, thus neglected, were reduced to despair; while, having left their fields uncultivated, [448.] they began to find the miseries of famine added to the horrors of war. It happened, however, that the Barbarians themselves began to feel the same inconveniences in a country which they had ravaged; and being harassed by the irruptions of the Britons, as well as the want of necessaries, they were obliged to retreat from the southern parts of the kingdom laden with spoil.

The enemy having thus left the country open, the Britons joyfully issued from their mountains and forests, and pursued once more their usual arts of husbandry, which were attended with such abundance the succeeding season, that they soon forgot all their past miseries. But it had been happy for them if plenty had not removed one evil to plant another. They began, from a state of famine, to indulge themselves in such riot and luxury, that their bodies were totally enervated, and their minds debauched.

Thus, entirely occupied in the enjoyment of the present interval of peace, they made no provision for resisting the enemy, who were only taking breath to renew their former invasions. Christianity, indeed, had been introduced among them some time before, though at what period is not certainly known: however, to the other calamities of the state were added also their disputes in theology. The disciples of Pelagius, who was a native of Britain, had increased in a great degree; and the clergy, who considered his opinions as heretical, were more solicitously employed in resisting them than in opposing the common enemy. Besides all these calamities, a terrible pestilence visited the southern parts

of the island, which thinned its inhabitants, and totally deprived them of all power of resistance.

It was in this deplorable and enfeebled state that the Britons were informed of fresh preparations for an invasion from their merciless northern neighbours. To oppose their progress, they pitched upon Vortigern as their general and sovereign,—a prince who is said to have raised himself to the supreme command by the murder of his predecessor. This step was only productive of fresh calamities. Vortigern, instead of exerting what strength yet remained in the kingdom, only set himself to look about for foreign assistance; and the Saxons appeared to him at once the most martial, and the most likely to espouse his interests.

The Saxons were one branch of those Gothic nations, which, swarming from the northern hive, came down to give laws, manners, and liberty to the rest of Europe. A part of this people, under the name of Suvi, had, some time before Cæsar's invasion of Gaul, subdued and possessed an extensive empire in Germany. These, for their strength and valour, were formidable to all the German nations. They were afterwards divided into several nations, and each became famous for subduing that country which was the object of its invasion. France, Germany, and England were among the number of their conquests.

There is a period between savage rudeness and excessive refinement, which seems peculiarly adapted for the purpose of war, and which fits mankind for great achievements. In this state of half refinement, when compared to the Britons, were the Saxons at the time their assistance was thought necessary. They dressed with some degree of elegance, which the generality of the Britons, even though so long under the institutions of the Romans, had not yet learned to practise. Their women used linen garments trimmed and striped with purple. Their hair was bound in wreaths, or fell in curls upon their shoulders; their arms were bare, and their bosoms uncovered;—fashions which, in some measure, seem peculiar to the ladies of England to this day. Their government was generally an elective monarchy, and sometimes a republic. Their commanders were chosen for their merit, and dismissed from duty when their authority was no longer needful. The salaries they were supplied with seldom exceeded a bare subsistence; and the honours they received were the only

reward of their superior dangers and fatigues. The custom of trying by twelve men is of Saxon original: slavery was unknown among them, and they were taught to prefer death to a shameful existence. We are told by Marcellinus, that a body of them being taken prisoners, were kept for exhibition on the amphitheatre at Rome, as gladiators, for the entertainment of the people. The morning, however, on which they were expected to perform, they were every one found dead in his cell, each choosing rather a voluntary death than to be the ignominious instruments of brutal pleasure to their conquerors. The chastity of this people is equally remarkable; and to be without children was to be without praise. But their chief excellence, and what they most gloried in, was their skill in war. They had, in some measure, learned discipline from the Romans, whom they had often defeated; and had, for a century and a half before, made frequent descents upon the coasts of Britain for the sake of plunder. They were, therefore, a very formidable enemy to the Romans when settled there; and an officer was appointed to oppose their inroads, under the title of the "Count of the Saxon shore." Thus, ever restless and bold, they considered war as their trade, and were, in consequence, taught to consider victory as a doubtful advantage, but courage as a certain good. A nation, however, entirely addicted to war has seldom wanted the imputation of cruelty, as those terrors which are opposed without fear are often inflicted without regret. The Saxons are represented as a very cruel nation; but we must remember that their enemies have drawn the picture.

It was upon this people that Vortigern turned his eyes for succour against the Picts and Scots, whose cruelties, perhaps, were still more flagrant. It certainly was not without the most pressing invitations that the Saxons deigned to espouse their cause; and we are yet in possession of the form of their request, as left us by Wittichindus, a cotemporary historian of some credit: "The poor and distressed Britons, almost worn out by hostile invasions, and harassed by continual incursions, are humble suppliants to you, most valiant Saxons, for succour. We are possessed of a wide-extended and a fertile country; this we yield wholly to be at your devotion and command. Beneath the wings of your valour we seek for safety, and shall willingly undergo whatever services you may hereafter be pleased to impose."

It was no disagreeable circumstance to these conquerors, to be thus invited into a country upon which they had, for ages before, been forming designs. In consequence, therefore, of Vortigern's solemn invitation, they arrived with fifteen hundred men, under the command of Hengist and Horsa, who were brothers, and landed on the isle of Thanet. There they did not long remain inactive; but, being joined by the British forces, they boldly marched against the Picts and Scots, who had advanced as far as Lincolnshire, and soon gained a complete victory over them.

Hengist and Horsa possessed great credit among their countrymen at home, and had been much celebrated for their valour and the splendour of their descent. They were believed to be sprung from Woden, who was worshipped as a god among this people, and were said to be no more than the fourth in descent from him. This report, how fabulous soever, did not a little contribute to increase their authority among their associates; and being sensible of the fertility of the country to which they came, and the barrenness of that which they had left behind, they invited over great numbers of their countrymen to become sharers in their new expedition. It was no difficult matter to persuade the Saxons to embrace an enterprise, which promised at once an opportunity of displaying their valour and of rewarding their rapacity. Accordingly they sent over a fresh supply of five [450.] thousand men, who passed over in seventeen vessels.

It was now, but too late, that the Britons began to entertain apprehensions of their new allies, whose numbers they found augmenting as their services became less necessary. They had long found their chief protection in passive submission; and they resolved, upon this occasion, to bear every encroachment with patient resignation. But the Saxons, being determined to come to a rupture with them, easily found a pretext, in complaining that their subsidies were ill paid, and their provisions withdrawn. They, therefore, demanded that these grievances should be immediately redressed, otherwise they would do themselves justice; and in the mean time they engaged in a treaty with the Picts, whom they had been called in to repress. The Britons, impelled by the urgency of their calamities, at length took up arms; and having deposed Vortigern, by whose counsel and vices they were thus reduced to an extremity, they put themselves under

the command of Vortimer, his son. Many were the battles fought between these enraged nations, their hatred to each other being still more inflamed by the difference of their religion, the Britons being all Christians, and the Saxons still remaining in a state of idolatry. There is little to entertain the reader in the narration of battles, where rather obstinate valour than prudent conduct procured the victory; and, indeed, the accounts given us of them are very opposite, when described by British and Saxon annalists. However, the progress the latter still made in the island sufficiently proves the advantage to have been on their side; although, in a battle fought at Eglesford, Horsa, the Saxon general was slain.

But a single victory, or even a repetition of success, could avail but little against an enemy continually reinforced from abroad; for Hengist, now becoming sole commander, and procuring constant supplies from his native country, carried devastation into the most remote corners of Britain. Chiefly anxious to spread the terror of his arms, he spared neither sex, age, nor condition, but laid the country desolate before him. The priests and bishops found no protection from their sacred calling, but were slaughtered upon their altars. The people were massacred in heaps; and some, choosing life upon the most abject terms, were contented to become slaves to the victors. It was about this time that numbers deserted their native country, and fled over to Armorica, since called Brittany, where they settled in great numbers, among a people of the same manners and language with themselves.

The British historians, in order to account for the easy conquest of their country by the Saxons, assign their treachery, not less than their valour, as a principal cause. They allege that Vortigern was artfully inveigled into a passion for Rowena, the daughter of Hengist; and, in order to marry her, was induced to settle the fertile province of Kent upon her father, from whence the Saxons could never after be removed. It is alleged also, that, upon the death of Vortimer, which happened shortly after the victory obtained at Eglesford, Vortigern his father was reinstated upon the throne. It is added that this weak monarch accepting of a festival from Hengist, three hundred of his nobility were treacherously slaughtered, and himself detained as a captive.

Be these facts as they may, it is certain that the affairs of the Britons gradually declined; and they found but a temporary relief in the valour of one or two of their succeeding kings. After the death of Vortimer, Ambrosius, a Briton though of Roman descent, was invested with the command, and in some measure proved successful in uniting his countrymen against the Saxons. He penetrated with his army into the heart of their possessions; and though he fought them with doubtful advantage, yet he restored the British interest and dominion. Still, however, Hengist kept his ground in the country; and inviting over a new tribe of Saxons, under the command of his brother Octa, he settled them in Northumberland. As for himself, he kept possession of the kingdom of Kent, comprehending also Middlesex and Essex, fixing his royal seat at Canterbury, and leaving his new-acquired dominions to his posterity.

[488.] After the death of Hengist, several other German tribes, allured by the success of their countrymen, came over in great numbers. A body of their countrymen, under the [477.] command of Ælla and his three sons, had some time before laid the foundation of the kingdom of the South Saxons, though not without great opposition and bloodshed. This new kingdom included Surry, Sussex, and the New Forest; and extended to the frontiers of Kent.

Another tribe of Saxons, under the command of Cerdic and his son Kenric, landed in the West, and from thence took the name of West Saxons. These met a very vigorous opposition from the natives: but being reinforced from Germany, and assisted by their countrymen on the island, they routed the Britons; and although retarded in their progress by the celebrated king Arthur, they had strength enough to keep possession of the conquests they had already made. Cerdic, therefore, with his son Kenric, established the third Saxon kingdom in the island, namely, that of the West Saxons, including the counties of Hants, Dorset, Wilts, Berks, and the Isle of Wight.

It was in opposing this Saxon invader that the celebrated prince Arthur acquired his fame. Howsoever unsuccessful all his valour might have been in the end, yet his name makes so great a figure in the fabulous annals of the times, that some notice must be taken of him. This prince is of such obscure



original, that some authors suppose him to be the son of king Ambrosius, and others only his nephew; others again affirm that he was a Cornish prince, and son of Gurlois, king of that province. However this be, it is certain he was a commander of great valour; and could courage alone repair the miserable state of the Britons, his might have been effectual. According to Nennius, and the most authentic historians, he is said to have worsted the Saxons in twelve successive battles. In one of these, namely, that fought at Caerbaden, in Berks, it is asserted that he killed no less than four hundred and forty of the enemy with his own hand. But the Saxons were too numerous and powerful to be extirpated by the desultory efforts of single valour; so that a peace, and not conquest, were the immediate fruits of his victories. The enemy, therefore, still gained ground; and this prince, in the decline of life, had the mortification, from some domestic troubles of his own, to be a patient spectator of their encroachments. His first wife had been carried off by Melnas, king of Somersetshire, who detained her a whole year at Glastonbury, until Arthur, discovering the place of her retreat, advanced with an army against the ravisher, and obliged him to give her back, by the mediation of Gildas Albanus. In his second wife, perhaps, he might have been more fortunate, as we have no mention made of her; but it was otherwise with his third consort, who was debauched by his own nephew Mordred. This produced a rebellion, in which the king and his traitorous kinsman meeting in battle, they slew each other.

In the mean time, while the Saxons were thus gaining ground in the West, their countrymen were not less active in other parts of the island. Adventurers still continuing to pour over from Germany, one body of them, under the command of Uffa, seized upon the counties of Cambridge, Suffolk, and Norfolk, and gave their commander the title of king of the East Angles, which was the fourth Saxon kingdom founded in Britain. [575.]

Another body of these adventurers formed a kingdom under the title of East Saxony, or Essex, comprehending Essex, Middlesex, and part of Hertfordshire. This kingdom, which was dismembered from that of Kent, formed the fifth Saxon principality founded in Britain. [585.]

The kingdom of Mercia was the sixth which was established by these fierce invaders, comprehending all the middle counties, from the banks of the Severn to the frontiers of the two last-named kingdoms.

The seventh and last kingdom which they obtained was that of Northumberland, one of the most powerful and extensive of them all. This was formed from the union of two smaller Saxon kingdoms, the one called Bernicia, containing the present county of Northumberland and the bishopric of Durham; the subjects of the other, called the Deiri, extending themselves over Lancashire and Yorkshire. These kingdoms were united in the person of Ethelfrid, king of Northumberland, by the expulsion of Edwin, his brother-in-law, from the kingdom of the Deiri, and the seizure of his dominions.

In this manner, the natives being overpowered, or entirely expelled, seven kingdoms were established in Britain, which have been since well known by the name of the Saxon Heptarchy.—The unfortunate Britons having been exhausted by continual wars, and even worn out by their own victories, were reluctantly compelled to forsake the more fertile parts of the country, and to take refuge in the mountainous parts of Wales and Cornwall. All the vestiges of Roman luxury were now almost totally destroyed by the conquerors, who rather aimed at enjoying the comforts of life than its magnificence. The few natives who were not either massacred or expelled their habitations, were reduced to the most abject slavery, and employed in cultivating those grounds for their new masters, which they once claimed as their own.

From this time British and Roman customs entirely ceased in the island; the language, which had been either Latin or Celtic, was discontinued, and the Saxon or English only was spoken. The land, before divided into colonies or governments, was cantoned into shires, with Saxon appellations to distinguish them. The habits of the people in peace, and arms in war, their titles of honour, their laws, and methods of trial by jury, were continued as originally practised by the Germans, only with such alterations as increasing civilization produced. Conquerors, although they disseminate their own laws and manners, often borrow from the people they subdue. In the present instance they imitated the Britons in

their government, by despotic and hereditary monarchies, while their exemplary chastity, and their abhorrence of slavery, were quite forgotten.

The Saxons being thus established in all the desirable parts of the island, and having no longer the Britons to contend with, began to quarrel among themselves. A country divided into a number of petty independent principalities must ever be subject to contention, as jealousy and ambition have more frequent incentives to operate. The wars and revolutions of these little rival states were extremely numerous, and the accounts of them have swelled the historian's page. But these accounts are so confusedly written, the materials so dry, uninteresting, and filled with such improbable adventures, that a repetition of them can gratify neither the reader's judgment nor curiosity. Instead, therefore, of entering into a detail of tumultuous battles, petty treacheries, and obscure successions, it will be more conformable to the present plan to give some account of the introduction of Christianity among the Saxons, which happened during this dreary period.

The Christian religion never suffered more persecution than it underwent in Britain from the barbarity of the Saxon pagans, who burned all the churches, stained the altars with the blood of the clergy and massacred all those whom they found professing Christianity. This deplorable state of religion in Britain was first taken into consideration by St. Gregory, who was then pope; and he undertook to send missionaries thither. It is said, that before his elevation to the papal chair, he chanced one day to pass through the slave-market at Rome, and perceiving some children of great beauty who were set up for sale, he inquired about their country; and finding they were English pagans, he is said to have cried out, in the Latin language, *Non Angli sed Angeli forent, si essent Christiani*—"They would not be English, but Angels, had they been Christians." From that time he was struck with an ardent desire to convert that unenlightened nation, and actually embarked in a ship for Britain; when his pious intentions were frustrated by his being detained at Rome by the populace, who loved him. He did not however lay aside his holy resolution; for, having succeeded to the papal chair, he ordered a monk, named Augustine, and others of the same fraternity, to undertake the mission into Britain. It was not with-

out some reluctance that these reverend men undertook so dangerous a task; but some favourable circumstances in Britain seemed providentially to prepare the way for their arrival. Ethelbert, king of Kent, in his father's lifetime, had married Bertha, the only daughter of Caribert, king of Paris, one of the descendants of Clovis, king of Gaul. But before he was admitted to this alliance, he was obliged to stipulate that this princess should enjoy the free exercise of her religion, which was that of Christianity. She was therefore attended to Canterbury, the place of her residence, by Luidhard, a Gaulish prelate, who officiated in a church dedicated to St. Martin, which had been built by the Romans, near the walls of Canterbury. The exemplary conduct and powerful preaching of this primitive bishop, added to the queen's learning and zeal, made very strong impressions upon the king, as well as the rest of his subjects, in favour of Christianity. The general reception of this holy religion all over the continent might also contribute to dispose the minds of these idolaters for its admission, and make the attempt less dangerous than Augustine and his associates at first supposed.

This pious monk, upon his first landing in the Isle of Thanet, sent one of his interpreters to the Kentish king, declaring he was come from Rome with offers of eternal salvation. In the meantime he and his followers lay in the open air, that they might not, according to the belief of the times, by entering a Saxon house, subject themselves to the power of heathen necromancy. The king immediately ordered them to be furnished with all necessaries, and even visited them, though without declaring himself as yet in their favour. Augustine, however, encouraged by this favourable reception, and now seeing a prospect of success, proceeded with redoubled zeal to preach the gospel, and even endeavoured to call in the aid of miracles to enforce his exhortations. So much assiduity, together with the earnestness of his address, the austerity of his life, and the example of his followers, at last powerfully operated. The king openly espoused the Christian religion, while his example wrought so successfully on his subjects, that numbers of them came voluntarily to be baptized, their missionary loudly declaring against any coercive means towards their conversion. The heathen temples, being purified, were changed to places of Christian worship; and such churches

as had been suffered to decay were repaired. The more to facilitate the reception of Christianity, the pope enjoined his missionary to remove the pagan idols, but not to throw down the altars, observing, that the people would be allured to frequent those places which they had formerly been accustomed to reverence. He also permitted him to indulge the people in those feasts and cheerful entertainments which they had been formerly accustomed to celebrate near the places of their idolatrous worship. The people thus exchanged their antient opinions with readiness, since they found themselves indulged in those innocent relaxations, which are only immoral when carried to an excess. Augustine was consecrated archbishop of Canterbury, endowed with authority over all the British churches; and his associates, having spread themselves over all the country, completed that conversion which was so happily begun.

The kingdom of the heptarchy which next embraced the Christian faith was that of Northumberland, at that time the most powerful of the rest: Edwin, a wise, brave, and active prince, then king of the country, was married to Ethelburga, the daughter of Ethelbert, who had been so lately converted. This princess, emulating the glory of her mother, who had been the instrument of converting her husband and his subjects to Christianity, carried Paulinus, a learned bishop, with her into Northumberland, having previously stipulated for the free exercise of her religion. Edwin, whom his queen unceasingly solicited to embrace Christianity, for a long time hesitated on the proposal, willing to examine its doctrines before he declared in their favour. Accordingly he held several conferences with Paulinus, disputed with his counsellors, meditated alone, and, after a serious discussion, declared himself a Christian. The high-priest also of the pagan superstition soon after declaring himself a convert to the arguments of Paulinus, the whole body of the people unanimously followed their example.

The authority of Edwin, who was thus converted, soon after prevailed upon Earpwold, the king of the East Angles, to embrace Christianity. This monarch, however, after the death of Edwin, relapsed into his former idolatry, at the persuasion of his wife. But upon his decease, Sigebert, his half-brother, who had

been educated in France, restored Christianity, and introduced learning among the Angles.

Mercia, the most powerful kingdom of all the Saxon heptarchy, owed its conversion, like the former, to a woman. The wife of Peada, who was the daughter of Oswy, king of Northumberland, having been bred in the Christian faith, employed her influence with success in converting her husband and his subjects. But it seems the new religion was attended with small influence on the manners of that fierce people, as we find Otto, one of their new-converted kings, in a few reigns after, treacherously destroying Ethelbert, king of the East Angles, at an entertainment to which he had been invited. However, to make atonement for this transgression, we find him paying great court to the clergy, giving the tenth of his goods to the church, and making a pilgrimage to Rome, where his riches procured him the papal absolution. It was upon this occasion, the better to ingratiate himself with the pope, that he engaged to pay him a yearly donation for the support of an English college at Rome; and, in order to raise the sum, he imposed a tax of a penny on each house possessed of thirty pence a year. This imposition being afterwards generally levied throughout the kingdom, went by the name of Peter-pence, and in succeeding times gave rise to many ecclesiastical abuses.

In the kingdom of Essex, Sebert, who was nephew to Ethelbert, king of Kent, of whose conversion we have already made mention, was also prevailed upon by his uncle to embrace the Christian religion. His sons, however, relapsed into idolatry, and banished Melitus, the Christian bishop, from their territories, because he refused to let them eat the white bread which was distributed at the communion. But Christianity was restored two or three reigns after, by Sigebert the Good; and such was the influence of its doctrines upon Offa, the third in succession from him, that he went upon a pilgrimage to Rome, and shut himself up during the rest of his life in a cloister.

We know but little of the propagation of Christianity in the kingdom of Sussex; but this being the smallest of all the Saxon heptarchy, it is probable that it was governed in its opinions by some of its more powerful neighbours. It is said, that, during the reign of Cissa, one of its kings, which continued seventy-six

years, the kingdom fell into a total dependencé upon that of Wessex, and to this it is probable that it owed its conversion.

The kingdom of Wessex, which in the end swallowed up all the rest, deserves our more particular attention. This principality, which, as has been already related, was founded by Cerdic, was, of all the Saxon establishments in Britain, the most active and warlike. The great opposition the invaders of this province originally met from the natives, whom they expelled, not without much bloodshed, served to carry their martial spirit to the highest pitch. Cerdic was succeeded by his son Kenric, and he by Ceanhin, a prince more ambitious and enterprising than either of the former. He had, by waging continual war against the Britons, added a great part of the counties of Devon and Somerset to his dominions; and, not satisfied with conquest over his natural enemies, he attacked the Saxons themselves, till, becoming terrible to all, he provoked a general confederacy against him. This combination took place; so that he was at last expelled the throne, and died in exile and misery. His two sons succeeded; and, after a succession of two more, Kynegils inherited the crown. This prince embraced Christianity through the persuasion of Oswald, the king of Northumberland, his son-in-law. After some succeeding obscure reigns, Ceodwalla mounted the throne, an enterprising, warlike, and successful prince. He subdued entirely the kingdom of Sussex, and annexed it to his own dominions. He made also some attempts upon Kent, but was repulsed with vigour. Ina, his successor, was the most renowned and illustrious of all the kings who reigned in England during the heptarchy. This monarch inherited the military virtues of Ceodwalla, but improved by policy, justice, and prudence. He made war upon the Britons, who yet remained in Somersetshire; and having totally subdued that province, he treated the vanquished with a humanity hitherto unknown to the Saxon conquerors. In less than a year after he mounted the throne of Wessex, he was declared monarch of the Anglo-Saxons: a remarkable proof of the great character he had acquired. He compiled a body of laws, which served as the ground-work of those which were afterwards published by Alfred. He also assembled a general council of the clergy, in which it was determined that all churches, monasteries, and places of religious worship which had gone to

ruin or decay, should be rebuilt and repaired. At length, after a distinguished reign of thirty-seven years, in the decline of life, he made a pilgrimage to Rome; and, on his return home, shut himself up in a cloister, where he died. To him succeeded Oswald, Cudred, Sigebert, Cenulph, and Brithric; all these claiming the crown, not entirely by hereditary right, nor yet totally rejecting their family pretensions.

It was in the reign of the last-named monarch, that Egbert, a grand nephew of the late king Ina, began to grow very popular among the West Saxons, both on account of his family and private merit. Being sensible, however, of the danger of popularity, under such a jealous monarch as Brithric, he withdrew secretly into France, to the court of Charlemagne, at that time the most polished prince of Europe. This was a school in which young Egbert failed not to make a rapid proficiency; and he soon acquired such accomplishments, both in arts and arms, as raised him greatly superior to any of his countrymen at home.

Nor was it long before this prince had an opportunity of displaying his natural and acquired talents to advantage; for, Brithric being poisoned by his wife Eadburga, the nobility recalled him from France, in order to ascend the throne of his ancestors.

[799.] About that time also, a fortunate concurrence of events seemed to prepare the way for his becoming sole monarch of the whole country. In all the kingdoms of the heptarchy, an exact rule of succession was but little regarded; while, at the same time, family pretensions were not laid totally aside. Every person of the collateral line had as good a right to assert his claim as those who urged direct descent; so that the reigning monarch was under continual apprehensions from the princes of the blood, whom he was taught to consider as rivals, and whose death alone could ensure him tranquillity. From this fatal cause, together with the passion princes then had of retiring to monasteries, and the opinion of merit attending the preservation of chastity, even in a married state; from these causes, I say, the royal families had been entirely extinguished in all the kingdoms, except that of Wessex. Thus Egbert was the only surviving descendant of those conquerors who boasted their descent from Woden; and consequently, beside his personal merit, he had hereditary pretensions to the throne of the united kingdoms.



It is indeed probable that he had already planned the union of the heptarchy; but, in order to avert the suspicions of the neighbouring states, he attacked the Britons in Cornwall, and continued to act as mediator among the Saxon princes, whose differences were become almost irreconcilable. His moderation in these good offices, the prudence he manifested in his own government, and his known capacity in the affairs of war and peace, procured him such a degree of reputation that he was soon considered as chief of the Saxon heptarchy.

But his ambition was not to be satisfied with a mere nominal superiority; he still aimed at breaking down all distinctions, and uniting these petty states into one great and flourishing kingdom. The king of Mercia was the first who furnished him with a pretext for recovering the part of his dominions which had formerly been dismembered by that state. Beornulf, the monarch of that country, who had already almost obtained the sovereignty over the heptarchy, taking advantage of Egbert's absence, who was employed in quelling the Britons, invaded his dominions with a numerous army composed of the flower of his country. Egbert was not remiss in marching to oppose him, with a body of troops less numerous than those of Beornulf, but more brave and resolute. Both armies met at Wilton, and a battle ensuing, the Mercians were defeated with terrible slaughter.

In the mean time, while the victor pursued his conquest into the enemies' country, he dispatched his eldest son, Ethelwolf, with an army, into the kingdom of Kent, who soon made himself master of the whole nation, and expelled Baldred, their monarch, to whom his subjects had paid a very unwilling obedience. The East Saxons also, and part of Surry, dissatisfied with their subjection to the Mercians, readily submitted to Egbert; nor were the East Angles backward in sending ambassadors to crave his protection and assistance against that nation, whose yoke they had for some time endured, and were resolved no longer to bear. The Mercian king, attempting to repress their defection, was defeated and slain: and two years after, Ludecan, his successor, met with the same fate. Withalf, one of their ealdermen, soon after put himself at their head; but being driven from province to province by the victorious arms of Egbert, he was, at last, obliged to take shelter in the abbey of Croyland, while Egbert

made himself master of the whole kingdom of Mercia. However, in order to accustom that people to his dominion, he permitted Withalf to govern the kingdom as a vassal, and tributary under him; thus, at once satisfying his ambition, and flattering the people with an appearance of their former government.

The king of Northumberland was the last that submitted to his authority. This state had been long harassed by civil wars and usurpations: all order had been destroyed among the people, and the kingdom was weakened to such a degree, that it was in no condition to withstand such an invader as Egbert. The inhabitants, therefore, unable to resist his power, and desirous of possessing some established form of government, very cheerfully sent deputies, who submitted to his authority, and expressed their allegiance to him as their sovereign. By this submission, all the kingdoms of the heptarchy were united under his command; but, to give splendor to his authority, a general council of the clergy and laity was summoned at Winchester, where he was solemnly crowned king of England, by which name the united kingdom was thenceforward called.

Thus, about four hundred years after the first arrival of the Saxons in Britain, all their petty settlements were united into one great state, and nothing offered but prospects of peace, security, and increasing refinement. At this [827.] period, namely about the eighth century, the arts and sciences, which had been before only known to the Greeks and Romans, were disseminated over Europe, where they were sufficient to raise the people above mere barbarians; but yet lost all their native splendor in the transplantation. The English, at this time, might be considered as polite, if compared to the naked Britons at the invasion of Cæsar. The houses, furniture, clothes, eating, and all the real luxuries of sense, were almost as great then as they have been since. But the people were incapable of sentimental pleasure. All the learning of the times was confined among the clergy; and little improvement could be expected from their reasonings, since it was one of their tenets to discard the light of reason. An eclipse was even by their historians talked of as an omen of threatened calamities; and magic was not only believed, but some actually believed themselves magicians. Even the clergy were not averse to these opinions, as

such, in some measure, served to increase their authority. Indeed the reverence of the clergy was carried so high, that if a person appeared in a sacerdotal habit on the highway, the people flocked round him, and, with all the marks of profound respect, received every word he uttered as an oracle. From this blind attachment, the social and even the military virtues began to decline among them. The reverence towards saints and relics served to supplant the adoration of the Supreme Being. Monastic observances were esteemed more meritorious than active virtues; and bounty to the church atoned for all the violences done to society. The nobility, whose duty it was to preserve the military spirit from declining, began to prefer the sloth and security of a cloister to the tumult and glory of war; and those rewards which should have gone to encourage the soldier, were lavished in maintaining the credulous indolence of monastic superstition.

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#### CHAP. IV.

##### FROM THE ACCESSION OF *EGBERT* TO THE *NORMAN CONQUEST*.

IT might have been reasonably expected, that a wise and fortunate prince, at the head of so great a kingdom, and so united and numerous a people as the English then were, should not only have enjoyed the fruits of peace and quiet, but left felicity to succeeding generations. The inhabitants of the several provinces, tired out with mutual dissensions, seemed to have lost all desire of revolting: the race of their antient kings was extinct, and none now remained but a prince who deserved their allegiance, both by the merit of his services and the splendor of his birth. Yet, such is the instability of human affairs, and the weakness of man's best conjecture, that Egbert was hardly settled on this united throne, when both he and his subjects began to be alarmed at the approach of new and unknown enemies, and the island exposed to fresh invasions.

About this time a mighty swarm of those nations who had possessed the countries bordering on the Baltic, be- [819.]

gan, under the names of Danes and Normans, to infest the western coasts of Europe; and to fill all places, wherever they came, with slaughter and devastation. These were, in fact, no other than the ancestors of the very people whom they came to despoil, and might be considered as the original stock from whence the numerous colonies that infested Britain had migrated some centuries before. The Normans fell upon the northern coasts of France; the Danes chiefly levelled their fury against England, their first appearance being when Brithric was king of Wessex.

[787.] It was then that a small body of them landed on the coasts of that kingdom, with a view of learning the state of the country; and, having committed some small depredations, fled to their ships for safety. About seven years after the first attempt they made a descent upon the kingdom of Northumberland, where they pillaged a monastery; but their fleet being shattered by a storm, they were defeated by the inhabitants, and put to the sword. It was not till about five years after the accession of Egbert that their invasions became truly formidable. From that time they continued with unceasing ferocity, until the whole kingdom was reduced to a state of the most distressful bondage.

As the Saxons had utterly neglected their naval power since their first settlement in Britain, the Danes, who succeeded them in the empire of the sea, found no difficulty in landing upon the isle of Sheppey, in Kent, which they ravaged, returning to their ships laden with the spoil. Their next attempt, the year ensuing, was at the mouth of the Tyne, where they landed a body of fifteen thousand men, that made good their ground against the efforts of Egbert; who, after a battle, was obliged to draw off his forces by night. Within two years after, they landed in Cornwall; and being joined by the Britons there, they advanced towards the borders of Devonshire, where they were totally routed by Egbert, in a pitched battle, at Hengsdown-hill near Kellington. By this victory he secured the kingdom from invasion for some time; but his death seemed to put a period to the success of his countrymen, and to invite the enemy to renew their devastations with impunity.

He was succeeded by Ethelwolf, his son, who had neither the vigour nor the abilities of his father. This prince had been educated in a cloister, and had actually taken orders during the

life of his elder brother ; but upon his death he received a dispensation to quit the monkish habit, and to marry. He was scarcely settled on his throne when a fleet of Danish ravagers, consisting of thirty-three sail, landed at Southampton ; but were repulsed, though not without great slaughter on both sides. However, no defeat could repress the obstinacy, nor could any difficulties daunt the courage of these fierce invaders, who still persevered in their descents, and, year after year, made inroads into the country, marking their way with pillage, slaughter, and desolation. Though often repulsed, they always obtained their end,—of spoiling the country and carrying the plunder away. It was their method to avoid coming, if possible, to a general engagement ; but scattering themselves over the face of the country, they carried away, indiscriminately, as well the inhabitants themselves as all their moveable possessions. If the military force of the country was drawn out against them, the invaders either stood their ground, if strong enough to oppose ; or retreated to their ships, if incapable of resistance. Thus, by making continual and repeated descents, every part of England was kept in constant alarm, every county fearful of giving assistance to the next, as its own safety was in danger. From this general calamity the priests and monks were no way exempted ; they were rather the chief objects on whom these Danish idolaters wreaked their resentment.

In this state of fluctuating success affairs continued for some time, the English often repelling, and as often being repulsed by, their fierce invaders ; till at length the Danes resolved upon making a settlement in the country, and, landing on the isle of Thanet, stationed themselves there. In this place they kept their ground, notwithstanding a bloody victory [852.] gained over them by Ethelwolf. From thence they soon after removed to the isle of Sheppey, which they considered as more convenient for their tumultuary depredations.

In the mean time Ethelwolf, the wretched monarch of the country, instead of exerting his strength to repel these invaders, was more solicitous to obey the dictates of monkish superstition. In order to manifest his devotion to the pope, he sent his son Alfred to Rome to receive confirmation from his holiness ; and, not satisfied with this testimony of his zeal, undertook a pilgrimage

thither in person. He passed a twelvemonth in that city, and gained no small applause for his devotion, which he testified by his great liberality to the church. In his return home he married Judith, daughter to the emperor Charles the Bald; but, on his landing in his own dominions, he was surprised to find his title to the crown disputed.

His second son, Ethelbald, upon the death of his elder brother, perceiving the miserable state to which the kingdom was reduced by the king's ill-timed superstitions, formed a conspiracy to expel him from the throne. The people seemed equally divided between the claims of the father and son; so that a bloody civil war seemed likely to complete the picture of the calamities of the times. A division of the kingdom at length terminated the dispute; the king was content with the eastern part of the monarchy, while his son was appointed to govern the western, which was the most powerful, and the most exposed to danger.

Having come to this agreement, a council was summoned of the states of the kingdom; and, besides the ratification of this grant, a tith of all the produce of the land was settled upon the clergy.

Ethelwolf lived only two years after this agreement; leaving, by will, the kingdom shared between his two eldest sons, Ethelbald and Ethelbert; the west being consigned to the former, the east to the latter. The reign of Ethelbald was of no long continuance; however, in so short a space, he crowded a number of vices sufficient to render his name odious to posterity. He married Judith, his own mother-in-law; and was, not without great difficulty, prevailed upon to divorce her. The reign of his brother was of longer duration; and, as we are told, was in every respect more meritorious. Nevertheless, the kingdom was still infested by the Danes, who committed great outrages.

This prince was succeeded by his brother Ethelred, a brave king, but whose valour was insufficient to repress the Danish incursions. In these exploits he was always assisted by his younger brother Alfred, afterwards surnamed the Great, who sacrificed all private resentment to the public good, having been deprived by the king of a large patrimony. It was during this prince's reign that the Danes, penetrating into Mercia, took up their winter-quarters at Nottingham; from whence they were

not dislodged without difficulty. Their next station was at Reading, from whence they infested the country with their excursions. The king, attended by his brother Alfred, marched at the head of the West Saxons against them; there, after many reciprocations of success, the king died of a wound which he received in battle, and left to his brother Alfred the inheritance of a kingdom that was now reduced to the brink of ruin.

Nothing could be more deplorable than the state of the country when Alfred came to the throne. The Danes had already subdued Northumberland and East Anglia, and had penetrated into the very heart of Wessex. The Mercians were united against him; the dependence upon the other provinces of the empire was but precarious; the lands lay uncultivated, through fears of continual incursions; and all the churches and monasteries were burned to the ground. In this terrible situation of affairs nothing appeared but objects of terror, and every hope was lost in despair. The wisdom and virtues of one man were found sufficient to bring back happiness, security, and order; and all the calamities of the times found redress from Alfred.

This prince seemed born not only to defend his bleeding country, but even to adorn humanity. He had given very early instances of those great virtues which afterwards signalized his reign; and was anointed by pope Leo as future king, when he was sent by his father for his education to Rome. On his return from thence, he became every day more the object of his father's fond affections; and that, perhaps, was the reason why his education was at first neglected. He had attained the age of twelve before he was made acquainted with the lowest elements of literature; but hearing some Saxon poems read which recounted the praise of heroes, his whole mind was roused, not only to obtain a similitude of glory, but also to be able to transmit that glory to posterity. Encouraged by the queen his mother, and assisted by a penetrating genius, he soon learned to read these compositions, and proceeded from thence to a knowledge of Latin authors, who directed his taste, and rectified his ambition.

He was scarce come to the crown when he was obliged to oppose the Danes, who had seized Wilton, and were exercising their usual ravages on the countries around. He marched against them with the few troops he could assemble on a sudden,

and a desperate battle was fought, to the disadvantage of the English. But it was not in the power of misfortune to abate the king's diligence, though it repressed his power to do good. He was in a little time enabled to hazard another engagement: so that the enemy, dreading his courage and activity, proposed terms of peace, which he did not think proper to refuse. They had by this treaty agreed to relinquish the kingdom; but, instead of complying with their engagements, they only removed from one place to another, burning and destroying wherever they came.

Alfred, thus opposed to an enemy whom no stationary force could resist, nor no treaty could bind, found himself unable to repel the efforts of those ravagers, who from all quarters invaded him. New swarms of the enemy arrived every year upon the coast, and fresh invasions were still projected. It was in vain that Alfred pursued them, straitened their quarters, and compelled them to treaties: they broke every league; and, continuing their attacks with unabated perseverance, at length totally dispirited his army, and induced his superstitious soldiers to believe themselves abandoned by Heaven, since it thus permitted the outrages of the fierce idolaters with impunity. Some of them therefore left their country, and retired into Wales, or fled to the continent. Others submitted to the conquerors, and purchased their lives by their freedom. In this universal defection, Alfred vainly attempted to remind them of the duty they owed their country and their king; but, finding his remonstrances ineffectual, he was obliged to give way to the wretched necessity of the times. Accordingly, relinquishing the ensigns of his dignity, and dismissing his servants, he dressed himself in the habit of a peasant, and lived for some time in the house of a herdsman, who had been intrusted with the care of his cattle. In this manner, though abandoned by the world, and fearing an enemy in every quarter, still he resolved to continue in his country, to catch the slightest occasions for bringing it relief. In his solitary retreat, which was in the county of Somerset, at the confluence of the rivers Parret and Thone, he amused himself with music, and supported his humble lot with the hopes of better fortune. It is said, that, one day, being commanded by the herdsman's wife, who was ignorant of his quality, to take care of some cakes



which were baking by the fire, he happened to let them burn, for which she severely upbraided him for neglect.

Previous to his retirement, Alfred had concerted measures for assembling a few trusty friends, whenever an opportunity should offer of annoying the enemy, who were now in possession of all the country. This chosen band, still faithful to their monarch, took shelter in the forests and marshes of Somerset, and from thence made occasional irruptions upon straggling parties of the enemy. Their success, in this rapacious and dreary method of living, encouraged many more to join their society, till at length, sufficiently augmented, they repaired to their monarch, who had by that time been reduced by famine to the last extremity.

Mean while, Ubba, the chief of the Danish commanders, carried terror over the whole land, and now ravaged the country of Wales without opposition. The only place where he found resistance was, in his return, from the castle of Kenwith, into which the earl of Devonshire had retired with a small body of troops. This gallant soldier finding himself unable to sustain a siege, and knowing the danger of surrendering to a perfidious enemy, was resolved, by one desperate effort, to sally out and force his way through the besiegers, sword in hand. The proposal was embraced by all his followers, while the Danes, secure in their numbers, and in their contempt of the enemy, were not only routed with great slaughter, but Ubba, their general, was slain.

This victory once more restored courage to the dispirited Saxons; and Alfred, taking advantage of their favourable disposition, prepared to animate them to a vigorous exertion of their superiority. He soon therefore apprised them of the place of his retreat, and instructed them to be ready with all their strength at a minute's warning. But none was found who would undertake to give intelligence of the forces and posture of the enemy. Not knowing, therefore, a person in whom to confide, he undertook this dangerous task himself. In the simple dress of a shepherd, with a harp in his hands, he entered the Danish camp, tried all his arts to please, and was so much admired that he was brought into the presence of Guthrum, the Danish prince, with whom he remained some days. There he remarked the supine security of the Danes, their contempt of the English, their negligence in foraging and plundering, and their dissolute wasting of such ill-got-

ten booty. Having made his observations, he returned to his retreat, and, detaching proper emissaries among his subjects, appointed them to meet him in arms in the forests of Selwood,—a summons which they gladly obeyed.

It was against the most unguarded quarter of the enemy that Alfred made his most violent attack, while the Danes, surprised to behold an army of English, whom they considered as totally subdued, made but a faint resistance, notwithstanding the superiority of their number. They were routed with great slaughter: and though such as escaped fled for refuge into a fortified camp in the neighbourhood, yet, being unprovided for a siege, in [876.] less than a fortnight they were compelled to surrender at discretion. By the conqueror's permission, those who did not choose to embrace Christianity embarked for Flanders, under the command of one of their generals called Hastings. Guthrum, their prince, became a convert, with thirty of his nobles, and the king himself answered for him at the font.

Of the Danes who had enlisted with Hastings, a part returned, contrary to agreement, once more to ravage that country where they had been so mercifully spared, and, landing on the coasts of Kent, advanced towards Rochester, in hopes of surprising that city. They were soon, however, deterred from proceeding, by hearing that Alfred was upon his march to oppose them. That such depredations might be prevented for the future, this monarch equipped a strong fleet, with which he attacked and destroyed sixteen of their vessels in the port of Harwich. There was now but the port of London open to the invaders; and as that city was but weakly garrisoned, he soon reduced it to capitulation. Having augmented its fortifications, and embellished it with a number of new edifices, he delivered it in charge to his son-in-law, Ethelred, and thus secured the whole country from foreign danger.

Alfred had now attained the meridian of glory; he possessed a greater extent of territory than had ever been enjoyed by any of his predecessors; the kings of Wales did him homage for their possessions, the Northumbrians received a king of his appointing, and no enemy appeared to give him the least apprehensions, or excite an alarm. In this state of prosperity and profound tranquillity, which lasted for twelve years, Alfred was dil-

igently employed in cultivating the arts of peace, and in repairing the damages which the kingdom had sustained by war. After rebuilding the ruined cities which had been destroyed by the Danes, he established a regular militia for the defence of the kingdom. He took care that all his subjects should be armed and registered; he assigned them a regular rotation of duty; a part was employed to cultivate the land, while others were appointed to repel any sudden invasion from the enemy. He took care to provide a naval force that was more than a match for the invaders, and trained his subjects as well in the practice of sailing as of naval engagements. A fleet of a hundred and twenty ships of war was thus stationed along the coasts; and being well supplied with all things necessary, both for subsistence and war, it impressed the incursive enemy with awe. Not but that there succeeded some very formidable descents, which the king found it difficult to repress. Hastings, the Danish chieftain, in particular, appeared off the coast of Kent with a fleet of three hundred and fifty sail; and although his forces were vigorously opposed and repulsed by the vigilance of Alfred, yet he found means to secure himself in the possession of Bamflete, near the isle of Canvey, in the county of Essex. But he was not long settled there when his garrison was overpowered by a body of the citizens of London, with great slaughter, and his wife and two sons made captives. These experienced the king's clemency: he restored them to Hastings, on condition that he should depart the kingdom. Nor were the East Anglian Danes, as well as insurgents of Northumberland, much more successful. These broke into rebellion; and, yielding to their favourite habits of depredation, embarked on board two hundred and forty vessels, and appeared before Exeter. There, however, they met a very bloody reception from Alfred; and were so discouraged, that they put to sea again without attempting any other enterprise. A third body of piratical Danes were even more unsuccessful than either of the former. Great numbers of them, after the departure of Hastings, seized and fortified Shobury, at the mouth of the Thames; and, having left a garrison there, marched along the banks of the river till they came to Bodington, in the county of Gloucester, where being reinforced by a body of Welshmen, they threw up entrenchments, and prepared for defence. There they were sur-

rounded by the king's forces, and reduced to the utmost extremity. After having eaten their horses, and many of them perishing with hunger, they made a desperate sally, in which numbers were cut to pieces. Those who escaped, being pursued by the vigilance of Alfred, were finally dispersed, or totally destroyed. Nor did he treat the Northumbrian freebooters with less severity. Falling upon them while they were exercising their ravages in the West, he took twenty of their ships; and having tried all the prisoners at Winchester, he hanged them as pirates, and as the common enemies of mankind.

Having by this vigilance and well-timed severity given peace and total security to his subjects, his next care was to polish the country by arts, as he had protected it by arms. He is said to have drawn up a body of laws; but those which remain to this day under his name seem to be only the laws already practised in the country by his Saxon ancestors, and to which, probably, he gave his sanction. The trial by juries, mulcts and fines for offences, by some ascribed to him, are of a much more antient date. The care of Alfred for the encouragement of learning did not a little tend to improve the morals and restrain the barbarous habits of the people. When he came to the throne, he found the English sunk into the grossest ignorance and barbarism, proceeding from the continued disorders of the government and from the ravages of the Danes. He himself complains, that, on his accession, he knew not one person south of the Thames who could so much as interpret the Latin service. To remedy this deficiency, he invited over the most celebrated scholars from all parts of Europe; he founded, or at least re-established, the university of Oxford, and endowed it with many privileges. He gave, in his own example, the strongest incentives to study. He usually divided his time into three equal portions; one was given to sleep, and the refecton of his body, diet, and exercise; another to the dispatch of business; and the third to study and devotion. He made a considerable progress in the different studies of grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, architecture, and geometry. He was an excellent historian, he understood music, and was acknowledged to be the best Saxon poet of the age. He left many works behind him, many of which remain to this day. He translated the Pastoral of Gregory I., *Boetius de Consolatione*, and Bede's Ecclesi-

astical History, into the Saxon language. Sensible that his illiterate subjects were not much susceptible of speculative instruction, he endeavoured to convey his morality by parables and stories, and is said to have translated from the Greek the Fables of Æsop. Nor did he even neglect the more mechanical arts of life. Before his time the generality of the people chiefly made use of timber in building. Alfred raised his palaces of brick, and the nobility by degrees began to imitate his example. He introduced and encouraged manufactures of all kinds; and no inventor or improver of any ingenious art was suffered to go unrewarded. Even the elegancies of life were brought to him from the Mediterranean; and his subjects, by seeing these productions of the peaceful arts, were taught to respect the virtues of justice and industry, by which alone they could be procured. It was after a glorious reign of twenty-nine years, thus spent in the advancement of his subjects' happiness, that he died, in the vig- [901.]  
our of his age, and the full enjoyment of his faculties,

an example to princes, and an ornament to human nature. To give a character of this prince would only be to sum up those qualities which constitute perfection. Even virtues seemingly opposite were happily blended in his disposition; persevering, yet flexible; moderate, yet enterprising; just, yet merciful; stern in command, yet gentle in conversation. Nature also, as if desirous that such admirable qualities of mind should be set off to the greatest advantage, had bestowed on him all bodily accomplishments, vigour, dignity, and an engaging, open countenance. In short, historians have taken such delight in describing the hero, that they have totally omitted the mention of his smaller errors, which doubtless he must have had in consequence of his humanity.

Alfred had, by his wife Ethelwitha, the daughter of a Mercian earl, three sons and three daughters. His eldest son, Edmund, died without issue, during his father's life-time. His third son, Ethelward, inherited his father's passion for letters, and lived a private life. His second son, Edward, succeeded him on the throne.

EDWARD was scarce settled on the throne when his pretensions were disputed by Ethelward, his cousin-german, who raised a large party among the Northumbrians to espouse his cause. At first his aims seemed to be favoured by fortune; but he was soon

after killed in battle, and his death thus freed Edward from a very dangerous competitor. Nevertheless the death of their leader was not sufficient to intimidate his turbulent adherents. During the whole of this prince's reign there were but few intervals free from the attempts and insurrections of the Northumbrian rebels. Many were the battles he fought, and the victories he won; so that, though he might be deemed unequal to his father in the arts of peace, he did not fall short of him in the military virtues. He built several castles, and fortified different cities. He reduced Turkethill, a Danish invader, and obliged him to retire with his followers. He subdued the East Angles, and acquired dominion over the Northumbrians themselves. He was assisted in these conquests by his sister, Ethelfleda, the widow of Ethelbert, earl of Mercia, who, after her husband's death, retained the government of that province. Thus, after Edward had reduced the whole kingdom to his obedience, and begun his endeavours to promote the happiness of his people, he was prevented by death from the completion of his designs.

[925.] To him succeeded **ATHELSTAN**, his natural son, the illegitimacy of his birth not being then deemed a sufficient obstacle to his inheriting the crown. To this prince, as to the former, there was some opposition made in the beginning. Alfred, a nobleman of his kindred, is said to have entered into a conspiracy against him, in favour of the legitimate sons of the deceased king, who were yet too young to be capable of governing themselves. Whatever his attempts might have been, he denied the charge, and offered to clear himself of it by oath before the pope. The proposal was accepted; and it is asserted, that he had scarce sworn himself innocent, when he fell into convulsions, and died three days after. This monarch received also some disturbance from the Northumbrian Danes, whom he compelled to surrender; and resenting the conduct of Constantine, king of Scotland, who had given them assistance, he ravaged that country with impunity, till at length he was appeased by the humble submissions of that monarch. These submissions, however, being extorted, were insincere. Soon after Athelstan had evacuated that kingdom, Constantine entered into a confederacy with a body of Danish pirates and some Welsh princes who were jealous of Athelstan's growing greatness. A bloody battle was

fought at Brunsburg, in Northumberland, in which the English monarch was again victorious. After this success, Athelstan enjoyed his crown in tranquillity; and he is regarded as one of the ablest and most active of the Saxon kings. During his reign the Bible was translated into the Saxon language; and some alliances also were formed by him with the princes on the continent. He died at Gloucester, after a reign of six- [941.] teen years; and was succeeded by his brother Edmund.

EDMUND, like the rest of his predecessors, met with disturbance from the Northumbrians on his accession to the throne; but his activity soon defeated their attempts. The great end, therefore, which he aimed at, during his reign, was to curb the licentiousness of this people, who offered to embrace Christianity as an atonement for their offences. Among other schemes for the benefit of the people, he was the first monarch who, by law, instituted capital punishments in England. Remarking that fines and pecuniary mulcts were too gentle methods of treating robbers, who were, in general, men who had nothing to lose, he enacted, that, in gangs of robbers, when taken, the oldest of them should be condemned to the gallows. This was reckoned a very severe law at the time it was enacted; for, among our early ancestors, all the penal laws were mild and merciful. The resentment this monarch bore to men of that desperate way of living was the cause of his death. His virtues, abilities, wealth, and temperance, promised him a long and happy reign; when, on a certain day, as he was solemnizing a festival in Gloucestershire, he remarked that Leolf, a notorious robber whom he had sentenced to banishment, had yet the boldness to enter the hall where he was dining, and to sit at the table among the royal attendants. Enraged at this insolence, he commanded him to leave the room; but on his refusing to obey, the king, whose temper was naturally choleric, flew against him, and caught him by the hair. The ruffian, giving way to rage also on his side, drew a dagger, and, lifting his arm, with a furious blow stabbed the monarch to the heart, who fell down on the bosom of his murderer. The death of the assassin, who was instantly cut in pieces, was but a small compensation for the loss of a king, loved by his subjects, and deserving their esteem.

The late king's sons were too young to succeed him in the di-

rection of so difficult a government as that of England: his brother EDRED was therefore appointed to succeed; and, like his predecessors, this monarch found himself at the head of a rebellious and refractory people. The Northumbrian Danes, as usual, made several attempts to shake off the English yoke; so that the king was at last obliged to place garrisons in their most considerable towns, and to appoint an English governor over them, who might suppress their insurrections on the first appearance. About this time the monks, from being contented to govern in ecclesiastical matters, began to assume the direction in civil affairs; and, by artfully managing the superstitions and the fears of the people, erected an authority that was not shaken off by several succeeding centuries. Edred had blindly delivered over his conscience to the guidance of Dunstan, abbot of Glastonbury, who was afterwards canonized; and this man, under the appearance of sanctity, concealed the most boundless ambition. The monks had hitherto been a kind of secular priests, who, though they lived in communities, were neither separated from the rest of the world, nor useless to it. They were often married; they were assiduously employed in the education of youth, and subject to the commands of temporal superiors. The celibacy and the independency of the clergy, as being a measure that would contribute to the establishment of the papal power in Europe, was warmly recommended by the see of Rome to all ecclesiastics in general, but to the monks in particular. The present favourable opportunity offered of carrying this measure in England, arising from the superstitious character of Edred, and the furious zeal of Dunstan, Both lent it all the assistance in their power; and the order of Benedictine monks was established under the direction of Dunstan. Edred implicitly submitted to his directions both in church and state; and the kingdom was in a fair way of being turned into a papal province by this zealous ecclesiastic, when he was checked in the midst of his career by the death of the king, who died of a quinsy, in the tenth year of his reign.

[954.] EDWY, his nephew, who ascended the throne, his own sons being yet unfit to govern, was a prince of great personal accomplishments and a martial disposition. But he was now come to the government of a kingdom in which he had an



enemy to contend with, against whom all military virtues could be of little service. Dunstan, who had governed during the former reign, was resolved to remit nothing of his authority in this; and Edwy, immediately upon his accession, found himself involved in a quarrel with the monks, whose rage neither his accomplishments nor his virtues could mitigate. He seems to have been elected by the secular priests in opposition to the monks; so that their whole body, and Dunstan at their head, pursued him with implacable animosity while living, and even endeavoured to brand his character to posterity.

This Dunstan, who makes a greater figure in these times than even kings themselves, was born of noble parents in the West; but being defamed as a man of licentious manners in his youth, he betook himself to the austerities of a monastic life, either to atone for his faults, or vindicate his reputation. He secluded himself entirely from the world, in a cell so small that he could neither stand erect nor lie along in it. It was in this retreat of constant mortification that his zeal grew furious, and his fancy teemed with visions of the most extravagant nature. His supposed illuminations were frequent; his temptations strong, but he always resisted with bravery. The devil, it was said, one day paid him a visit in the shape of a fine young woman; but Dunstan, knowing the deceit, and provoked at his importunity, seized him by the nose with a pair of red-hot pincers, as he put his head into the cell; and he held him there till the malignant spirit made the whole neighbourhood resound with his bellowsings. Nothing was so absurd but what the monks were ready to propagate in favour of their sect. Crucifixes, altars, and even horses were heard to harangue in their defence against the secular clergy. These miracles, backed by their stronger assertions, prevailed with the people. Dunstan was considered as the peculiar favourite of the Almighty, and appeared at court with an authority greater than that of kings; since theirs was conferred by men, but his allowed by Heaven itself. Being possessed of so much power, it may be easily supposed that Edwy could make but a feeble resistance; and that his first fault was likely to be attended with the most dangerous consequences. The monk found or made one on the very day of his coronation. There was a lady of the royal blood, named Elgiva, whose beauty had made a strong

impression on this young monarch's heart. He had even ventured to marry her, contrary to the advice of his counsellors, as she was in the degrees of affinity prohibited by the canon law. On the day of his coronation, while his nobility were giving a loose to the more noisy pleasures of wine and festivity in the great hall, Edwy retired to his wife's apartment, where, in company with her mother, he enjoyed the more pleasing satisfaction of her conversation. Dunstan no sooner perceived his absence, than, conjecturing the reason, he rushed fiercely into the apartment, and, upbraiding him with all the bitterness of ecclesiastical rancour, dragged him forth in the most outrageous manner. Dunstan, it seems, was not without his enemies; for the king was advised to punish this insult, by ordering him to account for the money with which he had been intrusted during the last reign. This account the haughty monk refused to give in; wherefore he was deprived of all the ecclesiastical and civil emoluments of which he had been in possession, and banished the kingdom. His exile only served to increase the reputation of his sanctity among the people; and Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, was so far transported with the spirit of the party, that he pronounced a divorce between Edwy and Elgiva. Ecclesiastical censures were then attended with the most formidably effects. The king could no longer resist the indignation of the church, but consented to surrender his beautiful wife to its fury. Accordingly, Odo sent into the palace a party of soldiers, who seized the queen, and, by his orders, branded her on the face with a hot iron. Not contented with this cruel vengeance, they carried her by force into Ireland, and there commanded her to remain in perpetual exile. This injunction, however, was too distressing for that faithful woman to comply with; for, being cured of her wound, and having obliterated the marks which had been made to deface her beauty, she once more ventured to return to the king, whom she still regarded as her husband. But misfortune still continued to pursue her. She was taken prisoner by a party whom the archbishop had appointed to observe her conduct, and was put to death in the most cruel manner; the sinews of her legs cut, and her body mangled, she was thus left to expire in the most cruel agony. In the mean time a secret revolt against Edwy became almost general; and that it might not be doubted at whose instiga-

tion this revolt was undertaken, Dunstan returned to England, and put himself at the head of the party. The malcontents at last proceeded to open rebellion; and having placed Edgar, the king's younger brother, a boy of about thirteen years of age, at their head, they soon put him in possession of all the northern parts of the kingdom. Edwy's power, and the number of his adherents, every day declining, he was at last obliged to consent to a partition of the kingdom; but his death, which happened soon after, freed his enemies from all further inquietude, and gave Edgar peaceable possession of the government.

EDGAR being placed on the throne by the influence of the monks, affected to be entirely guided by their [959.] directions in all his succeeding transactions. There has ever been some popular cry, some darling prejudice amongst the English; and he who has taken the advantage of it, has always found it of excellent assistance to his government. The sanctity of the monks was the cry at that time; and Edgar, chiming in with the people, at once promoted their happiness and his own glory. Few English monarchs have reigned with more fortune or more splendour than he. He not only quieted all domestic insurrections, but repressed all foreign invasions; and his power was so well established, and so widely extended, that he is said to have been rowed in his barge by eight tributary kings upon the river Dee. The monks whom he promoted are loud in his praise; and yet the example of his continence was no way corresponding with that chastity and forbearance on which they chiefly founded their superior pretensions to sanctity. It is indeed somewhat extraordinary, that one should have been extolled for his virtues by the monks, whose irregularities were so peculiarly opposite to the tenets they they enforced. His first transgression of this kind was the breaking into a convent, carrying off Editha, a nun, by force, and even committing violence on her person. For this act of sacrilege and barbarity, no other penance was enjoined than that he should abstain from wearing his crown for seven years. As for the lady herself, he was permitted to continue his intercourse with her without scandal. There was another mistress of Edgar's, named Elfleda the Fair, with whom he formed a connection by a kind of accident;—for being at the house of one of his nobles, and fixing his affections

on the nobleman's daughter, he privately requested that the young lady should pass that very night with him. The lady's mother, knowing his power, and the impetuosity of his temper, prevailed upon her daughter seemingly to comply with his request; but, in the mean time, substituted a beautiful domestic in the young lady's place. In the morning, when the king perceived the deceit, instead of being displeased at the stratagem, he expressed pleasure in the adventure; and transferring his love to Elfreda, as the damsel was called, she became his favourite mistress, and maintained an ascendancy over him till his marriage with Elfrida. The story of this lady is too remarkable to be passed over in silence.

Edgar had long heard of the beauty of a young lady, whose name was Elfrida, daughter to the earl of Devonshire: but, unwilling to credit common fame in this particular, he sent Ethelwald, his favourite friend, to see, and inform him, if Elfrida was indeed that incomparable woman report had described her. Ethelwald, arriving at the earl's, had no sooner cast his eyes upon that nobleman's daughter than he became desperately enamoured of her himself. Such was the violence of his passion, that, forgetting his master's intentions, he solicited only his own interests, and demanded for himself the beautiful Elfrida from her father in marriage. The favourite of a king was not likely to find a refusal; the earl gave his consent, and their nuptials were performed in private. Upon his return to court, which was shortly after, he assured the king, that her riches alone and her high quality had been the cause of her admiration; and he appeared amazed how the world could talk so much, and so unjustly, of her charms. The king was satisfied, and no longer felt any curiosity, while Ethelwald secretly triumphed in his address. When he had, by this deceit, weaned the king from his purpose, he took an opportunity, after some time, of turning the conversation on Elfrida, representing, that though the fortune of the earl of Devonshire's daughter would be a trifle to a king, yet it would be an immense acquisition to a needy subject. He, therefore, humbly entreated permission to pay his addresses to her, as she was the richest heiress in the kingdom. A request so seemingly reasonable was readily complied with: Ethelwald returned to his wife, and their nuptials were solemnized in public. His greatest care,

however, was employed in keeping her from court ; and he took every precaution to prevent her appearing before a king so susceptible of love, whilst he was so capable of inspiring that passion. But it was impossible to keep his treachery long concealed. Favourites are never without private enemies, who watch every opportunity of rising upon their ruin. Edgar was soon informed of the whole transaction ; but, dissembling his resentment, he took occasion to visit that part of the country where this miracle of beauty was detained, accompanied by Ethelwald, who reluctantly attended him thither. Upon coming near the lady's habitation, he told him that he had a curiosity to see his wife, of whom he had formerly heard so much, and desired to be introduced as his acquaintance. Ethelwald, thunder-struck at the proposal, did all in his power, but in vain, to dissuade him. All he could obtain, was permission to go before, on pretence of preparing for the king's reception. On his arrival he fell at his wife's feet, confessing what he had done to be possessed of her charms, and conjuring her to conceal, as much as possible, her beauty from the king, who was but too susceptible of its power. Elfrida, little obliged to him for a passion that had deprived her of a crown, promised compliance ; but, prompted either by vanity or revenge, adorned her person with the most exquisite art, and called up all her beauty on the occasion. The event answered her expectations : the king no sooner saw than he loved her, and was instantly resolved to obtain her. The better to effect his intentions, he concealed his passion from the husband, and took leave with a seeming indifference ; but his revenge was not the less certain and fatal. Ethelwald was some time after sent into Northumberland, upon pretence of urgent affairs, and was found murdered in a wood by the way. Some say he was stabbed by the king's own hand ; some, that he only commanded the assassination : however this be, Elfrida was invited soon after to court, by the king's own order, and their nuptials were performed with the usual solemnity.

Such was the criminal passion of a monarch, whom the monks have thought proper to represent as the most perfect of mankind. His reign was successful, because it was founded upon a compliance with the prejudices of the people ; but it produced very sensible evils, and these fell upon his successor. He died after a

reign of sixteen years, in the thirty-third year of his age, being succeeded by his son Edward, whom he had by his first marriage with the daughter of the earl of Ordmer.

[957.] EDWARD, surnamed the MARTYR, was made king by the interest of the monks, and lived but four years after his accession. In his reign there is nothing remarkable, if we except his tragical and memorable end. Though this young monarch had been from the beginning opposed by Elfrida, his step-mother, who seems to have united the greatest deformity of mind with the highest graces of person, yet he ever showed her marks of the strongest regard, and even expressed, on all occasions, the most tender affection for her son, his brother. However, hunting one day near Corfe-castle, where Elfrida resided, he thought it his duty to pay her a visit, although he was not attended by any of his retinue. There desiring some liquor to be brought him, as he was thirsty, while he was yet holding the cup to his head, one of Elfrida's domestics, instructed for that purpose, stabbed him in the back. The king, finding himself wounded, put spurs to his horse; but, fainting with the loss of blood, he fell from the saddle, and his foot sticking in the stirrup, he was dragged along by his horse till he was killed. Being tracked by the blood, his body was found, and privately interred at Wareham by his servants.

[978.] ETHELRED the Second, the son of Edgar and Elfrida, succeeded; a weak and irresolute monarch, incapable of governing the kingdom, or providing for its safety. After a train of dissensions, follies, and vices, which seem to have marked some of the former reigns, it is not surprising that the country was weakened; and the people, taught to rely entirely on præternatural assistance, were rendered incapable of defending themselves. During this period, therefore, their old and terrible enemies, the Danes, who seem not to be loaded with the same accumulation of vice and folly, were daily gaining ground. The weakness and the inexperience of Ethelred appeared to give a favourable opportunity for renewing their depredations; and accordingly they landed on several parts of the coasts, spreading their usual terror and devastation. The English, ill-provided to oppose such an enemy, made but a feeble resistance; endeavouring, by treachery and submission, to avert the storm they had not spirit to oppose.

The northern invaders, now well acquainted with the defenceless condition of England, made a powerful descent, under the command of Sweyn king of Denmark, and Olave king of Norway, who, sailing up the Humber, committed on all sides their destructive ravages. The English opposed them with a formidable army, but were repulsed with great slaughter. The Danes, encouraged by this success, marched boldly into the heart of the kingdom, filling all places with the marks of horrid cruelty. Ethelred had, upon a former invasion of these pirates, bought them off with money; and he now resolved to put the same expedient in practice once more. He sent ambassadors, therefore, to the two kings, and offered them subsistence and tribute, provided they would restrain their ravages, and depart the kingdom. It has often been remarked, that buying off an invasion only serves to strengthen the enemy, and to invite a repetition of hostilities. Such it happened upon this occasion: Sweyn and Olave agreed to the terms, and peaceably took up their quarters at Southampton, where the sum of sixteen thousand pounds was paid them. Olave returned to his native country, and never infested England more; but Sweyn was less scrupulous, and the composition with him gave but a short interval to the miseries of the English.

The English now found their situation truly deplorable. The weakness of the king, the divisions of the no- [998.] bility, the treachery of some, and the cowardice of others, frustrated all their endeavours for mutual defence. The Danes, ever informed of their situation, and ready to take advantage of it, appeared, a short time after the late infamous composition, upon the English shore, and, rising in their demands in proportion to the people's incapacity to oppose, now demanded twenty-five thousand pounds more. This sum they also received; and this only served to improve their desire for fresh exactions. But they soon had a material cause of resentment given them, by which the infraction of the stipulated treaty became necessary. The Danes, as hath been already observed, had made several settlements, for many years before, in different parts of the kingdom. There, without mixing with the natives, they still maintained a peaceable correspondence and connexion among them. Their military superiority was generally acknowledged by all; and the kings of England had been accustomed to keep in pay

bodies of Danish troops, whom they quartered in different parts of the country. These mercenaries had attained to such a height of luxury, according to the old English writers, that they combed their hair once a day, bathed themselves once a week; and, by these arts, then esteemed effeminate, had rendered themselves so agreeable to the fair sex, that they debauched the wives and daughters of the English, and had dishonoured many families. To those insults was added the treachery of their conduct upon every threatened invasion, as they still showed their attachment to their own countrymen, against those among whom they were permitted to reside. These were motives sufficient, in that barbarous age, for a general massacre; and Ethelred, by a policy incident to weak princes, embraced the cruel resolution of putting them all to the sword. This plot was carried on with such secrecy, that it was executed in one day, and all the Danes in England were destroyed without mercy. But this massacre, so perfidious in the contriving, and so cruel in the execution, instead of ending the long miseries of the people, only prepared the way for greater calamities.

While the English were congratulating each other upon their late deliverance from an inveterate enemy, Sweyn, king of Denmark, who had been informed of their treacherous cruelties, appeared off the western coasts with a large fleet, meditating slaughter, and furious with revenge. The English vainly attempted to summon their forces together; treachery and cowardice still operated to dispirit their troops, or to dissipate them. To these miseries was added a dreadful famine, partly from the bad seasons, and partly from the decay of agriculture. For a while they supposed that the Danish devastations would be retarded by the payment of thirty thousand pounds, which the invaders agreed to accept; but this, as in all the former cases, afforded but a temporary relief. For a while they placed some hopes in a powerful navy, which they found means to equip; but this was soon divided and dispersed, without doing them any service. Nothing, therefore, now remained but their suffering the just indignation of the conqueror, and undergoing all the evils that war, inflamed by revenge, could inflict. During this period, a general consternation, together with a mutual diffidence and dissension, prevailed. Cessations from these calamities were purchased, one after another,



by immense sums; but as they afforded only a short alleviation of the common distress, no other resource remained at last than that of submitting to the Danish monarch, of swearing allegiance to him, and giving hostages as pledges of sincerity. Ethelred was obliged to fly into Normandy, and the whole country thus came under the power of Sweyn, his victorious rival.

The death of Sweyn, which happened about six weeks after, seemed to offer a favourable opportunity of once more restoring Ethelred to the throne, and his subjects to their liberties. Accordingly he seized it with avidity: but his misconducts were incurable; and his indolence, credulity, and cowardice, obstructed all success. At length, after having seen the greatest part of the kingdom seized by the insulting enemy, after refusing to head his troops to oppose them, he retired to London, where he ended an inglorious reign of thirty-five years by a natural death, leaving behind him two sons, the eldest of whom, Edmund, succeeded to his crown and his misfortunes.

EDMUND, his son and successor, received the surname of IRONSIDE, from his hardy opposition to the enemy; [1016.] but this opposition seemed as ineffectual to restore the happiness of his country as it was to continue him in the possession of the throne. He was opposed by one of the most powerful and vigilant monarchs then in Europe; for Canute, afterwards surnamed the Great, succeeded Sweyn as king of Denmark, and also as general of the Danish forces in England. The contest between these two monarchs was therefore managed with great obstinacy and perseverance; the first battle that was fought appeared undecided; a second followed, in which the Danes were victorious: but Edmund still having interest enough to bring a third army into the field, the Danish and English nobility, equally harassed by these convulsions, obliged their kings to come to a compromise, and to divide the kingdom between them by treaty. Canute reserved to himself the northern parts of the kingdom; the southern parts were left to Edmund: but this prince being murdered about a month after the treaty by his two chamberlains, at Oxford, Canute was left in peaceable possession of the whole kingdom.

CANUTE, though he had gratified his ambition in obtaining possession of the English crown, yet was obliged at first to make

some mortifying concessions ; and, in order to gain the affections of the nobility, he endeavoured to gratify their avarice. But as his power grew stronger, and his title more secure, he then resumed those grants which he had made, and even put many of the English nobles to death, sensible that those who had betrayed their native sovereign would never be true to him. Nor was he less severe in his exactions upon the subordinate ranks of the people, levying at one time seventy-two thousand pounds upon the country, and eleven thousand more upon the city of London only.

Having thus strengthened his new power by effectually weakening all who had wealth or authority to withstand him, he next began to show the merciful side of his character. Nor does it seem without just grounds that he is represented by some historians as one of the first characters in those barbarous ages. The invectives which are thrown out against him by the English writers seem merely the effect of national resentment, or prejudice, unsupported by truth. His first step to reconcile the English to his yoke, was, by sending back to Denmark as many of his followers as he could safely spare. He made no distinction between the English and Danes in the administration of justice, but restored the Saxon customs in a general assembly of the kingdom. The two nations thus uniting with each other, were glad to breathe for a while from the tumult and slaughter in which they had mutually involved each other ; and, to confirm their amity, the king himself married Emma, the sister of Richard, duke of Normandy, who had ever warmly espoused the interests of the English.

Canute, having thus settled his power in England beyond the danger of a revolution, made a voyage into Denmark, as his native dominions were attacked by the king of Sweden. In this expedition Godwin, an English earl, was particularly distinguished for his valour, and acquired that fame which afterwards laid a foundation for the immense power he acquired during the succeeding reigns. In another voyage he made to Denmark, he attacked Norway ; and, expelling Olaus from his kingdom, annexed it to his own empire. Thus, being at once king of England, Denmark, and Norway, he was considered as the most warlike and potent prince in Europe ; while the security of his power inclined his temper, which was naturally cruel, to mercy.

As his reign was begun in blood, he was, towards the end of it, willing to atone for his former fierceness by acts of penance and devotion. He built churches, endowed monasteries, and appointed revenues for the celebration of mass. He even undertook a pilgrimage to Rome, where he remained a considerable time; and, besides obtaining from the pope some privileges for the English school erected there, he engaged all the princes through whose dominions he passed, to desist from those heavy impositions which they were accustomed to exact from the English pilgrims. The piety of the latter part of his life, and the resolute valour of the former, were topics that filled the mouths of his courtiers with flattery and praise. They even affected to think his power uncontrollable, and that all things would be obedient to his command. Canute, sensible of their adulation, is said to have taken the following method to reprove them. He ordered his chair to be set on the sea-shore while the tide was coming in, and commanded the sea to retire. "Thou art under my dominion (cried he); the land upon which I sit is mine; I charge thee, therefore, to approach no further, nor dare to wet the feet of thy sovereign." He feigned to sit some time in expectation of submission, till the waves began to surround him; then, turning to his courtiers, he observed, that the titles of Lord and Master belonged only to him whom both earth and seas were ready to obey. Thus, feared and respected, he lived many years honoured with the surname of Great for his power, but deserving it still more for his virtues. He died at Shaftesbury, in the nineteenth year of his reign, leaving behind three sons, Sweyn, Harold, and Hardicnute. Sweyn was crowned king of Norway; Hardicnute was put in possession of Denmark; and Harold succeeded his father on the English throne.

HAROLD, surnamed HAREFOOT, from his swiftness in running, upon his first coming to the crown met with no small opposition from his younger brother, Hardicnute. But, by the intervention of the nobles, a compromise was made between them; by which it was agreed that Harold should have London, and all the provinces north of the Thames, while the possession of the southern parts should be ceded to Hardicnute; and, until that prince should appear in person, Emma, his mother, should govern in his stead. But this agreement was of short

duration ; for, queen Emma having brought over from Normandy Edward and Alfred, descendants of the antient Saxon kings, Alfred was invited, with the warmest professions of friendship, by Harold to London, and treacherously set upon, by his orders, on the way. Six hundred of his train were murdered in the most cruel manner ; he himself was taken prisoner ; and his eyes being put out, he was conducted to the monastery of Ely, where he died soon after. Edward and Emma, apprised of his fate, fled to the continent ; and Harold, without resistance, took possession of the whole kingdom. He lived to enjoy the fruits of his treachery but four years ; and dying, very little regretted by his subjects, he left the succession open to his brother.

HARDICNUTE'S title was readily acknowledged both [1039.] by the Danes and the English ; and upon his arrival from the continent he was received with the most extravagant demonstrations of joy. The ceremony of his coronation was scarce performed when he gave the first specimen of the badness of his disposition, in his inpotent insults upon the body of his brother, which he ordered to be dug up, beheaded, and thrown into the Thames. When it was found some time after by a fisherman, and buried, he ordered it to be again dug up, and to be thrown into the Thames a second time. His malice, however, was in the end ineffectual ; for it was again found, and buried with the greatest secrecy. Hardicnute's next act of rigorous sovereignty was the imposition of a grievous tax for the payment of his navy ; which was the more intolerable, as the nation was threatened with a famine. In these acts of severity, Godwin, duke of Wessex, who had been a vile instrument of treachery and oppression during the former reign, was assistant now. However, his base compliances did not entirely screen him from the resentment of Emma, who had the strongest reasons to believe that he was instrumental in the death of prince Alfred, her son. At her instigation, therefore, Alfric, archbishop of York, accused him of being an accomplice, and demanded justice accordingly. Godwin found means to evade the danger, by appealing to the king's avarice, and not to the justice of his cause. He presented him with a magnificent galley, curiously carved and gilded, rowed by four-score men, who wore each of them a gold bracelet on his arm, weighing sixteen ounces. The king, softened by

this present, permitted him to purge himself by oath; and Godwin very readily swore that he had no hand in the death of Alfred. This king's violence and unjust government were but of short duration. He died two years after his accession, in consequence of excess at the marriage of a Danish lord, which was celebrated at Lambeth. His death, far from being regretted by the English, became the subject of their derision, his anniversary being distinguished by the name of Hock Holiday.

EDWARD, surnamed THE CONFESSOR, from his piety, had many rivals, whose claims to the crown were rather [1041.] more just than his own. The direct descendants of the last Saxon monarch were still in being, though at the remote distance of the kingdom of Hungary. Sweyn, the eldest son of Hardicnute, was still alive, but at that time engaged in wars in Norway. It required therefore the utmost diligence in Edward to secure his claims, before either of these could come over to dispute his title. His own authority, though great in the kingdom, was not sufficient to expedite his affairs with the desired dispatch; he was therefore obliged to have recourse to Godwin, whose power was then very extensive, to second his pretensions. This nobleman, though long an enemy to his family, finding, upon the present occasion, that their interests were united, laid aside all former animosity, and concurred in fixing him upon the throne.

The English, who had long groaned under a foreign yoke, now set no bounds to their joy, at finding the line of their antient monarchs restored; and at first the warmth of their raptures was attended with some violence against the Danes: but the new king, by the mildness of his character, soon composed these differences, and the distinction between the two nations gradually disappeared. Thus, after a struggle of above two hundred years, all things seemed to remain in the same state in which those conflicts began. These invasions from the Danes produced no new change of laws, customs, language, or religion; nor did any other traces of their establishments seem to remain, except the castles they built, and the families that still bear their names. No further mention therefore is made of two distinct nations; for the Normans coming in soon after served to unite them into a closer union.

The first acts of this monarch's reign bore the appearance of severity, for he resumed all grants that had been made by the crown in former reigns; and he ordered his mother Emma, who was ever intriguing against him, to be shut up in a monastery. As he had been bred in the Norman court, he showed, in every instance, a predilection for the customs, laws, and even the natives of that country; and among the rest of his faults, though he had married Editha, the daughter of Godwin, yet, either from mistaken piety or fixed aversion, during his whole reign he abstained from her bed.

However these actions might be regarded by many of the king's subjects (for they were all of a doubtful kind), certain it is that Godwin, who was long grown much too powerful for a subject, made them the pretext of his opposition. He began by complaining of the influence of the Normans in the government; and his animosities soon broke out into action. Eustace, count of Boulogne, who had married Edward's sister, arrived in England upon a visit to the king, and was received with great honour and affection. Upon his return to Dover, having sent a servant before him to bespeak lodgings in that city, a fray happened between this domestic and the townsmen, in which he lost his life. The count and his attendants attempting to take revenge, the inhabitants took arms; and both sides engaging with great fury, the count was obliged to find safety by flight, after having lost about twenty of his men, and slain as many of the people. The count, exasperated at this insult, returned to the court at Gloucester, and demanded justice of the king, who very warmly espoused his quarrel. He instantly gave orders to Godwin, in whose government Dover lay, to go immediately to the place, and to punish the inhabitants for their crime. This was a conjuncture highly favourable to the schemes of this aspiring chief; and, thinking that now was the time to ingratiate himself with the people, he absolutely refused to obey the king's command. Sensible, however, that obedience would soon be extorted, unless he could defend his insolence, he prepared for his defence, or rather for an attack upon Edward. Accordingly, under a pretence of repressing some disorders on the Welsh frontier, he secretly assembled a great army, and attempted to surprise the king, who continued, without the smallest suspicion, at Gloucester. Nevertheless, be-

ing soon informed of Godwin's treachery, his first step was privately to summon all the assistance he could, and, in the meanwhile, to protract the time by a pretended negotiation. As soon as he found himself in a capacity to take the field, he then changed his tone; and Godwin, finding himself unable to oppose his superior force, or to keep his army together, permitted it to disperse, and took shelter with Baldwin, earl of Flanders. His estates, which were numerous, together with those of his sons, were confiscated; and the greatness of the family seemed, for a time, to be totally overthrown.

But this nobleman's power was too strong to be shaken by so slight a blast; for, being assisted with a fleet by the earl of Flanders, he landed on the isle of Wight, where he was joined by his son Harold, with a squadron which that nobleman had collected in Ireland. From thence being reinforced by great numbers of his former dependants and followers, he sailed up the Thames, and, appearing before London, threw all things into confusion. In this exigence the king alone seemed resolute; but his nobility, many of whom were secretly inclined to Godwin, brought on a negotiation, in which it was stipulated, that the king should dismiss all his foreign servants, the primate being among the number; and that Godwin should give hostages for his own future good behaviour. Godwin's death, which followed soon after, prevented him from reaping the fruits of an agreement, by which the king's authority was almost reduced to nothing.

This nobleman was succeeded in his governments and offices by his son Harold, who, in his ambition, was equal to his father, but in his virtues and abilities far his superior. By a modest and gentle demeanor he acquired the good will of Edward, or at least softened those impressions of hatred which he had long borne the whole family. He artfully insinuated himself into the affections of the people by his liberality and apparent candour, while every day he increased his power by seeming modestly to decline it. By these arts he not only supplanted Algar, duke of Mercia, whom the king raised up to rival his power, but he got his brother Tosti made duke of Northumberland, upon the death of Siward, who had long governed that province with great glory.

Harold's insinuating manners, his power, and virtues, extended and increased his popularity to such a degree, that he began to be

talked of as the most proper person to succeed to the crown. But nothing could be more ungrateful to Edward than such a desire, as he abhorred a successor from the family of Godwin. Aroused, therefore, by these rumours, he sent for his nephew Edward from Hungary, who was, in fact, the direct descendant from the antient Saxon kings. Prince Edward soon arrived, but was scarcely safe landed when he died, leaving his pretensions to Edgar Atheling, his son, who was too young, weak, and inactive to avail himself of his title. The king was now therefore thrown into new difficulties. He saw the youth and inexperience of Edgar, and dreaded the immoderate ambition of Harold. He could not, without reluctance, think of increasing the grandeur of a family which had risen on the ruins of royal authority, and had been stained in the blood of his own brother. In this uncertainty he is said to have cast his eyes on William, duke of Normandy, as a person fit to succeed him; but of the truth of this circumstance we must, at this distance of time, be contented to remain in uncertainty,

In the mean time Harold did not remit in obedience to the king, or his assiduities to the people; still increasing in his power, and preparing his way for his advancement, on the first vacancy, to the throne. In these aims fortune herself seemed to assist him; and two incidents, which happened about [1057.] this time, contributed to fix that popularity which he had been so long eagerly in pursuit of. The Welsh renewing their hostilities under prince Griffin, were repelled by him, and rendered tributary to the crown of England. The other incident was no less honourable: his brother Tosti, who had been appointed to the government of Northumberland, having grievously oppressed the people, was expelled in an insurrection, and Harold was ordered by the king to reinstate him in his power, and punish the insurgents. While yet at the head of an army, preparing to take signal vengeance for the injury done to his brother, he was met by a deputation of the people who had been so cruelly governed. They assured him that they had no intention to rebel, but had taken up arms merely to protect themselves from the cruelty of a rapacious governor. They enumerated the grievances they had sustained from his tyranny, brought the strongest proofs of his guilt, and appealed to Harold's equity for redress. This



nobleman, convinced of Tosti's brutality, sacrificed his affection to his duty; and not only procured their pardon from the king, but confirmed the governor whom the Northumbrians had chosen in his command. From that time Harold became the idol of the people; and indeed his virtues deserved their love, had they not been excited by ambition.

Harold, thus secure of the affections of the English, no longer strove to conceal his aims, but openly aspired at the succession. He every where insinuated, that as the heir-apparent to the crown was utterly unequal to the task of government, both from age and natural imbecility, there was none so proper as a man of mature experience and tried integrity; he alleged, that a man born in England was only fit to govern Englishmen; and that none but an able general could defend them against so many foreign enemies as they were every day threatened with. The people readily saw to what these speeches tended; and, instead of discountenancing his pretensions, assisted them with their wishes and applause. Edward, broken with age and infirmities, his mind entirely engrossed by the visions of superstition, and warmly attached to none, saw the danger to which the government was exposed, but took feeble and irresolute steps to secure the succession. While he continued thus uncertain, he was surprised by sickness, which brought him to his end, on the fifth of January, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and twenty-fifth of his reign. [1066.]

This prince, who was revered by the monks, under the titles of Saint and Confessor, had but weak pretensions to either, being indolent, irresolute, and credulous. The tranquillity of his reign was owing rather to the weakness of his foreign enemies than to his own domestic strength. But, though he seemed to have few active virtues, yet he certainly had no vices of an atrocious kind; and the want of the passions, rather than their restraint, was then, as it has been long since, the best title to canonization. He was the first who, from his supposed sanctity, touched for the king's-evil.

Harold, whose intrigues and virtues seemed to give a right to his pretensions, ascended the throne without any opposition. The citizens of London, who were ever fond of an elective monarchy, seconded his claims; the clergy adopted his cause; and the body of the people, whose friend he had been, sincerely loved

him. Nor were the first acts of his reign unworthy of the general prejudice in his favour. He took the most effectual measures for an impartial administration of justice; ordered the laws to be revised and reformed; and those disturbers of the public peace to be punished, who had thriven under the lenity of the last reign.

But neither his valour, his justice, nor his popularity, were able to secure him from the misfortunes attendant upon an ill-grounded title. The first symptoms of his danger came from his own brother Tosti, who had taken refuge in Flanders, and went among the princes of the continent, endeavouring to engage them in a league against Harold, whom he represented as a tyrant and usurper. Not content with this, being furnished with some ships by the earl of Flanders, he made a descent upon the isle of Wight, which he laid under contribution, and pillaged along the coast, until he was encountered and routed by Morcar, who had been appointed to the government from which he was expelled.

But he was not yet without succour; for Harfagar, king of Norway, who had been brought over by his remonstrances, arrived with a fleet of two hundred sail at the mouth of the river Humber, where he was joined by the shattered remains of Tosti's forces. It was in vain that the earls of Mercia and Northumberland attempted to stop their progress, with a body of new-raised undisciplined troops: they were quickly routed, and York fell a prey to the enemy. Meanwhile Harold, being informed of this misfortune, hastened with an army to the protection of his people, and expressed the utmost ardour to show himself worthy of their favour. He had given so many proofs of an equitable and prudent administration, that the people flocked from all quarters to join his standard; and as soon as he reached the enemy at Stamford, he found himself in a condition of giving them battle. The action was very bloody; but the victory was decisive on the side of Harold, and ended in the total rout of the Norwegians, Harfagar their king and Tosti being slain. Those, who escaped, owed their safety to the personal prowess of a brave Norwegian, who is said to have defended a bridge over the Derwent for three hours, against the whole English army; during which time, he slew forty of their best men with his battle-ax: but he was at length slain by an arrow. Harold, pursuing his victory, made himself master of a Norwegian fleet that lay in the river Ouse;

and had the generosity to give prince Olave, the son of Harfagar, his liberty, and allowed him to depart with twenty vessels. There had never before been in England an engagement between two such numerous armies, each being composed of no less than threescore thousand men. The news of this victory diffused inexpressible joy over the whole kingdom; they gloried in a monarch, who now showed himself able to defend them from insult, and avenge them of their invaders: but they had not long time for triumph, when news was brought of a fresh invasion, more formidable than had ever been formed against England before. This was under the conduct of William, duke of Normandy, who landed at Hastings with an army of disciplined veterans, and laid claim to the English crown. Sept. 29,  
1066.

William, who was afterwards called the Conqueror, was the natural son of Robert, duke of Normandy. His mother's name was Arlette, a beautiful maid of Falaise, whom Robert fell in love with as she stood gazing at the door whilst he passed through the town. William, who was the offspring of this amour, owed a part of his greatness to his birth, but still more to his own personal merit. His body was vigorous, his mind capacious and noble, and his courage not to be repressed by apparent danger. His father Robert growing old, and, as was common with princes then, superstitious also, resolved upon a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, contrary to the advice and opinion of all his nobility. As his heart was fixed upon the expedition, instead of attending to their remonstrances, he showed them his son William, whom, though illegitimate, he tenderly loved, and recommended to their care, exacting an oath from them of homage and fealty. He then put him, as he was yet but ten years of age, under the tutelage of the French king; and soon after going into Asia, from whence he never returned, left young William rather the inheritor of his wishes than his crown. In fact William, from the beginning, found himself exposed to many dangers, and much opposition, from his youth and inexperience, from the reproach of his birth, from a suspected guardian, a disputed title, and a distracted state. The regency, appointed by Robert, were under great difficulties in supporting the government against this complication of dangers: and the young prince, when he came of age, found himself reduced to a very low condition. But the great qualities

which he soon displayed in the field and the cabinet gave encouragement to his friends, and struck a terror into his enemies. He on all sides opposed his rebellious subjects, and repressed foreign invaders, while his valour and conduct prevailed in every action. The tranquillity which he had thus established in his dominions induced him to extend his views; and some overtures, made him by Edward the Confessor in the latter part of his reign, who was wavering in the choice of a successor, inflamed his ambition with a desire of succeeding to the English throne. Whether Edward really appointed him to succeed, as William all along pretended, is, at this distance of time, uncertain; but it is beyond a doubt, that Harold, happening to pay a visit to the Norman coast, was induced by this prince to acknowledge his claims, and to give a promise of seconding them. This promise, however, Harold did not think proper to perform, when it stood in the way of his own ambition; and afterwards, when William objected to the breach, he excused himself, by alleging that it was extorted from him at a time when he had no power to refuse. On whatever side justice might lie, the pretext on William's part was, that he was appointed heir to the crown of England by Edward the Confessor, upon a visit he had paid that monarch during his lifetime. In consequence of these pretensions, he was not remiss, after the death of Edward, to lay in his claims; but Harold would admit none of them, resolved to defend by his valour what his intrigues had won. William, finding that arms alone were to be the final deciders of this dispute, prepared to assert his right with vigour. His subjects, as they had long been distinguished for valour among the European nations, had at this time attained to the highest pitch of military glory. His court was the centre of politeness; and all who wished for fame in arms, or were naturally fond of adventure, flocked to put themselves under his conduct. The fame of his intended invasion of England was diffused over the whole continent; multitudes came to offer him their services in this expedition; so that he was embarrassed rather in the choice of whom he should take than in the levying his forces. The pope himself was not behind the rest in favouring his pretensions; but, either influenced by the apparent justice of his claims, or by the hopes of extending the authority of the church, he immediately pronounced Harold an usurper. He denounced ex-

communication against him and all his adherents; and sent the duke a consecrated banner, to inspire him with confidence. With such favourable incentives, William soon found himself at the head of a chosen army of sixty thousand men, all equipped in the most warlike and splendid manner. The discipline of the men, the vigour of the horses, the lustre of the arms and accoutrements, were objects that had been scarcely seen in Europe for some ages before. It was in the beginning of summer that he embarked this powerful body on board a fleet of three hundred sail; and, after some small opposition from the weather, landed at Pevensey, on the coast of Sussex, with resolute tranquillity. William himself, as he came on shore, happened to stumble and fall; but, instead of being discomposed at the accident, he had the presence of mind to cry out, that he thus took possession of the country. Different from all the ravagers to which England had been formerly accustomed, this brave prince made no show of invading a foreign country, but rather encamping in his own. Here he continued in a quiet and peaceable manner for about a fortnight, either willing to refresh his troops, or desirous of knowing the reception his pretensions to the crown would meet with among the people. After having refreshed his men at this place, and sent back his fleet to Normandy to leave no retreat for cowardice, he advanced along the sea-side to Hastings, where he published a manifesto, declaring the motives that induced him to undertake this enterprise.

He was soon roused from his inactivity by the approach of Harold, who seemed resolved to defend his right to the crown, and retain that sovereignty which he had received from the people, who only had a right to bestow it. He was now returning, flushed with conquest, from the defeat of the Norwegians, with all the forces he had employed in that expedition, and all he could invite or collect in the country through which he passed. His army was composed of active and valiant troops, in high spirits, strongly attached to their king, and eager to engage. On the other hand, the army of William consisted of the flower of all the continent, and had been long inured to danger. The men of Bretagne, Boulogne, Flanders, Poictou, Maine, Orleans, France, and Normandy, were all voluntarily united under his command. England never before, nor never since, saw two such

armies drawn up to dispute its crown. The day before the battle, William sent an offer to Harold to decide the quarrel between them by single combat, and thus to spare the blood of thousands; but Harold refused, and said he would leave it to the God of armies to determine. Both armies, therefore, that night pitched in sight of each other, expecting the dawning of the next day with impatience. The English passed the night in songs and feasting; the Normans, in devotion and prayer.

The next morning, at seven, as soon as day appeared, both armies were drawn up in array against each other. Harold appeared in the centre of his forces, leading on his army on foot, that his men might be more encouraged by seeing their king exposed to an equality of danger. William fought on horseback, leading on his army, that moved at once, singing the song of Roland, one of the famous chiefs of their country. The Normans began the fight with their cross-bows, which, at first, galled and surprised the English; and, as their ranks were close, their arrows did great execution. But soon they came to closer fight, and the English, with their bills, hewed down their adversaries with great slaughter. Confusion was spreading among the ranks, when William, who found himself on the brink of destruction, hastened, with a select band, to the relief of his forces. His presence restored the suspense of battle; he was seen in every place endeavouring to pierce the ranks of the enemy, and had three horses slain under him. At length, perceiving that the English line continued impenetrable, he pretended to give ground; which, as he expected, drew the enemy from their ranks, and he was instantly ready to take advantage of their disorder. Upon a signal given, the Normans readily returned to the charge with greater fury than before, broke the English troops, and pursued them to a rising ground. It was in this extremity that Harold was seen flying from rank to rank, rallying and inspiring his troops with vigour; and though he had toiled all day, till near night-fall, in the front of his Kentish men, yet he still seemed unabated in force or courage, keeping his men to the post of honour. Once more, therefore, the victory seemed to turn against the Normans, and they fell in great numbers; so that the fierceness and obstinacy of this memorable battle was often renewed by the courage of the leaders, whenever that of the soldiers be-

gan to slacken. Fortune, at length, determined a victory that valour was unable to decide. Harold, making a furious onset at the head of his troops, against the Norman heavy-armed infantry, was shot into the brain by an arrow; and his two valiant brothers, fighting by his side, shared the same fate. He fell with his sword in his hand, amidst heaps of slain, and, after the battle, the royal corpse could hardly be distinguished among the dead. From the moment of his death, all courage seemed to forsake the English; they gave ground on every side, and were pursued with great slaughter by the victorious Normans. Thus, after a battle which was fought from morning till sun-set, the invaders proved successful, and the English crown became the reward of victory. There fell near fifteen thousand of the Nor-

Oct. 14,  
1066.

mans, while the loss on the side of the vanquished was yet more considerable, beside that of the king and his two brothers. The next day, the dead body of Harold was brought to William, and generously restored, without ransom, to his mother.

This was the end of the Saxon monarchy in England, which had continued for more than six hundred years. Before the time of Alfred, the kings of this race seemed totally immersed in ignorance; and after him taken up with combating the superstition of the monks, or blindly obeying its dictates. As for the crown, during this period, it was neither wholly elective nor yet totally hereditary, but disposed of either by the will of the former possessor, or obtained by the eminent intrigues or services of some person nearly allied to the royal family. As for the laws and customs of this race, they brought in many long in practice among their German ancestors; but they adopted also many more which they found among the Britons, or which the Romans left behind them after their abdication. They assumed, in imitation of those nations, the name of kings; nay, some of them took the Greek appellation of Basileus, a title unknown to the countries from whence they came. Their noblemen also assumed names of Roman authority, being termed dukes or duces; while the lower classes of people were bought and sold with the farms they cultivated; a horrid custom, first introduced by the Greeks and Romans, and afterwards adopted by the countries they conquered. Their canon laws also, which often controlled the civil authority, had primarily their origin in Rome; and the priests and monks,

who drew them up, had generally their education there. We must not, therefore, ascribe the laws and customs which then prevailed over England, entirely to Saxon original, as many of them were derived from the Britons and Romans. But, now the Saxon monarchy was no more, all customs and laws, of whatever original, were cast down into one common mass, and cemented by those of Norman institution. The whole face of obligation was altered, and the new masters instituted new modes of obedience. The laws were improved; but the taste of the people for polite learning, arts, and philosophy, for more than four hundred years after, was still to continue the same. It appears surprising enough, in such a variety of events, such innovation in military discipline, and such changes in government, that true politeness, and what is called a taste in the arts, never came to be cultivated. Perhaps the reason may be, that, while the authority of the church continued so great, the people were afraid of any knowledge but that derived to them through their clergy; and, being secluded from the ordinary conversation of mankind, they were but indifferent judges of human nature. A monk of the tenth century, and a monk of the eighteenth century, are equally refined, and equally fit to advance those studies that give us an acquaintance with ourselves, or that tend to display the mazes of the human heart.

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## CHAP. V.

### WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

NOTHING could exceed the consternation of the English upon the loss of the battle of Hastings: their king slain, the flower of their nobility cut off, and their whole army dispersed or destroyed, struck them with despair. Very little seemed now remaining but a tame submission to the victor; and William, sensible of their terror, was careful not to lose the fruits of victory by delay. Accordingly, after the pursuit of the flying enemy, and a short refreshment of his own army, he set forward on the completion of his design; and, sitting down before Dover, took it after a



slight resistance, and fortified it with fresh redoubts. After a short delay at this place, he advanced by quick marches towards London, where his approach served to spread new confusion. The inhabitants for some time hesitated between their terrors and their loyalty; but, casting their eyes on every side, they saw no person of valour or authority sufficient to support them in their independence. Edgar Atheling, the right heir to the crown, was a weak and feeble prince, without courage or ambition; all their other leaders were either destroyed, or too remote to lend them assistance. The clergy, who had a large share in the deliberations, declared openly for a prince whose pretensions were acknowledged, and whose arms were blessed by the holy see. Nothing remained, but to submit to the necessity of the times, and to acknowledge those claims which it was not in their power to oppose. As soon, therefore, as William passed the Thames, at Wallingford, Stigand, the primate, made submissions to him in the name of the clergy; and before he came within sight of the city, all the chief nobility, and Edgar Atheling himself, who just before had been created king, came into his camp, and declared an intention of yielding to his authority. William was glad of being thus peaceably put in possession of a throne, which several of his predecessors had not gained without repeated victories. He readily accepted the crown upon the terms that were offered him; which were, that he should govern according to the established customs of the country. William, though he had it in his power to dictate his own conditions rather than receive any, chose to have his election considered rather as a gift from his subjects than a measure extorted by him. He knew himself to be a conqueror, but was willing to be thought a legal king.

In order to give his invasion all the sanction possible, he was crowned at Westminster by the arch-bishop of York, and took the oath usual in the times of the Saxon and Danish kings; which was, to protect and defend the church, to observe the laws of the realm, and to govern the people with impartiality. Having thus given all possible satisfaction to the English, his next care was to reward the many brave adventurers who had followed his fortunes. He first divided the lands of the English barons who opposed him, among the Norman barons who had assisted his enterprise; and such as he could neither supply with money nor lands,

he appointed to the vacant offices of the state. But, as there were still numbers unprovided for, he quartered them on the rich abbeys of the kingdom, until better means offered for their advancement. This, which gave no small umbrage to the clergy, was but little resented by the people, who were willing to see their own burthens lightened, by having a part of them laid upon shoulders that were at that time much better able to bear them.

But what gave them great umbrage was, to see him place all real power in the hands of his own countrymen, and still to give them possession of the sword, to which he owed all his authority. He disarmed the city of London, and other places which appeared most warlike and populous, and quartered Norman soldiers in all those places where he most dreaded an insurrection. Having thus secured the government, and, by a mixture of vigour and lenity, brought the English to an entire submission, he resolved to return to the continent, there to enjoy the triumph and congratulation of his antient subjects. Having no reason to apprehend any disturbance in his absence among the English, whose affection he had taken such pains to conciliate, he left the regency with his brother Odo bishop of Bayeux, and William Fitzosborne. To secure himself yet further, he resolved to carry along with him all the English noblemen from whose power or inclination he could apprehend a revolt: and, pretending to take great pleasure in their conversation, he set sail with his honourable captives for Normandy, where he was received by his natural subjects with a mixture of admiration and joy. He resided for some time at the abbey of Feschamp, where he was visited by an ambassador from the king of France, sent to congratulate him on his success. William, naturally fond of splendour, received this embassy with great state and magnificence; while his English courtiers, willing to ingratiate themselves with their new sovereign, endeavoured to outshine each other, and made a display of riches which struck foreigners with astonishment. It was probably this foolish ostentation that excited the pride of the Normans to treat men with contempt who were apparently so much above them.

In the mean time, the absence of the Conqueror in England produced the most fatal effects. His officers, being no longer controlled by his justice, thought this a fit opportunity for ex-

tortion; while the English, no longer awed by his presence, thought it the happiest occasion for vindicating their freedom. The two governors he had left behind took all opportunities of oppressing the people; either desiring to provoke them to rebellion, in order to profit by confiscations, or, in case they submitted tamely to their impositions, to grow rich without slaughter. The inhabitants of Kent, who were more immediately exposed to these outrages, having repeated their complaints and remonstrances to no purpose, at length had recourse to Eustace, count of Boulogne, who assisted them in an attack upon the garrison of Dover. But the Normans were upon their guard, and, having repulsed the assailants with some slaughter, took the nephew of count Eustace prisoner. This miscarriage did not deter Edric the Forester from repelling the depredations of the Normans, and, in his turn, from wasting their possessions. But though these open hostilities were not very considerable, the disaffection among the English was general, and the people began too late to perceive that strength will ever give laws to justice. A secret conspiracy was therefore formed for destroying all the Normans, as the Danes had been formerly cut off; and this was prosecuted with so much animosity, that the vassals of the earl Coxo put him to death, because he refused to head them against the invaders.

William, being informed of these commotions, hastened over to England, and arrived time enough to prevent the execution of this bloody enterprise. The conspirators had already taken the resolution, and fixed the day for the intended massacre, which was to be on Ash-Wednesday, during the time of divine service, when all the Normans would be unarmed, as penitents, according to the discipline of the times. But his presence quickly disconcerted all their schemes. Such of them as had been more open in their mutiny betrayed their guilt by flight; and this served to confirm the proofs of an accusation against those who remained.

From that time forward the king began to lose all confidence in his English subjects, and to regard them as inveterate and irreconcilable enemies. He had already raised such a number of fortresses in the kingdom, that he no longer dreaded the tumultuous or transient efforts of a discontented multitude; he determined to treat them as a conquered nation, to indulge his own avarice, and that of his followers, by numerous confiscations,

and to secure his power by humbling all who were able to make any resistance. The first signal of his arbitrary power was manifested in renewing the odious tax of Danegelt, which had been abolished by Edward the Confessor. This measure produced remonstrances, complaints, and even insurrections, in different parts of the kingdom; but William, conscious of his power, marched against such as were most formidable, and soon compelled them to implore for mercy. In this manner the inhabitants of Exeter and Cornwall excited his resentment, and experienced his lenity.

But these insurrections were slight, compared to that [1068.] in the North, which seemed to threaten the most important consequences. This was excited by the intrigues of Edwin and Morcar, the two most powerful noblemen of the English race, who, joined by Blethim prince of North Wales, Malcolm king of Scotland, and Sweyn king of Denmark, resolved to make one great effort for the recovery of their antient liberties. But the vigour and celerity of William destroyed their projects before they were ripe for execution; for, advancing towards them at the head of a powerful army, by forced marches, the two earls were so intimidated, that, instead of opposing, they had recourse to the Conqueror's clemency, by submission. He did not think proper to reject their advances, but pardoned them without hesitation. A peace which he made with Malcolm king of Scotland, shortly after, seemed to deprive them of all hopes of future assistance from without the kingdom.

But, whatever the successes of William might have been, the inhabitants, whether English or Normans, were at that time in a most dreadful situation. All the miseries that insolence on one hand, and hatred on the other; that tyranny and treason, suspicion and assassination, could bring upon a people, were there united. The Normans were seen to commit continual insults upon the English, and these vainly sought redress from their partial masters. Legal punishment being denied, they sought for private vengeance; and a day seldom passed but the bodies of assassinated Normans were found in the woods and highways, without any possibility of bringing the perpetrators to justice. Thus, at length, the conquerors themselves began again to wish for the tranquillity and security of their native country; and sev-

eral of them, though intrusted with great commands, desired to be dismissed the service. In order to prevent these desertions, which William highly resented, he was obliged to allure others to stay, by the largeness of his bounties. These brought on fresh exactions, and new insurrections were the natural consequences.

The inhabitants of Northumberland, impatient of their yoke, attacked the Norman garrison in Durham, and, taking advantage of the governor's negligence, put him, with seven hundred of his men, to the sword. The Norman governor of York shared the same fate; and the insurgents, being reinforced by the Danes, and some leaders from Scotland, attacked the castle, which was defended by a garrison of three thousand men. Mallet, its governor, that he might the better provide for its defence, set fire to some houses which lay contiguous; but the fire spreading, the whole city was quickly in flames. This proved the cause of his destruction; for the enraged inhabitants, joining in the assault, entered the citadel sword in hand, and cut off the whole garrison, without mercy. This transient gleam of success seemed to spread a general spirit of insurrection. The counties of Somerset, Dorset, Cornwall, and Devon, united in the common cause, and determined to make one great effort for the recovery of their former freedom.

William, undaunted amidst this scene of confusion, assembled his forces, and led them towards the North, conscious that his presence alone would be sufficient to repress these rude efforts of unadvised indignation. Accordingly, wherever he appeared, the insurgents either submitted or retired. The Danes were content to return, without committing any further hostilities, into Denmark. Waltheoff, who long defended York castle, submitted to the victor's clemency, and was taken into favour. Edric, another nobleman, who commanded the Northumbrians, made his submission to the Conqueror, and obtained pardon; while the rest dispersed themselves, and left the Normans undisputed masters of the whole kingdom. Edgar Atheling, who had been drawn among the rest into this insurrection, sought a retreat in Scotland from the pursuit of his enemies. There he continued, till, by proper solicitation, he was again taken into favour by the king. From that time he remained in England in a private station, con-

tent with opulence and security; perhaps as happy, though not so splendid, as if he had succeeded in the career of his ambition.

William being now acknowledged master of a people that more than once showed reluctance to his government, he resolved to throw off all appearance of lenity, and to incapacitate them from future insurrections. His first step was, to order the county of Northumberland to be laid waste, the houses to be burnt, the instruments of husbandry to be destroyed, and the inhabitants to seek new habitations. By this order it is said that above one hundred thousand persons perished, either by the sword or famine; and the country is supposed, even at this day, to bear the marks of its antient depopulation. He next proceeded to confiscate all the estates of the English gentry, and to grant them liberally to his Norman followers. Thus all the antient and honourable families were reduced to beggary, and the English found themselves entirely excluded from every road that led either to honour or preferment. They had the cruel mortification to find, that all his power only tended to their depression; and that the scheme of their subjection was attended with every circumstance of insult and indignity.

He was not yet, however, sufficiently arbitrary to change all the laws then in being for those of his own country. He only made several innovations, and ordered the law-pleas in the several courts to be made in the Norman language. Yet, with all his endeavours to make the French the popular language, the English still gained ground; and, what deserves remark, it had adopted much more of the French idiom for two or three reigns before than during the whole line of the Norman kings succeeding.

The feudal law had been before introduced into England by the Saxons; but this monarch reformed it according to the model of that practised in his native dominions. He divided all the lands of England, except the royal demesne, into baronies, and conferred those, upon certain military conditions, on the most considerable of his followers. These had a power of sharing their grants to inferior tenants, who were denominated knights or vassals, and who paid their lord the same duty that he paid the sovereign. To the first class of these baronies the English were not admitted; and the few who were permitted still to retain their

landed property, were content to be received in the second. The barons exercised all kinds of jurisdiction within their own manors, and held courts in which they administered justice to their own vassals. This law extended not only to the laity, but also to the bishops and clergy. They had usurped a power, during the Saxon succession, of being governed within themselves: but William restrained them to the exercise of their ecclesiastical power only, and submitted them to a similitude of duties with the rest of their fellow-subjects. This they at first regarded as a grievous imposition: but the king's authority was established by a power that neither the clergy nor the pope could intimidate. But, to keep the clergy as much as possible in his interests, he appointed none but his own countrymen to the most considerable church-dignities, and even displaced Stigand, arch-bishop of Canterbury, upon some frivolous pretences. His real motive was, that such a dignity was too exalted for a native to possess.

While he was thus employed in humbling the clergy, he was no less solicitous to repress many of those superstitious practices to which they had given countenance. He endeavoured to abolish trials by *ordeal* and *camp-fight*: the ordeal trial, which had been originally of pagan institution, and was still held in veneration by the Saxon Christians, was either by fire or water. It was used in criminal cases, where the suspicions were strong, but the proofs not evident. In that of fire, the person accused was brought into an open plain, and several plough-shares, heated red-hot, were placed at equal intervals before him: over these he was to walk blindfold; and if he escaped unhurt, he was acquitted of the charge. In the trial by water, the person accused was thrown, bound hand and foot, into the water: if he sunk, he was declared innocent; if he swam, he was executed, as being thus miraculously convicted. The trial by camp-fight was performed by single combat, in lists appointed for that purpose, between the accuser and the accused. He who, in such a case, came off victorious, was deemed innocent; and he who was conquered, if he survived his antagonist's resentment in the field, was sure to suffer as a malefactor some time after. Both these trials William abolished, as unchristian and unjust; and he reduced all causes to the judgment of twelve men, of a rank nearly equal to that of the prisoner. This method of trial by jury was

common to the Saxons, as well as the Normans, long before; but it was now confirmed by him with all the sanction of undisputed authority.

While William was thus employed, in rewarding his associates, punishing the refractory, and giving laws for the benefit of all, he was threatened with an insurrection in his dominions on

[1071.] the continent, which he thought his presence necessary to suppress. Unwilling, however, to draw off his Norman forces from England, he carried over a considerable army, composed almost entirely of English; and by those brave troops he soon reduced the revolted to submission. Thus we see a whimsical vicissitude of fortune: the inhabitants of Normandy brought over for the conquest of the English, and the English sent back to conquer the Normans. However, William had not time to enjoy his success unmolested; for accounts were quickly brought him from England, that a new conspiracy was formed, more dreadful, in being supported by the joint efforts of the Normans as well as the English. The adventurers who had followed the fortunes of William into England, had been bred in authority and independence at home, and were ill able to endure the absolute authority which this monarch had for some time assumed. The discontents were therefore become very general among these haughty nobles, and some wanted only the opportunity of his absence to break out into open rebellion. Among the number was Roger, earl of Hereford, son and heir to Fitzosborne, who had been the king's principal favourite. This nobleman had, either by way of compliment to the king, or in compliance with some obligation of the feudal law, solicited William's consent to permit the marriage of his sister with Ralph de Guader, earl of Norfolk; but he was flatly refused. Nevertheless, he proceeded to solemnize the nuptials with great magnificence, assembling all his friends, and those of Guader, upon the occasion. As the parents of the new-married couple were well acquainted with the character of William, whose resentment they had every reason to dread, they took the opportunity, while the company was heated with wine, to introduce that as a subject of conversation. They inveighed against the severity of his government; they observed, that by means of his excessive impositions he had taken with one hand what he had given with the other; they



affected to commiserate the English, whom he had reduced to beggary; and aggravated the defects in his disposition, which they represented as haughty and unforgiving. The guests were ready enough at any time to concur in their complaints; but now, warmed by the jollity of the entertainment, they put no bounds to their zeal. They unanimously entered into a conspiracy to shake off his yoke; and earl Waltheoff himself, whom we have already seen pardoned upon a former insurrection, was among the foremost on this occasion. But it was not without the greatest anxiety that he reflected, in his cooler intervals, upon an engagement made in the ardour of intoxication, big with the most fatal consequences both to himself and his country. In this state of perturbation, he had recourse to his wife, the niece of the king, and unbosomed himself to her, as he had the most firm reliance on her fidelity. But he was deceived; for she was in love with another, and only wanted an opportunity of getting rid of her husband at any rate. She, therefore, instantly found means to communicate the whole affair to the king, taking care to represent her husband's conduct in the most disadvantageous point of light. In the mean time, Waltheoff himself gave way to his internal remorse, and confessed the whole conspiracy to Lanfranc, who exhorted him, by all means, to reveal it to the king; which he was at last persuaded to do: but it was not till the whole affair had been divulged by his faithless consort. William coolly thanked him for his fidelity; but the former account of his perfidy sunk deep into the king's mind, and he secretly resolved to punish it.

During this interval, the conspirators being informed that Waltheoff was gone over to Normandy, justly concluded that their designs were betrayed, and flew to arms before their schemes were ripe for execution. The earl of Hereford was checked by Walter de Lacy, a great baron in the king's interest. The earl of Norfolk was defeated by Odo, the king's brother; and the prisoners who were taken had each the right foot cut off, in order to deter others from a similitude of treason. The earl himself retired to Denmark; so that William, upon his arrival in England, found that nothing remained for him to do but to punish the criminals; which was performed with unusual severity. Many of the rebels were hanged, some had their eyes put out, and others their hands cut off. The unfortunate Waltheoff, who

had imprudently entered into the conspiracy, but attempted to atone for his fault by an early confession, found no mercy. He was rich, and he was an Englishman; two faults that served to aggravate his guilt: he was accordingly tried, condemned, and executed. His infamous wife did not long enjoy the fruits of her perfidy; but, falling some time after under the king's displeasure, was abandoned by the world, and passed the rest of her life in contempt, remorse, and misery. Some assert that this nobleman fell a sacrifice to the cruelty of Odo, not of William; but, however that may be, it is certain that Waltheoff, and Fitz-Aubert, a noble Norman, who was also beheaded on this occasion, were the only persons of note that were executed during the reign of William the Conqueror. Having thus re-established the peace of his government, and extinguished the last embers of rebellion with blood, William returned once more to the continent, in order to pursue Guader, who, escaping from England, had taken refuge with the count of Bretagne. Finding him, however, too powerfully protected by that prince, instead of prosecuting his vengeance, he wisely came to a treaty with the count, in which Guader was included.

[1076.] William, having thus secured the peace of his dominions, now expected rest from his labours; and, finding none either willing or powerful enough to oppose him, he hoped that the end of his reign would be marked with prosperity and peace. But such is the blindness of human hope, that he found enemies where he least expected them, and such too as served to embitter all the latter part of his life. His last troubles were excited by his own children, from the opposing of whom he could expect to reap neither glory nor gain. He had four sons, Robert, Richard, William, and Henry, besides several daughters. Robert, his eldest son, surnamed Curthose, from the shortness of his legs, was a prince who inherited all the bravery of his family and nation, but was rather bold than prudent, rather enterprising than politic. Earnest after fame, and even impatient that his father should stand in the way, he aspired at that independence to which his temper, as well as some circumstances in his situation, conspired to invite him. He had formerly been promised by his father the government of Maine, a province of France, which had submitted to William, and was also declared successor to the

dukedom of Normandy. However, when he came to demand the execution of these engagements, he received an absolute denial; the king shrewdly observing, that it was not his custom to throw off his clothes till he went to bed. Robert openly declared his resentment, and was often heard to express his jealousy of his two surviving brothers, William and Henry; for Richard was killed, in hunting, by a stag. These, by greater assiduity, had wrought upon the credulity and affections of the king, and consequently were the most obnoxious to Robert. A mind, therefore, so well prepared for resentment, soon found or made a cause for an open rupture. The princes were one day in sport together, and, in the idle petulance of play, took it in their heads to throw water upon their elder brother as he passed through the court, on leaving their apartment. Robert, all alive to suspicion, quickly turned this idle frolic into a studied indignity; and having these jealousies still further inflamed by one of his favourites, he drew his sword, and ran up stairs with an intent to take revenge. The whole castle was quickly filled with tumult, and it was not without some difficulty that the king himself was able to appease it. But he could not allay the animosity, which, from that moment, ever after prevailed in his family. Robert, attended by several of his confederates, withdrew to Rouen that very night, hoping to surprise the castle; but his design was defeated by the governor.

The flame being thus kindled, the popular character of the prince, and a sympathy of manners, engaged all the young nobility of Normandy and Maine, as well as of Anjou and Bretagne, to espouse his quarrel; even his mother, it is said, supported him by secret remittances, and aided him in this obstinate resistance by private encouragement. This unnatural contest continued for several years to inflame the Norman state; and William was at last obliged to have recourse to England for supporting his authority against his son. Accordingly, drawing an army of Englishmen together, he led them over into Normandy; where he soon compelled Robert and his adherents to quit the field, and he was quickly reinstated in all his dominions. As for Robert, being no longer able to resist his father, he was obliged to take shelter in the castle of Gerberoy, which the king of France had provided for him, where he was shortly after besieged by his father. As the garrison was strong, and conscious of guilt, it

made a most gallant defence; and many were the skirmishes and duels that were fought under its walls. In one of these, accident brought the king and his son together; but, being both concealed by their helmets, they attacked each other with mutual fury. A fierce and dreadful combat ensued between them, till at last the young prince wounded his father in the arm, and threw him from his horse. The next blow would, in all probability, have put an end to the king's life, had he not cried out for assistance. Robert then immediately recollected his father's voice; and at once stung with a consciousness of his crime, he leaped from his horse, and raised the fallen monarch from the ground. He then prostrated himself in his presence, and craved pardon for his offences, promising for the future a strict adherence to his duty. The resentment harboured by the king was not so easily appeased; perhaps his indignation at being overcome added to his anger: instead, therefore, of pardoning his son, he gave him his malediction, and departed for his own camp on Robert's horse, which the prince had assisted him to mount. However, the conduct of the son served, after some recollection, to appease the father. As soon as William was returned to Rouen, he became reconciled to Robert, and carried him with him into England, where he was successfully employed in retaliating an invasion of Malcolm king of Scotland.

[1081.] William, being thus freed from foreign and domestic enemies, began to have sufficient leisure for a more attentive application to the duties of peace. For this purpose, the Doomsday Book was compiled by his order, which contains a general survey of all the lands in the kingdom; their extent in each district; their proprietors, tenures, value, the quantity of meadow, pasture, wood, and arable land, which they contained; and in some counties, the number of tenants, cottages, and people of all denominations, who lived upon them. This detail enabled him to regulate the taxations in such a manner, that all the inhabitants were compelled to bear their duties in proportion to their abilities.

He was no less careful of the methods of saving money than of accumulation. He reserved a very ample revenue for the crown; and, in the general distribution of land among his followers, he kept possession of no less than fourteen hundred manors

in different parts of the country. Such was his income, that it is justly said to have exceeded that of any English prince either before or since his time. No king of England was ever so opulent; none so able to support the splendour and magnificence of a court; none had so many places of trust and profit to bestow; and none, consequently, had his commands attended with such implicit obedience.

There was one pleasure to which William, as well as all the Normans and antient Saxons, was addicted, which was hunting. To indulge this in its utmost extent, he depopulated the country of Hants for thirty miles, turning out the inhabitants, destroying all the villages, and making the wretched outcasts no compensation for such an injury. In the time of the Saxon kings, all noblemen without distinction had a right to hunt in the royal forests; but William appropriated all these, and published very severe laws to prohibit his subjects from encroaching on this part of his prerogative. The killing of a deer, a boar, or even a hare, was punished with the loss of the delinquent's eyes, at a time when the killing of a man might be atoned for by paying a moderate fine or composition.

As the king's wealth and power were so great, it may be easily supposed that the riches of his ministers were in proportion. Those of his uterine brother Odo, bishop of Bayeux, were so great, that he resolved to purchase the papacy. For this purpose, taking the opportunity of William's absence, he equipped a vessel at the Isle of Wight, on board of which he sent immense treasures, and prepared for his embarkation; but he was unfortunately detained by contrary winds. In the mean time William, having had intimation of his design, resolved to prevent the exportation of so much wealth from his dominions. Accordingly, returning from Normandy, where he was then employed, he came into England at the very instant his brother was stepping on board, and immediately ordered him to be made a prisoner. His attendants, however, respecting the immunities of the church, scrupled to execute his commands; so that the king himself was obliged with his own hands to seize him. Odo, disconcerted at so unexpected an intervention, appealed to the pope; who, he alleged, was the only person upon earth to try a bishop. To this the king replied, that he did not seize him as bishop of Bayeux, but as the earl of

Kent; and in that capacity he expected, and would have, an account of his administration. He was therefore sent prisoner into Normandy; and, notwithstanding all the remonstrances and threats of Gregory, he was detained in custody during the remainder of William's reign.

William had scarcely put an end to this transaction when he felt a very severe blow in the death of Matilda, his queen; and, as misfortunes generally come together, he received information of a general insurrection in Maine, the nobility of which had been always averse from the Norman government. Upon his arrival on the continent, he found that the insurgents had been secretly assisted and excited by the king of France, whose policy consisted in thus lessening the Norman power, by creating dissensions among the nobles of its different provinces. William's displeasure was not a little increased by the account he received of some railleries which that monarch had thrown out against him. It seems that William, who was become corpulent, had been detained in bed some time by sickness; and Philip was heard to say, that he only lay in of a big belly. This so provoked the English monarch, that he sent him word he should soon be up, and would at his churching present such a number of tapers as would set the kingdom of France in a flame.

In order to perform this promise he levied a strong army, and, entering the isle of France, destroyed and burned all the villages and houses without opposition. He took the town of Mante, which he reduced to ashes. But the progress of these hostilities was stopped by an accident, which shortly after put an end to William's life. His horse, chancing to place his fore-feet on some hot ashes, plunged so violently that the rider was thrown forward, and bruised upon the pommel of the saddle to such a degree, that he suffered a relapse, and was obliged to return to Rouen. Finding his illness increase, and being sensible of the approach of death, he began to turn his eyes to a future state, from which the pursuit of ambition had long averted them. He was now struck with remorse for all the cruelties and depredations he had made: he endeavoured to atone for his former offences by large presents to churches and monasteries, and by giving liberty to many prisoners whom he unjustly detained. He was even prevailed on, though not without reluctance, to consent,

with his dying breath, to the deliverance of his brother Odo, against whom he was extremely incensed. He then bequeathed Normandy and Le Maine to his eldest son Robert, whom he never loved ; to Henry he left five thousand pounds and his mother's jointure, without the smallest territory ; and though he would not pretend to establish the succession of the crown of England, to which he now began to perceive that he had no title, he expressed his wish that it might devolve to his favourite son William, whom he immediately dispatched with letters to the archbishop of Canterbury, desiring his assistance. Having thus regulated his temporal affairs, he was conveyed in a litter to a little village near Rouen, where he might settle the concerns of his soul without noise or interruption. It was there that he died, in the sixty-first year of his age, after having reigned fifty-two in Normandy, and twenty-one in England. His body was interred in the church at Caen, which he himself had founded : but his interment was attended with a remarkable circumstance. As the body was carrying to the grave, the prelates and priests attending with the most awful silence, a man, who stood upon an eminence, was heard to cry out with a loud voice, and to forbid the interment of the body in a spot that had been unjustly seized by the Conqueror. " That very place," cried the man, " is the area of my father's house ; and I now summon the departed soul before the divine tribunal to do me justice, and to atone for so great an oppression." The bishops and attendants were struck with the man's intrepid conduct ; they inquired into the truth of his charge, and finding it just, agreed to satisfy him for the damages he had sustained.

William was a prince of great courage and capacity ; ambitious, politic, cruel, vindictive, and rapacious. He was fond of glory, and parsimonious merely for the purposes of ostentation. Though sudden and impetuous in his enterprises, he was cool, deliberate, and indefatigable in times of danger. He is said, by the Norman writers, to be above eight feet high, his body strong built and well proportioned, and his strength such that none of his courtiers could draw his bow. He talked little ; he was seldom affable to any, except to Lanfranc, arch-bishop of Canterbury ; with him he was ever meek and gentle,—with all others stern and austere. Though he rendered himself formidable to all, and

odious to many, yet he had policy sufficient to transmit his power to posterity, and the throne is still occupied by his descendants.

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CHAP. VI.

WILLIAM RUFUS.

WILLIAM, surnamed RUFUS from the colour of his hair, had no sooner received the late king's letter to Lanfranc in his favour, than he hastened to take measures for securing himself on the throne. Arriving, therefore, before the news of William's death had yet reached England, his first care was to take possession of the treasure left by the king at Winchester, which amounted to the sum of sixty thousand pounds. He then addressed the primate, who had always considered him with an eye of peculiar affection, and who now, finding the justness of his claim, instantly proceeded to the ceremony of his coronation. At the same time Robert, who had been appointed successor to Normandy, took peaceable possession of that government; where his person was loved, and his accession long desired.

In the beginning of William Rufus's reign the English began to think they had hitherto mistaken this prince's character, who had always appeared to them rude and brutal. He at first seemed to pay the utmost regard to the counsels of Lanfranc the primate, which were mild and gentle, and constantly calculated for the benefit of the nation. Nevertheless, the Norman barons, who knew him better, perceived that he kept his disposition under an unnatural restraint, and that he only waited an opportunity for throwing off the mask when his power should be established. They were, from the beginning, displeased at the division of the empire by the late king; they eagerly desired an union as before, and looked upon Robert as the proper owner of the whole. The natural disposition also of this prince was as pleasing to them as that of William his brother was odious. Robert was open, generous, and humane; he carried his facility to an excess, as he could scarcely find strength of mind to give any of his adherents the mortification of a refusal. But this was a quality no way disa-



greeable to those who expected to build their ambition on the easy pliancy of his temper. A powerful conspiracy was therefore carried on against William; and Odo, the late king's brother, undertook to conduct it to maturity.

William, sensible of the danger that threatened him on all sides, endeavoured to gain the affections of the native English, whom he prevailed upon, by promises of future good treatment and preference of the distribution of his favours, to espouse his interests. He was soon in the field; and, at the head of a numerous army, showed himself in readiness to oppose all who should dispute his pretensions. In the mean time Odo had written to Robert an account of the conspiracy in his favour, urging him to use dispatch, and exciting him by the greatness of the danger, and the splendour of the reward. Robert gave the most positive assurances of speedy assistance; but his indolence was not to be excited by distant expectations. Instead of employing his money in levies to support his friends in England, he squandered it away in idle expenses and unmerited benefits, so that he procrastinated his departure till the opportunity was lost; while William exerted himself with incredible activity to dissipate the confederacy before he could arrive. Nor was this difficult to effect: the conspirators had, in consequence of Robert's assurances, taken possession of some fortresses; but the appearance of the king soon reduced them to implore for mercy. He granted them their lives, but confiscated all their estates, and banished them the kingdom.

William, thus freed from all danger of insurrection, and fixed in the peaceable possession of the kingdom, showed the first instance of his perverse disposition, in his ingratitude to the English who had secured him on the throne.

The death of Lanfranc, which followed shortly after, took off all restraint from his inclinations; and his mind now appeared in its natural deformity, tyrannical and unjust. He ordered a new survey to be taken of all the lands and property of the kingdom; and wherever he found them undervalued in the Domesday-book, he raised the proportion of taxes accordingly. Even the privileges of the church, which were held very sacred in those times of ignorance, were but a feeble rampart against his usurpations; he seized the vacant bishoprics, and openly put to sale such ab-

beys as he thought proper. But, not contented with exerting his tyranny over his own dominions, he was resolved to extend his authority over those of his brother. In consequence of this resolution he appeared in Normandy at the head of a numerous army; but the nobility, on both sides, strongly connected by interest and alliances, brought on an accommodation. Among other articles of this treaty, it was agreed, that, in case either of the brothers should die without issue, the survivor should inherit all his dominions. It was in vain that Henry, the other brother, remonstrated against this act of injustice; it was in vain that he took arms, and even defended a little fortress on the coast of Normandy, for some time, against their united assaults. He was at last obliged to surrender; and being despoiled of even the small patrimony that was left him, he wandered about for some years with a few attendants, and was often reduced to great poverty.

It was in besieging this fortress that a circumstance or two have been related, which serve to mark the character of the two brothers. As William was taking the air one day on horseback, at some distance from the camp, he perceived two horsemen riding out from the castle, who soon came up and attacked him. In the very first encounter, the king's horse being killed, overturned, and lay upon him in such a manner that he could not disengage himself. His antagonist, while he remained in this situation, lifted up his arm to dispatch him; when William exclaimed, in a menacing tone, "Hold, villain! I am the king of England." The two soldiers were immediately seized with veneration and awe; and, helping him up, accommodated him with one of their horses. William was not ungrateful for this service; he mounted the horse, and, ordering the soldier to follow, took him into his service. Soon after Robert had an occasion to show still greater marks of generosity; for, hearing that the garrison was in great distress for want of water, he not only ordered that Henry should be permitted to supply himself, but also sent him some pipes of wine for his own table. Rufus did not at all approve of this ill-timed generosity; but Robert answered his remonstrances by saying, "Shall we suffer our brother to die with thirst? Where shall we find another when he is gone?"

The intestine and petty discords that ensued upon this accommodation between Robert and Rufus, seem scarce worthy the at-

vention of history. They indeed produced more real calamities to the people than splendid invasions and bloody battles; as the depredations of petty tyrants are ever more severely felt by the poor than the magnanimous projects of ambition. A rupture ensued between Rufus and Malcolm, king of Scotland, in which the latter was ultimately surprised, and slain, by a party from Alnwick castle.

A new breach was made some time after between the brothers, in which Rufus found means to encroach still [1093.] further upon Robert's possessions. An incursion from the Welsh filled the country of England with alarm; but they were quickly repelled, and obliged to find refuge in their native [1094.] mountains. A conspiracy of the Norman barons in England threatened serious consequences; but their schemes were prevented and frustrated. Robert Mowbray, earl of Northumberland, who was at the head of this plot, was thrown into prison, where he died, after thirty years confinement. The count of Eu, another conspirator, denying the charge, fought with his accuser in presence of the court at Windsor, and, being worsted in the combat, was condemned to be castrated, and to have his eyes put out. Every conspiracy, thus detected, served to enrich the king, who took care to apply to his own use those treasures that had been amassed for the purpose of dethroning him.

But the memory of these transient broils and unsuccessful treasons was now totally eclipsed by one of the most noted enterprises that ever adorned the annals of nations, or excited the attention of mankind: I mean the crusades, which were now first projected. Peter the Hermit, a native of Amiens in Picardy, was a man of great zeal, courage, and piety. He had made a pilgrimage to the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem, and beheld, with indignation, the cruel manner in which the Christians were treated by the Infidels, who were in possession of that place. Unable to suppress his resentment, upon his return he entertained the bold design of freeing the whole country from the Mahometan yoke, and of restoring to the Christians the land where their religion was first propagated. He proposed his views to Martin II., at that time pope, who permitted rather than assisted this bold enthusiast in his aims. Peter, therefore, warmed with a zeal that knew no bounds, began to preach the crusade, and to excite the

princes of Christendom to the recovery of the Holy Land. Bare-headed and bare-footed, he travelled from court to court, preaching as he went, and inflaming the zeal of every rank of people. The fame of this design being thus diffused, prelates, nobles, and princes, concurred in seconding it; and, at a council held at Clermont, where the pope himself exhorted to the undertaking, the whole assembly cried out with one voice, as if by inspiration, *It is the will of God! It is the will of God!* From that time nothing was seen but an universal migration of the western nations into the East; men of all ranks flew to arms with the utmost alacrity, and bore the sign of the cross upon their right shoulder, as a mark of their devotion to the cause. In the midst of this universal ardour that was diffused over Europe, men were not entirely forgetful of their temporal interest; for some, hoping a more magnificent settlement in the soft regions of Asia, sold their European property for whatever they could obtain, contented with receiving any thing for what they were predetermined to relinquish. Among the princes who felt and acknowledged this general spirit of enterprise, was Robert, duke of Normandy. The crusade was entirely adapted to his inclinations and his circumstances; he was brave, zealous, covetous of glory, harassed by insurrections, and, what was more than all, naturally fond of change. In order to supply money to defray the necessary charges of so expensive an undertaking, he offered to mortgage his dukedom of Normandy to his brother Rufus for a stipulated sum of money. This sum, which was no greater than ten thousand marks, was readily promised by Rufus, whose ambition was upon the watch to seize every advantage. He was no ways solicitous about raising the money, as he knew the riches of his clergy. From them, therefore, he forced the whole,—heedless of their murmurs, and aggravating his injustice by the pious pretences he made use of to cover his extortions: thus equipping his brother for his romantic expedition to the Holy Land, he more wisely, and more safely, took peaceable possession of his dukedom at home.

In this manner was Normandy once more united to England; and from this union, afterwards, arose those numerous wars with France, which for whole centuries continued to depopulate both nations, without conducing in the end to increase the power of

either. However, Rufus was not a little pleased with this acquisition; he made a voyage to his new dominion, and took possession of it for five years, according to agreement [1095.] with his brother. He also demanded of the king of France a part of the territory of Vexin, which he pretended was an appurtenance to his duchy, and even attempted to enforce his claims by arms. But though the cession of Maine and Normandy greatly increased the king's territories, they added but little to his real power, as his new subjects were composed of men of independent spirits, more ready to dispute than obey his commands. Many were the revolts and insurrections which he was obliged to quell in person; and no sooner was one conspiracy suppressed than another rose to give him fresh inquietude.

In the midst of these foreign troubles, he found himself involved in a disagreeable quarrel with Anselm, arch-bishop of Canterbury, a prelate of a haughty disposition, and extremely tenacious of the rights of the clergy. There was at that time a schism in the church, between Urban and Clement, who both pretended to the papacy; and Anselm, who had already acknowledged Urban, was determined, without the king's consent, to introduce his authority into England. William, who, imitating his father's example, had prohibited his subjects from recognizing any pope whom he had not previously approved, was enraged at Anselm's pretensions. A synod was summoned at Rockingham, for deposing the prelate; but instead of obeying the king, the members of it declared, that none but the pope could inflict a censure on their primate. To this was soon after added a fresh offence. Anselm, being required to furnish his quota of soldiers for an intended expedition against the Welsh, reluctantly complied; but he sent them so ill equipped, that Rufus threatened him with a prosecution. As the resentments on both sides were increased, their mutual demands were raised in proportion, till at length their anger proceeded to recrimination; and Anselm, finding it dangerous to remain in the kingdom, desired permission to retire to Rome. This request the king very readily complied with; but, in order to mortify the prelate yet more, he sent an officer to search his baggage after he was on board, and to seize all his money, on pretence of a law which forbade the exportation of silver. Not content with this, he ordered all his temporalities to

be confiscated, and actually kept possession of them the remaining part of his life.

This open infringement of what were then considered as rights of the church, served to exasperate the pope, as well as all the ecclesiastics of his own dominions, against him. Urban even menaced him with the sentence of excommunication; but he was too earnestly engaged in the crusade to attend to any other business. Rufus, therefore, little regarded those censures, which he found were ineffectual: he had but very little religion at best; and the amazing infatuation of the times inspired him with no very high ideas of the wisdom of its professors. It is reported of him, that he once accepted fifty marks of a Jew, whose son had been converted to Christianity, and who engaged him by that present to assist in bringing back the youth to Judaism. William employed both menaces and persuasion to that purpose; but, finding his efforts ineffectual, he sent for the father, and informing him that the new convert was obstinate in his faith, he returned him half the money, and kept the rest for his pains. At another time, he is said to have sent for some learned Christian theologians and some Jewish rabbies, and bade them fairly dispute the points of their religion before him. He was perfectly indifferent, he said, which should prevail; he had his ears open to both, and he would embrace that doctrine, which, upon comparison, should be found supported on the most solid arguments.

In this manner Rufus proceeded, careless of approbation or censure, and only intent upon extending his dominions, either by purchase or conquest. The earl of Poictou and Guienne, inflamed with a desire of going upon the crusade, had gathered an immense multitude for that expedition, but wanted money to forward his preparations. He had recourse therefore to Rufus, and offered to mortgage all his dominions, without much considering what would become of his unhappy subjects that he thus disposed of. The king accepted this offer with his usual avidity, and had prepared a fleet and an army, in order to take possession of the rich provinces thus consigned to his trust. But an accident put an end to all his ambitious projects, and served to rid the world of a mercenary tyrant. His favourite amusement was hunting, almost the only relaxation of princes in those rude times, when the other arts of peace were but little cultivated. The New For-

est was generally the scene of his sport; and there he usually spent those hours which were not employed in business of a more serious nature. One day, as he was mounting his horse in order to take his customary amusement, he is said to have been stopped by a monk, who warned him, from some dreams he had the night before, to abstain from that day's diversion. Rufus, smiling at his superstition, ordered him to be paid for his zeal, but desired him to have more favourable dreams for the future. Thus setting forward, he began the chase, attended by Walter Tyrrel, a French knight, famous for archery, who always accompanied him in these excursions. Towards sunset, they found themselves separated from the rest of their retinue; and the king dismounted, either through fatigue, or in expectation of a fresh horse. Just at that instant a stag bounded out before him; and Rufus, drawing his bow, wounded the animal, yet not so mortally but that it fled, while he followed in hopes of seeing it fall. As the setting sun beamed in his face, he held up his hands before his eyes, and stood in that posture, when Tyrrel, who had been engaged in the same pursuit, let fly an arrow, which glancing from a tree struck the king to the heart. He dropped dead instantaneously; while the innocent author of his death, terrified at the accident, put spurs to his horse, hastened to the sea-shore, embarked for France, and joined the crusade that was then setting out for Jerusalem. William's body, being found by some countrymen passing through the forest, was laid across a horse, and carried to Winchester, where it was next day interred in the cathedral, without ceremony, or any marks of respect. Few lamented his fate, and none of the courtiers attended his funeral.

It requires no great art to draw the character of a prince whose vices were compensated by scarce one virtue. Rufus was a perfidious, encroaching, and a dangerous neighbour; an unkind and ungenerous relation, a rapacious and yet a prodigal prince. However, there remain to this day some monuments of his public spirit; the Tower, Westminster-hall, and London-bridge, were all built by him, and are evidences that the treasures of government were not all expended in vain. William Rufus was slain in the thirteenth year of his reign, and about the fortieth of his age. As he never was married, he left no legitimate issue behind him: the succession, therefore, of course devolved upon Robert, his elder brother; but he was then too distant to assert his pretensions.

## CHAP. VII.

## HENRY I. SURNAMED BEAU-CLERC.

**T**HERE were now two competitors for the crown,—Robert, who had engaged in the holy war, and Henry, the youngest brother, who continued at home. Had Robert been in Normandy when William died, there is no doubt, from the popularity of his character, and from the treaty formerly concluded between the two brothers, but that he would have been elected without opposition. This valiant and generous prince, having led his followers into Palestine, and there distinguished himself by his courage, his affable disposition, and unbounded generosity, after the taking of Jerusalem, began to think of returning home, and of enjoying in tranquillity that glory which he had acquired in the field against the infidels. But, instead of taking the most direct road to England, he passed through Italy, where he became acquainted with Sibylla, daughter of count Conversano, a lady of celebrated beauty; and, marrying her, he lavished away, in her company, those hours which should have been employed in the recovery of his kingdom.

In the mean time Henry, who had been hunting in the New Forest when his brother was slain, took the earliest advantage of the occasion, and, hastening to Winchester, resolved to secure the royal treasure, which he knew to be the best assistant in seconding his aims. William de Breteuil, who had the care of the treasury, informed of the king's death, opposed himself boldly to Henry's pretensions. He ventured to assure Henry, that the money in his custody, as well as the crown, belonged to his elder brother, and that he was resolved to continue firm in his just allegiance. The dispute was on the point of producing bloodshed, when several of Henry's partisans arriving, compelled Breteuil to surrender the treasure, with a part of which they, in all probability, hoped to be rewarded for their service. Being possessed of this, without losing time, he next hastened to London, where he procured himself to be proclaimed king, and instantly proceeded to the exercise of the royal dignity. The barons, as well as the people, acquiesced in a claim which they were unprepared to resist, and yielding obedience from the fears of immediate danger.



Whenever there is a disputed throne, the people generally become umpires, and thus regain a part of those natural rights of which they might have been deprived. Henry easily foresaw that, to secure his usurped title, his subjects were to be indulged, and that his power could only find security in their affections. His first care, therefore, was to make several concessions in their favour. He granted them a charter, establishing the churches in possession of all their immunities; abolishing those excessive fines which used to be exacted from heirs; granting his barons and military tenants the power of bequeathing their money by will; remitting all debts due to the crown; offering a pardon for all former offences, and promising to confirm and observe all the laws of Edward the Confessor. These concessions pleased the clergy and the people, while the king, who meant only to observe them while his power was in dispute, boasted of the lenity of his government.

Still further to ingratiate himself with the people, Henry expelled from court all the ministers of his brother's debauchery and arbitrary power; he stripped Ralph Flambard, who had been his brother's principal favourite, and consequently obnoxious to the people, of his dignity, and had him confined to the Tower. But what gave him the greatest share of popularity was his recalling Anselm, arch-bishop of Canterbury, who had been banished during the last reign, to his former dignity and his favour. One thing only remained to confirm his claims without danger of a rival. The English still remembered their Saxon monarchs with gratitude, and beheld them excluded the throne with regret. There still remained some of the descendants of that favourite line, and, among others, Matilda, the niece of Edgar Atheling; which lady, having declined all pretensions to royalty, was bred up in a convent, and had actually taken the veil. Upon her Henry first fixed his eyes as a proper consort, by whose means the long breach between the Saxon and Norman interests would be finally united. It only remained to get over the scruple of her being a nun: but this a council, devoted to his interests, readily admitted; and Matilda being pronounced free to marry, the nuptials were celebrated with great pomp and solemnity.

It was at this unfavourable juncture that Robert returned from abroad, and, after taking possession of his native dominions, laid

his claim to the crown of England. But he was now, as in all his former attempts, too late for success. However, as he was a man of undaunted resolution, he seemed resolved to dispute his pretensions to the last; and the great fame he had acquired in the East did not a little serve to forward his endeavours. He was also excited to these resolutions by Flambard, who had escaped from the Tower; together with several others, as well of the Norman as the English nobility. Even the seamen were affected with the general popularity of his name, and revolted to him with the greatest part of a fleet that had been equipped to oppose his passage. Henry, who outwardly pretended to slight all these preparations, yet had penetration enough to perceive that his subjects fluctuated in their inclinations between him and his brother. In this emergency he had recourse to the bigotry of the people to oppose their sentiments of justice. He paid diligent court to Anselm, whose sanctity and wisdom he pretended to revere; and this prelate, in return, employed all his credit in securing him on the throne. He scrupled not to assure the nobles of the king's sincerity in his professions of justice; and even rode through the ranks of the army, recommending to the soldiery the defence of their king, and promising to see their valour rewarded. Thus the people were retained in their allegiance to the usurper, and the army marched cheerfully forward to meet Robert and his forces, which were landed in safety at Portsmouth. When the two armies came in sight, they both seemed equally unwilling to hazard a battle; and their leaders, who saw that much more would be lost than gained by such a conflict, made proposals for an accommodation. This, after the removal of a few obstacles, was agreed to; and it was stipulated that Robert, upon the receipt of a certain sum, should resign his pretensions to England; and that if either of the princes died without issue, the other should succeed to his dominions. This treaty being ratified, the armies on each side were disbanded; and Robert, having lived two months in the utmost harmony with his brother, returned in peace to his own dominions.

But it was not in the power of formal treaties to bind up the resentment of a monarch who knew himself injured, and found it in his power to take revenge. Henry soon showed his resolution to punish all the heads of the party which had lately opposed him;

and this he did, under different pretexs, and by repeated prosecutions. The earl of Shrewsbury, Arnulf de Montgomery, and Roger, earl of Lancaster, were banished the kingdom, with the confiscations of their estates. Robert de Pon- [1103.] tefract, Robert de Mallet, William de Warene, and the earl of Cornwall, were treated with equal severity; so that Robert, finding his friends thus oppressed, came over to England to intercede in their behalf. Henry received him very coolly, and assembled a council to deliberate in what manner he should be treated; so that Robert, finding his own liberty to be in danger, was glad to ask permission to return; which, however, was not granted him till he consented to give up his pension.

But the consequences of Robert's indiscretion were not confined to his own safety alone: as he was totally averse to business, and only studious of the more splendid amusements or employments of life, his affairs every day began to wear a worse appearance. His servants pillaged him without compunction; and he is described as lying whole days a-bed for want of clothes, of which they had robbed him. His subjects were treated still more deplorably; for, being under the command of petty and rapacious tyrants, who plundered them without mercy, the whole country was become a scene of violence and depredation. It was in this miserable exigence that the Normans at length had recourse to Henry, from whose wise administration of his own dominions they expected a similitude of prosperity, should he take the reins of theirs. Henry very readily promised to redress their grievances, as he knew it would be the direct method to second his own ambition. The year ensuing, therefore, he landed in Normandy with a strong army, took some of the prin- [1105.] cipal towns, and showed, by the rapidity of his progress, that he meditated the entire conquest of the country.

Robert, who had already mortgaged or given away the greatest part of his demesne, spent his time in the most indolent amusements, and looked upon the progress of Henry with an eye of perfect indifference. But being at last roused from his lethargy, and finding his affairs in a desperate situation, he took the strange resolution of appealing, in person, to Henry's natural affections, which this brave, imprudent man estimated by the emotions of his own heart. Henry received him not only with cool-

ness but contempt; and soon taught him, that no virtues will gain that man esteem who has forfeited his pretensions to prudence. Robert, thus treated with indignity, quitted his brother in a transport of rage, expressing an ardent purpose of revenge; to which Henry paid no sort of regard.

Robert was resolved, however, to show himself formidable, even in the most distressed state of his circumstances. Possessed with high ideas of chivalry, which his expedition to the Holy Land served to heighten, he was willing to retrieve his affairs by valour, which he had lost by indolence. Being supported by the earl of Mortaigne and Robert de Belesme, Henry's inveterate enemies, he raised an army, and approached his brother's camp, with a view of finishing, by a decisive battle, the quarrel between them. While the two armies were yet in sight of each other, some of the clergy employed their mediation to bring on a treaty; but as Henry insisted upon Robert's renouncing the government of his dominions entirely, and one half of the revenue, all accommodation was rejected with disdain, and both sides prepared for battle. Robert was now entered on that scene of action in which he chiefly gloried, and in which he was always known to excel. He animated his little army by his example, and led them to the encounter with that spirit which had formerly made the infidels tremble. There was no withstanding his first shock; that quarter of the English army where he made the impression gave way, and he was nearly on the point of gaining a complete victory. But it was different on that quarter where Belesme commanded; he was put to flight by one of the king's generals, who also advancing himself with a fresh body of horse to sustain his centre, his whole army rallied; while Robert's forces, exhausted and broken, gave ground on every side, in spite of all his efforts and acts of personal valour. But though he now saw his army defeated, and numbers falling round him, yet he refused to find safety by flight, or turn his back upon an enemy that he still disdained. He was taken prisoner, with near ten thousand of his men, and all the considerable barons who had adhered to his misfortunes. This victory was followed by the final reduction of Normandy, while Henry returned in triumph to England, leading with him his captive brother, who, after a life of bravery, generosity, and truth, now found himself not only deprived of his

patrimony and his friends, but also of his freedom. Henry, unmindful of his brother's former magnanimity with regard to him, detained him a prisoner during the remainder of his life, which was no less than twenty-eight years; and he died in the castle of Cardiff, in Glamorganshire. It is even said by some that he was deprived of his sight by a red-hot copper bason applied to his eyes; while his brother attempted to stifle the reproaches of his conscience by founding the abbey of Reading, which was then considered as a sufficient atonement for every degree of barbarity.

The first step Henry took, after his return to England, was to reform some abuses which had crept in among his courtiers; for, as they were allowed by the feudal law to live upon the king's tenants whenever he travelled, they, under colour of this, committed all manner of ravages with impunity. To remedy this disorder, he published an edict, punishing with the loss of sight all such as should, under pretext of royal authority, commit any depredation in the places through which they passed. Some disputes also concerning ecclesiastical affairs, which were supported by Anselm, the arch-bishop of Canterbury, were compromised and adjusted. Henry was contented to resign his right of granting ecclesiastical investitures, but was allowed to receive homage from his bishops for all their temporal properties and privileges. The marriage of priests also was prohibited, and laymen were not allowed to marry within the seventh degree of affinity. The laity were also prohibited from wearing long hair,—a mode of dress to which the clergy showed the utmost aversion.

These regulations served to give employment to Henry in his peaceful intervals; but the apprehensions which he had from the dissatisfaction of his Norman subjects, and his fears for the succession, gave him too much business to permit any long intervals of relaxation. His principal concern was to prevent his nephew, William, the son of Robert, from succeeding to the crown, in prejudice of William, his own son, for whom he was solicitous to secure it. His nephew was but six years of age when he committed him to the care of Helie de St. Saen; and this nobleman discharged his trust in his education with a degree of fidelity uncommon at the barbarous period we are describing. Finding that Henry was desirous of recovering possession of his pupil's person, he withdrew, and carried him to the court of Fulk,

count of Anjou, who gave him protection. This noble youth, wandering from court to court, evaded all the arts of his powerful uncle, who was not remiss in trying every method of seizing him, either by treaty or intimidation. In this struggle Lewis, the king of France, took the young adventurer's part, and endeavoured to interest the pope in his quarrel. Failing in this, he endeavoured to gain, by force of arms, what his negotiations could not obtain. A war ensued between him and Henry, in which many slight battles were fought, but attended with no decisive consequences. In one of these, which was fought at Noyon, a city that Lewis had an intention to surprise, the valour both of the nephew and the uncle were not a little conspicuous. This young man, who inherited all his father's bravery, charged the van of the English army with such impetuosity, that it fell back upon the main body, commanded by the king in person, whose utmost efforts were unequal to the attack. Still, however, exerting all his endeavours to stem the torrent of the enemy that was pouring down upon him, a Norman knight, whose name was William Crispin, discharged at his head two such furious strokes of a sabre, that his helmet was cut through, and his head severely wounded. At the sight of his own blood, which rushed down his visage, he was animated to a double exertion of his strength, and retorted the blow with such force, that his antagonist was brought to the ground, and taken prisoner. This decided the victory in favour of the English, who pursued the French with great slaughter; and it also served to bring on an accommodation soon after, in which the interests of his nephew were entirely neglected. From this period till the time of that brave youth's death, which [1119.] happened about eight years after, he appears to have been employed in ineffectual struggles to gain those dominions to which he had the most just hereditary claims, but wanted power to back his pretensions.

Fortune now seemed to smile upon Henry, and promise a long succession of felicity. He was in peaceable possession of two powerful states, and had a son who was acknowledged undisputed heir, arrived at his eighteenth year, whom he loved most tenderly. His daughter Matilda was also married to the emperor Henry V. of Germany, and she had been sent to that court, while yet but eight years old, for her education. All his prospects, however,

were at once clouded by unforeseen misfortunes and accidents, which tinged his remaining years with misery. The king, from the facility with which he usurped the crown, dreading that his family might be subverted with the same ease, took care to have his son recognized as his successor by the states of England, and carried him over to Normandy to receive the homage of the barons of that duchy. After performing this requisite ceremony, Henry, returning triumphantly to England, brought with him a numerous retinue of the chief nobility, who seemed to share in his successes. In one of the vessels of the fleet, his son, and several young noblemen, the companions of his pleasures, went together to render the passage more agreeable. The king set sail from Barfleur, and was soon carried by a fair wind out of sight of land. The prince was detained by some accident; and his sailors, as well as their captain Fitz Stephen, having spent the interval in drinking, became so disordered, that they ran the ship upon a rock, and immediately it was dashed to pieces. The prince was put into the boat, and might have escaped, had he not been called back by the cries of Maude, his natural sister. He was at first conveyed out of danger himself, but could not leave a person so dear to perish without an effort to save her. He, therefore, prevailed upon the sailors to row back and take her in. The approach of the boat giving several others, who had been left upon the wreck, the hopes of saving their lives, numbers leaped in, and the whole went to the bottom. Above a hundred and forty young noblemen, of the principal families of England and Normandy, were lost on this occasion. A butcher of Rouen was the only person on board who escaped; he clung to the mast, and was taken up the next morning by some fishermen. Fitz Stephen, the captain, while the butcher was thus buffeting the waves for his life, swam up to him, and inquired if the prince was yet living; when being told that he had perished, "Then I will not outlive him," said the captain, and immediately sunk to the bottom. The shrieks of these unfortunate people were heard from the shore, and the noise even reached the king's ship; but the cause was then unknown. Henry entertained hopes for three days that his son was put into some distant port of England; but when certain intelligence of the calamity was brought him, he fainted away, and was never seen to smile from that moment to the day of his death.

The rest of this prince's life seems a mere blank : his restless desires having now nothing left worth toiling for, he appeared more fond of repose than ambition. His daughter Matilda, however, becoming a widow by the death of the emperor, he married her a second time to Geoffrey Plantagenet, eldest son of the count of Anjou, and endeavoured to insure her accession by obliging his barons to recognize her as the heir of all his dominions. Some time after, that princess was delivered of a son, who received the name of Henry ; and the king, further to insure her succession, caused all the nobility of England and Normandy to renew their former oaths of allegiance. The barons of these times were ready enough to swear whatever the monarch commanded ; but, it seems, they observed it no longer than while they were compelled to obey. Henry did not long survive these endeavours to secure the succession in his family. He was seized with a sudden illness at St. Denis, a little town in Normandy, from eating too plentifully of lampreys, a dish he was particularly fond of.

Dec. 1, He died in the sixty-seventh year of his age, and the  
1135. thirty-fifth of his reign, leaving, by will, his daughter Matilda heiress of all his dominions.

If we consider Henry's character impartially, we shall find more to admire than to love in it. It cannot be doubted but that he was a wise and a valiant prince ; and yet our hearts revolt against his success, and follow the unfortunate Robert even to his captivity. Henry's person was manly, his countenance engaging, his eye clear, serene, and penetrating. By his great progress in literature he acquired the name of Beau-clerc, or the Scholar ; and such was the force of his eloquence, that, after a conference with him, the pope is said to have given him the preference to all the other princes of Europe. He was much addicted to women, and left behind him a numerous spurious offspring. Hunting also was one of his favourite amusements : and he is accused of augmenting the forests which had been appropriated during the former reigns for that diversion. His justice also seemed to approach to cruelty : stealing was first made capital in his reign ; and false coining was punished with death and mutilation. He first granted the city of London a charter and privileges ; and from this first concession we may date the origin of English liberty, such as we find it at this day.



## CHAP. VIII.

## STEPHEN.

As every expedient was used during the life of the late king to fix the succession in his family, he, among others, thought that the aggrandizing his nearest relations would not be an impolitic step. He only dreaded the designs of Robert and his adherents, no way mistrusting any attempts from another quarter. With these views, he was very liberal in heaping favours upon the children of his sister Adela, who had been married to the count of Blois. He thought they would be the strongest safeguard to protect him from the aspiring attempts of his brother, or his posterity; and he was resolved to load them with favours, as being too far removed from the crown to entertain any hopes of succeeding in their designs to obtain it: in pursuance of this plan, he had, some years before his death, invited Stephen and Henry, the two youngest of his sister's sons, into England, and received them with great honour and esteem. Thinking that he could never do too much to secure their affections, he married Stephen to the daughter and heiress of Eustace, count of Boulogne, who brought him an immense fortune. He conferred on him the great estates forfeited by Robert Mallet in England, and by the earl of Mortaigne, in Normandy. Nor was Stephen's brother, Henry, without his share in the king's liberalities. He was created abbot of Glastonbury, and bishop of Winchester; so that the two brothers were thus become by far the most powerful subjects in the kingdom.

Such great riches, so much power, and the consciousness of abilities, were the first incentives to Stephen's ambition. Placed at no great distance from the throne by birth, and perceiving the success of his uncle's usurpation, he resolved to run the same career, and strike for the crown. For this purpose, even during the king's lifetime, he used all his arts to procure popularity, and to cultivate the affections of the English nobility. By his bravery, activity, and vigour, he acquired the esteem of the barons; by his generosity and familiar address he obtained the love of the people. No sooner, therefore, was the king known to be dead,

than Stephen, conscious of his own power and influence, resolved to secure to himself the possession of what he so long desired. He immediately hastened from Normandy, where he then was, and, setting sail for England, landed at Dover. But there the citizens, apprised of his intent, shut their gates against him. From thence he went on to Canterbury, where he was treated with the like disrespect; but, passing on, he arrived at London, where he was immediately saluted king by all the lower ranks of the people. Being thus secure of the populace, his next step was to gain over the clergy; and for that purpose, his brother the bishop of Winchester exerted all his influence among them with great success. The arch-bishop of Canterbury, as he had taken the oaths of allegiance to Matilda, seemed for a while to stand out; but Hugh Bigod, steward of the household, averring, upon oath, that the late king had expressed his intentions to make Stephen his heir, the arch-bishop anointed him without further scruple. Thus was Stephen made king, by one of those speedy revolutions which ever mark the barbarity of a state in which they are customary. The people acquiesced in his claims from his popularity; the clergy allowed them, being influenced by the intrigues of his brother; and the nobility acknowledged a king, from the weakness of whose title they might derive power to themselves.

The first acts of an usurper are always popular. Stephen, in order to secure his tottering throne, passed a charter, granting several privileges to the different orders of the state. To the nobility, a permission to hunt in the royal forests; to the clergy, a speedy filling of all vacant benefices; and to the people, a restoration of the laws of Edward the Confessor. To fix himself still more securely, he took possession of the royal treasures at Winchester, and had his title ratified by the pope with a part of the money.

A crown thus gained by usurpation was to be kept only by repeated concessions. The nobility and the clergy, in proportion as they were indulged in one demand only prepared to find out others. The barons, in return for their submission, required the right of fortifying their castles, and putting themselves in a posture of defence; nor could the king refuse his consent to such exorbitant demands, as their opposition might be fatal. The

clergy imitated the same pernicious example; and, in a short time, all England was filled with these independent fortresses, which the noblemen garrisoned with their own vassals, or with mercenary bravoës hired from the continent: nothing could exceed the misery which the kingdom must have been reduced to at that terrible period of aristocracy. Unbounded rapine was exercised upon the people for the maintenance of those troops; the private animosities of the nobility were productive of wars in every quarter; the erection of one castle proved the immediate cause of building many more; and the whole country presented a scene of petty tyranny and hostile preparation. It was in vain that a victory gained by the king over the Scots at Northallerton promised to allay the murmurs of the people: their miseries were risen to too great a height for such brilliant successes to remove. The prince, having usurped the crown without a title, was obliged to tolerate in others that injustice by which he had himself risen to the throne. [1138.]

Not only real, but imaginary grievances were added to raise the discontents of the people, and fill the country with complaints against government. The clergy, whose power had been firmly established on the ruins of the regal authority, began, in imitation of the lay-barons, to build castles, and entertain garrisons, sensible that their sacred pretensions would be more implicitly obeyed when their temporal power was sufficient to enforce them. Stephen, who now too late perceived the mischiefs attending these multiplied citadels, resolved to begin with destroying those of the clergy, whose profession seemed to be averse from the duties of war. Taking, therefore, the pretence of a fray, which had risen between the retinue of the bishop of Salisbury and that of the earl of Bretagne, he seized that prelate, and obliged both him and the bishop of Lincoln to deliver up their castles which they had lately erected. This the whole body of the clergy considered as a breach of that charter which he had granted upon his accession; they loudly murmured against this infraction; and even the bishop of Winchester, his brother, resolved to vindicate the privileges of the church, which he pretended were openly violated. A synod was assembled, in which the disgraced prelates openly inveighed against the king. But

he, instead of answering the charge in person, sent one of his barons to plead his cause, and intimidate his accusers.

It was in this critical situation of Stephen's affairs that accounts were brought him of Matilda's landing in England, with a resolution to dispossess him, and regain the crown. Matilda, upon the death of the late king, being then in Normandy, found herself totally unable to oppose the rapid progress of her rival. She was not less unfortunate in her continental connections than in those at home. The Norman barons, unwilling to have the union with England dissolved, almost unanimously declared for Stephen, and put him in possession of their government; while Geoffrey himself, Matilda's husband, was content to resign his pretensions, and to receive a pension from the English king. He had not, however, long acquiesced in this compromise when he was incited to a renewal of his wife's claims by Robert earl of Gloucester, natural son of the late king, a nobleman who had, from the beginning, opposed the accession of Stephen, and only waited a fit opportunity to begin an insurrection. This haughty baron, having at length settled with his friends the project of an opposition, retired to the continent, to the court of Matilda, and from thence sent the king a defiance, solemnly renouncing his allegiance. It was not long before he was in a capacity effectually to second his declarations; for, sensible of the power of his party in England, he landed, together with Matilda, whose claims he professed to support, upon the coast of Sussex.

The whole of Matilda's retinue, upon this occasion, amounted to no more than a hundred and forty knights, who immediately took possession of Arundel castle; but the nature of her claims soon increased the number of her partisans, and her forces every day seemed to gain ground upon those of her antagonist. Mean-  
 [1139.] time Stephen, being assured of her arrival, flew to besiege Arundel, where she had taken refuge, and where she was protected by the queen dowager, who secretly favoured her pretensions. This fortress was too feeble to promise a long defence; and it would have been soon taken, had it not been represented to the king, that as it was a castle belonging to the queen dowager, it would be an infringement on the respect which was her due, to attempt taking it by force. There was a spirit of generosity mixed with the rudeness of the times, that unaccount-

ably prevailed in many transactions; Stephen permitted Matilda to come forth in safety, and had her conveyed with security to Bristol, another fortress equally strong with that from whence he permitted her to retire. It would be tedious to relate the various skirmishes on either side, in pursuance of their respective pretensions; it will suffice to say, that Matilda's forces increased every day, while her antagonist seemed every hour to become more unpopular. The troops Stephen led were, in general, foreign mercenaries, commanded by tumultuous barons,—more accustomed to pillage than to conquer. But, in this fluctuation of success, the kingdom was exposed to ruin, whichever side pretended to victory. The castles of the nobility were become receptacles for licensed robbers, who gave their rapine the name of attachment to party. The land was left untilled, the instruments of husbandry were destroyed or abandoned, and a terrible famine, the result of general disorder, oppressed at once the spoiled and the spoilers.

After the misery of numberless undecisive conflicts, added to the rest of the country's calamities, a complete victory, gained by the forces of Matilda, promised to terminate their disputes. Stephen had marched his forces to relieve the city of Lincoln; the earl of Gloucester led a body of troops to second the efforts of the besiegers. These two armies engaged within [1141.] sight of the city, and a dreadful conflict ensued. After a violent shock, the two wings of Stephen's army, which were composed of horse, were put to flight; and the infantry, soon following the example, deserted their king. All the race of the Norman conqueror were brave. Stephen was for some time left without attendants, and fought on foot in the midst of his enemies, assaulted by multitudes, and resisting all their efforts with astonishing intrepidity. Being hemmed in on every side, he made way for some time with his battle-axe; but that breaking, he drew his sword, and dealt his blows round the circle in which he was inclosed. At length, after performing more than could be naturally expected from a single arm, his sword flying in pieces, he was obliged to surrender himself prisoner. He was conducted to Gloucester; and though at first treated with respect, he was soon after, on some suspicions, thrown into prison, and laid in irons.

Stephen and his party now seemed totally disabled. Matilda was possessed not only of superior power, but also the juster title. She was considered as incontestable sovereign, and the barons came in daily from all quarters to do her homage. The bishop of Winchester himself, who had espoused her cause against his brother, admitted her claims; he led her in procession into his cathedral, and blessed her with the greatest solemnity; the archbishop of Canterbury also swore allegiance; and shortly after an ecclesiastical council, at which none of the laity assisted, except deputies from the city of London, confirmed her pretensions; and she was crowned at Winchester with all imaginable solemnity.

A crown thus every way secured, seemed liable to be shaken by no accidents; yet such is the vanity of human security, and such was the great increase of power among the barons, who were in effect masters of those they nominally elected as governors, that Matilda remained but a short time in possession of the throne. This princess, beside the disadvantages of her sex, which weakened her influence over a martial people, was resolved upon repressing the growing power of the nobles, who had left only the shadow of authority to their sovereign. But having neither temper nor policy sufficient to carry her views into execution, she disgusted those by her pride to whom she was obliged for her power. The first petition she refused was the releasement of Stephen; she rejected the remonstrance of the Londoners, who entreated her to mitigate the severe laws of the Norman princes, and revive those of Edward the Confessor. She affected to treat the nobility with a degree of disdain to which they had long been unaccustomed; while the fickle nation once more began to pity their deposed king, and to repent the steps they had taken in her favour. The bishop of Winchester, who probably was never her sincere partisan, was not remiss in fomenting these discontents; and, when he found the people ripe for a tumult, detached a party of his friends and vassals to block up the city of London, where the queen then resided. At the same time measures were taken to instigate the Londoners to a revolt, and to seize her person. Matilda, having timely notice of this conspiracy, fled to Winchester, whither the bishop, still her secret enemy, followed her, watching an opportunity to ruin her cause. His party was soon sufficiently strong to bid the queen open defiance, and to besiege

her in the very place where she first received his benediction. There she continued for some time; but the town being pressed by famine, she was obliged to escape, while her brother, the earl of Gloucester, endeavouring to follow, was taken prisoner, and exchanged for Stephen, who still continued a captive. Thus a sudden revolution once more took place; Matilda was deposed, and obliged to seek for safety in Oxford. Stephen was again recognized as king, and taken from his dungeon to be placed on the throne.

The civil war now broke out afresh, with all its train of devastations. Many were the battles fought, and various the stratagems of those who conducted the affairs of either party. Matilda escaped from Oxford, at a time when the fields were covered with snow, by being dressed all in white, with four knights, her attendants, habited in the same manner. Stephen was upon another occasion surprised by the earl of Gloucester at Wilton, and obliged to find safety by flight. Another time the empress was obliged to quit the kingdom; and the death of the earl of Gloucester soon after, who was the soul of her party, gave a dreadful blow to her interests.

Yet still the affairs of Stephen continued to fluctuate. Though this monarch had the good fortune to see his rival fly to the continent, and leave him entire possession of the kingdom; though his brother was possessed of the highest authority among the clergy; yet he was still insecure. Finding that the castles built by the noblemen of his own party encouraged a spirit of independence, and were little less dangerous than those which remained in the hands of the enemy, he endeavoured to gain these; and this attempt united many of his own adherents against him. This discontent was increased by the opposition of the clergy, who, from having been on his side, began to declare loudly in favour of his opponents. The pope laid his whole party under an interdict, for his having refused to send deputies, to be named by himself, to the general council at Rheims. By this sentence, which was now first practised in England, divine service was prohibited, and all the offices of religion ceased, except baptism and extreme unction. This state of Stephen's affairs looked so unpromising, that a revolution was once more expected; when his submission to the see of Rome for a while suspended the threatened blow.

Stephen had hitherto been opposed only by men who seconded the pretensions of another; and who consequently wanted that popularity which those have who fight their own cause. But he was now to enter the lists with a new opposer, who was every day coming to maturity, and growing more formidable. This was Henry, the son of Matilda, who had reached his sixteenth [1149.] year, and gave the greatest hopes of being one day a valiant leader and a consummate politician. It was usual in those days for young noblemen to receive the honour of knighthood before they were permitted to carry arms; and Henry proposed to receive his admission from his great uncle, David, king of Scotland. With this view, and in hopes of once more inspiring his mother's party, he landed in England with a great retinue of knights and soldiers, accompanied by many noblemen as well English as foreigners. The ceremony was performed by the Scot's king at Carlisle, amidst a multitude of people assembled on this occasion, who all, pleased with the vigour, the address, and still more perhaps with the youth of the prince, secretly began to wish for a revolution in his favour. Soon after his return to Normandy, he was, by his mother's consent, invested with that duchy, which had some time before revolted to her. He was also, upon the death of his father Geoffrey Plantagenet, secured in the possession of his dominions; and, to add still more to his increasing power, he married Eleanor, the daughter, and heiress of the duke of Guienne and Poitou; and took possession of these extensive territories.

With this great accession of power, young Henry was now resolved to reclaim his hereditary kingdom, and to dispute once more Stephen's usurped pretensions. For this purpose, being previously assured of the dispositions of the majority of the people in his favour, he made an invasion on England, [1153.] where he was immediately joined by almost all the barons of the kingdom. Though it was the middle of winter, he advanced to besiege Malmsbury; and took the town, after having worsted a body of the enemy that attempted to oppose his march. Soon after, Reading, and above thirty other fortresses, submitted without resistance.

In the mean time Stephen, alarmed at the power and popularity of his young rival, tried every method to anticipate the purpose



of his invasion, by depriving him of a succession he so earnestly sought after. He had convoked a council in London, where he proposed his own son Eustace, who was but a weak prince, as his associate in government as well as his successor. He had even expressed a desire of immediately proceeding to the coronation ; but was mortified to find that the archbishop of Canterbury refused to perform the ceremony. It was then no time to prosecute his resentment, when his rival was landed, and making hasty strides to the throne ; wherefore, finding that Henry was advancing with a rapid progress, he marched with all possible diligence to oppose him, while he was besieging Wallingford ; and coming in sight, he rested his army to prepare for battle. In this situation the two armies remained for some time, within a quarter of a mile of each other, a decisive action being every day expected. While they continued thus in anxious expectation, a treaty was set on foot, by the interposition of William earl of Arundel, for terminating the dispute without blood. The death of Stephen's son, which happened during the course of the treaty, facilitated its conclusion. It was therefore agreed by all parties, that Stephen should reign during life ; and that justice should be administered in his name ; that Henry should, on Stephen's death, succeed to the kingdom ; and William, Stephen's son, should inherit Boulogne and his patrimonial estate. After all the barons had sworn to this treaty, which filled the whole kingdom with joy, Henry evacuated England, and Stephen returned to the peaceable enjoyment of his throne. His reign, however, Oct. 25, was soon terminated by his death, which happened about 1154. a year after the treaty, at Canterbury, where he was interred.

The fortune of many princes gives them, with posterity, the reputation of wisdom and virtue. Stephen wanted success in all his schemes but that of ascending the throne ; and consequently his virtues and abilities now remain doubtful. If we estimate them by the happiness of his subjects, they will appear in a very despicable light ; for England was never more miserable than during his reign ; but if we consider them as they appear in his private conduct, few monarchs can boast more. Active, generous, and brave, his sole aim was to destroy a vile aristocracy that oppressed the people ; but the abilities of no man, however politic or intrepid, were then sufficient to resist an evil that was too

firmly supported by power. The faults, therefore, of this monarch's reign are entirely to be imputed to the ungovernable spirit of the people; but his virtues were his own.

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CHAP. IX.

HENRY II.

WE have hitherto seen the barons and clergy becoming powerful, in proportion to the weakness of the monarch's title to the crown, and enriching themselves with the spoils of enfeebled majesty. Henry Plantagenet had now every right, from hereditary succession, from universal assent, from power, and personal merit, to make sure of the throne, and to keep its prerogatives unimpaired. He was employed in besieging a castle of one of his mutinous barons upon the continent, when news was brought him of Stephen's death: but, sensible of the security of his claims in England, he would not relinquish his enterprise till he had reduced the place. He then set out on his journey, and was received in England with the acclamations of all the people, who, harassed with supporting opposite pretensions, were now rejoiced to see all parties united.

The first act of Henry's government gave the people a happy omen of his future wise administration. Conscious of his strength, he began to correct those abuses, and to resume those privileges which had been extorted from the weakness or the credulity of his predecessors. He immediately dismissed all those mercenary soldiers who committed infinite disorders in the nation. He ordered all the castles which were erected since the death of Henry the First, and were become receptacles of rapine, to be demolished, except a few which he retained in his own hands for the protection of the kingdom. The adulterated coin was cried down, and new money struck of the right value and standard. He resumed many of those benefactions which had been made to churches and monasteries in the former reigns. He gave charters to several towns, by which the citizens claimed their freedom and privileges, independent of any superior but

himself. These charters were the ground-work of English liberty. The struggles which had before this time been, whether the king, or the barons, or the clergy, should be despotic over the people, now began to assume a new aspect; and a fourth order, namely, that of the more opulent of the people, began to claim a share in administration. Thus was the feudal government at first impaired; and liberty began to be more equally diffused throughout the nation.

From this happy commencement England once more began to respire; agriculture returned with security; and every individual seemed to enjoy the happy effects of the young king's wise administration. Not but that some slight commotions proceeded from many of the depressed barons, who were quickly brought to a sense of their duty; as also from the Welsh, who made several incursions; but these were at last obliged to make submission, and to return to their natural fastnesses. But to such a state of tranquillity was the whole kingdom brought in a very short time, that Henry thought his presence no longer necessary to preserve order at home, and therefore made an expedition to the continent, where his affairs were in some disorder.

As the transactions of the continent do not properly fall within the limits of this scanty page, it will be sufficient to say, that Henry's valour and prudence seconding his ambition, he soon extended his power in that part of his dominions, and found himself, either by marriage or hereditary claims, master of a third part of the French monarchy. He became possessed, in right of his father, of Anjou, Touraine, and Maine; in that of his mother, of Normandy; in that of his wife, of Guienne, Poitou, Saintonge, Auvergne, Perigord, Angoumois, and the Limousin; to which he shortly after added Bretagne, by marrying his son, who was yet a child, to the heiress of that dukedom, who was yet a child also; and thus securing that province, under pretence of being his son's guardian. It was in vain that Lewis, the king of France, opposed his growing power; and several ineffectual engagements served only to prove that little was to be acquired by force. A cessation of arms, therefore, was at first concluded between them, and, soon after, a peace, which was brought about by the pope's mediation.

[1161.] Henry, being thus become the most powerful prince of his age, the undisputed monarch of England, possessed of more than a third of France, and having humbled the barons that attempted to circumscribe his power, naturally expected to reign with very little opposition for the future. But it happened otherwise. He found the severest mortifications from a quarter where he least expected resistance. Though he had diminished the power of the barons, he was sensible that the temporal influence of the clergy was still gaining ground; and was grown to such a pitch as would shortly annihilate the authority of the sovereign himself.

They now seemed resolved not only to be exempted from the ordinary taxes of the state, but to be secured from its punishments also. They had extorted an immunity from all but ecclesiastical penalties, during the last distracted reign; and they continued to maintain that grant in the present. It may easily be supposed, that a law which thus screened their guilt, contributed to increase it; and we accordingly find upon record not less than a hundred murders committed by men in holy orders, in the short period since the king's accession, not one of which was punished, not so much as with degradation; while the bishops themselves seemed to glory in this horrid indulgence.

The mild character and advanced age of Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, together with his merits, in refusing to put the crown on the head of Eustace, the son of Stephen, prevented Henry, during his lifetime, from any attempts to repress the vices of his clergy; but, after his death, he resolved to exert himself with more activity. For this purpose, and that he might be secure against any opposition, he advanced to that dignity Thomas à Becket, on whose compliance he supposed he could entirely depend.

The famous Thomas à Becket, the first man of English extraction who had, since the Norman conquest, risen to any share of power, was the son of a citizen of London. Having received his early education in the schools of that metropolis, he resided some time at Paris; and on his return became clerk in the sheriff's office. In that station he was recommended to the archbishop of Canterbury, and behaved with so much prudence, that he obtained from that prelate some beneficial dignities in the church.

Thomas, however, was not contented with moderate preferment, and resolved to fit himself for a higher station in life, by travelling to Italy, where he studied the civil law at Bologna. On his return, he appeared to have made so great a proficiency in knowledge, that he was promoted by his patron to the archdeaconry of Canterbury, an office of considerable trust and profit. On the accession of Henry to the throne, he was recommended to that monarch as worthy of greater preferment; and the king finding, on further acquaintance, that his spirit and abilities entitled him to the highest trusts, he soon promoted him to the dignity of chancellor, one of the first civil offices in the kingdom. Preferments were now heaped upon him without number. He was made provost of Beverley; dean of Hastings, and constable of the Tower. He was put in possession of the honours of Eye and Berkham; and, to complete his grandeur, he was intrusted with the education of prince Henry, son and heir to the king. His revenues were immense; his expenses were incredible. He kept open table for persons of all ranks. The most costly luxuries were provided for his entertainments: The pomp of his retinue, the sumptuousness of his furniture, and the munificence of his presents, corresponded with the greatness of his preferments: His apartments exhibited an odd mixture of the rudeness of the times and the splendour of his station; they glittered with gold and silver-plate, and yet were covered with hay or clean straw in winter, and with green boughs or rushes in summer, for the ease of his guests to recline on. A considerable number of knights were retained in his service, and the greatest barons were fond of being received at his table; the king himself frequently condescended to partake of his entertainments. He employed two-and-fifty clerks in keeping accounts of the vacant prelacies and his own ecclesiastical preferments. When he crossed the sea, he was always attended with five ships; and in an embassy to Paris, he appeared with a thousand persons in his retinue, displaying such wealth as amazed the spectators. As he was but in deacon's orders, he declined few of the amusements then in fashion. He diverted himself in hawking, hunting, chess-playing, and tilting; at which he was so expert, that even the most approved knights dreaded his encounter. His familiarity with the king is ascertained by a story told of their happening to meet a

beggar-man, as they were riding together through London. "Would it not be right," says the king, casting his eyes on a poor wretch that was shivering with cold, "to clothe that man in this severe season?" "Certainly," replied his chancellor; "and you do right in considering his calamity." "If so, then," cried the king, "he shall have a coat instantly;" and without more delay he began to pull off the chancellor's coat with violence. The chancellor defended himself for some time; but after a struggle, in which they had both like to have fallen to the ground, he gave up his coat, and the king gave it to the beggar, who, ignorant of the quality of his benefactors, was not a little surprised with his good fortune. Thus great and intimate was Becket, while yet but chancellor; but when, contrary to the advice of Matilda, he was promoted still higher to the archbishopric of Canterbury, his whole conduct took a new turn. No sooner was he fixed in this high station, which rendered him for life the second person in the kingdom, than he endeavoured to retrieve the character of sanctity which his former levities might have appeared to oppose. Without consulting his master's pleasure, he sent him the seals of his office as lord-chancellor, pretending that he was henceforth to be employed in matters of a more sacred nature. Though he still retained the pomp and splendour of his retinue, he was in his own person the most mortified man that could be seen. He wore sackcloth next his skin. He changed it so seldom, that it was filled with dirt and vermin. His usual diet was bread; his drink, water, which he rendered further unpalatable by the mixture of unsavoury herbs. His back was mangled with frequent discipline. He every day washed on his knees the feet of thirteen beggars. Every one that made profession of sanctity was admitted to his conversation; and his aspect wore the appearance of mortification and secret sorrow. To these mortifications he sacrificed all the comforts of life; and it would be unjust to suppose but that he thought them really meritorious.

Henry now saw, when it was too late, the ambitious superiority which Becket aimed at. His resignation of the chancellor's office served to raise his suspicions, how much he was mistaken in the pliancy of Becket's disposition; but he was soon after convinced, when this churchman, now made archbishop, began to revive

some antient claims to several church-lands that had lain dormant ever since the Conquest. Henry, indeed, prevailed upon him to desist from one or two of these claims; but he found, for the future, that he was to expect, in the seemingly easy Becket, a most obstinate and turbulent opposer to all his schemes of humbling the clergy.

Notwithstanding this unexpected opposition, Henry was resolved to try every expedient to rectify the errors that had crept in among the clergy, who, under a pretence of independence upon secular power, were grown most abominably licentious. During the preceding reign, a great number of idle and illiterate persons, in order to enjoy the indulgence of their vices, had entered into holy orders; for the bishops seldom rejected any that presented. These having no benefices, and belonging to no diocese, and consequently subject to no jurisdiction, committed the most flagrant enormities with impunity. Among other inventions of the clergy to obtain money, that of selling pardons was introduced, and had become a revenue to the priests. These and such like grievances bore hard upon the people, who were at the same time taught that their only remedy was implicit submission. A prince of Henry's excellent penetration easily pierced through the mist of ignorance in which the age was involved; and he resolved, by a bold struggle, to free the laity from these clerical usurpations. An opportunity soon offered, that gave him a popular pretext for beginning his intended reformation. A man in holy orders had debauched the daughter of a gentleman in Worcestershire, and then murdered the father, to prevent the effects of his resentment. The atrociousness of the crime produced a spirit of indignation among the people; and the king insisted that the assassin should be tried by the civil magistrate. This Becket opposed, alleging the privileges of the church; and ordered the criminal to be confined in the bishop's prison, lest he should be seized by the officers of the king. It was to no purpose that the king desired he might be tried first by an ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and then delivered up to the secular tribunal. Becket asserted that it was unjust to try a man twice for the same offence; and appealed for the equity of his opinions to the court of Rome. This, however, was the time for Henry to make his boldest attack upon the immunities of the church, when, to defend itself, it must also es-

pouse the cause of the most atrocious of criminals. He, therefore, summoned an assembly of all the prelates in England, and desired that the murderer should be delivered over to the hands of justice, and a law made to punish such delinquents for the future. Becket retired with the prelates to deliberate; but, as he directed the assembly, they entrenched themselves behind the papal decrees, and refused to give up their prisoner. Henry, willing to bring them to an open absurdity, demanded, whether they were willing or not to submit to the antient laws and customs of the kingdom? To this they replied with equal art, that they were willing, except where their own order was concerned. The king, provoked past bearing by this evasive answer, instantly quitted the assembly, and sent Becket orders to surrender the honours and castles which he continued to hold in consequence of having been chancellor. These being surrendered, the prelate quitted London without taking the least notice of the assembly.

Labouring for some time under the uncertainty of the king's displeasure, Becket was soon after induced to give way, and to promise his majesty, without reserve, a steady observance of the antient laws and customs of the kingdom. This was the disposition which the king wished to retain him in; and he therefore summoned a general council of the nobility and prelates at Clarendon, to whom he submitted this great and important affair, and desired their concurrence. These councils seem, at that time, convened rather to give authenticity to the king's decrees, than to enact laws that were to bind their posterity. A number of regulations were there drawn up, which were afterwards well known under the title of the Constitutions of Clarendon, and were then voted without opposition. By these regulations it was enacted, that clergymen accused of any crime should be tried in the civil courts; that laymen should not be tried in the spiritual courts, except by legal and reputable witnesses; that the king should ultimately judge in ecclesiastical and spiritual appeals; that the archbishops and bishops should be regarded as barons, and obliged to furnish the public supplies as usual with persons of their rank; that the goods forfeited to the king should not be protected in churches or church-yards by the clergy; and that the sons of villains should not take orders without the consent of their lord. These, with some others of less consequence, or im-



plied in the above, to the number of sixteen, were readily subscribed by all the bishops present; and Becket himself, who at first showed some reluctance, added his name to the number. It only remained that the pope should ratify them; but there Henry was mistaken. Alexander, who was then pope, condemned them in the strongest terms, abrogated, annulled, and rejected them: out of sixteen he admitted only six, which he thought not important enough to deserve censure. [1164.]

How Henry could suppose the pope would give consent to these articles, which must infallibly have destroyed his whole authority in the kingdom, is not easy to conceive; but we may well suppose, that a man of Becket's character must be extremely mortified at finding that he had signed what the pope had refused to confirm. Accordingly, on this occasion, he expressed the deepest sorrow for his former concessions. He redoubled his austerities, in order to punish himself for his criminal compliance; and refused to officiate at the altar till he had obtained absolution from his holiness. All these mortifications appeared to Henry as little more than specious insults upon himself; his former affection was converted into hatred, and the breach between him and the archbishop every day grew wider. At last, willing to supersede the prelate's authority at any rate, he desired that the pope would send a legate into his dominions; who, from the nature of his commission, might have a superior control. This the pope readily granted; and a legate was appointed, but with a clause annexed to his commission, that he was to execute nothing in prejudice of the archbishop. An authority thus clogged in that very part where it was desired to be unlimited, was no way agreeable to the king; and he sent back the commission with great indignation. He now, therefore, went another way to wreak his resentment upon Becket. He had him sued for some lands, which were part of a manor belonging to his primacy; and the primate being detained by sickness from coming into court, his non-attendance was construed into disrespect. A great council was summoned at Northampton, where Becket defended his cause in person; but he was condemned as guilty of a contempt of the king's court, and as wanting in that fealty which he had sworn to his sovereign. All his goods and chattels were confiscated; and the bishop of Winchester was obliged to pronounce the sentence

against him. Besides this conviction, the king exhibited another charge against him for three hundred pounds, which he had levied on the honours of Eye and Berkham, while he remained in possession. Becket, rather than aggravate the king's resentment, agreed to give sureties for the payment. The next day another suit was commenced against him for a thousand marks, which the king had lent him on some former occasion. Immediately on the back of these, a third claim was made, still greater than the former: this was, to give an account of the money he had received and expended during the time of his chancellorship. The estimate was laid at no less than forty thousand marks; and Becket was wholly unprovided either of the means of balancing his accounts, or of securities for answering so great a demand. In this exigence his friends were divided what council to give. Some prelates advised him to resign his see, in hopes of an acquittal; some counselled him to throw himself entirely upon the king's mercy; and some, to offer ten thousand marks as a general satisfaction for all demands. Becket followed none of these opinions; but, with an intrepidity peculiar to himself, arraying himself in his episcopal vestments, and with the cross in his hand, he went forward to the king's palace, and, entering the royal apartments, sat down, holding up his cross as his banner of protection. The king, who sat in an inner room, ordered by proclamation the prelates and the nobility to attend him; to whom he complained loudly of Becket's insolence and inflammatory proceedings. The whole council joined in condemning this instance of his unaccountable pride; and determined to expostulate with him upon his inconsistency, in formerly subscribing the Constitutions of Clarendon, and now in being the first to infringe them. But all their messages, threats, and arguments were to no purpose: Becket had taken his resolution, and it was now too late to attempt to shake it. He put himself, in the most solemn manner, under the protection of the supreme pontiff; and appealed to him against any penalty which his iniquitous judges might think proper to inflict. Then departing the palace, he asked the king's immediate permission to leave Northampton; and upon receiving a refusal, he secretly withdrew in disguise, and at last found means to cross over to the continent.

Here it may be natural to inquire how a person of such mean

extraction should be able to form any kind of opposition to so powerful a monarch as Henry ? But the state was then, as it was for some ages after, composed of three distinct powers, all pursuing separate interests, and very little dependant upon each other. These were, that of the king, that of the barons, and that of the clergy ; for as yet the people had scarce any influence, separately considered. Of these three powers the most recent was that of the clergy, which, wanting the sanction of prescriptive right, endeavoured to make up those defects by their superior arts of popularity. They therefore attached the people, who had hitherto been considered as unworthy of notice in the constitution, to their party ; and thus gained an acquisition of strength that was often too powerful for the other two members of the state. The king, being but a single person, could have no wide connections among the lower orders of mankind ; the nobles, being bred up in a haughty independence, were taught to regard the inferior ranks as slaves : the clergy alone, by their duty, being obliged to converse with the lowest as well as the highest orders, were most beloved by the populace, who, since they were at any rate to be slaves, were the more willing to obey men who conversed with them, and who seemed to study their welfare, than such as kept them at a humiliating distance, and only regarded them as the instruments of their private ambition. For these reasons, therefore, during the times we speak of, the side of the clergy was always espoused by the people ; and Becket, upon the present occasion, secretly relied on their encouragement and support.

The intrepidity of Becket, joined to his apparent sanctity, gained him a very favourable reception upon the continent, both from the people and their governors. The king of France, who hated Henry, very much affected to pity his condition ; and the pope, whose cause he had so strenuously defended, honoured him with the greatest marks of distinction, while he treated Henry's ambassadors with coolness and contempt. Becket, sensible of his power, was willing to show all possible humility ; and even resigned his see of Canterbury into the pope's hands, in order to receive it back from him with greater solemnity, and with an investiture of more apparent sanctity. Such favours bestowed upon an exile, and a perjured traitor, for such had been his sentence of condemnation in England, excited the indignation of Henry be-

yond measure. He saw his ambassadors slighted, all his endeavours to procure a conference with the pope frustrated, and his subjects daily excited to discontents, in consequence of the king's severity to a sanctified character. In this state of resentment, Henry resolved to throw off all dependance upon the pontiff at once, and to free himself and his people from a burthen that had long oppressed them without pity. He accordingly issued orders to his justiciaries, inhibiting, under severe penalties, all appeals to the pope or the archbishop; and forbidding any of them to receive mandates from them, or to apply to their authority. He declared it treasonable to bring over from either of them any interdict upon the kingdom. This he made punishable in secular clergymen by the loss of their eyes and by castration, in regulars by the amputation of their feet, and in laymen by death.

The pope and the archbishop were not remiss on their side to retort these fulminations, and to shake the very foundation of the king's authority. Becket compared himself to Christ, who had been condemned by a lay tribunal, and who was crucified a-new in the present oppressions under which the church laboured. But he did not rest in complaints only; he issued out a censure, excommunicating the king's chief ministers by name, all that were concerned in sequestering the revenues of his see, and all who obeyed or favoured the Constitutions of Clarendon. He even threatened to excommunicate the king himself if he did not immediately repent; and to give his censures the greater energy, he got them to be ratified by the pope.

Whatever Henry's contempt of these fulminations might be in the beginning, he, after some deliberation, began to find them more formidable than he had supposed, and secretly wished for an accommodation. Yet there seemed no other way for terminating these disputes, but by the king's appealing to the pope, as umpire between him and the archbishop; and this promised no very favourable decision. However, perceiving that his authority was beginning to decline among his subjects, and that his rivals on the continent had actually availed themselves of his perplexities, he resolved at any rate to apply to the pope for his mediation.

[1167.] The pope, on the other hand, was every day threatened himself by the machinations of an antipope. He was apprehensive that the king of England might join against him; he

knew his great abilities, and was sensible that as yet no insurrection had been made in consequence of the threats and exhortations of Becket. Thus the disposition of both parties produced frequent attempts towards an accommodation; but the mutual jealousies that each bore of the other, and their anxiety not to lose the least advantage in the negotiation, often protracted this desirable treaty. At one time the terms being agreed on, were postponed by the king's refusing to sign but with a salvo to his royal dignity. At another time they were accommodated, but broke off by Becket's refusing to submit but with a salvo to the honour of God. A third and a fourth negotiation followed without effect. In this last all the terms were completely adjusted, when Becket took it into his head to demand a kiss of peace. This the king refused to grant; and both parties once more prepared for mutual annoyance.

These disturbances continued for some time longer; Becket never losing an opportunity of impeaching the king's ministers, and obstructing all his measures. At length, by the mediation of the pope's legate, all difficulties were adjusted; and while the king allowed Becket to return, that prelate consented to wave the kiss of peace. The ceremonial of the interview being regulated, when the archbishop approached, the king advanced to meet him in the most gracious manner; and conversed with him for some time with great ease, familiarity, and kindness. All material points being adjusted, Becket attended Henry on horseback; and as they rode together, the prelate begged some satisfaction from the invasions of his right by the archbishop of York, who had some time before crowned the young prince. To this Henry replied, that what was past could not be undone; but that he would take care that none but he should crown the young queen, which ceremony was soon to be performed. Becket, transported at this instance of the king's condescension, alighted instantly, and threw himself at the feet of his sovereign, who, leaping from his horse at the same time, lifted him from the ground, and helped him to remount. The terms of their present agreement were very advantageous to the prelate; and this might have inspired him, in the ardour of his gratitude, to such a humiliation. It was agreed that he should not give up any of the rights of the church, or resign any of those pretensions which had

been the original ground of the quarrel ; that Becket and his adherents should be restored to their livings ; and that all the possessors of such benefices belonging to the see of Canterbury as had been installed since the primate's absence should be expelled, and Becket have liberty to supply the vacancies. In return for these concessions, the king only reaped the advantage of seeing his ministers absolved from the sentence of excommunication, and of preventing an interdict which was preparing to be laid upon all his dominions.

Becket having thus, in some measure, triumphed over the king, was resolved to remit nothing of the power which he had acquired. He soon began to show, that not even a temporary tranquillity was to be the result of his reconciliation. Nothing could exceed the insolence with which he conducted himself upon his first landing in England. Instead of retiring quietly to his diocese with that modesty which became a man just pardoned by his king, he made a progress through Kent in all the splendour and magnificence of a sovereign pontiff. As he approached Southwark, the clergy, the laity, men of all ranks and ages, came forth to meet him, and celebrated his triumphal entry with hymns of joy. Thus, confident of the voice and the hearts of the people, he began to lanch forth his thunders against those who had been his former opposers. The archbishop of York, who had crowned Henry's eldest son in his absence, was the first against whom he denounced sentence of suspension. The bishops of London and Salisbury he actually excommunicated. Robert de Broc and Nigel de Sackville were exposed to the same censures ; and many of the most considerable prelates and ministers, who had assisted at the late coronation of the young prince, were partakers of the common calamity. One man he excommunicated for having spoken against him ; and another for having cut off the tail of one of his horses.

Henry was then in Normandy, while the primate was thus triumphantly parading through the kingdom ; and it was not without the utmost indignation that he received information of his turbulent insolence. When the suspended and excommunicated prelates arrived with their complaints, his anger knew no bounds. He broke forth into the most acrimonious expressions against that arrogant churchman, whom he had raised from the lowest station

to be the plague of his life, and the continual disturber of his government. The archbishop of York remarked to him, that so long as Becket lived, he could never expect to enjoy peace or tranquillity; and the king himself burst out into an exclamation, that he had no friends about him, or he would not so long have been exposed to the insults of that ungrateful hypocrite. These words excited the attention of the whole court, and armed four of his most resolute attendants to gratify their monarch's secret inclinations. The names of these knights and gentlemen of his household were, Reginald Fitz-Urse, William de Tracy, Hugh de Morville, and Richard Brito, who immediately communicated their thoughts to each other. They instantly bound themselves by an oath to revenge their king's quarrel; and, secretly retiring from court, took shipping at different ports, and met the next day at the castle of Saltwode, within six miles of Canterbury. Some menacing expressions which they had dropt, and their sudden departure gave the king reason to suspect their design. He therefore sent messengers to overtake and forbid them, in his name, to commit any violence; but these orders arrived too late to prevent their fatal purpose. The conspirators, being joined by some assistants at the place of their meeting, proceeded to Canterbury with all the haste their bloody intentions required. Advancing directly to Becket's house, and entering his apartment, they reproached him very fiercely for the rashness and the insolence of his conduct; as if they had been willing to enjoy his terrors before they destroyed him. Becket, however, was not in the least terrified; but vindicated his actions with that zeal and resolution, which nothing probably but the consciousness of his innocence could inspire. The conspirators felt the force of his replies; and were particularly enraged at a charge of ingratitude, which he objected to three of them, who had been formerly retained in his service. During this altercation, the time approached for Becket to assist at vespers, whither he went unguarded, the conspirators following, and preparing for their attempt. As soon as he had reached the altar, where it is just to think he aspired at the glory of martyrdom, they all fell upon him; and having cloven his head with repeated blows, he dropped down dead before the altar of St. Benedict, which was besmeared with his blood and brains.

The circumstances of the murder, the place where it was perpetrated, and the fortitude with which the prelate resigned himself to his fate, made a most surprising impression on the people. No sooner was his death known than they rushed into the church to see the body; and dipping their hands in his blood, crossed themselves with it as with that of a saint. The clergy, whose interest it was to have Becket considered as a saint, and perhaps who were real in their belief, considering the times we treat of, did all that lay in their power to magnify his sanctity, to extol the merits of his martyrdom, and to hold him out as the fittest object of the veneration of the people. Their endeavours soon prevailed. Innumerable were the miracles said to be wrought at his tomb; for when the people are brought to see a miracle, they generally find or make one. It was not sufficient that his shrine had the power of restoring dead men to life; it restored also cows, dogs, and horses. It was reported, and believed, that he rose from his coffin before he was buried, to light the tapers designed for his funeral: nor was he remiss, when the funeral ceremony was over, in stretching forth his hands to give his benediction to the people. Thus Becket became a saint; and the king was strongly suspected of procuring his assassination.

Nothing could exceed the king's consternation upon receiving the first news of this prelate's catastrophe. He was instantly sensible that the murder would be ultimately imputed to him. He was apprised that his death would effect what his opposition could not do; and would procure those advantages to the church which it had been the study of his whole reign to refuse. These considerations gave him the most unfeigned concern. He shut himself up in darkness, refusing even the attendance of his domestics. He even rejected, during three days, all nourishment. The courtiers dreading the effects of his regret, were at last obliged to break into his solitude; in order to persuade him to be reconciled to a measure that he could not redress. The pope soon after, being made sensible of the king's innocence, granted him his pardon; but upon condition that he would make every future submission, and perform every injunction that the holy see should require. All things being thus adjusted, the assassins who had murdered Becket retired in safety to the enjoyment of their former dignities and honours; and the king, in order to divert



the minds of the people to a different object, undertook an expedition against Ireland.

Ireland was at that time in pretty much the same situation that England had been after the first invasion of the Saxons. They had been early converted to Christianity; and, for three or four centuries after, possessed a very large proportion of the learning of the times; being undisturbed by foreign invasions, and perhaps too poor to invite the rapacity of conquerors, they enjoyed a peaceful life, which they gave up to piety, and such learning as was then thought necessary to promote it. Of their learning, their arts, their piety, and even their polished manners, too many monuments remain to this day for us to make the least doubt concerning them; but it is equally true, that in time they fell from these advantages; and their degenerate posterity, at the period we are now speaking of, were wrapt in the darkest barbarity. This may be imputed to the frequent invasions which they suffered from the Danes, who over-ran the whole country, and every where spread their ravages, and confirmed their authority. The natives, kept in the strictest bondage, grew every day more ignorant and brutal; and when at last they rose upon their conquerors, and totally expelled them the island, they wanted instructors to restore them to their former attainments. From thence they continued in the most deplorable state of barbarism. The towns that had been formerly built were suffered to fall into ruin; the inhabitants exercised pasture in the open country, and sought protection from danger by retiring into their forests and bogs. Almost all sense of religion was extinguished; the petty princes exercised continual outrages upon each other's territories; and nothing but strength alone was able to procure redress.

At the time when Henry first planned the invasion of the island, it was divided into five principalities, namely, Leinster, Meath, Munster, Ulster, and Connaught; each governed by its respective monarch. As it had been usual for one or other of those to take the lead in their wars, he was denominated sole monarch of the kingdom, and possessed of a power resembling that of the early Saxon monarchs in England. Roderic O'Connor, king of Connaught, was then advanced to this dignity, and Dermot M'Morrogh was king of Leinster. This last-named

prince, a weak, licentious tyrant, had carried off and ravished the daughter of the king of Meath, who, being strengthened by the alliance of the king of Connaught, invaded the ravisher's dominions, and expelled him from his kingdom. This prince, thus justly punished, had recourse to Henry, who was at that time in Guienne, and offered to hold his kingdom of the English crown, in case he recovered it by the king's assistance. Henry readily accepted the offer; but, being at that time embarrassed by more near interests, he only gave Dermot letters patent, by which he empowered all his subjects to aid the Irish prince in the recovery of his dominions. Dermot, relying on this authority, returned to Bristol, where, after some difficulty, he formed a treaty with Richard, surnamed Strongbow, earl of Pembroke, who agreed to reinstate him in his dominions, upon condition of his being married to his daughter Eva, and declared heir of all his territory. He at the same time contracted for succours with Robert Fitzstephen, and Maurice Fitzgerald, whom he promised to gratify with the city of Wexford, and the two adjoining districts, which were then in possession of the Easterlings. Being thus assured of assistance, he returned privately to Ireland, and concealed himself during the winter in the monastery of Ferns, which he had founded. Robert Fitzstephen was first able, the ensuing spring, to [1172.] fulfil his engagements, by landing with a hundred and thirty knights, sixty esquires, and three hundred archers. They were soon after joined by Maurice Pendergast, who, about the same time, brought over ten knights and sixty archers; and with this small body of forces they resolved on besieging Wexford, which was to be theirs by treaty. This town was quickly reduced; and the adventurers, being reinforced by another body of men, to the amount of an hundred and fifty, under the command of Maurice Fitzgerald, composed an army that struck the barbarous natives with awe. Roderic, the chief monarch of the island, ventured to oppose them, but he was defeated; and soon after the prince of Ossory was obliged to submit, and give hostages for his future conduct.

Dermot being thus reinstated in his hereditary dominions, soon began to conceive hopes of extending the limits of his power, and making himself master of Ireland. With these views he endeavoured to expedite Strongbow, who, being personally pro-

hibited by the king, was not yet come over. Dermot tried to inflame his ambition by the glory of the conquest, and his avarice by the advantages it would procure: he expatiated on the cowardice of the natives, and the certainty of his success. Strongbow first sent over Raymond, one of his retinue, with ten knights and seventy archers; and receiving permission shortly after for himself, he landed with two hundred horse and a hundred archers. All these English forces, now joining together, became irresistible; and though the whole number did not amount to a thousand, yet, such was the barbarous state of the natives, that they were every where put to the rout. The city of Waterford quickly surrendered; Dublin was taken by assault; and Strongbow, soon after marrying Eva, according to treaty, became master of the kingdom of Leinster upon Dermot's decease.

The island being thus in a manner wholly subdued, for nothing was capable of opposing the further progress of the English arms, Henry became jealous of their success, and was willing to share in person those honours which the adventurers had already secured. He therefore shortly after landed in Ireland, at the head of five hundred knights, and some soldiers; not so much to conquer a disputed territory, as to take possession of a subject kingdom. In his progress through the country, he received the homage of the petty chieftains as he went along, and left most of them in possession of their antient territories. In a place so uncultivated, and so ill peopled, there was still land enough to satisfy the adventurers who had followed him. Strongbow was made seneschal of Ireland; Hugh de Lacey was made governor of Dublin, and John de Courcy received a patent for conquering the province of Ulster, which had as yet remained unsubdued. The Irish bishops very gladly admitted the English, as they expected from their superior civilization a greater degree of reverence and respect. Pope Adrian, who had, in the beginning, encouraged Henry to subdue the Irish by his bull, granting him the kingdom, now confirmed him in his conquest; and the kings of England were acknowledged as lords over Ireland forever. Thus, after a trifling effort, in which very little money was expended, and little blood shed, that beautiful island became an appendage to the English crown, and as such it has ever since continued with unshaken fidelity.

The joy which this conquest diffused was very great; and Henry seemed now to have attained the summit of his utmost wishes. He was now undisputed monarch of the greatest domain in Europe; father of a numerous progeny, that gave both lustre and authority to his crown; victorious over all his enemies, and cheerfully obeyed by all his subjects. Henry, his eldest son, had been anointed king, and was acknowledged as undoubted successor; Richard, his second son, was invested with the duchy of Guienne and Poitou; Geoffrey, his third son, inherited, in right of his wife, the duchy of Bretagne; and John, his youngest, was designed as king in Ireland. Such was the flattering prospect of grandeur before him; but such is the instability of human happiness, that this very exaltation of his family proved the means of embittering his future life, and disturbing his government.

Among the few vices ascribed to this monarch, unlimited gallantry was one. Queen Eleanor, whom he married from motives of ambition, and who had been divorced from her former royal consort for her incontinence, was long become disagreeable to Henry; and he sought in others those satisfactions he could not find with her. Among the number of his mistresses we have the name of Fair Rosamond, whose personal charms, and whose death, make so conspicuous a figure in the romances and the ballads of this period. It is true that the severity of criticism has rejected most of these accounts as fabulous; but even well-known fables, when much celebrated, make a part of the history, at least of the manners, of the age. Rosamond Clifford is said to have been the most beautiful woman that ever was seen in England, if what romances and poets assert be true. Henry loved her with a long and faithful attachment; and in order to secure her from the resentment of his queen, who, from having been formerly incontinent herself, now became jealous of his incontinence, he concealed her in a labyrinth in Woodstock Park, where he passed in her company his hours of vacancy and pleasure. How long this secret intercourse continued is not told us; but it was not so closely concealed but that it came to the queen's knowledge, who, as the accounts add, being guided by a clue of silk to her fair rival's retreat, obliged her, by holding a drawn dagger to her breast, to swallow poison. Whatever may be the veracity of this story,

certain it is, that this haughty woman, though formerly offensive by her own gallantries, was now no less so by her jealousy; and she it was who first sowed the seeds of dissension between the king and his children.

Young Henry was taught to believe himself injured, when, upon being crowned as partner in the kingdom, he was not admitted into a share of the administration. This prince had, from the beginning, shown a degree of pride that seems to have been hereditary to all the Norman succession: when the ceremony of his coronation was performing, the king, willing to give it all the splendour possible, waited upon him at table; and while he offered him the cup, observed that no prince ever before had been so magnificently attended. "There is nothing very extraordinary," replied the young prince, "in seeing the son of a count serving the son of a king." From this instance, nothing seemed great enough to satisfy his ambition; and he took the first opportunity to assert his aspiring pretensions. The discontent of young Henry was soon followed by that of Geoffrey and Richard, whom the queen persuaded to assert their title to the territories assigned them; and, upon the king's refusing their undutiful demands, they all fled secretly to the court of France, where Lewis, who was instrumental in increasing their disobedience, gave them countenance and protection. Queen Eleanor herself was meditating an escape to the same court, and had put on man's apparel for that purpose, when she was seized by the king's order, and put into confinement. Thus Henry saw all his long perspective of future happiness totally clouded; his sons, scarce yet arrived at manhood, eager to share the spoils of their father's possessions; his queen warmly encouraging those undutiful princes in their rebellion; and many potentates of Europe not ashamed to lend them assistance to support their pretensions. Nor were his prospects much more pleasing when he looked among his subjects: his licentious barons, disgusted with a vigilant administration, desired to be governed by princes whom they could flatter or intimidate: the clergy had not yet forgot Becket's death; and the people considered him as a saint and a martyr. In this universal disaffection, Henry supported that intrepidity which he had shown through life, and prepared for a contest from which he could expect to reap neither profit nor glory. Twenty thousand merce-

nary soldiers, joined to some troops which he brought over from Ireland, and a few barons of approved fidelity, formed the sole force with which he proposed to resist his opponents.

It was not long before the young princes had sufficient influence upon the continent to raise a powerful confederacy in their favour. Beside the king of France, Philip count of Flanders, Matthew count of Boulogne, Theobald count of Blois, and Henry count of Eu, all declared themselves in their interests. William, king of Scotland, also made one of this association; and a plan was concerted for a general invasion of Henry's extensive dominions. This was shortly after put into execution. The king's continental dominions were invaded on one side by the counts of Flanders and Boulogne; on the other by the king of France with a large army, which the young English princes animated by their presence and popularity. But Henry found means to oppose them on every quarter; the count of Boulogne being mortally wounded in the assault of the town of Driencourt, his death stopped the progress of the Flemish arms on that side. The French army being obliged to retire from the siege of Verneuil, Henry attacked their rear, put them to the rout, and took several prisoners. The barons of Bretagne also, who had risen in favour of the young princes, shared no better fate; their army was defeated in the field, and, taking shelter in the town of Dol, were there made prisoners of war. These successes repressed the pride and the expectations of the confederated forces; and a conference was demanded by the French king, to which Henry readily agreed. In this interview, he had the mortification to see his three sons ranged on the side of his mortal and inveterate enemy; but he was still more disappointed to find that their demands rose with their incapacity to obtain them by compulsion.

While Henry was thus quelling the insolence of his foreign enemies, his English subjects were in no small danger of revolting from their obedience at home. The nobility were in general united to oppose him; and an irruption at this time by the king of Scotland, assisted their schemes of insurrection. The earl of Leicester, at the head of a body of Flemings, invaded Suffolk, but was repulsed with great slaughter. The earl of Ferrars, Roger de Mowbray, and many others of equal dignity, rose in arms; while the more to augment the confusion, the king of Scotland

broke into the northern provinces with an army of eighty thousand men, which laid the whole country into one extensive scene of desolation. Henry, from baffling his enemies in France, flew over to oppose those in England; but his long dissension with Becket still was remembered against him, and it was his interest to persuade the clergy as well as the people, that he was no way accessory to his murder. All the world now began to think the dead prelate a saint; and, if we consider the ignorance of the times, perhaps Henry himself thought so too. He had some time before taken proper precautions to exculpate himself to the pope, and given him the most solemn promises to perform whatever penances the church should inflict. He had engaged on the Christmas following to take the cross; and, if the pope insisted on it, to serve three years against the infidels, either in Spain or Palestine; and promised not to stop appeals to the holy see. These concessions seemed to satisfy the court of Rome for that time; but they were nevertheless, every day, putting Henry in mind of his promise, and demanding those humiliations, for his offences to the saint, that could alone reconcile him to the church. He now therefore found it the most proper conjuncture to obey; and, knowing the influence of superstition over the minds of the people, and perhaps apprehensive that a part of his troubles arose from the displeasure of Heaven, he resolved to do penance at the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury, for that was the name given to Becket upon his canonization. As soon as he came within sight of the church of Canterbury, alighting from his horse, he walked barefoot towards the town, prostrated himself before the shrine of the saint, remained in fasting and prayer a whole day, watched all night the holy relics, made a grant of fifty pounds a year to the convent for a constant supply of tapers to illuminate the shrine; and, not satisfied with these submissions, he assembled a chapter of monks, disrobed before them, put a scourge of discipline into each of their hands, and presented his bare shoulders to their infliction. Next day he received absolution; and departing for London, received the agreeable news of a victory over the Scots, obtained on the very day of his absolution.

Having thus made his peace with the church, and brought over the minds of the people, he fought upon surer grounds; every victory he obtained was imputed to the favour of the reconciled

saint, and every success thus tended to ascertain the growing confidence of his party. The victory which was gained over the Scots was signal and decisive. William, their king, after having committed the most horrible depredations upon the northern frontiers, had thought proper to retreat, upon the advance of an English army, commanded by Ralph de Glanville, the famous English lawyer. As he had fixed his station at Alnwick, he thought himself perfectly secure, from the remoteness of the enemy, against any attack. In this, however, he was deceived; for Glanville, informed of his situation, made a hasty and fatiguing march to the place of his encampment, and approached it very nearly during the obscurity of a mist. The Scotch, who continued in perfect security, were surprised in the morning to find themselves attacked by the enemy, which they thought at such a distance; and their king venturing with a small body of a hundred horse to oppose the assailants, was quickly surrounded, and taken prisoner. His troops hearing of his disaster, fled on all sides with the utmost precipitation, and made the best of their way to their own country.

From that time Henry's affairs began to wear a better aspect; the barons, who had revolted, or were preparing for a revolt, made instant submission; they delivered up their castles to the victor, and England in a few weeks was restored to perfect tranquillity. Young Henry, who was ready to embark with a large army, to second the efforts of the English insurgents, finding all disturbances quieted at home, abandoned all thoughts of the expedition. Lewis attempted in vain to besiege Rouen, which Henry hastened over to succour. A cessation of arms, and a conference was once more agreed upon by the two monarchs. Henry granted his sons much less advantageous terms than they formerly refused to accept; the most material were some pensions for their support, some castles for their residence, and an indemnity to all their adherents. Thus England once more emerged from the numerous calamities that threatened to overwhelm it, and the king was left at free liberty to make various provisions for the glory, the happiness, and the security of his people.

His first care was to make his prisoner, the king of Scots, undergo a proper punishment for his unmerited and ungenerous attack. That prince was obliged to sign a treaty, by which he was compelled to do homage to Henry for his dominions in Scotland.



It was agreed, that his barons and bishops also should do the same ; and that the fortresses of Edinburgh, Stirling, Berwick, Roxborough, and Jedborough, should be delivered into the hands of the conqueror till the articles were performed. This treaty was punctually and rigorously executed : the king, barons, and prelates of Scotland, did homage to Henry in the cathedral of York : so that he might now be considered as monarch of the whole island, the mountainous parts of Wales only excepted.

His domestic regulations were as wise as his political conduct was splendid. He enacted severe penalties against robbery, murder, false coining, and burning of houses ; ordaining that these crimes should be punished by the amputation of the right hand and right foot. The ordeal trial by the water, though it still subsisted, was yet so far weakened, as that if a person who came off in this scrutiny were legally convicted by creditable testimony, he should nevertheless suffer banishment. He partitioned out the kingdom into four divisions ; and appointed itinerant justices to go their respective circuits to try causes, to restrain the cruelties of their barons, and to protect the lower ranks of the people in security. He renewed the trial by juries, which, by the barbarous method of camp-fight, was almost grown obsolete. He demolished all the new erected castles that had been built in the times of anarchy and general confusion ; and, to secure the kingdom more effectually against any threatened invasion, he established a well-armed militia, which with proper accoutrements, specified in the act, were to defend the realm upon any emergency.

But it was not in the power of wisdom to conciliate the turbulent and ambitious spirits of his sons, who, not contented with rebelling against their father, now warmly prosecuted their enmities against each other. Richard, whom Henry had made master of Guienne, and who had already displayed great marks [1180.] of valour in humbling his mutinous barons, refused to obey his father's orders in doing homage to his elder brother for that duchy. Young Henry and Geoffrey, uniting their arms, carried war into their brother's dominions ; and while the king was endeavouring to compose their differences, he found himself secretly conspired against by all. What the result of this conspiracy might be, is uncertain ; for it was defeated by the death

of young Henry, who died in the twenty-sixth year of his age, of a fever, at Martel, not without the deepest remorse for his undutiful conduct towards his father.

[1183.] As this prince left no posterity, Richard was become heir in his room; and he soon discovered the same ardent ambition that had misled his elder brother. He refused to obey his father's commands in giving up Guienne, which he had been put in possession of; and even made preparations to attack his brother Geoffrey, who was possessed of Bretagne. No sooner was this breach made up, at the intercession of the queen, than Geoffrey broke out into violence, and demanded Anjou to be annexed to his dominions of Bretagne. This being refused him, he followed the old undutiful method of procuring redress, fled to the court of France, and prepared to levy an army against his father. Henry was freed from the danger that threatened him on that quarter, by the affliction of his son's death, who was killed in a tournament at Paris. The loss of this prince gave few, except the king himself, any uneasiness, as he was universally hated, and went among the people under the opprobrious name of *The Child of Perdition*.

But the death of the prince did not wholly remove the cause of his revolt; for Philip, the king of France, disputed his title to the wardship of Arthur, the son of Geoffrey, who was now become duke of Bretagne, upon the death of his father. Some other causes of dissension inflamed the dispute between the two monarchs. Philip had once more debauched Richard from his duty; and insisted upon his marriage being completed with Adalais, the sister of France: and threatened to enforce his pretensions by a formidable invasion. In consequence of this claim, another conference was held between Gisors and Trie, the usual place of meeting, under a vast elm, that is said to have shaded more than an acre. It was in the midst of this conference upon their mutual rights, that a new object of interest was offered to their deliberation, and that quickly bore down all secular considerations before it. The archbishop of Tyre appeared before the assembly in the most miserable habit, and with looks calculated to inspire compassion. He had come from the Holy Land, and had seen the oppressions of the Christians, who were appointed to defend the Holy Sepulchre, and was a witness of the triumph of the infidels.

He painted the distresses of those champions of the cross in the most pathetic manner; he deplored their bravery and their misfortunes. The Christians, about a century before, had attacked and taken Jerusalem; but the Saracens recovered courage after the first torrent of success was past, and being every day reinforced by fresh supplies, at last conquered by perseverance a land of warriors, who, in common, preferring celibacy to marriage, had not multiplied in the ordinary methods of population. The holy city itself was soon retaken by the victorious arms of Saladin; and all Palestine, except a few maritime towns, was entirely subdued. Nothing now remained of those boasted conquests that had raised the glory, and inflamed the zeal of the western world; and nothing was to be seen, of what near a century before had employed the efforts of all the noblest spirits of Europe to acquire. The western Christians were astonished at receiving this dismal intelligence; the whole audience burst into tears; the two kings laid aside their animosity, and agreed to convert their whole attention to the rescuing Jerusalem from the hands of the infidels. They instantly therefore took the cross; many of their most considerable vassals imitated their example; and as the emperor Frederick I. entered into the same confederacy, it was universally expected that nothing could resist their united endeavours. But it was the fate of Henry to be crossed in his most darling pursuits by his undutiful and ungrateful children.

Richard, who had long wished to have all the glory of such an expedition to himself, and who could not bear to have even his father a partner in his victories, entered into a confederacy with the king of France, who promised to confirm him in those wishes at which he so ardently aspired. He therefore began by making an inroad into the territories of the count of Thoulouse, a vassal of the king of France: and this monarch, in order to retaliate, carried war into the provinces of Berri and Auvergne. Henry, who was apprised of their secret confederacy, nevertheless attempted to make depredations in turn upon the dominions of the French king. Conferences were proposed, attended, and dismissed. At length, Henry found himself obliged to give up all hopes of taking the cross, and compelled to enter upon a war with France and his eldest son, who were unnaturally leaguéd

against him. He now saw the confederacy daily gaining ground. Ferte-Bernard fell first into the hands of the enemy; Mans was next taken by assault; Amboise, Chaumont, and Château de Loire, opened their gates upon the enemy's appearance; Tours was invested; and the king, who had retired to Saumur, and had daily instances of the cowardice and infidelity of his governors, expected the most dismal issue of all his enterprises. While he was in this state of despondency, the duke of Burgundy, the count of Flanders, and archbishop of Rheims, interposed their good offices; and at last a treaty was concluded, in which he submitted to many mortifying concessions. It was agreed that Richard should marry the princess Adalais, and be crowned king of England during the life-time of his father. It was stipulated, that Henry should pay twenty thousand marks to the king of France, as a compensation for the charges of the war; that his own barons should engage to make him observe this treaty; and in case of violating it, to join Philip and Richard against him; and that all his vassals who espoused the cause of Richard should receive an indemnity for the offence. These were terms sufficiently humiliating to a prince accustomed to give, not receive, commands: but what was his resentment, when, upon demanding a list of the barons that were to be thus pardoned, he found his son John, his favourite child, among the number. He had long borne an infirm state of body with calm resignation; he had seen his children rebel without much emotion; he saw his own son his conqueror, himself bereft of his power, reduced to the condition of a fugitive, and almost suppliant in his old age; and all this he endured with tranquillity of temper;—but when he saw that child, whose interests always lay next his heart, among the number of those who were in rebellion against him, he could no longer contain his indignation. He broke out into expressions of the utmost despair; cursed the day in which he had received his miserable being; and bestowed on his ungrateful children a malediction which he never after could be prevailed upon to retract. The more his heart was disposed to friendship and affection, the more he resented this barbarous return; and now, not having one corner in his heart where he could look for comfort, or fly for refuge from his conflicting passions, he lost all his former vivacity. A lingering fever, caused by a broken heart, soon after

terminated his life and his miseries. He died at the castle of Chinon, near Saumur.

His corpse was conveyed by his natural son Geoffrey, who of all his children behaved with duty, to the nunnery of Fontevrault; and next day, while it lay in the abbey church, Richard chancing to enter, was struck with horror at the sight. At his approach the blood was seen to gush out at the mouth and nostrils of the corpse; and this, which, without doubt, was accidental, was interpreted by the superstition of the times as the most dreadful rebuke: Richard could not endure the sight; he exclaimed, "that he was his father's murderer;" and expressed a strong, though late, sense of that undutiful conduct which brought his parent to an untimely grave.

Thus died Henry, in the fifty-eighth year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his reign; in the course of which [1189.] he displayed all the abilities of a politician, all the sagacity of a legislator, and all the magnanimity of a hero. He was of a middle stature, strong and well proportioned; his countenance was lively and engaging; his conversation affable and entertaining; his elocution easy, persuasive, and ever at command. When he could enjoy leisure, he recreated himself either in learned conversation or reading, and he cultivated his natural talents by study above any prince of his time. During his reign all foreign improvements in literature and politeness, in laws and arts, seem to have been, in a good measure, transplanted into England. The little learning of the Saxon priests, which was confined to church history and legendary tales, was now exchanged for the subtleties of school philosophy. The homely manners of the great were softened by the pomps of chivalry. The people, however, were as yet far from being civilized; and even in their cities, where the social arts were best cultivated, there were amazing instances of barbarity. It was common, for instance, in London, for great numbers, to the amount of a hundred, or more, of the sons and relations of eminent citizens, to form themselves into a confederacy to plunder and rob their more wealthy neighbours. By these crimes it was become so dangerous to walk the streets at night, that the citizens, after dark, were obliged to continue within doors. A band of these ruffians had one day attacked the house of a rich citizen, with an intention to plunder it. They had al-

ready broke through a stone-wall with hammers and wedges, and were actually entering the house sword in hand, when the citizen, in complete armour, supported by his servant, appeared in the passage to oppose them. He cut off the right hand of the first robber that entered; and made such a noble resistance, that his neighbours had time to assemble and come to his relief. The man who lost his hand was caught; and was tempted, by the promise of a pardon, to reveal his confederates, among whom was one John Senex, esteemed among the richest and the best born citizens of London. He was convicted by the ordeal trial; and though he offered five hundred marks for his life, the king refused the money, and ordered him to be hanged.

Henry left only two legitimate sons, Richard, who succeeded him, and John, who inherited no territory, and therefore received the surname of Lackland. He left three legitimate daughters, Maud, who was married to the duke of Saxony, Eleanor, married to Alphonso king of Castile, and Joan, to William, king of Sicily. He left two natural sons by Rosamond; Richard Longsword, who was afterwards married to the daughter and heiress of the earl of Salisbury; and Geoffrey, who was afterwards archbishop of York.

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## CHAP. X.

### RICHARD I. SURNAMED CŒUR DE LION.

**R**ICHARD, who succeeded to the throne without opposition, seemed resolved to discourage future disobedience, by dismissing from his service all those who had assisted him in his former undutiful conduct. Those who had seconded his rebellion, instead of meeting with that trust and honour which they expected, were treated with scorn and neglect. He retained in his service all the loyal adherents of the late king; and more than once observed, that those who were faithful to one sovereign would probably continue so to another. He instantly, upon his accession, released his mother from confinement; and was profuse in heaping favours upon his brother John, who afterwards made but a very indifferent return for his indulgence.

But the king was no way suspicious in his temper; nor did he give much attention to his own security, being more earnestly solicitous of fame. A romantic desire for strange adventures, and an immoderate zeal for the external rites of Christianity, were the ruling passions of the times. By these alone glory was to be acquired; and by these Richard only hoped for glory. The Jews, who had been for some time increasing in the kingdom, were the first who fell a sacrifice to the enthusiastic zeal of the people; and great numbers of them were slaughtered by the citizens of London, upon the very day of the king's coronation. Five hundred of that infatuated people had retired into York Castle for safety; but finding themselves unable to defend the place, they resolved to perish by killing one another, rather than meet the fury of their persecutors. Having taken this gloomy resolution, they first murdered their wives and children; next threw the dead bodies over the wall against their enemies, who attempted to scale it; and then setting fire to the houses, perished in the flames.

This horrid massacre, which was in itself so impolitic and unjust, instead of tarnishing the lustre of this monarch's reign, was then considered as a most splendid commencement of his government; and the people were from thence led to form the most favourable sentiments of his future glory. Nor was it long before he showed himself perfectly fitted to gratify their most romantic desires. Perhaps impelled more by a love of military glory than actuated by superstition, he resolved upon an expedition to the Holy Land, and took every method to raise money for so expensive an undertaking. His father had left him a treasure of above a hundred thousand marks; and this sum he endeavoured to augment by all expedients, however pernicious to the public, or dangerous to royal authority. He set up to sale the revenues and manors of the crown, and several offices of the greatest trust and power. Liberties, charters, castles, and employments, were given to the best bidders. When some of his friends suggested the danger attending this venality, he told them he would sell the city of London itself, if he could procure a purchaser. In these times we find but one man who was honest enough to retire from employment when places were become thus ignominious. This was the great lawyer Glanville, who resigned his post of justicia:

ry, and took the cross. Richard was not much displeas'd at his resignation, as he was able shortly after to sell his employment to Hugh, bishop of Durham, who gave a thousand marks for the office. Thus the king, elated with the hopes of fame, was blind to every other consideration. Numerous exactions were practis'd upon people of all ranks and stations; menaces, promises, exostulations, were used to frighten the timid, or allure the avaricious. A zealous preacher of those times was so far embolden'd as to remonstrate against the king's conduct; and advis'd him to part with his three daughters, which were Pride, Avarice, and Sensuality. To this Richard readily repli'd, "You counsel right, my friend; and I have already provided husbands for them all. I will dispose of my Pride to the Templars; my Avarice to the Monks; and as for my Sensuality, the Clergy shall share that among them." At length, the king having got together a sufficient supply for his undertaking, and having even sold his superiority over the kingdom of Scotland, which had been acquired in the last reign, for a moderate sum, he set out for the Holy Land, whither he was impell'd by repeated messages from the king of France, who was ready to embark in the same enterprise.

The first place of rendezvous for the two armies of England and France was the plain of Vezelay, on the borders of Burgundy, where, when Richard and Philip arriv'd, they found their armies amounting to a hundred thousand fighting men. These were all ardent in the cause; the flower of all the military in both dominions, and provided with all the implements and accoutrements of war. Here the French prince and the English enter'd into the most solemn engagements of mutual support; and having determin'd to conduct their armies to the Holy Land by sea, they parted, one for Genoa, the other for Marseilles, with a view of meeting the fleets that were to attend them at their respective stations. It was not long after that both fleets put to sea; and nearly about the same time were oblig'd, by stress of weather, to take shelter in Messina, the capital of Sicily, where they were detain'd during the whole winter. Richard took up his quarters in the suburbs, and possess'd himself of a small fort, which command'd the harbour. Philip quarter'd his troops in the town, and liv'd upon good terms with the Sicilian king.

It is now unknown what gave rise to a quarrel, which happen'd



soon after, between the Sicilians and the English; it is doubtful whether the intrigues of the French king, or the violent proceedings of Richard. Certain it is, that the Messinese soon took occasion to treat the English with great insolence; shut their gates, manned their walls, and set Richard at defiance. Richard, who had hitherto acted as a friend, endeavoured to use the mediation of Philip to compromise this quarrel; but while the two monarchs were yet in deliberation, a body of Sicilians issued from the town, and attacked the English with great impetuosity. This insult was sufficient to excite the fury of Richard, who, naturally bold, and conscious of his own superior force, assaulted the city with such fury, that it was soon taken, and the standard of England displayed on the ramparts. Philip, who considered the place as his quarters, exclaimed against the insult, and ordered some of his troops to pull down that mark of his disgrace. To this, however, Richard returned for answer, that he was willing to take down the standard, since it displeased his associate, but that no power on earth should compel him to do so. This was sufficient to produce a mutual jealousy between these two princes, which never after subsided; but which was still more inflamed by the opposition of their tempers.

Many were the mistrusts and the mutual reconciliations between these two monarchs, which were very probably inflamed by the Sicilian king's endeavours. At length, however, having settled all controversies, they set sail for the Holy Land, where the French arrived long before the English. The little knowledge that was then had of the art of sailing, made that passage by sea very long and dangerous, which is now considered as so trifling. Richard's fleet was once more encountered by a tempest, and two of the ships driven upon the coast of the island of Cyprus. Isaac, who was then prince of that country, either impelled by avarice, or willing to discourage the rest of Richard's fleet from landing, pillaged the ships that were stranded, and threw the seamen and soldiers into prison. But Richard, who soon after arrived, took ample vengeance for that injury. He disembarked his troops, defeated the tyrant, entered the capital by storm, obliged Isaac to surrender at discretion, and took the island into his own possession. It was there that Richard married Berengaria, daughter to the king of Navarre, who had attended

him in his expedition; and whom he had preferred to Adalais, the king of France's sister, whose charms were not so powerful, or whose fidelity was more suspected.

Upon the arrival of the English army in Palestine, fortune was seen to declare more openly in favour of the common cause. The French and English princes seemed to forget their secret jealousies, and act in concert. In besieging the city of Acre, while the one made the attack the other guarded the trenches; and this duty they performed each day alternately. By this conduct, that garrison, after a long and obstinate resistance, was obliged to capitulate; and upon condition of having their lives spared, they promised to restore all the prisoners that had been made by the Saracens, and to deliver up the wood of the true cross. Such were the amazing advantages that attended an enterprise that had laid Asia in blood, and had, in a great measure, depopulated Europe of its bravest forces.

[1191.] Immediately after the conquest of this place, Philip, either disgusted at the ascendant assumed by Richard, or perhaps displeased at his superior popularity, declared his resolution of returning to France. He pleaded the bad state of his health in excuse for his desertion; and, to give a colour to his friendly professions, he left Richard ten thousand of his troops, under the command of the duke of Burgundy. Richard, being now left sole conductor of the war, went on from victory to victory. The Christian adventurers, under his command, determined to besiege the renowned city of Ascalon, in order to prepare the way for attacking Jerusalem with greater advantage. Saladin, the most renowned of all the Saracen monarchs, was resolved to dispute their march, and placed himself upon the road with an army of three hundred thousand men. This was a day equal to Richard's wishes; this an enemy worthy his highest ambition. The English were victorious. Richard, when the wings of his army were defeated, led on the main body in person, and restored the battle. The Saracens fled in the utmost confusion; and no less than forty thousand of their number perished on the field of battle. Ascalon soon surrendered after this victory; other cities of less note followed the example; and Richard was at last able to advance within sight of Jerusalem, the object of his long and ardent expectations. But, just at this glorious junc-

ture, his ambition was to suffer a total overthrow : upon reviewing his forces, and considering his abilities to prosecute the siege, he found that his army was so wasted with famine, fatigue, and even with victory, that they were neither able nor willing to second the views of their commander. It appeared, therefore, absolutely necessary to come to an accommodation with Saladin ; and a truce for three years was accordingly concluded, in which it was agreed ; that the sea-port towns of Palestine should remain in the hands of the Christians ; and that all of that religion should be permitted to make their pilgrimage to Jerusalem in perfect security.

Richard, having thus concluded his expedition, with more glory than advantage, began to think of returning home, and of enjoying in tranquillity those honours which he had reaped with so much danger. But he was at a loss how to proceed. If he should take shipping, and return by the way he came, he must necessarily put himself into the power of the king of France, from whose resentment he had every thing to fear. No way was left but by going more to the North ; wherefore, taking shipping for Italy, he was once more wrecked, near Aquileia. From thence directing his travels towards Ragusa, and putting on the disguise of a pilgrim, he resolved to make his way, in that private manner, through Germany. But, unfortunately, his intentions and person were not so concealed, but that his quality was suspected ; and the governor of Istria pursued him, in order to make him a prisoner. Being thus forced from the direct road, and now become a fugitive, he was obliged to pass by Vienna, where his expenses and liberalities betraying his dignity, though disguised in the habit of a pilgrim, he was arrested by Leopold, duke of Austria, who commanded him to be imprisoned and loaded with shackles, to the disgrace of honour and humanity. This prince had served under Richard at the siege of Acre ; and being disgusted at some affront offered him by his commander on that occasion, he took this base method of retaliating the injury. His avarice, also, might have had a share in this procedure, as he expected a large share of that ransom which he knew would be given by the English to extricate their king from bondage. Henry the Sixth, who was then emperor of Germany, was equally an enemy to Richard, on account of the alliance contracted between him

and Tancred king of Sicily, by his marriage with Berengaria. When, therefore, shortly after, he received the news of Richard's being in custody, he required the prisoner to be delivered up to him, and ordered a large sum of money to the duke as a reward for this service. Thus the king of England, who had long filled the world with his fame, was basely thrown into a dungeon, and loaded with irons, by those who expected to reap a sordid advantage from his misfortunes. It was a long time before his subjects in England knew what was become of their warlike monarch. So little intercourse was there between different nations at that time, that this discovery is said by some to have been made by a poor French minstrel, who playing upon his harp, near the fortress in which Richard was confined, a tune which he knew that unhappy monarch was fond of, he was answered by the king from within, who with his harp played the same tune; and this discovered the place of his confinement.

In the mean time, while Richard was thus fruitlessly victorious, and afterwards miserably confined, his affairs in England were in a very unprosperous situation. The kingdom, as has been before observed, was put under the government of two prelates, one of whom had bought his place, and the other had risen to it by the meanest arts of adulation. The bishop of Durham was ignorant and avaricious; Longchamp his colleague was naturally proud, and still more elated by the consciousness of possessing his master's favour. Tempers so opposite soon begat enmity; and Longchamp went even so far as to arrest the person of his colleague, who was obliged to resign his power to obtain his liberty. It was to no purpose that the king, by his letters, commanded Longchamp to replace his co-adjutor; this haughty prelate refused to obey, alleging that he knew the king's secret intentions better than to comply. He proceeded, therefore, still to govern the kingdom alone; and as he knew his situation was precarious, he increased the number of his guard, without which he never ventured from his palace. In the universal disgust which so much power and magnificence naturally produced against him, there was none in the kingdom hardy enough to control his will, except John, the king's brother, who, having been personally dis-obliged by this prelate, was willing to catch the present favourable occasion of universal discontent, to oppose himself to his power.

He accordingly ventured to summon, at Reading, a general council of the nobility and prelates; and cited Longchamp to appear before them. Longchamp, sensible of his own insolence and their enmity, was unwilling to trust himself in their power, but shut himself up in the Tower of London. From thence he fled, in the disguise of a female habit, beyond sea; upon which the archbishop of Rouen was made justiciary in his room. These dissensions were soon known by the king of France, who was by this time returned from the Holy Land. He made all possible use of Longchamp's resentment, to divide the English still more effectually; and even had almost prevailed upon John to throw off his allegiance, by an offer of putting him in possession of all Richard's continental dominions.

It was in this precarious situation of affairs that the English were first informed of the captivity of their beloved monarch, and the base treatment he had received, without even the colour of justice to gloss over the injury. The queen-dowager was particularly enraged at the treatment of her favourite son. She wrote reiterated letters to pope Celestine, to excite his compassion or his indignation, but all to very little purpose. The people testified their regard for him with all the marks of violence and despair. The clergy considered him as a sufferer in the cause of the church; and all mouths were filled with the nobleness of his actions and the greatness of his fall. But while these testified the sincerity of their sorrow, there were some that secretly rejoiced in his disaster, and did all they could to prolong the term of his captivity. Of this number was the king of France, his ancient enemy, and his own brother John, who, forgetting every tie of kindred, duty, or gratitude, on the first invitation from Philip, suddenly went abroad, and held a conference with him, in which the perpetual captivity of Richard was agreed upon. He stipulated to deliver into Philip's hand a great part of Normandy; and, in return, he received the French king's assurances of being secured on the English throne; and some say that he did homage for the crown of England. In consequence of this treaty, Philip invaded Normandy, the fortresses of which were delivered up to him after a colour of opposition; and all but Rouen were subjected to this authority. John, on his side, was equally assiduous to secure England; and, upon his arrival in London, claimed the

throne, as being heir to his brother, of whose death he pretended to have received certain intelligence. But in this the traitor's expectations were disappointed. His claim was rejected by all the barons, who took such measures to provide for the security of the kingdom, that John was obliged to return to the continent, and openly to acknowledge his alliance with the king of France.

In the mean time, the unhappy Richard suffered all the mortifications that malicious tyranny could inflict. The emperor, in order to render him more impatient for the recovery of his liberty, and make him submit to the payment of a larger ransom, treated him with the greatest severity, and reduced him to a condition worse than that of the meanest malefactor. Richard, however, was too noble-spirited to be meanly depressed by those indignities. As he did not know what extremities he might be reduced to, or what condescensions he might be obliged to make, he wrote to the justiciary of England to obey no orders that should come from him, if they seemed in the least contrary to his honour or the good of the nation. His precautions were well founded; for the emperor, willing to intimidate him, had him even accused at the diet of Worms of many-crimes and misdemeanors, partly to justify his own cruelty, and partly to swell the ransom. There he was charged with making an alliance with Tancred, the usurper of Sicily; of turning the arms of the crusade against a Christian prince; of affronting the duke of Austria before Acre; of obstructing the progress of the Christian arms, by his contest with the king of France; of concluding a truce with Saladin, and leaving Jerusalem in the hands of the infidels. These frivolous charges were heard by Richard with becoming indignation. He even waived his dignity to answer them; and so fully vindicated himself before the princes who composed the diet, that they exclaimed loudly against the conduct of the emperor, while the pope even threatened him with excommunication. This barbarous monarch now saw that he could no longer detain his prisoner. He therefore was willing to listen to terms of accommodation. A ransom was agreed upon, which amounted to a hundred and fifty thousand marks, or about three hundred thousand pounds of our money. Of this, Richard was to pay one hundred thousand before he received his liberty, and sixty-seven hostages were to be delivered for the remainder. The agreement being thus made,

Richard sent Hubert, one of his faithful followers in the Holy Land, to England, with the terms upon which he was to receive his liberty, and with a commission to raise money for that purpose.

In the feudal times, every military tenant was, by law, obliged to give aid for the ransom of his lord from captivity. The tax arising from this obligation was accordingly raised throughout the kingdom, and assessed by itinerant justices. But the ardour of the people outwent the cool offerings of their duty; great sums were raised by voluntary contribution to purchase the freedom of their king. The churches and monasteries melted down their plate; the bishops, abbots, and nobles, paid a fourth of their annual income; the inferior clergy contributed a tenth of their tithes, and the requisite sum was thus at length amassed; with which queen Eleanor, and the justiciary, immediately set out for Germany.

While the English were thus piously employed in preparing for the ransom of their king, Philip was as assiduously occupied in endeavouring to prolong Richard's captivity. As he had the passions of the emperor to work upon, whom he knew to be avaricious to the last degree, he made him fresh proposals still more lucrative than those which had been agreed upon for Richard's ransom. He offered to marry the emperor's daughter, and to gratify him with a sum equal to the ransom, if he would only detain his prisoner for one year more in captivity. The emperor perceived that he had concluded a treaty with Richard too hastily, and repented of his rashness. He was very willing to sacrifice every consideration of honour or justice; but then he feared the resentment of his princes, who, in these feudal times, had power to punish his injustice. Thus he continued fluctuating between his avarice and his fears, between different motives equally sordid, until the day fixed for the king's deliverance arrived. His releasement from captivity was performed with great ceremony at Mentz, in presence of the German nobility: the money was paid by queen Eleanor, the hostages were delivered as a security for the remainder, and Richard once more restored to freedom. In the mean time, the emperor beheld his releasement with an agitation of all the malignant passions. He could not bear to see one he had made his enemy in a state of felicity; he could not bear to lose the superior advantages that were offered for his de-

tention. All his terrors, from his own subjects, gave way to the superior dictates of avarice; he once more resolved to send him back to his former prison, and gave orders to have him pursued and arrested. But luckily the messengers were too late. Richard, well acquainted with his perfidy, and secretly apprised of the offers of the French king, had ordered some shipping to attend him at the mouth of the Scheld; so that, upon his arrival at the place of embarking, he went instantly on board, although the wind was against him, and was out of sight of land when his pursuers reached Antwerp.

Nothing could exceed the joy of the English upon seeing their monarch return, after all his achievements and sufferings. He made his entry into London in triumph; and such was the profusion of wealth shown by the citizens, that the German lords who attended him were heard to say, that if the emperor had known of their affluence, he would not so easily have parted with their king. He, soon after, ordered himself to be crowned a-new at Winchester. He convoked a general council at Nottingham, at which he confiscated all his traitorous brother's possessions; and then having made proper preparations for avenging himself on the king of France, he set sail with a strong body of forces for Normandy.

[1194.] Richard was but one day landed, when his faithless brother John came to make submission, and to throw himself at his monarch's feet. It was not without some degree of resentment that Richard received a prince, who had all along been leagued with his mortal enemy against him. However, at the intercession of queen Eleanor, he was received into favour. "I forgive him," said the king; "and I wish I could as easily forget his offences as he will forget my pardon." This condescension was not lost upon a man whose heart, though naturally bad, was not yet dead to every sentiment of humanity. From that time he served him faithfully; and did him signal services in his battles with the king of France, which followed soon after.

[1195.] These wars, which produced no remarkable event, nor served to keep the animosity of the two nations alive, without fixing their claims or pretensions. The most remarkable circumstance, in the tedious journals of those transactions, is the taking



the bishop of Beauvais captive at the head of his vassals, and his being put in prison by Richard. When the pope demanded his liberty, and claimed him as a child of the church, the king sent his holiness the bloody coat of mail which that prelate had worn in battle; asking whether that was the coat of his son? The cruelty of both parties was in this manner inflamed by insult and revenge. Both kings frequently put out the eyes of their prisoners; and treaties were concluded and broke with very little repugnance. At length, the pope's legate induced them to commence a treaty, which promised to be attended with a firmer reconciliation; but the death of Richard put an end to the contest.

Aymar, viscount of Limoges, a vassal of the crown, [1199.] had taken possession of a treasure which was found by one of his peasants in digging a field; and to secure the remainder, he sent a part of it to the king. Richard, as superior lord, sensible that he had a right to the whole, insisted on its being sent him; and, upon refusal, attacked the castle of Chalus, where he understood this treasure had been deposited. On the fourth day of the siege, as he was riding round the place to observe where the assault might be given with the fairest success, he was aimed at by one Bertram de Gourdon, an archer, from the castle, and pierced in the shoulder with an arrow. The wound was not in itself dangerous; but an unskilful surgeon endeavouring to disengage the arrow from the flesh, so rankled the wound that it mortified and brought on fatal symptoms. Richard, when he found his end approaching, made a will, in which he bequeathed the kingdom, with all his treasure, to his brother John, except a fourth part, which he distributed among his servants. He ordered also that the archer who had shot him should be brought into his presence, and demanded "what injury he had done him that he should take away his life?" The prisoner answered with deliberate intrepidity: "You killed with your own hands my father, and my two brothers; and you intended to have hanged me. I am now in your power, and my torments may give you revenge; but I will endure them with pleasure, since it is my consolation that I have rid the world of a tyrant." Richard, struck with this answer, ordered the soldier to be presented with one hundred shillings, and set at liberty; but Marcadé, the general who commanded under him, like a true ruffian, ordered him to be flayed

alive, and then hanged. Richard died in the tenth year of his reign, and the forty-second of his age, leaving only one natural son, called Philip, behind him.

Richard had all the qualities that could gain the admiration and love of a barbarous age, and few of those that could ensure the approbation of his more refined posterity. He was open, magnanimous, generous, and brave, to a degree of romantic excess. But then he was cruel, proud, and resentful. He valued neither the blood nor the treasure of his subjects; and he enfeebled his states by useless expeditions, and wars calculated rather to promote his own revenge than their interests. During this reign, the inferior orders of the people seemed to increase in power, and to show a degree of independent obstinacy. Formerly, they were led on to acts of treason by their barons; they were now found to aim at vindicating their rights under a leader of their own rank and denomination. The populace of London placed at their head one William Fitzosborn, commonly called Longbeard, who had been bred to the law; but who, fonder of popularity than business, renounced his profession, and espoused the cause of the poor with uncommon enthusiasm. He styled himself the saviour of the poor; and, upon a certain occasion, even went over to Normandy, where he represented to the king that the poorer citizens were oppressed by an unequal assessment of taxes, and obtained a mitigation. His fame for this became so great among the lower orders of his fellow citizens, that above fifty thousand of them entered into an engagement to defend and to obey him. Murders were in consequence daily committed in the streets; but whether by Longbeard's order, is uncertain. The justiciary (for the king was then absent) summoned him before the council to answer for his conduct: but he came with such a formidable train, that none were found hardy enough to accuse him. However, he was pursued some time after by a detachment of officers of justice; but killing one of them, he escaped with his concubine to the church of St. Mary Le Bow, where he defended himself with determined resolution. There he was supplied with arms and provisions, and expected to be joined by the populace; but being deceived in his expectations, he was at last forced from his retreat by the smoke of wet straw kindled for the purpose at the door. He was then taken, tried, and convicted; and being drawn

at a horse's tail through the streets of London, he was hung in chains, with nine more of his accomplices. The lower class of people, when he was dead, began to revere a man that they had not spirit to relieve. They stole his gibbet, and paid it a veneration like that offered to the wood of the cross. The turf on which it stood was carried away, and kept as a preservative from sickness and misfortune; and had not the clergy withstood the torrent of popular superstition, his memory might have probably received honours similar to those paid at the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury.

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CHAP. XI.

JOHN.

WERE the claims of princes settled on the same principles that govern the lower orders of mankind, John had nothing to fear from a disputed succession. The king of France, who was the only monarch that could assist the pretensions of a rival, had long declared for John's title; and, during the life of his brother, had given him the most convincing proofs of sincerity in his assistance. But it was otherwise now that Richard was no more. Philip began to show that his former alliances and friendships were calculated not to serve John, but to distress England; not to distribute justice, but to increase his own power. There was an old claimant of the crown, whom indeed Richard, upon his taking the cross, declared heir to the throne; but who was afterwards set aside, at the instance of the dowager-queen. This was Arthur, the son of his late brother Geoffrey, a youth who, though then but twelve years of age, promised to be deserving of the kingdom. Philip, who only desired an occasion to embarrass John, soon resolved to second this young claimant's pretensions; and several of the continental barons immediately declared in favour of Arthur's succession.

John, who was readily put in possession of the English throne, lost no time to second his interest on the continent; and his first care was to recover the revolted provinces from young Arthur,

his nephew. The war, therefore, between the English and French king was renewed with all its former animosity, and all its usual detail of petty victories and undecisive engagements. At length a treaty put an end to those conquests that only served to thin mankind; and it was hastened by a circumstance peculiarly favourable. John's nephew, Arthur, together with Constantia, his mother, distrusting the designs of the king of France, who only intended to betray them, came to throw themselves on his mercy, and restored the provinces which still continued in their interest. Thus this monarch, after a short contest, saw himself undisputed monarch of all the dominions which were annexed to the English throne. But he was ill able to preserve that power by his prudence, which was thus easily obtained by the mutual jealousies of his enemies. His first transgression was his marriage [1202.] with Isabella, daughter of the count of Angouleme, while the queen was yet alive; and, what still increased the offence, while Isabella probably belonged to another husband, the count de la Marche, who ardently loved her. This produced an insurrection against him; to repress which he was obliged to have recourse to his English subjects for assistance, by whose means the confederacy was soon broken; and John found, by his present success, that he might in future commit violences with impunity.

As the method of deciding all disputes by duel was still in full force, John resolved to avail himself of this advantage against all his refractory barons. He kept a set of hired bravoës, under the title of his champions; and these he deputed to fight his cause whenever any of the nobility opposed his encroachments. Such contemptible opponents very justly gave the haughty barons disgust; and an universal discontent prevailed among them, which at last produced another dangerous confederacy. John attempted to break it by oaths, protestations, and perfidies; but every attempt of this kind only served to connect his enemies, and render his person contemptible.

Something still remained to render John hateful to his subjects; and this ill-disposed prince took the first opportunity of becoming so. Young Arthur, who, with his mother, had so imprudently resigned themselves to his protection, soon perceived their error, and found that nothing honourable was to be expected from a prince of his abandoned character. Observing somewhat very

suspicious in his manner of conducting himself to them, they fled from Mans, where he detained them, and retired in the night to Angers, from whence they went once more to take refuge with their old protector. As it was Philip's interest to treat them with all possible indulgence, they were received with great marks of distinction; and young Arthur's interests were soon after very vigorously supported. One town after another submitted to his authority; and all his attempts seemed attended with success. But his unfortunate ardour soon put an end to his hopes and his claims. Being of an enterprising disposition, and fond of military glory, he had laid siege to a fortress in which the dowager-queen was protected, and defended by a weak garrison. John, therefore, falling upon his little army before they were aware of his approach, the young prince was taken prisoner, together with the most considerable of the revolted barons. The greater part of the prisoners were sent over to England; but the unfortunate prince himself was shut up in the castle of Falaise. John, thus finding a rival at his mercy, from whom he had every thing to dread, began to meditate upon measures which would most effectually remove his future apprehensions. No other expedient suggested itself but what is foremost in the imagination of tyrants, namely, the young prince's death. How this brave youth was dispatched, is not well known: certain it is, that from the moment of his confinement he was never heard of more. The most probable account of this horrid transaction is as follows. The king having first proposed to one of his servants, William de la Braye, to dispatch Arthur, the brave domestic replied, that he was a gentleman, and not an executioner. This officer having positively refused to comply, John had recourse to another instrument, who went, with proper directions, to the castle where Arthur was confined, to destroy him. But still this prince's fate seemed suspended: for Hubert de Bourg, chamberlain to the king, and constable of the place, willing to save him, undertook the cruel office himself, and sent back the assassin to his employer. However, he was soon obliged to confess the imposture; for Arthur's subjects vowing the severest revenge, Hubert, to appease them, revealed the secret of his pretended death, and assured them that their prince was still alive, and in his custody. John, now finding that all his emissaries had still more compunc-

tion than himself, resolved, with his own hands, to execute the bloody deed; and for that purpose had Arthur removed to the castle of Rouen, situated upon the river Seine. It was at midnight when John came in a boat to the place, and ordered the young prince to be brought before him. Long confinement, solitude, and the continuance of bad fortune, had now broken this generous youth's spirit; and perceiving that his death was meditated, he threw himself in the most imploring manner upon his knees before his uncle, and begged for mercy. John was too much hardened in the school of tyranny, to feel any pity for his wretched suppliant. His youth, his affinity, his merits, were all disregarded, or were even obnoxious in a rival. The barbarous tyrant, making no reply, stabbed him with his own hands; and, fastening a stone to the dead body, threw it into the Seine. This inhuman action thus rid John of a hated rival; but, happily for the instruction of future princes, it opened the way to his future ruin. Having in this manner shown himself the enemy of mankind in the prosperity of his reign, the whole world seemed to turn their back upon him in his distress.

John was now detested by all mankind; and the rest of his reign he only supported himself in power, by making it the interest of some to protect him, and letting others feel the effects of his resentment, if they offered to defend themselves. The loss of all his French provinces immediately followed his last transgression. Not but that he attempted a defence; and even laid siege to Alençon, one of the towns that had revolted from him. But Philip, his active rival, persuaded a body of knights, who were assembled at a tournament, to take his part; and these readily joining against the parricide, quickly obliged him to raise the siege. John, therefore, repulsed and stript of his dominions, was obliged to bear the insult with patience; though, indeed, such was the ridiculous absurdity of his pride, that he assured those about him of his being able to take back in a day, what cost the French years in acquiring.

[1205.] Normandy soon followed the fate of the French provinces. Chateau-Gaillard, one of its strongest fortresses, being taken after an obstinate siege, the whole duchy lay open to the invader; and while John basely sought safety by flying into England, Philip, secure of his prey, pushed his conquests

with vigour. The whole duchy submitted to his authority ; and thus, after being for near three centuries dismembered from the French monarchy, was again reunited.

John, being thus stript of all his continental dominions, was resolved to wreak his vengeance on that part of the monarchy which still acknowledged subjection. Upon his arrival, therefore, in England, he began to lay the blame of this ill success upon his barons, who, he pretended, had deserted his standard in Normandy. To punish them for this imputed offence, he levied large sums upon their estates and effects, under colour of preparations for a Norman expedition ; which, however, he deferred till the next year. When the season came for making it, he summoned all his barons to attend him ; and then capriciously deferred the execution of his projects to another opportunity. The year following he put to sea, as if with a firm resolution to do wonders ; but returned soon after, without making the smallest attempt. Another year elapsed, when he promised that he would then redeem his country's reputation by a most signal blow. He set sail, landed at Rochelle, marched to Angers, laid the city in ashes ; and hearing that the enemy were preparing to oppose him, he re embarked his troops, and returned once more to his indignant country, loaden with shame and confusion.

Hitherto John was rather hateful to his subjects than contemptible ; they rather dreaded than despised him. But he soon showed that he might be offended, if not without resentment, at least with impunity. It was the fate of this vitious prince to make those the enemies of himself whom he wanted abilities to make the enemies of each other. The clergy had for some time acted as a community independent of the crown, and had their elections of each other generally confirmed by the pope, to whom alone they owned subjection. However, the election of archbishops had for some time been a continual subject of dispute between the suffragan bishops and the Augustine monks ; and both had precedents to confirm their pretensions. Things being in this situation, Hubert, the archbishop of Canterbury, died : and the Augustine monks, in a very private manner, made choice of Reginald, their sub-prior. The bishops exclaimed at this election, as a manifest invasion of their privileges ; and a furious theological contest was likely to ensue. A politic prince would have seized such a con-

junction with joy ; and would have managed the quarrel in such a manner as to enfeeble the exorbitant power of the clergy by inflaming their mutual animosity. But John was not a politic prince. He immediately sided with the suffragan bishops ; and John de Gray, bishop of Norwich, was unanimously chosen. To decide the mutual claims of both parties, it was expedient to appeal to the see of Rome : an agent was sent by the bishops to maintain their cause, while the monks dispatched twelve of their order to support their pretensions. Innocent III. who then filled the chair, possessed an unbounded share of power, and his talents were equal to the veneration in which he was held. He seized with avidity that conjuncture which John failed to use : and vacating the claims of both parties, as uncanonical and illegal, he enjoined the monks to choose cardinal Stephen Langton, an Englishman, then at the court of Rome, as a fit person to fill the vacant dignity.

This was an encroachment of power that the see of Rome had long been aiming at, and was now resolved to maintain. The being able to nominate to the greatest dignity in the kingdom, next to that of the king, was an acquisition that would effectually give the court of Rome an authority which it had hitherto vainly pretended to assume. So great an insult was to be introduced to this weak prince with persuasions adapted to his capacity ; and the pope accordingly sent him a most affectionate letter, with a present of four gold rings set with precious stones. He begged John to consider seriously the form of the rings, their number, their matter, and their colour. Their form being round, shadowed out eternity, for which it was his duty to prepare. Their number, four, denoted the four cardinal virtues, which it was his duty to practise. Their matter being gold, the most precious of metals, denoted wisdom, the most precious of accomplishments, which it was his duty to acquire : and as to their colour, the green colour of the emerald represented faith ; the yellow of the sapphire, hope ; the redness of the ruby, charity ; and the splendour of the topaz, good works. John received the rings, thought all the pope's illustrations very beautiful, but was resolved not to admit Stephen Langton as archbishop of Canterbury.

As all John's measures were conducted with violence, he sent two knights of his train, who were fit instruments for such a prince,



to expel the monks from their convent, and to take possession of their revenues. The pope was not displeased at this instance of his impetuosity; he was sensible that John would sink in the contest, and therefore persevered the more vigorously in his pretensions. He began his attempts to carry his measures by soothing, imploring, and urging; he proceeded to threats, and at last sent three English prelates to the king to inform him, that if he persevered in his disobedience he would put the kingdom under the sentence of an interdict. All the other prelates threw themselves on their knees before the king; entreated him in the most earnest manner not to bring upon them the resentment of the holy tribunal; exhorted him to receive the new elected primate, and to restore the monks to their convent, from whence they had been expelled. But these entreaties served only to inflame his resentment. He broke out into the most violent invectives; and swore by God's teeth, his usual oath, that if the kingdom was put under an interdict, he would banish the whole body of the clergy, and confiscate all their possessions. This idle threat only served to hasten the resentment of the pontiff. Perceiving the king's weakness, and how little he was loved by his subjects, he issued at last the sentence of the interdict, which was so much dreaded by the whole nation. This instrument of terror in the hands of the see of Rome was calculated to strike the senses in the highest degree, and to operate upon the superstitious minds of the people. By it a stop was immediately put to divine service, and to the administration of all the sacraments but baptism. The church doors were shut, the statues of the saints were laid on the ground. The dead were refused Christian burial, and were thrown in the ditches and on the highways, without the usual rites, or any funeral solemnity. Marriage was celebrated in the church-yards, and the people prohibited the use of meat, as in times of public penance. They were debarred from all pleasure; they were prohibited from shaving their beards, from saluting each other, and giving any attention to their apparel. Every circumstance seemed calculated to inspire religious terror, and testified the apprehensions of divine vengeance and indignation. Against such calamity, increased by the deplorable lamentations of the clergy, it was in vain that John exerted all his authority, threatened and punished, and opposed the terrors of his temporal power to their

ecclesiastical censures. It was in vain that he banished some, and confined others; it was in vain that he treated the adherents of Langton with rigour, and ordered all the concubines of the clergy to be imprisoned. The church conquered by perseverance; and John saw himself every day growing more obnoxious and more contemptible. The barons, many of whose families he had dishonoured by his licentious amours, were almost to a man his declared enemies. The clergy represented him in the most odious light to the people: and nothing remained to him but the feeble relics of that power which had been so strongly fixed by his grandfather, that all his vices were hitherto unable totally to overthrow.

In the mean time, the pope, seeing all the consequences he expected attending the interdict, and that the king was thus rendered perfectly disagreeable to his subjects, resolved to second his blow; and, while the people were yet impressed with terror, determined to take advantage of their consternation. The church of Rome had artificially contrived a gradation of sentences; by which, while she inflicted one punishment, she taught the sufferers to expect more formidable consequences from those which were to ensue. On the back of the interdict, therefore, came the sentence of excommunication, by which John was at once rendered [1209.] impious and unfit for human society. No sooner was this terrible sentence denounced against him, than his subjects began to think of opposing his authority. The clergy were the first to set an example of disobedience. Geoffrey, archdeacon of Norwich, who was intrusted with a considerable office in the court of exchequer, resigned his employment; which so exasperated the king that he had him confined, and, ordering his head to be covered with a great leaden cope, thus kept him in torment till he died. Most of the other bishops, dreading his fate, left the kingdom. Many of the nobility also, terrified at the king's tyranny, went into voluntary exile: and those who remained employed their time in cementing a confederacy against him. The next gradation of papal indignation was to absolve John's subjects from their oaths of fidelity and allegiance, and to declare every one excommunicated who had any commerce with him in public or private, at his table, in his council, or even in private conversation. John, however, still continued refractory; and

only one step more remained for the pope to take, and this was to give away the kingdom to another.

No situation could be more deplorable than that of John, upon this occasion. Furious at his indignities, jealous of his subjects, and apprehending an enemy in every face,—it is said that, fearing a conspiracy against his life, he shut himself up a whole night in the castle of Nottingham, and suffered none to approach his person. Being informed that the king of Wales had taken part against him, he ordered all the Welch hostages to be instantly put to death. Being apprehensive of the fidelity of his barons, he required their sons and daughters as hostages for their obedience. When his officers repaired on this odious duty to the castle of William Brause, a nobleman of great note, that baron's wife resolutely told them, that she would never trust her children in the hands of a man who had so barbarously murdered his own nephew. John was so provoked at this merited reproach, that he sent a body of forces to seize the person of Brause, who fled into Ireland with his wife and family. But John's indignation pursued them there; and, discovering the unhappy family in their retreat, he seized the wife and son, whom he starved to death in prison, while the unfortunate father narrowly escaped by flying into France.

Meanwhile the pope, who had resolved on giving the kingdom to another, was employed in fixing upon a person who was willing to accept the donation, and had power to vindicate his claim. Philip, the king of France, seemed the fittest for such an undertaking; he was politic and powerful; he had already despoiled John of his continental dominions, and was the most likely person to deprive him of the remainder. To him, therefore, the pope made a tender of the kingdom of England; and Philip very ardently embraced the offer. To strengthen the hands of Philip still more, the pope published a crusade against the deposed monarch all over Europe, exhorting the nobility, the knights, and men of every condition, to take up arms against that persecutor of the church, and to enlist under the French banner. Philip was not less active on his part; he levied a great army; and, summoning all the vassals of the crown to attend him at Rouen, he collected a fleet of seventeen hundred vessels in the seaports of Normandy and Picardy, already devouring in imagination the kingdom he was appointed to possess. [1213.]

John, who, unsettled and apprehensive, scarcely knew where to turn, was still able to make an expiring effort to receive the enemy. All hated as he was, the natural enmity between the French and the English, the name of king, which he still retained, and some remaining power, put him at the head of sixty thousand men: a sufficient number indeed, but not to be relied on, and with these he advanced to Dover. Europe now regarded the important preparations on both sides with impatience; and the decisive blow was soon expected, in which the church was to triumph or to be overthrown. But neither Philip nor John had ability equal to the pontiff by whom they were actuated; he appeared on this occasion too refined a politician for either. He only intended to make use of Philip's power to intimidate his refractory son, not to destroy him. He expected more advantages from his agreement with a prince so abject both in character and fortune, than from his alliance with a great and victorious monarch, who, having nothing else left to conquer, might convert his power against his benefactor. He therefore secretly commissioned Pandolf, his legate, to admit of John's submission, in case it should be offered; and he dictated the terms which would be proper for him to impose. In consequence of this, the legate passed through France, where he beheld Philip's great armament ready to set sail, and highly commended that monarch's zeal and expedition. From thence he went in person, or, as some say, sent over an envoy to Dover, under pretence of negotiating with the barons, and had a conference with John upon his arrival. He there represented to this forlorn prince the numbers of the enemy, the hatred of his own subjects, and the secret confederacy there was in England against him. He intimated, that there was but one way to secure himself from impending danger; which was, to put himself under the pope's protection, who was a merciful father, and still willing to receive a repentant sinner to his bosom. John was too much intimidated by the manifest danger of his situation not to embrace every means offered for his safety. He assented to the truth of the legate's remonstrances, and took an oath to perform whatever stipulations the pope should impose. Having thus sworn to the performance of an unknown command, the artful Italian so well managed the barons, and so effectually intimidated the king, that he persuaded him to take the most extra-

ordinary oath in all the records of history, before all the people, kneeling upon his knees, and with his hands held up between those of the legate.

“I, John, by the grace of God, king of England, and lord of Ireland, in order to expiate my sins, from my own free will, and the advice of my barons, give to the church of Rome, to pope Innocent, and his successors, the kingdom of England, and all other prerogatives of my crown. I will hereafter hold them as the pope’s vassal. I will be faithful to God, to the church of Rome, to the pope my master, and his successors legitimately elected. I promise to pay him a tribute of a thousand marks yearly; to wit, seven hundred for the kingdom of England, and three hundred for the kingdom of Ireland.” Having thus done homage to the legate, and agreed to reinstate Langton in the primacy, he received the crown, which he had been supposed to have forfeited, while the legate trampled under his feet the tribute which John had consented to pay.

Thus, after all his armaments and expectations, Philip saw himself disappointed of his prey, and perceived that the pope had over-reached him in this transaction. Nevertheless, as he had undertaken the expedition at the pope’s request, he was resolved to prosecute the war in opposition to him and all his censures. He laid before his vassals the ill-treatment he had received from the court of Rome; and they all vowed to second his enterprise, except the earl of Flanders, who declared against the impiety of the undertaking. In the mean time, while the French king was resolving to bring this refractory nobleman to his duty, the English admiral attacked the French fleet in their harbours, where he took three hundred ships, and destroyed a hundred more. Philip finding it impossible to prevent the rest from falling into the hands of the enemy, set fire to them himself, and was thus obliged to give up all designs upon England.

John was now once more, by the most abject submissions, reinstated in power; but his late humiliations [1214.]<sup>a</sup> did not in the least serve to relax his cruelty or insolence. One Peter of Pomfret, a hermit, had foretold, that the king this very year should lose his crown; and for that rash prophecy he had been thrown into Corfe castle: John now determined to punish him as an impostor, and had him arraigned for that purpose.

The poor hermit, who was probably some wretched enthusiast, asserted the truth of his prediction, alleging that the king had given up his crown to the pope, from whom he again received it. This argument would have prevailed with any person less cruel than John. The defence was supposed to augment the crime. Peter was dragged at horses' tails to the town of Warham, and there hanged on a gibbet with his son.

In this manner, by repeated acts of cruelty, by expeditions without effect, and humiliations without reserve, John was long become the detestation of all mankind. Equally odious and contemptible, both in public and private life, he affronted the barons by his insolence, and dishonoured their families by his debaucheries; he enraged them by his tyranny, and impoverished them by his exactions. But now, having given up the independence of his kingdom to a foreign power, his subjects thought they had a right to claim a part of that power which he had been granting so liberally to strangers.

The barons had been long forming a confederacy against him; but their union was broken, or their aims disappointed, by various and unforeseen accidents. Nothing at present seemed so much to forward their combinations as the concurrence of Langton the primate, who, though forced upon the kingdom by the see of Rome, amply compensated to his countrymen by his attachment to their real interests.

This prelate, either a sincere friend of the people, or a secret enemy to the king, or supposing that, in their mutual conflict, the clergy would become superior; or, perhaps, instigated by all these motives, had formed a plan for reforming the government, which still continued in a very fluctuating situation. At a synod of his prelates and clergy, convened in St. Paul's, on pretence of examining into the losses sustained by the exiled bishops, he conferred privately with a number of barons, and expatiated upon the vices and the injustice of their sovereign. He showed them a copy of Henry the First's charter, which was luckily found in a monastery; for so little had those charters, extorted from kings at their coronation, been hitherto observed, that they soon came into disuse, and were shortly after buried in total oblivion. There was but one copy of this important charter now left in the kingdom; and that, as was observed, was found in the rubbish of an

obscure monastery. However, it contained so many articles tending to restore and fix the boundaries of justice, that Langton exhorted the confederating barons to insist on the renewal and observance of it. The barons swore they would lose their lives sooner than forego those claims that were founded on nature, on reason, and precedent. The confederacy every day began to spread wider, and to take in almost all the barons of England.

A new and a more numerous meeting was summoned by Langton, at St. Edmundsbury, under colour of devotion. He again produced to the assembly the charter of Henry, and renewed his exhortations to continue steadfast and zealous in their former laudable conspiracy. The barons, inflamed by his eloquence, and still more by their injuries, as also encouraged by their numbers, solemnly swore before the high altar to adhere to each other, to insist on their demands, and to persevere in their attempts until they obtained redress. They agreed, that after Christmas they would prefer their common petition in a body; and in the mean time separated, with resolutions of putting themselves in a posture of defence, to enlist men, and fortify their castles. Pursuant to their promise and obligations, they repaired, in the beginning of January, to London, accoutred in military garb and equipage, and presented their demands to the king; alleging that he had promised to grant them, at the time he was absolved from his excommunication, when he consented to a confirmation of the laws of Edward the Confessor. On the other hand, John, far from complying with their request, resented their presumption, and even insisted upon a promise under their hands and seals, that they would never demand, or attempt to extort, such privileges for the future. This, however, they boldly refused, and considered as an unprecedented act of power; so that, perceiving their unanimity, in order for a while to break their combination, he desired further time to consider of an answer to their demands. He promised, that at the festival of Easter, he would give a positive reply to their petition; and offered them the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishop of Ely, and the earl mareschal, as sureties for fulfilling his engagements. The barons accepted the terms, and peaceably returned to their habitations. They saw their own strength, and were certain at any time to enforce their demands.

Freedom could never have found a more favourable conjuncture for its exertions than under the government of a weak and vitious monarch, such as John was, whose resistance only served to give splendour to every opposition. Although he had granted the barons assurances of his good intentions, yet nothing was further from his heart than complying with their demands. In order to break their league, he had recourse to the power of the clergy, of whose influence he had experience from his own recent misfortunes. He courted their favour, by granting them a charter, establishing all those rights of which they were already in possession, and which he now pretended liberally to bestow, when he had not the ability to refuse. He took the cross, to ingratiate himself still further; and, that he might enjoy those privileges annexed to the profession, he appealed to the pope against the usurpation of his barons, and craved his holy protection. Nor were the barons remiss in their appeals to the pontiff. They alleged that their just privileges were abridged, and entreated the interposition of his authority with the king. The pope did not hesitate in taking his part. A king who had already given up all to his protection, who had regularly paid the stipulated tributes, and who took every occasion to advance the interests of the church, was much more meritorious in his eyes than a confederacy of barons, whom, at best, he could manage with difficulty, and whose first endeavours would perhaps be to shake off his authority. He therefore wrote letters to England, reproaching Langton, and the bishops, for favouring these dissensions, and commanding them to promote peace between the parties. He exhorted the barons to conciliate the king, not with menaces, but humble entreaties; and promised, upon their obedience, to interpose his own authority in favour of such of their petitions as he should find to be just. At the same time he annulled their associations, and forbad them to engage in any confederacy for the future.

Neither the bishops nor barons paid the least regard to the pope's remonstrance; and as for John's pretences of taking the cross, they turned them into ridicule. They had for some time been spectators of the interested views of the see of Rome. They found that the pope consulted only his own interests, instead of promoting those of the church or the state. They continued, in-



deed, to reverence his authority as much as ever, when exerted on points of duty ; but they now began to separate between his religious and his political aims, adhering to the one, and rejecting the other. The bishops and barons, therefore, on this occasion, employed all their arts and emissaries to kindle a spirit of revolt in the nation ; and there was now scarce a nobleman in the kingdom who did not either personally engage in the design, or secretly favour the undertaking. After waiting till Easter, when the king promised to return them an answer, upon the approach of that festival they met, by agreement, at Stamford. There they assembled a force of above two thousand knights, and a body of foot to a prodigious number. From thence, elated with their power, they marched to Brackley, about fifteen miles from Oxford, the place where the court then resided. John, hearing of their approach, sent the archbishop of Canterbury, the earl of Pembroke, and others of his council, to know the particulars of their request, and what those liberties were which they so earnestly importuned him to grant. The barons delivered a schedule, containing the chief articles of their demands, and of which the charters of Henry and Edward formed the ground-work. No sooner were they shown to the king than he burst into a furious passion, and asked why the barons did not also demand his kingdom ; swearing that he would never comply with such exorbitant demands. But the confederacy was now too strong to fear much from the consequences of his resentment. They chose Robert Fitzwalter for their general, whom they dignified with the titles of “Mareschal of the army of God, and of the Holy Church,” and proceeded without further ceremony to make war upon the king. They besieged Northampton, they took Bedford, they were joyfully received into London. They wrote circular letters to all the nobility and gentlemen who had not yet declared in their favour, and menaced their estates with devastation in case of refusal or delay.

In the mean time the timid king was left at a place called Odiham, in Hants, with a mean retinue of only seven knights, where he vainly endeavoured to avert the storm, by the mediation of his bishops and ministers. He appealed to Langton against these fierce remonstrants, little suspecting that the primate himself was leagued against him. He desired him to fulminate the thun-

ders of the church upon those who had taken arms against their prince; and aggravated the impiety of their opposition, as he was engaged in the pious and noble duties of the crusade. Langton permitted the tyrant to waste his passion in empty complaints, and declared he would not pass any censure where he found no delinquent. He promised indeed that much might be done, in case some foreign auxiliaries, whom John had lately brought over, were dismissed; and the weak prince, supposing his advice sincere, disbanded a great number of Germans and Flemings, whom he had retained in his service. When the king had thus left himself without protection, he then thought it was the duty of Langton to perform his promise, and to give him the aid of the church, since he had discarded all temporal assistants. But what was his surprise, when the archbishop refused to excommunicate a single baron, and peremptorily opposed his commands! John, stung with resentment and regret, knew not where to turn for advice or comfort: as he had hitherto sported with the happiness of mankind, he found none that did not secretly rejoice in his sufferings. He now began to think that any terms were to be complied with; and that it was better to reign a limited prince than sacrifice his crown, and perhaps his life, to ambition. But first he offered to refer all differences to the pope alone, or to eight barons, four to be chosen by himself, and four by the confederates. This the barons scornfully rejected. He then assured them that he would submit at discretion, and that it was his supreme pleasure to grant all their demands: a conference was accordingly appointed, and all things adjusted for this most important treaty.

The ground where the king's commissioners met the barons was between Staines and Windsor, at a place called Runimede, still held in reverence by posterity, as the spot where the standard of freedom was first erected in England. There the barons appeared, with a vast number of knights and warriors, on the fifteenth day of June, while those on the king's part came a day or two after. Both sides encamped apart, like open enemies. The debates between power and precedent are generally but of short continuance. The barons, determined on carrying their aims, would admit of few abatements; and the king's agents being for the most part in their interests, few debates ensued. After some

days, the king, with a facility that was somewhat suspicious, signed and sealed the charter required of him; a charter which continues in force to this day, and is the famous bulwark of English liberty, which now goes by the name of *MAGNA CHARTA*. This famous deed either granted or secured very important privileges to those orders of the kingdom that were already possessed of freedom, namely, to the clergy, the barons, and the gentlemen; as for the inferior and the greatest part of the people, they were as yet held as slaves, and it was long before they could come to a participation of legal protection.

The clergy, by this charter, had their former grants confirmed. All check upon appeals to Rome was removed, by allowance to every man to depart the kingdom at pleasure; and the fines upon the clergy, for any offence, were ordained to be proportionable to their temporal, not their ecclesiastical possessions. With respect to the barons, they were secured in the custody of the vacant abbeys and convents which were under their patronage. The reliefs or duties to be paid for earldoms, baronies, and knights' fees, were fixed, which before were arbitrary. This charter decreed, that barons should recover the lands of their vassals, forfeited for felony, after being a year and a day in possession of the crown; that they should enjoy the wardships of their military tenants, who held other lands of the crown by a different tenure; that a person knighted by the king, though a minor, should enjoy the privileges of a full-grown man, provided he was a ward of the crown. It enacted, that heirs should be married without disparagement; and before the marriage was contracted, the nearest relations were to be informed of it. No scutage, or tax, was to be imposed upon the people by the great council of the nation, except in three particular cases; the king's captivity, the knighting his eldest son, and the marrying his eldest daughter. When the great council was to be assembled, the prelates, earls, and great barons, were to be called to it by a particular writ, the lesser barons by a summons of the sheriff. It went on to ordain, that the king shall not seize any baron's land for a debt to the crown, if the baron possesses personal property sufficient to discharge the debt. No vassal shall be allowed to sell so much of his land, as to incapacitate him from performing the necessary service to his lord. With respect to the people, the following

were the principal clauses calculated for their benefit. It was ordained, that all the privileges and immunities, granted by the king to his barons, should be also granted by the barons to their vassals. One weight and one measure shall be observed throughout the whole kingdom; merchants shall be allowed to transact all business, without being exposed to any arbitrary tolls and impositions; they, and all freemen, shall be allowed to go out of the kingdom, and return to it at pleasure; London, and all cities and boroughs, shall preserve their antient liberties, immunities, and free customs; aids or taxes shall not be required of them, except by the consent of the great council; no towns or individuals shall be obliged to make or support bridges, but by antient customs; the goods of every freeman shall be disposed of according to his will; if he die intestate, his heirs shall succeed to them; no officer of the crown shall take any horses, carts, or wood, without the consent of the owner; the king's courts of justice shall be stationary, and shall no longer follow his person; they shall be open to every one, and justice shall no longer be bought, refused, or delayed by them; the sheriffs shall be incapacitated to hold pleas of the crown, and shall not put any person upon his trial from rumour or suspicion alone, but upon the evidence of lawful witnesses: no freeman shall be taken or imprisoned, or dispossessed of his free tenement and liberties, or outlawed, or banished, or anywise hurt or injured, unless by the legal judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land; and all who suffered otherwise in this, and the two former reigns, shall be restored to their rights and possessions; every freeman shall be fined in proportion to his fault, and no fine shall be levied on him to his utter ruin. Such were the stipulations in favour of that part of the people, who, being either merchants, or the descendants of the nobles, or of the clergy, were thus independent of an immediate lord. But that part of the people who tilled the ground, who constituted, in all probability, the majority of the nation, had but one single clause in their favour, which stipulated, that no villain or rustic should by any fine be bereaved of his carts, ploughs, and instruments of husbandry. As for the rest, they were considered as a part of the property belonging to an estate, and passed away with the horses, cows, and other moveables, at the will of the owner.

This great charter being agreed to by all, ratified, and mutually signed by both parties, the barons, in order to secure the observance of it, and knowing the perfidious disposition of the king, prevailed upon him to appoint twenty-five of their order as conservators of the public liberty. These were to admonish the king, if he should act contrary to his written obligations; and in case of resistance, they might levy war against him, and attack his castles. John, with his usual perfidy, seemed to submit passively to all these regulations, however injurious to majesty; and even sent writs to the sheriffs, ordering them to constrain every one to swear obedience to the twenty-five barons. He pretended that his government was henceforth to undergo a total reformation, more indulgent to the liberty and independence of the people. His subjects therefore flattered themselves with brighter prospects; and it was thought the king's misfortunes had humanized his disposition.

But John's seeming tranquillity was but dissimulation. The more care his barons had taken to bind him to their will, the more impatient he grew under their restrictions. He burned with desire to shake off the conditions they had imposed upon him. The submissions he had paid to the pope, and the insults he had sustained from the king of France, slightly affected him, as they were his equals; but the sense of his subjection to his own vassals sunk deep in his mind; and he was determined, at all events, to recover his former power of doing mischief. He grew sullen, silent, and reserved. He shunned the society of his former companions, and even retired into the Isle of Wight, as if to hide his disgrace in solitude. But he was still, however, employed in machinations to obtain revenge. He had sent to the continent to enlist a large body of mercenary troops; he had made complaints to the pope of the insurrections of his subjects against him; and the pontiff very warmly espoused his cause. A bull was sent over, annulling the whole charter; and at the same time the foreign forces arrived, whom John intended to employ in giving his intentions efficacy.

He now no longer took shelter under the arts of dissimulation, but acted the bold tyrant; a character that became him much better. The barons, after obtaining the charter, seemed to have been lulled into a fatal security; and took no measures for assem-

bling their forces in case of the introduction of a foreign army. The king, therefore, was for some time undisputed master of the field, at the head of an army of Germans, Brabantines, and Flemings, all eager for battle, and inspired with the hopes of dividing the kingdom among them. The castle of Rochester was first invested, and, after an obstinate resistance, was obliged to surrender at discretion. John, irritated at the length of the siege, was going to hang the governor and all the garrison, contrary to the laws of war; but, at the intercession of one of his generals, he only put the inferior prisoners to death. After the reduction of this important fortress, the royal interests began to prevail; and two armies were formed, with one of which the king marched northward, subduing all fortresses and towns that lay in his way. The other army, commanded by the earl of Salisbury, was equally vigorous and successful; several submitted at his approach, and London itself was in the utmost danger. The foreign mercenaries committed the most horrible cruelties in their march, and ravaged the country in a most dreadful manner. Urged on at once by their natural rapacity, and the cruelty of the king, nothing was seen but the flames of villages and castles; consternation and misery were pictured in the looks of the people; and tortures were every where exercised by the soldiers to make the inhabitants reveal their riches. Wherever the king marched, the provinces were laid waste on each side his passage; as he considered every estate which was not his immediate property as entirely hostile, and a proper object of military execution.

[1215.] The barons, reduced to this deplorable situation, their estates destroyed, their liberties annihilated, and their persons exposed to the revenge of a malicious tyrant, lost all power of self-defence. They were able to raise no army in England that could stand before their ravager, and yet they had no hopes from submission. In this desperate exigence they applied to the old enemy of their country, Philip, king of France, and offered to acknowledge Lewis, the eldest son of that monarch, as their sovereign, on condition of his affording them protection against their domestic destroyer. No proffer could have been more agreeable to this ambitious monarch, who long wanted to annex England to the rest of his dominions. He therefore instantly embraced the proposal of the barons, of whom, however,

he demanded five-and-twenty hostages for the performance of their promise. These being sent over, he began to make the most diligent preparations for this expedition, regardless of the menaces of the pope, who threatened Philip with excommunication, and actually excommunicated Lewis, the son, some time after. The first detachment consisted of a body of seven thousand men, which he reinforced soon after by a powerful army, commanded by Lewis himself, who landed at Sandwich without opposition.

John, who but just now saw himself in the career of victory, upon the landing of the French army was stopped all of a sudden, and found himself disappointed in his revenge and ambition. The first effect of their appearance was, that most of the foreign troops deserted, refusing to serve against the heir of their monarchy. Many considerable noblemen also deserted his party; and his castles daily fell into the hands of his enemies. Thus England saw nothing but a prospect of being every way undone. If John succeeded, a tyrannical and implacable monarch was to be their tormentor; if Lewis should prevail, the country was ever after to submit to a more powerful monarchy, and was to become a province to France. What neither human prudence could foresee, nor policy suggest, was brought about by a happy and unexpected concurrence of events. Neither John nor Lewis succeeded in their designs upon the people's happiness and freedom.

Lewis, having vainly endeavoured to pacify the pope's legate, resolved to set the pope at defiance, and marched his army against the castle of Rochester, which he quickly reduced. Thence he advanced to London, where the barons and burghers did him homage, and took the oath of fealty, after he had sworn to confirm the liberties and privileges of the people. Though never crowned king of England, yet he exercised sovereign authority, granting charters, and appointing officers of state. But how flattering soever the prospect before him appeared, yet there was a secret jealousy that was destroying his ambition, and undermining all his pretensions. Through a great degree of imprudence he, on every occasion, showed a visible preference to his natural French subjects, to the detriment of those he came to govern. The suspicions of the English against him were still further in-

creased by the death-bed confession of the count de Melun, one of his courtiers, who declared to those about him, that it was the intention of Lewis to exterminate the English barons as traitors, and to bestow their dignities and estates on his own French subjects, upon whose fidelity he could safely rely. Whatever truth there might be in this confession, it greatly operated upon the minds of the people; so that the earl of Salisbury, and other noblemen, who had forsaken John's party, once more deserted to him, and gave no small lustre to his cause.

In the mean time John was assembling a considerable army, with a view to make one great effort for the crown; and, at the head of a large body of troops, he resolved to penetrate into the heart of the kingdom. With these resolutions he departed from Lynn, which, for its fidelity, he had distinguished with many marks of favour, and directed his route towards Lincolnshire. His road lay along the shore, which was overflowed at high water; but not being apprised of this, or being ignorant of the tides of the place, he lost all his carriages, treasures, and baggage, by their influx. He himself escaped with the greatest difficulty, and arrived at the abbey of Swinsted, where his grief for the loss he had sustained, and the distracted state of his affairs, threw him into a fever, which soon appeared to be fatal. Next day, being unable to ride on horseback, he was carried in a litter to the castle of Seaford, and from thence removed to Newark, where, after having made his will, he died, in the fifty-first year of his age, and the eighteenth of his reign.

This monster's character is too strongly marked in every transaction of his life, to leave the smallest necessity for disentangling it from the ordinary occurrences of his reign. It was destructive to the people, and ruinous to himself. He left two legitimate sons behind him; Henry, who succeeded him on the throne, and was now nine years of age; Richard who was about seven. He left also three daughters; Jane, married to Alexander, king of Scots; Eleanor, married to the earl of Pembroke; and Isabella, married to the emperor Frederic II. His illegitimate children were numerous, but unnoted.



## CHAP. XII.

## HENRY III.

THE English, being now happily rid of a tyrant who threatened the kingdom with destruction, had still his rival to fear, who only aimed at gaining the crown, to make it subservient to that of France. The partiality of Lewis on every occasion was the more disgusting, as it was the less concealed. The diffidence which he constantly discovered of the fidelity of the barons increased that jealousy which was so natural for them to entertain on the present occasion. An accident happened, which rendered him still more disagreeable to his new subjects. The government of the castle of Hertford becoming vacant, it was claimed as of right by Robert Fitzwalter, a nobleman who had been extremely active in his service: but his claim was rejected. It was now, therefore, apparent that the English would be excluded from every trust under the French government, and that foreigners were to engross all the favour of their new sovereign. Nor was the excommunication denounced against Lewis, by the pope, entirely without its effect. In fact the people were easily persuaded to consider a cause as impious and profane, for which they had already entertained an unsurmountable aversion.

In this disposition of the people, the claims of any native, with even the smallest pretensions to favour, would have had a most probable chance of succeeding. A claim was accordingly made in favour of young Henry, the son of the late king, who was now but nine years of age. The earl of Pembroke, a nobleman of great worth and valour, who had faithfully adhered to John in all the fluctuations of his fortune, was at the time of that prince's death marshal of England, and consequently at the head of the army. This nobleman determined to support the declining interests of the young prince, and had him solemnly crowned by the bishops of Winchester and Bath, at Gloucester. In order also to enlarge and confirm his own authority upon the present occasion, a general council of the barons was summoned at Bristol, where the earl was chosen guardian to the king, and protector of the kingdom. His first act was highly pleasing to the

people, and reconciled them to the interests of the young prince ; he made young Henry grant a new charter of liberties, which contained but very few exceptions from that already extorted from his predecessor. To this was added also a charter, ascertaining the jurisdiction and the boundaries of the royal forests, which from thence was called the *Charta Foresta*. By this it was enacted, that all the forests which had been inclosed since the reign of Henry the Second should be again restored to the people, and new perambulations made for that purpose. Offences on the forests were no longer declared to be capital, but punishable by gentler laws ; and all the proprietors of land were granted a power of cutting and using their own wood at pleasure. To these measures, which gave universal satisfaction, Pembroke took care to add his more active endeavours against the enemy. He wrote letters, in the king's name, to all the discontented barons, assuring them of his resolution to govern them by their own charters ; and represented the danger which they incurred by their adherence to a French monarch, who only wanted to oppress them. These assurances were attended with the desired effect. The party in the interests of Lewis began to lose ground every day, by the desertion of some of its most powerful leaders. The earls of Salisbury, Arundel, and Warenne, together with William Marshall, eldest son of the protector, came over to the young king ; and all the rest of the barons appeared desirous of an opportunity of following their example.

The protector was so much strengthened by these accessions, that he took the field ; but the French army appearing, he was obliged to retire. The count de Perche, who commanded for Lewis, was so elated with his superiority, that he marched to Lincoln ; and, being admitted into the town, began to attack the castle, which he soon reduced to extremity. The protector, now finding that a decisive blow was to be struck, summoned all his forces from every quarter, in order to relieve a place of so much importance ; and he, in turn, appeared so much superior to the French, that they shut themselves within the city, and resolved to take shelter behind the walls. But the garrison of the castle, having received a strong reinforcement, made a vigorous sally upon the besiegers, while the English army assaulted them from without ; and, scaling the walls, entered the city sword in hand.

Lincoln was delivered over to be pillaged; the French army was totally routed, the commander in chief was killed, and several of the rest made prisoners of war. This misfortune of the French was but the forerunner of another. Their fleet, which was bringing over reinforcements both of men and money, was attacked by the English, under the command of Philip d'Albiney, and was repulsed with considerable loss. D'Albiney is said to have practised a stratagem against them, to which he owed his victory. Having got the wind of the French, he ordered his men to throw quicklime in the faces of the enemy; which, blinding them, they were disabled from further defence. These repeated losses served, at length, to give peace to the kingdom. Lewis, finding his cause every day declining, and that it was at last grown wholly desperate, began to be anxious for the safety of his person; and was glad to submit to any conditions favourable to his retreat. He concluded a peace with the protector, in which he agreed to leave the kingdom; and in which he exacted, in return, an indemnity for all his adherents. Thus ended a civil war which had for some time drenched the kingdom in blood; and in which not only its constitution, but all its happiness, seemed irretrievable. The death of John, and the abdication of Lewis, were circumstances that could hardly be expected even by the most sanguine well-wishers of their country. The one was brought about by accident, and the other by the prudence and intrepidity of the earl of Pembroke, the protector, who himself did not long survive his success.

[1216.] The young king was of a character the very opposite of his father: as he grew up to man's estate, he was found to be gentle, merciful, and humane; he appeared easy and good-natured to his dependants, but no way formidable to his enemies. Without activity or vigour, he was unfit to conduct in war; without distrust or suspicion, he was imposed upon in time of peace. A king of such beneficent and meek qualifications was very little fitted to hold the reins of a kingdom such as England was at that time, where every order was aspiring to independence, and endeavouring to plume themselves with the spoils of the prerogative. The protector was succeeded in his office by Peter, bishop of Winchester, and Hubert de Burgh, high justiciary; but no authority in the governors could control a people

who had been long used to civil discord, and who caught every slight occasion to magnify small offences into public grievances. The nobles were now, in effect, the tyrants of the people; for, having almost totally destroyed the power of the crown, and being encouraged by the weakness of a minority, they considered the laws as instruments made only for their defence, and with which they alone were to govern. They therefore retained by force the royal castles which they had usurped during the former convulsions; they oppressed their vassals; they infested their weaker neighbours; and they invited all disorderly people to take protection under their authority. It is not then to be wondered, that there were many complaints against those who were placed over them. Hubert de Burgh, who seemed to take the lead in government, at this time experienced many conspiracies formed not only against his authority but his person; and so little did the confederates regard secrecy, that they openly avowed their intentions of removing him from his office. The barons being required by him to give up their castles, they not only refused, but several of them entered into a confederacy to surprise London; and, with the earls of Chester and Albemarle at their head, they advanced as far as Waltham with that intention. At that time, however, their aims were frustrated by the diligence of the government: but they did not desist from their enterprise; for, meeting some time after at Leicester, they endeavoured to seize the king, but found themselves disappointed in this, as in their former attempt. In this threatening commotion, the power of the church was obliged to interpose; and the archbishops and prelates threatened the barons with the sentence of excommunication, if they should persist either in their attempts upon the king or in detaining his castles. This menace at last prevailed. Most of the fortresses were surrendered; and the number at that time is said to have amounted to above a thousand. But though Henry gained this advantage by the prudence and perseverance of his minister, yet his power was still established upon a very weak foundation. A contest with his brother Richard, who had amassed such sums of money as to be reckoned the richest prince in Europe, soon showed the weakness both of his power and his disposition. Richard had unjustly expelled an inferior baron from his manor; and the king insisted upon his restoring him. The

other persisting in his refusal, a powerful confederacy was formed, and an army assembled, which the king had neither power nor courage to resist. Richard's injustice was declared legal; and his resentment was obliged to be mollified by grants of much greater importance than the manor which had been the first ground of the quarrel. Thus was the king obliged to submit to all the demands of his haughty vassal; and he had scarce any person who seemed solicitous for his interests, but Hubert de Burgh, whom, nevertheless, he discarded in a sudden caprice, and thus exposed his faithful servant to the violent persecution of his enemies. Among the many frivolous crimes objected to him, he was accused of gaining the king's affections by enchantment, and sending the prince of Wales a jewel which he had stolen from the treasury, that rendered the wearer invulnerable. Hubert, when he found his ruin resolved on, was compelled to take sanctuary in a church; but the king was prevailed upon to give orders for his being dragged from thence. Thus irresolute and timid, the orders of one moment contradicted those of the preceding.

He quickly recalled the orders he had given, and again renewed them. The clergy interposed, and obliged the king to permit him to return to his sanctuary; but he was once more constrained to surrender himself a prisoner, and was confined to the castle of Devizes. From thence Hubert made his escape; and though he afterwards obtained the king's pardon, he never testified any desire to encounter future dangers in his service.

But, as weak princes are never to be without governing favourites, the place of Hubert was soon supplied by Peter de Roches, bishop of Winchester, à Poitevin by birth, one equally remarkable for his arbitrary conduct and for his courage and abilities. Henry, in pursuance of this prelate's advice, invited over a great number of Poitevins and other foreigners, who, having [1231.] neither principles nor fortunes at home, were willing to adopt whatever schemes their employer should propose. Every office and command were bestowed on these unprincipled strangers, whose avarice and rapacity were exceeded only by their pride and insolence. So unjust a partiality to strangers very naturally excited the jealousy of the barons; and they even ventured to assure the king, that, if he did not dismiss all foreigners from court, they would drive both him and them out of the king-

dom. But the bishop of Winchester had taken his measures so well, that he brought over many of the most powerful of the confederates, and the estates of the more obnoxious barons were confiscated, for the benefit of his needy countrymen. In these violent measures the king was a calm consenting spectator; he was contented with present advantages; and while these confiscations procured immediate wealth, he little regarded the consequence. But, as Henry was chiefly swayed by tumultuary remonstrances, another confederacy, at the head of which the archbishop of Canterbury was, induced him to dismiss his minister, and to send him and his needy countrymen out of the kingdom. Encouragement to foreigners was the chief complaint against the king; and it was now expected that the people were to be no longer aggrieved by seeing such advanced above them.

[1236.] But their hopes were quickly disappointed; for, the king having married Eleanor, daughter of the count of Provence, he transferred his affections to the strangers of that country, whom he caressed with the fondest affection, and enriched with the most imprudent generosity. Places, dignities, and vast treasures, were lavished upon them; many young noblemen, who were wards to the crown, were married to wives of that country; and when the sources of the king's liberality were dried up, he resumed all the grants he had formerly made, in order to continue his favours. The resentment of every rank of people was excited by this mischievous attachment; but their anger was scarce kept within bounds, when they saw a new swarm of these intruders come over from Gascony, with Isabella, the king's mother, who had been some time before married to the count de la Marche. To these just causes of complaint were added the king's unsuccessful expeditions to the continent, his total want of economy, and his oppressive exactions, which were but the result of the former. The kingdom, therefore, waited with gloomy resolution, resolving to take vengeance when the general discontent was arrived at maturity.

To these temporal discontents, those arising from the rapacity of the see of Rome were added shortly after. The clergy of England, while they were contending for the power of the pope, were not aware that they were effectually opposing their own interests; for the pontiff, having by various arts obtained the investiture of

all livings and prelacies in the kingdom, failed not to fill up every vacancy with his own creatures. His power being established, he now began to turn it to his profit, and to enrich the church by every art of extortion and avarice. At this time, all the chief benefices of the kingdom were conferred on Italians. Great numbers of that nation were sent over at one time [1253.] to be provided for; the king's chaplain alone is said to have held at once seven hundred ecclesiastical livings. These abuses became too glaring even for the blind superstition of the people to submit to; they rose in tumults against the Italian clergy, pillaged their barns, wasted their fields, and insulted their persons. But these were transient obstacles to the papal encroachments. The pontiff exacted the revenues of all vacant benefices; the twentieth of all ecclesiastical livings without exception; the third of such as exceeded a hundred marks a year, and the half of such as were held by non-residents: he claimed the goods of all intestate clergymen; he pretended a right of inheriting all money got by usury; and he levied voluntary contributions on the people. The indignities which the people suffered from these intruding ecclesiastics were still more oppressive than their exactions. On a certain occasion, while the English were complaining of the avarice of their king, and his profusion to foreign favourites, the pope's legate made his triumphal entry into England, and some business induced him to visit Oxford before his return. He was received there with all possible splendour and ceremony, and the most sumptuous preparations were made for his table. One day, as the legate's dinner was preparing, several scholars of the university entered his kitchen, some incited by motives of curiosity, others of hunger: while they were thus employed in admiring the luxury and opulence in which this dignitary was served, and of which they were only to be spectators, a poor Irish scholar ventured to beg relief from the cook, who was an Italian, as were all the legate's domestics. This brutal fellow, instead of giving the poor Irishman an alms, threw a ladle-full of boiling water in his face, and seemed to exult in his brutality. The indignity so provoked a Welsh student who was near, that, with a bow which he happened to have in his hand, he shot the cook dead with an arrow. The legate hearing the tumult retired in a fright to the tower of the church, where he remained till

night-fall. As soon as he found that he might retire in safety, he hastened to the king, who was then at London, and complained to him of the outrage. The king, with his usual submission to the church, appeared in a violent passion, and offered to give immediate satisfaction by putting the offenders to death. The legate at first seemed to insist upon vengeance, but at length was appeased by a proper submission from the university. All the scholars of that school which had offended him were ordered to be stript of their gowns, and to go in procession bare-footed, with halters about their necks, to the legate's house, and there were directed humbly to crave his absolution and pardon.

But the impositions of the church appeared in their most conspicuous point of view in a transaction between the pope and the king. The court of Rome some time before, had reduced the kingdom of Sicily to the same state of vassalage to which England had submitted; but Mainfroy, an usurper, under pretence of governing the kingdom for the lawful heir, had seized upon the crown, and was resolved to reject the pope's authority. As the pontiff found that his own force alone was not sufficient to vindicate his claims, he had recourse to Richard, the king's brother, whose wealth he was not ignorant of; and to him, and his heirs, he offered the kingdom of Sicily, with only one condition, that he should regain it from the hands of the usurper. Richard was too well acquainted with the difficulty of the enterprise to comply with such a proposal; but when it was made to the king himself, the weak monarch, dazzled with the splendour of the conquest, embraced the proposal with ardour. Accordingly, without reflecting on the consequences, or even consulting the parliament, he gave the pope unlimited credit to expend whatever sums he should think proper for completing the conquest of that kingdom. This was what the pope expected and desired; he soon brought Henry in debtor for more than a hundred thousand marks, a debt which he had never been advised with in the contracting. Henry was mortified at the greatness of the sum, and still more at the little prospect of its being laid out with success; but he dreaded the pope's displeasure, and therefore he resolved to have recourse to parliament for a supply.

In this universal state of indignation, it may readily be imagined that the barons were more liberal of their complaints than their



supplies. They determined not to lavish their money on favourites without merit, and expeditions without a prospect of success. The clergy themselves began to turn against their spiritual father; and the bishop of London boldly asserted, that if the king and the pope should take the mitre from his head, he would clap on a helmet. But though the bishops and clergy were obliged to acquiesce in furnishing a part of this absurd expense, the barons still continued refractory; and, instead of supplies, for some time answered with expostulations. They urged the king's partiality to foreigners; they aggravated the injuries of his servants, and the unjust seizures made by his officers from men of mercantile professions. The parliament therefore was dissolved (for so now the general assembly of the nation began to be called), and another soon after was convened with as little success. The urgency of the king's affairs required that money should be procured at any rate; and yet the legate never failed, upon those occasions, to obstruct the king's demands, by making several for himself. It was now, therefore, that Henry went amongst such of his subjects as were firmly attached to him, and begged for assistance at their own houses. At one time, he would get money by pretending to take the cross; at another, he would prevail by asserting that he was resolved to re-conquer his French dominions. At length his barons, perceiving the exigencies to which he was reduced, seemed, in mere pity, willing to grant him aid; and, upon his promising to grant them plenary redress, a very liberal supply was obtained, for which he renewed their charter with more than usual solemnity. All the prelates and abbots were assembled, with burning tapers in their hands; the Magna Charta [1255.] was read in their presence; and they denounced sentence of excommunication against all who should infringe upon its decisions; they then put out their tapers on the ground, and exclaimed, "May every soul that proves false to this agreement so stink and corrupt in hell!" The king had his part in the ceremony, and subjoined, "So help me God, I will inviolably keep all these things, as I am a man, as I am a Christian, as I am a knight, and as I am a king crowned and anointed!" Thus solemn were their mutual engagements; but the wretched Henry had no sooner received the supplies for which his parliament had been convoked, than he forgot every article of what he had so solemnly agreed to observe.

Though the king, in the last convention, had solemnly engaged to follow the advice of English counsellors, yet he was directed in all his measures by foreigners; and William de Valence, on whom he conferred various honours, grasped at every post of profit that was in the royal power to bestow. This imprudent preference, joined to a thousand other illegal evasions of justice, at last impelled Simon Montfort, earl of Leicester, to attempt an innovation in the government, and to wrest the sceptre from the feeble hand that held it. This nobleman was the son of the famous general who commanded against the Albigenses, a sect of enthusiasts that had been destroyed some time before in the kingdom of Savoy. He was married to the king's sister; and, by his power and address, was possessed of a strong interest in the nation, having gained equally the affections of the great and the little. The king was the only person whose favour he disdained to cultivate. He so much disregarded Henry's friendship or enmity, that when the monarch, upon a certain occasion, called him traitor, Leicester gave him the lye, and told him, that if he were not his sovereign he would soon make him repent of his insult. Being possessed of power too great for a subject, he had long, though secretly, aspired at the throne, and filled all places with complaints of the king's injustice, partiality, and inability to govern. Having at last found his designs ripe for execution, he called a meeting of the most considerable barons; and concealing his private ambition under the mask of public concern, he represented to them the necessity of reforming the state. He exaggerated the oppressions of the lower orders of the people, the violations of the barons' privileges, the continued plunder of the clergy, and the perfidy of the king. His popularity and his power added weight to his eloquence; and the barons entered into a resolution of redressing public grievances, by taking the administration of the government into their own hands.

The first place where this formidable confederacy discovered itself was in the parliament-house, where the barons appeared in complete armour. The king, upon his entry, asked them what was their intention; to which they submissively replied, To make him their sovereign, by confirming his power, and to have their grievances redressed. Henry, who was ready enough to promise whatever was demanded, instantly assured them of his intentions

to give all possible satisfaction; and for that purpose summoned another parliament at Oxford, to digest a new plan of government, and to elect proper persons who were to be intrusted with the chief authority. This parliament, afterwards called the *mad parliament*, went expeditiously to work upon the business of reformation. Twenty-four barons were appointed, with supreme authority, to reform the abuses of the state, and Leicester was placed at their head. The first step was calculated for the good of the people, as it contained the rude out-line of the house of commons, which makes a part of the constitution at this day. They ordered that four knights should be chosen by each county, who should examine into the grievances of their respective constituents, and attend at the ensuing parliament to give information of their complaints. They ordained that three sessions of parliament should be regularly held every year; that a new high sheriff should be annually elected; that no wards nor castles should be intrusted to foreigners; no new forests made; nor the revenues of any counties let to farm. These constitutions were so just, that some of them have been continued to the present time; but it was not the security of the people, but the establishment of their own power, that this odious confederacy endeavoured to effect. Instead of resigning their power when they had fulfilled the purposes of their appointment, they still maintained themselves in an usurped authority; at one time pretending that they had not as yet digested all necessary regulations for the benefit of the state; at another, that their continuance in power was the only remedy the people had against the faithless character of the king: in short, they resolved to maintain their stations till they should think proper to resign their authority. The whole state accordingly underwent a complete alteration; all its former officers were displaced, and creatures of the twenty-four barons were put in their room; they had even the effrontery to impose an oath upon every individual of the nation, declaring an implicit obedience to all the regulations executed, and to be yet executed, by the barons who were thus appointed as rulers. They not only abridged the authority of the king, but the efficacy of parliament, giving up to twelve persons all parliamentary power between each session. Thus these insolent nobles, after having trampled upon the crown, now threw

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prostrate all the rights of the people ; and a vile oligarchy was on the point of being established forever.

The first opposition that was made to these usurpations was from that very power which so lately began to take place in the constitution. The knights of the shire, who for some time had begun to be regularly assembled in a separate house, now first perceived those grievances, which they submitted to the superior assembly of the barons for redress. These bold and patriotic men strongly remonstrated against the slowness of the proceedings of their twenty-four rulers ; and, for the first time, began to show that spirit of just resistance which has ever since actuated their counsels in a greater or a less degree. They represented, that though the king had performed all the conditions required of him, the barons had hitherto done nothing on their part that showed an equal regard for the people ; that their own interests and power seemed the only aim of all their decrees ; and they even called upon the king's eldest son, prince Edward, to interpose his authority, and save the sinking nation.

Prince Edward was at this time about twenty-two years of age, when the hopes which were conceived of his abilities and his integrity rendered him an important personage in the transactions of the times, and in some measure atoned for his father's imbecility. Upon this occasion his conduct was fitted to impress the people with the highest idea of his piety and justice. He alleged, when appealed to, that he had sworn to the late Constitutions of Oxford, which, though contrary to his own private sentiments, he yet resolved by no means to infringe. At the same time, however, he sent a message to the barons, requiring them to bring their undertaking to an end, or otherwise to expect the most vigorous opposition to their usurpations. To this the barons were obliged to reply, by publishing a new code of laws, which, though it contained scarce any thing material, yet they supposed would, for a while, dazzle the eyes of the people, until they could take measures to confirm their authority upon a securer foundation. In this manner, under various pretences and studied delays, they continued themselves in power for three years ; while the whole nation perceived their aims, and loudly condemned their treachery. The pope himself beheld their usurpations with indignation, and absolved the king and all his subjects

from the oath which they had taken to observe the Provisions of Oxford.

The people now only wanted a leader to subvert this new tyranny imposed upon them ; but they knew not where, nor whom, they could apply to for succour. The king himself, weak, timid, irresolute, and superstitious, was in a manner leagued with those who opposed and depressed his own interests ; the clergy, who formerly gave the people redress, were become an independent body, and little concerned in the commotions of the state, which they regarded as tame spectators. In this distressful situation, they had recourse to young prince Edward, who, at a very early age, had given the strongest proofs of courage, of wisdom, and of constancy. At first, indeed, when applied to, appearing sensible of what his father had suffered by levity and breach of promise, he refused some time to take advantage of the pope's absolution, and the people's earnest application ; but being at last persuaded to concur, a parliament was called, in which the king resumed his former authority ; and the barons, after making one fruitless effort to take him by surprise at Winchester, were obliged to acquiesce in what they could not openly oppose.

In the mean time the earl of Leicester, no way discouraged by the bad success of his past enterprises, resolved upon entirely overturning that power which he had already humbled. For this purpose he formed a most powerful confederacy with the prince of Wales, who invaded England with a body of thirty thousand men. To these barbarous ravagers Leicester quickly joined his own forces ; and the whole kingdom was soon exposed to all the devastations of a licentious army. The citizens of London also were not averse to his cause. Under the command of their mayor, Thomas Fitz-Richard, a furious and licentious man, they fell upon the Jews, and many of the more wealthy inhabitants, pillaging and destroying wherever they came. The fury of the faction was not confined to London only, but broke out in most of the populous cities of the kingdom ; while the king, with his usual pusillanimity, deplored the turbulence of the times, and in vain applied to the pope for his holy protection.

In this distressful state of the nation, nothing now remained but an accommodation with the insurgent barons ; and, after some time, a treaty of peace was concluded, but upon the most disad-

[1263.] vantageous terms to the king and his party. The Provisions of Oxford were again restored, and the barons re-established in the sovereignty of the kingdom. They took possession of all the royal castles and fortresses; they even named the officers of the king's household, and summoned a parliament to meet at Westminster, in order the more fully to settle the plan of their government. By this assembly it was enacted that the authority of the twenty-four barons should continue; and that not only during the reign of the king, but also during that of prince Edward.

But these were conditions which, though the pusillanimous king could very easily submit to, yet the young prince would by no means acquiesce in. He appealed to the king of France, to whom he consented to refer the subject of his infringed pretensions; and when that just monarch declared in his favour, he resolved to have recourse to arms, the last refuge of oppressed royalty. Accordingly, summoning the king's military vassals from all quarters, and being reinforced by many of the more equitable barons, he resolved to take the field. His first attempts were successful; Northampton, Leicester, and Nottingham, submitted to his power; and he proceeded into the county of Derby, in order to ravage with fire and sword the estates of such as had espoused the opposite cause. On the other side, the earl of Leicester was besieging Rochester, when he was informed of the king's successes; upon which he raised the siege, and retreated to London, where he was joined by a body of the citizens amounting to fifteen thousand men. Both armies being thus pretty near equal, they resolved to come to an engagement, and Leicester halted within about two miles from Lewes in Sussex; offering, at the same time, terms of accommodation which he well knew the king would reject. Upon the refusal of these with contempt, both sides prepared for a battle with the utmost rancour and animosity. The earl advanced with his troops near Lewes, where the king had drawn up his forces to give him a proper reception. The royal army was formed in three divisions: prince Edward commanded on the right; Richard, the king's brother, who had been some time before made king of the Romans, was posted on the left wing; and Henry himself remained in the centre. The earl's army was divided into four bodies: the first was conducted by

Henry de Montfort, son of the general; the second was commanded by the earl of Gloucester; the third was under the command of the earl himself; and the fourth, consisting of Londoners, was under the direction of Nicholas Seagrave. To encourage these insurgents still further, the bishop of Chichester gave a general absolution to their party, accompanied with assurances, that if any of them fell in the action, they would infallibly be received into heaven, as a reward for their suffering in so meritorious a cause. The battle was begun by prince Edward, who rushed upon the Londoners, placed foremost in the post of honour, with so much fury, that they were unable to sustain the charge, but, giving way, fled with great precipitation. The prince, transported with a desire of revenging the insults they had offered to his mother, pursued them four miles off the field of battle, causing a terrible slaughter. While he was making this imprudent use of his victory, the earl of Leicester, who was a skilful commander, pushed with all his forces against the enemies' left wing, soon put them to the rout, and took both the king and his brother prisoners. It was a dreadful prospect, therefore, to the young prince, who was now returning victorious from the pursuit, to behold the field covered with the bodies of his friends, and still more when he heard that his father and his uncle were defeated and taken. In this deplorable state, he at first endeavoured to inspire his remaining troops with ardour; but being artfully amused by Leicester with a pretended negotiation, he quickly found his little body of troops surrounded, and himself obliged to submit to such terms as the conqueror thought fit to impose. These were short, and very conformable to his wretched situation. He, together with another general, named Henry d'Almain, were to surrender themselves prisoners, as pledges in the place of the king and his brother, who were to be released; the Provisions of Oxford were to continue in full force, but to be revised by six Frenchmen appointed by the king of France, three prelates, and three noblemen, who, with three more of their own choosing, were to be invested with full powers to settle all disturbances that then subsisted. Such was the convention called the *Mise* of Lewes.

These great advantages were no sooner obtained, than Leicester resolved to possess himself of that power for [1264.] which he had so long been struggling. Instead of referring the

subject in dispute to the king of France, as was agreed on, he kept Richard still a prisoner; and though he had already confined prince Edward in the castle of Dover, yet he effectually took care still to continue the king also in bondage. To add to his injustice, he made use of his name for purposes the most prejudicial to the royal interests; and while he every where disarmed the king's adherents, he was cautiously seen to keep his partisans in a posture of defence. The king, a poor contemptible spectator of his own degradation, was carried about from place to place, and obliged to give his governors directions to deliver their castles into the hands of his enemy. To this usurpation of the king's authority, Leicester added the most barefaced and rapacious avarice. He seized the estates of no less than eighteen barons, as his share of the spoil gained in the battle of Lewes. He engrossed to himself the ransom of all the prisoners; he monopolized the sale of wool to foreign markets; and, to fix himself completely in authority, he ordained that all power should be exercised by a council of nine persons, who were to be chosen by three persons, or the majority of them; and these were the earl himself, the earl of Gloucester, and the bishop of Chichester.

In this stretch of power Leicester was not so entirely secure, but that he still feared the combinations of the foreign states against him, as well as the internal machinations of the royal party. The king of France, at the intercession of the queen of England, who had taken refuge at his court, actually prepared to reinstate Henry in his dominions; the pope was not sparing in his ecclesiastical censures; and there were many other princes that pitied the royal sufferings, and secretly wished the usurper's fall. The miserable situation of the kingdom, in the end produced the happiness of posterity. Leicester, to secure his ill-acquired power, was obliged to have recourse to an aid till now entirely unknown in England, namely, that of the body of the people. He called a parliament, where, besides the barons of his own party, and several ecclesiastics who were not immediate tenants of the crown, he ordered returns to be made of two knights from every shire; and also deputies from the boroughs, which had been hitherto considered as too inconsiderable to have a voice in legislation. This is the first confirmed outline of an English house of commons. The people had been gain-

Jan. 20,  
1266.



ing some consideration since the gradual diminution of the force of the feudal system. The establishment of corporation charters, by which many of the rustic slaves were in a capacity of rescuing themselves from the power of their masters, increased not only the power of the people, but their ardour to be free. As arts increased, the number of these little independent republics, if they may be so called, increased in proportion; and we find them, at the present period, of consequence enough to be adopted into a share of the legislature. Such was the beginning of an institution, that has since been the guardian of British liberty, and the admiration of mankind. In this manner it owed its original to the aspiring aims of a haughty baron, who flattered the people with the name of freedom, with a design the more completely to tyrannize.

A parliament, assembled in this manner to second the views of the earl, was found not so very complying as he expected. Many of the barons, who had hitherto steadfastly adhered to his party, appeared disgusted at his immoderate ambition; and many of the people, who found that a change of masters was not a change from misery to happiness, began to wish for the establishment of the royal family. In this exigence, Leicester, finding himself unable to oppose the concurring wishes of the nation, was resolved to make a merit of what he could not prevent; and he accordingly released prince Edward from confinement, and had him introduced at Westminster-hall, where his freedom was confirmed by the unanimous voice of the barons. But though Leicester had all the popularity of restoring the prince, yet he was politic enough to keep him still guarded by his emissaries, who watched all his motions, and frustrated all his aims.

On the other hand, prince Edward, who had too much penetration not to perceive that he was made the tool of Leicester's ambition, ardently watched an opportunity to regain that freedom of which he then enjoyed but the appearance. An opportunity soon offered for procuring him a restoration of his former liberty with his power. The earl of Gloucester, one of the heads of Leicester's party, being discontented at that nobleman's great power, retired from court in disgust, and went, for safety, to his estate on the borders of Wales. Leicester was not slow in pursuing him thither; and, to give greater authority to his arms, carried

the king and the prince of Wales along with him. This was the happy opportunity that young Edward long wanted, in order to effect his escape. Being furnished by the earl of Gloucester with a horse of extraordinary swiftness, under a pretence of taking the air with some of Leicester's retinue, who were in reality appointed to guard him, he proposed that they should run their horses one against the other. When he perceived that he had thus sufficiently tired their horses, immediately mounting Gloucester's horse, that was still fresh, he bid his attendants very politely farewell. They followed him indeed for some time; but the appearance of a body of troops belonging to Gloucester soon put an end to the pursuit. This happy event seemed the signal for the whole body of the royalists to rise. The well-known valour of the young prince, the long train of grievances which the people endured, and the countenance of the earl of Gloucester, a man of great power, all combined to increase their numbers, and inspire their activity. An army was soon assembled, which Leicester had no power to withstand; and he saw his hard-earned power every day ravished from him, without being able to strike a single blow in its defence. His son, attempting to bring him a reinforcement of troops from London, was, by a vigorous march of young Edward, surprised, and his army cut to pieces.

It was not long after, that the earl himself, ignorant of his son's fate, passed the Severn, in expectation of the London army; but instead of the troops he expected, he soon perceived that the indefatigable prince was coming up to give him battle. Nor was it without a stratagem that his little army was assaulted. While the prince led a part of his troops by a circuit to attack him behind, he ordered another body of them to advance with the banners of the London army that was just defeated, which, for a long time, the earl mistook for an actual reinforcement, and made dispositions accordingly. At last, however, this proud but unfortunate general perceived his mistake, and saw that the enemy was advancing against him on all sides, with the most regular dispositions and determined bravery. He now, therefore, found that all was lost; and was so struck with dismay, that he could not help exclaiming, "The Lord have mercy upon our souls, for our bodies are doomed to destruction!" He did not, however, abandon all hopes of safety; but drew up his men in a

compact circle, and exhorted them to fight like men who had all to gain, or all to suffer. At the same time, he obliged the old king to put on armour, and to fight against his own cause, in the front of the army. The battle soon began; but the earl's army, having been exhausted by famine on the mountains of Wales, were but ill able to sustain the impetuosity of young Edward's attack, who bore down upon them with incredible fury. During this terrible day, Leicester behaved with astonishing intrepidity, and kept up the spirit of the action from two o'clock in the afternoon till nine at night. At last, his horse being killed under him, he was compelled to fight on foot; and though he demanded quarter, the adverse party refused it, with a barbarity common enough in the times we are describing. The old king, who was placed in the front of the battle, was soon wounded in the shoulder; and not being known by his friends, he was on the point of being killed by a soldier; but crying out, "I am Henry of Winchester, the king!" he was saved by a knight of the royal army. Prince Edward, hearing the voice of his father, instantly ran to the spot where he lay, and had him conducted to a place of safety. The body of Leicester, being found among the dead, was barbarously mangled by one Roger Mortimer, and then, with an accumulation of inhumanity, sent to the wretched widow, as a testimony of the royal party's success.

This victory proved decisive; and those who were formerly persecuted now became oppressors in their turn. The king, who was grown vindictive from his sufferings, resolved to take a signal vengeance on the citizens of London, who had ever forwarded the interests of his opponents. In this exigence, submission was their only resource; and Henry was hardly prevailed upon from totally destroying the city. He was at last contented to deprive it of its military ensigns and fortifications, and to levy upon the inhabitants a very heavy contribution. Fitz-  
 Richard, the seditious mayor, was imprisoned, and pur-  
 chased his pardon with the loss of his substance. The rebels ev-  
 ery-where submitted, or were pursued with rigour. Their cas-  
 tles were taken and demolished; and scarce any were found  
 that disputed the king's authority. Among the few who still  
 continued refractory, was one Adam Gordon, formerly governor  
 of Dunster castle, and very much celebrated for his prodigious

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strength and great bravery. This outrageous baron maintained himself for some time in the forests of Hampshire, and ravaged the counties of Berks and Surry. Prince Edward was, at length, obliged to lead a body of troops into that part of the country to force him from thence; and attacked his camp with great bravery. Being transported with the natural impetuosity of youth, and the ardour of the action, he leapt over the trench, by which it was defended, attended by a few followers; and thus found himself unexpectedly cut off from the rest of his army. Gordon soon distinguished him from the rest of his attendants; and a single combat began between these two valiant men, which, for a long time, continued doubtful. But the prince's fortune at last prevailed: Adam's foot happening to slip, he received a wound, which disabled him from continuing the action, and he remained at the mercy of the conqueror. Edward was as merciful as he was brave: he not only granted him his life, but introduced him that very night to his consort at Guildford; procured him his pardon and estate, and received him into favour. Gordon was not ungrateful for such mercy; he ever after followed the prince, and was often found combating by his side in the most dangerous shock of battle. In this manner the generosity of the prince tempered the insolence of victory: the strength was gradually restored to the different members of the constitution, that had been so long weakened by the continuance of civil discord.

Edward, having thus restored peace to the kingdom, found his affairs now so firmly established, that it was not in the power of any slight disgust taken by the licentious barons to shake them. The earl of Gloucester, indeed, who had been so instrumental in restoring the king to the crown, thought that no recompense could equal his merits. He therefore engaged once more in open rebellion; but was soon brought to submission by the prince, who obliged him to enter into a bond of twenty thousand marks, never to take part in similar schemes for the future. The kingdom being thus tolerably composed, that spirit of adventure and ardour for military glory, which shone forth in all the prince's actions, now impelled him to undertake the expedition against the infidels in the Holy Land. The crusade was at that time the great object of ambition; all other wars were considered as trifling, and all other successes as mean, in comparison of those gain-

ed over the enemies of Christ and his religion. To that renowned field of blood flocked all the brave, the pious, the ambitious, and the powerful:

In pursuance of this resolution, which though succeeding fashions of thinking have condemned, yet certainly then was prosecuted upon the noblest motives, Edward sailed from England with a large army, and arrived at the camp of Lewis, the king of France, which lay before Tunis, and where he had the misfortune to hear of that good monarch's death before his arrival. The prince, however, no way discouraged by this event, continued his voyage, and arrived at the Holy Land in safety.

He was scarce departed upon this pious expedition, when the health of the old king began to decline; and he found not only his own constitution, but also that of the state, in such a dangerous situation, that he wrote letters to his son, pressing him to return with all dispatch. The former calamities began to threaten the kingdom again; and the barons, taking advantage of the king's weakness, oppressed the people with impunity. Bands of robbers infested various parts of the nation; and the populace of London once more resumed their accustomed licentiousness. To add to the king's uneasiness, his brother Richard died, who had long assisted him with his advice in all emergencies. He therefore ardently wished for the return of his gallant son, who had placed the sceptre in hands that were too feeble to hold it. At last, overcome by the cares of government and the infirmities of age, he ordered himself to be removed, by easy journeys, from St. Edmund's to Westminster; where sending for the earl of Gloucester, he obliged him to swear that he would preserve the peace of the kingdom, and to the utmost of his power, maintain the interests of his son. That same night he expired; and the next morning the great seal was delivered to the archbishop of York, and the lords of the privy council.

Thus died Henry, in the sixty-fourth year of his age, and the fifty-sixth of his reign, the longest to be met with in the English annals. He was a prince more adapted for private than for public life; his ease, simplicity, and good nature, would have secured him that happiness in a lower station, of which they deprived him upon a throne. However, from his calamities the people afterwards derived the most permanent blessings; that liber-

ty which they extorted from his weakness, they continued to preserve under bolder princes who succeeded him. The flame of freedom had now diffused itself from the incorporated towns through the whole mass of the people, and ever afterwards blazed forth at convenient seasons; so that, in proportion as the upper orders lost, the people were sure to be gainers. In this contest, though they often laid down their lives and suffered all the calamities of civil war, yet those calamities were considered as nothing, when weighed against the advantages of freedom and security.

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### CHAP. XIII.

#### EDWARD I.

WHILE the unfortunate Henry was thus vainly struggling against the ungovernable spirit of his subjects, his son and successor, Edward, was employed in the holy wars, where he revived the glory of the English name, and made the enemies of Christianity tremble. He had arrived at the city of Acon, in Palestine, just as the Saracens were sitting down to besiege it. He soon relieved the place, followed the enemy, and obtained many victories, which, though splendid, were not decisive. Such, however, were the enemies' terrors at the progress of his arms, that they resolved to destroy by treachery that valiant commander whom they could not oppose in the field. A tribe of Mahometan enthusiasts had long taken possession of an inaccessible mountain in Syria, under the command of a petty prince, who went, in the Christian armies, under the name of the Old Man of the Mountain, and whose subjects were called Assassins; from whence we have since borrowed the name to signify a private stabber. These men, wholly devoted to their commander, and inflamed with a detestable superstition, undertook to destroy any Christian prince or leader who became obnoxious to their party. It was in vain to threaten them with punishment; they knew the dangers that awaited them, but, resolute to destroy, they rushed upon certain death. Some time before, the capital of this tribe

had been taken by the Tartars, and the inhabitants put to the sword; yet there still remained numbers of them that were educated in that gloomy school of superstition; and one of those undertook to murder the prince of England. In order to gain admittance to Edward's presence, he pretended to have letters to deliver from the governor of Joppa, proposing a negotiation; and thus he was permitted to see the prince, who conversed with him freely in the French language, which the assassin understood. In this manner he continued to amuse him for some time, being permitted to have free egress and regress from the royal apartments. It was on the Friday in Whitsun-week that he found Edward sitting in his apartment alone, in a loose garment, the weather being extremely hot. This was the opportunity the infidel had so long earnestly desired; and looking round to see if there were any present to prevent him, and finding him alone, he drew a dagger from his breast, and attempted to plunge it into the prince's bosom. Edward had just time to perceive the murderer's intention, and, with great presence of mind, received the blow upon his arm. Perceiving the assassin about to repeat his blow, he struck him at once to the ground with his foot; and, wresting the weapon from his hand, buried it instantly in his bosom. The domestics, hearing a noise, quickly came into the room, and soon wreaked their resentment on the perfidious wretch's body, who had thus abused the laws of hospitality. The wound the prince had received was the more dangerous, as having been inflicted with a poisoned dagger; and it soon began to exhibit some symptoms that appeared fatal. He therefore expected his fate with great intrepidity, and made his will, contented to die in a cause which he was assured would procure him endless felicity. But his usual good fortune prevailed; an English surgeon of extraordinary skill, by making deep incisions, and cutting away the mortified parts, completed the cure, and restored him to health in little more than a fortnight. A recovery so unexpected was considered by the superstitious army as miraculous; nor were there wanting some, who alleged that he owed his safety to the piety of Eleonora his wife, who sucked the poison from the wound, to save his life, at the hazard of her own. However this be, it is probable that the personal danger he incurred, by continuing the war in Palestine, might induce him more readily to listen

to terms of accommodation, which were proposed soon after by the soldan of Babylon. He received that monarch's ambassadors in a very honourable manner, and concluded a truce with him for ten years, ten weeks, and ten days. Having thus settled the affairs of Palestine, in the best manner they would admit of, he set sail for Sicily, where he arrived in safety, and there first heard the news of the king his father's death, as well as that of his own son John, a boy of six years of age. He bore the last with resignation, but appeared extremely afflicted at the death of his father; at which when the king of Sicily expressed his surprise, he observed that the death of a son was a loss which he might hope to repair, but that of a father was a loss irreparable.

Though the death of the king happened while the successor was so far from home, yet measures had been so well taken, that the crown was transferred with the greatest tranquillity. The high character acquired by the prince, during the late commotions, had procured him the esteem and affection of all ranks of men; and, instead of attempting to oppose, their whole wish was to see him once more returning in triumph. But the prince, sensible of the quiet state of the kingdom, did not seem in much haste to take possession of the throne; and he spent near a year in France before he made his appearance in England. The honours he received from the great upon the continent, and the acclamations with which he was every where attended by the people, were too alluring to a young mind to be suddenly relinquished; he was even tempted to exhibit proofs of his bravery in a tournament, to which he was invited by the count de Chalons, who defied him to a trial of his skill. Impressed with high ideas of the chivalry of the times, he accepted the challenge; and proposed, with his knights, to hold the field against all that would enter the lists. His usual good fortune attended him; and his success had like to have converted a trial of skill into a matter of bloody contention. The count de Chalons, enraged at being foiled, made a serious attack upon the English, in which some blood was idly spilt; but Edward and his knights still maintained the superiority. From Chalons Edward proceeded to Paris, where he was magnificently entertained by Philip, king of France, to whom he did homage for the territories the kings of England had possessed in that kingdom. From Paris he set out for Gascony, to curb



the insolence of Gaston count Bearne, who had rebelled in his absence. From thence he passed through Montreuil, where he accommodated some differences between the English and Flemings. At length, after various battles, dangers, and fatigues, he arrived in his native dominions, amidst the loud acclamations of his people, and was solemnly crowned at Westminster by the archbishop of Canterbury. The joy of all ranks upon this occasion was inexpressible; the feasting continued a whole fortnight at the king's expense; five hundred horses were turned loose, as the property of those who could catch them. The king of Scotland, with several other princes, graced the solemnity, and did homage for those territories they held under the English crown. Nothing therefore remained to complete the felicity of the people but the continuance of such prosperity; and this they had every reason to expect from the king's justice, his economy, and his prudence.

As Edward was now come to an undisturbed throne, the opposite interest was proportionably feeble. The barons were exhausted by long mutual dissensions; the clergy were divided in their interests, and agreed only in one point, to hate the pope, who had for some time drained them with impunity: the people, by some insurrections against the convents, appear to have hated the clergy with equal animosity. These disagreeing orders concurred in one point only, that of esteeming and reverencing the king. In such a conjuncture, therefore, few measures could be taken by the crown that would be deemed oppressive; and we accordingly find the present monarch often, from his own authority alone, raising those taxes that would have been peremptorily refused to his predecessor. However, Edward was naturally prudent; and though capable of becoming absolute, he satisfied himself with moderate power, and laboured only to be terrible to his enemies.

His first care was to correct those disorders which had crept in under the last part of his father's feeble administration. He proposed, by an exact distribution of justice, to give equal protection and redress to all the orders of the state. He took every opportunity to inspect the conduct of all his magistrates and judges, and to displace such as were negligent or corrupt. In short, a system of strict justice, marked with an air of severity,

was pursued throughout his reign; formidable to the people indeed, but yet adapted to the ungovernable licentiousness of the times. The Jews were the only part of his subjects who were refused that equal justice which the king made a boast of distributing. As Edward had been bred up in prejudices against them, and as these were still more confirmed by his expedition to the Holy Land, he seemed to have no compassion upon their sufferings. Many were the arbitrary taxes levied upon them; two hundred and eighty of them were hanged at once, upon a charge of adulterating the coin of the kingdom; the goods of the rest were confiscated, and all of that religion utterly banished the kingdom. This severity was very grateful to the people, who hated the Jews, not only for their tenets, but for their method of living, which was by usury and extortion.

But Edward had too noble a spirit to be content with the applause this petty oppression acquired: he resolved to march against Lewellyn, prince of North Wales, who had refused to do homage for his dominions, and seemed bent upon renouncing all dependence upon the crown of England. The Welsh had for many ages enjoyed their own laws, language, customs, and opinions. They were the remains of the antient Britons who had escaped the Roman and Saxon invasions, and still preserved their freedom and their country uncontaminated by the admission of foreign conquerors. But as they were, from their number, incapable of withstanding their more powerful neighbours on the plain, their chief defence lay in their inaccessible mountains, those natural bulwarks of the country. Whenever England was distressed by factions at home, or its forces called off to wars abroad, the Welsh made it a constant practice to pour in their irregular troops, and lay the open country waste wherever they came. Nothing could be more pernicious to a country than several neighbouring independent principalities, under different commanders, and pursuing different interests; the mutual jealousies of such were sure to harass the people; and wherever victory was purchased, it was always at the expense of the general welfare. Sensible of this, Edward had long wished to reduce that incursive people, and had ordered Lewellyn to do homage for his territories; which summons the Welsh prince refused to obey, unless the king's own son should be delivered as a hostage for his safe

return. The king was not displeased at this refusal, as it served to give him a pretext for his intended invasion. He therefore levied an army against Lewellyn, and marched into his country with certain assurance of success. Upon the approach of Edward, the Welsh prince took refuge among the inaccessible mountains of Snowdon, and there resolved to maintain his ground, without trusting to the chance of battle. These were the steep retreats that had for many ages before defended his ancestors against all the attempts of the Norman and Saxon conquerors. But Edward, equally vigorous and cautious, having explored every part of his way, pierced into the very centre of Lewellyn's territories, and approached the Welsh army in its last retreat. Lewellyn at first little regarded the progress of an enemy that he supposed would make a transient invasion, and then depart; but his contempt was turned into consternation, when he saw Edward place his forces at the foot of the mountains, and surround his army, in order to force it by famine. Destitute of magazines, and cooped up in a narrow corner of the country, without provisions for his troops, or pasturage for his cattle, nothing remained but death or submission; so that the unfortunate Welsh prince, without being able to strike a blow for his independence, was at last obliged to submit at discretion, and to receive such terms as the victor was pleased to impose. Lewellyn consented to pay fifty thousand pounds, as a satisfaction for damages; to do homage to the crown of England; to permit all other barons, except four near Snowdon, to swear fealty in the same manner; to relinquish the country between Cheshire and the river Conway; to do justice to his own family; and to deliver hostages for the security of his submission.

But this treaty was only of short duration: the oppression of the conqueror, and the indignant pride of [1281.] the conquered nation, could not long remain without producing new dissensions. The lords of the Marches committed all kinds of injustice on their Welsh neighbours; and although Edward remitted the fifty thousand pounds penalty, yet he laid other restrictions some time after upon Lewellyn, which that prince considered as more injurious. He particularly exacted a promise from him at Worcester, that he would retain no person in his principality that should be disagreeable to the English monarch.

These were insults too great to be endured, and once more the Welsh flew to arms. A body of their forces took the field, under the command of David, the brother of their prince, ravaged the plain country, took the castle of Harwardin, made sir Roger Clifford, justice of the Marches, who was very dangerously wounded, their prisoner, and soon after laid siege to the castle of Rhudlan. When the account of these hostilities was brought to Edward, he assembled a numerous army, and set out with a resolution to exterminate Lewellyn and his whole family, and to reduce that people to such an abject state, that they should never after be able to revolt, or distress their peaceable neighbours. At first, however, the king's endeavours were not attended with their usual success : having caused a bridge of boats to be laid over the river Menay, a body of forces, commanded by lord Latimer and De Thonis, passed over before it was completely finished, to signalise their courage against the enemy. The Welsh patiently remained in their fastnesses till they saw the tide flowing in beyond the end of the bridge, and thus cutting off the retreat of the assailants. It was then that they poured down from their mountains with hideous outcries, and, with the most ungovernable fury, put the whole body that had got over to the sword. This defeat revived the sinking spirits of the Welsh, and it was now universally believed by that superstitious people that heaven had declared in their favour. A story ran, that it was foretold, in the prophecies of Merlin, that Lewellyn was to be the restorer of Brutus's empire in Britain : a wizard had prognosticated that he should ride through the streets of London with a crown upon his head. These were inducements sufficiently strong to persuade this prince to hazard a decisive battle against the English. With this view he marched into Radnorshire ; and passing the river Wey, his troops were surprised and defeated by Edward Mortimer, while he himself was absent from his army upon a conference with some of the barons of that country. Upon his return, seeing the dreadful situation of his affairs, he ran desperately into the midst of the enemy, and quickly found that death he so ardently sought for. One of the English captains, recognizing his countenance, severed his head from his body, and it was sent to London, where it was received with extreme demonstrations of joy. The brutal spirit of the times will sufficiently appear from the

barbarity of the citizens on this occasion : the head being encircled in a silver coronet, to fulfil the prediction of a wizard, it was placed by them upon a pillory, that the populace might glut their eyes with such an agreeable spectacle. David, the brother of this unfortunate prince, soon after shared the same fate ; while his followers, quite dispirited by the loss of their beloved leader, obeyed but slowly, and fought with reluctance. Thus, being at last totally abandoned, he was obliged to hide himself in one of the obscure caverns of the country ; but his retreat being soon after discovered, he was taken, tried, and condemned as a traitor. His sentence was executed with the most rigorous severity ; he was hanged, drawn, and quartered, only for having bravely defended the expiring liberties of his native country, and his own hereditary possessions. With him expired the government and the distinction of the nation. It was soon after united to the kingdom of England, made a principality, and given to the eldest son of the crown. Foreign conquest might add to the glory, but this added to the felicity of the kingdom. The Welsh were now blended with the conquerors ; and, in the revolution of a few ages, all national animosity was entirely forgotten.

At the time of the conquest, however, the Welsh submitted with extreme reluctance ; and few nations ever bowed to a foreign yoke with greater indignation. The bards of the country, whose employment consisted in rehearsing the glorious deeds of their ancestors, were particularly obnoxious to the king, who, considering that while they continued to keep the antient flame alive he must expect no peace in his new acquisitions, ordered them to be massacred, from motives of barbarous policy at that time not uncommon. This severity he is said to have softened by another measure, equally politic, and far less culpable. In order to flatter their vanity, and amuse their superstition, he left his queen to be delivered in the castle of Caernarvon, and afterwards presented the child, whose name was Edward, to the Welsh lords, as a native of their country, and as their appointed prince. The lords received him with acclamations of joy, considering him as a master who would govern them as a distinct people from the English, there being at that time another heir-apparent to the English crown. But the death of the eldest son, Alphonso, soon after made young Edward, who had been thus

created prince of Wales, heir also to the English monarchy; and ever since the government of both nations has continued to flow in one undivided channel.

This great and important conquest being achieved, paved the way for one of still more importance, though not attended with such permanent consequences. Alexander III. king of Scotland, had been killed by a fall from his horse, leaving only Margaret, his grand-daughter, heir to the crown, who died some time after. The death of this princess produced a most ardent dispute about the succession to the Scottish throne, being claimed by no less than twelve competitors. That nation being thus divided into as many factions as there were pretenders, the guardians of the realm would not undertake to decide a dispute of so much consequence. The nobility of the country were no less divided in their opinions; and, after long debates, they at last unanimously agreed to refer the contest to the determination of the king of England. The claims of all the other candidates were reduced to three, who were the descendants of the earl of Huntingdon by three daughters; John Hastings, who claimed in right of his mother, as one of the co-heiresses of the crown; John Baliol, who alleged his right, as being descended from the eldest daughter, who was his grand-mother; and Robert Bruce, who was the actual son of the second daughter. In this contest, which was referred to Edward, he pretended the utmost degree of deliberation; and although he had long formed his resolution, yet he ordered all inquiries to be made on the subject, that he might be master of the arguments that could be advanced on any side of the question. In this research, he soon discovered that some passages in old chronicles might be produced to favour his own secret inclinations; and, without further delay, instead of admitting the claims of the competitors, he boldly urged his own; and, to second his pretensions, advanced with a formidable army to the frontiers of the kingdom.

The Scottish barons were thunderstruck at these unexpected pretensions; and though they felt the most extreme indignation at his procedure, yet they resolved to obey his summons to meet at the castle of Norham, a place situated on the southern banks of the Tweed, where he convened the parliament of that country. He there produced the proofs of his superiority, which he alleged

were unquestionable, and desired their concurrence with his claims; at the same time advising them to use deliberation, and to examine all his allegations with impartial justice. To a proposal that appeared in itself so unreasonable, no immediate answer could be given; for, where all is defective, it is not easy to submit to the combating a part: the barons, therefore, continued silent; and Edward, interpreting this for a consent, addressed himself to the several competitors to the crown; and previous to his appointing one of them as his vassal, he required their acknowledgment of his superiority. He naturally concluded that none of them would venture to disoblige the man who was unanimously appointed to be the arbitrator of his pretensions. Nor was he deceived; he found them all equally obsequious on this occasion. Robert Bruce was the first who made the acknowledgment, and the rest quickly followed his example. Edward, being thus become the superior of the kingdom, undertook next to consider which of the candidates was the fittest to be appointed under him; or it may be, as they appeared all indifferent to him, which had the justest claim. In order to give this deliberation the appearance of impartiality, a hundred commissioners were appointed; forty of them being chosen by the candidates who were in the interests of John Baliol; forty, by those in the interests of Robert Bruce; and twenty, who were chosen by Edward himself. Having thus fitted matters to his satisfaction, he left the commissioners to sit at Berwick; and went southward, to free their deliberations from all shadow of restraint. The subject of the dispute ultimately rested in this question: Whether Baliol, who was descended from the elder sister, but further removed by one degree, was to be preferred before Bruce, who was actually the younger sister's son? The rights of inheritance, as at present generally practised over Europe, were even at that time pretty well ascertained; and not only the commissioners, but many of the best lawyers of the age, universally concurred in affirming Baliol's superior claim. Edward, therefore, pronounced sentence in his favour; and that candidate, upon renewing his oath of fealty to England, was put in possession of the Scottish kingdom, and all its fortresses, which had been previously put in the hands of the king of England.

Baliol being thus placed upon the Scottish throne, less as a

king than as a vassal, Edward's first step was sufficient to convince that people of his intentions to stretch the prerogative to the utmost. Instead of gradually accustoming the Scots to bear the English yoke, and of sliding in his new power upon them by slow and imperceptible degrees, he began at once to give them notice of his intentions. A merchant of Gascony had presented a petition to him, importing that Alexander, the late king of Scotland, was indebted to him a large sum, which was still unpaid, notwithstanding all his solicitations to Baliol, the present king, for payment; Edward eagerly embraced this opportunity of exercising his new right, and summoned the king of Scotland to appear at Westminster, to answer in person the merchant's complaint. Upon subjects equally trivial he sent six different summonses, at different times, in one year; so that the poor Scottish king soon perceived that he was possessed of the name only, but not the authority, of a sovereign. Willing, therefore, to shake off the yoke of so troublesome a master, Baliol revolted, and procured the pope's absolution from his former oaths of homage. To strengthen his hands still more, he entered into a secret treaty with Philip, king of France, which was the commencement of a union between these two nations, that, for so many succeeding ages, was fatal to the interests of England. To confirm this alliance, the king of Scotland stipulated a marriage between his eldest son and the daughter of Philip de Valois.

Edward, to whom these transactions were no secret, endeavoured to ward the threatened blow, by being the first aggressor; and accordingly summoned John to perform the duty of a vassal, and to send him a supply of forces against an invasion from France, with which state he had for some time been at variance. He also summoned him to surrender some of his principal forts, and to appear at a parliament which was held at Newcastle. None of these commands, as he well foresaw, being complied with, he resolved to enforce obedience by marching a body of thirty thousand foot, and four thousand horse, into the heart of the kingdom of Scotland. As the Scottish nation had little reliance on the vigour or the courage of their king, they had assigned him a council of twelve noblemen to assist, or, more properly speaking, to superintend his proceedings. They raised an army of forty thousand men for the present emergency, and marched



them to the frontiers, which Edward was now preparing to attack. But some of the most considerable of the Scottish nobility, among whom were Robert Bruce and his son, endeavoured to ingratiate themselves with Edward by an early submission, which served not a little to intimidate those who still adhered to their king. The progress, therefore, of the English arms was extremely rapid; Berwick was taken by assault, sir William Douglas, the governor, made prisoner, and a garrison of seven thousand men put to the sword. Elated by these advantages, Edward dispatched the earl Warrene, with ten thousand men, to lay siege to Dunbar; and the Scots, sensible of the importance of that place, advanced with their whole army, under the command of the earls of Mar, Buchan, and Lenox, to relieve it. Although the superiority of the numbers was greatly on their side, yet courage and discipline were entirely on that of the English. The conflict was of short continuance; the Scots were soon thrown into confusion, and twenty thousand of their men were slain upon the field of battle. The castle of Dunbar, with all its garrison, surrendered the day following; and Edward, who was now come up with the main body of his army, led them onward into the country to certain conquest. The castles of the greatest strength and importance opened their gates to him almost without resistance; and the whole southern part of the country acknowledged the conqueror. The northern parts were not so easily reducible, being defended by the inaccessible mountains, and intricate forests, that deform the face of that country. To make himself master of this part of the kingdom, Edward reinforced his army with numbers of men levied in Ireland and Wales, who, being used to this kind of desultory war, were best qualified to seek or pursue the latent enemy. But Baliol made these preparations unnecessary; he found that a ready submission was more safe and easy than a fierce resistance drawn out among mountainous deserts, and those solitudes made still more dreadful by famine. He hastened, therefore, to make his peace with the victor, and expressed the deepest repentance for his former disloyalty. To satisfy him still further, he made a solemn resignation of the crown into his hands; and the whole kingdom soon after followed his example. Edward, thus master of the kingdom, took every precaution to secure his title, and to abolish those distinctions which might be apt to keep the nation in its former independence.

He carefully destroyed all records and monuments of antiquity that inspired the people with a spirit of national pride. He carried away a stone, which the traditions of the vulgar pretended to have been Jacob's pillow, on which all their kings were seated when they were anointed. This, the antient tradition had assured them, was the mark of their government, and wherever it was placed their command was always to follow. The great seal of Baliol was broken; and that unhappy monarch himself was carried as a prisoner to London, and committed to custody in the Tower. Two years afterwards he was restored to his liberty, and banished to France, where he died in a private station, without making any further attempts to reinstate himself upon the throne; happier perhaps in privacy than if gratified in the pursuits of ambition.

The cessation which was given to Edward by those successes, in his insular dominions, induced him to turn his ambition to the continent, where he expected to recover a part of those territories that had been usurped from his crown during the imbecility of his predecessors. There had been a rupture with France some time before, upon a very trifling occasion. A Norman and English ship met off the coast, near Bayonne, and having both occasion to draw water from the same spring, there happened a quarrel for the preference. This scuffle, in which a Norman was slain, produced a complaint to the king of France, who desired the complainant to take his own revenge, and not bring such matters before him. This the Normans did shortly after; for, seizing the crew of a ship in the Channel, they hanged a part of them, together with some dogs, in the presence of all their companions. This produced a retaliation from the English cinqueports; and the animosity of the merchants on both sides being wrought up to fury, the sea became a scene of piracy and murder. No quarter was given on either side; the mariners were destroyed by thousands; and at last the affair became too serious for the sovereigns of either side to continue any longer unconcerned spectators. Some ineffectual overtures were made for an accommodation; but Edward, seeing that it was likely to come to an open rupture, gave orders for having his territory of Guienne, upon the continent, put into a posture of defence. Nor was he remiss in making treaties with several neighbouring princes, whose

assistance he purchased, though greatly to the diminution of his scanty revenues. He even sent an army, collected in England from the jails, which had been filled with robbers in the former reign, and who were now made serviceable to the state. These, though at first successful under the command of John de Bretagne, earl of Richmond, were, however, soon repulsed by the French army, under the command of Charles, brother to the king of France. Yet it was not easy to discourage [1296.] Edward from any favourite pursuit. In about three years after, he again renewed his attempts upon Guienne, and sent thither an army of seven thousand men, under the command of his brother, the earl of Lancaster. That prince gained, at first, some advantages over the French at Bordeaux: but he was soon after seized with a distemper, of which he died at Bayonne.

The king, finding his attempts upon that quarter unsuccessful, resolved to attack France upon another, where he hoped that kingdom would be more vulnerable. He formed an alliance with John, earl of Holland, by giving him his daughter Elizabeth in marriage; and also with Guy, earl of Flanders, whose assistance he procured for the stipulated sum of seventy-five thousand pounds. From these assistances he entertained hopes of being once more able to recover his hereditary dominions; and he accordingly set himself earnestly about providing money for such an arduous undertaking. This was not obtained without the greatest struggles with his clergy and the people; so that when he came to take the field in Flanders, at the head of an army of fifty thousand men, the proper season of action was lost; wherefore the king of France and he were glad to come to an accommodation, by which they agreed to submit their differences to the arbitration of the pope. By this mediation it was agreed between them, that their union should be cemented with a double marriage,—that of Edward with Margaret, Philip's sister; and that of the prince of Wales with Isabella, the French monarch's daughter. Philip was prevailed on to restore Guienne to the English. He agreed also to abandon the king of Scotland, upon condition that Edward should in like manner neglect the earl of Flanders. Thus, after a very expensive war, the two monarchs were obliged to sit down just where they began; and instead of making preparations against each other, they resolved to turn the weight of their power upon their weaker neighbours.

But though this expedition was thus fruitlessly terminated, yet the expenses which were requisite for fitting it out were not only burthensome to the king, but even, in the event, threatened to shake him on his throne. In order at first to set the great machine in movement, he raised considerable supplies by means of his parliament; and that august body was then first modelled by him into the form in which it continues to this day. As the great part of the property of the kingdom was now, by the introduction of commerce, and the improvement of agriculture, transferred from the barons to the lower classes of the people, so their consent was thought necessary for the raising any considerable supplies. For this reason he issued writs to the sheriffs, enjoining them to send to parliament, along with two knights of the shire (as in the former reign), two deputies from each borough within their county, and these provided with sufficient powers from their constituents to grant such demands as they should think reasonable for the safety of the state. The charges of these deputies were to be borne by the borough which sent them; and so far were they from considering their deputation as an honour, nothing could be more displeasing to any borough than to be thus obliged to send a deputy, or to any individual than to be thus chosen. However, the authority of these commoners increased by time. Their union gave them weight; and it became customary among them, in return for the supplies which they had granted, to prefer petitions to the crown for the redress of those grievances under which they supposed the nation to labour. The more the king's necessities increased, the more he found it expedient to give them an early redress, till from requesting the commons proceeded to requiring; and, having all the property of the nation, they by degrees began to be possessed of the power. Such was the constitution of that parliament to which Edward applied for assistance against France. He obtained from the barons and knights a grant of the twelfth of their moveables; from the boroughs an eighth; and from the clergy he resolved to exact a fifth; but he there found an unexpected resistance. This body of men, who had already felt the weight of his necessities, resolved to avail themselves of any pretext rather than thus submit to such a heavy and disproportioned imposition. The pope had sometime before issued a bull, prohibiting the clergy from

paying taxes to any temporal prince, without permission from the see of Rome ; and those of England now pleaded conscience, in refusing to comply with the king's demand. They alleged, that they owed obedience to two sovereigns, a spiritual and a temporal ; but that their eternal happiness bound them to obey one, while only their worldly safety led them to acknowledge the commands of the other. Edward was somewhat mortified at their refusal, but employed their own arguments with great force against them. He refused them his temporal protection, ordered his judges to receive no cause brought before them by the clergy, but to hear and decide all causes in which they were defendants ; to do every man justice against them ; and to deny them justice even under the greatest injury.

In this outlawed situation they suffered numberless hardships from every ruffian, while the king's officers remained unconcerned spectators of the ravages committed upon them, without incurring the hatred of oppressive or vindictive cruelty. Whenever the clergy ventured from home, they were dismounted from their horses, and robbed of their clothes ; the primate himself was attacked on the highway, and stripped of all his equipage and furniture. These severities at length prevailed ; and the clergy agreed to lay the sums they were taxed in some church appointed them, which were to be taken away by the king's officers. Thus at once they obeyed the king, without incurring the censures of the pope. But though these sums were very great, yet they were by no means adequate to the wants of the state. New taxes were therefore arbitrarily imposed. Edward laid a duty of forty shillings a sack upon wool ; he required the sheriffs of each county to supply him with two thousand quarters of wheat, and as many of oats, without considering the means by which they were to be obtained. These he levied by the way of loans, promising to pay an equivalent whenever the exigencies of the state were less pressing. Such various modes of oppression were not suffered without murmuring. The clergy were already disgusted to a man ; the people complained at those extortions they could not resist ; while many of the more powerful barons, jealous of their own privileges, as well as of national liberty, gave countenance to the general discontent.

The first symptoms of this spirit of resistance appeared upon

the king's ordering Humphry Bohun, the constable, and Roger Bigod, the mareshal of England, to take the command of an army that he proposed to send over into Gascony, while he himself intended to make a diversion on the side of Flanders. But these two powerful noblemen refused to obey his orders, alleging, that they were obliged by their offices to attend him only in the wars, and not to conduct his armies. A violent altercation ensued. The king, addressing himself to the constable, cried out, "Sir earl, by God, you shall either go or be hanged." To which the haughty baron replied, "Sir king, by God, I will neither go nor be hanged." This opposition quite defeated his scheme for the conquest of Guienne. He found he had driven prerogative a little too far; and with that presence of mind which always brought him back, when he had the least gone beyond the line of discretion, he desired to be reconciled to his barons, to the church, and to his people. He therefore pleaded the urgent necessities of the crown, and promised, upon his return from Flanders, whither he was then going, to redress all grievances, to restore the execution of the laws, and to make his subjects compensation for the losses which they had sustained. These professions served pretty well to allay the kindling discontents of the nation during his absence abroad, except that the ensuing parliament only the two noblemen, attended by a great body of cavalry and infantry, took possession of the city gates, and obliged the king's council to sign the Magna Charta, and to add a clause, to secure the nation forever against all impositions and taxes without the consent of parliament. This the council readily agreed to sign; and the king himself, when it was sent over to him in Flanders, after some hesitation, thought proper to do the same. These concessions he again confirmed upon his return; and though it was probable he was averse to granting them, yet he was at last brought to give a plenary consent to all the articles that were demanded of him. Thus, after the contest of an age, the Magna Charta was finally established; nor was it the least circumstance in its favour, that its confirmation was procured from one of the greatest and boldest princes that ever swayed the English sceptre.

But though the confirmation of this charter was obtained without much violence, yet it is probable, that the disturbance given

by Scotland about the same time might have hastened [1297.] its final execution. That fierce nation, which had been conquered some time before with so much ease, still discovered a spirit of independence, that no severity could restrain, nor defeats subdue. The earl Warenne had been left justiciary in that kingdom; and his prudence and moderation were equal to his valour. He therefore protected the people with his justice, as he had subdued them by his arms: but being obliged, by the bad state of his health, to leave that kingdom, he left the administration in the hands of two very improper ministers; the one, whose name was Ormesby, was rigorous and cruel; the other, called Cressingham, was avaricious and mean. Under such an administration little stability could be expected; and their injustice soon drove this distressed people into open rebellion. A few of those who had fled into the most inaccessible mountains from the arms of Edward, took this opportunity to pour down and strike for freedom. They were headed by William Wallace, so celebrated in Scottish story, the younger son of a gentleman who lived in the western part of the kingdom. He was a man of gigantic stature, incredible strength, and amazing intrepidity; eagerly desirous of independence, and possessed with the most disinterested spirit of patriotism. To this man had resorted all those who were obnoxious to the English government; the proud, the bold, the criminal, and the ambitious. These, bred among dangers and hardships themselves, could not forbear admiring in their leader a degree of patience, under fatigue and famine, which they supposed beyond the power of human nature to endure; he soon, therefore, became the principal object of their affection and their esteem. His first exploits were confined to petty ravages and occasional attacks upon the English. As his forces increased, his efforts became more formidable; every day brought accounts of his great actions; his party was joined first by the desperate, and then by the enterprising; at last, all who loved their country came to take shelter under his protection. Thus reinforced, he formed a plan of surprising Ormesby, the unworthy English minister, who resided at Scone; but though this tyrant escaped the meditated irruption, yet his effects served to recompense the insurgents. From this time, the Scots began to grow too powerful for the English that were appointed to govern them; many of their princi-

pal barons joined the insurgents; sir William Douglas was among the foremost openly to avow his attachment; while Robert Bruce more secretly favoured and promoted the cause. To oppose this unexpected insurrection, earl Warrenne collected an army of forty thousand men in the North of England, and prepared to attack the Scots, who had by this time crossed the borders, and had begun to ravage the country. He suddenly entered Annandale, and came up with the enemy at Irvine, where he surprised their forces, who, being inferior in number, capitulated, and promised to give hostages for their future fidelity. Most of the nobility renewed their oaths, and joined the English army with reluctance, waiting a more favourable occasion for vindicating their freedom. Wallace alone disdained submission; but, with his faithful followers, marched northwards, with a full intention to protract the hour of slavery as long as he could. In the mean time, Warrenne advanced in the pursuit, and overtook him, where he was advantageously posted, in the neighbourhood of Stirling, on the other side of the river Forth. The earl, perceiving the favourable ground he had chosen, was for declining the engagement: but being pressed by Cressingham, a proud man, whose private revenge operated over his judgment, the old earl was at last obliged to comply, and he passed over a part of his army to begin the attack. Wallace, allowing such numbers of the English to get over as he thought himself superior to, boldly advanced upon them before they were completely formed, and put them entirely to the rout. Part were pursued into the river that lay in the rear, and the rest were cut to pieces. Among the slain was Cressingham himself, whose memory was so extremely odious to the Scots, that they flayed his dead body, and made saddles of his skin. Warrenne retired with the remains of his army to Berwick, while his pursuers took such castles as were but ill provided for a siege. Wallace returned into Scotland, after having thus, for a time, saved his country, laden with an immense plunder, with which he for a while dispelled the prospect of famine, that seemed to threaten the nation.

[1297.] Edward, who had been over in Flanders while these misfortunes happened in England, hastened back with impatience to restore his authority, and secure his former conquests. As the discontents of the people were not yet entirely



appeased, he took every popular measure that he thought would give them satisfaction. He restored to the citizens of London the power of electing their own magistrates, of which they had been deprived in the latter part of his father's reign. He ordered strict inquiries to be made concerning the quantity of corn which he had arbitrarily seized for the use of his armies, as if he intended to pay the value to the owners. Thus having appeased, if not satisfied, all complaints, he levied the whole force of his dominions; and, at the head of a hundred thousand men, he directed his march to the North, fully resolved to take vengeance upon the Scots for their late defection.

It may easily be supposed that the Scots, even if united, were but ill able to resist such an army, commanded by such a king; but their own mutual dissensions served to render them still more unequal to the contest, and to prepare Edward's way to an easy triumph. The Scots were headed by three commanders, who each claimed an equal share of authority; these were the steward of Scotland, Cummin of Badenoch, and William Wallace, who offered to give up his command, but whose party refused to follow any other leader. The Scotch army was posted at Falkirk, and there proposed to abide the assault of the English. They were drawn up in three separate divisions, each forming a complete body of pikemen, and the intervals filled up with archers. Their horses were placed in the rear, and their front was secured with palisadoes.

Edward, though he saw that the advantage of situation was against him, little regarded such a superiority, confident of his skill and his numbers; wherefore, dividing his forces also into three bodies, he led them to the attack. Just as he advanced at the head of his troops, the Scots set up such a shout, that the horse upon which the king rode took fright, threw, and afterwards kicked him on the ribs as he lay on the ground; but the intrepid monarch, though sorely bruised with his fall, quickly mounted again with his usual alacrity, and ordered the Welsh troops to begin the attack. These made but a feeble resistance against the Scots, who fought with determined valour; but Edward, seeing them begin to decline, advanced in person at the head of another battalion; and, having pulled up the palisadoes, charged the enemy with such impetuosity that they were no longer able to resist.

In this distress, Wallace did all that lay in the power of man to sustain and avert the shock; but the division commanded by Cummin quitting the field, both the divisions of the lord steward, as well as that of Wallace, lay exposed to the English archers, who at that time began to excel those of all other nations. Wallace for a while maintained an unequal contest with his pikemen; but finding himself in danger of being surrounded, he was at last obliged to give way, and slowly to draw off the poor remnant of his troops behind the river Carron. Such was the famous battle of Falkirk, in which Edward gained a complete victory, leaving twelve thousand of the Scots, or, some will have it, fifty thousand, dead upon the field of battle, while the English had not a hundred slain.

A blow so dreadful had not as yet entirely crushed the spirits of the Scotch nation; and after a short interval they began to

[1298.] breathe from their calamities. Wallace, who had gained all their regards by his valour, showed that he still merited them more by his declining the rewards of ambition. Perceiving how much he was envied by the nobility, and knowing how prejudicial that envy would prove to the interests of his country, he resigned the regency of the kingdom, and humbled himself to a private station. He proposed Cummin as the properest person to supply his room; and that nobleman endeavoured to show himself worthy of this pre-eminence. He soon began to annoy the enemy; and not content with a defensive war, he made incursions into the southern counties of the kingdom, which

[1302.] Edward had imagined wholly subdued. They attacked an army of the English lying at Roslin, near Edinburgh, and gained a complete victory. The renown of the Scottish arms soon began to spread dismay among the English garrisons left in that kingdom; and they evacuated all the fortresses of which they had for some time been put in possession. Thus once more the task of conquest was to be performed over again; and in proportion to their losses the Scots seemed to gather fresh obstinacy.

But it was not easy for any circumstances of bad fortune to repress the enterprising spirit of the king. He assembled a great fleet

[1303.] and army; and, entering the frontiers of Scotland, appeared with a force which the enemy could not think

of resisting in the open field. The fleet furnished the land army with all necessary provisions; while these marched securely along, and traversed the kingdom from one end to the other, ravaging the open country, taking all the castles, and receiving the submissions of all the nobles. This complete conquest employed Edward for the space of two years; but he seemed, by the severity of his conduct, to make the natives pay dear for the trouble to which they had put him. He abrogated all the Scottish laws and customs; he endeavoured to substitute those of England in their place; he entirely rased or destroyed all their monuments of antiquity, and endeavoured to blot out even the memory of their former independence and freedom. There seemed to remain only one obstacle to the final destruction of the Scottish monarchy; and that was William Wallace, who still continued refractory, and, wandering with a few forces from mountain to mountain, still preserved his native independence and usual good fortune. But even their feeble hopes from him were soon disappointed; he was betrayed into the king's hands by sir John Monteith, his friend, whom he had made acquainted with the place of his concealment, being surprised by him as he lay asleep in the neighbourhood of Glasgow. The king, willing to strike the Scots with an example of severity, ordered him to be conducted in chains to London, whither he was carried amidst infinite crowds of spectators, who flocked to see a man that had often filled the whole country with consternation. On the day after his arrival he was brought to his trial, as a traitor, at Westminster-hall, where he was placed upon a high chair, and crowned with laurel in derision. Being accused of various imputed crimes, he pleaded Not guilty, and refused to own the jurisdiction of the court, affirming that it was equally unjust and absurd to charge him with treason against a prince whose title he had never acknowledged; and as he was born under the laws of another country, it was cruel to try him by those to which he was a stranger. The judges disregarded his defence; for, considering Edward as the immediate sovereign of Scotland, they found him guilty of high-treason, and condemned him to be hanged, drawn, and quartered; the usual punishment for such offences. This sentence was executed with the most rigorous punctuality; and his head and quarters were exposed in the chief cities of England. Such was

the wretched end of a brave man, who had, through a course of many years, with signal perseverance and conduct, defended his native country against an unjust invader.

Robert Bruce was among those on whom the cruel fate of Wallace had made the deepest impression. This nobleman, whom we have already seen as competitor for the crown, and whose claims, though set aside by Edward, were still secretly pursued, was now actually in the English army. He never was sincerely attached to the English monarch, whom he was in some measure compelled to follow; and an interview with Wallace, some time before that champion was taken, confirmed him in his resolution to set his country free. But as he was now grown old and infirm, he was obliged to give up the flattering ambition of being the deliverer of his people, and to leave it in charge to his son, whose name was Robert Bruce also, and who received the project with ardour. This young nobleman was brave, active, and prudent; and a favourable conjuncture of circumstances seemed to conspire with his aims. John Baliol, whom Edward had dethroned and banished into France, had lately died in that country; his eldest son continued a captive in the same place; there was none to dispute his pretensions, except Cummin, who was regent of the kingdom; and he also was soon after brought over to second his interests. He therefore resolved upon freeing his country from the English yoke; and although he attended the court of Edward, yet he began to make secret preparations for his intended revolt. Edward, who had been informed not only of his intentions, but of his actual engagements, contented himself with setting spies round him to watch his conduct, and ordered all his motions to be strictly guarded. Bruce was still busily employed in his endeavours, unconscious of being suspected, or even of having guards set upon his conduct; but he was taught to understand his danger, from a present sent him, by a young nobleman of his acquaintance, of a pair of gilt spurs and a purse of gold. This he considered as a warning to make his escape; which he did by ordering his horses to be shod with their shoes turned backwards, to prevent his being tracked in the snow, which had then fallen.

His dispatch was considered then as very great; having [1306.] travelled from London to Lochmaben, which is near

four hundred miles, in seven days. Cummin, who had in the beginning concurred in his schemes, was privately known to have communicated the whole to Edward; and Bruce was resolved, in the first place, to take vengeance upon him for his perfidy. Hearing that he was then at Dumfries, he went thither, and, meeting him in the cloisters of a monastery belonging to the Gray Friars, reproached him in severe terms with his treachery; and, drawing his sword, instantly plunged it in his breast. Sir Thomas Kirkpatrick, one of Bruce's friends, asking him soon after if the traitor was slain, and Bruce answering that he believed so, "What!" replied the other, "only belief? I will secure him;" and going back to where Cummin was receiving absolution at the altar, he stabbed him to the heart. It is a disagreeable reflection, that actions begun in this manner should, nevertheless, terminate in success.

Bruce had by this action not only rendered himself the object of Edward's resentment, but involved all his party in the same guilt. They had now no resource left but to confirm by desperate valour what they had begun in cruelty; and they soon expelled such of the English forces as had fixed themselves in the kingdom. Bruce was solemnly crowned king by the bishop of St. Andrew's, in the abbey of Scone; and numbers flocked to his standard, resolved to confirm his pretensions. Thus, after twice conquering the kingdom, and as often pardoning the delinquents; after having spread his victories in every quarter of the country, and received the most humble submissions, the old king saw that his whole work was to begin afresh, and that nothing but the final destruction of the inhabitants could give him assurance of tranquillity. But no difficulties could repress the arduous spirit of this monarch, who, though now verging towards his decline, yet resolved to strike the parting blow, and to make the Scots once more tremble at his appearance. He vowed revenge against the whole nation; and averred, that nothing but reducing them to the completest bondage could satisfy his resentment. He summoned his prelates, nobility, and all who held by knight's service, to meet him at Carlisle, which was appointed as the general rendezvous; and in the mean time he detached a body of forces before him into Scotland, under the command of Aymer de Valence, who began the threatened infliction by a complete victory

over Bruce, near Methuen, in Perthshire. That warlike commander fought with great obstinacy; he was thrice dismounted from his horse in the action, and as often recovered: but at last he was obliged to fly, and take shelter, with a few followers, in the Western Isles. The earl of Athol, sir Simon Fraser, and sir Christopher Seton, who had been taken prisoners, were executed as traitors on the spot. Immediately after this dreadful blow, the resentful king himself appeared in person, entering Scotland with his army divided into two parts, and expecting to find, in the opposition of the people, a pretext for punishing them. But this brave prince, who was never cruel but from motives of policy, could not punish the poor submitting natives, who made no resistance. His anger was disappointed in their humiliation: and he was ashamed to extirpate those who only opposed patience to his indignation. It was chiefly upon the nobles of the country that the weight of his resentment fell. The sister of Bruce, and the countess of Buchan, were shut up in wooden cages, and hung over the battlements of a fortress; and his two brothers fell by the hands of the executioner. The obstinacy of this commander served to inflame the king's resentment. He still continued to excite fresh commotions in the Highlands; and, though often overcome, persisted in seemingly fruitless opposition. Edward, therefore, at last resolved to give no quarter; and at the head of a great army entered Scotland, from whence he had lately retreated, resolving to exterminate the whole body of those insurgents who seemed so implacably averse to his government. Nothing lay before the refractory Scots, but prospects of the most speedy and terrible vengeance; while neither their valour nor their mountains were found to afford them any permanent protection. But Edward's death put an end to their apprehensions, and effectually rescued their country from total subjection. He sickened and died at Carlisle of a dysentery; enjoining his son, with his last breath, to prosecute the enterprise, and never to desist till he had finally subdued the kingdom. He expired in the sixty-ninth year of his age and the thirty-fifth of his reign, after having added more to the solid interests of the kingdom than any of those who went before or have since succeeded him. He was a promoter of the happiness of the people, and seldom attempted exerting any arbitrary stretch of power.

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1307.

er, but with a prospect of increasing the welfare of his subjects. He was of a very majestic appearance, tall in stature, of regular features, with keen piercing black eyes, and an aspect that commanded reverence and esteem. His constitution was robust, his strength and dexterity unequalled, and his shape agreeable, except from the extreme length and smallness of his legs, from whence he had the appellation of Longshanks. He seemed to have united all those advantages which in that age might be considered as true glory. He gained renown by his piety in the Holy Land; he fixed the limits of justice at home; he confirmed the rights of the people; he was the most expert at martial exercises of any man in the kingdom; and was allowed to be a conqueror, by his success over the kingdom of Scotland. Succeeding times have, with great justice, questioned the merit of some of these claims; but none can deny him comparative excellence, if they look upon those princes who either went before or have succeeded. Edward, by his first wife Eleanor of Castile, had four sons, and eleven daughters; of the last, most died young; of the former, Edward the Second alone, his heir and successor, survived him.

If we turn to the state of the people during his administration, we shall find that England acquired not only great power, but great happiness, under his protection. The barons, who might, during this period, be considered as a junto of petty tyrants, ready to cry out for liberty, which they alone were to share, were kept under; and their combinations were but feeble and ill supported. The monarch was in some measure absolute, though he was prudent enough not to exert his power. He was severe, indeed; and some people tax this severity as a stain upon his memory; but let it be remembered that he was the first who began to distribute indiscriminate justice. Before his time, the people who rose in insurrections were punished in the most cruel manner by the sword or gibbet; while at the same time the nobility, who were really guilty, were treated with a degree of lenity which encouraged them to fresh insurrections. But what gave Edward's reign a true value with posterity, was the degree of power which the people began to assume during this period. The king considered the clergy and barons in some measure as rivals; and, to weaken their force, he never attempted to control the

slow but certain advances made by the people, which in time entirely destroyed the power of the one, and divided the authority of the other.

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CHAP. XIII.

EDWARD II. SURNAMED OF CAERNARVON.

THE pleasure which the people generally feel at the accession of a new prince, effaces their sorrow for the deceased ; the faults of the one are known and hated, while the other, from novelty, receives imputed merit. Much, therefore, was expected from the young prince ; and all orders hastened to take the oath of allegiance to him. He was now in the twenty-third year of his age, of an agreeable figure, of a mild harmless disposition, and apparently addicted to few vices. But he soon gave symptoms of his unfitness to succeed so great a monarch as his father ; he was rather fond of the enjoyment of his power than of securing it ; and, lulled by the flattery of his courtiers, he thought he had done enough for glory when he had accepted the crown. Instead, therefore, of prosecuting the war against Scotland, according to the injunctions he had received from his dying father, he took no steps to check the progress of Bruce ; his march into that country being rather a procession of pageantry than a warlike expedition. Bruce, no longer dreading a great conqueror in the field, boldly issued from his retreats, and even obtained a considerable advantage over Aymer de Valence, who commanded the English forces. Young Edward looked tamely on, and, instead of repressing the enemy, endeavoured to come to an accommodation. The English barons, who had been kept under during the preceding reign, now saw that the sceptre was fallen into such feeble hands, that they might re-assert their former independency with impunity.

To confirm the inauspicious conjectures that were already formed of this reign, Edward recalled one of his favourites, who was banished during his father's reign, being accused of corrupting the prince's morals. The name of this much-



loved youth was Piers Gavestone, the son of a Gascon knight, who had been employed in the service of the late king. This young man soon insinuated himself into the affections of the prince, and, in fact, was adorned with every accomplishment of person and mind that was capable of creating affection: but he was utterly destitute of those qualities of heart and understanding that serve to procure esteem. He was beautiful, witty, brave, and active; but then he was vicious, effeminate, debauched, and trifling. These were qualities entirely adapted to the taste of the young monarch, and such as he could not think of living without. He therefore took Gavestone into his particular intimacy, and seemed to think no rewards equal to his deserts. Even before his arrival at court from exile, he endowed him with the whole earldom of Cornwall, which had lately fallen to the crown. He married him soon after to his own niece, and granted him a sum of two-and-thirty thousand pounds, which the late king had reserved for the maintenance of one hundred and forty knights, who had undertaken to carry his heart to Jerusalem.

These accumulated favours did not fail to excite the jealousies and indignation of the barons; and Gavestone was no way solicitous to soften their resentment. Intoxicated with his power, he became haughty and overbearing. He treated the English nobility, from whom it is probable he received marks of contempt, with scorn and derision. Whenever there was to be a display of pomp or magnificence, Gavestone was sure to eclipse all others; and he not only mortified his rivals by his superior splendour, but by his superior insolence.

The barons were soon after still more provoked to see this presumptuous favourite appointed guardian of the realm, during a journey the king was obliged to make to Paris to espouse the princess Isabella, to whom he had been long since betrothed. They were not remiss, therefore, upon the arrival of this princess, who was imperious and intriguing, to make her of their party, and to direct her animosity against Gavestone; which, to do him justice, he took little care to avoid. A conspiracy was soon formed against him, at the head of which, queen Isabella, and the earl of Lancaster, a nobleman of great power, were associated. They bound themselves by oath to expel Gavestone, and began to throw off all reverence for the royal authority, which

they saw wholly in the possession of this overgrown favourite. At length, the king found himself obliged to submit to their united clamour; and he sent Gavestone out of the kingdom, by appointing him lord-lieutenant of Ireland. But this compliance was of short duration: the weak monarch, long habituated to his favourite, could not live without him; and having obtained a dispensation from the pope for his breach of faith, he once more recalled Gavestone, and even went down to Chester to receive him on his first landing from Ireland. A parliament was soon after assembled, where the king had influence sufficient to have his late conduct approved; and this served only to increase his ridiculous affection, and to render Gavestone still more odious. This infatuated creature himself, forgetting his past misfortunes, and unmindful of future danger, resumed his former ostentation and insolence, and made himself every day some new enemy.

It was easy to perceive that a combination of the nobles, while the queen secretly assisted their designs, would be too powerful against the efforts of a weak king and a vain favourite. They were resolved upon the fall of Gavestone, even though that of Edward himself should be involved in the same ruin. They soon therefore assembled in a tumultuary parliament, contrary to the king's express command, attended with a numerous retinue of armed followers, and began their first usurpation by giving laws to the king. They compelled him to sign a commission, March 16, 1308. by which the whole authority of government was to be delegated to twelve persons, to be chosen by themselves. These were to have the government of the kingdom, and the regulation of the king's household. They were to enact ordinances for the good of the state, and the honour of the king; their commission was to continue for six months; and then they were to lay down their authority. Many of their ordinances were accordingly put in force; and some of them appeared for the advantage of the nation; such as the requiring that the sheriffs should be men of property; the prohibiting the adulteration of the coin; the excluding foreigners from farming the revenues; and the revoking all the late exorbitant grants of the crown. All these the king, who saw himself entirely stript of his power, could very patiently submit to; but when he learned that Gavestone was to be banished forever from his dominions, he no longer was master of his tem-

per; but removing to York, where he was at a small distance from the immediate terror of the confederated power, he instantly invited Gavestone back from Flanders, whither the barons had banished him; and declaring his punishment and sentence to be illegal, he openly reinstated him in all his former splendours. This was sufficient to spread an alarm over the whole kingdom; all the great barons flew to arms; the earl of [1312.] Lancaster put himself at the head of this irresistible confederacy; Guy, earl of Warwick, entered into it with fury; the earl of Hereford, the earl of Pembroke, and the earl Warenne, all embraced the same cause;—whilst the archbishop of Canterbury brought over the majority of the ecclesiastics, and consequently of the people. The unhappy Edward, instead of attempting to make resistance, sought only for safety: ever happy in the company of his favourite, he embarked at Tinmouth, and sailed with him to the castle of Scarborough, where he left Gavestone as in a place of safety; and then went back to York himself, either to raise an army to oppose his enemies, or, by his presence, to allay their animosity. In the mean time Gavestone was besieged in Scarborough by the earl of Pembroke; and had the garrison been sufficiently supplied with provisions, that place would have been impregnable. But Gavestone, sensible of the bad condition of the garrison, took the earliest opportunity to offer terms of capitulation. He stipulated, that he should remain in Pembroke's hands as a prisoner for two months; and that endeavours should be used, in the mean time, for a general accommodation. But Pembroke had no intention that he should escape so easily; he ordered him to be conducted to the castle of Deddington, near Banbury, where, on pretence of other business, he left him with a feeble guard; which the earl of Warwick having notice of, he attacked the castle in which the unfortunate Gavestone was confined, and quickly made himself master of his person. The earls of Lancaster, Hereford, and Arundel, were soon apprised of Warwick's success, and informed that their common enemy was now in custody at Warwick castle. Thither, therefore, they hastened with the utmost expedition, to hold a consultation upon the fate of their prisoner. This was of no long continuance; they unanimously resolved to put him to death, as an enemy to the kingdom, and gave him no time to prepare for his execution.

They instantly had him conveyed to a place called Blacklow-hill, where a Welsh executioner, provided for that purpose, severed the head from the body. There appeared a deeper spirit of cruelty now entering into the nation than had been known in times of barbarism and ignorance. It is probable, that the mutual slaughters committed by the Christians and Saracens upon each other, in the crusades, made the people familiar with blood, and taught Christians to butcher each other with the same alacrity with which they were seen to destroy infidels, to whom they seldom gave any quarter.

The king at first seemed to feel all the resentment which so sensible an injury could produce; but, equally weak in his attachment and his revenge, he was soon appeased, and granted the perpetrators a free pardon, upon their making a show of submission and repentance. An apparent tranquillity was once more established among the contending parties; and that resentment which they had exercised upon each other, was now converted against the Scots, who were considered as the common enemy. A war had been declared some time before with this nation, in order to recover that authority over them which had been established in the former reign, and a truce was soon after concluded; but, the terms of it being ill observed on both sides, the animosities were kindled afresh, and the whole military force of England was called out by the king, together with very large reinforcements, as well from the continent as other parts of the English dominions. Edward's army amounted to a hundred thousand men; while Bruce, king of Scotland, could bring but a body of thirty thousand to oppose him. Both armies met at a place called Bannockburn, in the kingdom of Scotland, within two miles of Stirling; the one confident in numbers, the other relying wholly on its advantageous position. Bruce had a hill on his right flank, and a bog on his left; with a rivulet in front, on the banks of which he had caused several deep pits to be dug, with sharp stakes driven into them, and the whole carefully concealed from the view of the enemy. The onset was made by the English; and a very furious engagement ensued between the cavalry on both sides. The fortune and intrepidity of Bruce gave the first turn to the day. He engaged in single combat with Henry de Bohun, a gentleman of the family of Hereford; and at one stroke clove his

skull with his battle-axe to the chin. So favourable a beginning was only interrupted by the night; for, the battle renewing at the dawn of the ensuing day, the English cavalry once more attempted to attack the Scottish army, but unexpectedly found themselves entangled among those pits which Bruce had previously made to receive them. The earl of Gloucester, the king's nephew, was overthrown and slain: this served to intimidate the whole English army; and they were soon still more alarmed by the appearance of a fresh army, as they supposed it to be, that was preparing, from a neighbouring height, to fall upon them in the rear. This was only composed of wagoners and attendants upon the Scottish camp, who had been supplied by the king with standards, and ordered to make as formidable an appearance as they could. The stratagem took effect: the English, intimidated by their losses, and distracted by their fears, began to fly on all sides; and, throwing away their arms, were pursued with great slaughter as far as Berwick.

Edward himself narrowly escaped by flight to Dunbar, where he was received by the earl of Marche, and thence conveyed in safety by sea to Berwick. This battle was decisive in favour of the Scots. It secured the independence of the crown of that kingdom; and such was the influence of so great a defeat upon the minds of the English, that for some years after no superiority of numbers could induce them to take the field against their formidable adversaries.

Want of success is ever attended with want of authority. The king, having suffered not only a defeat from [1314.] the Scots, but also having been weakened by several insurrections among the Welsh and Irish, found his greatest afflictions still remaining in the turbulence and insolence of his subjects at home. The nobility, ever factious, now took the advantage of his feeble situation to depress his power, and re-establish their own. The earl of Lancaster, and those of his party, no sooner saw the unfortunate monarch return with disgrace, than they renewed their demands, and were reinstated in their former power of governing the kingdom. It was declared, that all offices should be filled from time to time by the votes of parliament; which, as they were influenced by the great barons, these effectually took all government into their own hands. Thus, from every fresh calam-

ity the state suffered; the barons acquired new power; and their aims were not so much to repress the enemies of their country, as to foment new animosities, and strengthen every foreign confederacy.

A confirmed opposition generally produces an opposite combination. The king, finding himself thus steadily counteracted by all his subjects, had no resource but in another favourite, on whom he reposed all confidence, and from whose connections he hoped for assistance. The name of this new favourite was Hugh Despenser, a young man of a noble English family, of some merit, and very engaging accomplishments. His father was a person of a much more estimable character than the son; he was venerable from his years, and respected through life for his wisdom, his valour, and his integrity. But these excellent qualities were all diminished and vilified, from the moment he and his son began to share the king's favour. The turbulent barons, and Lancaster at their head, regarded them as rivals, and taught the people to despise those accomplishments that only served to eclipse their own. The king, equally weak and unjust in his attachments, instead of profiting by the wisdom of his favourites, endeavoured to strengthen himself by their power. For this purpose he married the young Spenser to his niece; he settled upon him some very large possessions in the marches of Wales; and even dispossessed some lords unjustly of their estates, in order to accumulate them upon his favourite. This was a pretext the king's enemies had been long seeking for: the earls of Lancaster and Hereford flew to arms; and the lords Audley and Ammori, who had been dispossessed, joined them with all their forces. Their first measure was to require the king to dismiss or confine his favourite, the young Spenser; menacing him, in case of a refusal, with a determination to obtain by force what should be denied to their importunities. This request was scarce made, when they began to show their resolution to have redress, by pillaging and destroying the lands of young Spenser, and burning his houses. The estates of the father soon after shared the same fate; and the insurgents, having thus satiated themselves with the plunder of this most opulent family, marched to London, to inflict with their own hands that punishment which had been denied to their remonstrances. Finding a free entrance into the city, they so

intimidated the parliament that was then sitting, that a sentence was procured of perpetual exile against the two Spensers, and a forfeiture of their fortune and estates. But an act of this kind, extorted by violence, was not likely to bind the king any longer than necessity compelled him. Some time after, having assembled a small army to punish one of the barons, who had offered an indignity to the queen, he thought it a convenient opportunity to take revenge on all his enemies at once, and to recall the two Spensers, whose company he so ardently desired. In this manner the civil war was kindled afresh, and the country once more involved in all the horrors of slaughter and devastation.

The king had now got the start of his adversaries, and hastened by forced marches towards the borders of Wales, where the enemy's chief power lay. Lancaster, however, was not slow in making head against him; having summoned together all his vassals and retainers, and being joined by the earl of Hereford. Still further to strengthen his party, he formed an alliance with the king of Scotland, with whom he had long been privately connected. But his diligence on this occasion proved ineffectual: the king, at the head of thirty thousand men, pressed him so closely, that he had not time to collect his forces together; and, flying from one place to another, he was at last stopt in his way towards Scotland by sir Andrew Harcla, who repulsed his forces in a skirmish, in which the earl of Hereford was slain, and Lancaster himself taken prisoner. As he had formerly shown little mercy to Gaveston, there was very little extended to him upon this occasion. He was condemned by the court martial; and led, mounted on a lean horse, to an eminence near Pomfret, in circumstances of the greatest indignity, where he was beheaded by a Londoner. The people, with whom he had once been a favourite, seemed to have quite forsaken him in his disgrace; they reviled him, as he was led to execution, with every kind of reproach; and even his own vassals seemed eager to remove suspicion, by their being foremost to insult his distress. About eighteen more of the princial insurgents were afterwards condemned and executed in a more legal manner, while others found safety by escaping to the continent.

A rebellion thus crushed, served only to increase the pride and rapacity of young Spenser; most of the forfeitures were seized

for his use ; and in his promptitude to punish the delinquents, he was found guilty of many acts of rapine and injustice. He himself laid the train for his own future misfortunes, and an occasion soon offered for putting it into effect against him. [1324.] The king of France, taking the advantage of Edward's weakness, resolved to confiscate all his foreign dominions. After a fruitless embassy from Edward, to dissuade that monarch from his purpose, the queen of England herself desired permission to go over to the court of France, to endeavour to avert the storm. The French king, though he gave her the kindest reception, was resolved to listen to no accommodation, unless Edward in person should appear, and do him homage for the dominions he held under him. This was reckoned a very dangerous step ; and what the king of England could not think of complying with, nor what his favourite Spenser was willing to permit. In this exigence, the queen started a new expedient, which seemed calculated to get rid of all difficulties. It was, that Edward should resign the dominion of Guienne to his son, now thirteen years of age ; and that the young prince should go to Paris, to pay that homage which had been required of the father. With this proposal all parties agreed ; young Edward was sent to Paris ; and the queen, a haughty and ambitious woman, having thus got her son in her power, was resolved to detain him till her own aims were complied with. Among the number of these was the expulsion of the Spensers, against whom she had conceived a violent hatred, from their great influence over the king.

In consequence of this resolution she protracted the negotiation for some time ; and being at last required by the king to return, she replied, that she would never again appear in England till Spenser was removed from the royal presence, and banished the kingdom. By this reply, she gained two very considerable advantages ; she became popular in England, where Spenser was universally disliked ; and she had the pleasure of enjoying the company of a young nobleman, whose name was Mortimer, upon whom she had lately placed her affections. This youth had, in some former insurrection, been condemned for high treason, but had the sentence commuted into perpetual imprisonment in the Tower. From thence, however, he had the good fortune to escape into France, and soon became distinguished among his par-



ty for his violent animosity to Spenser. The graces of his person and address, but particularly his dislike to the favourite, rendered him very acceptable to the queen; so that, from being a partisan, he became a lover, and was indulged with all the familiarities that her criminal passion could confer. The queen's court now, therefore, became a sanctuary for all the malcontents who were banished their own country, or who chose to come over. A correspondence was secretly carried on with the discontented at home; and nothing now was aimed at but to destroy the favourites, and dethrone the king.

To second the queen's efforts, many of the principal nobles prepared their vassals, and loudly declared [1325.] against the favourite. The king's brother, the earl of Kent, was led into engage among the rest; the earl of Norfolk was prevailed upon to enter secretly into the conspiracy; the brother and heir to the earl of Lancaster was from principle attached to the cause: the archbishop of Canterbury expressed his approbation of the queen's measures; and the minds of the people were enflamed by all those arts which the designing practise upon the weak and ignorant. In this universal disposition to rebel, the queen prepared for her expedition; and, accompanied by three thousand men at arms, set out from Dort harbour and landed safely, without opposition, on the coast of Suffolk. She no sooner appeared than there seemed a general revolt in her favour; three prelates, the bishops of Ely, Lincoln, and Hereford, brought her all their vassals; and Robert de Watteville, who had been sent to oppose her progress, deserted to her with all his forces.

In this exigence the unfortunate Edward vainly attempted to collect his friends, and bring the malcontents to their duty; he was obliged to leave the capital to the resentment of the prevailing party; and the populace, immediately upon his desertion, flew out into those excesses, which are the consequence of brutality unrestrained by fear. They seized Walter Stapleton, bishop of Exeter, as he was passing through the city, beheaded him without any form of trial, and threw his body into the Thames. They also seized upon the Tower, and agreed to show no mercy to any who should oppose their attempts. In the mean time, the king found the spirit of disloyalty was not confined to the capital alone, but diffused over the whole kingdom. He had placed

some dependence upon the garrison, which was stationed in the castle of Bristol, under the command of the elder Spenser; but they mutinied against their governor, and that unfortunate favourite was delivered up, and condemned by the tumultuous barons to the most ignominious death. He was hanged on a gibbet in his armour, his body was cut to pieces and thrown to the dogs, and his head was sent to Winchester, where it was set on a pole, and exposed to the insults of the populace. Thus died the elder Spenser, in his ninetieth year, whose character even the malevolence of party could not tarnish. He had passed a youth of tranquillity and reputation; but his fond compliance with his son's ambition at length involved his age in ruin, though not disgrace.

Young Spenser, the unhappy son, did not long survive the father; he was taken with some others who had followed the fortunes of the wretched king, in an obscure convent in Wales, and the merciless victors resolved to glut their revenge in adding insult to cruelty. The queen had not patience to wait the formality of a trial; but ordered him immediately to be led forth before the insulting populace, and seemed to take a savage pleasure in feasting her eyes with his distresses. The gibbet erected for his execution was fifty feet high; his head was sent to London, where the citizens received it in brutal triumph, and fixed it on the bridge. Several other lords also shared his fate; all deserving pity indeed, had they not themselves formerly justified the present inhumanity, by setting a cruel example.

In the mean time the king, who hoped to find refuge in Wales, was quickly discovered, and closely pursued by his triumphant enemies. Finding no hopes of succour in that part of the country, he took shipping for Ireland; but even there his wretched fortune seemed willing to persecute him; he was driven back by contrary winds, and delivered up to his adversaries, who expressed their satisfaction in the grossness of their treatment. He was conducted to the capital, amidst the insults and reproaches of the people, and confined in the Tower. A charge was soon after exhibited against him; in which no other crimes but his incapacity to govern, his indolence, his love of pleasure, and his being swayed by evil counsellors, were objected against him. His deposition was quickly voted by parliament; he was assigned a pension for his support; his son Edward, a youth of fourteen,

was fixed upon to succeed him, and the queen was appointed regent during the minority.

The deposed monarch but a short time survived his misfortunes ; he was sent from prison to prison, a wretched [1327.] outcast, and the sport of his inhuman keepers. He had been at first consigned to the custody of the earl of Lancaster ; but this nobleman showing some marks of respect and pity, he was taken out of his hands, and delivered over to lord Berkeley, Montravers, and Gournay, who were intrusted with the charge of guarding him month about. Whatever his treatment from lord Berkeley might have been, the other two seemed resolved that he should enjoy none of the comforts of life while in their custody. They practised every kind of indignity upon him, as if their design had been to accelerate his death by the bitterness of his sufferings. Among other acts of brutal oppression, it is said that they shaved him for sport in the open fields, using water from a neighbouring ditch. The genius of the people must have been greatly debased, or they would never have permitted such indecencies to be practised on a monarch, whose greatest fault was the violence of his friendships. He is said to have borne his former indignities with patience, but all fortitude forsook him upon this occasion ; he looked upon his merciless insulters with an air of fallen majesty, and, bursting into tears, exclaimed, that the time might come when he should be more decently attended. This, however, was but a vain expectation. As his persecutors saw that his death might not arrive, even under every cruelty, till a revolution had been made in his favour, they resolved to rid themselves of their fears by destroying him at once. Accordingly, his two keepers, Gournay and Montravers, came to Berkeley castle, where Edward was then confined ; and having concerted a method of putting him to death without any external signs of violence, they threw him on a bed, holding him down by a table, which they placed over him. They then ran a horn pipe up his body, through which they conveyed a red-hot iron ; and thus burnt his bowels, without disfiguring his body. By this cruel artifice, they expected to have their crime concealed ; but his horrid shrieks, which were heard at a distance from the castle, soon gave a suspicion of the murder ; and the whole was soon after divulged, by the confession of one of the accomplices. Misfortunes

like his must ever create pity; and a punishment so disproportionate to the sufferer's guilt must wipe away even many of those faults of which Edward was justly culpable. He left behind him four children, two sons, and two daughters: Edward was his eldest son and successor; John died young; Jane was afterwards married to David Bruce, king of Scotland; and Eleanor was married to Reginald, count of Gueldres.

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CHAP. XIV.

EDWARD III.

**T**HE parliament by which young Edward was raised to the throne, during the life of his father, appointed twelve persons as his privy-council, to direct the operations of government. Mortimer, the queen's paramour, who might naturally be set down as one of the members, artfully excluded himself, under a pretended show of moderation; but at the same time he secretly influenced all the measures that came under their deliberation. He caused the greatest part of the royal revenues to be settled on the queen-dowager, and seldom took the trouble to consult the ministers of government in any public undertaking. The king himself was so besieged by the favourite's creatures, that no access could be procured to him, and the whole sovereign authority was shared between Mortimer and the queen, who took no care to conceal her criminal attachment.

A government so constituted could not be of long continuance; and the slightest shock was sufficient to overturn that power which was founded neither in strength nor virtue. An irruption of the Scots gave the first blow to Mortimer's credit; and young Edward's own abilities contributed to its ruin. The Scots, who had no connection with either party, were resolved to take advantage of the feeble state of the nation; and, without regarding the truce that subsisted between the two kingdoms, attempted to surprise the castle of Norham. This commencement of hostilities they soon after seconded by a formidable invasion on the northern counties, with an army of twenty thousand men. Ed-

ward, even at this early age, discovered that martial disposition for which he was afterwards so famous. He resolved to intercept them in their retreat; and began his march in the middle of July, at the head of an army of threescore thousand men; but after undergoing incredible fatigues, in pursuing them through woods and morasses, he was unable to perceive any signs of an enemy, except from the ravages they had made, and the smoking ruins of villages which they had set on fire. In this disappointment, he had no other resource but to offer a reward to any who should discover the place where the Scots were posted. This the enemy understanding, sent him word that they were ready to meet him and give him battle. However, they had taken so advantageous a situation, on the opposite banks of the river Ware, that the king found it impracticable to attack them; and no threats could bring them to a battle upon equal terms. [1327.]

It was in this situation that the first breach was discovered between the king and Mortimer, the queen's favourite. This young monarch, all ardour to engage, resolved that night, at all hazards, not to allow the ravagers to escape with impunity; but Mortimer opposed his influence to the valour of the king, and prevented an engagement, which might be attended with the most destructive consequences to his authority, whether he won or lost the day. Shortly after, the Scots, under the command of Douglas, made an irruption into the English camp by night, and arrived at the very tent in which the king was sleeping. But the young monarch, happening to wake in the critical moment, made a valiant defence against the enemy; his chamberlain and chaplain died fighting by his side; and he thus had time given him to escape in the dark. The Scots, being frustrated in their design upon the king, were contented to decamp for their own country, leaving their tents standing, without any person behind them, except six English prisoners, whose legs had been broken to prevent their carrying intelligence to their countrymen. The escape of the Scots was as disagreeable a circumstance to the English army, as the valour of the young king was applauded and admired. The failure on one part was entirely ascribed to the queen's favourite; and the success on the other to the king's own intrepidity. The people began to wish for a removal of that au-

thority which stood between them and the monarch; and spared no pains to aggravate the faults of their governors, or to extol the rising merit of their young sovereign.

Mortimer now found himself in a very precarious situation, and was resolved, on any terms, to procure a peace with Scotland, in order to fix his power more firmly at home. A treaty was accordingly concluded between the two nations, in which the English renounced all title to sovereignty over the sister kingdom; and the Scots, in return, agreed to pay thirty thousand marks as a compensation. The next step that Mortimer thought necessary for his security, was, to seize the earl of Kent, brother to the late king, a harmless and well-meaning person, who, under a persuasion that his brother was still alive, and concealed in some secret prison, entered into a design of restoring him to liberty, and reinstating him in his former power. Him therefore Mortimer resolved to destroy; and, summoning him before parliament, had him accused, condemned, and executed, even before the young king had time to interpose in his favour. In proportion as Mortimer thus got rid of his enemies, he was careful to enrich himself with their spoils. The estate of the unfortunate earl was seized upon for the use of the favourite's youngest son: the immense fortunes of the Spencers were in like manner converted to his use. Thus his power became invidious, and his corrupt morals made it still more formidable.

It was in this posture of affairs that Edward resolved to shake off an authority which was odious to the nation, and particularly restrictive upon him. But such was the power of the favourite, that it required as much precaution to overturn the usurper as to establish the throne. The queen and Mortimer had for some time chosen the castle of Nottingham for the place of their residence; it was strictly guarded, the gates locked every evening, and the keys carried to the queen. It was therefore agreed between the king and some of his barons, who secretly entered into his designs, to seize upon them in this fortress; and for that purpose, sir William Eland, the governor, was induced to admit them by a secret subterraneous passage, which had been formerly contrived for an outlet, but was now hidden with rubbish, and known only to one or two. It was by this, that the noblemen in the king's interests entered the castle in the night; and Mortimer,

without having it in his power to make any resistance, was seized in an apartment adjoining that of the queen. It was in vain that she endeavoured to protect him ; in vain she entreated them to spare her "gentle Mortimer ;" the barons, deaf to her entreaties, denied her that pity which she had so often refused to others. Her paramour was condemned by the parliament, which was then sitting, without being permitted to make his defence, or even examining a witness against him. He was hanged on a gibbet at a place called Elmes, about a mile from London, where his body was left hanging for two days after. A similar sentence was passed against some of his adherents, particularly Gournay and Montravers, the murderers of the late king ; but these had time to elude punishment, by escaping to the continent. The queen, who was certainly the most culpable, was shielded by the dignity of her situation ; she was only deprived of all share of power, and confined for life, to the castle of Risings, with a pension of three thousand pounds a year. From this confinement she was never after set free ; and though the king annually paid her a visit of decent ceremony, yet she found herself abandoned to universal contempt and detestation ; and continued, for above twenty-five years after, a miserable monument of blasted ambition.

Edward, being thus freed from the control of usurped authority, resolved to become popular, by an expedient which seldom failed to gain the affections of the English. He knew that a conquering monarch was the fittest to please a warlike people. The weakness of the Scottish government, which was at that time under a minority, gave him a favourable opportunity of renewing hostilities ; and the turbulent spirit of the nobles of that country contributed still more to promote his aims. A new pretender also started up to that throne, namely Edward Baliol, whose father John had been crowned king of Scotland : and Edward resolved to assist him in his pretensions. He therefore gave him permission to levy what forces he was able in England ; and, with not above three thousand adventurers thus fortuitously united, Baliol gained a considerable victory over his countrymen, in which twelve thousand of their men were slain. This victory, which was followed by some others, so intimidated the Scots, that their armies dispersed, and the kingdom seemed as if subdued by a

handful of men. Baliol, by one of those unexpected turns of fortune, common enough in barbarous times, was crowned king at Scone: and every nobleman, who was most exposed to danger, submitted to his authority. But he did not long enjoy his superiority; by another turn equally sudden, he was attacked and defeated by sir Archibald Douglas, and obliged to take refuge in England once more, in a miserable condition.

An attempt, thus unsuccessfully made by Baliol, only served to inflame the ardour of Edward, who very joyfully accepted of that offer of homage and superiority, which it was Baliol's present interest to make. He therefore prepared, with all his force, to reinstate the deposed king of Scotland in a government which would ever after be subordinate to his own. He accordingly prevailed upon his parliament to give him a supply, which they reluctantly did; and, with a well-disciplined army, he laid siege to Berwick, which capitulated after a vigorous defence. It was in attempting to relieve this city that a general engagement ensued between the Scots and the English. It was fought at Hali-down-hill, a little north of Berwick. The fortune of Edward prevailed. Douglas, the Scottish general, was slain, and soon after the whole army put to the rout. This victory was in a great measure obtained by the expertness of the English archers, who now began to be famous over Europe for their peculiar skill. All the Scottish nobles of great distinction were either slain or taken prisoners; near thirty thousand of their men fell in the  
July 9, action, while the loss of the English only amounted to  
1333. about fifteen men; an inequality almost incredible. This important victory decided the fate of Scotland; Baliol, with very little trouble, made himself master of the country; and Edward returned in triumph to England, having previously secured many of the principal towns in Scotland, which were declared to be annexed to the English monarchy. These victories, however, were rather splendid than serviceable; the Scots seemed about this time to have conceived an insurmountable aversion to the English government; and no sooner were Edward's forces withdrawn, than they revolted against Baliol, and well nigh expelled him the kingdom. Edward's appearance a second time served to bring them to subjection; but they quickly renewed their animosities upon his retiring. It was in vain, therefore, that he employ-



ed all the arts of persuasion, and all the terrors of war, to induce them to submission ; they persevered in their reluctance to obey : and they were daily kept in hopes, by promises of succour from France.

This kingdom, which had for a long time discontinued its animosities against England, began to be an object of Edward's jealousy and ambition. A new scene began to be opened in France, which operated for more than a century in subjecting that country to all the miseries of war, till Europe at last began to doubt, whether it was annexed to England by right of arms, or of succession. France, at that period, was neither the extensive nor the powerful kingdom we see it at this day. Many great provinces have been added to it since that period, particularly Dauphiny, Provence, and Franche Comté ; and the government was still more enfeebled by those neighbouring princes who were pretended subjects to the king, but, in reality, formidable rivals of his power. At the time we are speaking of, that kingdom was particularly unfortunate ; and the king shared in the general calamity. The three sons of Philip the Fair, in full parliament, accused their wives of adultery ; and in consequence of this accusation they were condemned, and imprisoned for life. Lewis Hutin, the successor to the crown of France, caused his wife to be strangled, and her lovers to be flayed alive. After his death, as he left only a daughter, his next brother, Philip the Tall, assumed the crown, in prejudice of the daughter ; and vindicated his title by the Salic law, which laid it down, that no female should succeed to the crown. This law, however, was not universally acknowledged, nor sufficiently confirmed by precedents to procure an easy submission. They had hitherto inquired but slightly in France, whether a female could succeed to the kingdom ; and as laws are only made to regulate what may happen by what has happened already, there were no facts upon which to ground the opinions on either side of the question. There were, in reality, precedents to countenance both claims, and thus to keep mankind in suspense. The parliament in France had often adjudged the succession to women, as Artois was formerly given to a female, in prejudice of the male heir. The succession of Champagne had been, on some occasion, given to the daughters ; while, on others, they were judged unqualified to succeed. We thus see that right

changed with power; and justice, in such a case, was unknown, or disregarded. In the present instance, the younger brother of the late king, Charles the Fair, jealous of his elder brother's fortune, opposed his pretensions, and asserted that the late king's daughter was rightful heir to his crown. The cause, thus warmly contested between the two brothers, was at last carried before the parliament of France; and they decided, upon the Salic law, in favour of Philip the elder. This monarch enjoyed the crown but a short time; and, dying, left only daughters to succeed him. Charles, therefore, without a male opponent, seized the crown, and enjoyed it for some time; but he also dying, left his wife pregnant. As there was now no apparent heir, the regency was contested by two persons, who laid their claims upon this occasion. Edward the Third urged his pretensions, as being by his mother Isabella, who was daughter to Philip the Fair, and sister to the three last kings of France, rightful heir to the crown. Philip Valois, on the other hand, put himself in actual possession of the government, as being next heir by the male succession. He was, for this reason, constituted regent of France; and the queen-dowager being unfortunately, some time after, brought to bed of a daughter, he was unanimously elected king. He was crowned amidst the universal congratulations of his subjects; received the appellation of Philip the Fortunate; and to this he added those qualities which might merit good fortune, namely, justice and virtue. Among other instances of his felicity, he might reckon that of the homage paid him by Edward, his rival, which he came to offer at Amiens. However, as strength generally inspires ambition, this homage was soon followed by a war; and Edward disputed that crown, of which he had just before declared himself a vassal.

A brewer of Ghent was one of those who gave the greatest assistance to Edward in this war, and determined him to assume the title of king of France. This citizen's name was James Arteveld, a man grown too powerful for a subject; and one of those whom, according to Machiavel, kings ought to flatter or destroy. This citizen had, for some time, governed his countrymen with a more absolute sway than had ever been assumed by any of their lawful sovereigns. He placed and displaced magistrates at his pleasure. He was accompanied by a guard, who, on the least

signal from him, instantly assassinated any man who had the misfortune to fall under his displeasure. With the assistance of this man, therefore, Edward resolved to undertake the conquest of France. He first, however, in a formal manner consulted his parliament on the propriety of the undertaking, obtained their approbation, received a proper supply of wool, which he intended to barter with the Flemings; and being attended with a body of English forces, and several of the nobility, he sailed over to Flanders, big with his intended conquests.

Edward's first step was to assert his claim to the French crown; to assume the title of king of the country, and brand Philip, his rival, with the title of usurper. Philip, on the other hand, made vigorous preparations to oppose him; he [1339.] even challenged the invader to try their fortune in single combat, upon equal terms, in some appointed plain. Edward accepted the challenge; for in every action this prince affected the hero: but some obstacles intervening, the war was prosecuted in the usual manner, both sides taking every advantage when it happened to offer.

The first great advantage gained by the English was in a naval engagement on the coast of Flanders, in which the French lost two hundred and thirty ships, and had thirty thousand of their seamen, and two of their admirals, slain. None of Philip's courtiers, it is said, dared to inform him of the event, till his jester gave him a hint, by which he discovered the loss he had sustained. This victory, together with some successful operations that soon after followed, brought on a truce, which neither side seemed willing to break, till the ambition of Edward was once more excited by the invitation of the count de Montfort, who had possessed himself of the province of Bretagne, and applied to Edward to second his claims. An offer of this kind entirely coincided with Edward's most sanguine desires. He immediately saw the advantages arising from such a proposal. He was happy in the promised assistance of Montfort, an active and valiant prince, closely united to him by interest, and thus opening to him an entrance into the heart of France. On the other hand, he could have no hopes from the side of Flanders, as he was obstructed by those numerous fortifications which had been raised on that frontier. These flattering prospects, however, were for a while damped by the

imprisonment of Montfort; whose aims being discovered, he found himself besieged in the city of Nantes, and taken. But Jane of Flanders, his wife, soon made up for the loss of her husband. This lady, who was one of the most extraordinary women of the age, courageously undertook to support the falling fortunes of her family. She assembled the inhabitants of Rennes, where she then resided; and, carrying her infant son in her arms, deplored her misfortunes, and attempted to inspire the citizens with an affection for her cause. The inhabitants of Nantes instantly espoused her interests, and all the other fortresses of Bretagne embraced the same resolution. The king of England was apprised of her efforts in his favour, and entreated to send her succours with all possible expedition to the town of Hennebonne, in which place she resolved to sustain the attacks of the enemy. She was not deceived in her opinion of the enemy's vigilance and activity. Charles de Blois, Philip's general, anxious to make himself master of so important a fortress as Hennebonne, and still more to take the countess prisoner, sat down before the place with a large army, and conducted the siege with indefatigable industry. The defence was no less vigorous; several sallies were made by the garrison, in which the countess herself was still the most active, and led on to the assault. Observing one day that their whole army had quitted the camp to join in a general storm, she sallied out by a postern at the head of three hundred horse, set fire to the enemy's tents and baggage, put their sutlers and servants to the sword, and occasioned such an alarm, that the French desisted from the assault in order to cut off her communication with the town. Thus intercepted, she retired to Auray, where she continued for five or six days; then returning at the head of five hundred horse, she fought her way through one quarter of the French camp, and returned to her faithful citizens in triumph. But mere unsupported valour could not repel all the encroachments of an active and superior enemy. The besiegers had at length made several breaches in the walls; and it was apprehended that a general assault, which was hourly expected, would be fatal. A capitulation was therefore proposed, and a conference was already begun, when the countess, who had mounted on a high tower, and was looking towards the sea with great impatience, descried some ships at a distance. She immediately exclaimed

that succours were arrived, and forbade any further capitulation. She was not disappointed in her wishes: the fleet she discerned carried a body of English gentlemen, with six thousand archers, whom Edward had prepared for the relief of Hennebonne, but who had been long detained by contrary winds. They entered the harbour, under the conduct of sir Walter Manny, one of the most valiant commanders of his time. This relief served to keep up the declining spirits of the Bretons, until the time appointed by the late truce with Edward was expired, on which he was at liberty to renew the war in greater form.

He accordingly soon after landed at Morbian, near Vannes, with an army of twelve thousand men; and being master of the field, where no enemy dared to appear against [1342.] him, he endeavoured to give lustre to his arms by besieging some of the most capital of the enemy's fortifications. The vigour of his operations led on to another truce; and this was soon after followed by a fresh infraction. The truth is, neither side observed a truce longer than it coincided with their interests; and both had always sufficient art to throw the blame of perfidy from themselves. The earl of Derby was sent by Edward to defend the province of Guienne, with instructions also to take every possible advantage that circumstances might offer. At first his successes were rapid and brilliant: but as soon as the French king had time to prepare, he met with a very unexpected resistance; so that the English general was compelled to stand upon the defensive. One fortress after another was surrendered to the French; and nothing appeared but a total extinction of the power of England upon the continent. In this situation, Edward resolved to bring relief in person to his distressed subjects and allies; and accordingly embarked at Southampton on board a fleet of near a thousand sail, of all dimensions. He carried [1346.] with him, besides all the chief nobility of England, his eldest son, the prince of Wales (afterwards surnamed the Black Prince), a youth of about fifteen years old, and already remarkable both for understanding and valour above his age. His army consisted of four thousand men at arms, ten thousand archers, ten thousand Welsh infantry, and six thousand Irish, all which he landed safely at La Hogue, a port in Normandy, which country he determined to make the seat of war.

The intelligence of Edward's landing, and the devastation caused by his troops, who dispersed themselves over the whole face of the country, soon spread universal consternation through the French court. The rich city of Caen was taken and plundered by the English without mercy; the villages and towns, even up to Paris, shared the same fate; and the French had no other resource but by breaking down their bridges to attempt putting a stop to the invader's career. In the mean time, Philip was not idle in making preparations to repress the enemy. He had stationed one of his generals, Godemar de Faye, with an army on the opposite side of the river Somme, over which Edward was to pass; while he himself, at the head of a hundred thousand fighting men, advanced to give the English battle. Edward thus, in the midst of his victories, unexpectedly exposed to the danger of being inclosed and of starving in an enemy's country, published a reward to any that should bring him intelligence of a passage over the river Somme. This was discovered by a peasant of the country; and Edward had just time to get his whole army over the river, when Philip appeared in his rear.

As both armies had for some time been in sight of each other, nothing was so eagerly expected by both parties as a battle; and although the forces were extremely disproportioned, the English amounting only to thirty thousand, the French to a hundred and twenty thousand, yet Edward resolved to indulge the impetuosity of his troops, and put all to the hazard of a battle. He accordingly chose his ground, with advantage, near the village of Crecy; and there determined to wait with tranquillity the shock of the enemy. He drew up his men on a gentle ascent, and divided them into three lines. The first was commanded by the young prince of Wales; the second was conducted by the earls of Northampton and Arundel; and the third, which was kept as a body of reserve, was headed by the king in person. As his small army was in danger of being surrounded, he threw up trenches on his flank, and placed all his baggage in a wood behind him, which he also secured by an entrenchment. Having thus made the proper dispositions, he and the prince of Wales received the sacrament with great devotion; and all his behaviour denoted the calm intrepidity of a man resolved on conquest or death. He rode from rank to rank with a serene countenance;

bade his soldiers remember the honour of their country ; and by his eloquence animated the whole army to a degree of enthusiastic expectation. It is said also by some, that he first made use of artillery upon this occasion ; and placed in his front some pieces, which contributed not a little to throw the enemy into disorder.

On the other side, Philip, impelled by resentment, and confident in his numbers, was more solicitous of bringing the enemy to an engagement than prudent in taking measures for the success of it. He was advised by some of his generals to defer the combat till the ensuing day, when his army would have recovered from their fatigue, and might be disposed into better order than their present hurry permitted them to observe. But it was now too late ; the impatience of his troops was too great to be restrained ; they pressed one upon the other, and no orders could curb their blind impetuosity. They were led on, however, in three bodies to oppose those of the English. The first line, consisting of fifteen thousand Genoese cross-bow-men, were commanded by Anthony Doria ; the second body was led by the count Alençon, brother to the king ; and the king himself was at the head of the third.

About three in the afternoon the famous battle of Crecy began, by the French king's ordering the Genoese archers to charge ; but they were so fatigued with their march, that they cried out for a little rest before they should engage. The count Alençon, being informed of their petition, rode up and reviled them as cowards, commanding them to begin the onset without delay. Their reluctance to begin was still more increased by a heavy shower which fell that instant and relaxed their bow-strings, so that the discharge they made produced but very little effect. On the other hand, the English archers, who kept their bows in cases, and were favoured by a sudden gleam of sunshine that rather dazzled the enemy, let fly their arrows so thick, and with such good aim, that nothing was to be seen among the Genoese but hurry, terror, and dismay. The young prince of Wales had presence of mind to take advantage of their confusion, and to lead on his line to the charge. The French cavalry, however, commanded by count Alençon, wheeling round, sustained the combat, and began to hem the English round. The earls of Arundel and Northampton

now came in to assist the prince, who appeared foremost in the very shock, and, wherever he appeared, turning the fortune of the day. The thickest of the battle was now gathered round him, and the valour of a boy filled even veterans with astonishment. But their surprise at his courage could not give way to their fears for his safety. Being apprehensive that some mischance might happen to him in the end, an officer was dispatched to the king, desiring that succours might be sent to the prince's relief. Edward, who had all this time, with great tranquillity, viewed the engagement from a windmill, demanded, with seeming deliberation, if his son were dead; but being answered that he still lived, and was giving astonishing instances of his valour; "Then tell my generals," cried the king, "that he shall have no assistance from me; the honour of this day shall be his; let him show himself worthy the profession of arms, and let him be indebted to his own merit alone for victory." This speech, being reported to the prince and his attendants, inspired them with new courage; they made a fresh attack upon the French cavalry, and count Alençon, their bravest commander, was slain. This was the beginning of their total overthrow: the French, being now without a competent leader, were thrown into confusion: the Welsh infantry rushed into the midst of the conflict, and dispatched those with their long knives who had survived the fury of the former onset. It was in vain that the king of France seemed almost singly to maintain the combat; he endeavoured to animate his few followers, both by his voice and example: but the victory was too decisive to be resisted: while he was yet endeavouring to face the enemy, John de Hainault seized the reins of his horse, and, turning him round, carried him off the field of battle. In this engagement, thirty thousand of the French were killed upon the field; and, among this number, were John king of Bohemia, James king of Majorca, Ralph duke of Lorraine, nine counts, four-and-twenty bannerets, twelve hundred knights, fifteen hundred gentlemen, and four thousand men at arms. There is something remarkable in the fate of the Bohemian monarch; who, though blind, was yet willing to share in the engagement. This unfortunate prince, inquiring the fate of the day, was told that all was lost, and his son Charles obliged to retire desperately wounded; and that the prince of Wales bore down every thing



before him. Having received this information, blind as he was, he commanded his knights to lead him into the hottest part of the battle against the young warrior: accordingly, four of them rushed with him into the thickest part of the enemy, where they were all quickly slain.

The whole French army took to flight, and were put to the sword by the pursuers without mercy, till night stopped the carnage. The king, on his return to the camp, flew into the arms of the prince of Wales, and exclaimed, "My valiant son! continue as you have begun; you have acquitted yourself nobly, and are worthy of the kingdom that will be your inheritance." The next morning was foggy; and a party of the militia of Rouen, coming to join the French army, were routed by the English at the first onset; many more also were decoyed by some French standards, which the victors placed upon the mountains, and to which the fugitives resorted, where they were cut in pieces without mercy. Never was a victory more seasonable, or less bloody, to the English than this. Notwithstanding the great slaughter of the enemy, the conquerors lost but one esquire, three knights, and a few of inferior rank. The crest of the king of Bohemia was three ostrich feathers, with this motto, *Ich dien*, which signifies, in the German language, I serve. This was thought to be a proper prize to perpetuate the victory; and it was accordingly added to the arms of the prince of Wales, and it has been adopted by all his successors.

But this victory was attended with still more substantial advantages; for Edward, as moderate in conquest as prudent in his measures to obtain it, resolved to secure an easy entrance into France for the future. With this view he laid siege to Calais, that was then defended by John de Vienne, an experienced commander, and supplied with every thing necessary for defence. The king, however, knowing the difficulty of taking so strong a town by force, resolved to reduce it by famine. He chose a secure station for his camp; drew entrenchments round the city, and made proper provisions for his soldiers to endure a winter campaign. These operations, though slow, were at length successful. It was in vain that the governor made a noble defence, that he excluded all the useless mouths from the city, which Edward generously permitted to pass unmolested through his camp.

It was at length taken, after a twelvemonth's siege, the defendants having been reduced to the last extremity by famine and fatigue. The obstinate resistance made by the townsmen was not a little displeasing to Edward; and he had often declared, that, when put in possession of the place, he would take signal revenge for the numbers of men he had lost during the siege. It was with great difficulty, therefore, that he was persuaded to accept of their submission, and to spare their lives, upon condition that six of the most considerable citizens should be sent him, to be disposed of as he should think proper: but on these he was resolved to wreak his resentment, and he gave orders that they should be led into his camp, bare-headed and bare-footed, with ropes about their necks, in the manner of criminals just prepared for instant execution. When the news of this fierce resolution was brought into the city, it spread new consternation among the inhabitants. Who should be the men that were thus to be offered up as victims to procure the safety of all the rest, and by their deaths appease the victor's resentment, was a fresh subject of dreadful inquiry. In this terrible suspense, one of the principal inhabitants, whose name was Eustace de St. Pierre, walked forward, and offered himself as willing to undergo any tortures that could procure his fellow-citizens safety. Five more soon followed his noble example; and these, marching out like criminals, laid the keys of their city at Edward's feet: but no submissions seemed sufficient to appease his resentment; and they would in all probability have suffered death, had not the generosity of their conduct affected the queen, who interceded in their behalf, and with some difficulty obtained their pardon.

Edward, having thus opened himself a passage into France, by [1347.] which he might at any time pour in his forces, and withdraw them with security, resolved on every method that could add strength or stability to his new acquisition. He ordered all the French inhabitants to leave the town, and peopled it with his own subjects from England. He also made it the staple, or principal market for wool, leather, tin, and lead, which were the principal English commodities for which there was any considerable demand upon the continent. All the English were obliged to bring their goods thither; and foreign merchants came to the same place to purchase them. By these means the city

became populous, rich, and flourishing; and although it had like to have been taken some time after by treachery, it continued for above two centuries after in the possession of the English, and braved all the military power of France.

The treachery, which had like to have restored it to the French, arose from the perfidy of Aymer de Pavie, an Italian, who had been appointed governor of the place. He agreed to deliver it up to the enemy; when his perfidy was discovered by Edward, who obliged him to carry on the treaty, and to persuade the enemy that he was still in their interests. Accordingly a day was appointed for the admission of the French troops into the city; while the king, with a strong body of forces, took care to prepare for their reception. All those who entered the city were immediately cut to pieces; and the garrison, with Edward, and sir Walter Manny at their head, rushing out in the pursuit of the rest, a fierce and bloody engagement ensued, in which the king overthrew and took Eustace de Ribault, a man of remarkable strength and valour, with his own hand.

In this manner, the war between the English and French was carried on with mutual animosity; a war which at once thinned the inhabitants of the invaded country, while it drained that of the invaders. But a destruction still more terrible than that of war contributed, at this time, to desolate the wretched provinces of Europe. A pestilence, more dreadful than any mentioned in the annals of history, which had already almost dispeopled Asia and Africa, came to settle upon the western world with increased malignity. It is said to have taken its origin in the great kingdom of Cathay, where it rose from the earth with the most horrid and sulphureous stench, destroying all the inhabitants, and even marking plants and minerals with its malignity. The fourth part of the people were cut off; and it particularly raged with such violence in London, that in one year's space there were buried in the Charter House church-yard above fifty thousand [1349.] persons. It was in the midst of this terrible infliction from nature that the ambition of Edward and Philip was exerted for new conquests, and was adding to the calamities of mankind. Yet still these ravages were silently repairing by commerce and industry: these arts, which were then despised by princes, were laying the seeds of future opulence and increased population.

The arts of peace had for some time been revived in Italy, and were gradually travelling westward; the refinements and the pleasures of sense every day began to improve, although intellectual refinements were as yet totally unknown. Sensual enjoyments must ever be carried to some height, before mankind can find leisure or taste for entertainments of a more exquisite nature.

Nor was England free from internal wars during this dreary period. While Edward was reaping victories upon the continent, the Scots, ever willing to embrace a favourable opportunity of rapine and revenge, invaded the frontiers with a numerous army, headed by David Bruce their king. This unexpected invasion, at such a juncture, alarmed the English, but was not capable of intimidating them. Lionel, Edward's son, who was left guardian of England during his father's absence, was yet too young to take upon him the command of an army; but the victories on the continent seemed to inspire even women with valour: Philippa, Edward's queen, took upon her the conduct of the field, [1346.] and prepared to repulse the enemy in person. Accordingly, having made lord Percy general under her, she met the Scots at a place called Nevill's Cross, near Durham, and offered them battle. The Scottish king was no less impatient to engage; he imagined that he might obtain an easy victory against undisciplined troops, and headed by a woman. But he was miserably deceived; his army was quickly routed and driven from the field; fifteen thousand of his men were cut to pieces; and himself, with many of his nobles and knights, were taken prisoners, and carried in triumph to London.

This victory diffused an universal degree of joy through the nation; a captive king was an object that flattered their pride, and they soon had new reasons for exultation. Philip, who was surnamed the Fortunate, upon coming to the crown of France, ended his life under the accumulation of every misfortune that could render a king unhappy. John, his son, succeeded him on the throne, which was but ill supported by Philip, and yet still worse by him. This weak yet virtuous prince, upon coming to the crown, found himself at the head of an exhausted nation, and a divided and factious nobility. France at that time pretty much resembled England under the reign of a prince of the same name some ages before. They had parliaments of barons despotic over

their own hereditary possessions; and they obliged John their king to sign a charter very much resembling the Magna Charta which had formerly been signed by his namesake of England. The warlike resources, therefore, of France and England were at this time very unequal. John was at the head of a nobility that acknowledged no subordination among each other; they led their dependent slaves to battle, and obeyed their superiors only as it suited their inclination. Their king might more justly be said to command a number of small armies under distinct leaders, than one vast machine operating with uniformity and united efforts. The French barons paid their own soldiers, punished their transgressions, and rewarded their fidelity. But the forces of England were under a very different establishment; the main body of the English army was composed of soldiers indiscriminately levied throughout the nation, paid by the king, and regarding him alone as the source of preferment or disgrace. Instead of personal attendance, the nobility contributed supplies in money; and there was only such a number of nobles in the army as might keep the spirit of honour alive, without injuring military subordination.

It was in this state of things that a short truce, which had been concluded between Edward and Philip, was dissolved by the death of the latter; and Edward, well pleased with the factions that then prevailed in France, was resolved to seize the opportunity of increasing its distresses. Accordingly the black Prince was sent into France with his army, on board a fleet of a hundred sail; and, landing in Gascony, carried his devastations into the heart of the country. On the other hand, Edward himself made an irruption on the side of Calais, at the head of a numerous army, and ravaged all the open country. In the mean time John, who was as yet unprepared to oppose the progress of the enemy, continued a quiet spectator of their insults; nor was it till the succeeding summer's campaign that he resolved to attack the Black Prince, whose army was by this time reduced to a body of about twelve thousand men. With such a [1355.] trifling complement of forces had this young warrior ventured to penetrate into the heart of France, with a design of joining his forces to those of the duke of Lancaster. But he soon found that his scheme was impracticable; the country before him was too

well guarded to prevent his advancing further ; and all the bridges behind were broken down : which effectually barred a retreat. In this embarrassing situation, his perplexity was increased by being informed that the king of France was actually marching at the head of sixty thousand men to intercept him. He at first thought of retreating ; but, soon finding it impossible, he determined calmly to wait the approach of the enemy ; and, notwithstanding the disparity of forces, to commit all to the hazard of a battle.

It was at a place called Maupertuis, near Poitiers, that both armies came in sight of each other. The French king might very easily have starved the English into any terms he thought proper to impose ; but such was the impatient valour of the French nobility, and such their certainty of success, that it might have been equally fatal to attempt repressing their ardour to engage. In the mean time, while both armies were drawn out, and expecting the signal to begin, they were stopped by the appearance of the cardinal of Perigord, who attempted to be a mediator between them. However, John, who made himself sure of victory, would listen to no other terms than the restitution of Calais ; with which the Black Prince refusing to comply, the onset was deferred till the next morning, for which both sides waited in anxious suspense.

It was during this interval that the young prince showed himself worthy of conquest ; he strengthened his post by new intrenchments ; he placed three hundred men in ambush, with as many archers, who were commanded to attack the enemy in flank during the heat of the engagement. Having taken these precautions, and the morning beginning to appear, he ranged his army in three divisions ; the van, commanded by the earl of Warwick ; the rear, by the earls of Salisbury and Suffolk ; and the main body by himself. In like manner the king of France arranged his forces in three divisions ; the first commanded by the duke of Orleans ; the second by the dauphin, attended by his younger brothers ; while himself led up the main body, seconded by his youngest and favourite son, then about fourteen years of age. As the English were to be attacked only by marching up a long narrow lane, the French suffered greatly from their archers, who were posted on each side behind the hedges. Nor were they in a better situation upon emerging from this danger, being met by

the Black Prince himself, at the head of a chosen body of troops, who made a furious onset upon their forces, already in great disorder. A dreadful overthrow ensued : those who were as yet in the lane recoiled upon their own forces ; while the English troops who had been placed in ambush took that opportunity to increase the confusion, and confirm the victory. The dauphin, and the duke of Orleans, were among the first that fled. The king of France himself made the utmost efforts to retrieve by his valour what his rashness had forfeited : but his single courage was unable to stop that consternation which had now become general through his army ; and his cavalry soon flying, he found himself totally exposed to the enemy's fury. He saw his nobles falling round him, valiantly fighting in his defence, and his youngest son wounded by his side. At length, spent with fatigue, and despairing of success, he thought of yielding himself a prisoner ; and frequently cried out, that he was ready to deliver himself to his cousin, the prince of Wales. The honour of taking him, however, was reserved for a much more ignoble hand ; he was seized by Dennis de Morbec, a knight of Arras, who had been obliged to fly his country for murder.

This success was, in a great measure, owing to the valour and conduct of the Black Prince ; but his moderation in victory was a nobler triumph than had ever graced any former conqueror. He came forth to meet the captive monarch with an air of pitying modesty ; he remonstrated with him in the most humble manner, when he began to complain of his misfortunes, that he still had the comfort left of reflecting, that, though unsuccessful, he had done all that deserved to ensure conquest ; he promised, that a submissive deference to his dignity should never be wanting to soften his captivity ; and at table he actually refused to sit down, but stood among the number of his prisoner's attendants, declaring that it did not become him, as a subject, to sit down in the presence of a king.

In April following, the prince conducted his royal prisoner through London, attended by an infinite con- [1357.] course of people of all ranks and stations. His modesty upon this occasion was not less than before : the king of France was clad in royal apparel, and mounted on a white steed, distinguished by its size and beauty ; while the prince himself rode by his side upon a mean little horse, and in very plain attire.

Two kings prisoners in the same court, and at the same time, were considered as glorious achievements ; but all that England gained by them was only glory. Whatever was won in France, with all the dangers of war, and the expense of preparation, was successively, and in a manner silently, lost, without the mortification of a defeat. It may be easily supposed, that the treaties which were made with the captive kings were highly advantageous to the conquerors ; but these treaties were no longer observed than while the English had it in their power to enforce obedience. It is true that John held to his engagements as far as he was able ; but by being a prisoner he lost his authority, and his misfortunes had rendered him contemptible at home. The dauphin, and the states of France, rejected the treaties he had been induced to sign ; and prepared, in good earnest, to repel the meditated invasions of the conqueror. All the considerable towns were put in a posture of defence ; and every thing valuable in the kingdom was secured in fortified places. [1358.] It was in vain, therefore, that Edward tried to allure the dauphin to hazard a battle, by sending him a defiance ; it was impossible to make that cautious prince change the plan of his operations ; it was in vain that Edward alleged the obligation of the treaties which had been signed at London, and plundered the country round to provoke an engagement. He at length thought fit to listen to equitable terms of peace, which was concluded upon condition that king John should be restored to liberty, on paying a ransom of about a million and a half of our money. It was stipulated, that Edward should forever renounce all claim to the kingdom of France ; and should only remain possessed of the territories of Poictou, Saintonge, l'Aginois, Perigord, the Limousin, Quercy, Rouergue, l'Angoumois, and other districts in that quarter, together with Calais, Guisnes, Montreuil, and the county of Ponthieu, on the other side of France : some other stipulations were made in favour of the allies of England ; and forty hostages were sent to England, as a security for the execution of these conditions.

Upon John's return to his dominions, he found himself very ill able to comply with those terms of peace that had been just concluded. He was without finances, at the head of an exhausted state ; his soldiers without discipline, and his peasants without



subordination. These had risen in great numbers ; and one of the chiefs of their banditti assumed the title of the Friend of God and the Terror of Man. A citizen of Sens, named John Gouge, also got himself, by means of his robberies, to be acknowledged king ; and he soon caused as many calamities by his devastations as the real king had brought on by his misfortunes. Such was the state of that wretched kingdom upon the return of its captive monarch ; and yet, such was his absurdity, that he immediately prepared for a crusade into the Holy Land, before he was well replaced on the throne. Had his exhausted subjects been able to equip him for this chimerical project, it is probable he would have gone through with it ; but their miseries were such, that they were even too poor to pay his ransom. This was a breach of treaty that John would not submit to ; and he was heard to express himself in a very noble manner upon the occasion : “ Though,” says he, “ good faith should be banished from the rest of the earth, yet she ought still to retain her habitation in the breast of kings.” In consequence of this declaration, he actually returned to England once more, and yielded himself a prisoner, since he could not be honourably free. It is said by some, that his passion for the countess of Salisbury was the real cause of this journey ; but we want at this time the foundation for such an injurious report. He was lodged in the Savoy, the palace where he had resided during his captivity : and soon after he closed a long and unfortunate reign, by his death, which happened in about the fifty-sixth year of his age. [1364.]

Charles, surnamed the Wise, succeeded his father on the throne of France ; and this monarch, merely by the force of a finely conducted policy, and even though suffering some defeats, restored his country once more to tranquillity and power. He quelled and dissipated a set of banditti who had associated themselves under the name of Companions, and who had long been a terror to the peaceable inhabitants. He had them inrolled into a body, and led them into the kingdom of Castile against Peter, surnamed the Cruel, whom his subjects had dethroned, and who, by means of an alliance with the English, endeavoured to get himself reinstated upon the throne. In consequence of these alliances, the English and French again came to an engagement ; their armies on the one side commanded by the Black Prince ; on the

other, by Henry of Transtamare, and Bertrand du Guesclin, one of the most consummate generals and accomplished characters of the age in which he lived. However, the usual good fortune of April 5, the English prince prevailed; the French lost above 1367. twenty thousand men, while only four knights and forty private men on the side of the English were slain.

Nevertheless, these victories were attended with very good effects. The English, by their frequent supplies, had been quite exhausted, and were unable to continue an army in the field. Charles, on the other hand, cautiously forbore coming to any decisive engagement, but was contented to let his enemies waste their strength in attempts to plunder a fortified country. When they were retired, he then was sure to sally forth, and possess himself of such places as they were not strong enough to defend. He first fell upon Ponthieu; the citizens of Abbeville opened their gates to him; those of St. Valois, Rue, and Crotoy, imitated the example; and the whole country was, in a little time, reduced to total submission. The southern provinces were, in the same manner, invaded by his generals with equal success; while the Black Prince, destitute of supplies from England, and wasted by a cruel and consumptive disorder, was obliged to return to his native country, leaving the affairs of the south of France in a most desperate condition.

In this exigence, the resentment of the king of England was excited to the utmost pitch; and he seemed resolved to take signal vengeance on his enemies on the continent. But the fortunate occasion seemed now elapsed; and all his designs were marked with ill success. The earl of Pembroke, and his whole army, were intercepted at sea, and taken prisoners by Henry, king of Castile. This nobleman in person attempted to embark with an army for Bourdeaux; but was detained by contrary winds, and obliged to lay aside the expedition. Sir Robert Knolles, one of his generals on the continent, at the head of thirty thousand men, was defeated by Bertrand du Guesclin; while the duke of Lancaster, at the head of twenty-five thousand men, had the mortification of seeing his troops diminished one half by flying parties, without ever coming to a battle. Such was the picture that presented itself to this victorious monarch in the decline of life; and this might well serve as a lesson to the princes of

the age, that more permanent advantages are obtained by wisdom than by valour. Added to his other uneasinesses, he had the mortification to see his authority despised at home. It was in vain that he sought refuge, in his age, from the complaints of his subjects, in the arms of a favourite mistress whose name was Alice Pierce: this only served to exasperate his people the more against him, and to turn their indignation into contempt. But what, of all other things, served to gloom the latter part of this splendid reign, was the approaching death of the Black Prince, whose constitution showed but too manifestly the symptoms of a speedy dissolution. This valiant and accomplished prince died in the forty-sixth year of his age, leaving behind him a character without a single blemish, and a degree of sorrow among the people that time could scarcely alleviate. His affability, clemency, and liberal disposition, have been celebrated by different historians. Though born in an age in which military virtues alone were held in esteem, he cultivated the arts of peace, and seemed ever more happy in deserving praise than in obtaining it.

The king was most sensibly affected with the loss of his son, and tried every art to remove his uneasiness. He had banished his concubine some time before from his presence; but took her again, in hopes of finding some consolation in her company. He removed himself entirely from the duties and burthens of the state, and left his kingdom to be plundered by a set of rapacious ministers. He did not survive the consequences of his bad conduct; but died about a year after the prince, at Shene, in Surry, deserted by all his courtiers, even by those who had grown rich by his bounty. He expired in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the fifty-first of his reign; a prince more admired than loved by his subjects, and more an object of their applause than their sorrow. [1377.]

The reign of Edward was rather brilliant than truly serviceable to his subjects. If England, during these shining triumphs on the continent, gained any real advantage, it was only that of having a spirit of elegance and honour diffused among the higher ranks of the people. In all conquests, something is gained in civil life from the people subdued; and as France was at that time evidently more civilized than England, those imitative islanders, as they were then called, adopted the arts of the people they over-

came. The meanest soldier in the English army now began to follow his leader from love, and not compulsion; he was brave from sentiment alone, and had the honour of his country beating in his breast, even though in the humblest station. This was the time when chivalry was at its highest pitch; and many of the successes of England were owing to that romantic spirit which the king endeavoured to diffuse, and of which he was the most shining example. It was this spirit that in some measure served to soften the ferocity of the age; being a mixture of love, generosity, and war. Instead of being taught the sciences, the sons of the nobility were brought into the field as soon as they were able, and instructed in no other arts but those of arms; such as the method of sitting on horseback, of wielding the lance, running at the ring, flourishing at a tournament, and addressing a mistress. To attain these, was considered as the sum of all human acquirements; and though war made their only study, yet the rules of tactics, encampments, stratagems, and fortifications, were almost totally disregarded.

[1349.] It was in this reign that the order of the Garter was instituted; the number received into which was to consist of twenty-four persons, beside the king. A vulgar story prevails, but unsupported by any antient authority, that the countess of Salisbury, at a ball, happening to drop her garter, the king took it up and presented it to her with these words, "Honi soit qui mal y pense:" Evil to him that evil thinks. This accident is said to give rise to the order and the motto; it being the spirit of the times to mix love and war together, and for knights to plume themselves upon the slightest tokens that their mistresses were pleased to bestow.

Edward left many children by his queen Philippa of Hainault; his eldest son, the Black Prince, died before him, but left a son, named Richard, who succeeded to the throne; Edward's second son was Lionel, duke of Clarence; the third son was called John of Gaunt, from the place of his birth, and was afterwards created duke of Lancaster; the fourth son was Edmund, earl of Cambridge, and afterwards duke of York; the fifth son was Thomas, duke of Gloucester, the most ambitious and enterprising of all his family. There were several daughters also; but, as there is nothing material in their history, we shall pass over their names without further notice.

## CHAP. XV.

## RICHARD II.

**R**ICHARD II. came to the throne of his grandfather when as yet but eleven years of age, and found the people discontented and poor, the nobles proud and rebellious. A spirit of profusion had entered into the kingdom with the spirit of gallantry; which, while it produced indolence and rapacity among the higher orders, produced want and disobedience among the poor.

As the king was a minor, the government was vested in the hands of his three uncles, the dukes of Lancaster, York, and Gloucester; the difference of whose dispositions, it was supposed, would serve to check the defects of each other. Lancaster, though experienced during the late reign in government, was neither popular nor enterprising; York was indolent and weak; Gloucester turbulent, popular, and ambitious. Under the secret influence of these, without any regency being appointed, the whole system of government was kept together for some years; the authority established during the former reign still continuing to operate in this.

But though government was carried on, yet it was not without many commotions, arising either from the impatience of the people or the ambition of the great: as the late king had left the kingdom involved in many dangerous and expensive wars, and as these demanded large and constant supplies, the murmurs of the people increased in proportion. Nor were they lessened by the manner of carrying on these expeditions; which, in general, were languid, and upon the whole unsuccessful. The duke of Lancaster laid claim to the crown of Castile, and made a fruitless expedition; the war with France produced no enterprise of lustre, and that with Scotland was rather unsuccessful. The expenses, however, of the armaments to face the enemy on every side, and a want of œconomy in the administration, entirely exhausted the treasury; and a new tax of three groats, on every person above fifteen, was granted by parliament as a supply. The indignation of the people had been for some time increasing;

but a tax so unequitable, in which the rich paid no more than the poor, kindled the resentment of the latter into a flame.

Notwithstanding the numbers who by war, by a residence in towns, and by other means had become free, yet there were still multitudes in the country who had lands in villanage, that were only slaves to the lords from whom they held. These had seen the advantages of liberty, from its effects upon those of equal rank who had gone to live in towns; and they panted for a participation of those advantages. Several of these had become opulent enough to purchase their freedom; but, by an unjust act of parliament in this reign, these purchases were declared of no validity. This act the peasants considered as an infraction of the laws of humanity; and such indeed it must be allowed to have been. But it had long been the prescriptive manner of reasoning, to have no regard for the rights of a certain class of men who were supposed too low for justice. The seeds of discontent were still more cultivated by the preaching of several men, who went about the country inculcating the natural equality of mankind, and consequently the right that all had to an equal participation of the goods of nature. Hitherto we have seen popular insurrections only in towns; but we now find the spirit of freedom gaining ground in the country. Our citizens soon began to perceive their own strength; but it was a considerable time before the peasantry, who had been annexed to the soil, claimed a share in those advantages. We, in this first instance, find a knowledge of the rights of humanity diffusing itself even to the very lowest of the people, and exerting itself in rude and terrible efforts for freedom.

The minds of the peasants being thus prepared for insurrection, the manner of collecting this unjust poll-tax soon furnished them with a pretext for beginning the revolt. It began in Essex, where a report was industriously spread, that the peasants were to be destroyed, their houses burned, and their farms plundered. A blacksmith, well known by the name of Wat Tyler, was the first that excited them to arms. The tax-gatherers, coming to this man's house while he was at work, demanded payment for his daughter; which he refused, alleging that she was under the age mentioned in the act. One of the brutal collectors insisted on her being a full grown woman, and immediately attempted

giving a very indecent proof of his assertion. This provoked the father to such a degree, that he instantly struck him dead with a blow of his hammer. The standers-by applauded his spirit, and, one and all, resolved to defend his conduct. He was considered as a champion in the cause, and appointed the leader and spokesman of the people. It is easy to imagine the disorders committed by this tumultuous rabble: the whole neighbourhood rose in arms; they burnt and plundered wherever they came, and revenged upon their former masters all those insults which they had long sustained with impunity. As the discontent was general, the insurgents increased in proportion as they approached the capital. The flame soon propagated itself into Kent, Hertfordshire, Surry, Sussex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridge, and Lincoln. They were found to amount to above a hundred thousand men by the time they were arrived at Blackheath; from whence they sent a message to the king, who had taken shelter in the Tower, desiring a conference with him. With this message Richard was desirous of complying, but was intimidated by their fierce demeanour. In the mean time they had entered the city, burning and plundering the houses of such as were obnoxious from their power, or remarkable for their riches. They broke into the Savoy palace, belonging to the duke of Lancaster, and put several of his attendants to death. Their animosity was particularly levelled against the lawyers, to whom they showed no mercy. Such was the vehemence of their fury, that the king began to tremble for his own safety; and, knowing that the Tower was not capable of standing against an assault, he went out among them, and desired to know their demands. To this they made a very humble remonstrance, requiring a general pardon, the abolition of slavery, freedom of commerce in market-towns, and a fixed rent instead of those services required by the tenure of villanage. As these requests were reasonable, the king soon complied; and charters were accordingly made out, ratifying the grant. In the mean time another body of these insurgents had broke into the Tower, and murdered the chancellor, the primate, and the treasurer, with some other officers of distinction. They then divided themselves into bodies, and took up their quarters in different parts of the city. At the head of one of these was Wat Tyler, who led his men into Smithfield, where he was met by the king, who in-

vited him to a conference, under a pretence of hearing and redressing his grievances. Tyler, ordering his companions to retire till he should give them a signal, boldly ventured to meet the king in the midst of his retinue; and accordingly began the conference. The demands of this demagogue are censured by all the historians of the time as insolent and extravagant; and yet nothing can be more just than those they have delivered for him. He required that all slaves should be set free; that all common-ages should be open to the poor as well as to the rich; and that a general pardon should be passed for the late outrages. Whilst he made these demands, he now and then lifted up his sword in a menacing manner; which insolence so raised the indignation of William Walworth, then mayor of London, attending on the king, that, without considering the danger to which he exposed his majesty, he stunned Tyler with a blow of his mace; while one of the king's knights, riding up, dispatched him with his sword. The mutineers, seeing their leader fall, prepared themselves to take revenge; and their bows were now bent for execution; when Richard, though not yet quite sixteen years of age, rode up to the rebels, and, with admirable presence of mind, cried out, "What, my people, will you then kill your king? Be not concerned for the loss of your leader: I myself will now be your general; follow me into the field, and you shall have whatever you desire." The awed multitude immediately desisted; they followed the king, as if mechanically, into the fields, and there he granted them the same charter that he had before given to their companions.

These grants, for a short time, gained the king great popularity; and it is probable it was his own desire to have them continued: but the nobles had long tasted the sweets of power, and were unwilling to admit any other to a participation. The parliament soon revoked these charters of enfranchisement and pardon; the low people were reduced to the same slavish condition as before, and several of the ringleaders were punished with capital severity. The insurrections of the barons against their kings are branded in our history with no great air of invective; but the tumults of the people against the barons are marked with all the virulence of reproach.

The cruelty which was exercised against the popular leaders



upon this occasion created no small enmity against the king. He had first granted them a charter, which implied the justice of their demands; and he was seen, soon after, weak enough to revoke what he had before allowed the justice of. It is probable also, that his uncles were not backward in increasing this general dislike against him; as by that means they were more like to continue in their present authority. His own capricious conduct, indeed, might very well countenance them in the restrictions they placed upon him; as he very soon testified an eager desire to govern, without any of the requisites to fit him for such a difficult undertaking: he soon discovered an attachment to favourites, without any merit on their side to entitle them to such flattering distinctions. Robert Vere, earl of Oxford, a young man, whose person was faultless, but whose morals were debauched, had acquired an entire ascendant over him. This nobleman was first created marquis of Dublin, and then duke of Ireland, with the entire sovereignty, during life, of that island. He gave him his own cousin in marriage; and soon after permitted him to repudiate her for another lady, of whom he was enamoured. He soon became the channel through which all royal favour passed to the people; and he possessed all the power, while the king had only the shadow of royalty.

A partiality in princes ever produces animosity among their subjects. Those noblemen who were either treated with disrespect by the favourite, or who thought that they had themselves better pretensions to favour, instantly took the alarm, and combined against him. At the head of this association were, Mowbray, earl of Nottingham; Fitz-Alan, earl of Arundel; Percy, earl of Northumberland; Montacute, earl of Salisbury; and Beauchamp, earl of Warwick. These, uniting, resolved on the destruction of the favourite; and they began by marking out Michael de la Pole, who was then chancellor, and Oxford's chief friend and supporter, as the first object of their vengeance. He was accordingly impeached in parliament; and, although nothing material was alleged against him, such was the interest of the conspiring barons, that he was condemned, and deprived of his office.

From punishing his ministers, they soon after ventured to attack the king in person. Under a pretence that he was as yet

unable to govern, although he was at that time twenty-one, they [1386.] appointed a commission of fourteen persons, upon whom the sovereign power was to be transferred for a year. This was, in fact, totally depriving the king of all power, and oppressing the kingdom with a confirmed aristocracy. This measure was driven forward by the duke of Gloucester; and none but those of his own faction were admitted as members of the committee. It was not without a struggle that the king saw himself thus totally divested of authority; he endeavoured first to gain over the parliament to his interests, by influencing the sheriffs of each county, who were then the only returning officers. This measure failing, he applied to the judges; and they, either from motives of interest, or from conviction, declared, that the commission which had deprived him of his authority was unlawful; and that those who procured or advised it were punishable with death. This sentence was quickly opposed by declarations from the lords: the duke of Gloucester saw his danger if the king should prevail; and, secretly assembling his party, he appeared in arms at Haringay Park, near Highgate, at the head of a body of men, more than sufficient to intimidate the king and all his adherents. These insurgents, sensible of their own power, were now resolved to make use of the occasion; and began by demanding of the king the names of those who had advised him to his late rash measures. A few days after they appeared armed in his presence, and accused, by name, the archbishop of York, the duke of Ireland, the earl of Suffolk, and sir Robert Tresilian, one of the judges, who had declared in his favour, together with sir Nicholas Bember, as public and dangerous enemies to the state. It was now too late for the opposite party to attempt any other vindication of their conduct than by arms. The duke of Ireland fled into Cheshire, where he attempted to raise a body of forces; but was quickly obliged to fly into Flanders, on the arrival of the duke of Gloucester with a superior army. Soon after the king was obliged to summon a parliament; an accusation was drawn up against five of his counsellors; of these only sir Nicholas Bember was present; and he was quickly found guilty, condemned, and executed, together with sir Robert Tresilian, who had been discovered and taken during the interval. But the blood of one or two was not sufficient to satiate the resentment of the

duke of Gloucester ; lord Beauchamp of Holt was shortly after condemned and executed ; and sir Simon Burley, who had been appointed the king's governor, shared the same fate, although the queen continued for three hours on her knees before the duke, imploring his pardon.

It might be supposed that, after such a total subversion of the royal power, there would be no more struggles, during this reign, between the prince and his nominal subjects ; but, whether from the fluctuation of opinions among the people, or from the influence of a military force which had been lately levied against France, we find Richard once more resolved to shake off that power which had long controlled him, and actually bringing the parliament to second his resolutions.

In an extraordinary council of the nobility, assembled after Easter, he, to the astonishment of all present, [1339.] desired to know his age ; and being told that he was turned of two-and-twenty, he alleged, that it was time then for him to govern without help, and that there was no reason that he should be deprived of those rights which the meanest of his subjects enjoyed. The lords answering, in some confusion, that he had certainly an indisputable right to take upon himself the government of the kingdom : " Yes," replied he, " I have long been under the government of tutors ; and I will now first show my right to power by their removal." He then ordered Thomas Arundel, whom the commissioners had lately appointed chancellor, to give up the seal, which he next day delivered to William of Wickham, bishop of Winchester. He next removed the duke of Gloucester, the earl of Warwick, and other lords of the opposition, from the council. The bishop of Hereford lost his office of treasurer ; the earl of Arundel was deprived of the post of high-admiral ; all the great officers of the household, as well as the judges, were changed ; and all the offices felt the influence of this extraordinary revolution.

The king, being thus left at liberty to conduct the business of government at discretion, began by showing many marks of moderation towards those who before had endeavoured to depress his power : he seemed to be entirely reconciled to his uncles ; and he remitted some subsidies which had been granted him, that acquired him for a time the affections of the people. But he want-

ed those arts that are usually found to procure a lasting respect: he was fond of luxurious pleasures and idle ostentation; he admitted the meanest ranks to his familiarity; and his conversation was not adapted to impress them with a reverence for his morals or abilities. His military talents, on which mankind then placed the greatest value, were seldom exerted, and never with any great success. The French war was scarce heard of; and some successful inroads of the Scots, particularly that which brought on a disputed victory at Otterbourne, were only opposed by those barons whose possessions lay along the frontier. He gained indeed some reputation for arms in Ireland; but his successes there were too insignificant to give him a decisive character. From thence, the small regard which the public bore his person disposed them to murmur against his administration, and to receive with avidity every complaint which discontent or ambition suggested to his prejudice.

Whether the duke of Gloucester was secretly displeased with this mean disposition in his royal nephew, or wanted to make himself king by fomenting jealousies against him, must remain forever unknown; but certain it is, that he used every art to increase the aversion of the nation against him, and to establish his own popularity. He represented the peace which had [1396.] been just then concluded with France as the result of the king's pusillanimity; and plausibly appeared to lament that Richard should have degenerated so far from the heroic virtues of his father. He frequently spoke with contempt of the king's person and government, and deliberated concerning the lawfulness of throwing off all allegiance to him. These were insults that deserved to be chastised in any subject; but which called aloud for punishment in him, whose popularity was dangerous, and who more than once had testified a disposition to rebel. As all his conduct was secretly observed by the king's emissaries, Richard at length formed a resolution of ridding himself entirely both of him and his faction, sensible that he then had the parliament entirely at his disposal. He accordingly ordered Gloucester to be immediately arrested and sent over to Calais, at which place there was no danger of a rescue from his numerous adherents. The earls of Arundel and Warwick were seized at the same time; and a parliament was summoned at Westminster, which

the king knew to be obedient to his will. This parliament, as he was apprised, passed whatever acts he thought proper to dictate: they annulled forever the commission of fourteen, which had usurped upon his authority; they repealed all those acts which had condemned his former ministers; and revoked the general pardon which the king had granted, upon his assuming the reins of government into his own hands. In consequence of this several of the party of Gloucester were impeached, condemned, and executed. Fitz-Alan, archbishop of Canterbury, was banished the kingdom, and his temporalities sequestered. The earl of Arundel vainly attempted to plead the king's general pardon to stop his execution; the earl of Warwick, showing signs of contrition, had his life spared, but was banished to the Isle of Man. The greatest criminal yet remained; and a warrant was accordingly issued to the earl mareschal, governor of Calais, to bring over the duke of Gloucester, to take his trial as the rest had done. It is probable this nobleman would have shared the same fate with the rest of his party; but he was privately dispatched in prison, being smothered, as it afterwards appeared, between two pillows, by his keepers.

The death of a nobleman so popular as the duke did not fail to increase those animosities which had already taken deep root in the kingdom. The aggrandisement of some new favourites contributed still more to make the king odious; but though he seemed resolved, by all his actions, to set his subjects against him, it was accident that gave the occasion for his overthrow. After the destruction of the duke of Gloucester, and the heads of that party, a misunderstanding broke out among those noblemen who had joined in the prosecution. The earl of Hereford appeared in parliament, and accused the duke of Norfolk of having spoken seditious words against his majesty in a private conversation. Norfolk denied the charge; gave Hereford the lie; and offered to prove his innocence by single combat. As proofs were wanting for legal trial, the lords readily acquiesced in that mode of determination; the time and place were appointed; and the whole nation waited with anxious suspense for the event. At length the day arrived on which this duel was to be fought; and as combats of this kind were then very prevalent, it may not be amiss to describe the ceremonies on that occasion. Hereford, the challenger,

first appeared on a white charger, gaily caparisoned, armed at all points, and holding his drawn sword. When he approached the lists, the mareschal demanded his name and business; to which he replied, "I am Henry of Lancaster, earl of Hereford, come hither according to my duty, against Thomas Mowbray, duke of Norfolk, a false traitor to God and the king, the realm and me." Then taking the oath that his quarrel was just and true, he desired to enter the lists; which being granted, he sheathed his sword, pulled down his heaver, crossed himself on the forehead, seized his lance, passed the barrier, alighted, and sat down in a chair of green velvet placed at one end of the lists. He had scarce taken his seat when the king came into the field with great pomp, attended by the lords, the count de St. Pol, who came from France on purpose to see this famous trial, and ten thousand men at arms, to prevent tumults and disturbances. His majesty being seated in his chair of state, the king at arms proclaimed that none but such as were appointed to marshal the field should presume to touch the lists upon pain of death. Then another herald proclaimed aloud, "Behold here Henry of Lancaster, earl of Hereford, who has entered the lists to perform his devoir against Thomas Mowbray, duke of Norfolk, on pain of being counted false and recreant." Just then the duke of Norfolk appeared in arms, mounted upon a barbed horse, with a coat of arms of crimson velvet, embroidered with lions of silver and mulberry trees; and, having taken his oath before the constable and mareschal, entered the field, exclaiming aloud, "God defend the right!" Then alighting from his horse, he placed himself in a chair of crimson velvet opposite to his antagonist, at the other end of the lists. After which the mareschal, having measured their lances, delivered one to the challenger, and sent a knight with the other to the duke of Norfolk; and proclamation was made that they should prepare for the combat. Accordingly, mounting their horses, and closing their beavers, they fixed their lances in rest, and the trumpets sounded the charge. The earl of Hereford began his career with great violence; but before he could join his antagonist, the king threw down his warder, and the heralds interposed. By the advice and authority of his parliamentary commissioners, he stopped the combat, and ordered both the combatants to leave the kingdom. The duke of Norfolk he banished for life, but the

earl of Hereford only for ten years. Thus, the one was condemned to exile without being charged with any offence, and the other without being convicted of any crime. The duke of Norfolk was overwhelmed with grief and despondence at the judgment awarded against him; he retired to Venice, where, in a little time after, he died of a broken heart. Hereford's behaviour on this occasion was resigned and submissive; which so pleased the king, that he consented to shorten the date of his banishment four years; and he also granted him letters patent, insuring him the enjoyment of any inheritance which should fall to him during his absence. But nothing could be more fluctuating than Richard's promises or friendship. The earl of Hereford retiring into Flanders, and from thence to Paris, found there a very favourable reception from the French king. He even opened a treaty of marriage with the daughter of the duke of Berry, uncle to the king of France; but was prevented from completing the alliance by the interest of Richard, who, dreading the increasing power of the banished earl, sent over the earl of Salisbury to Paris, with instructions to break off the match. Such an unexpected injury could not fail to aggravate the resentment of Hereford; but he had still more cogent reasons for anger, upon the death of his father, the duke of Lancaster, which happened shortly after. Richard, as we before observed, had given him letters patent, empowering him to possess any successions that should fall to him while abroad; but, being now afraid of strengthening the hands of a man whom he had injured, he revoked those letters, and retained the possession of the Lancaster estate to himself.

Such complicated injuries served to inflame the resentment of Hereford against the king; and although he had hitherto concealed them, he now set no bounds to his indignation, but even conceived a desire of dethroning a person who had shown himself so unworthy of power. Indeed no man could be better qualified for an enterprise of this nature than the earl of Hereford: he was cool, cautious, discerning, and resolute. He had served with distinction against the infidels of Lithuania; and he had just joined to his other merits those of piety and valour. He was the idol of the soldiery, and the favourite of the people; he was immensely rich, and, by blood or alliance, connected with all the great families of the nation. On the other hand, the king, finding

himself above all restraint, gave himself up to a soft effeminate life, regardless of his own safety and of the good of the public. His ministers, following the example of their sovereign, gave little attention to business, but saw, without any concern, the honour of the nation sinking into contempt. In this situation all people naturally turned their eyes upon the banished earl as the only person from whom they could expect relief or redress. He was stimulated by private injuries; and had alliances and fortune sufficient to give weight to his measures. The malcontents only waited for the absence of the king to put their schemes in execution; and for these an opportunity was quickly offered.

The earl of Marche, presumptive heir to the crown, having been appointed the king's lieutenant in Ireland, was slain in a skirmish with the natives of that country; which so incensed Richard, that, unmindful of his precarious situation at home, he resolved with a numerous army to revenge his death in person. The duke of Lancaster (for that was the title which Hereford assumed upon the death of his father) being informed of Richard's departure for Ireland, instantly embarked at Nantz, with a retinue of sixty persons, in three small vessels, and landed at Ravenspur in Yorkshire. The earl of Northumberland, who had long been a malcontent, together with Henry Percy his son, who, from his ardent valour, was surnamed Hotspur, immediately joined him with their forces. After this junction the concourse of people coming to list under his banner was so great, that, in a few days, his army amounted to three-score thousand men.

The duke of York had been left guardian of the realm during Richard's absence; but his efforts were ineffectual, as the most powerful persons who espoused the king's interests were then actually with him in Ireland. The duke, however, assembled a body of forty thousand men at St. Alban's; but found them either quite dispirited, or more attached to the cause of the rebels than of the crown. It had been Hereford's policy, from the beginning, to hide the real motives of his expedition, and to give out that he only aimed at the recovery of his patrimony and dukedom. Upon the present occasion, therefore, he entreated the duke of York not to oppose a loyal and humble suppliant in the recovery of his just rights; but to concur in a measure that was more likely to promote the king's honour than injure his in-



terests. York was deceived by these specious professions; he declared that he would not only approve, but assist him in his pretensions; and both armies meeting, embraced with acclamations of joy.

Whilst these things were transacting in England, Richard continued in Ireland in perfect security. Contrary winds, which at that time continued to blow for three weeks together, prevented his receiving any news of the rebellion which was begun in his native dominions. Upon the first information, therefore, he immediately imprisoned the earl of Hereford's brothers, whom he had taken over with him, and then resolved to go immediately over to fight the enemy in person. Yet, ever wavering in his resolutions, he was persuaded to stay some time longer, till he could prepare ships to transport all his forces together. This delay completed his ruin; so that, when he landed at Milford-haven with a body of twenty thousand men, he had the mortification to find that the duke of York had already espoused the interest of his rival, and that his force was every way inferior to that of the enemy. He now saw himself in a dreadful situation, in the midst of an enraged people, without any friend on whom to rely, and forsaken by those, who, in the sunshine of his power, had only contributed to fan his follies. His little army gradually began to desert him, till at last he found he had not above six thousand men who followed his standard. Thus, not knowing whom to trust to, or where to turn, he saw no other hopes of safety, but to throw himself upon the generosity of his enemy, and to gain from pity what he could not obtain by arms. He therefore sent Hereford word that he was ready to submit to whatever terms he thought proper to prescribe; and that he earnestly desired a conference. For this purpose, the earl appointed him to meet at a castle within about ten miles of Chester, where he came [1399.] the next day with his whole army. Richard, who the day before had been brought thither by the earl of Northumberland, descrying his rival's approach from the walls, went down to receive him; while Hereford, after some ceremony, entered the castle in complete armour, only his head was bare, in compliment to the fallen king. Richard received him with that open air for which he had been remarkable, and kindly bade him welcome. "My lord the king," returned Hereford, with a cool respectful bow,

“I am come sooner than you appointed, because your people say, that for one-and-twenty years you have governed with rigour and indiscretion. They are very ill satisfied with your conduct; but, if it please God, I will help you to govern them better for the time to come.” To this declaration the king made no other answer, but, “Fair cousin, since it pleases you, it pleases us likewise.”

But Hereford's haughty answer was not the only mortification the unfortunate Richard was to endure. After a short conversation with some of the king's attendants, Hereford ordered the king's horses to be brought out of the stable; and two wretched animals being produced, Richard was placed upon one, and his favourite, the earl of Salisbury, upon the other. In this mean equipage they rode to Chester, and were conveyed to the castle, with a great noise of trumpets, and through a vast concourse of people, who were no way moved at the sight. In this manner he was led triumphantly along, from town to town, amidst multitudes who scoffed at him, and extolled his rival. “Long live the good duke of Lancaster, our deliverer!” was the general cry; but as for the king, to use the pathetic words of the poet, “none cried God bless him.” Thus, after repeated indignities, he was confined a close prisoner in the Tower; there, if possible, to undergo a still greater variety of studied insolence, and flagrant contempt. The wretched monarch, humbled in this manner, began to lose the pride of a king with the splendours of royalty, and his spirits sunk to his circumstances. There was no great difficulty, therefore, in inducing him to sign a deed, by which he renounced his crown, as being unqualified for governing the kingdom. Upon this resignation Hereford founded his principal claim: but willing to fortify his pretensions with every appearance of justice, he called a parliament, which was readily brought to approve and confirm his claims. A frivolous charge of thirty-three articles was drawn up, and found valid against the king; upon which he was solemnly deposed, and the duke of Lancaster elected in his stead, by the title of Henry IV. Thus began the contest between the houses of York and Lancaster, which, for several years after, deluged the kingdom with blood; and yet, in the end, contributed to settle and confirm the constitution.

When Richard was deposed, the earl of Northumberland made

a motion in the house of peers, demanding the advice of parliament with regard to the future treatment of the deposed king. To this they replied, that he should be imprisoned in some secure place, where his friends and partisans should not be able to find him. This was accordingly put in practice; but while he still continued alive, the usurper could not remain in safety. Indeed some conspiracies and commotions, which followed soon after, induced Henry to wish for Richard's death; in consequence of which, one of those assassins that are found in every court, ready to commit the most horrid crimes for reward, went down to the place of this unfortunate monarch's confinement, in the castle of Pomfret, and, with eight of his followers, rushed into his apartment. The king, concluding their design was to take away his life, resolved not to fall unrevenged, but to sell it as dearly as he could; wherefore wresting a pole-axe from one of the murderers, he soon laid four of their number dead at his feet. But he was at length overpowered, and struck dead by the blow of a pole-axe; although some assert that he was starved in prison. Thus died the unfortunate Richard, in the thirty-fourth year of his age, and the twenty-third of his reign. Though his conduct was blameable, yet the punishment he suffered was greater than his offences; and, in the end, his sufferings made more converts to his family and cause than ever his most meritorious actions could have procured them. He left no posterity, either legitimate or otherwise.

It was during this reign that John Wickliff, a secular priest, educated at Oxford, began to propagate his doctrines; and he has the honour of being the first person who had sagacity to see through the errors of the church of Rome, and courage enough to attempt a reformation. He denied the doctrine of the real presence, the supremacy of the church of Rome, and the merit of monastic vows. He maintained that the scriptures were the sole rule of faith; that the church was dependent on the state; that the clergy ought to possess no estates; and the numerous ceremonies of the church were hurtful to true piety. In short, most of his doctrines were such as the wisdom of posterity thought fit to establish: and Wickliff failed in being a reformer, only because the minds of men were not yet sufficiently ripened for the truths he endeavoured to inculcate. The clergy of that age did not fail

to oppose Wickliff with fury ; but as his doctrines were pleasing to the higher orders of the laity, he found protection from their indignation. John of Gaunt was his particular friend and favourer ; and when summoned to appear before the bishop of London, that nobleman attended him into the court, and defended him both from the resentment of the clergy and the rage of the populace. However, in process of time, he had the satisfaction to see the people, who were at first strongly prejudiced against him, entirely declaring in his favour ; and although he was often cited to appear before the prelates, yet, from the estimation he was held in, both among the higher and lower ranks of the laity, he was always dismissed without injury. In this manner he continued, during a long life, to lessen the credit of the clergy, both by his preaching and writings ; and at last died of a palsy, in the year 1385, at his rectory of Lutterworth, in the county of Leicester ; while the clergy took care to represent his death as a judgment from heaven for his multiplied heresies and impieties.

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## CHAP. XVI.

### HENRY IV.

[1399.] **N**UMEROUS formalities are seldom used but to cover distrust or injustice. Henry the Fourth, knowing the weakness of his title, was, at least, determined to give his coronation all possible solemnity, and to make religion a cloak to cover his usurpation. Accordingly, particular care was taken to procure a certain oil, said to have been presented by the Virgin Mary to Thomas à Becket during his exile. The phial that contained this precious balm had fallen into the hands of a hermit, who gave it to the first duke of Lancaster, assuring him that all kings anointed with that oil would become true champions of the church. On the present occasion, being seized by Henry among the other jewels of Richard, he was anointed with it in all the forms ; at the same time declaring, that he had ascended the throne by the right of conquest, the resignation of Richard in his favour, and as the most direct descendant of Henry the Third,

king of England. These were the formalities employed to hide his ambition, or perhaps quiet his own fears; for the heir of the house of Mortimer, who had in the late reign been declared in parliament the true heir to the crown, was still alive, though but a boy of seven years of age. Him Henry detained, together with his younger brother, in an honourable custody; at Windsor castle.

But notwithstanding these precautions for his security, Henry soon found that the throne of an usurper is ever a bed of thorns. Such violent animosities broke out among the barons, in the first session of his parliament, that forty challenges were given and received, and forty gauntlets thrown down as pledges of the sincerity of their resentment. Although these commotions were seemingly suppressed by his moderation for that time, they soon broke out into rebellion; and a conspiracy was formed for seizing Henry at Windsor, and replacing Richard on the throne, who was supposed to be yet alive. This plot was set on foot by the earls of Rutland, Kent, Huntingdon, and lord Spenser, whom Henry had degraded from superior titles conferred upon them by the late king. The particulars of their scheme were committed to writing, and each of the confederates had a copy signed by all the rest. Among the number of these, the duke of Aumerle was one, furnished with a paper, which he unfortunately dropped out of his bosom as he was sitting one day at dinner with his father, the duke of York. The father, perceiving something fall, privately took it up, and to his great astonishment discovered the contents, which he resolved, with all diligence, to disclose to the king, and accordingly rode off with the utmost expedition to Windsor, where the court resided at that juncture. In the mean time the son, finding the sad mischance that had happened, and guessing the cause of his father's expedition, was resolved, if possible, to prevent his information; and, hastening by a shorter way, discovered the whole to the king, and obtained the royal pardon before his father could arrive; who, coming soon after, produced the paper with the names of the conspirators.

In the mean time, while Henry employed the most vigorous efforts to dispel the rising storm, the conspirators, finding their first intentions frustrated, dressed up one of the late king's chaplains in royal robes, giving out that he was

[1400.]

the deposed monarch, whom they had taken from his prison and were willing to replace on the throne. Pity is a passion for which the English have ever been remarkable; majesty in distress was an object sufficient at once to excite their loyalty and compassion; and they accordingly flocked in great numbers round the standard of the conspirators. Their army soon became considerable, and encamped near Cirencester, while the leaders took up their head-quarters within the town; yet so careless or inexperienced were they, that they neglected to place proper guards at the gates and avenues of the place. This was quickly perceived by the mayor of the town, who was in the interests of the king: this magistrate, assembling four hundred men in the night, secured the gates so as to exclude the army encamped without, and then he attacked the chiefs within. The earls of Kent and Salisbury were taken, after an obstinate resistance, and beheaded on the spot by the mayor's order. The earl of Huntingdon and lord Spenser escaped over the tops of the houses into the camp, in hopes of storming the town at the head of their forces: but they quickly had the mortification to find the tents and baggage abandoned by the soldiers, who, upon hearing the noise and tumult within, had concluded that a party of the king's army had entered privately to strengthen the townsmen; and, under the conviction of this, they fled with the utmost precipitation.

The two lords, perceiving that all hope was over, endeavoured to conceal themselves separately; but they were soon after taken, and lost their heads upon a scaffold, by the king's order. Their deaths were soon after followed by those of sir Thomas Blount and sir Benedict Sely; and when the quarters of these unhappy men were brought to London, no less than eighteen bishops, and thirty-two mitred abbots, joined the populace, and met them with the most indecent marks of joy and exultation. In this shocking procession was seen the earl of Rutland carrying the head of lord Spenser, his brother-in-law, in triumph, after having betrayed him. This miscreant had been long inured to blood and treachery: he was instrumental in the murder of his uncle, the duke of Gloucester, to please Richard; he soon after deserted the fallen fortunes of that monarch, and joined with Henry; not long after, he entered into a conspiracy against this monarch, after having sworn allegiance to him; and now, at last, betrayed those very

associates whom he had seduced into this enterprise, carrying in triumph the marks of his execrable villany.

But the suppression of a single rebellion was not sufficient to give quiet to a kingdom threatened with foreign invasion, and torn by intestine discontent. The king of France had actually raised a vast armament to invade England : but a truce was soon after concluded for eight-and-twenty years ; and it was agreed, that queen Isabel, who had been married to Richard, but whose marriage had not been consummated, should return to France, her native country. The Scots, shortly after, began to renew their antient disturbances ; and while the English army marched northward to oppose their incursions, the Welsh, on the other side, under the conduct of Owen Glendour, attacked the kingdom upon the defenceless quarter. Many were the petty victories gained, and the ravages committed, on either part, in this contest. The name of Owen Glendour is respected among his countrymen to this very day ; but as all his conquests procured no lasting advantage, and as all his victories only terminated in fame, they are scarce worth a place in the page of history. It will be sufficient to observe, that, whatever honour the English lost on the side of Wales, they gained an equivalent on that of Scotland ; the Welsh maintained their ground, although their chieftain Glendour was taken prisoner, while the Scots still fled before the English, and would neither submit, nor yet give them battle.

It was in a skirmish between the Scots and the English, that Archibald, earl of Douglas, and many of the Scottish nobility, were taken prisoners by the earl of Northumberland, and carried to Alnwick castle. This success was considered at first as a signal advantage ; but it was soon attended with consequences that were fatal to the victors. When Henry received intelligence of this victory, he sent the earl orders not to ransom his prisoners, as he intended to detain them, in order to increase his demands in making peace with Scotland. This message was highly resented by the earl of Northumberland, who, by the laws of war that prevailed in that age, had a right to the ransom of all such as he had taken in battle. The command was still more irksome, as he considered the king as his debtor, both for security and his crown. Indeed, the obliga-

tions which Henry owed him were of a nature the most likely to produce ingratitude on the one side, and discontent on the other. The prince naturally became jealous of that power which had advanced him to the throne; and the subject thought himself entitled to every favour the crown had to bestow. Not but that Henry had already conferred the highest honours upon him; he had made him constable of the kingdom, and given him several other employments; but nothing could satisfy this nobleman's ambition, while the king had any thing left to give. Accordingly, stung with this supposed injury, he resolved to overturn a throne which he had the chief hand in establishing. A scheme was laid, in which the Scots and Welsh were to unite their forces, and to assist Northumberland in elevating Mortimer, as the true heir to the crown of England. When all things were [1403.] prepared for the intended insurrection, the earl had the mortification to find himself unable to lead on the troops, being seized with a sudden illness at Berwick. But the want of his presence was well supplied by his son Harry Percy, surnamed Hotspur, who took the command of the troops, and marched them towards Shrewsbury, in order to join his forces with those of Glendour, who, sometime before, had been exchanged from prison, and had now advanced with his forces as far as Shropshire. Upon the junction of these two armies, they published a manifesto, which aggravated their real grievances, and invented more. In the mean time, Henry, who had received no intelligence of their designs, was at first greatly surprised at the news of this rebellion. But fortune seemed to befriend him on this occasion; he had a small army in readiness, which he had intended against the Scots; and knowing the importance of dispatch against such active enemies, he instantly hurried down to Shrewsbury, that he might give the rebels battle.

Upon the approach of the two armies, both sides seemed willing to give a colour to their cause, by showing a desire of reconciliation; but when they came to open their mutual demands, the treaty was turned into abuse and recrimination. On one side were objected rebellion and ingratitude: on the other, tyranny and usurpation. The two armies were nearly equal, each consisting of about twelve thousand men; the animosity, on both sides, was inflamed to the highest pitch; and no prudence or



military skill could determine on which side the victory might incline. Accordingly, a very bloody engagement ensued, in which the generals on both sides exerted themselves with great bravery. Henry was seen every where in the thickest of the fight; while his valiant son, who was afterwards the renowned conqueror of France, fought by his side, and, though wounded in the face by an arrow, still kept the field, and performed astonishing acts of valour. On the other side, the daring Hotspur supported that renown which he had acquired in many bloody engagements, and every where sought out the king as a noble object of his indignation. At last, however, his death, from an unknown hand, decided the victory; and the fortune of Henry once more prevailed. On that bloody day, it is said that no less than two thousand three hundred gentlemen were slain, and about six thousand private men, of whom two thirds were of Hotspur's army.

While this furious transaction was going forward, Northumberland, who was lately recovered from his indisposition, was advancing with a body of troops to reinforce the army of the malcontents, and take upon him the command. But hearing by the way of his son's misfortune, he dismissed his troops, not daring to take the field with so small a force, before an army superior in number, and flushed with recent victory. The earl for a while attempted to find safety in flight; but at last being pressed by his pursuers, and finding himself totally without resource, he chose rather to throw himself upon the king's mercy than lead a precarious and indigent life in exile. Upon his appearing before Henry, at York, he pretended that his sole intention in arming was to mediate between the two parties; and this, though a very weak apology, seemed to satisfy the king. Northumberland therefore received a pardon; Henry probably thinking that he was sufficiently punished by the loss of his army, and the death of his favourite son.

But the extinction of one rebellion only seemed to give rise to another. The archbishop of York, who had been promoted during the late reign, entered into a confederacy with the earl of Nottingham, and the earl of Northumberland who [1405.] had been so lately pardoned, to dethrone the king, and set young Mortimer in his place. Had the forces of these insurgents cooperated with those that were so lately overthrown, it is possible

they might have overpowered any body of men which the king could bring into the field ; but they began their operations just when their confederates were defeated. This powerful combination, however, took the field, and published a manifesto, in which they reproached Henry with usurpation, tyranny, and murder ; they required that the right line should be restored, and all grievances redressed. The earl of Westmoreland, who had been sent against them with a very inferior force, demanded a conference, to which they readily consented. The chiefs, on each side, met at Skipton, in Yorkshire, and, in the presence of both armies, entered upon the subject of their grievances and complaints. The archbishop loudly deplored the nation's injuries and his own ; the earl of Westmoreland not only allowed the justice of his remonstrances, but begged of him to propose the remedies. The archbishop entered upon many stipulations, and the earl granted them all. He now therefore entreated, that, since they had nothing more to ask or to fear, they would dismiss their forces, and trust to his honour for the rest. His specious promises, and plausible manners, led them to their ruin. The insurgents immediately disbanded their troops, while he gave private orders that his own army should not disperse till further notice ; and thus having disqualified them for defence, instantly seizing upon the archbishop and the earl of Nottingham, he carried them to the king. The form of a trial was a very unnecessary ceremony, to men whose fate was pre-determined ; the archbishop of York was the first prelate who was capitally punished in England ; the earl of Nottingham shared the same fate, and the earl of Northumberland found safety by flying into Scotland ; but he was slain about three years after, in an incursion, by sir Thomas Rokeby sheriff of Yorkshire.

Such advantages seemed to promise the country, long torn with factions, and threatened with invasions, some degree of repose ; but a new calamity now began to appear, which, though small in the beginning, was attended, in the course of ages, with most dreadful effects. Since Wickliff had published his opinions, in the last reign, his doctrines met with so many partisans, that the clergy began to tremble for their influence over the minds of the people. They therefore used all their interest to bring the king over to their party ; who had more than once, in

former times, declared himself in favour of the new doctrines. But at present, as he was conscious of the weakness of his title to the crown, he was resolved to make use of every support to confirm his pretensions; and, among others, that offered him by the clergy was by no means to be thought slightly of. He seemed to listen with great earnestness to their complaints; and took an occasion to direct his parliament to attend to the conservation of the church, which he asserted was then in danger. How reluctant soever the house of commons might be to prosecute a sect whose crime at any rate was but error, the credit of the court and the cabals of the clergy at last obtained an act for burning obstinate heretics. This statute was no sooner passed than the clergy resolved to show that it was not hung up as an empty terror, but that it would be urged with all the force of which it was capable. William Sawtre, a follower of Wickliff, and rector of St. Osithe's, London, had been condemned by the convocation of Canterbury, and was soon after burned alive, by virtue of the king's writ delivered to the lord-mayor of London. This was the first man that suffered death in England for the sake of religion; but the fires once kindled were not likely to be soon extinguished, as the clergy had the power of continuing the flame. They easily perceived, that a power of burning their enemies would revive that share of temporal power which they had possessed some centuries before; and in this they were not mistaken. They thus renewed their pristine authority, but upon very different grounds; for, as in the Saxon times they fixed their power upon the affections, they now founded it upon the terrors of the people.

By these means Henry seemed to surmount all his troubles; and the calm, which was thus produced, was employed by him in endeavours to acquire popularity, which he had lost by the severities exercised during the preceding part of his reign. For that reason, he often permitted the house of commons to assume powers which had not been usually exercised by their predecessors. In the sixth year of his reign, when they voted him the supplies, they appointed treasurers of their own, to see the money disbursed for the purposes intended; and required them to deliver in their accounts to the house. They proposed thirty very important articles for the government of the king's household; and, on the whole, preserved their privileges and freedom more

entire, during his reign, than in that of any of his predecessors. But while the king thus laboured, not without success, to retrieve the reputation he had lost, his son Henry, prince of Wales, seemed equally bent on incurring the public aversion. He became notorious for all kinds of debauchery; and ever chose to be surrounded by a set of wretches, who took pride in committing the most illegal acts, with the prince at their head. The king was not a little mortified at this degeneracy in his eldest son, who seemed entirely forgetful of his station, although he had already exhibited repeated proofs of his valour, conduct, and generosity. Such were the excesses into which he ran, that one of his dissolute companions having been brought to trial before sir William Gascoigne, chief-justice of the king's bench, for some misdemeanour, the prince was so exasperated at the issue of the trial, that he struck the judge in open court. The venerable magistrate, who knew the reverence that was due to his station, behaved with a dignity that became his office, and immediately ordered the prince to be committed to prison. When this transaction was reported to the king, who was an excellent judge of mankind, he could not help exclaiming in a transport, "Happy is the king that has a magistrate endowed with courage to execute the laws upon such an offender; still more happy, in having a son willing to submit to such a chastisement." This, in fact, is one of the first great instances we read in the English history, of a magistrate doing justice in opposition to power; since, upon many former occasions, we find the judges only ministers of royal caprice.

Henry, whose health had for some time been declining, did not long outlive this transaction. He was subject to fits, which bereaved him, for the time, of his senses; and which, at last, brought on the near approach of death, at Westminster. As [1413.] his constitution decayed, his fears of losing the crown redoubled even to a childish anxiety. He could not be persuaded to sleep, unless the royal diadem were laid upon his pillow. He resolved to take the cross, and fight the cause of the pilgrims to Jerusalem; and even imparted his designs to a great council, demanding their opinions relative to his intended journey: but his disorder increasing to a violent degree, he was obliged to lay aside his scheme, and to prepare for a journey of much greater

importance. In this situation, as he was one day in a violent paroxysm, the prince of Wales took up the crown and carried it away; but the king soon after recovering his senses, and missing the crown, demanded what was become of it? Being informed that the prince of Wales had carried it off: "What!" said the king, "would he rob me of my right before my death?" But the prince, just then entering the room, assured his father that he had no such motives in what he had done, went and replaced the crown where he had found it, and, having received his father's blessing, dutifully retired. The king was taken with his last fit while he was at his devotions before the shrine of St. Edward the Confessor, in Westminster Abbey; and thence he was carried to the Jerusalem Chamber. When he had recovered from his swoon, perceiving himself in a strange place, he desired to know where he was, and if the apartment had any particular name: being informed that it was called the Jerusalem Chamber, he said, that he then perceived a prophecy was fulfilled, which declared that he should die in Jerusalem. Thus saying, and recommending his soul to his Maker, he soon after expired, in the forty-seventh year of his age, and the fourteenth of his reign.

If we consider this monarch on one side of his character, he will appear an object worthy of the highest applause; if on the other, of our warmest indignation. As a man, he was valiant, prudent, cool, and sagacious. These virtues adorned him in his private character; nor did his vices appear till ambition brought him within sight of a throne: it was then that he was discovered to be unjust, cruel, gloomy, and tyrannical; and though his reign contributed much to the happiness of his subjects, yet it was entirely destructive of his own. He was twice married: by his first wife, Mary de Bohun, he had four sons,—Henry, his successor; Thomas, duke of Clarence; John, duke of Bedford; Humphry, duke of Gloucester: and two daughters. By his second wife he had no issue.

## CHAP. XVII.

HENRY V.

[1413.] **T**HE death of Henry IV. gave the people very little concern, as he had always governed them rather by their fears than their affections. But the rejoicings made for the succession of his son, notwithstanding his extravagances, were manifest and sincere. In the very height and madness of the revel, he would often give instances of the noblest disposition; and, though he did not practise the virtues of temperance, he always showed that he esteemed them. But it was his courage which, in that martial age, chiefly won the people's affection and applause. Courage and superstition then made up the whole system of human duty; nor had the age any other idea of heroism, but what was the result of this combination.

The first steps taken by the young king confirmed all those prepossessions entertained in his favour. He called together his former companions, acquainted them with his intended reformation, exhorted them to follow his example, and thus dismissed them from his presence, allowing them a competency to subsist upon, till he saw them worthy of higher promotion. The faithful ministers of his father, at first, indeed, began to tremble for their former justice in the administration of their duty; but he soon eased them of their fears, by taking them into his friendship and confidence. Sir William Gascoigne, who thought himself the most obnoxious, met with praises instead of reproaches, and was exhorted to persevere in the same rigorous and impartial execution of justice.

But Henry did not stop here; he showed himself willing to correct not only his own private errors but those of the former reign. He expressed the deepest sorrow for the fate of the unhappy Richard, and ordered his funeral obsequies to be performed with royal solemnity. He seemed ambitious to bury all party distinctions in oblivion; the good men only of each party were dear to him; and the bad vainly alleged their loyalty as an extenuation of their vices. The exhortations as well as the example of the prince gave encouragement to virtue; all parties were

equally attached to so just a prince, and the defects of his title were forgotten amidst the lustre of his admirable qualities.

In this manner, the people seemed happy in their new king; but it is not in the power of man to raise himself entirely above the prejudices of the age in which he lives, or to correct those abuses which often employ the sagacity of whole centuries to discover. The vices of the clergy had drawn upon them the contempt and detestation of the people; but they were resolved to continue their antient power, not by reforming themselves, but by persecuting those who opposed them. The heresy of Wickliff, or Lollardism as it was called, began to spread every day more and more, while it received a new lustre from the protection and preaching of sir John Oldcastle, baron of Cobham, who had been one of the king's domestics, and stood high in his favour. His character, both for civil and military excellence, pointed him out to Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, as the proper victim of ecclesiastical vengeance; and he applied to the king for permission to indict lord Cobham, as a miscreant guilty of the most atrocious heresy. But the generous nature of the prince was averse to such sanguinary methods of conversion; and he resolved first to try what effects the arts of reason and persuasion would produce upon this bold leader of his sect. He accordingly desired a private conference with lord Cobham; but he found that nobleman obstinate in his opinions, and determined rather to part with life than what he believed upon conviction. The king finding him immoveable, gave him up to the fury of his enemies. Persecution ever propagates those errors which it aims at abolishing. The primate indicted lord Cobham; and, with the assistance of his suffragans, condemned him, as an heretic, to be burned alive. Cobham, however, escaping from the Tower, before the day appointed for his execution, privately went among his party; and, stimulating their zeal, led them up to London to take a signal revenge of his enemies. But the king, apprised of his intentions, ordered that the city gates should be shut; [1414.] and, coming by night with his guard into St. Giles's Fields, seized such of the conspirators as appeared, and afterwards laid hold of several parties that were hastening to the appointed place. Some of these were executed, but the greater number pardoned. Cobham himself found means of escaping for that time: but he

was taken about four years after ; and never did the cruelty of man invent, or crimes draw down, such torments as he was made to endure. He was hung up with a chain by the middle ; and thus at a slow fire burned, or rather roasted, alive.

Such spectacles as these must naturally excite the disgust of the people, not only against the clergy but the government itself. Henry, to turn their minds from such hideous scenes, resolved to take the advantage of the troubles in which France was at that time engaged, and pursue the advice of his dying father, who gave it as his last instructions, that he should employ his subjects in foreign expeditions, and thus give all the restless spirits occupation for their inquietude. Charles the Sixth, who was then king of France, was subject to frequent fits of lunacy, which totally disqualified him for reigning. During the paroxysms of his disease, the ambition of his vassals and courtiers had room for exertion ; and they grew powerful from their sovereign's weakness. The administration of affairs was disputed between his brother Lewis, duke of Orleans, and his cousin-german, John duke of Burgundy. Isabella, his queen, also had her party ; and the king vainly attempted to secure one also in his favour. Each of these, as they happened to prevail, branded their captives with the name of traitors ; and the gibbets were at once hung with the bodies of the accused and the accusers. This, therefore, was thought by Henry a favourable opportunity to recover from France those grants that had been formerly given up by treaty. But previously, to give his intended expedition the appearance of justice, he sent over ambassadors to Paris, offering a perpetual peace and alliance, on condition of being put in possession of all those provinces which had been ravished from the English during the former reigns, and of espousing Catharine, the French king's daughter, with a suitable dowry. Though the French court was at that time extremely averse to war, yet the exorbitance of these demands could not be complied with ; and Henry very probably made them in hopes of a denial. He assembled a great fleet and army at Southampton ; and having allured all the military men of the kingdom to attend him, from the hopes of conquest, he put [1415.] to sea, and landed at Harfleur, at the head of an army of six thousand men at arms, and twenty-four thousand foot, mostly archers.



The first operations were upon Harfleur, which, being pressed hard, promised at a certain day to surrender, unless relieved before that time. The day arriving, and the garrison, unmindful of their engagement, still resolving to defend the place, Henry ordered an assault to be made, took the town by storm, and expelled the garrison and the inhabitants. Thence the victor advanced into the country, which had been already rendered desolate by factions, and which he now totally laid waste. Although the enemy made but a feeble resistance, yet the climate seemed to fight against the English,—a contagious dysentery carrying off or disabling one half of Henry's army. In such a situation he had recourse to an expedient, common enough in that barbarous age, to inspire his troops with confidence in their general. He challenged the dauphin, who commanded in the French army, to single combat, offering to stake his pretensions on the event. This challenge, as might naturally be expected, was rejected; and the French, though disagreeing internally, at last seemed to unite, at the appearance of the common danger. Fourteen thousand men at arms, and forty thousand foot, were by this time assembled, under the command of the constable L'Albret, and were so stationed as to threaten an interception of Henry's weakened forces on their return. The English monarch, when it was too late, began to repent of his rash inroad into a country where disease and a powerful army every where threatened destruction; he therefore began to think of retiring into Calais. In this retreat, which was at once both painful and dangerous, Henry took every precaution to inspire his troops with patience and perseverance; and showed them in his own person the brightest example of fortitude and resignation. He was continually harassed on his march by flying parties of the enemy; and whenever he attempted to pass the river Somme, over which his march lay, he saw troops on the other side ready to oppose his passage. However, he was so fortunate as to seize by surprise a passage near St. Quintin, which had not been sufficiently guarded; and there he safely carried over his army.

But the enemy still hoped to intercept his retreat; and, after he had passed the small river Ternois at Blangi, he was surprised to observe from the heights the whole French army (considerably reinforced) drawn up on the plains of Azincourt, and so posted,

that it was impossible for him to proceed on his march without coming to an engagement. No situation could be more unfavourable than that in which he then found himself. His army was wasted with disease, the soldiers' spirits worn down with fatigue, destitute of provisions, and discouraged by their retreat. Their whole body scarcely exceeded twelve thousand men; and these were to sustain the shock of an enemy six times their number, headed by expert generals, and plentifully supplied with provisions. This disparity, as it depressed the English, raised the courage of the French in proportion; and so confident were they of success, that they began to treat for the ransom of their prisoners. Henry, on the other hand, though sensible of his extreme danger, did not omit any circumstance that could assist his situation. As the enemy were so much superior, he drew up his army on a narrow ground between two woods, which guarded each flank; and he patiently expected, in that position, the attack of the enemy. The constable of France was at the head of one army; and Henry himself, with Edward duke of York, commanded the other. For a time both armies, as if afraid to begin, kept silently gazing at each other, neither being willing to break their ranks by making the onset; which Henry perceiving, with a cheerful countenance cried out, "My friends, since they will not begin, it is ours to set them the example: come on, and the Blessed Trinity be our protection!" Upon this, the whole army set forward with a shout, while the French still continued to wait their approach with intrepidity. The English archers, who had long been famous for their great skill, first let fly a shower of arrows three feet long, which did great execution. The French cavalry advancing to repel these, two hundred bow-men, who lay till then concealed, rising on a sudden, let fly among them, and produced such a confusion, that the archers threw by their arrows, and, rushing in, fell upon them sword in hand. The French at first repulsed the assailants, who were enfeebled by disease; but they soon made up the defect by their valour; and, resolving to conquer or die, burst in upon the enemy with such impetuosity, that the French were soon obliged to give way.

In the mean time a body of English horse, which had been concealed in a neighbouring wood, rushing out, flanked the French infantry, and a general disorder began to ensue. The first line

of the enemy being routed, the second line marched up to interrupt the progress of the victory. Henry, therefore, alighted from his horse, presented himself to the enemy with an undaunted countenance; and at the head of his men fought on foot, encouraging some, and assisting others. Eighteen French cavaliers, who were resolved to kill him, or die in the attempt, rushing from the ranks together, advanced, and one of them stunned the king with a blow of his battle-axe. They then fell upon him in a body; and he was upon the point of sinking under their blows, when David Gam, a valiant Welshman, aided by two of his countrymen, came up to the king's assistance, and soon turned the attention of the assailants from Henry to themselves, till at length, being overpowered, they fell dead at his feet. The king had by this time recovered his senses; and fresh troops advancing to his relief, the eighteen French cavaliers were slain: upon which he knighted the Welshmen who had so valiantly fallen in his defence. The heat of the engagement still increasing, Henry's courage seemed also to increase, and the most dangerous situation was where he fought in person: his brother, who was stunned by a blow, fell at his feet; and while the king was piously endeavouring to succour him, he received another blow himself, which threw him upon his knees. But he soon recovered; and leading on his troops with fresh ardour, they ran headlong upon the enemy; and put them into such disorder, that their leaders could never after bring them to the charge. The duke of Alençon, who commanded the second line, seeing it fly, resolved, by one desperate stroke, to retrieve the fortune of the day, or fall in the attempt. Wherefore running up to Henry, and at the same time crying aloud that he was the duke of Alençon, he discharged such a blow on his head, that it carried off part of the king's helmet; while, in the mean time, Henry, not having been able to ward off the blow, returned it by striking the duke to the ground, and he was soon killed by the surrounding crowd, all the king's efforts to save him proving ineffectual. In this manner the French were overthrown in every part of the field; from their number, being crowded into a very narrow space, they were incapable of either flying or making any resistance; so that they covered the ground with heaps of slain. After all appearance of opposition was over, the English had leisure to make prisoners; and

having advanced with uninterrupted success to the open plain, they there saw the remains of the French rear-guard, which still maintained a show of opposition. At the same time was heard an alarm from behind, which proceeded from a number of peasants who had fallen upon the English baggage, and were putting those who guarded it to the sword. Henry, now seeing the enemy on all sides of him, began to entertain apprehensions from his prisoners, the number of whom exceeded even that of his army. He thought it necessary, therefore, to issue general orders for putting them to death; but on the discovery of the certainty of his victory, he stopped the slaughter, and was still able to save a great number. This severity tarnished the glory which his victory would otherwise have acquired: but all the heroism of that age is tinged with barbarity.

This battle was very fatal to France, from the number of princes and nobility slain or taken prisoners. Among the number of the slain were the constable of France, the two brothers of the duke of Burgundy, the duke of Barre, and the count de Marle. An archbishop of Sens also perished fighting in this battle. The killed are computed on the whole to have amounted to ten thousand men; and as the loss fell chiefly upon the cavalry, it is pretended that of these eight thousand were gentlemen. The number of prisoners of whom the most distinguished were the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, approached fourteen thousand. All the English who were slain did not exceed eighty; a number amazingly inconsiderable, if we compare the loss with the victory.

Oct. 25. This victory, how great soever it might have been,  
 1415. was attended with no immediate good effects. Henry did not interrupt his retreat a moment after the battle of Azincourt, but carried his prisoners to Calais, and thence to England, where the parliament, dazzled with the splendour of his late victory, granted him new supplies, though unequal to the expenses [1417.] of a campaign. With these supplies, and new levies, he landed an army of twenty-five thousand men in Normandy, and prepared to strike a decisive blow for the crown of France, to which the English monarchs had long made pretensions. That wretched country was now in a most deplorable situation. The whole kingdom appeared as one vast theatre of crimes, murders, injustice, and devastation. The duke of Orleans

was assassinated by the duke of Burgundy; and the duke of Burgundy, in his turn, fell by the treachery of the dauphin. At the same time, the duke's son, desirous of revenging his father's death, entered into a secret treaty with the English; and a league was immediately concluded at Arras, between Henry [1419.] and the young duke of Burgundy, in which the king promised to revenge the murder of the late duke: and the son seemed to insist upon no further stipulations. Henry, therefore, proceeded in his conquests, without much opposition from any quarter. Several towns and provinces submitted on his approach; the city of Rouen was besieged and taken; Pontoise and Gisors he soon became master of. He even threatened Paris by the terror of his power, and obliged the court to move to Troye. It was at this city that the duke of Burgundy, who had taken upon him the protection of the French king, met Henry, in order to ratify that treaty, which was formerly begun, and by which the crown of France was to be transferred to a stranger. The imbecility into which Charles had fallen, made him passive in this remarkable treaty; and Henry dictated the terms throughout the whole negotiation. The principal articles of this treaty were, that Henry should espouse the princess Catharine; that king Charles should enjoy the title and dignity of king for life,—but that Henry should be declared heir to the crown, and should be intrusted with the present administration of the government; that France and England should forever be united under one king, but should still retain their respective laws and privileges; that Henry should unite his arms with those of king Charles and the duke of Burgundy, to depress and subdue the dauphin and his partisans. Such was the tenor of a treaty, too repugnant to the real interests of both kingdoms to be of long duration; but the contending parties were too much blinded by their resentments and jealousies to see that it is not in the power of princes to barter kingdoms, contrary to the real interests of the community.

It was not long after this treaty that Henry married [1420.] the princess Catharine; after which he carried his father-in-law to Paris, and took formal possession of that capital. There he obtained, from the estates of the kingdom, a ratification of the late compact; and then turned his arms, with success, against the adherents of the dauphin, who, in the mean time, wan-

dered about a stranger in his own patrimony, and to his enemies' successes only opposed fruitless expostulations.

[1421.] Henry's supplies were not provided in such plenty as to enable him to carry on the war without returning in person to prevail upon his parliament for fresh succours ; and upon his arrival in England, though he found his subjects highly pleased with the splendour of his conquests, yet they seemed somewhat doubtful as to the advantage of them. A treaty which in its consequences was likely to transfer the seat of the empire from England was not much relished by the parliament. They, therefore, upon various pretences, refused him a supply equal to his exigencies or his demands ; but he was resolved on pursuing his schemes : and joining to the supplies granted at home the contributions levied on the conquered provinces, he was able to assemble an army of twenty-eight thousand men, and with these he landed safely at Calais.

In the mean time the dauphin, a prince of great prudence and activity, omitted no opportunity of repairing his ruined situation, while Henry was absent from France. He prevailed upon the regent of Scotland to send him a body of seven thousand men from that kingdom ; and with these, and some forces of his own, he attacked the duke of Clarence, brother of Henry, and gained a complete victory.

This was the first action which turned the tide of success against the English. But it was of short duration ; for Henry soon after appearing with a considerable army, the dauphin fled at his approach ; while many of the places which had submitted to this prince, in the neighbourhood of Paris, surrendered to the conqueror. While Henry was thus victorious, he fixed his residence at Paris ; and while Charles had but a small court, he was [1422.] attended with a very magnificent one. On Whitsunday the two kings and their two queens, with crowns on their heads, dined together in public ; Charles receiving apparent homage, but Henry commanding with absolute authority.

In the mean time, the dauphin was chased beyond the Loire, and almost totally dispossessed of all the northern provinces. He was even pursued into the south, by the united arms of the English and Burgundians, and threatened with total destruction. In this exigence, he found it necessary to spin out the war, and to

evade all hazardous actions with a rival who had been long accustomed to victory. His prudence was every where remarkable ; and, after a train of long persecutions from Fortune, he found her at length willing to declare in his favour, by ridding him of an antagonist that was likely to become a master.

Henry, at a time when his glory had nearly reached its summit, and both crowns were just devolved upon him, was seized with a fistula ; a disorder which, from the unskilfulness of the physicians of the times, soon became mortal. Perceiving his distemper incurable, and that his end was approaching, he sent for his brother the duke of Bedford, the earl of Warwick, and a few other noblemen whom he had honoured with his confidence ; and to them he delivered, in great tranquillity, his last will with regard to the government of his kingdom and family. He recommended his son to their protection ; and though he regretted the being unable to accomplish the great object of his ambition, in totally subduing France, yet he expressed great indifference at the approach of death ; he devoutly waited its arrival, and expired with the same intrepidity with which he had lived, in the thirty-fifth year of his age, and the tenth year of his reign.

This prince possessed many virtues, but his military successes gave him credit for more than he really possessed. It is certain, however, that he had the talent of attaching his friends by affability, and of gaining his enemies by address and clemency. Yet his reign was rather splendid than profitable ; the treasures of the nation were lavished on conquests, which, even if they could have been maintained, would have proved injurious to the nation. Nevertheless he died fortunate, by falling in the midst of his triumphs, and leaving his subjects in the very height of his reputation. Charles, who died two months after him, finished a wretched reign, long passed in phrensy and contempt, despised by his friends, insulted by his allies, and leaving the most miserable subjects upon earth.

Henry left by his queen, Catharine of France, only one son, who succeeded him on the throne ; and whose misfortunes, during the course of a long reign, surpassed all the glories and successes of his father.

The English triumphs at this time in France produced scarce any good effects at home : as they grew warlike they became sav-

age, and, panting after foreign possessions, forgot the arts of cultivating those that lay nearer home. Our language, instead of improving, was more neglected than before; Langland and Chaucer had begun to polish it, and enrich it with new and elegant constructions; but it now was seen to relapse into its former rudeness, and no poet or historian of note was born in this tempestuous period.

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CHAP. XVIII.

HENRY VI.

**HENRY VI.** was not quite a year old when he came to the throne; and his relatives began, soon after, to dispute the administration during his minority. The duke of Bedford, one of the most accomplished princes of the age, and equally experienced both in the cabinet and the field, was appointed, by parliament, protector of England, defender of the church, and first counsellor to the king. His brother, the duke of Gloucester, was fixed upon to govern in his absence, while he conducted the war in France; and, in order to limit the power of both brothers, a council was named, without whose advice and approbation no measure of importance could be carried into execution.

Things being adjusted in this manner, as the conduct of military operations was at that time considered in a much superior light to civil employments at home, the duke of Bedford fixed his station in France, to prosecute the successes of the English in that part of their dominions, and to repress the attempts of Charles VII., who succeeded his father on a nominal throne. Nothing could be more deplorable than the situation of that monarch on assuming his title to the crown. The English were masters of almost all France; and Henry VI., though yet an infant, was solemnly invested with regal power by legates from Paris. The duke of Bedford was at the head of a numerous army, in the heart of the kingdom, ready to oppose every insurrection; while the duke of Burgundy, who had entered into a firm confederacy with him, remained steady, and seconded his claims. Notwith-



standing these unfavourable appearances, Charles (who, though not yet twenty, united the prudence of age with the affability of youth) found means to break the leagues formed against him, and to bring back his subjects to their natural interests and their duty.

However, his first attempts were totally destitute of success; wherever he endeavoured to face the enemy, [1423.] he was overthrown; and he could scarcely rely on the friends next his person. His authority was insulted even by his own servants; various advantages were obtained over him; and a battle fought near Verneuil, in which he was totally defeated by the duke of Bedford, seemed to render his affairs wholly desperate. However, from the impossibility of the English keeping the field without new supplies, Bedford was obliged to retire into England, and in the mean time his vigilant enemy began to recover from his late consternation. Dunois, one of his generals, at the head of one thousand six hundred men, compelled the earl of Warwick to raise the siege of Montargis; and this advantage, slight as it was, began to make the French suppose that the English were not invincible.

But they soon had still greater reason to triumph in their change of fortune, and a new revolution was produced by means apparently the most unlikely to be attended with success. The assistance of a female, of the humblest birth and meanest education, served to turn the tide of victory in their favour, and impress their enemies with those terrors which had hitherto rendered them unequal in the field. By this feeble aid, the vanquished became the victors; and the English, every where worsted, were at length totally expelled the kingdom.

In the village of Domremi, near Vaucouleurs, on the borders of Lorraine, there lived a country girl, about twenty-seven years of age, called Joan of Arc. This girl had been a servant at a small inn; and in that humble station had submitted to those hardy employments which fit the body for the fatigues of war. She was of an irreproachable life, and had hitherto testified none of those enterprising qualities which displayed themselves soon after. She contentedly fulfilled the duties of her situation, and was remarkable only for her modesty, and love of religion. But the miseries of her country seemed to have been one of the greatest objects of her compassion and regard. Her king expelled his

native throne, her country laid in blood, and strangers executing unnumbered rapines before her eyes, were sufficient to excite her resentment, and to warm her heart with a desire of redress. Her mind, inflamed by these objects, and brooding with melancholy steadfastness upon them, began to feel several impulses which she was willing to mistake for the inspirations of heaven. Convinced of the reality of her own admonitions, she had recourse to Baudricourt, governor of Vaucouleurs, and informed him of her destination by heaven to free her native country from its fierce invaders. Baudricourt treated her at first with some neglect: but her importunities at length prevailed: and willing to make a trial of her pretensions, he gave her some attendants, who conducted her to the French court, which at that time resided at Chinon.

The French court were probably sensible of the weakness of her pretensions; but they were willing to make use of every artifice to support their declining fortunes. It was therefore given out, that Joan was actually inspired; that she was able to discover the king among the number of his courtiers, although he had laid aside all the distinctions of his authority; that she had told him such secrets as were only known to himself; and that she had demanded, and minutely described, a sword in the church of St. Catharine de Fierbois, which she had never seen. In this manner the minds of the vulgar being prepared for her appearance, she was armed cap-à-piè, mounted on a charger, and shown in that martial dress to the people. She was then brought before the doctors of the university; and they, tinctured with the credulity of the times, or willing to second the imposture, declared that she had actually received her commission from above.

When the preparations for her mission were completely blazoned, their next aim was to send her against the ene-  
 [1429.] my. The English were at that time besieging the city of Orleans, the last resource of Charles, and every thing promised them a speedy surrender. Joan undertook to raise the siege; and, to render herself still more remarkable, girded herself with the miraculous sword, of which she had before such extraordinary notices. Thus equipped, she ordered all the soldiers to confess themselves before they set out; she displayed in her hand a consecrated banner, and assured the troops of certain success. Such confidence on her side soon raised the spirits of the French army;

and even the English, who pretended to despise her efforts, felt themselves secretly influenced with the terrors of her mission. A supply of provision was to be conveyed into the town; Joan, at the head of some French troops, covered the embarkation, and entered Orleans at the head of the convoy which she had safely protected. While she was leading her troops along, a dead silence and astonishment reigned among the English; and they regarded with religious awe that temerity which they thought nothing but supernatural assistance could inspire. But they were soon roused from their state of amazement by a sally from the town; Joan led on the besieged, bearing the sacred standard in her hand, encouraging them with her words and actions, bringing them up to the trenches, and overpowering the besiegers in their own redoubts. In the attack of one of the forts, she was wounded in the neck with an arrow; but instantly pulling out the weapon with her own hands, and getting the wound quickly dressed, she hastened back to head the troops, and to plant her victorious banner on the ramparts of the enemy. These successes continuing, the English found that it was impossible to resist troops animated by such superior energy; and Suffolk, who conducted the attack, thinking that it might prove extremely dangerous to remain any longer in the presence of such a courageous and victorious enemy, raised the siege, and retreated with all imaginable precaution.

From being attacked, the French now in turn became the aggressors. Charles formed a body of six thousand men, and sent them to besiege Jergeau, which the earl of Suffolk occupied with a part of his army. The city was taken; Suffolk yielded himself a prisoner, and Joan marched into the place in triumph, at the head of the army. A battle was soon after fought near Patay, where the English were worsted as before; and the generals Scales and Talbot were taken prisoners.

The raising of the siege of Orleans was one part of the Maid's promise to the king of France; the crowning him at Rheims was the other. She now declared that it was time to complete that ceremony; and Charles, in pursuance of her advice, set out for Rheims, at the head of twelve thousand men. The towns through which he passed opened their gates to receive him; and Rheims sent him a deputation, with its keys, upon his approach. The ceremony of his coronation was there performed with the utmost

solemnity; and the Maid of Orleans (for so she was now called), seeing the completion of her mission, desired leave to retire, alleging that she had now accomplished the end of her calling. But her services had been so great, that the king could not think of parting; he pressed her so earnestly to stay, that she at length complied with his request.

A tide of success followed the performance of this solemnity; Laon, Soissons, Chateau-Thierry, Provins, and many other towns and fortresses in that neighbourhood, submitted to him on the first summons. On the other hand the English, discomfited and dispirited, fled in every quarter, unknowing whether to ascribe their misfortunes to the power of sorcery or to a celestial influence, but equally terrified at either. They now found themselves deprived of the conquests they had gained, in the same manner as the French had formerly submitted to their power. Their own divisions, both abroad and at home, unfitted them entirely for carrying on the war; and the duke of Bedford, notwithstanding all his prudence, saw himself divested of his strong holds in the country, without being able to stop the enemy's progress. In order, therefore, to revive the declining state of his affairs, he resolved to have Henry crowned king at Paris, knowing that the natives would be allured to obedience by the splendour of the ceremony. Henry was accordingly crowned, all [1431.] the vassals that still continued under the English power swearing fealty and homage. But it was now too late for the ceremonies of a coronation to give a turn to the affairs of the English; the generality of the kingdom had declared against them, and the remainder only waited a convenient opportunity to follow the example.

An accident had previously occurred, which, though it promised to promote the English cause in France, in the end served to render it odious, and conduced to the total evacuation of that country. The duke of Burgundy, at the head of a powerful army, had laid siege to Compeigne; and the Maid of Orleans had thrown herself into the place, contrary to the wishes of the governor, who did not desire the company of one whose authority would be greater than his own. The garrison, however, rejoiced at her appearance, and believed themselves invincible under her protection. But their joy was of short duration; for Joan having,

the day after her arrival, headed a sally, and twice driven the enemy from their entrenchments, she was at last obliged to retire, placing herself in the rear, to protect the retreat of her forces. But in the end, attempting to follow her troops into the city, she found the gates shut, and the bridge drawn up, by order of the governor, who is said to have long wished for an opportunity of delivering her up to the enemy.

Nothing could exceed the joy of the besiegers, in having taken a person who had been so long a terror to their arms. The service of *Te Deum* was publicly celebrated on this occasion ; and it was hoped that the capture of this extraordinary person would restore the English to their former victories and successes. The duke of Bedford was no sooner informed of her being taken, than he purchased her of the count Vendome, who had made her his prisoner, and ordered her to be committed to close confinement. The credulity of both nations was at that time so great, that nothing was too absurd to gain belief that coincided with their passions. As Joan but a little before, from her successes, was regarded as a saint, she was now, upon her captivity, considered as a sorceress, forsaken by the *dæmon* who had granted her a fallacious and temporary assistance. Accordingly it was resolved in council to send her to Rouen, to be tried for witchcraft ; and the bishop of Beauvais, a man wholly devoted to the English interest, presented a petition against her for that purpose. The university of Paris was so mean as to join in the same request. Several prelates, among whom the cardinal of Winchester was the only Englishman, were appointed as her judges. They held their court in Rouen, where Henry then resided ; and the Maid, clothed in her former military apparel, but loaded with irons, was produced before this tribunal. Her behaviour there no way disgraced her former gallantry ; she betrayed neither weakness nor womanish submission ; but appealed to God and the pope for the truth of her former revelations. In the issue, she was found guilty of heresy and witchcraft, and sentenced to be burned alive, the common punishment for such offences.

But, previous to the infliction of this dreadful sentence upon her, they were resolved to make her abjure her former errors ; and at length so far prevailed upon her by terror and rigorous

treatment, that her spirits were entirely broken by the hardships she was obliged to suffer. Her former visionary dreams began to vanish, and a gloomy distrust to take place of her late inspirations. She publicly declared herself willing to recant, and promised never more to give way to the vain delusions which had hitherto misled her and imposed on the people. This was what her oppressors desired; and, willing to show some appearance of mercy, they changed her sentence into perpetual imprisonment, and to be fed during life on bread and water. But the rage of her enemies was not yet satiated. Perfectly satisfied of her guilt, they were willing to know if her reformation was equally certain. Suspecting that the female dress, which she had consented to wear, was disagreeable to her, they purposely placed in her apartment a suit of men's apparel, and watched for the effect of their temptation upon her. Their cruel artifice prevailed. Joan, struck with the sight of a dress in which she had gained so much glory, immediately threw off her penitent's robes, and put on the forbidden garment. Her enemies found her equipped in this manner; and her imprudence was considered as a relapse into her former transgressions. No recantation would suffice, and no pardon would be granted to her. She was condemned to be burned alive in the market-place of Rouen; and this infamous sentence was accordingly executed upon her.

Superstition adds virulence to the natural cruelty of mankind; and this cruel sentence served only to inflame the hatred between the contending powers, without being advantageous to the cause of the invaders. One of the first misfortunes which the English felt after this punishment, was the defection of the duke of Burgundy, who had for some time seen the error of his conduct, and wished to break an unnatural connection, that only served to involve his country in ruin. A treaty was therefore be-  
[1435.] gun, and concluded, between him and Charles, in which the latter made all the atonements possible for his offence; and the former agreed to assist him in driving the English out of France. This was a mortal blow to their cause; and such were its effects upon the populace in London when they were informed of it, that they killed several of the duke's subjects, who happened to be among them at that time. It might perhaps also have hastened the duke of Bedford's death, who died at Rouen soon after

the treaty was concluded ; and Richard, duke of York, was appointed his successor in the regency of France.

From this period the English affairs became totally irretrievable. The city of Paris returned once more to the sense of its duty. Lord Willoughby, who commanded it for the English, was contented to stipulate for the safe retreat of his troops to Normandy. Thus ground was continually, though slowly, gained by the French ; and notwithstanding their fields were laid waste, and their towns depopulated, yet they found protection from the weakness and divisions of the English. At length both parties began to grow weary of a war, which, though carried on but feebly, was a burthen greater than either could support. But the terms of peace insisted upon by both were so wide of each other, that no hopes of an accommodation could quickly be expected. [1444.] A truce, therefore, for twenty-two months was concluded, which left every thing on the present footing between the parties.

No sooner was this agreed upon than Charles employed himself with great industry and judgment in repairing those numberless ills to which his kingdom, from the continuance of wars both foreign and domestic, had so long been exposed. He established discipline among his troops, and justice among his governors. He revived agriculture, and repressed faction. Thus being prepared once more for taking the field, he took the first favourable occasion of breaking the truce ; and Normandy was at the same time invaded by four powerful armies, one commanded by Charles himself, a second by the duke of Bretagne, [1449.] a third by the duke of Alençon, and a fourth by the count Du-nois. Every place opened its gates almost as soon as the French appeared. Rouen was the only town that promised to hold out a siege ; but the inhabitants clamoured so loud for a surrender, that the duke of Somerset, who commanded the garrison, was obliged to capitulate. The battle, or rather the skirmish, of Fourmigni was the last stand which the English [1450.] made in defence of their French dominions. However, they were put to the rout, and above a thousand were slain. All Normandy and Guienne, that had so long acknowledged subjection to England, were quickly lost ; and the English at length saw themselves entirely dispossessed of countries which for three cen-

[1453.] turies they had considered as annexed to their native dominions. Calais alone remained of all their conquests; and this was but a small compensation for the blood and treasure which had been lavished in France, and only served to gratify ambition with a transient applause.

It may easily be supposed that the ill success in France, which began almost with young Henry's reign, produced dissensions and factions among the rulers at home. The duke of Gloucester, who had been appointed regent of England during his brother's absence, was not so secure in his place but that he had many who envied his situation. Among the number of these was Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, great uncle to the king, and son of John of Gaunt. This prelate, to whom the care of the king's person and education had been intrusted, was a man of great capacity and experience, but of an intriguing and dangerous disposition. As he aspired to the government of affairs, he had continual disputes with the duke of Gloucester, and gained frequent advantages over the open temper of that prince. It was in vain that the duke of Bedford employed all his own authority, and that of parliament, to reconcile them; their mutual animosities served for several years to embarrass government, and to give its enemies every advantage. The sentiments of these two leaders of their party were particularly divided with regard to France. The cardinal encouraged every proposal of accommodation with that country; the duke of Gloucester was for maintaining the honour of the English arms, and winning back all that had been lost by defeats or delay. In this contest the powers seemed nearly divided; and it became incumbent on one side to call in new auxiliaries, before either party could turn the political scale. For this purpose the cardinal resolved to strengthen himself, by procuring a suitable match for Henry; and then, by bringing the new queen over to his interests, to turn the balance in his favour. Accordingly, the earl of Suffolk, a nobleman whom he knew to be steadfast in his attachments, was sent over to France, apparently to settle the terms of the truce, which had been then begun; but, in reality, to procure a suitable match for the king. The duke of Gloucester had before proposed a daughter of the count d'Armagnac, but had not influence sufficient to prevail. The cardinal and his friends had cast their eye on Mar-



garet of Anjou, daughter of Regnier, titular king of Sicily, Naples, and Jerusalem, but without either real power or possessions. This princess was considered as the most accomplished of the age, both in mind and person; and it was thought would, by her own abilities, be able to supply the defects of her consort, who was weak, timid, and superstitious. The treaty was hastened by Suffolk; and the marriage was solemnised in England, when Henry was in his twenty-fourth year.

The cardinal being strengthened by this new alliance (for the queen came immediately into his measures), the duke of Gloucester soon found himself possessed of only the shadow of power without the substance; all his measures were over-ruled by his powerful antagonist; and he daily found himself insulted in the most cruel manner. One of the principal steps his enemies took to render him odious, was to accuse his wife, the duchess, of witchcraft. She was charged with conversing with one Roger Bolingbroke, a priest and reputed necromancer, and also one Mary Gurdemain, who was said to be a witch. It is asserted that these three in conjunction had made a figure of the king in wax, which was placed before a gentle fire; and as the wax dissolved, the king's strength was expected to waste; and upon its total dissolution his life was to be at an end. This accusation was readily attended to in that credulous age; and the more it departed from reason, the fitter it was for becoming an object of belief. The prisoners were pronounced guilty; neither the rank of the duchess, nor the innocence of the accused, could protect them; she was condemned to do penance, and to suffer perpetual imprisonment; Bolingbroke, the priest, was hanged; and the woman was burned in Smithfield.

But this was only the beginning of the duke's distresses. The cardinal of Winchester resolved to drive his resentment to extremity, and accordingly procured a parliament to be summoned, not at London, which was too well affected to the duke, but at St. Edmundsbury, where his adherents were sufficiently numerous to overawe every opponent. As soon as he appeared, he was accused of treason, and thrown into prison; and on the day on which he was to make his defence, he was found dead in his bed, though without any signs of violence upon his body.

The death of the duke of Gloucester was universally ascribed

to the cardinal of Winchester, who himself died six weeks after, testifying the utmost remorse for the bloody scene he had acted. What share the queen had in the guilt of this transaction is uncertain ; her usual activity and spirit made the public conclude, with some reason, that the duke's enemies durst not have ventured on such a deed without her privity. Henry did not fail to share in the general disgust that was thus produced ; and, as he wanted abilities, he never had the art to remove any suspicion. From this time discontent began to prevail among the people, and faction among the great. A weak prince seated on the throne of England, however gentle and innocent, seldom fails of having his authority despised, and his power insulted. The incapacity of Henry began every day to appear in a fuller light ; and the foreign war being now extinguished, the people began to prepare for the horrors of intestine strife. In this period of calamity a new interest was revived, which had lain dormant in the times of prosperity and triumph.

It was now that the English were to pay the severe though late penalty for having unjustly deposed Richard the Second ; another Richard, who was duke of York, beginning to think of preferring his claims to the crown. This nobleman was descended, by the mother's side, from Lionel, one of the sons of Edward the Third ; whereas the reigning king was descended from John of Gaunt, a son of the same monarch, but younger than Lionel. Richard, therefore, stood plainly in succession before Henry ; and he began to think the weakness and unpopularity of the present reign a favourable moment for ambition. The ensign of Richard was a white rose, that of Henry a red ; and this gave name to the two factions whose animosity was now about to drench the kingdom with blood.

The cardinal of Winchester being dead, the duke of Suffolk, who had a hand in Gloucester's assassination, took the lead in public affairs ; and, being secretly aided by the interest of the queen, managed all with uncontrollable authority. As this nobleman had made his way to power by murder, so he was resolved to maintain himself in it by the usual resources of bad men, by tyranny over his inferiors, and flattery to the queen. His conduct soon excited the jealousy or the hatred of the whole kingdom. The great nobility could ill brook the exaltation of a subject

above them who was of a birth inferior to their own. The people complained of his arbitrary measures, and the immense acquisitions which he had made in office; and the blame of every odious and unsuccessful measure was instantly given to him. Suffolk was not ignorant of the hatred of the people; but supposed that his crimes were such as could not be proved against him, or that, if proved, he could readily evade punishment: he endeavoured, therefore, to overawe his enemies by boldly presenting himself to the charge; and he called upon them to show an instance of his guilt. This was what the house of commons had long wished for; and they immediately opened their charge against him, of corruption, tyranny, and treason. He was accused of being the cause of the loss of France; of persuading the French king, with an armed force, to invade England; and of betraying in office the secrets of his department. This accusation might have been false; but the real motive, which was Suffolk's power and the cruel use he made of it, was left unmentioned, although it was true. It was no easy matter for any one man's strength, how great soever, to withstand the united resentment of a nation; so that the court was obliged to give up its favourite; and the king, to shield him as much as possible from popular resentment, banished him from the kingdom for five years. This was considered by some as an escape from justice: the captain of a vessel was therefore employed by his enemies to intercept him in his passage to France; he was seized near Dover, his head was struck off on the side of a long-boat, and his body thrown into the sea. There is little in the transactions of these times to interest us on the side of either party; we see scarce any thing but crimes on both sides, without one shining character or one virtue to animate the narrative.

By the death of the duke of Suffolk, Richard of York saw himself rid of a potent enemy, and was pleased to [1450.] see the discontents of the nation daily increase. Among the number of complaints to which the unpopularity of the government gave rise, there were some which even excited insurrection; particularly that headed by John Cade, which was of the most dangerous nature. This man was a native of Ireland, who had been obliged to fly over into France for his crimes; but seeing the people upon his return prepared for violent measures, he assumed

the name of Mortimer, and, at the head of twenty thousand Kentish-men, advanced towards the capital, and encamped at Blackheath. The king, being informed of this commotion, sent a message to demand the cause of their assembling in arms; and Cade, in the name of the community, answered, that their only aim was to punish evil ministers, and procure a redress of grievances for the people. The king's council deeming these demands seditious, a body of fifteen thousand men were levied to oppose the insurgents; while Henry himself marched at their head towards Blackheath. At his approach Cade retired, as if he had been afraid of an engagement, and lay in ambush in a wood, not doubting that he should be pursued by the king's whole army; but the king was content with sending a detachment after the fugitives, and returning himself to London. This was what Cade desired to see; and, sallying out from his ambuscade, he cut the detachment in pieces.

The citizens of London soon after opened their gates to the victor; and Cade for some time maintained great order and discipline among his followers. He always led them out into the field during the night-time; and published severe edicts against plunder, and violence of every kind.

Next day, being informed that the treasurer, lord Say, was in the city, he caused him to be apprehended and beheaded, without any form of trial; and in the evening returned to Southwark. Thus for some days he continued the practice of entering the city in the morning, and quitting it at night; but at length, being unable to keep his followers within bounds, the citizens resolved to shut their gates against him. Cade endeavouring to force his way, an engagement ensued between him and the citizens, which was not discontinued until night put an end to the engagement. The archbishop of Canterbury, and the chancellor, who had taken refuge in the Tower, being informed of the situation of affairs, found means to draw up the same night an act of amnesty, which was privately dispersed among the rebels. This had the desired effect. Cade saw himself in the morning abandoned by most of his followers, and, retreating to Rochester, was obliged to fly alone into the wolds of Kent, where, a price being set upon his head by proclamation, he was discovered and slain by one Alexander Eden, who, in recompense for this service, was made governor of Dover-castle.

In the mean time, the duke of York secretly fomented these disturbances; and, pretending to espouse the cause [1451.] of the people, wrote to the king, advising a reformation in the ministry; and the house of commons was brought over to second his request. An address was presented against the duke of Somerset, the duchess of Suffolk, the bishop of Chester, sir John Sutton, and lord Dudley, praying the king to remove them forever from his person and councils, and to prohibit them from approaching within twelve miles of the court. Though the king was willing enough to oppose so violent and arbitrary an attack upon his favourites, yet he endeavoured to soften the general animosity against them, by promising to banish a part of the obnoxious ministry from court for the space of a year.

But partial concessions in government are generally bad palliatives. The duke of York, who found the people strongly attached to him, resolved to avail himself of his power; and, raising a body of ten thousand men, marched towards London, demanding a reformation of the government, and the removal of the duke of Somerset from all his power and authority. He had hopes from the beginning that the citizens would have thrown open the gates to him; but was much mortified when he found that he was refused admission. Upon his retreat into Kent, a parley ensued between the king and him, in which the duke still insisted on the dismissal of Somerset; with which Henry seemed at length willing to comply. The duke of York was, therefore, persuaded to pay his respects to the king in his tent; but, on repeating his charge against the duke of Somerset, he was surprised to see that minister step from behind the curtain, and offer to justify his innocence. York now perceived his danger, and repressed the impetuosity of his accusation. As soon as he left the presence, the king commanded him to be apprehended; but such was this nobleman's authority, or such the timidity of the king's council, that they suffered him to retire to his seat at Wigmore, upon promising strict obedience for the future.

A reconciliation thus extorted could be of no long duration. York still secretly aspired to the crown; and though he wished nothing so ardently, yet he was for some time prevented by his own scruples from seizing it. What his intrigues failed to bring

about, accident produced to his desire. The king falling into a distemper, which so far increased his natural imbecility [1454.] that it even rendered him incapable of maintaining the appearance of royalty, York was appointed lieutenant and protector of the kingdom, with powers to hold and open parliament at pleasure. This was a fatal blow to the house of Lancaster: all the adherents of that party were dismissed from court, and the duke of Somerset was sent to the Tower.

York, being thus invested with a plenitude of power, continued in the enjoyment of it for some time: but at length the unhappy king recovered from his lethargic complaint; and, as if awaking from a dream, perceived, with surprise, that he was stripped of all his authority. Margaret, his queen, also did all in her power to rouse him to a sense of his unworthy situation, and prevailed upon him to remove the duke of York from his [1455.] power; in consequence of which that nobleman had instant recourse to arms. The impotent monarch, thus obliged to take the field, was dragged after his army to St. Alban's, where both sides came to an engagement, in which the Yorkists gained a complete victory, and the duke of Somerset was slain. The king himself being wounded, and taking shelter in a cottage near the field of battle, was taken prisoner, and treated by the victor with great respect and tenderness. Thence he was, shortly after, led in triumph to London; and the duke of York, permitting him still to enjoy the name of king, reserved to himself the title of protector, in which consisted all the real power of the crown.

Henry was now but a prisoner treated with the splendid forms of royalty; yet, indolent and sickly, he seemed pleased with his situation, and did not regret that power which was not to be exercised without fatigue. But it was otherwise with Margaret, his queen. She, naturally bold, active, and endued with masculine courage, could not be content with the appearance of that authority which her enemies alone permitted her to exercise; she continued to excite the wretched monarch to a vindication of his regal dignity, and to spur him on to independence. He was, therefore, once more induced to assert his prerogative; and the duke of York was obliged to retire, to be in readiness to oppose any designs against his liberty and life. At first a negotiation for

peace was entered upon by both parties; but their mutual distrusts soon brought them into the field, and the fate of the kingdom was given up to be determined by the sword. Their <sup>Sept. 23,</sup> armies met at Bloreheath, on the borders of Stafford- <sup>1459.</sup> shire, and the Yorkists gained some advantages. But when a more general action was about to ensue, the night before the intended engagement, sir Andrew Trollop, who commanded a body of veterans for the duke of York, deserted with all his men to the king; and this so intimidated the whole army of the Yorkists, that they separated the next day without striking a single blow. The duke of York fled to Ireland; the earl of Warwick, one of his boldest and ablest supporters, escaped to Calais, with the government of which he had been entrusted during the late protectorship; and all the party, thus suppressed, concealed their intentions for a more favourable opportunity. Nor was this opportunity long wanting: Warwick, having met with some successes at sea, landed in Kent; and being there joined by [1460.] some other barons, he marched up to London amidst the acclamations of the people. The city immediately opened its gates to him; and his troops increasing on every day's march, he soon found himself in a condition to face the royal army, which hastened from Coventry to attack him. Never was there a more formidable division of interests, or greater inveteracy between the chiefs of either party, than the present. Warwick was one of the most celebrated generals of his age, formed for times of trouble, extremely artful, and incontestably brave, equally skilful in council and the field, and inspired with a degree of hatred against the queen that nothing could suppress. On the other side, the queen seemed the only acting general: she ranged the army in battalia, and gave the necessary orders, while the poor king was brought forward, an involuntary spectator of those martial preparations. Both armies met on a plain near Northampton. The queen's forces were considerably inferior in number to those of the earl; but she was not discouraged. While she went about from rank to rank, the king remained in his tent, awaiting the issue of the combat, with female doubts and apprehensions. The battle continued for five hours, with the utmost obstinacy; but at length the good fortune and the numbers of Warwick were seen to prevail. The queen's army was over-

thrown; and she had the misfortune to see the king once more made a prisoner, and brought back to his capital in triumph.

The cause of the Yorkists being thus confirmed by the strongest arguments, those of power, a parliament was called to give it their more formal sanction. The duke of York, whose prospects began to widen as he rose, from being contented with the protectorship, now began to claim the crown. It was now, for the first time, that the house of lords seemed to enjoy an unbiassed deliberative authority; the cause of Henry, and that of the duke of York, were solemnly debated, each side producing their reasons without fear or control. This was the first time that a spirit of true rational liberty ever appeared to exert itself in England, and in which recent conquest did not supersede all deliberation. The duke, though a conqueror, could not entirely gain his cause: it was determined that Henry should possess the throne during his life; and that the duke should be appointed his successor, to the utter exclusion of the prince of Wales, who, yet but a child, was insensible of the injury that was done him.

The queen, to all appearance, now seemed utterly destitute of every resource; her armies were routed, her husband taken prisoner, and the parliament disclaimed her cause. Yet though she had lost all, she still retained her native intrepidity and perseverance: she was a woman of a great mind and some faults, but ambition seemed to be the leading passion in all her conduct. Though a fugitive, distant from the capital, opposed by a victorious army and a consummate general, she still tried every resource to repair her disastrous circumstances. She flew to Wales; there endeavoured to animate her old friends, and to acquire new. The nobility of the North, who regarded themselves as the most warlike of the kingdom, were moved with indignation to find the Southern barons dispose of the crown, and settle the government. They began to consider the royal cause as unjustly oppressed; and the queen soon found herself at the head of an army of twenty thousand men, ready to second her pretensions. She and her  
Dec. 30, old enemy, the duke of York, once more met upon Wake-  
1460. field Green, near the castle of Sandal; and victory, on this occasion, declared itself in favour of the queen. The duke of York was killed in the action; and as his body was found among the slain, his head was cut off by Margaret's orders, and



fixed on the gates of York, with a paper crown in derision of his pretended title. His son, the earl of Rutland, a youth of seventeen, was taken prisoner and killed in cold blood by lord Clifford, in revenge for his father's death, who had fallen in the battle of St. Alban's.

Margaret, being victorious, marched towards London, in order to give the king liberty ; but the earl of Warwick, who now put himself at the head of the Yorkists, commanded an army in which he led about the captive king, to give a sanction to his attempts. Upon the approach of the Lancastrians, he conducted his forces, strengthened by a body of Londoners, who were very affectionate to his cause, and gave battle to the queen at [1461.] St. Alban's. While the armies were warmly engaged, lord Lovelace, who commanded a considerable body of Yorkists, treacherously withdrew from the combat ; and this decided the victory in favour of the queen. Above two thousand of the Yorkists perished in the battle, and the person of the king again fell into the hands of his own party,—to be treated with apparent respect, but real contempt. Lord Bonneville, to whose care he had been intrusted, continued with him after the defeat, upon an assurance of pardon ; but Margaret, regardless of her husband's promise, ordered his head to be struck off.

It only now remained that the city of London should declare in the queen's favour : but Warwick had previously secured it in his interests ; and the citizens, who dreaded her tumultuous army, refused to open their gates to her summons. In the mean time young Edward, the eldest son of the late duke of York, began to repair the losses his party had lately sustained, and to give spirit to the Yorkists. This prince in the bloom of youth, remarkable for the beauty of his person, his bravery, and popular deportment, advanced towards London with the remainder of Warwick's army, and, obliging Margaret to retire, entered the city amidst the acclamations of the people. Perceiving his own popularity, he supposed that now was the time to assert his claim to the crown ; and his friend Warwick, assembling the citizens in St. John's Fields, pronounced an harangue, setting forth the title of Edward, and inveighing against the tyranny and usurpation of the house of Lancaster. He then demanded whether they chose Henry for their king ; to which the people crying, " A York ! a

York!" he quickly called an assembly of lords and bishops at Baynard's Castle, and these ratified their choice. The young duke was proclaimed king, by the title of Edward IV., and then conducted, with great ceremony, to the palace where Henry used to lodge when within the walls of the city.

But the miseries of a civil war were not yet completed; and Margaret resolved to strike another blow. Upon her retiring to the North, great numbers flocked to her standard, and she was able, in a few days, to assemble an army of sixty thousand men in Yorkshire. On the other side, the earl of Warwick conducted young Edward at the head of forty thousand men to oppose her. Both sides at length met near Towton, in the March 29, county of York, to decide the fate of empire; and never 1461. was England depopulated by so terrible an engagement. It was a dreadful sight to behold a hundred thousand men of the same country engaged against each other; and all to satisfy the empty ambition of the weakest or the worst of mankind. While the army of Edward was advancing to the charge, there happened a great fall of snow, which driving full in the faces of the enemy blinded them; and this advantage, seconded by an impetuous onset, decided the victory in their favour. Edward issued orders to give no quarter; and a bloody slaughter ensued, in which thirty-five thousand of the Lancastrians were slain. Edward entered York victorious; and taking down the heads of his father, and the earl of Salisbury, that were placed over the city gates, put up that of the earl of Devonshire in their stead.

In the mean time, Margaret, hearing the fate of her army, and being sensible that no place in England could now afford her protection, fled with Henry and her son to Scotland. But no calamity was able to repress her perseverance: though so often [1462.] overcome, yet she was resolved once more to enter England with five thousand men granted her by the French king; and the unfortunate Henry was led onward, by his presence to enforce her claims. But even here her former ill fortune attended her; and her little fleet was dispersed by a tempest, while she herself escaped with some difficulty by entering the [1464.] mouth of the Tweed. A defeat, which her few forces suffered at Hexham, seemed to render her cause desperate; and the cruelty which was practised upon all her adherents rendered it still more dangerous.

The loss of this battle appeared to deprive her of every resource; she and her husband were obliged to seek for safety in a separate flight, without attendants, and without even the necessaries of life. The weak unfortunate king, always imprudent and always unsuccessful, thought he could remain concealed in England; but his error was soon attended with the obvious consequences; for he was taken prisoner, carried to London with ignominy, and confined in the Tower. Margaret was rather more fortunate. She flying with her son into a forest, where she endeavoured to conceal herself, was set upon during the darkness of the night by robbers, who, either ignorant or regardless of her quality, despoiled her of her rings and jewels, and treated her with the utmost indignity. But she found more respectful treatment from one of those lawless men, who, knowing her station, resolved to procure her safety at the hazard of his own; and at last conducted her to the sea-coast, whence she made her escape to her father in Flanders, who, though very poor, strove as well as he could to supply her with the necessaries of life. To the same court the dukes of Somerset and Exeter retired; and they, literally speaking, felt all the miseries of want. Philip de Comines, the French historian, says, he saw the duke of Exeter following the duke of Burgundy's equipage bare-footed, and serving for his livelihood as a footman. This was a strange situation for a lord, who had conducted armies, and was allied to kings and princes; but those enjoyments which served to distinguish the great from the little were not so apparent then as at present.

Edward being now, by means of the earl of Warwick, fixed upon the throne, reigned in peace and security, while his title was recognised by parliament, and universally submitted to by the people. He began, therefore, to give a loose to his favourite passions; and a spirit of gallantry, mixed with cruelty, was seen to prevail in his court. In the very same palace which one day exhibited a spectacle of horror was to be seen the day following a masque or a pageant; and the king would at once gallant a mistress and inspect an execution. In order to turn him from these pursuits, which were calculated to render him unpopular, the earl of Warwick advised him to marry; and, with his consent, went over to France to procure Bona of Savoy as queen; and the match was accordingly concluded. But whilst the earl

was hastening the negotiation in France, the king himself rendered it abortive at home, by marrying Elizabeth Widville, lady Gray, with whom he had fallen in love, and whom he had vainly endeavoured to debauch. Having thus given Warwick real cause of offence, he resolved to widen the breach, by driving him from the council. Every incident tended to increase the jealousy between the king and this powerful subject; the favour shown the queen's party, and the contempt which was thrown upon the earl, manifested an open rupture. Warwick, whose prudence was equal to his bravery, soon made use of both to assist his revenge; he seduced the duke of Clarence, brother to the king, and, to confirm that nobleman in his interests, gave him his daughter in marriage. Thus an extensive and dangerous combination was formed against Edward and his ministry; and an accident that followed soon after contributed to fan the flame. The inhabitants about [1469.] St. Leonard's hospital, in Yorkshire, complained that the duties levied for that institution, which were originally allotted for pious uses, were now secreted by the managers; and they refused to contribute their part. They soon after rose in a body to oppose the ecclesiastical severities that were levelled against them by the earl of Pembroke. It is thought that the earl of Warwick had some hand in fomenting these disorders; and although this rebellion was quieted by a pardon from Edward, yet some others, that broke out shortly after, appeared favourable to Warwick's designs. Vengeance seemed to be the only motive this nobleman had in view; and that he pursued with unabating assiduity. Plots, treasons, stratagems, and negotiations, followed each other in rapid succession: but at last fortune seemed to favour Warwick's aims, and the king, as we are told, fell into his power, by accepting an invitation which the earl gave him in order to betray him. Be this as it may, Edward had soon the good fortune to see himself at the head of a numerous army, and in a condition to take satisfaction for the treachery of his powerful opponent. Resolving, therefore, to take advantage of [1470.] the enemies' weakness, after having defeated a party commanded by lord Wells, and cut off his head, he marched to give them battle. In this exigence, Warwick, and the duke of Clarence, had no other resource but to quit the kingdom; and embarking for Calais, they seized upon some Flemish

vessels, which they found lying along that coast, with which they entered one of the ports of France. Here they entered into an union with Margaret, which was dictated by necessity; both sides being willing to forget their mutual animosity, in order to second their revenge. Lewis XI., king of France, prepared a fleet to escort them; and seizing the opportunity, they landed at Dartmouth with a small body of troops, while Edward was in the North suppressing an insurrection which had lately appeared there. Nothing can be more extraordinary than the success of Warwick upon this occasion. The spirit of discontent with which many were infected, and the general instability of the English nation, conspired with his ambition; and in less than six days such multitudes flocked to his standard, that he saw himself at the head of an army of threescore thousand men.

It was now become Edward's turn to fly the kingdom. He had just time to escape an attempt made upon his person in the night, by the marquis of Montague; and to embark on board a small fleet, which lay off Lynn in Norfolk. Nor were his dangers lessened at sea, where he was chased by some ships belonging to the Hanse-towns, who were then at war with both France and England. But at length he landed safely in Holland, where he received a cool reception from the duke of Burgundy, with whom he had some time before entered into an alliance.

In the mean time Warwick, with his resistless army, advanced to London; and once more the poor passive king Henry was released from prison, to be placed upon a dangerous throne. A parliament was called, which confirmed Henry's title with great solemnity; and Warwick was himself received among the people under the title of the King-maker. All the attainders of the Lancastrians were reserved; and every one was restored, who had lost either honours or fortune by his former adherence to Henry's cause. All the considerable Yorkists either fled to the continent, or took shelter in sanctuaries, where the ecclesiastical privileges afforded them protection.

But Edward's party, though repressed, was not destroyed. Though an exile in Holland, he had many partisans at home; and, after an absence of five months, being seconded by a small body of forces granted him by the duke of Bur- [1471.] gundy, he made a descent at Ravenspur in Yorkshire. Though

at first he was coolly received by the English, yet his army increased upon its march, while his moderation and feigned humility still added to the number of his partisans. London, at that time ever ready to admit the most powerful, opened her gates to him; and the wretched Henry was once more plucked from his throne, to be sent back to his former mansion.

Thus Warwick began to experience the instability of fortune, and find his party declining; but what gave the most dreadful blow to his hopes was the defection of his son-in-law, the duke of Clarence, who went over to Edward, and threw all his weight into the opposite scale. Nothing now remained to Warwick, but to cut short a state of anxious suspense by hazarding a battle; and though he knew his forces to be inferior to those of Edward, yet he placed his greatest dependance upon his own generalship. With this resolution he marched from St. Alban's, where he was stationed, and advancing towards Barnet, within ten miles of London, there resolved to wait for Edward, who was not slow in marching down to oppose him. Warwick and Edward were at that time considered as the two most renowned generals of the age; and now was to be struck the decisive blow that was either to fix Edward on the throne, or to overthrow his pretensions forever. The unfortunate Henry also was dragged along to be a spectator of the engagement; happy in his natural imbecility, which seemed as a balm to sooth all his afflictions.

April 14,  
1471      The battle began early in the morning, and lasted till noon. Both armies fought with great obstinacy and bravery, not honour but life depending on the issue of the contest. The example of Warwick inspired his troops with more than common resolution, and the victory for a while seemed to declare in his favour. But an accident at last threw the balance against him: from the mistiness of the morning, a part of his army happening to mistake a body of their own forces for the enemy, fell furiously upon them, and this error turned the fortune of the day. Warwick did all that experience, valour, or conduct, could suggest, to retrieve the mistake: but it was now too late; no art could remove the ill effects of the error; wherefore, finding all hopes gone, he was resolved to sell the conquerors a dear-bought victory. He had, contrary to his usual practice, engaged that day on foot; and leading a chosen body into the thickest of the

slaughter, he there fell in the midst of his enemies, covered with wounds. His brother underwent the same fate; and six thousand of his adherents were slain, Edward having ordered that no quarter should be given.

Margaret, who had been ever fruitful in resources, was at that time returning with her son from France, where she had been negotiating for fresh supplies. She had scarce time to refresh herself from the fatigues of her voyage, when she received the fatal news of the death of the brave Warwick, and the total destruction of her party. Though she had hitherto boldly withstood all the attacks of fortune, the present information was too violent a blow for nature to support. Her grief, for the first time, found way in a torrent of tears; and yielding to her unhappy fate, she took sanctuary in the abbey of Beaulieu in Hampshire.

She had not been long in this melancholy abode before she found some few friends still willing to assist her fallen fortunes. Tudor, earl of Pembroke, Courtenay, earl of Devonshire, the lords Wenlock and St. John, with other men of rank, exhorted her still to hope for success, and offered to assist her to the last. A dawn of hope was sufficient to revive the courage of this magnanimous woman; and the recollection of her former misfortunes gave way to the flattering prospect of another trial. The duke of Somerset headed her army; a man who had shared her dangers, and had ever been steady in her cause. He was valiant, generous, and polite; but rash and headstrong. When Edward first attacked him in his entrenchments, he repulsed him with such vigour, that the enemy retired with precipitation; upon which the duke, supposing them routed, pursued, and ordered lord Wenlock to support his charge. But unfortunately this lord disobeyed his orders; and Somerset's forces were soon overpowered by numbers. In this dreadful exigence, the duke, finding that all was over, became ungovernable in his rage; and beholding Wenlock inactive, in the very place where he had first drawn up his men, he gave way to his fury, ran upon the coward with his heavy battle-axe in both hands, and with one blow dashed out his brains.

The queen and the prince were taken prisoners after the battle, and brought into the presence of Edward. The young prince appeared before the conqueror with undaunted majesty; and be-

ing asked, in an insulting manner, how he dared to invade England without leave, the young prince, more mindful of his high birth than of his ruined fortune, replied, "I entered the dominions of my father, to revenge his injuries and redress my own." The barbarous Edward, enraged at his intrepidity, struck him on the mouth with his gauntlet; and this served as a signal for further brutality; the dukes of Gloucester and Clarence, and other courtiers, rushing on the unarmed youth at once, like wild beasts, stabbed him to the heart with their daggers. To complete the tragedy, Henry himself, who had long been the passive spectator of all these horrors, was now thought unfit to live. The duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard the Third, entering his chamber alone, murdered him in cold blood. Of all those who were taken, few were suffered to survive but Margaret herself. Edward perhaps expected that she would be ransomed by the king of France; and in this point he was not deceived, as that monarch paid fifty thousand crowns for her freedom. This extraordinary woman, after having sustained the cause of her husband in twelve battles; after having survived her friends, fortunes, and children, died a few years after in privacy in France, very miserable indeed; but with few claims to our pity, except her courage and her distresses.

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## CHAP. XIX.

### EDWARD IV.

OF all people the English are the most truly compassionate; and a throne raised upon cruelty never wanted enemies among them. Nothing could have been more ill-judged than any attempts to govern such a people by the hands of the executioner; and the leaders of either faction seemed insensible of this truth. Edward, being now freed from great enemies, turned to the punishment of those of less note; so that the gibbets were hung with his adversaries, and their estates confiscated to his use. The bastard Falconbridge, among others, having advanced to London at the head of a small body of forces, was repulsed; and, being taken prisoner, was immediately executed.



While Edward was thus rendering himself terrible on the one hand, he was immersed in abandoned pleasures on the other. Nature, it seems, was not unfavourable to him in that respect; as he was universally allowed to be the most beautiful man of his time. His courtiers also seemed willing to encourage those debaucheries in which they had a share; and the clergy, as they themselves practised every kind of lewdness with impunity, were ever ready to lend absolution to all his failings. The truth is, enormous vices had been of late so common, that adultery was held but as a very slight offence. Among the number of his mistresses was the wife of one Shore, a merchant in the city, a woman of exquisite beauty and good sense, but who had not virtue enough to resist the temptations of a handsome man and a monarch.

England now enjoying a temporary calm, Edward thought that the best way to ingratiate himself with his subjects would be to assert his right to his dominions in France, which the insurrections of his father had contributed to alienate during the former reign. An attempt of this kind would serve to give vent to the malignant disposition of his enemies, and would be sure to please the vulgar, who are ever more fond of splendid than of useful acquisitions. To prosecute this scheme, the king sent off to his ally, the duke of Burgundy, a reinforcement of three thousand men, and soon after passed over himself at the head of a numerous army. Lewis was, not without reason, [1475.] alarmed at this formidable invasion, which, as he was unable to resist, he strove to obviate by treaty. This succeeded more effectually than arms: the two kings had an interview at Pecquigni; and, upon the promise of a stipulated sum, Edward agreed to lead his forces back to England. This monarch wanted to return home to his mistresses, to spend upon them the money he expected to receive from France; and the French monarch hoped soon to put himself in a posture to refuse giving the sums which he had only made a promise to pay.

Upon the conclusion of this expedition, which thus ended without effect, Edward appeared no less actuated by private passions, unworthy of a sovereign and a statesman, than jealous of all who seemed to despise his conduct. Among the detail of private wrongs, which are too minute for history, an act of tyranny, of which he was guilty in his own family, deserves the detestation

of posterity. The duke of Clarence, by all his services in deserting Warwick, had never been able to recover the king's friendship, which he had forfeited by his former confederacy with that nobleman. A pretext was, therefore, sought to ruin him; and the openness of his hasty temper soon gave the wished-for occasion. The king hunting one day in the park of Thomas Burdet, a creature of the duke's, killed a white buck, which was a great favourite of the owner. Burdet, vexed at the loss, broke into a passion, and wished the horns of the deer in the belly of the person who had advised the king to that insult. For this trifling exclamation Burdet was tried for his life, and publicly executed at Tyburn. The duke of Clarence, upon the death of his friend, vented his grief in renewed reproaches against his brother, and exclaimed against the iniquity of the sentence. The king, highly offended with this liberty, or using that as a pretext against him, had him arraigned before the house of peers, and [1478.] appeared in person as his accuser. In those times of confusion, every crime alleged by the prevailing party was fatal: the duke was found guilty; and being allowed to choose the manner in which he would die, he was privately drowned in a butt of malmsey, in the Tower: a whimsical choice, implying that he had an extraordinary passion for that liquor.

The rest of this monarch's life was spent in riot and debauchery; in gratifications that are pleasing only to the narrow mind, in useless treaties with France, in which he was ever deceived, and in empty threats against the monarch who had deceived him. His parliament, become merely the ministers of his will, consented, at his request, to a war with France, at a time when his alliances upon the continent were so broken that it was impossible for it to succeed. The people seemed equally pleased with the prospect of an expedition, which without serving could only tend to impoverish the nation; and great hopes were revived of once more conquering France. While all were thus occupied with hope or private distrust, and while Edward was employed in making preparations for that enterprise, he was seized April 9, 1483, with a distemper, of which he expired, in the forty-first year of his age, and (counting from his first usurpation) in the twenty-third of his reign. The character of this prince is easily summed up. His best qualities were courage and beauty; his

bad, a combination of all the vices. Besides five daughters, he left two sons; Edward, prince of Wales, his successor, then in his thirteenth year; and Richard, duke of York, in his ninth year.

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CHAP. XX.

EDWARD V.

UPON the death of Edward the kingdom was divided into two new factions. The queen's family, who during the last reign had grown into power, had become obnoxious to the old nobility, who could not bear to act in subordination to persons whom they considered as inferiors. The king, during his lifetime, had been able to overawe these animosities; and on his death-bed he endeavoured to guard against their future increase. He expressed a desire that his brother, the duke of Gloucester, should be intrusted with the regency, and recommended peace and unanimity during the minority of his son. But the king was no sooner dead than the parties broke out with all their former resentment; and the duke of Gloucester, a crafty, wicked, and ambitious prince, resolved to profit by their mutual contentions.

His first aim was to foment the discontents of the old nobility, by insinuating that the queen wanted to hide the meanness of her original in a multitude of new promotions; at the same time he redoubled his professions of zeal and attachment to that princess, and thus entirely gained her confidence. Having succeeded thus far, he gained over the duke of Buckingham, and some other lords, to his interest; and prevailed upon them to second him in his attempts to procure the guardianship of the young king, and the custody of his person.

Being sure of the assistance of these noblemen, he resolved to take the king out of the custody of the earl of Rivers, his uncle by the mother's side; and having ordered that nobleman to be arrested, he met young Edward in person, and offered to conduct him to London, with the most profound demonstrations of respect. Having thus secured the person of the king, his next step was to get the charge of the king's brother, who, with the queen,

his mother, had taken sanctuary in Westminster Abbey. The queen, who had foreseen from the beginning the dangers that threatened her family, was with great difficulty persuaded to deliver up her child: but, at the intercession of the primate, and the archbishop of York, she was at last induced to comply; and clasping the child in her arms, with a last embrace, took leave of him with a shower of tears. The young king, finding that he was to have the pleasure of his brother's company, was greatly rejoiced at the queen's compliance, not considering the fatal intent of these preparations; for, in a few days after, the duke of Gloucester, who had been made protector of the realm, upon a pretence of guarding their persons from danger, conveyed them both to the Tower.

Having thus secured the persons of those he intended to destroy, his next step was to spread a report of their illegitimacy; and, by pretended obstacles, to put off the day appointed for the young king's coronation. Lord Stanley, a man of deep penetration, was the first to disclose his fears of the protector's ill designs; and communicated his suspicions to lord Hastings, who long had been firmly attached to the king's family. Hastings would at first give the surmise no credit; and probably his wishes that such a project might not be true, influenced his judgment, and confirmed his security. But he was soon undeceived; for Catesby, a vile instrument of the protector, was sent to sound him, and to try whether he could not be brought over to assist the projected usurpation. Hastings treated the proposal with horror; he professed himself immoveable in his adherence to the king; and his death was, therefore, resolved on by the protector.

In the mean time orders had been dispatched to execute lord Rivers, sir Richard Grey, and sir Thomas Vaughan, who had been confined in Pontefract castle, and whose only crime was their attachment to the young king. On the very day on which they were beheaded, the protector summoned a council in the Tower, whither lord Hastings, amongst others, repaired, no way suspecting that his own life was in danger. The duke of Gloucester was capable of committing the most bloody and treacherous murders with the utmost coolness and indifference. He came thither at nine o'clock in the morning, with the most cheerful countenance, saluting the members with the utmost affability, and de-

monstrations of unusual good humour. He complimented the bishop of Ely on his early strawberries, and begged to have a dish of them. He then left the council, as if called away by other business; but desired that his absence might not interrupt the debates. In about a quarter of an hour he returned quite altered in look, knitting his brows, biting his lips, and showing, by a frequent change of countenance, the signs of some inward perturbation. A silence ensued for some time; and the lords looked upon each other, not without reason, expecting some horrid catastrophe. At length, he broke the dreadful silence: "My Lords," cried he, "what punishment do they deserve, who have conspired against my life?" This question redoubled the astonishment of the assembly; and the silence continuing, lord Hastings at length made answer, that whoever did so deserved to be punished as a traitor. "These traitors," cried the protector, "are the sorceress my brother's wife, and Jane Shore, his mistress, with others their associates. See to what a condition they have reduced me by their incantations and witchcrafts." Upon which he laid bare his arm, all shrivelled and decayed. The amazement of the council seemed to increase at this terrible accusation; and lord Hastings again said, "If they have committed such a crime, they deserve punishment."—"If?" cried the protector, with a loud voice: "dost thou answer me with Ifs? I tell thee that they have conspired my death; and that thou, traitor, art an accomplice in their crime!" He then struck the table twice with his hand; and the room was instantly filled with armed men. "I arrest thee," continued he, turning to Hastings, "for high treason;" and at the same time gave him in charge to the soldiers. In the mean time the council-room was filled with tumult and confusion; and though no rescue was offered, yet the soldiers caused a bustle, as if they apprehended danger. One of them narrowly missed cleaving lord Stanley's head with a battle-axe; but he fortunately escaped, by shrinking under the table. In all probability the fellow had orders for that attempt; and should Stanley be killed, his death might be ascribed to the tumult caused by an intended rescue. However, though he escaped the blow, he was arrested by order of the protector, who was well apprised of his attachment to the young king. As for lord Hastings, he was obliged to make a short confession to the next priest that was

at hand ; the protector crying out, by St. Paul, that he would not dine till he had seen his head taken off. He was accordingly hurried out to the little green before the Tower chapel, and there beheaded on a log of wood that accidentally lay in the way. Two hours after, a proclamation, very well drawn up, was read to the citizens of London, enumerating his offences, and palliating the suddenness of his punishment. It was remarked, however, by a merchant among the auditors, that the proclamation was certainly drawn up by a spirit of prophecy.

The protector, having thus dismissed from the world those whom he most feared, was willing to please the populace by punishing Jane Shore, the late king's mistress. This unfortunate woman was an enemy too humble to excite his jealousy ; yet, as he had accused her of witchcraft, of which all the world saw she was innocent, he thought proper to make her an example, for those faults of which she was really guilty. Jane Shore had been formerly deluded from her husband, who was a goldsmith in Lombard-street, and continued to live with Edward, the most guiltless mistress of his abandoned court. She was ever known to intercede for the distressed, and was usually applied to as a mediator for mercy. She was charitable, generous, and of a most pleasing conversation ; her wit being said to be as irresistible as her beauty. As she was blameless in other respects, the protector ordered her to be sued for incontinency, as having left her husband to live in adultery with another. It is very probable that the people were not displeased at seeing one again reduced to former meanness, who had for a while been raised above them, and enjoyed the smiles of a court. The charge against her was too notorious to be denied ; she pleaded guilty, and was accordingly condemned to walk barefoot through the city, and to do penance in St. Paul's church in a white sheet, with a wax taper in her hand, before thousands of spectators. She lived above forty years after this sentence, reduced to extreme wretchedness ; and sir Thomas More, in the succeeding reign, assures us, that he saw her gathering herbs in a field near the city for her nightly repast ; an extraordinary example for the ingratitude of courts, and the reverses of fortune.

The protector now began to throw off the mask, and to deny his pretended regard for the sons of the late king, thinking it high

time to aspire at the throne more openly. He had previously gained over the duke of Buckingham, a man of talents and power, by bribes and promises of future favour. This nobleman, therefore, used all his arts to infuse into the people an opinion of the bastardy of the late king, and also that of his children. Doctor Shaw, a popular preacher, was hired to harangue the people from St. Paul's Cross to the same purpose; where, after having displayed the incontinence of the queen, and insisting on the illegality of the young king's title, he expatiated on the virtues of the protector. "It is the protector," cried he, "who carries in his face the image of virtue, and the marks of a true descent. He alone can restore the lost honour and glory of the nation." It was hoped upon this occasion, that some of the populace would have cried out, "Long live king Richard!" but the audience remaining silent, the duke of Buckingham undertook to persuade them in his turn. His speech was copious upon the calamities of the last reign, and the bastardy of the present race; he saw only one method of shielding off the miseries that threatened the state, which was, to elect the protector; but he seemed apprehensive that he would never be prevailed on to accept of a crown, accompanied with such difficulty and danger. He next asked his auditors, whether they would have the protector for their king; but was mortified to find that a total silence ensued. The mayor, who was in the secret, willing to relieve him in this embarrassing situation, observed, that the citizens were not accustomed to be harangued by a person of such quality, and would only give an answer to their recorder. This officer repeated the duke's speech; but the people continuing still silent, "This is strange obstinacy!" cried the duke; "we only require of you, in plain terms, to declare, whether or not you will have the duke of Gloucester for your king; as the lords and commons have sufficient power without your concurrence?" After all these efforts, some of the meanest apprentices, incited by the protector's and Buckingham's servants, raising a feeble cry of, "God save king Richard!" the mob at the door, a despicable class of people, ever pleased with novelty, repeated the cry, and, throwing up their caps, repeated, A Richard! a Richard!

In this manner the duke took the advantage of this faint approbation; and the next day, at the head of the mayor and al-

dermen, went to wait upon the protector, at Baynard's Castle, with offers of the crown. When Richard was told that a great multitude waited at the door, with his usual hypocrisy he appeared to the crowd in a gallery between two bishops, and at first seemed quite surprised at such a concourse of people. But when he was informed that their business was to offer him the crown, he declared against accepting it; alleging his love for the late king, his brother, his affection for the children under his care, and his own insufficiency. Buckingham, seeming displeased with this answer, muttered some words to himself, but at length plainly told him, "that it was needless to refuse, for the people were bent on making him king; that they had now proceeded too far to recede; and therefore, in case of his refusal, were determined to offer the crown where it would meet a more ready acceptance." This was a resolution which the protector's tenderness for his people would not suffer him to see effected. "I perceive," said he in a modest tone, "that the nation is resolved to load me with preferments, unequal to my abilities or my choice; yet, since it is my duty to obey the dictates of a free people, I will, though reluctantly, accept their petition. I therefore, from this moment, enter upon the government of England and France, with a resolution to defend the one and subdue the other." The crowd being thus dismissed, each man returned home, pondering upon the proceedings of the day, and making such remarks as passion, interest, or party might suggest.

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CHAP. XXI.

RICHARD III.

June 27,  
1483. **O**NE crime ever draws on another; justice will revolt against fraud, and usurpation requires security. As soon, therefore, as Richard was seated upon the throne, he sent the governor of the Tower orders to put the two young princes to death: but this brave man, whose name was Brackenbury, refused to be made the instrument of a tyrant's will; and submissively answered, that he knew not how to embrue his hands in



innocent blood. A fit instrument, however, was not long wanting; sir James Tyrrel readily undertook the office, and Brackenbury was ordered to resign to him the keys for one night. Tyrrel choosing three associates, Slater, Dighton, and Forest, came in the night-time to the door of the chamber where the princes were lodged; and sending in the assassins, he bade them execute their commission, while he remained without. They found the young princes in bed, fallen into a sound sleep. After suffocating them with the bolsters and pillows, they showed their naked bodies to Tyrrel; who ordered them to be buried at the stair-foot, deep in the ground, under a heap of stones. These facts appeared in the succeeding reign, being confessed by the perpetrators; who, however, escaped punishment for the crime. The bodies of the princes were afterwards sought by Henry VII., but could not be found: however, in the reign of Charles II., the bones of two young persons, answering their ages, were discovered in the very spot where it was said they were buried: they were interred in a marble monument, by order of the king, in Westminster Abbey.

Richard had now waded through every obstacle to the throne; and began, after the manner of all usurpers, to strengthen his ill-gotten power, by sovereign connections. Sensible also of the influence of pageantry and show upon the minds of the people, he caused himself to be crowned first at London, and afterwards at York. The clergy he endeavoured to secure by great indulgences; and his friends, by bestowing rewards on them in proportion as they were instrumental in placing him on the throne.

But while he thus endeavoured to establish his power, he found it threatened on a quarter where he least expected an attack. The duke of Buckingham, who had been too instrumental in placing him on the throne, though he had received the greatest rewards for his services, yet continued to wish for more. He had already several posts and governments conferred upon him; but that nobleman, whose avarice was insatiable, making a demand of the confiscated lands belonging to the earldom of Hereford, to which his family had an antient claim, Richard either reluctantly complied with his request, or but partially indulged it, so that a coolness soon ensued; and no sooner had Buckingham supposed himself injured, than he resolved to dethrone a monarch whose

title was founded in injustice. At first, however, this aspiring subject remained in doubt, whether he should put up for the crown himself, or set up another ; but the latter resolution prevailing, he determined to declare for Henry, earl of Richmond, who was at that time an exile in Bretagne, and was considered as the only surviving branch of the house of Lancaster.

Henry, earl of Richmond, was detained in a kind of honourable custody by the duke of Bretagne. He was one of those who had the good fortune to escape the numerous massacres of the preceding reigns ; but as he was a descendant of John of Gaunt, by the female line, he was for that reason obnoxious to those in power. He had long lived in exile ; and was, at one time, delivered up to the ambassadors of Edward, who were preparing to carry him over to England, when the prince, who delivered him, repented of what he had done, and took him from the ambassadors just as they were leading him on ship-board. This was the youth on whom the duke of Buckingham cast his eye, to succeed to the crown, and a negotiation was begun between them for that purpose. Henry's hereditary right to the throne was doubtful ; but the crimes of the usurper served to strengthen his claims. However, to improve his title, a marriage was projected between him and the princess Elizabeth, eldest daughter of the late king, and the queen dowager was prevailed on to accede to the measure.

Richard, in the mean time, either informed by his creatures, or kept distrustful by conscious guilt, began to suspect Buckingham's fidelity ; and the secret informations which he daily received, left him no room to doubt of the truth of his suspicions. Impressed with this jealousy, he formed a resolution of sending for him to court ; and the duke's refusing to obey the summons confirmed him in his fears. But he soon had the plainest proofs of Buckingham's enmity ; intelligence arriving that this nobleman was at the head of a large body of men in arms, and marching towards the western shore, Richard, whose courage no danger could allay, immediately put himself in a posture of defence, by levying some troops in the North, and prepared to meet the insurgents with his usual expedition. But fortune seemed his friend on the present occasion, and rendered all his preparations unnecessary. As Buckingham was advancing by hasty marches towards Gloucester, where he intended to cross the Severn, he found that river

swollen to such a degree, that the country on both sides was deluged, and even the tops of some hills were covered with water. This inundation continued for ten days; during which Buckingham's army, composed of Welshmen, could neither pass the river, nor find subsistence on their own side; they were therefore obliged to disperse, and return home, notwithstanding all the duke's efforts to prolong their stay. In this helpless situation, the duke, after a short deliberation, took refuge at the house of one Banister, who had been his servant, and who had received repeated obligations from his family. But the wicked seldom find, as they seldom exert, friendship. Banister, unable to resist the temptation of a large reward that was set upon the duke's head, betrayed him to the sheriff of Shropshire, who, surrounding the house with armed men, seized the duke, in the habit of a peasant, and conducted him to Salisbury, where he was instantly tried, condemned, and executed, according to the summary method practised in those ages.

In the mean time the earl of Richmond appeared on the coast of England; but, finding his hopes frustrated by the failure of Buckingham, he hastily set sail again, and returned to Bretagne. Thus every concurrence seemed to promise Richard a long possession of the crown: however, the authority of parliament was still wanting to give sanction to the injustice of his proceedings; but in those times of ignorance and guilt that was easily procured. An act was passed, confirming the illegitimacy of Edward's children; an act of attainder was also confirmed [1484.] against Henry, earl of Richmond; and all the usurper's wishes seemed to be the aim of their deliberations. One thing was wanting to complete Richard's security, which was the death of his rival: to effect this, he sent ambassadors to the duke of Bretagne, seemingly upon business of a public nature; but, in reality, to treat with Landois, that prince's minister, to deliver up the earl. The minister was base enough to enter into the negotiation; but Richmond, having had timely notice, fled into France, and just reached the confines of that kingdom, when he found that he was pursued by those who intended to give him up to his rival.

Richard, thus finding his attempts to seize his enemy's person unsuccessful, became every day more cruel, [1485.] as his power grew more precarious. Among those who chiefly

excited his jealousy, was the lord Stanley, who was married to the mother of Henry ; and to keep him steadfast in obedience, he took his son as a hostage for the father's behaviour. He now also resolved to get rid of his present queen, Anne, to make room for a match with his niece, the princess Elizabeth, by whose alliance he hoped to cover the injustice of his claims. The lady whom he wished to remove was the widow of the young prince of Wales, whom he had murdered with his own hands at Tewkesbury ; and it is no slight indication of the barbarity of the times, that the widow should accept for her second lord the murderer of her former husband. But she was now rewarded for that instance of inhumanity, as Richard treated her with so much pride and indifference, that she died of grief, according to his ardent expectation. However, his wishes were not crowned with success in his applications to Elizabeth : the mother, indeed, was not averse to the match ; but the princess herself treated his vile addresses with contempt and detestation.

Amidst the perplexity caused by this unexpected refusal, he received information that the earl of Richmond was once more making preparations to land in England, and assert his claims to the crown. Richard, who knew not in what quarter he might expect the invader, had taken post at Nottingham, in the centre of the kingdom ; and had given commissions to several of his creatures, to oppose the enemy wherever he should land. The accounts received of Richmond's preparations were not ungrounded ; he set out from Harfleur in Normandy, with a retinue of about two thousand persons ; and, after a voyage of six days, arrived at Milford-haven, in Wales, where he landed without opposition. Sir Rice ap Thomas, and sir Walter Herbert, who were intrusted to oppose him in Wales, were both in his interests ; the one immediately deserted to him, and the other made but a feeble opposition. Upon news of this descent, Richard, who was possessed of courage and military conduct, his only virtues, instantly resolved to meet his antagonist, and decide their mutual pretensions by a battle. Richmond, on the other hand, being reinforced by sir Thomas Bouchier, sir Walter Hungerford, and others, to the number of about six thousand, boldly advanced with the same intention ; and in a few days both armies drew near Bosworth field in Leicestershire, to determine a contest that had now for

thirty years filled the kingdom with civil commotions, and deluged its plains with blood.

The army of Richard was above double that of Henry; but the chief confidence of the latter lay in the friendship and secret assurances of lord Stanley, who, with a body of seven thousand men, hovered near the field of battle, and declined engaging on either side.

Richard, perceiving his enemy advance, drew up his army, consisting of about thirteen thousand men, in order of battle; he gave the command of the van-guard to the duke of Norfolk, while he led the main body himself, with the crown on his head, designing by this either to inspire the enemy with awe, or to render himself conspicuous to his own army. The van of Richmond's army, consisting of archers, was commanded by John earl of Oxford; sir Gilbert Talbot led the right wing, sir John Savage the left; while the earl himself, accompanied by his uncle, the earl of Pembroke, placed himself in the main body. Lord Stanley, in the mean time, posted himself on one flank, between the two armies, while his brother took his station on the other. Richard, seeing him thus in a situation equally convenient for joining either army, immediately sent him orders to unite himself to the main body; which the other refusing, he gave instant orders for beheading lord Stanley's son, whom he still kept as a hostage. He was persuaded, however, to postpone the execution till after the fight; and attending to the more important transactions of the day, he directed the trumpets to sound to battle. The two armies approaching each other, the battle began with a shower of arrows, and soon the adverse fronts were seen closing. This was what lord Stanley had for some time expected, who immediately profiting by the occasion, joined the line of Richmond, and thus turned the fortune of the day. This measure, so unexpected to the men, though not to their leaders, had a proportioned effect on both armies; it inspired unusual courage into Henry's soldiers, and threw Richard's into confusion. The intrepid tyrant, perceiving the danger of his situation, spurred his horse into the thickest of the fight, while Richmond quitted his station behind, to encourage his troops by his presence in the front. Richard, perceiving him, was desirous of ending all by one blow; and with irresistible fury flew through thousands to

attack him. He slew sir William Brandon, the earl's standard-bearer, who attempted to stop his career. Sir John Cheyne, having taken Brandon's place, was thrown by him to the ground. Richmond, in the mean time, stood firm to oppose him; but they were separated by the interposing crowd. Richard, thus disappointed, went, by his presence, to inspire his troops at another quarter; but at length perceiving his army every where yielding or flying, and now finding that all was gone, he rushed with a loud shout into the midst of the enemy, and there met a better death than his crimes and cruelties deserved. After the battle his body was found stripped among a heap of slain, covered with wounds, and the eyes frightfully staring: it was thrown across a horse, the head hanging down on one side and the legs on the other, and thus carried to Leicester. It lay there two days exposed to public view, and then was buried without further ceremony.

Richard's crown, being found by one of Henry's soldiers on the field of battle, was immediately placed upon the head of the conqueror; while the whole army, as if inspired with one voice, cried out, "Long live king Henry!"

Thus ended the bloody reign of Richard; and by his death, the race of the Plantagenet kings, who had been in possession of the crown during the space of three hundred and thirty years, became extinct. Thus ended also the contests between the houses of York and Lancaster, by which most of the antient families of the kingdom were extinguished, and more than a hundred thousand men lost their lives, either by the sword or the executioner.

These dissensions had for some time reduced the kingdom to a state of savage barbarity. Laws, arts, and commerce, which had before emitted some feeble gleams, were entirely neglected for the practice of arms; and to be a conqueror was sufficient, in the eyes of brutal people, to stand for every other virtue. The English had as yet but little idea of legal subordination; nor could they give any applause to those who attempted to cultivate the arts of peace, the whole of their study and education being turned for war. The ferocity of the people to each other was incredible. However, the women, whatever part they took in disturbances of the government, were exempted from capital pun-

ishments ; nor were they ever put to death, except when convicted of witchcraft or poisoning. As for the clergy, they were entirely distinct from the laity, both in customs, laws, and learning. They were governed by the code of civil law, drawn up in the times of Justinian ; while the laity were held by the common law, which had been traditional from times immemorial in the country. The clergy, whatever may be told to the contrary, understood and wrote Latin fluently ; while the laity, on the other hand, understood nothing of Latin, but applied themselves wholly to the French language, when they aspired at the character of a polite education. The clergy, as a body distinct from the state, little interested themselves in civil polity ; and perhaps they were not displeased to see the laity, whom they considered less as fellow-subjects than rivals for power, weakening themselves by continual contests, and thus rendering themselves more easily manageable. In short, as there was no knowledge of government among the individuals, but what totally resulted from power, the state was like a feverish constitution, ever subject to ferment and disorder. France, indeed, had served for some time as a drain for the peccant humours ; but when that was no longer open, the disorders of the constitution seemed daily to increase, and vented themselves at last in all the horrors of a long-continued civil war.

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 CHAP. XXII.

## HENRY VII.

AFTER having presented the reader with a frightful Aug. 23,  
1485. train of treasons, stratagems, murders, and usurpations, we are beginning to emerge into a time of greater importance and glory. We are now to view the conduct of a monarch who, if not the best, was at least the most useful of any that ever sat upon the English throne. We are now to behold a nation of tumult reduced to civil subordination ; an insolent and factious aristocracy humbled, wise laws enacted, commerce restored, and the peaceful arts made amiable to a people, for whom war alone

heretofore had charms. Hitherto we have only beheld the actions of a barbarous nation, obeying with reluctance, and governed by caprice; but henceforward we may discover more refined politics, and better concerted schemes; human wisdom, as if roused from her lethargy of thirteen hundred years, exerting all her efforts to subdue the natural ferocity of the people, and to introduce permanent felicity.

Henry's first care, upon coming to the throne, was to marry the princess Elizabeth, daughter of Edward the Fourth; and thus he blended the interests of the houses of York and Lancaster, so that ever after they were incapable of distinction. Nevertheless, being apprehensive that the people might suppose he claimed the crown in right of this union, he deferred the queen's coronation till two years after; by which he hoped to make the priority of his own claim incontestable. His reign also happily commenced with an obedience to the forms of law, of which England had hitherto seen few examples. An act had been passed in the preceding reign for the attainder of his friends and followers, which continued still in force; and the names of many members of that house, by which it was to be repealed, were expressly mentioned in the attainder. To suffer these to join in repealing that statute, would be admitting them as judges in their own cause; but to this Henry prudently objected, obliging them to leave the house till an act was passed for reversing their attainder.

Before this reign, it had been usual, in the case of any person who was attainted, for the king, after his execution, to give away his estates to any of the court favourites that happened to be most in confidence. Henry wisely perceived that this severity had two bad effects: the cruelty of the measure in the first place excited indignation; and it also made the favourite too powerful for subjection. In order to remedy these inconveniences, he made a law to deprive those who were found in arms of their estates and effects, and sequestered them for the benefit of the crown.

A great part of the miseries of his predecessors proceeded from their poverty, which was mostly occasioned by riot and dissipation. Henry saw that money alone could turn the scale of power in his favour; and therefore hoarded up all the confiscations of his enemies with the utmost frugality. Hence he has been ac-



cused by historians of avarice; but that avarice which tends to strengthen government, and repress sedition, is not only excusable but praise-worthy. Liberality in a king is too often a misplaced virtue. What is thus given is generally extorted from the industrious and needy, to be lavished as rewards on the rich, the insidious, and the fawning, upon the sycophants of a court, or the improvers of luxurious refinement. Henry showed himself very different from his predecessors in these respects, as he gave very few rewards to the courtiers about his person, and none except the needy shared his benefactions. He released all prisoners for debt in his dominions, whose debts did not amount to forty shillings, and paid their creditors from the royal coffers. Thus his economy rendered him not only useful to the poor, but enabled him to be just to his own creditors, both abroad and at home. Those sums which he borrowed from the city of London, or any of his subjects, he repaid at the appointed day with the utmost punctuality; and in proportion as he was esteemed in his own dominions, he became respectable abroad.

With regard to the king's servants, he was himself the only acting minister; and as for the rest, he did not choose his under agents from among the nobility, as had been most usual; but pitched upon John Morton and Richard Fox, two clergymen, persons of industry, vigilance, and capacity, to whom he chiefly confided his affairs and secret counsels. They had shared with him in all his former dangers and distresses; and he now took care that they should participate in his good fortune; the one being soon after created bishop of Ely, the other bishop of Exeter. He perhaps supposed, that as clergymen were naturally more dependent on him than the nobility, so they would be more submissive to his commands, and more active in their services.

Immediately after his marriage with Elizabeth, he issued a general pardon to all such as chose to accept [1486.] it; but those lords who had been the favourites of the last reign, and long accustomed to turbulence, refused his proffered tenderness, and flew to arms. Lord Lovel, together with Humphrey and Thomas Stafford, placed themselves at the head of this insurrection; but Henry sent the duke of Bedford to oppose them, with orders to try what might be done by offering a pardon, before he made any attempts to reduce them. The duke punctually

obeyed his instructions; and a general promise of pardon was made to the rebels, which had a greater effect on the leaders than on their followers. Lovel, who had undertaken an enterprise that exceeded his courage and capacity, was so terrified with the fears of desertion among his troops, that he suddenly withdrew himself; and, after lurking some time in Lancashire, made his escape into Flanders, where he was protected by the duchess of Burgundy. The Staffords took sanctuary in the church of Colnham, a village near Abingdon: but it appearing that this church had not the privilege of giving protection, they were taken thence; the elder Stafford was executed at Tyburn; the younger, pleading that he was misled by his brother, obtained his pardon. The rebel army, now without a leader, submitted to the mercy of the king, and were permitted to disperse without punishment.

But the people were become so turbulent and factious by a long course of civil war, that no governor could rule, nor any king please them; so that one rebellion seemed extinguished only to give rise to another. The king, in the beginning of his reign, had given orders that the son of the duke of Clarence, whom we have already mentioned as being drowned in a wine-butt, should be taken from the prison where he had been confined by Richard, and brought to the Tower. This unfortunate youth, who was styled the earl of Warwick, was, by long confinement, so unacquainted with the world, that, as we are told, he could not tell the difference between a duck and a hen. However, the unhappy youth, harmless as he was, was made an instrument to deceive the people. There lived in Oxford one Richard Simon, a priest, who, possessing some subtlety, and more rashness, trained up one Lambert Simnel, a baker's son, to counterfeit the person of the earl of Warwick; and he was previously instructed by his tutor to talk upon many facts and occurrences, as having happened to him in the court of Edward. But as the impostor was not calculated to bear a close inspection, it was thought proper to show him first at a distance; and Ireland was judged the fittest theatre for him to support his assumed character. The plot unfolded to their wishes; Simnel was received with the utmost joy, and proclaimed king of Ireland; he was conducted by the magistrates and the populace of Dublin with great pomp to the Castle, where he was treated conformably to his supposed birth and distinction,

Henry could not help feeling more uneasiness at this bare-faced imposture than it seemed to deserve : but the penetrating monarch saw that his mother-in-law was at the bottom of it ; and he dreaded the fierce inquietude of her temper. He was resolved therefore to take the advice of his council upon this occasion ; and they, after due deliberation, determined upon confining the old queen to a monastery ; but, to wipe off the imputation of treason from one so nearly allied to the crown, it was given out that she was thus punished for having formerly delivered up the princess, her daughter, to Richard. The people, as usual, murmured at the severity of her treatment : but the king, unmindful of their idle clamours, persisted in his resolution ; and she remained in confinement till her death, which did not happen till several years after. The next measure was to show Warwick to the people. In consequence of this he was taken from the Tower, and led through the principal streets of London ; after which he was conducted in solemn procession to St. Paul's, where great numbers were assembled to see him. Still, however, they proceeded in Dublin to honour their pretended monarch ; and he was crowned with great solemnity, in presence of the earl of Kildare, the chancellor, and the other officers of state. Such impositions upon the people were very frequent at that time, in several parts of Europe. Lorrain, Naples, and Portugal, had their impostors, who continued to deceive for a long time without detection. In fact, the inhabitants of every country were so much confined within their own limits, and knew so little of what was passing in the rest of the world, that any distant story might be propagated, how improbable soever. In this manner king Simnel, being now joined by lord Lovel and other malcontents of rank, resolved to pass over into England ; and accordingly landed in [1487.] Lancashire, whence he marched to York, expecting that the country would rise and join him as he marched along. But in this he was deceived : the people, unwilling to join a body of German and Irish troops, by whom he was supported, and kept in awe by the king's reputation, remained in tranquillity, or gave all their assistance to the royal cause. The earl of Lincoln, therefore, a disaffected lord, to whom the command of the rebel army was given, finding no hopes but in speedy victory, was determined to bring the contest to a short issue. The opposite ar-

mies met at Stoke, in the county of Nottingham, and fought a battle, which was more bloody, and more obstinately disputed, than could have been expected from the inequality of their forces. But victory at length declared in favour of the king, and it proved decisive. The earl perished in the field of battle; lord Lovel was never more heard of, and it was supposed he shared the same fate. Simnel and his tutor Simon were taken prisoners; and four thousand of the common men fell in battle. Simon, being a priest, could not be tried by the civil power, and was only committed to close confinement. Simnel was too contemptible to excite the king's fears or resentment; he was pardoned, and made a scullion in the king's kitchen, whence he was afterwards advanced to the rank of falconer, in which mean employment he died.

Things being thus quietly settled at home, Henry began to turn his thoughts toward his continental connections, and to establish some degree of understanding between himself and the neighbouring states. He was too wise a prince not to perceive the fatality of conquests upon the continent, which could at best produce no other reputation than the empty one of military glory. Yet, while he internally despised such pernicious triumphs, he was obliged, in order to gain popularity, to countenance them. He, therefore, frequently boasted that he was determined to ravish his kingdom of France from the usurpers, who had long possessed it; and that he would lay the whole country in blood. But these were the distant threats of a crafty politician; there was nothing more distant from his heart. As far as negotiations went, he did all in his power to keep the interests of that kingdom so nearly balanced, as to prevent any from growing too powerful; but as for succours of men and money, he too well knew the value of both to lavish them, as his predecessors had done, upon such fruitless projects.

About this time the nobles of Bretagne, being disgusted with their minister, Peter Landois, rose in conspiracy against him, [1488.] and put him to death. Willing to defend one crime by another, they called in the aid of the French monarch to protect them from the resentment of their own sovereign. Charles VIII. quickly obeyed the call; but instead of only bringing the nobles assistance, he over-ran and took possession of the

greatest part of the country. The aid of Henry was implored by the distressed Bretons; but this monarch appeared more willing to assist them by negotiations than by arms. Though he was determined to maintain a pacific conduct, as far as the situation of his affairs would permit, he knew too well the warlike disposition of his subjects, and their desires to engage in any scheme that promised the humiliation of France. He resolved, therefore, to take advantage of this propensity; and to draw some supplies of money from the people, on pretence of giving assistance to the duke of Bretagne. He accordingly summoned a parliament to meet at Westminster, and easily per- [1489.] suaded them to grant a considerable supply. But money was, at that time, more easily granted than levied in England. A new insurrection began in Yorkshire, the people resisting the commissioners who were appointed to levy the tax. The earl of Northumberland attempted to enforce the king's command; but the populace, being by this taught to believe that he was the adviser of their oppressions, flew to arms, attacked his house, and put him to death. The mutineers did not stop there; but by the advice of one John à Chambre, a seditious fellow of mean birth, they chose sir John Egremont for their leader, and prepared themselves for a vigorous resistance. The king, upon hearing this rash proceeding, immediately levied a force, which he put under the earl of Surry; and this nobleman, encountering the rebels, dissipated the tumult, and took their leader prisoner. John à Chambre was shortly after executed; but sir John Egremont fled to the court of the duchess of Burgundy, the usual retreat of all who were obnoxious to government in England.

As Henry had gone thus far in preparations for a war with France, he supposed that it would be too flagrant an imposition upon the credulity of the nation, not to put a part of his threats in execution. The French were, by this time, in possession of all Bretagne; and a marriage had been lately concluded be- [1491.] tween the French monarch and the duchess of the last named territory. This accession of power, in a rival state, was formidable not only to Henry but to Europe. He therefore prepared to make a descent upon France; and accordingly landed [1492.] at Calais with an army of twenty-five thousand foot, and sixteen hundred horse, which he put under the command of the

duke of Bedford and the earl of Oxford. But, notwithstanding this appearance of an hostile disposition, there had been secret advances made towards a peace three months before, and commissioners had been appointed to treat of the terms. The demands of Henry were wholly pecuniary ; and the king of France, who deemed the peaceable possession of Bretagne an equivalent for any sum, readily agreed to the proposals made him. He engaged to pay Henry near two hundred thousand pounds sterling, as a reimbursement for the expenses of this expedition ; and he stipulated to pay a yearly pension to him, and his heirs, of twenty-five thousand crowns.

Henry, having thus made an advantageous peace, had reason to flatter himself with the prospect of long tranquillity : but he was mistaken ; he had still enemies who found means to embroil him in fresh difficulties and dangers. One would have imagined, from the ill success of Simnel's imposture, that few would be willing to embark in another of a similar kind : however, the old duchess of Burgundy, rather irritated than discouraged by the failure of her past enterprises, was determined to disturb that government which she could not subvert. She first procured a report to be spread, that the young duke of York, said to have been murdered in the Tower, was still living ; and finding the rumour greedily received, she soon produced a young man, who assumed his name and character. The person pitched upon to sustain this part was one Osbeck or Warbeck, the son of a converted Jew, who had been in England during the reign of Edward IV. where he had this son named Peter, but corrupted after the Flemish manner into Peterkin or Perkin. It was by some believed that Edward, among his other amorous adventures, had a secret correspondence with Warbeck's wife, which might account for a striking resemblance between young Perkin and that monarch. Perkin, following the fortunes of his father, had travelled for many years from place to place ; so that his birth and circumstances became thereby unknown, and difficult to be traced by the most diligent inquiry. The variety of his adventures might have contributed to assist the natural sagacity and versatility of his disposition ; as he seemed to be a youth capable of sustaining any part, or any assumed character. The duchess of Burgundy found this youth entirely suited to her purposes ; and her lessons, in-

structing him to personate the duke of York, were easily learned and strongly retained by a youth of such quick apprehension. In short, his graceful air, his courtly address, his easy manners, and elegant conversation, were capable of imposing upon all but such as were conscious of the imposture. ✓

The kingdom of Ireland, which still retained its attachments to the house of York, was pitched upon as the proper place for Perkin's first appearance, as it before had favoured the pretensions of Simnel. He landed at Cork; and, immediately assuming the name of Richard Plantagenet, drew to himself numerous partisans among that credulous people. He wrote letters to the earls of Desmond and Kildare, inviting them to join his party; he dispersed every where the strange intelligence of his escape from his uncle Richard's cruelty; and men, fond of every thing new and wonderful, began to make him the general subject of their discourse, and even the object of their favour. From Ireland his fame soon spread over into France; and Charles sent Perkin an invitation to his court, where he received him with all the marks of consideration that were due to his supposed dignity. The youth, no way dazzled by his elevation, supported the prepossession which was spread abroad in his favour; so that England itself soon began to give credit to his pretensions; while sir George Nevil, sir John Taylor, and above a hundred gentlemen more went to Paris to pay him homage, and offer their services. Upon the peace being shortly after concluded between France and England, the impostor was obliged to make his residence at the court of his old patroness, the duchess of Burgundy, and the interview between these conscious deceivers was truly ridiculous. The duchess affected the utmost ignorance of his pretensions, and even put on the appearance of distrust, having, as she said, been already deceived by Simnel. She seemed to examine all his assertions with the most scrupulous diffidence; put many particular questions to him, affected astonishment at his answers, and at last, after long and severe scrutiny, burst out into joy and admiration at his delivery, acknowledging him as her nephew, as the true image of Edward, and legitimate successor to the English throne. She immediately assigned him an equipage suitable to his pretensions; appointed him a guard of thirty halberdiers;

and on all occasions honoured him with the appellation of the White Rose of England.

[1493.] The English, prone to revolt, gave credit to all these absurdities ; while the young man's prudence, conversation, and deportment, served to confirm what their disaffection and credulity had begun. All such as were disgusted with the king prepared to join him ; and some of those who had been in favour with Henry, and had contributed to place him on the throne, thinking their services could never be sufficiently repaid, now privately abetted the imposture, and became heads of the conspiracy. These were joined by numbers of the inferior class, some greedy of novelty, some blindly attached to their leaders, and some induced by their desperate fortunes to wish for a change.

Among those who secretly abetted the cause of Perkin were lord Fitzwalter, sir Simon Montfort, sir Thomas Thwaites, and sir Robert Clifford. But the person of the greatest weight, and the most dangerous opposition, was sir William Stanley, the lord chamberlain, and brother to the famous lord Stanley, who had so effectually supported the interests of Henry. This personage, either moved by a blind credulity, or more probably by a restless ambition, entered into a regular conspiracy against the king ; and a correspondence was settled between the malcontents in England and those in Flanders.

While the plot was thus carrying on in all quarters, Henry was not inattentive to the designs of his enemies. He spared neither labour nor expense to detect the falsehood of the pretender to his crown ; and was equally assiduous in finding out who were his secret abettors. For this purpose he dispersed his spies through all Flanders, and brought over, by large bribes, some of those whom he knew to be in the enemies' interests. Among these, sir Robert Clifford was the most remarkable, both for his consequence, and the confidence with which he was trusted. From this person Henry learned the whole of Perkin's birth and adventures, together with the names of all those who had secretly combined to assist him. The king was pleased with the discovery ; but the more trust he gave to his spies, the higher resentment did he feign against them.



At first he was struck with indignation at the ingratitude of many of those about him ; but, concealing his resentment for a proper opportunity, he, almost at the same instant, arrested Fitzwalter, Montfort, and Thwaites, together [1494.] with William d'Aubigni, Robert Radcliffe, Thomas Cressener, and Thomas Astwood. All these were arraigned, convicted, and condemned for high treason. Montfort, Radcliffe, and d'Aubigni, were immediately executed ; the rest received pardon. But the principal delinquent yet remained to be punished, whose station, as lord chamberlain, and whose connections with many of the principal men in the kingdom, seemed to exempt him from censure. To effect this, Clifford was directed to come over privately to England, and to accuse Stanley in person ; which he did, to the seeming astonishment of all present. Henry affected to receive the intelligence as false and incredible ; but, Clifford persisting in his accusation, Stanley was committed to custody, and soon after examined before the council. Finding his guilt but too clearly proved, he did not attempt to conceal it, supposing that an open confession might serve as an atonement, or trusting to his former services for pardon and security. In this he was mistaken ; after a delay of six weeks, during which time [1495.] the king affected to deliberate upon his conduct, he was brought to trial, when he was condemned, and shortly after beheaded. Through the whole of this reign, the king seemed to make a distinction in the crimes of those who conspired against him : whenever the conspirator took up arms against him from a conscientious adherence to principle, and a love of the house of York, he generally found pardon ; but when a love of change, or an impatience of subordination, inspired the attempt, the offender was sure to be treated with the utmost rigour of the law.

While the adherents of Perkin were thus disappointed in England, he himself attempted landing in Kent ; the gentlemen of which country gathered in a body to oppose him. Their aim was to allure him on shore by proffers of assistance, and then seize his person : but the wary youth, observing that they had more order and regularity in their movements than could be supposed in new-levied forces, refused to commit himself into their hands ; wherefore they attacked his attendants who had come ashore, of whom they took a hundred and fifty prisoners. These

were tried and condemned, and all executed by order of the king, who was resolved to use no lenity to men of such desperate fortunes.

The young adventurer, finding his hopes frustrated in the attempt, went next to try his fortune in Scotland. In that country his luck seemed greater than in England. James the Fourth received him with great cordiality; he was seduced to believe the story of his birth and adventures; and he carried his confidence so far, as to give him in marriage lady Catharine Gordon, daughter to the earl of Huntley, and a near kinswoman of his own; a young lady eminent for virtue as well as beauty. Not content with these instances of favour, he resolved to attempt setting him on the throne of England. It was naturally expected that, upon Perkin's first appearance in that kingdom, all the friends of the house of York would rise in his favour. Upon this ground the [1496.] king of Scotland entered England with a numerous army, and proclaimed the young adventurer wherever he went. But Perkin's pretensions, attended by repeated disappointments, were now become stale, even in the eyes of the populace; so that, contrary to expectation, none were found to second them. Being disappointed in this, he returned to Edinburgh, where he continued to reside, till, upon the conclusion of a treaty of peace between the two kingdoms, he was obliged to leave Scotland, and to seek a new protector.

In the mean time Henry found little uneasiness at Perkin's irruption, as he was sensible it would serve him as a pretext to demand further supplies from parliament, with which he knew they would readily comply. The vote was in fact easily enough obtained; but he found it not so easy to levy the money. The inhabitants of Cornwall were the first to refuse contributing supplies for [1497.] the safety of the northern parts of the kingdom, which were so very remote from them. Their discontents were further inflamed by one Michael Joseph, a farrier of Bodmin, who had long been the spokesman of the multitude. To him was joined one Thomas Flammock, a lawyer; and, under the conduct of these two, the insurgents passed through the county of Devon, and reached that of Somerset, where they were joined by Lord Audley, a nobleman of an antient family, popular in his department, but vain, ambitious, and restless in his temper. Thus headed, and breathing

destruction to the king's commissioners, they marched with great speed towards London, without, however, committing any devastations by the way. At length, without receiving countenance or reinforcement on their march, they pitched their camp near Eltham, not far from London. Henry, whose courage and intrepidity were never to be moved, had some time before levied an army to oppose the Scots ; and this he ordered southward to suppress the Cornish insurrection. On other occasions it was usual with him to hasten to a decision ; and it was a saying with him, that he only desired to see his enemies ; but as the present insurgents behaved in an inoffensive manner, he protracted his attack for some time, till at length it was begun by lord d'Aubigni, who, after some resistance, broke and put them to flight. Lord Audley, Flammock, and Joseph, were taken and executed ; but the rest, to the number of fourteen thousand, were suffered to depart without punishment.

In the mean time the restless Perkin being dismissed from Scotland, and meeting with a very cold reception from the Flemings, who now desired to be at peace with the English, resolved to continue his scheme of opposition ; and once more took refuge among the wilds and fastnesses of Ireland. Impatient, however, of an inactive life, he held a consultation with his followers, Herne, Skelton, and Astley, three broken tradesmen ; and by their advice he resolved to try the affections of the Cornish men, whose discontents the king's late lenity had only contributed to inflame. These were a tumultuous multitude, too ignorant for gratitude ; and upon their return ascribed the royal clemency to fear, inducing their countrymen to believe that the whole kingdom was ready to rise to vindicate their quarrel. It was in consequence of these suggestions that they determined to send for Perkin to put himself at their head ; and he no sooner made his appearance among them at Bodmin, than the populace, to the number of three thousand men, flocked to his standard. Elate with this appearance of success, he assumed, for the first time, the title of Richard the Fourth, king of England ; and, not to suffer the spirits of his adherents to languish, he led them to the gates of Exeter. Finding the inhabitants obstinate in refusing to admit him, and being unprovided with artillery to force an entrance, he resolved to continue before it until possessed of a suf-

ficient force to make a further progress into the kingdom. In the mean time Henry, being informed of his landing and his designs, expressed great joy upon the occasion, declaring that he should now have the pleasure of an interview with a person whom he had long wished to see. All the courtiers, sensible of Perkin's desperate situation, and the general suspicion there was of their own fidelity, prepared themselves to assist the king with great alacrity. The lords d'Aubigni and Broke, the earl of Devonshire, and the duke of Buckingham, appeared at the head of their respective forces, and seemed eager for an opportunity of displaying their courage and loyalty. Perkin being informed of these great preparations broke up the siege of Exeter, and retired to Taunton. His followers by this time amounted to seven thousand men, and appeared ready to defend his cause: but his heart failed him; and, instead of bringing them into the field, he privately deserted them, and took sanctuary in the monastery of Beaulieu in the New Forest. His wretched adherents, left to the king's mercy, found him still willing to pardon; and, except a few of the ringleaders, none were treated with capital severity. The lady Catharine Gordon, wife to Perkin, fell into the conqueror's hands, and was treated by him with all the lenity due to her sex and quality. She was placed in a reputable station near the person of the queen, and assigned a pension, which she enjoyed till her death. But the manner in which Perkin himself was to be treated appeared more doubtful. At first it was suggested by some, that he should be taken forcibly from the sanctuary to which he had fled, and made a public example; but Henry thought that milder methods would answer as well. He therefore employed some persons to treat with Perkin, and to persuade him, under promise of a pardon, to deliver himself up to justice, and to confess and explain all the circumstances of his imposture. His affairs being altogether desperate, he embraced the king's offers, without hesitation, and quitted the sanctuary. Henry being desirous of seeing him, he was brought to court, and conducted through the streets of London in a kind of mock triumph, amidst the derision and insults of the populace, which he bore with the most dignified resignation. He was then compelled to sign a confession of his former life and conduct, which was printed and dispersed throughout the nation; but it was so defective and con-

contradictory, that instead of explaining the pretended imposture, it left it still more doubtful than before; and this youth's real pretensions are to this very day an object of dispute among [1498.] the learned. However, though his life was granted him, he was still detained in custody, and keepers were appointed to watch over his conduct. But his impatience of any confinement could not be controlled; he broke loose from his keepers, and, flying to the sanctuary of Shene, put himself in the hands of the prior of that monastery. He was again prevailed on to trust himself to the king's mercy; but, in order to reduce him to the lowest state of contempt, he was set in the stocks at Westminster and Cheapside, and obliged to read aloud, in both places, the confession which had been formerly published in his name. From this place of scorn he was conveyed to the Tower, where it was thought the strength of his prison would be sufficient to restrain his restless, active disposition; but nothing could repress his habits of inquietude. He had insinuated himself into the intimacy of four servants of the lieutenant of the Tower; and by their means opened a correspondence with the unfortunate earl [1499.] of Warwick, who had been confined there for many years before, and kept in a state of utter ignorance. In all probability Perkin was permitted to enter into this correspondence with him by the connivance of the king, who hoped that his enterprising genius, and insinuating address, would engage the simple Warwick in some project that would furnish a pretext for taking away their lives; which accordingly happened. Perkin tampered with the servants, who, it is said, agreed to murder their master, and thus secure the gates of the Tower, by which the prisoners might make their escape to some secure part of the kingdom.

That the danger might appear more imminent and pressing, so as to justify the steps which Henry intended to take, another disturbance was raised at the same time in Kent, where a young man, called Ralph Wilford, the son of a cordwainer, personated the earl of Warwick, under the conduct and direction of one Patrick, an Augustine monk, who in his sermons exhorted the people to take arms in his favour. This friar, who had been used as a tool for the king's emissaries, was arrested, together with his pupil; and Wilford was hanged without ceremony, but the tutor obtained his pardon. This was the prelude to the fate of Perkin

and the earl of Warwick ; the former of whom was tried at Westminster, and, being convicted on the evidence of the servants of the Tower, was hanged at Tyburn with John Walter, mayor of Cork, who had constantly adhered to his cause in all the vicissitudes of his fortune. Blewet and Astwood, two of the servants, underwent the same fate ; but six other persons, condemned as accomplices in the same conspiracy, were pardoned. In a few days after Perkin's execution, the wretched earl of Warwick was tried by his peers ; and being convicted of high-treason, in consequence of pleading guilty to the arraignment, was beheaded on Tower Hill, and in him ended the last male branch of the house of Plantagenet. The deplorable end of this innocent nobleman, and the fate of Perkin, who, notwithstanding all that appeared against him, was, by the unprejudiced part of the nation, deemed the real son of king Edward, filled the whole kingdom with such aversion to the government of king Henry, that, to throw the odium from himself, he was obliged to lay it to the account of his ally, Ferdinand of Arragon, who, he said, scrupled his alliance while any prince of the house of York remained alive.

There had been hitherto nothing in this reign but plots, treasons, insurrections, impostures, and executions ; and it is probable that Henry's severity proceeded from the continual alarms in which they held him. It is certain that no prince ever loved peace more than he ; and much of the ill-will of his subjects arose from his attempts to repress their inclinations for war. The usual preface to all his treaties was, "That when Christ came into the world, peace was sung ; and when he went out of the world, peace was bequeathed." He had no ambition to extend his power, except only by treaties and by wisdom : by these he rendered himself much more formidable to his neighbours than his predecessors had by their victories ; they became terrible to their own subjects, he was chiefly dreaded by rival kings,

He had all along two points principally in view ; one to repress the nobility and clergy, and the other to exalt and humanise the populace. From the ambition and turbulence of the former, and from the wretchedness and credulity of the latter, all the troubles in the former reigns had taken their original. In the feudal times, every nobleman was possessed of a certain number of subjects, over whom he had an absolute power ; and, upon

every slight disgust, he was able to influence them to join him in his revolt or disobedience. Henry, therefore, wisely considered, that the giving these petty tyrants a power of selling their estates, which before this time were unalienable, would greatly weaken their interest. With this view he procured an act, by which the nobility were granted a power of disposing of their estates; a law infinitely pleasing to the commons, and not disagreeable even to the nobles, since they had thus an immediate resource for supplying their taste for prodigality, and answering the demands of their creditors. The blow reached them in their posterity alone; but they were too ignorant to be affected by such distant distresses.

His next scheme was to prevent their giving liveries to many hundreds of their dependents, who were thus retained to serve their lord, and kept like the soldiers of a standing army, to be ready at the command of their leader. By an act passed in this reign, none but menial servants were permitted to wear a livery under severe penalties; and this law was enforced with the most punctual observance. The king, one day paying a visit to the earl of Oxford, was entertained by him with all possible splendour and hospitality. When he was ready to depart, he saw ranged upon both sides a great number of men dressed up in very rich liveries, apparently to do him honour. The king, surprised at such a number of servants, as he pretended to suppose them, asked lord Oxford whether he entertained such a large number of domestics; to which the earl, not perceiving the drift of the question, replied that they were only men whom he kept in pay to do him honour upon such occasions. At this the king started back, and said, "By my faith, my lord, I thank you for your good cheer; but I must not suffer the laws to be broken in my sight; my attorney-general must talk with you." Oxford is said to have paid no less than fifteen thousand marks as a compensation for his offence.

We have already seen, in numerous instances, what a perverted use was made of monasteries, and other places appropriated to religious worship, by the number of criminals who found sanctuary and protection there. This privilege the clergy assumed as their undoubted right; and those places of pretended sanctity were now become the abode of murderers, robbers, and conspirators. Witches and magicians were the only persons that

were forbidden to avail themselves of the security these sanctuaries afforded; and they whose crimes were only fictitious were the only people who had not the benefit of such a retreat. Henry used all his interest with the pope to get these sanctuaries abolished; but was not able to succeed. All that he could procure was, that if thieves, murderers, or robbers, registered as sanctuary men, should sally out and commit fresh offences, and retreat again, in such cases they might be taken out of the sanctuary, and delivered up to justice.

Henry was not remiss in abridging the pope's power, while at the same time he professed the utmost submission to his commands, and the greatest respect for the clergy. The pope at one time was so far imposed upon by his seeming attachment to the church, that he even invited him to renew the crusades for recovering the Holy Land. Henry's answer deserves to be remembered. He assured his holiness that no prince in Christendom would be more forward to undertake so glorious and necessary an expedition; but, as his dominions lay very distant from Constantinople, it would be better to apply to the kings of France and Spain for their assistance; and in the mean time he would go to their aid himself, as soon as all the differences between the Christian princes should be brought to an end. This was at once a polite refusal, and an oblique reproach.

But while he thus employed his power in lowering the influence of the nobles and clergy, he was using every art to extend the privileges of the people. In former reigns they were sure to suffer, on whatever side they fought, when they were unsuccessful. This rendered each party desperate in a declared civil war, as no hopes of pardon remained, and consequently terrible slaughters were seen to ensue. He therefore procured an act, by which it was established, that no person should be impeached or attainted for assisting the king for the time being, or, in other words, the sovereign who should be then actually in possession of the throne. This excellent statute served to repress the desire of civil war, as several would naturally take arms in defence of that side on which they were certain of losing nothing by a defeat; and numbers would serve to intimidate rebellion. Thus the common people, no longer maintained in vicious idleness by their superiors, were obliged to become industrious for their support.



The nobility, instead of vying with each other in the number and boldness of their retainers, acquired by degrees a more civilized species of emulation; and endeavoured to excel in the splendour and elegance of their equipages, houses, and tables. In fact, the king's greatest efforts were directed to promote trade and commerce, because this naturally introduces a spirit of liberty among the people, and disengaged them from all dependence, except upon the laws and the king. Before this great æra, all our towns owed their original to some strong castle in the neighbourhood, where some powerful lord generally resided. These were at once fortresses for protection, and prisons for all sorts of criminals. In this castle there was usually a garrison armed and provided, depending entirely on the nobleman's support and assistance. To these seats of protection, artificers, victuallers, and shop-keepers, naturally resorted, and settled on some adjacent spot to furnish the lord and his attendants with all the necessaries they might require. The farmers also, and the husbandmen in the neighbourhood, built their houses there, to be protected against the numerous gangs of robbers, called Robertsmen, that hid themselves in the woods by day, and infested the open country by night. Henry endeavoured to bring the towns from such a neighbourhood, by inviting the inhabitants to a more commercial situation. He attempted to teach them frugality, and a just payment of debts, by his own example; and never once omitted the rights of the merchant, in all his treaties with foreign princes.

But, it must not be concealed, that from a long contemplation upon the relative advantages of money, he at last grew into a habit of considering it as valuable for itself alone. As he grew old, his avarice seemed to preponderate over his ambition; and the methods he took to increase his treasures cannot be justified by his most ardent admirers. He had found two ministers, Empson and Dudley, perfectly qualified to second his avaricious intentions. They were both lawyers; the first of mean birth, brutal manners, and an unrelenting temper; the second better born and better bred, but equally severe and inflexible. It was their usual practice to commit, by indictment, such persons to prison as they intended to oppress; who could rarely recover their liberty, but by paying heavy fines, which were called mitigations and compositions. By degrees, as the ministers became more

hardened in oppression, the very forms of law were omitted; they determined in a summary way upon the properties of the subject, and confiscated their effects to the royal treasury. But the chief instruments of oppression employed by Empson and his associate were the penal statutes, which, without consideration of rank, quality, or services, were rigidly put in execution against all men.

In this manner was the latter part of this active monarch's reign employed in schemes to strengthen the power of the crown, by amassing money, and extending the power of the people. He [1501.] had the satisfaction, about that time, of completing a marriage between Arthur, the prince of Wales, and the infanta Catharine of Spain, which had been projected and negotiated during the course of seven years. But this marriage proved, in the event, unprosperous. The young prince sickened and [1502.] died in a few months after, very much regretted by the whole nation; and the princess was obliged shortly after to marry his second son Henry, who was created prince of Wales in the room of his brother. The prince himself made all the opposition which a youth under twelve years of age was capable of; but as the king persisted in his resolution, the marriage was, by the pope's dispensation, shortly after solemnised.

The magnificence of these nuptials was soon after eclipsed by the accidental arrival of the archduke Philip, with Joan his consort. These personages had embarked for Spain during the winter, in order to take the advantage of an invitation from the Castilians, who wished to confer the administration upon Philip. Meeting, however, with a violent tempest in their voyage, they were obliged to take shelter in Weymouth harbour, where they were honourably received by sir John Trenchard, a gentleman of [1506.] authority in the county of Dorset. The king, being soon informed of their arrival, sent the earl of Arundel to compliment them on their escape, and to inform them that he intended shortly paying them a visit in person. Philip knew that this was but a polite method of detaining him; and, for the sake of dispatch, he resolved to anticipate his visit, and to have an interview with him at Windsor. Henry received him with all the magnificence possible, and with all seeming cordiality; but resolved to reimburse himself for the expense of his pageants, by

advantages that would be more substantially conducive to his own interests and those of the nation. There had been some years before a plot carried on against him by the earl of Suffolk; for which sir James Tyrrel and sir James Windham had been condemned and executed, while Suffolk, the original contriver, had made his escape into the Low Countries, where he found protection from Philip. But he was now given up, at Henry's request; and, being brought over to England, he was imprisoned in the Tower. A treaty of commerce was also agreed upon between the two sovereigns; which was at that time of the greatest benefit to England, and continues to remain the ground-work of commercial treaties to this day.

Henry,—having thus seen England in a great measure civilised by his endeavours, his people paying their taxes without constraint, the nobles confessing a just subordination, the laws alone inflicting punishment, the towns beginning to live independent of the powerful, commerce every day increasing, the spirit of faction extinguished, and foreigners either fearing England or seeking its alliance,—began to perceive the approaches of his end. He then resolved to reconcile himself to heaven; and, by distributing alms, founding religious houses, and granting a general pardon to all his subjects, to make an atonement for the errors of his reign. It was in this disposition that he died with the gout in the stomach, having lived fifty-two years, and reigned [1509.] twenty-three. Since the times of Alfred, England had not seen such another king. He rendered his subjects powerful and happy, and wrought a greater change in the manners of the people than it was possible to suppose could be effected in so short a time. If he had any fault that deserves to be marked with reproach, it was that, having begun his reign with economy, as he grew old his desires seemed to change their object from the use of money to the pleasure of hoarding it. But he ought in this to be pardoned, as he only saved for the public; the royal coffers being then the only treasury of the state; and in proportion to the king's finances, the public might be said to be either rich or indigent.

About this time all Europe, as well as England, seemed to rouse from the long lethargy in which it had continued for above twelve hundred years. France, Spain, Portugal, and Sweden,

enjoyed excellent monarchs, who encouraged and protected the rising arts, and spread the means of happiness. The Portuguese sailed round the Cape of Good Hope, under the command of Vasquez de Gama, and the Spaniards, under the conduct of Columbus, had made the discovery of the new world of America. It was by accident only that Henry had not a considerable share in these great naval discoveries; for Columbus, after meeting with many repulses from the courts of Portugal and Spain, sent his brother Bartholomew into England, in order to explain his projects to the king, and to crave his protection for the execution of them. Henry invited Columbus to England: but his brother, in returning, being taken by pirates, was detained in his voyage; and Columbus, in the mean time, succeeding with Isabella, happily effected his enterprise. Henry was not discouraged by this disappointment; he fitted out Sebastian Cabot, a Venetian, dwelling [1497.] at Bristol, and sent him westward in search of new countries. This adventurer discovered the main land of America to the north; then sailed southward, along the coast, and discovered Newfoundland and other countries; but returned without making any settlement. The king, soon after, expended fourteen thousand pounds in building one ship, called the *Great Harry*. This was, properly speaking, the first ship in the English navy. Before this period, when the king wanted a fleet, he had no other expedient but to hire ships from the merchants.

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CHAP. XXIII.

HENRY VIII.

April 21,  
1509. **N**o prince ever came to the throne with a conjuncture of circumstances more in his favour than Henry VIII., who now, in the eighteenth year of his age, undertook the government of the kingdom. His prudent father left him a peaceful throne, a well-stored treasury, and an undisputed succession. By his father's side he claimed from the house of Lancaster, and by his mother's from that of York. He was in friendship with all the powers of Europe, and his subjects were every day grow-

ing more powerful and more wealthy; commerce and arts had for some time been introduced into the kingdom, and the English seemed willing to give them a favourable reception. The young king himself was beautiful in person, expert in polite exercises, open and liberal in his air, and loved by all his subjects. The old king, who was himself a scholar, had him instructed in all the learning of the times: so that he was an adept in school divinity before the age of eighteen.

But, favourable as these circumstances were, Henry soon showed that they went but a short way in forming a good character; they were merely the gifts of nature, or accomplishments implanted by the assiduity of his father; but he wanted the more solid advantages, which were to be of his own formation,—a good heart, and a sound understanding. The learning he had, if it may deserve that appellation, served only to inflame his pride, but not control his vitious affections; the love of his subjects broke out in their flattery; and this was another meteor to lead him astray. His vast wealth, instead of relieving the public, or increasing his power, only contributed to supply his debaucheries, or gratify the rapacity of the ministers of his pleasures. But it would have been happy for his people, if his faults had rested here: he was a tyrant; humanity takes the alarm at his cruelties; and, however fortunate some of his measures might prove in the event, every good man must revolt at his motives, and the means he took for their accomplishment.

The first action which showed that the present reign was to be very different from the former, was the punishment of Empson and Dudley, who were obnoxious to the populace for having been the ready instruments of the late king's rapacity. They were immediately cited before the council, in order to answer for their conduct; but Empson in his defence alleged, that, far from deserving censure, his actions rather merited reward and approbation. Though a strict execution of the law was the crime of which he and Dudley were accused; although these laws had been established by the voluntary consent of the people; notwithstanding all their expostulations, Empson and Dudley were sent to the Tower, and soon after brought to their trial. As the strict discharge of their duty, in executing the laws, [1510.] could not be alleged against them as a crime, to grati-

fy the people with their punishment they were accused of having entered into a conspiracy against the present king, and of intentions to seize by force the administration of government. Nothing could be more improbable and unsupported than such a charge ; nevertheless the jury were so far infected with popular prejudice, that they gave a verdict against them ; and they were both executed some time after, by a warrant from the king.

This measure, which betrayed an unjust compliance with popular clamour, was followed by another still more detrimental to the nation, although still more pleasing to the people. Julius the Second was at that time pope, and had filled all Europe with his intrigues and ambition ; but his chief resentment was levelled against Lewis the Twelfth, king of France, who was in possession of some valuable provinces of Italy, from which he hoped by his intrigues to remove him. For this purpose he entered into a treaty with Ferdinand, king of Spain, and Henry of England ; to each of whom he offered such advantages as were most likely to inflame their ambition, in case they fell upon Lewis on their respective quarters ; while he undertook himself to find him employment in Italy. Henry, who had no other motives but the glory of the expedition, and the hopes of receiving the title of the Most Christian King, which the pope assured him would soon be wrested from

[1512.] Lewis to be conferred upon him, readily undertook to defend his cause ; and his parliament, being summoned, as readily granted supplies for a purpose so much favoured by the people. The spirit of chivalry and foreign conquest was not yet quite extinguished in England ; the kingdom of France was still an object they desired to possess ; and Henry, in compliance with their wishes, gave out that he intended striking for the crown. It was in vain that one of his old prudent counsellors objected, that conquests on the continent would only drain the kingdom without enriching it ; and that England, from its situation, was not fitted to enjoy extensive empire : the young king, deaf to all remonstrances, and burning with military ardour, resolved to undertake the war. The marquis of Dorset was first sent over, with a large body of forces, to Fontarabia, to assist the operations of Ferdinand : but that faithless and crafty monarch had no intentions of effectually seconding their attempts ; wherefore they were obliged to return home without effect.

A considerable fleet was equipped, some time after, [1513.] to annoy the enemy by sea, and the command intrusted to sir Edward Howard ; who, after scouring the Channel for some time, presented himself before Brest, where the French navy lay, and challenged them to combat. As the French were unequal to the enemy, they determined to wait for a reinforcement, which they expected, under the command of Prejent de Bidoux, from the Mediterranean. But in this the gallant Howard was resolved to disappoint them ; and upon the appearance of Prejent with six gallies, who had time to take refuge behind some batteries which were planted on the rocks that lay on each side of him, he boldly rowed up with two gallies, followed by barges filled with officers of distinction. Upon coming up to Prejent's ship, he immediately fastened upon it, and leaped on board, followed by one Carroz, a Spanish cavalier, and seventeen Englishmen. The cable, mean while, which fastened both ships together, was cut by the enemy, and the admiral was thus left in the hands of the French ; but as he still continued to fight with great gallantry, he was pushed overboard by their pikes, and perished in the sea. Upon this misfortune the fleet retired from before Brest ; and the French navy for a while kept possession of the sea.

This slight repulse only served to inflame the king's ardour to take revenge upon the enemy ; and he soon after sent a body of eight thousand men to Calais, under the command of the earl of Shrewsbury ; and another body of six thousand followed shortly after, under the conduct of lord Herbert. He prepared to follow himself with the main body and rear ; and arrived at Calais, attended by numbers of the English nobility. But he soon had an attendant, who did him still more honour. This was no less a personage than Maximilian, emperor of Germany, who had stipulated to assist him with eight thousand men ; but, being unable to perform his engagements, joined the English army with some German and Flemish soldiers, who were useful in giving an example of discipline to Henry's new-levied soldiers. He even enlisted himself in the English service, wore the cross of St. George, and received pay, a hundred crowns per day, as one of Henry's subjects and captains.

Henry being now at the head of a formidable army, fifty thousand strong, it was supposed that France must fall a victim to his

ambition. But that kingdom was not threatened by him alone; the Swiss, on another quarter, with twenty-five thousand men, were preparing to invade it; while Ferdinand of Arragon, whom no treaties could bind, was only waiting for a convenient opportunity of attack on his side to advantage. Never was the French monarchy in so distressed a situation; but the errors of its assailants procured its safety. The Swiss entered into a treaty with Trimouille, the French general, who gave them their own terms, satisfied that his master would rescind them all, as not having given him any powers to treat; Ferdinand continued to remain a quiet spectator, vainly waiting for some effectual blow to be struck by his allies; and Henry spent his time in the siege of towns, which could neither secure his conquests, nor advance his reputation.

The first siege was that of Terouenne, in Picardy, which kept him employed for more than a month, although the garrison scarcely amounted to two thousand men. The besieged, after some time, being in want of provisions, a very bold and desperate attempt was made to supply them, which was attended with success. A French captain, whose name was Fontrailles, led up a body of eight hundred men, each of whom carried a bag of gunpowder and two quarters of bacon behind him. With this small force he made a fierce and unexpected irruption into the English camp; and, surmounting all resistance, advanced to the ditch of the town, where each horseman threw down his burthen. Then immediately returning upon the gallop, they were again so fortunate as to break through the English without any great loss in the undertaking. But the cavalry sent to cover the retreat were not so successful. Though they were commanded by the boldest and bravest captains of the French army, yet on sight of the English they were seized with such an unaccountable panic, that they immediately fled, and had many of their best officers taken prisoners. This action was called by the French the battle of Guinegate, from the place where it was fought; but by the English the battle of the Spurs, as the French, on that day, made more use of their spurs than their swords, to procure safety.

After this victory, which might have been followed with very important consequences, had the victors marched forward to Paris, Henry sat down to make sure of the little town which had made



such an obstinate resistance; and found himself, when it was obliged to surrender, master of a place which neither recompensed the blood nor the delay that were expended in the siege.

From one error Henry went on to another. He was persuaded to lay siege to Tournay, a great and rich city of Flanders, which at that time was in possession of the French. This siege, though it took up little time, yet served to retard the great object, which was the conquest of France; and Henry hearing that the Swiss had returned home, and being elated with his trifling successes, resolved to transport his army back to England, where flattery was put to the torture to make him happy in the glory of his ridiculous expedition. A peace was concluded soon after between the two kingdoms; and Henry continued to dissipate, in more peaceful follies, those immense sums which had been amassed by his predecessor for very different purposes.

The success which, during his foreign expedition, attended his arms in the north of England, was much more important and decisive. A war having been declared between the English and Scots, who ever took the opportunity to fall on when their neighbours were embroiled with France, the king of that country summoned out the whole force of his kingdom; and, having passed the Tweed with a body of fifty thousand men, ravaged those parts of Northumberland which lay along the banks of that river. But as his forces were numerous, and the country barren, he soon began to want provisions; so that many of his men deserted, and returned to their native country. In the mean time the earl of Surry, at the head of twenty-six thousand men, approached the Scots, who were encamped on a rising ground near the hills of Cheviot. The river Till ran between the armies, and prevented an engagement; wherefore the earl of Surry sent a herald to the Scottish camp, challenging the enemy to descend into Flodden plain, and there to try their valour on equal ground. This offer not being accepted, he made a feint, as if he intended marching towards Berwick; which putting the Scots in motion to annoy his rear, he took advantage of a great smoke caused by the firing their huts, and passed the little river which had hitherto prevented the engagement. Both armies now perceiving that a combat was inevitable, they prepared for the onset with great composure and regularity. The English divided their army into two lines;

lord Thomas Howard led the main body of the first line; sir Edmund Howard the right wing, and sir Marmaduke Constable the left; the earl of Surry himself commanded the main body of the second line, assisted by lord Dacres and sir Edward Stanley to the right and the left. The Scots, on the other hand, presented three divisions to the enemy; the middle commanded by the king himself, the right by the earl of Huntley, and the left by the earls of Lenox and Argyle; a fourth division, under the earl of Bothwell, made a body of reserve. Lord Huntley began the onset, charging the division of sir Marmaduke Constable with such fury, that it was immediately put to confusion: but it was so seasonably supported, that the men rallied, and the battle became general. Both sides fought a long time with incredible impetuosity, until the Highlanders, being galled by the English artillery, broke in sword in hand upon the main body commanded by the earl of Surry; and at the head of these James fought with the most forward of the nobility. They attacked with such velocity, that the hinder line could not advance in time to sustain them, so that a body of English intercepted their retreat. James, being thus almost surrounded by the enemy, refused to quit the field while it was yet in his power; but, alighting from his horse, formed his little body into an orb, and in this posture fought with such desperate courage as restored the battle. The English therefore were again obliged to have recourse to their artillery and arrows, which made a terrible havock; but night separating the combatants, it was not till the day following that lord Howard perceived that he had gained a great and glorious victory. The English lost no persons of note; but the flower of the Scottish nobility fell. Ten thousand of the common men were cut off; and a body, supposed to be that of the king, was sent to London, where it remained unburied, as a sentence of excommunication still remained against him for having leagued with France against the Holy See. But upon Henry's application, who pretended that James in the instant before his death had discovered some signs of repentance, absolution was given him, and the body was interred. However, the populace of Scotland still continued to think their king alive; and it was given out among them that he had secretly gone on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

These successes only served to intoxicate Henry; and while his pleasure, on the one hand, engrossed his time, the preparations for repeated expeditions exhausted his treasures. As it was natural to suppose that the old ministers, who had been appointed by his father to direct him, would not readily concur in these idle projects, Henry had, for some time, discontinued asking their advice, and chiefly confided in the counsels of Thomas, afterwards cardinal Wolsey, who seemed to second him in his favourite pursuits. Wolsey was a minister who complied with all his master's inclinations, and flattered him in every scheme to which his sanguine and impetuous temper was inclined. He was the son of a private gentleman (and not of a butcher, as is commonly reported) of Ipswich. He was sent to Oxford so early, that he was a bachelor at fourteen, and was therefore called the boy bachelor. He arose by degrees, upon quitting college, from one preferment to another, till he was made rector of Lymington by the marquis of Dorset, whose children he had instructed. He had not long resided at this living, when one of the justices of the peace put him in the stocks for being drunk, and raising disturbances at a neighbouring fair. This disgrace, however, did not retard his promotion; for he was recommended as chaplain to Henry the Seventh; and being employed by that monarch in a secret negotiation respecting his intended marriage with Margaret of Savoy, he acquitted himself to that king's satisfaction, and obtained the praise both of diligence and dexterity. That prince, having given him a commission to Maximilian, who at that time resided at Brussels, was surprised in less than three days after to see Wolsey present himself before him; and, supposing that he had been delinquent, began to reprove his delay. Wolsey, however, surprised him with assurance that he had just returned from Brussels, and had successfully fulfilled all his majesty's commands. His dispatch on that occasion procured him the deanry of Lincoln; and in this situation it was that he was introduced by Fox, bishop of Winchester, to the young king's notice, in hopes that he would have talents to supplant the earl of Surry, who was favourite at that time: and, in this respect, the conjectures of Fox were not erroneous. Presently after being introduced at court, he was made a privy counsellor; and, as such, had frequent opportunities of ingratiating himself with

the young king, as he appeared at once complying, submissive, and enterprising. Wolsey used every art to suit himself to the royal temper; he sang, laughed, and danced with every libertine of the court; neither his own years, which were near forty, nor his character of a clergyman, were any restraint upon him, or tended to check, by ill-timed severities, the gaiety of his companions. To such a weak and vitious monarch as Henry, qualities of this nature were highly pleasing. Wolsey was soon acknowledged as his favourite, and was intrusted with the chief administration of affairs. The people began to see with indignation the new favourite's mean condescensions to the king, and his arrogance to themselves. They had long regarded the vitious haughtiness and the unbecoming splendour of the clergy, with envy and detestation; and Wolsey's greatness served to bring a new odium upon that body, already too much the object of the people's dislike. His character, being now placed in a more conspicuous point of light, daily began to manifest itself the more. Insatiable in his acquisitions, but still more magnificent in his expense; of extensive capacity, but still more unbounded in enterprise; ambitious of power, but still more desirous of glory; insinuating, engaging, persuasive, and at other times lofty, elevated, and commanding; haughty to his equals, yet affable to his dependants; oppressive to the people, but liberal to his friends; more generous than grateful; he was formed to take the ascendant in every intercourse, and vain enough not to cover his real superiority.

He had been advanced to the bishopric of Lincoln; but this he resigned on being promoted to the archbishopric of York. Upon the capture of Tournay, he had been preferred to the see of that place; but besides, he gained possession, at very low leases, of the revenues of Bath, Worcester, and Hereford, bishoprics filled by Italians, who were allowed to reside abroad, and who were glad to compound for this indulgence by parting with a considerable share of their profits. Besides many other church preferments, he was allowed to unite with the see of York, first that of Durham, next that of Winchester; and his appetite seemed to [1515.] increase by the means that were taken to satisfy it. The pope, observing his great influence over the king, was desirous of engaging him in his interests, and created him a

cardinal. His train consisted of eight hundred servants, of whom many were knights and gentlemen. Some even of the nobility put their children into his family as a place of education; and whoever were distinguished by any art or science, paid court to the cardinal, and were often liberally rewarded. He was the first clergyman in England who wore silk and gold, not only on his habit, but also on his saddles, and the trappings of his horses.

Besides these various distinctions, the pope soon after conferred upon him that of legate, designing thus to make him instrumental in draining the kingdom of money, upon pretence of employing it in a war against the Turks, but in reality with a view to fill his own coffers. In this he so well served the court of Rome, that, some time after, the post of legate was conferred upon him for life; and he now united in his person the promotions of legate, cardinal, archbishop, and prime minister.

Soon after Warham, chancellor, and archbishop of Canterbury, a man of a very moderate temper, chose rather to retire from public employment than maintain an unequal contest with the haughty cardinal. Wolsey instantly seized the chancellorship, and exercised the duties of that employment with great abilities and impartiality. The duke of Norfolk, finding the king's treasures exhausted, and his taste for expense still continuing, was glad to resign his office of treasurer, and retire from court. Fox, bishop of Winchester, who had been instrumental in Wolsey's rise, withdrew himself in disgust; the duke of Suffolk also went home with a resolution to remain private; whilst Wolsey availed himself of their discontents, and filled up their places by his creatures, or his personal assiduity. These were vast stretches of power; and yet the churchman was still insatiable. He procured a bull from the pope, empowering him to make knights and counts, to legitimate bastards, to give degrees in arts, law, physic, and divinity, and to grant all sorts of dispensations. So much pride and power could not avoid giving high offence to the nobility: yet none dared vent their indignation; so greatly were they in terror of his vindictive temper.

In order to divert their envy from his inordinate exaltation, he soon entered into a correspondence with Francis the First, of France, who had taken many methods to work upon his vanity, and at last succeeded. In consequence of that monarch's wishes, Henry was persuaded by the cardinal to restore Tournay to the

[1520.] French; and he also agreed to an interview with Francis. This expensive congress was held between Guisnes and Ardres, near Calais, within the English pale, in compliment to Henry for crossing the sea. The two monarchs, after saluting each other in the most cordial manner, retired into a tent erected for the purpose, where Henry proceeded to read the articles of their intended alliance. As he began to read the first words of it, "I, Henry, king," he stopped a moment, and then subjoined only "of England," without adding France, the usual style of English monarchs. Francis remarked this delicacy, and expressed his approbation by a smile. Nothing could exceed the magnificence of the nobility of both courts on this occasion. Many of them involved themselves in large debts; and the penury of a life was scarcely sufficient to reimburse the extravagance of a few days. Beside, there at first appeared something low and illiberal in the mutual distrusts that were conspicuous on this occasion: the two kings never met without having the number of their guards counted on both sides; every step was carefully adjusted; they passed each other in the middle point between both places, when they went to visit their queens; and at the same instant that Henry entered Ardres, Francis put himself into the hands of the English at Guisnes. But Francis, who is considered as the first restorer of true politeness in Europe, put an end to this illiberal method of conversing. Taking one day with him two gentlemen and a page, he rode directly into Guisnes, crying out to the English guards, that they were their prisoners, and desiring to be carried to their master. Henry was not a little astonished at the appearance of Francis; and taking him in his arms, "My brother," said he, "you have here given me the most agreeable surprise; you have shown me the full confidence I may place in you; I surrender myself your prisoner from this moment." He then took from his neck a collar of pearls of great value, and, putting it on Francis, begged him to wear it for the sake of his prisoner. Francis agreed; and, giving him a bracelet of double the value of the former, insisted on his wearing it in turn. Henry went the next day to Ardres, without guards or attendants; and confidence being now sufficiently established between these monarchs, they employed the rest of the time in feasts and tournaments.

Some months before a defiance had been sent by the two kings to each other's court, and through all the chief cities of Europe, importing that Henry and Francis, with fourteen aids, would be ready in the plains of Picardy to answer all comers, that were gentlemen, at tilt and tourney. Accordingly the monarchs now, gorgeously appalled, entered the lists on horseback; Francis surrounded with Henry's guards, and Henry with those of Francis. They were both at that time the most comely personages of their age, and prided themselves on their expertness in the military exercises. The ladies were the judges in these feats of chivalry; and they put an end to the encounter whenever they thought proper. It is supposed that the crafty French monarch was willing to gratify Henry's vanity by allowing him to enjoy a petty pre-eminence in these pastimes. He ran a tilt against Monsieur Grandeval, whom he disabled at the first encounter. He engaged Monsieur de Montmorency, whom, however, he could not throw from the saddle. He fought at faulchion with a French nobleman, who presented him with his courser in token of submission.

But these empty splendours were not sufficient to appease the jealousy of the nobles at home, or quiet [1521.] the murmurs of the people. Among these, the duke of Buckingham, the son of him who lost his life in the reign of Richard the Third, was the foremost to complain. He had often been heard to treat the cardinal's pride and profusion with just contempt; and carrying his resentment perhaps to an improper length, some low informers took care that Wolsey should be apprised of all. The substance of his impeachment was, that he had consulted a fortune-teller concerning his succession to the crown, and had affected to make himself popular. This was but a weak pretext to take away the life of a nobleman, whose father had died in defence of the late king: but he was brought to a trial; and the duke of Norfolk, whose son had married his daughter, was created high-steward to preside at this solemn procedure. He was condemned to die as a traitor, by a jury consisting of a duke, a marquis, seven earls, and twelve barons. When the sentence was pronouncing against him, and the high-steward came to mention the word traitor, the unhappy prisoner could not contain his indignation. "My lords," cried he to the judges, "I am no traitor;

and for what you have now done against me, take my sincere forgiveness: as for my life, I think it not worth petitioning for; may God forgive you, and pity me!" He was soon after executed on Tower Hill.

By this time the immense treasures of the late king were quite exhausted on empty pageants, guilty pleasures, or vain treaties and expeditions. But the king relied on Wolsey alone for replenishing his coffers; and no person could be fitter for the purpose. His first care was to get a large sum of money from the people, under the title of a benevolence, which added to its being extorted the mortification of being considered as a free gift. Henry little minded the manner of its being raised, provided he had the enjoyment of it. However, his minister met with some [1523.] opposition in his attempts to levy these extorted contributions. Having, in the first place, exacted a considerable subsidy from the clergy, he next addressed himself to the house of commons; but they only granted him half the supplies he demanded. Wolsey was at first highly offended at their parsimony, and desired to be heard in the house; but as this would have destroyed the very form and constitution of that august body, they replied, that none could be permitted to sit and argue there but such as had been elected members. This was the first attempt made in this reign to render the king master of the debates in parliament. Wolsey first paved the way; and, unfortunately for the kingdom, Henry too well improved upon his plans soon after.

A treaty with France, which threatened to make a breach with the emperor, induced Henry to wish for new supplies; or at least he made this the pretext of his demands. But as the parliament had testified their reluctance to indulge his wishes, he followed the advice of Wolsey, and resolved to make use of his prerogative alone for that purpose. He issued out commissions to all the counties of England for levying four shillings in the pound upon the clergy, and exacting three shillings and four pence from the laity; nor did he attempt to cover the violence of the measure by giving it the name either of benevolence or loan. This unwarrantable stretch of royal power was quickly opposed by the people; they were unwilling to submit to impositions unknown till now; and a general insurrection threatened to ensue. Henry



had the prudence to stop short in that dangerous path into which he had entered ; and declared, by circular letters to all the counties, that what was demanded was only by way of benevolence. But the spirit of opposition, once roused, was not so easily quieted ; the citizens of London hesitated on the demand ; and in some parts of the country insurrections were actually begun, which were suppressed by the duke of Suffolk. These imposts, which were first advised by Wolsey, not happily succeeding, he began to lose a little of his favour with the king ; and this displeasure was still more increased by the complaints of the clergy, who accused him of extortion. Henry reprov'd Wolsey in severe terms ; which rendered him more cautious and artful for the future. As an instance of his cunning, having built a noble palace, called York-place, at Westminster, for his own use, fearing now the general censure against him, he made a present of it to the king, assuring him that from the first he intended it as an offer to his majesty. Thus Wolsey's impunity only served to pave the way to greater extortions. The pride of this prelate was great ; but his riches were still greater. In order to have a pretext for amassing such sums, he undertook to found two colleges, one at Ipswich, the other at Oxford, for which he received every day fresh grants from the pope and the king. To execute this favourite scheme, he obtained a liberty of suppressing several monasteries, and converting their revenues to the benefit of his new foundations. Whatever might have been the pope's inducement to grant him these privileges, nothing could be more fatal to the pontiff's interests ; for Henry was thus himself taught shortly afterwards to imitate what he had seen a subject perform with impunity.

Hitherto the whole administration was carried on by Wolsey ; for the king was contented to lose, in the embraces of his mistresses, all the complaints of his subjects ; and the cardinal undertook to keep him ignorant, in order to continue his own uncontrolled authority. But now a period was approaching that was to put an end to this minister's exorbitant power. One of the most extraordinary and important revolutions that ever employed the attention of man was now ripe for execution. This was no less a change than the Reformation ; to have an idea of the rise of which, it will be proper to take a cursory view of the

state of the church at that time, and to observe by what seemingly contradictory means Providence produces the most happy events.

The church of Rome had now, for more than a thousand years, been corrupting the antient simplicity of the gospel, and converting into a temporality the kingdom of another world. The popes had been frequently seen at the head of their own armies, fighting for their dominions with the arm of flesh, and forgetting, in cruelty and detestable maxims of state, all the pretended sanctity of their characters. The cardinals, prelates, and dignitaries of the church, lived in envied splendour, and were served like voluptuous princes; and some of them were found to possess eight or nine bishoprics at once. Wherever the church governed, it exerted its power with cruelty; so that to its luxuries the crime of tyranny was usually added. As for the inferior clergy, both popish and protestant writers exclaim against their abandoned and dissolute morals. They publicly kept mistresses, and bequeathed to their illegitimate children whatever they were able to save from their pleasures, or extort from the poor. There is still to be seen a will made by a bishop of Cambray, in which he bequeathed a certain sum for the use of the bastards he already had, and those which, by the blessing of God, he might happen to have. In many parts of England and Germany, the people obliged their priests to have concubines, that the laity might preserve their wives with greater security; while the poor laborious peasant and artisan saw all the fruits of their toil go, not to clothe and maintain their own little families, but to pamper men who insulted them with lectures to which their example appeared a flat contradiction. But the vices of the clergy were not greater than their ignorance; few of them knew the meaning of their Latin mass. Their sagacity was chiefly employed in finding out witches, and exorcising the possessed; but what most increased the hatred of the people against them was the selling pardons and absolutions for sin, at certain stated prices. A deacon, or sub-deacon, who committed murder, was absolved from his crime, and allowed to possess three benefices, upon paying twenty crowns. A bishop or abbot might commit murder for about ten pounds of our money. Every crime had its stated value; and absolutions were given for sins not only already committed, but such as should be committed hereafter. The wisest of the people looked

with silent detestation on these impositions ; and the ignorant themselves, whom fortune seemed to have formed for slavery, began to open their eyes to such glaring absurdities.

These vices and impositions were now almost come to a head ; and the increase of arts and learning among the laity, propagated by means of printing, which had been lately invented, began to make them resist that power which was originally founded on deceit. Leo the Tenth was at that time pope, and eagerly employed in building the church of St. Peter at Rome. In order to procure money for carrying on that expensive undertaking, he gave a commission for selling indulgences, a practice that had been often tried before. These were to free the purchaser from the pains of purgatory ; and they would serve even for one's friends, if purchased with that intention. There were every where shops opened where they were to be sold ; but in general they were to be had at taverns, brothels, and gaming-houses. The Augustine friars had usually been employed in Saxony to preach the indulgences, and from this trust had derived both profit and consideration ; but the pope's minister, supposing that they had found out illicit methods of secreting the money, transferred the lucrative employment from them to the Dominicans. Martin Luther, professor in the university of Wittenberg on the Elbe, was an Augustine monk, and one of those who resented this transfer of the sale of indulgences from one order to another. He began to show his indignation by preaching against their efficacy ; and being naturally of a fiery temper, and provoked by opposition, he inveighed against the authority of the pope himself. Being driven hard by his adversaries, still as he enlarged his reading in order to support his tenets, he discovered some new abuse or error in the church of Rome. The people, who had long groaned under the papal tyranny, heard his discourses with pleasure, and defended him against the authority and machinations of his enemies. Frederic, elector of Saxony, surnamed the Wise, openly protected him ; the republic of Zurich even reformed their church according to the new model ; and Luther, a man naturally inflexible and vehement, was become incapable, either from promises of advancement or terrors of severity, of relinquishing a sect of which he was himself the founder. It was in vain, therefore, that the pope issued out his bulls against Luther ; it was in vain that the Dominican

friars procured his books to be burned ; he boldly abused the Dominicans, and burned the pope's bull in the streets of Wittenberg. In the mean time, the dispute was carried on by writing on each side. Luther, though opposed by the pope, the conclave, and all the clergy, supported his cause singly, and with success. As the controversy was new, his ignorance of many parts of the subject was not greater than theirs ; and, ill as he wrote, they answered still worse. Opinions are inculcated upon the minds of mankind, rather by confidence and perseverance, than by strength of reasoning or beauty of diction ; and no man had more confidence or more perseverance than he. In this dispute it was the fate of Henry to be a champion on both sides. His father, who had given him the education of a scholar, permitted him to be instructed in school divinity, which then was the principal object of learned inquiry. Henry, therefore, willing to convince the world of his abilities in that science, obtained the pope's permission to read the works of Luther, which had been forbidden under pain of excommunication. In consequence of this, the king defended the seven sacraments, out of St. Thomas Aquinas ; and showed some dexterity in this science, though it is thought that Wolsey had the chief hand in directing him. A book being thus finished in haste, it was sent to Rome for the pope's approbation, which it is natural to suppose would not be withheld. The pontiff, ravished with its eloquence and depth, compared it to the labours of St. Jerome or St. Augustine ; and rewarded the author with the title of Defender of the Faith, little imagining that Henry was soon to be one of the most terrible enemies that ever the church of Rome had to contend with.

Besides these causes, which contributed to render the Romish church odious and contemptible, there were still others proceeding from political measures. Clement the Seventh had succeeded Leo ; and the hereditary animosity between the emperor and the pope breaking out into a war, Clement was imprisoned in the castle of St. Angelo, and with thirteen cardinals, his adherents, kept in custody for his ransom. As the demands of the emperor were exorbitant, Henry undertook to negotiate for the pope, and was procuring him a very favourable treaty ; but his holiness, in the mean time, corrupting his guards, had the good fortune to procure his escape from confinement ; and, leaving the treaty

unfinished, sent Henry a letter of thanks for his mediation. The violence of the emperor taught Henry that popes might be injured with impunity; and the behaviour of the pope manifested but little of that sanctity or infallibility to which the pontiffs pretended. Besides, as Henry had laid the pope thus under obligations, he supposed that he might, upon any emergency, expect a grateful return.

It was in this situation of the church and the pope, that a new scene was going to be opened, which was to produce endless disturbances, and to change the whole system of Europe. Henry had now been more than twenty years married to Catharine of Arragon, who, as we have related, had been [1527.] brought over from Spain to marry his elder brother, who died a few months after cohabitation. But, notwithstanding the submissive deference paid to the indulgence of the church, Henry's marriage with this princess did not pass without scruple and hesitation. The prejudices of the people were in general bent against a conjugal union between such near relations; and the late king, though he had solemnised the espousals when his son was but twelve years of age, gave many intimations that he intended to annul them at a proper opportunity. These intentions might have given Henry some doubts and scruples concerning the legitimacy of his marriage; but as he had three children by the princess, and as her character and conduct were blameless, he for a while kept his suggestions private. But she was six years older than her husband; and the decay of her beauty, together with particular infirmities and diseases, had contributed to make him desirous of another consort. However, though he felt a secret dislike to her person, yet for a long time he broke out into no flagrant act of contempt; being contented to range from beauty to beauty among the ladies of his court, and his rank always procuring him a ready compliance. But Henry was carried forward, though perhaps not at first excited, by a motive much more powerful than the tacit suggestions of his conscience. It happened that among the maids of honour, then attending the queen, there was one Anne Boleyn, the daughter of sir Thomas Boleyn, a gentleman of distinction, and related to many of the nobility. He had been employed by the king in several embassies, and was married to a daughter of the duke of Norfolk. The beauty of Anne surpassed

whatever had hitherto appeared at this voluptuous court ; and her education, which had been at Paris, tended to set off her personal charms. Her features were regular, mild, and attractive ; her stature elegant, though below the middle size ; while her wit and vivacity exceeded even her other allurements. Henry, who had never learned the art of restraining any passion that he desired to gratify, saw and loved her ; but, after several efforts to induce her to comply with his criminal desires, he found that without marriage he could have no chance of succeeding. This obstacle, therefore, he hardily undertook to remove ; and as his own queen was now become hateful to him,—in order to procure a divorce, he alleged that his conscience rebuked him for having so long lived in incest with the wife of his brother. In this pretended perplexity he applied to Clement the Seventh, who owed him many obligations, desiring him to dissolve the bull of the former pope, which had given him permission to marry Catharine ; and to declare that it was not in the power even of the holy see to dispense with a law so strictly enjoined in scripture. The unfortunate pope was now in the utmost perplexity ; queen Catharine was aunt to the emperor who had lately made him a prisoner, and whose resentment he dreaded to rekindle by thus injuring so near a relation ; besides, he could not in prudence declare the bull of the former pope illicit, for this would be giving a blow to the doctrine of papal infallibility. On the other hand, Henry was his protector and friend ; the dominions of England were the chief resource from which his finances were supplied ; and the king of France, some time before, had obtained a bull of divorce in somewhat similar circumstances. In this exigence, he thought the wisest method would be to spin out the affair by a negotiation ; and in the mean time sent over a commission to Wolsey, in conjunction with the archbishop of Canterbury, or any other English prelate, to examine the validity of the king's marriage and the former dispensation ; granting them also a provisional dispensation for the king's marriage with any other person. When this message was laid before the council in England, they prudently considered that an advice given by the pope in this secret manner might very easily be disavowed in public, and that a clandestine marriage would totally invalidate the legitimacy of any issue the king should have by such a match. In consequence of this, fresh

messengers were dispatched to Rome, and evasive answers returned, the pope still continuing to promise, recant, dispute, and temporise; hoping that the king's passion would never hold out during the tedious course of an ecclesiastical controversy. In this he was entirely mistaken. Henry had been long taught to dispute as well as he, and quickly found, or wrested, many texts of scripture to favour his opinions or his passions. To his arguments he added threats, assuring the pope, that the English were already but too well disposed to withdraw from the holy see; and that, if he continued uncomplying, the whole country would readily follow the example of a monarch who, stung by ingratitude, should deny all obedience to a pontiff by whom he had always been treated with falsehood and duplicity. The king even proposed to his holiness, whether, in case of his not being permitted to put away his present queen, he might not have a dispensation for having two wives at a time.

The pope, perceiving the eagerness of the king, at one time had thoughts of complying with his solicitations, and sent cardinal Campegio, his legate, to London, who, with Wolsey, [1528.] opened a court for trying the legitimacy of the king's present marriage, and cited the king and the queen to appear before them. They both presented themselves; and the king answered to his name when called: but the queen, instead of answering to hers, rose from her seat, and, throwing herself at the king's feet, in the most pathetic manner entreated him to have pity upon her helpless situation. A stranger, unprotected, unfriended, she could only rely on him as her guardian and defender, on him alone who knew her submission and her innocence, and not upon any court in which her enemies prevailed, and would wrest the laws against her: she therefore refused the present trial, where she could expect neither justice nor impartiality. Yet, notwithstanding the queen's objections, her trial went forward; and Henry shortly hoped to be gratified in his most sanguine expectations. The principal point which came before the legates was the proof of prince Arthur's consummation of his marriage with Catharine, which some of his own expressions to that purpose tended to confirm. Other topics were preparing, tending to prove the inability of the pope himself to grant such a dispensation; and the business seemed now to be drawing near

a period, when, to the great surprise of all, Campegio, without any warning, and upon very frivolous pretences, prorogued the court, and transferred the cause before the court of Rome.

During the course of these perplexing negotiations, on the issue of which Henry's happiness seemed to depend, he had at first expected to find in his favourite Wolsey a warm defender and a steady adherent; but in this he found himself mistaken. Wolsey seemed to be nearly in the same dilemma with the pope. On the one hand, he was to please his master the king, from whom he had received a thousand marks of favour; and, on the other hand, he feared to disoblige the pope, whose servant he more immediately was, and who besides had power to punish his disobedience. He therefore resolved to continue neuter in this controversy; and, though of all men the most haughty, he gave way on this occasion to his colleague Campegio in all things, pretending a deference to his skill in canon law. Wolsey's scheme of temporising was highly displeasing to the king; but for a while he endeavoured to stifle his resentment, until it could act with more fatal certainty. He for some time looked out for a man of equal abilities and less art; and it was not long before accident threw in his way one Thomas Cranmer, a man of learning and talent, and probably of greater integrity than the cardinal possessed. Cranmer was a doctor of divinity, and a professor at Cambridge, but had lost his office upon marrying contrary to the institutes of the canon law, which enjoined celibacy to all the clergy. He had travelled in his youth into Germany; and it was there he became acquainted with Luther's works, and embraced his doctrines. This man happening to fall one evening into company with Gardiner, secretary of state, and Fox, the king's almoner, the business of the divorce became the subject of conversation. He gave it as his opinion, that the readiest way to quiet the king's conscience, or to extort the pope's consent, would be to consult all the universities of Europe upon the affair; an advice which, being brought to the king, pleased him so much, that Cranmer was desired to follow the court.

[1529.] The king, finding himself provided with a person who could supply Wolsey's place, appeared less reserved in his resentments against that prelate. The attorney-general was ordered to prepare a bill of indictment against him; and he



was soon after commanded to resign the great seal. Crimes are easily found against a favourite in disgrace, and the courtiers did not fail to increase the catalogue of his errors. He was ordered to depart from his palace at Westminster; and all his furniture and plate were converted to the king's use. The inventory of his goods being taken, they were found to exceed even the most extravagant surmises. Of fine Holland alone there were found a thousand pieces; the walls of his palace were covered with cloth of gold and silver; he had a cup-board of plate of massy gold; all the rest of his riches and furniture were in proportion, and probably their greatness invited the hand of power. The parliament soon after confirmed the sentence of the court of Star-chamber against him, and he was ordered to retire to Esher, a country-seat which he possessed near Hampton; there to await the king's further pleasure, with all the fluctuations of hope and apprehension. Still, however, he was in possession of the archbishopric of York, and bishopric of Winchester; and the king gave him distant gleams of hope, by sending him a ring, accompanied with a gracious message. Wolsey, who, like every bad character, was proud to his equals, and mean to those above him, happening to meet the king's messenger on horseback, immediately alighted, and, throwing himself on his knees in the mire, received, in that abject manner, those marks of his majesty's condescension. But his hopes were soon overturned; for, after he had remained some time at Esher, he was ordered to remove to his see of York, where he took up his residence at Ca- [1530.] wood, and rendered himself very popular in the neighbourhood by his affability. He was not allowed to remain long unmolested in this retreat. He was arrested by the earl of Northumberland, at the king's command, for high-treason; and preparations were made for conducting him to London, in order to his trial. He at first refused to comply with the requisition, as being a cardinal; but finding the earl bent on performing his commission, he complied, and set out, by easy journeys, for London, to appear as a criminal where he had acted as a king. In his way he staid a fortnight at the mansion of the earl of Shrewsbury; where one day at dinner he was taken ill, not without violent suspicions of having poisoned himself. Being thence brought forward, he with much difficulty reached Leicester abbey; where

the monks coming out to meet him, he said, "Father Abbot, I am come to lay my bones among you;" and immediately ordered his bed to be prepared. As his disorder increased, an officer being placed near, at once to guard and attend him, he spoke to him, a little before he expired, to this effect: "I pray you have me heartily recommended unto his royal majesty; he is a prince of a most royal carriage, and hath a princely heart; and rather than he will miss or want any part of his will, he will endanger one half of his kingdom. I do assure you I have kneeled before him, for three hours together, to persuade him from his will and appetite but could not prevail. Had I but served God as diligently as I have served the king, he would not have given me over in my gray hairs. But this is the just reward that I must receive for my indulgent pains and study, not regarding my service to God, but only to my prince." He died soon after, in all the pangs of remorse, and left a life which he had all along rendered turbid by ambition, and wretched by mean assiduities. He left two natural children; one of whom, being a priest, was loaded with church preferments.

Henry being now freed from the control of a person who had for some time been an obstacle to his intentions, by Cranmer's advice he had the legality of his present marriage canvassed in the most noted universities of Europe. It was very extraordinary to see the king on one side soliciting the universities to be favourable to his passion; and, on the other, the emperor pressing them with equal ardour to be favourable to his aunt. Henry liberally rewarded those doctors who declared on his side; and the emperor granted benefices to such as voted in conformity to his wishes. Time has discovered these intrigues. In one of Henry's account-books we find the disbursements he made on these occasions. To a sub-deacon he gave a crown, to a deacon two crowns; and he also gratified the rest, in proportion to the consequence of their station or opinion. The person, however, who bribed on these occasions, excused himself by declaring that he never paid the money till after the vote was given. In this contest, the liberalities, and consequently the votes, of Henry prevailed; his intrigues for a favourable decision being better carried on, as he was most interested in the debate. All the colleges of Italy and France unanimously declared his present mar-

riage to be repugnant to all laws divine and human; and therefore alleged, that it was not in the power of the pope himself to grant a dispensation. The only places where this decision was most warmly opposed, were at Oxford and Cambridge: but they also concurred in the same opinion at last, having furnished out the formality of a debate. But the agents of Henry were not content with the suffrages of the universities alone; the opinions of the Jewish rabbies were also demanded: however, their votes were easily bought up.

Henry, being thus fortified by the suffrages of the universities, now resolved to oppose even the pope himself; [1531.] and began in parliament by reviving an old law against the clergy, by which it was decreed, that all those who had submitted to the legantine authority had incurred severe penalties. The clergy, to conciliate the king's favour, were compelled to pay a fine of a hundred and eighteen thousand pounds. A confession was likewise extorted from them, that the king was protector and supreme head of the church and the clergy of England. These concessions cut off a great part of the profits, and still more of the power, of the church of Rome. An act soon after was passed against levying the first-fruits, or a year's rent, of all [1532.] the bishoprics that became vacant. The tie that held Henry to the church being thus broken, he resolved to keep no further measures with the pontiff. He therefore privately married Anne Boleyn, whom he had created marchioness of Pembroke; the duke of Norfolk, uncle to the new queen, her father, mother, and doctor Cranmer, being present at the ceremony. Soon after finding the queen pregnant, he publicly owned his marriage; and, to colour his disobedience to the pope with an appearance of triumph, he passed with his beautiful bride through London, with a magnificence greater than had been ever known before. The streets were strewed, the walls of the houses were hung with tapestry, the conduits ran with wine, and an universal joy was diffused among the people, who were contented rather with the present festivity than solicitous to examine the motives of it. Catharine, who had all along supported her claims with resolution, and yet with modesty, was cited to a trial; but, refusing to appear, she was pronounced contumacious; and judgment was given against the validity of her marriage with the king.

At length, finding the inutility of further resistance, she retired to Amptill, near Dunstable, where she passed the rest of her life in privacy and peace.

When this intelligence was conveyed to Rome, the conclave was in a rage; and the pope, incited by the ardour of the cardinals, and frightened also by the menaces of the emperor, published a sentence, declaring queen Catharine alone to be Henry's lawful wife; and requiring him to take her again, with a denunciation of censures in case of refusal. On the other hand, Henry, finding that his subjects of all ranks had taken part with him, and had willingly complied with his attempts to break a foreign dependence, resolved no longer to continue those submissions which no power could extort. The people had been prepared by degrees for this great innovation: care had been taken for some years to inculcate the doctrine, that the pope was entitled to no authority beyond the limits of his own diocese. The king, therefore, no longer delayed his meditated scheme of separating entirely from the church of Rome. The parliament was at his devotion; the majority of the clergy were in his interest, as they had already declared against the pope, by decreeing in favour of the divorce; and the people, above all, wished to see the church humbled, which had so long controlled them at pleasure, and grown opulent by their labours and distresses. Thus all things conspiring to co-operate with his designs, he ordered himself to be declared by [1534.] his clergy the supreme head of the church; the parliament confirmed the title, abolished all authority of the pope in England, voted all tributes formerly paid to the holy see as illegal, and intrusted the king with the collation to all ecclesiastical benefices. The nation came into the king's measures with joy, and took an oath, called the oath of supremacy; all the credit of the pope, that had subsisted for ages, was now at once overthrown; and none seemed to repine at the revolution, except those who were immediately interested by their dependance on the court of Rome.

But though Henry had thus separated from the church, he had not addicted himself to the system of any other reformer. The idea of heresy still appeared detestable as well as formidable to him; and whilst his resentment against the see of Rome had removed one part of his early prejudices, he made it a point never

to relinquish the rest. Separate as he stood from the catholic church, and from the Roman pontiff, the head of it, he still valued himself on maintaining the catholic doctrines, and on guarding by fire and sword the imagined purity of its establishments. His ministers and courtiers were of as motley a character as his conduct; and seemed to waver, during the whole reign, between the antient and the new religion. The young queen, engaged by interest as well as inclination, favoured the cause of the reformers; Thomas Cromwell, who, from being a creature of Wolsey, had, by an admirable defence of the conduct of his old master, procured the favour and confidence of the king, embraced the same views. Being a man of prudence and ability, he was very successful in promoting the reformation, though in a concealed manner. Cranmer, who was now become archbishop of Canterbury, had all along adopted the protestant tenets, and had gained Henry's friendship by his candour and sincerity. On the other hand, the duke of Norfolk adhered to the old mode of worship; and by the greatness of his rank, as well as by his talents for peace and war, he had great weight in the king's council. Gardiner, lately created bishop of Winchester, had enlisted himself in the same party; and the suppleness of his character, and the dexterity of his conduct, had rendered him extremely useful to it. The king, mean while, who held the balance between these contending factions, was enabled, by the courtship paid him by both protestants and catholics, to assume an immeasurable authority.

As the mode of religion was not as yet known, and as the minds of those who were of opposite sentiments were extremely exasperated, it naturally followed that several must fall a sacrifice in the contest between antient establishments and modern reformation. The reformers were the first who were exhibited as unhappy examples of the vindictive fury of those who were for the continuance of antient superstitions. One James Bainham, a gentleman of the Temple, being accused of favouring the doctrines of Luther, had been brought before sir Thomas More during his chancellorship; and, after being put to the torture, was condemned as a relapsed heretic, and was burned in Smithfield. Thomas Bilney, a priest, had embraced the new doctrine; but, being terrified into an abjuration, he was so stung with remorse, that he went into Norfolk, publicly recanting his former conduct,

and exposing the errors of popery. He was soon seized, tried in the bishop's court, condemned as a relapsed heretic, and burned accordingly. On the other hand, Henry was not remiss in punishing such as disowned the propriety of his late defection from Rome; and, as the monks suffered most by the reformation, so they were most obnoxious, from their free manner of speaking, to the royal resentment.

To assist him in bringing these to punishment, the parliament had made it capital to deny his supremacy over the church; and many priors and ecclesiastics lost their lives for this new species of crime. But of those who fell a sacrifice to this stern and unjust law, none are so much to be regretted as John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, and the celebrated sir Thomas More. Fisher was a prelate eminent for his learning and morals; but so firmly attached to antient opinions, that he was thrown into prison, and deprived of his ecclesiastical revenues; so that he had scarcely even rags to cover him in his severe confinement. He was soon [1535.] after indicted for denying the king's supremacy, condemned, and beheaded.

Sir Thomas More is entitled to still greater pity, as his merits were greater. This extraordinary man, who was one of the revivers of antient literature, and incontestably the foremost writer of his age, had, for some time, refused to act in subserviency to the capricious passions of the king. He had been created chancellor; but gave up that high office rather than concur in the breach with the church of Rome. The austerity of this man's virtue, and the sanctity of his manners, had in no wise encroached on the gentleness of his temper; and even in the midst of poverty and disgrace, he could preserve that natural gaiety which was probably inspired by conscious innocence. But on the present occasion, being put into confinement, no entreaties or arguments could prevail upon him to pronounce an entire acknowledgment of the justice of the king's claims. One Rich, who was then solicitor-general, was sent to confer with him; and in his presence he was inveigled to say, that any question with regard to the law which established that prerogative, was like a two-edged sword: if a person answered one way, it would confound his soul; if another, it would destroy his body. These words were sufficient for the base informer to hang an accusation upon; and, as trials

at that time were mere formalities, the jury gave sentence against More, who had long expected his fate. His natural cheerfulness attended him to the last: when he was mounting the scaffold, he said to one, "Friend, help me up; and when I go down again, let me shift for myself." The executioner asking his forgiveness, he granted the request, but told him, "You will never get credit by beheading me, my neck is so short." Then laying his head on the block, he bade the executioner stay till he had put aside his beard; "for," said he, "that has never committed treason."

The concurrence which the people seemed to lend to these severities, added to the great authority which Henry, from his severe administration, possessed, induced him to proceed still farther in his scheme of innovation. As the monks had all along shown him the greatest resistance, he resolved at once to deprive them of future power to injure him. He accordingly empowered Cromwell, secretary of state, to send commissioners into the several counties of England to inspect the monasteries; and to report, with rigorous exactness, the conduct and deportment of such as were resident there. This employment was readily undertaken by some creatures of the court, namely, Layton, London, Price, Gage, Petre, and Belasis, who are said to have discovered monstrous disorders in many of the religious houses;—whole convents of women abandoned to all manner of lewdness; friars accomplices in their crimes; pious frauds every where practised to increase the devotion and liberality of the people; and cruel and inveterate factions maintained between the members of many of these institutions. These accusations, whether true or false, were urged with great clamour against these communities; and a general horror was excited in the nation against them.

The king now thought he might with safety, and even some degree of popularity, abolish these institutions; but, willing to proceed gently at first, he gave directions to the parliament to go no farther at present than to suppress the smaller monasteries, which possessed revenues below the value of two hundred pounds a-year. By this act three hundred and [1536.] seventy-six monasteries were suppressed; and their revenues, amounting to thirty-two thousand pounds a-year, were granted to the king, besides their goods and plate, computed at a hundred thousand pounds more. But this was only the beginning of his con-

fiscations; for, about two years after, he resolved upon the entire destruction of all monasteries whatsoever. A new visitation was therefore appointed, and fresh crimes were also produced; so that his severities were conducted with such seeming justice and success, that in less than two years he became possessed of the revenues of all the monastic foundations. These, on the whole, amounted to six hundred and forty-five, of which twenty-eight had abbots who enjoyed a seat in parliament. Ninety collegiate institutions, two thousand three hundred and seventy-four chantries and free chapels, and a hundred and ten hospitals, were likewise suppressed. The whole revenue of these establishments amounted to one hundred and sixty-one thousand pounds—less than a twentieth part of the national income. The loss which was sustained by the clergy upon this occasion, was by no means so great or mortifying as the cruel insults and reproaches to which they were exposed for their former frauds and avarice. The numberless relics which they had amassed to delude and draw money from the people, were now brought forward, and exposed before the populace with the most poignant contempt:—an angel with one wing, that brought over the head of the spear which pierced the side of Christ; coals that had roasted St. Laurence; the parings of St. Edmund's toes; certain relics to prevent rain; others to stop the generation of weeds among corn. There was a crucifix at Boxley in Kent, distinguished by the appellation of the Rood of Grace, which had been long in reputation for bending, raising, rolling the eyes, and shaking the head. It was brought to London, and broken to pieces at Paul's Cross; and the wheels and springs by which it was actuated were shown to the people. At Hales, in Gloucestershire, the monks had carried on a profitable traffic with the pretended blood of Christ in a crystal phial. This relic was no other than the blood of a duck killed weekly, and exhibited to the pilgrim: if his prayers were accepted, the blood was shown him; if supposed to be rejected, the phial was turned; and, being on one side opaque, the blood was no longer to be seen. But the spoils of St. Thomas à Becket's shrine, at Canterbury, exceed what even imagination might conceive. The shrine was broken down; and the gold that adorned it filled two large chests, which eight strong men could hardly carry out of the church. The king even cited the saint himself to appear,



and to be tried and condemned as a traitor. He ordered his name to be struck out of the calendar, his bones to be burned, and the office for his festival to be struck out of the Breviary.

Such were the violent measures with which the king proceeded against these seats of indolence and imposture ; but as great murmurs were excited upon this occasion, he took care that all those who could be useful to him, or even dangerous in cases of opposition, should be sharers in the spoil. He either made a gift of the revenues of the convents to his principal courtiers, or sold them at low prices, or exchanged them for other lands on very disadvantageous terms. He erected six new bishoprics, Westminster, Oxford, Peterborough, Bristol, Chester, and Gloucester, of which the last five still continue. He also settled salaries on the abbots and priors, proportioned to their former revenues or their merits ; and each monk was allowed a yearly pension of eight marks for his subsistence.

But though the king had entirely separated himself from Rome, he was unwilling to follow any guide in conducting a new system. He would not therefore wholly abolish those practices by which priestcraft had been carried to such a pitch of absurdity. The invocation of saints was not yet abolished by him, but only restrained. He procured an act, or, more properly speaking, gave orders, to have the Bible translated into the vulgar tongue ; but it was not permitted to be put into the hands of the laity. It was a capital crime to believe in the pope's supremacy, and yet equally heinous to be of the reformed religion, as established in Germany. His opinions were at length delivered in a law, which, from its horrid consequences, was afterwards termed the Bloody Statute, by which it was ordained, that whoever, by word or writing, should deny transubstantiation, whoever should persist in affirming that the communion in both kinds was necessary, that it was lawful for priests to marry, that vows of chastity might be broken, that private masses were unprofitable, or that auricular confession was unnecessary, should be found guilty of heresy, and burned or hanged as the court should determine. As the people were at that time chiefly composed of those who followed the opinions of Luther, and such as still adhered to the pope, this statute, with Henry's former decrees, in some measure included both, and opened a field for persecution, which soon after produced its dreadful harvests.

These severities, however, were preceded by one of a different nature, arising neither from religious nor political causes, but merely from tyrannical caprice. Anne Boleyn, his queen, had been always a favourer of the Reformation, and consequently had many enemies on that account, who only waited a convenient occasion to destroy her credit with the king; and that occasion too soon presented itself. The king's passion was by this time palled by satiety. As the only desire he ever had for her arose from that brutal appetite which enjoyment soon destroys, he had now fallen in love, if we may so prostitute the expression, with another, and languished for the possession of Jane Seymour, who had for some time been maid of honour to the queen.

As soon as the queen's enemies perceived the king's disgust, they resolved on taking the first opportunity of gratifying his inclination to get rid of her, by producing crimes against her, which his passions would quickly make real. The viscountess Rochford in particular, who was married to the queen's brother, herself a woman of infamous character, began with the most cruel insinuations against the reputation of her sister-in-law. She pretended that her own husband was engaged in an incestuous correspondence with his sister; and, not contented with this insinuation, represented all the harmless levities of the queen as favours of a criminal nature. The king's jealousy first appeared openly in a tilting at Greenwich, where the queen happened to drop her handkerchief, as was supposed, to one of her minions to wipe his face, after having over-heated himself in the exercise. Though this might have been very harmless, the king abruptly retired from the place, and sent orders to have her confined to her apartment. Anne smiled at first, thinking the king was in jest; but when she found it was a very serious affair, she received the sacrament in her closet, sensible of what little mercy she had to expect from so furious a tyrant.

In the mean time her enemies were not remiss in inflaming the accusation against her. The duke of Norfolk, from his attachment to the old religion, took care to produce several witnesses, accusing her of incontinency with some of the meaner servants of the court. Four persons were particularly pointed out as her paramours; Henry Norris, groom of the stole, Weston and Breton, gentlemen of the king's bed-chamber, together with Mark

Smeton a musician. As these had served her with much assiduity, their respect might have been construed by suspicion into more tender attachments. The next day the queen was sent to the Tower, earnestly protesting her innocence, and sending up prayers to heaven for assistance in this extremity. She in vain begged to be admitted into the presence of the king; the lady Boleyn, her uncle's wife, who had always hated her, was ordered to continue in the same chamber, and she made a report of all the incoherent ravings of the afflicted prisoner. She owned that she had once rallied Norris on his delaying his marriage, and had told him that he probably expected her when she should be a widow. She had reproved Weston, she said, for his affection to a kinswoman of hers, and his indifference towards his wife; but he told her that she had mistaken the object of his affection, for it was herself. She affirmed, that Smeton had never been in her chamber but twice, when he played on the harpsichord; but she acknowledged that he once had the boldness to tell her, that a look sufficed him.

Every person at court now abandoned the unhappy queen in her distress, except Cranmer, who, though forbidden to come into the king's presence, wrote a letter to him in behalf of the queen; but his intercession had no effect. When Norris and the other prisoners were tried in Westminster-hall, Smeton was prevailed upon, by the promise of a pardon, to confess a criminal correspondence with the queen: but he was not confronted with her; and his execution with the rest, shortly after, served to acquit her of the charge. Norris, who had been much in the king's favour, had an offer of his life, if he would confess his crime and accuse his mistress; but he rejected the proposal with contempt, and died professing her innocence and his own.

In the mean time the queen, who saw the terrible appearance of her fortunes, attempted to soften the king by every endeavour to spare the lives of the unfortunate men whose deaths were decreed. But his was a stern jealousy fostered by pride; and nothing but her removal could appease him. Her letter to him, upon this occasion, written from the Tower, is full of the tenderest expostulations, and too remarkable to be omitted here; as its manner serves at once to mark the situation of her mind, and

shows to what a pitch of refinement she had even then carried the language. It is as follows :

“ Sir,

“ Your grace’s displeasure, and my imprisonment, are things so strange unto me, as what to write, or what to excuse, I am altogether ignorant. Whereas you send unto me (willing me to confess a truth and so obtain your favour) by such an one, whom you know to be mine antient professed enemy, I no sooner received this message by him, than I rightly conceived your meaning ; and if, as you say, confessing a truth indeed may procure my safety, I shall with all willingness and duty perform your command.

“ But let not your grace ever imagine that your poor wife will ever be brought to acknowledge a fault, where not so much as a thought thereof preceded. And to speak a truth, never prince had wife more loyal in all duty, and in all true affection, than you have ever found in Anne Boleyn ; with which name and place I could willingly have contented myself, if God and your grace’s pleasure had been so pleased. Neither did I at any time so far forget myself in my exaltation, or received queenship, but that I always looked for such an alteration as I now find ; for the ground of my preferment being on no surer foundation than your grace’s fancy, the least alteration I knew was fit and sufficient to draw that fancy to some other object. You have chosen me, from a low estate, to be your queen and companion, far beyond my desert or desire. If then you found me worthy of such honour, good your grace, let not any light fancy, or bad counsel of mine enemies, withdraw your princely favour from me ; neither let that stain, that unworthy stain of a disloyal heart towards your good grace, ever cast so foul a blot on your most dutiful wife, and the infant princess your daughter. Try me, good king ; but let me have a lawful trial, and let not my sworn enemies sit as my accusers and judges ; yea, let me receive an open trial, for my truth shall fear no open shame : then shall you see either mine innocence cleared, your suspicion and conscience satisfied, the ignominy and slander of the world stopped, or my guilt openly declared : so that whatsoever God or you may determine of me, your grace may be freed from an open censure ; and mine offence being so lawfully proved, your grace is at liberty both

before God and man, not only to execute worthy punishment on me as an unlawful wife, but to follow your affection already settled on that party, for whose sake I am now as I am, whose name I could some good while since have pointed unto, your grace not being ignorant of my suspicion therein.

“But if you have already determined of me, and that not only my death, but an infamous slander, must bring you the enjoying of your desired happiness, then I desire of God that he will pardon your great sin therein, and likewise mine enemies, the instruments thereof; and that he will not call you to a strict account for your unprincely and cruel usage of me at his general judgment-seat, where both you and myself must shortly appear, and in whose judgment, I doubt not (whatsoever the world may think of me) mine innocence shall be openly known and sufficiently cleared.

“My last and only request shall be, that myself shall only bear the burthen of your grace’s displeasure; and that it may not touch the innocent souls of those poor gentlemen, who (as I understand) are likewise in strait imprisonment for my sake. If ever I have found favour in your sight, if ever the name of Anne Boleyn hath been pleasing in your ears, then let me obtain this request; and I will so leave to trouble your grace any further, with mine earnest prayers to the Trinity, to have your grace in his good keeping, and to direct you in all your actions. From my doleful prison in the Tower, this sixth of May.

Your most loyal,

and ever faithful wife,

ANNE BOLEYN.”

It was not to be expected that eloquence could prevail on a tyrant, whose passions were to be influenced by none of the nobler motives. The queen and her brother were tried by a jury of peers; but upon what proof or pretence the crime of incest was urged against them, is unknown; the chief evidence, it is said, amounted to no more than that Rochford had been seen to lean on her bed before some company. Part of the charge against her was, that she had declared to her attendants, that the king never had her heart; which was considered as a slander upon the throne, and strained into a breach of a late statute, by which it was declared criminal to throw any slander upon the king, queen,

or their issue. The unhappy queen, though unassisted by counsel, defended herself with great judgment and presence of mind; and the spectators could not forbear declaring her entirely innocent. She answered distinctly to all the charges brought against her: but the king's authority was not to be controlled; she was declared guilty, and her sentence ran, that she should be burned or beheaded, at the king's pleasure. When this terrible sentence was pronounced against her, she could not help offering up a prayer to Heaven, vindicating her innocence; and, in a most pathetic speech to her judges, averred the injustice of her condemnation. But the tyrant, not satisfied with this vengeance, was desirous also of having her daughter declared illegitimate; and, remembering the report of a contract between her and Percy earl of Northumberland, prevailed upon the queen, either by promise of life, or executing the sentence in all its rigour, to confess such a contract. The afflicted primate, who sat as judge, thought himself obliged, by this confession, to pronounce the marriage null; and Henry, in the transports of his malignant prosecution, did not see, that if her marriage had been invalid from the beginning, the sentence of adultery must have been invalid also.

She who had been once the envied object of royal favour, was now going to give a melancholy instance of the capriciousness of fortune: upon her returning to prison, she once more sent protestations of her innocence to the king. "You have raised me," said she, "from privacy to make me a lady; from a lady you made me a countess; from a countess a queen; and from a queen I shall shortly become a saint in heaven." On the morning of her execution she sent for Kingston, the keeper of the Tower, to whom, upon entering the prison, she said, "Mr. Kingston, I hear I am not to die till noon, and I am sorry for it; for I thought to be dead before this time, and free from a life of pain." The keeper attempting to comfort her, by assuring her the pain would be very little; she replied, "I have heard the executioner is very expert; and (clasping her neck with her hands, laughing), I have but a little neck." When brought to the scaffold, from a consideration of her child Elizabeth's welfare, she would not inflame the minds of the spectators against her persecutors, but contented herself with saying "that she was come to die as she was sentenced by the law." She would accuse none, nor say any thing

of the ground upon which she was judged ; she prayed heartily for the king ; called him “ a most merciful and gentle prince ; ” declared that he had always been to her a good and gracious sovereign ; and, if any one should think proper to canvass her cause, she desired him to judge the best. She was beheaded by the executioner of Calais, who was brought over as much more expert than any in England. Her body was negligently thrown into a common chest of elm-tree, made to hold arrows, and was buried in the Tower. Anne Boleyn seemed to be guilty of no other crime than that of having survived the king’s affections ; and although many crowned heads had already been put to death in England, she was the first who underwent all the forms of law, and was beheaded on a scaffold.

The people, in general, beheld her fate with pity ; but still more, when they discovered the cause of the tyrant’s impatience to destroy her ; for, the very next day after her execution, he married the lady Jane Seymour, his cruel heart being no way softened by the wretched fate of one who had been so lately the object of his warmest affections. He also ordered his parliament to give him a divorce between her sentence and execution ; and thus he endeavoured to bastardise Elizabeth, the only child he had by her, as he had in the same manner formerly bastardised Mary, his only surviving child by queen Catharine.

It is easy to imagine that such various innovations and capricious cruelties were not felt by the people without indignation ; but their murmurs were fruitless, and their complaints disregarded. Henry now made himself umpire between those of the ancient superstition and the modern reformation ; both looked up to him for assistance, and, at mutual enmity with each other, he took the advantage of all. Beside, he had all the powerful men of the nation on his side, by the many grants he had made them of the lands and goods of which he had despoiled the monasteries. It was easy for him, therefore, to quell the various insurrections which his present arbitrary conduct produced, as they were neither headed by any powerful man, nor conducted with any kind of foresight, but were merely the tumultuary efforts of anguish and despair. The first rising was in Lincolnshire, headed by doctor Mackrel, prior of Barlings ; and though this tumultuary army amounted to twenty thousand men, upon a proclama-

tion being made with assurances of pardon, the populace dispersed; and the prior and some of his chief confederates, falling into the king's hands, were put to death. Another rising followed soon after in the north, amounting to thirty thousand men, who were preceded by priests carrying the ensigns of their functions before the army, and seemed chiefly inspired with an enmity against Cromwell, whom they considered as the instigator of the king's severities. But these also were soon dispersed, upon finding that provisions became scarce among them; after having in vain endeavoured to attack the duke of Norfolk's army, which was sent against them, and from which they were separated by a rivulet that was swollen by heavy rains. A new insurrection broke out shortly after, headed by Musgrave and Tilby; but the insurgents were dispersed and put to flight by the duke of Norfolk. Besides one Aske, who led the former insurrection in the north, lord D'Arcy, sir Robert Constable, sir John Bulmer, sir Thomas Percy, sir Stephen Hamilton, Nicholas Tempest, and William Lumley, were thrown into prison; and most of these suffered death. Henry, enraged by multiplied revolts, resolved to put no bounds to his severities; and the birth of a prince (afterwards Edward the Sixth) and the death of the queen, who survived this joyful occasion but two days, made but a small pause in the fierce severity with which those were treated who were found to oppose his will.

[1537.] In the midst of these commotions, the fires of Smithfield were seen to blaze with unusual fierceness. Those who adhered to the pope, or those who followed the doctrines of Luther, were equally the objects of royal vengeance and ecclesiastical persecution. From the multiplied alterations in the national systems of belief, mostly drawn up by Henry himself, few knew what to think, or what to profess. They were ready enough, indeed, to follow his doctrines, how inconsistent or contradictory soever; but as he was continually changing them himself, they could hardly pursue so fast as he advanced before them. Thomas Cromwell, raised by the king's caprice from being a blacksmith's son to be a royal favourite (for tyrants ever raise their favourites from the lowest of the people), together with Cranmer, now become archbishop of Canterbury, were both seen to favour the Reformation with all their endeavours. On the other hand, Gar-



diner, bishop of Winchester, and the duke of Norfolk, were for leading the king back to his original superstition. In fact, Henry submitted to neither ; his pride had long been so inflamed by flattery, that he thought himself entitled to regulate, by his single opinion, the religious faith of the whole nation.

In this universal terror and dégeneracy of mankind, [1538.] during which the severities of one man alone seemed to be sufficient to keep millions in awe, there was a school-master in London, who boldly stood up for the rights of humanity, and ventured to think for himself. This man's name was John Lambert, who hearing doctor Taylor preach in support of the real presence in the sacrament, presented him with his reasons for contradicting that doctrine. The paper was carried to Cranmer and Latimer, who were then of the opinion of Luther on that head, and endeavoured to bring him over to their opinions. But Lambert remained steady in his belief ; and they were mortified when, instead of recanting, he appealed to the king himself. This was a challenge that pleased Henry's vanity ; and, willing at once to exert his supremacy, and display his learning, he accepted the appeal ; and public notice was given of his intended disputation. For this purpose, scaffolds were erected in Westminster-hall for the accommodation of the audience, and Henry appeared on his throne, accompanied with all the ensigns of majesty. The prelates were placed on his right hand, the temporal peers on his left. The judges, and most eminent lawyers, had a place assigned to them behind the bishops ; the courtiers of the greatest distinction sat behind the peers. Poor Lambert was produced in the midst of this splendid assembly, with not one creature to defend or support him. The bishop of Chichester opened the conference by declaring, that the king, notwithstanding any slight alterations he had made in the rights of the church, was yet determined to maintain the purity of the catholic faith, and to punish, with the utmost severity, all departure from it. After this preamble, sufficient to terrify the boldest disputant, the king asked Lambert, with a stern countenance, what his opinion was of transubstantiation ? When Lambert began his oration with a compliment to his majesty, Henry rejected his praise with disdain and indignation. He afterwards entered upon the discussion of that abstruse question, and endeavoured to press Lambert with some argu-

ments drawn from the scriptures and the schoolmen. At every word the audience were ready to second him with their applause and admiration. Lambert, however, no way discouraged, was not slow to reply; but here Cranmer stepped in, and seconded the king's proofs by some new topics. Gardiner entered the lists in support of Cranmer; Tonsal took up the argument after Gardiner; Stokesly brought fresh aid to Tonsal. Six bishops more appeared successively in the field against the poor solitary disputant, who for five hours attempted to vindicate his doctrines, till, at last, fatigued, confounded, brow-beaten, and abashed, he was reduced to silence. The king, then returning to the charge, demanded if he was convinced; and whether he chose to gain life by recantation, or to die for his obstinacy? Lambert, not intimidated, replied, that he cast himself wholly on his majesty's clemency; to which Henry replied, that he would never protect a heretic; and therefore, if that was his final answer, he must expect to be committed to the flames. Lambert, not yet terrified, heard Cromwell read the sentence, by which he was condemned to be burned alive, with the utmost composure; and, as if his persecutors were resolved to try his fortitude, the executioners were ordered to make his punishment as painful as they could. He was, therefore, burned at a slow fire, his legs and thighs being first consumed; and when there appeared no end of his tortures, some of the guards, more merciful than the rest, lifted him on their halberds; and while he yet continued to cry out, "None but Christ! None but Christ!" he was wholly consumed by the surrounding fire.

This poor man's death seemed to be only a signal for that of many more. Adulation had inspired the king with such an opinion of his own ability, that he now resolved to punish rigorously all who should presume to differ from him in opinion, without making distinction between Catholics and Lutherans. Soon after, no less than five hundred persons were imprisoned [1539.]; for contradicting the opinions delivered in the Bloody Statute, and received protection only from the lenity of Cromwell. Doctor Barnes, who had been instrumental in Lambert's execution, felt, in his turn, the severity of the persecuting spirit; and, by a bill in parliament, without any trial, was condemned to the flames, discussing theological questions at the very stake.

With Barnes were executed one Gerard and Jerome, for the same opinions. Three catholics also, whose names were Abel, Fetherstone, and Powel, were dragged upon the same hurdles to execution; and declared, that the most grievous part of their punishment was the being coupled with such heretical miscreants as were united in the same calamity. [1540.]

During these horrid transactions Henry was resolved to take another queen; and, after some negotiation upon the continent, he contracted a marriage with Anne of Cleves, his aim being by her means to fortify his alliances with the princes of Germany. Nor was he led into this match without a most scrupulous examination, on his side, of the lady's personal accomplishments. He was assured by his envoy that she was of a very large person, which was the more pleasing to him, as he was at that time become very corpulent, and consequently required a similar figure in a wife. He was still farther allured by her picture, in which Holbein, who drew it, was, it seems, more a friend to his art than to truth; for he greatly flattered her. The king, upon her landing, went privately to meet her at Rochester, where he was very much damped in his amorous ardour. He found her big indeed, and tall as he could wish, but utterly devoid of grace and beauty; she could also speak but one language, her native German; so that her conversation could never recompense the defects of her person. He swore she was a great Flanders mare; and added, that he could never settle his affections upon her. However, sensible that he would greatly disoblige her brother the duke, and consequently all the German princes in his alliance, he resolved to marry her; and he told Cromwell, who was chiefly instrumental in this affair, that, since he had gone so far, he would put his neck into the yoke, whatever it cost him. The marriage was accordingly celebrated: but the king's disgust was only increased by it; he told Cromwell the next morning that he hated her more than ever; and even suspected her not to be a true maid; a circumstance in which he thought himself extremely skilful. Cromwell saw the danger he incurred by having been instrumental in forming this union; but he endeavoured, by his assiduity and humble adulation, to keep the king from coming to extremities with him.

But he should have known that a tyrant once offended is im-

placable. Henry's aversion to the queen secretly increased every day; and he at length resolved to get rid of her and his prime-minister together. The fall of this favourite was long and ardently wished for by a great part of the nation. The nobility hated a man who, from such mean beginnings, was placed before the first persons in the kingdom; for, besides being made vicar-general, which gave him almost absolute authority over the clergy, he was lord privy-seal, lord-chamberlain, and master of the rolls. He had also obtained the order of the Garter, a dignity which had hitherto been conferred on only the most illustrious families; and to carry his exaltation still higher, he had been made earl of Essex. The protestants disliked him for his concurrence with the king's will in their persecution; and the papists detested him as the inveterate enemy of their religion. It only remained, therefore, with the king to hasten or retard the punishment of a man who had scarcely a partisan in the nation except himself. But he had a strong cause of dislike to him for his late unpropitious alliance; and a new motive was soon added for increasing his displeasure. He had fixed his affection on Catharine Howard, niece to the duke of Norfolk; and the only method of gratifying this new passion was, as in former cases, discarding the present queen to make room for a new one. The duke of Norfolk had long been Cromwell's mortal enemy, and eagerly embraced this opportunity to destroy a man he considered as his rival. He therefore made use of all his niece's arts to ruin the favourite; and when his project was ripe for execution, he obtained a commission from the king to arrest Cromwell for high-treason. His disgrace was no sooner known than all his friends forsook him, except Cranmer, who wrote such a letter to Henry in his behalf as no other man in the kingdom would have presumed to offer. However, he was accused in parliament of heresy and treason, and, without being heard in his own defence, was condemned to suffer the pains of death, as the king should think proper to direct. Cromwell's fortitude seemed to forsake him in this dreadful exigency. He wrote to the king for pardon; said, that the frail flesh incited him continually to apply to his grace for mercy; and subscribed his epistle with a heavy heart and a trembling hand, "from the king's most miserable prisoner and poor slave at the Tower, Thomas Cromwell. Mercy, mercy, mercy!"

Cromwell's letter touched the hard heart of the monarch; he ordered it to be read to him three times; and then, as if willing to gain a victory over all his softer feelings, he signed the warrant for beheading him upon Tower-hill. When Cromwell was brought to the scaffold, his regard for his son hindered him from expatiating upon his own innocence; he thanked God for bringing him to that death for his transgressions; confessed he had often been seduced, but that he now died in the catholic faith. It was thus that Henry, not satisfied with the death of those whom he chose to punish, repressed their complaints also, and terrified the unhappy sufferers from the last consolation of the wretched, the satisfaction of upbraiding their persecutors. In this manner the unhappy sufferer, having spent some time in his private devotions, submitted his neck to the executioner, who mangled him in a most terrible manner. A few days after his death a number of people were executed together upon very different accusations; some for having denied the king's supremacy, and others for having maintained the doctrines of Luther.

About a month after the death of Cromwell, the king declared his marriage with Catharine Howard, whom he had some time before privately espoused. This was regarded as a very favourable incident by the catholic party; and the subsequent events for a while turned out to their wish. The king's councils being now entirely directed by Norfolk and Gardiner, a furious persecution commenced against the protestants, and the law of the six articles was executed with rigour; so that a foreigner, who then resided in England, had reason to say, that those who were against the pope were burned, and those who were for him were hanged. The king, with an ostentatious impartiality, reduced both parties to an equal share of subordination, and infused terror into every breast.

But the measure of his severities was not yet filled up. He had thought himself very happy in his new marriage. He was so captivated with the queen's accomplishments, that he gave public thanks for his felicity, and desired his confessor to join with him in the same thanksgiving. This joy, however, was of very short duration. While the king was at York, upon an intended conference with the king of Scotland, a man of the name of [1541.] Lascelles had waited upon Cranmer at London; and from the information of this man's sister, who had been servant to

the duchess-dowager of Norfolk, he gave a very surprising account of the queen's incontinence. He averred that she led a very lewd life before her marriage, and had carried on a scandalous correspondence with two men, called Derham and Mannock; and that she continued to indulge herself in the same criminal pleasures since she had been raised to her present greatness. Cranmer was equally surprised and embarrassed at this intelligence, which he communicated to the chancellor, and some other members of the privy-council, who advised him to make the king acquainted with the whole affair on his return to London. The archbishop knew the hazards he ran by intermeddling in such delicate points; but he also knew the dangers he incurred by suppressing his information. He therefore resolved to communicate what he had heard, by writing, in the form of a memorial; and this he shortly after delivered into the king's own hand, desiring his majesty to read it in private. Henry at first disbelieved, or pretended to disbelieve, the report; he ordered the keeper of the privy-seal to examine Lascelles, who persisted in his former narrative, and even produced his sister to confirm his account. Upon this Derham and Mannock were arrested; and they quickly confessed their own guilt, and the queen's incontinence. They went still farther, by impeaching lady Rochford, who had formerly been so instrumental in procuring the death of Anne Boleyn. They alleged that this lady had introduced one Culpepper into the queen's bedchamber, who staid with her from eleven at night till four in the morning. When the queen was first examined, she denied the charge; but afterwards, finding that her accomplices were her accusers, she confessed her incontinence before marriage, but denied her having dishonoured the king's bed since their union. But three maids of honour, who were admitted to her secrets, still farther alleged her guilt; and some of them confessed having passed the night in the same bed with her and her lovers. The king was so affected at this discovery that he burst into a flood of tears, and bitterly lamented his misfortune. Derham and Culpepper were convicted and executed; but he was resolved to throw the odium of the queen's death upon the parliament, who had always shown themselves the ready ministers of all his severities. These servile creatures, upon being informed of the queen's crime and confession, found her quickly guilty, and petitioned the

king that she might be punished with death ; that the same penalty might be inflicted on the lady Rochford, [1542.] the accomplice of her debaucheries ; and that her grandmother, the duchess-dowager of Norfolk, together with her uncle and his wife, also the countess of Bridgewater, and nine others, as having been privy to the queen's irregularities, should participate in her punishment. With this petition the king was most graciously pleased to agree ; they were condemned to death by an act of attainder, which, at the same time, made it capital for all persons to conceal their knowledge of the debaucheries of any future queen. It was also enacted, that if the king married any woman who had been incontinent, taking her for a true maid, she should be guilty of treason in case she did not previously reveal her guilt. The people made merry with this absurd and brutal statute ; and it was said, that the king must henceforth look out for a widow. After all these laws were passed, in which the most wonderful circumstance is, that a body of men could ever be induced to give their consent, the queen was beheaded on Tower-hill, together with the lady Rochford, who found no great degree of compassion, as she had herself before tampered in blood. The queen was more pitied, as she owned that she had led a dissolute life before marriage ; but denied in her last moments, and with the utmost solemnity, that she had ever been untrue since her marriage with the king. The public exclaimed so loudly against the severity of the act, which brought in so many accomplices of her guilt, that the king did not think proper to execute sentence upon them, though some of them were long detained in confinement.

Henry having thus, by various acts of tyranny, shown that he had abandoned all ideas of justice, morals, or humanity, at last took it into his head to compose a book of religion, which was to be the code by which his subjects should for the future regulate all their belief and actions. Having procured an act of parliament for this purpose, in which all spiritual supremacy was declared to be vested in him, he published a small volume soon after, called *The Institution of a Christian Man*, which was received by the convocation, and voted to be the infallible standard of orthodoxy. All the abstruse points of justification, faith, free-will, good works, and grace, are there defined, with a leaning towards

the opinion of the reformers ; while the sacraments, which a few years before were only allowed to be three, are there increased to their original number of seven, conformably to the sentiments of the catholics. But the king was not long satisfied with this code of belief ; for he soon after procured a new book to be composed, called *The Erudition of a Christian Man*, which he published upon his own authority ; and though this new creed differed a great deal from the former, yet he was no less positive in requiring assent to this than he had been to the former. In both these books he was very explicit in enforcing the doctrine of passive obedience ; so that his institutions were not likely to weaken what he so powerfully enforced by his severities.

But his authority in religion was not more uncontrolled than in temporal concerns. An alderman, one Read, who had refused to assist him with a benevolence, was pressed as a private soldier, and sent to serve in an army which was levied against an incursion of the Scots. In this manner all who opposed his will were either pressed or imprisoned, happy if they escaped with such slight punishments. His parliament made a law, by which the king's proclamations were to have the same force as statutes ; and to facilitate the execution of this act, by which all shadow of liberty was totally removed, they appointed that any nine of the privy-council should form a legal court for punishing disobedience to all proclamations. Thus the king was empowered to issue a proclamation to destroy the lives, or take away the properties, of any of his subjects ; and the only mode of application for redress was to himself in council.

In about a year after the death of the last queen, Henry once [1543.] more changed his condition, by marrying his sixth and last wife, Catharine Parr, who, according to the ridiculous suggestions of the people, was in fact a widow. She was the wife of the late lord Latimer, and was considered as a woman of discretion and virtue. She had already passed the meridian of life, and managed the temper of this capricious tyrant with prudence and success. His amiable days had long been over : he was almost choked with fat, and had contracted a morose air, very far from inspiring affection. Nevertheless, this woman, sacrificing her appetites to her ambition, so far prevailed in gaining his confidence, that she was appointed regent of the kingdom



during his absence in France, whither he passed over at the head of thirty thousand men, to prosecute a war which had been declared between him and the French king. He [1544.] there behaved, as in all his former undertakings, with ineffectual ostentation. Instead of marching into the heart of the country, he sat down before Boulogne, which was obliged to capitulate; and his ally, the emperor, making a separate peace, Henry was obliged to return with his army into England, where he found his subjects ready to offer him their accustomed adulation, and to praise him for an enterprise in which, at an infinite charge, he had made an acquisition that was of no manner of benefit.

But of all his subjects none seemed more abandoned and basely servile, than the members of the two houses of parliament, who, it might be reasonably supposed, would rather have been the protectors of the people than the slaves of the crown. Upon his return from his expensive French expedition, after professions of the greatest submission and profound acknowledgment, they granted him a subsidy equal to his demands, and added to it a gift, which will make their memory odious to the most distant posterity. By one vote they bestowed upon him all the revenues of the two universities, as well as some other places of education and public worship. But, rapacious as this monarch was, he refrained from despoiling those venerable seminaries of their antient endowments: however, they owed their safety to his lenity, and not to the protection of this base and degenerate parliament. Nor was he less just upon another occasion, with regard to the suggestions of his council, who had long conceived a hatred against Cranmer, and laboured to destroy him. This just and moderate man had all along owed his safety to his integrity; and, scorning intrigue himself, was therefore the less liable to be circumvented by the intrigues of others. The catholic party had long represented to the king that Cranmer was the secret cause of most of the divisions which tore the nation, as his example and support were the chief props of heresy. Henry seeing the point to which they tended, and desirous of knowing how far they would carry their intrigues, feigned a compliance with their wishes, and ordered the council to make inquiry into the primate's conduct and crimes. All the world concluded that his disgrace was certain, and his death inevitable. His old friends,

who from mercenary motives had been attached to him, now began to treat him with mortifying neglect; he was obliged to stand several hours among the servants at the door of the council chamber before the members deigned to admit him; and he made his appearance among them only to be informed that they had determined to send him to the Tower. But Cranmer was not to be intimidated by their menaces; he appealed to the king; and when that was denied him, he produced a ring, which Henry had given him to make use of upon that emergency. The privy-counsellors were confounded; and still more so, when, in the presence of the king, they found themselves severely reprov'd, and Cranmer taken into more than former favour. Henry obliged them all to embrace, as a sign of their reconciliation; and Cranmer, from his gentle nature, rendered this reconciliation more sincere on his part than is usual in such forced compliances.

Still, however, the king's severity to the rest of his subjects continued as fierce as ever. For some time he had been incommoded by an ulcer in his leg; the pain of which, added to his corpulence and other infirmities, increased his natural irascibility to such a degree, that scarcely any even of his domestics approached him without terror. It was not to be expected, therefore, that any/who differed from him in opinion should, at this time particularly, hope for pardon. Among the many whose unmerited sufferings excite our pity and indignation, the fate of Anne Askew deserves to be particularly remembered. This lady was a woman of merit as well as beauty, and connected with many of the principal ladies at court. It is said that she kept up a correspondence with the queen herself, who secretly favoured the Reformation; and this correspondence only served to hasten this poor woman's ruin, the chancellor being known to be her enemy. However this be, she happened to differ from the established code of belief, particularly in the article of the real presence; and, notwithstanding the weakness of her sex and age, she was thrown into prison, and accused of heresy. In this situation, with courage far beyond what might be expected, she employed her time in composing prayers and discourses, and vindicating the truth of her opinions. The chancellor Wriothesly; who was much attached to the catholic party, was sent to examine her with regard to her abettors at court; but she maintained

the utmost secrecy, and would accuse none. In consequence of this contumacy, as it was called, the poor young lady was put to the torture ; but she still continued resolute, and her silence testified her contempt of their petty cruelties. The chancellor, therefore, became outrageous, and ordered the lieutenant of the Tower, who executed this punishment, to stretch the rack still harder ; which he refusing to do, and, though menaced, still persisting in a refusal, the chancellor, intoxicated with religious zeal, grasped the cords himself, and drew it so violently that the woman's body was almost torn asunder. But her constancy was greater than the barbarity of her persecutors ; so that, finding no other method to subdue her, she was condemned to be burned alive. She received this sentence with a transport of joy, as a release from a state of the greatest pain to the greatest felicity. As her joints had been dislocated by the rack, so that she could not stand, she was carried to the place of execution in a chair. Together with her were brought Nicholas Belenian, a priest, John Lascelles, of the king's household, and John Adams, a taylor, who had all been condemned for the same crime. They were tied to the stake ; and in that dreadful situation informed, that, if they would recant, their lives would be spared. But they refused a life that was to be gained by such prostitution ; and they saw with tranquillity the executioner kindle the flames which consumed them.

From this indiscriminate severity the queen was not herself entirely secure. She had for some time attended the king in his indisposition, and endeavoured to sooth him by her arts and assiduity. His favourite topic of conversation was theology ; and Catharine, who was tinctured with the spirit of the times, would now and then enter into a debate with him upon many speculative tenets that were then in agitation between the Catholics and Lutherans. Henry, highly provoked that she should presume to differ from him, made complaints of her obstinacy to Gardiner, who gladly laid hold of the opportunity to inflame the quarrel. Even articles of impeachment were drawn up against her, which were brought to the king by the chancellor to be signed ; but, in returning home, he happened to drop the paper. It was very lucky for the queen that the person who found it was in her interests : it was immediately carried to her, and the con-

tents soon made her sensible of the danger to which she was exposed. In this exigence, she was resolved to work upon the king; and paying him her customary visit, he led her as usual to the subject of theology, which at first she seemed to decline, but in which she afterwards engaged, as if merely to gratify his inclinations. In the course of her conversation, however, she gave him to know, that her whole aim in talking was to receive his instructions, and not to controvert them; that it was not for her to set her opinions in opposition to those which served to direct the nation; but she alleged, she could not help trying every art that could induce the king to exert that eloquence which served, for the time, to mitigate his bodily pain. Henry seemed charmed at this discovery; "And is it so, sweet heart?" cried he: "then we are perfect friends again." Just after this reconciliation, the chancellor made his appearance, with forty pursuivants at his heels, prepared to take the queen into custody. But the king advanced to meet him, and seemed to expostulate with him in the severest terms. The queen could overhear the terms, knave, fool, and beast, which he very liberally bestowed upon that magistrate, and his being ordered to depart. When he was gone, she interposed in his defence; but the king could not help saying, "Poor soul, you know not how little entitled this man is to your good offices." Thenceforth the queen was careful not to offend Henry's humour by contradiction: she was contented to suffer the divines to dispute, and the executioner to destroy. The fires accordingly were kindled against the heretics of both sides, as usual; during which dreadful exhibitions, the king would frequently assemble the houses of parliament, and harangue them with florid orations, in which he would aver, that never prince had a greater affection for his people, nor ever people had a greater affection for their king. In every pause of these extraordinary orations, some of his creatures, near his person, would begin to applaud; and this was followed by loud acclamations from the rest of the audience.

But though his health was declining apace, yet his implacable cruelties were not the less frequent. His resentments were diffused indiscriminately to all: at one time a protestant, and at another a catholic, were the objects of his severity. The duke of Norfolk, and his son the earl of Surry, were the last that felt the

injustice of the tyrant's groundless suspicions. The duke was a nobleman who had served the king with talents and fidelity : his son was a young man of the most promising hopes, who excelled in every accomplishment that became a scholar, a courtier, and a soldier. He excelled in all the military exercises which were then in request : he encouraged the fine arts by his practice and example ; and it is remarkable, that he was the first who brought our language, in his poetical pieces, to any degree of refinement. He celebrated the fair Geraldina in all his sonnets, and maintained her superior beauty in all places of public contention. These qualifications, however, were no safeguard to him against Henry's suspicions : he had dropped some expressions of resentment against the king's ministers, upon being displaced from the government of Boulogne ; and the whole family had become obnoxious from the late incontinency of Catharine Howard, the queen, who was executed. From these motives, therefore, private orders were given to arrest the father and son ; and accordingly they were arrested both on the same day, and confined in the Tower. Surry being a commoner, his trial was the more expeditious ; and as to proofs, there were many informers base enough to betray the intimacies of private confidence, and all the connections of blood. The duchess dowager of Richmond, Surry's own sister, enlisted herself among the number of his accusers ; and sir Richard Southwell also, his most intimate friend, charged him with infidelity to the king. It would seem that, at this dreary period, there was neither faith nor honour to be found in all the nation. Surry denied the charge, and challenged his accuser to single combat. This favour was refused him ; and it was alleged, that he had quartered the arms of Edward the Confessor on his escutcheon, which alone was sufficient to convict him of aspiring to the crown. To this he could make no reply : and indeed any answer would have been needless ; for neither parliaments nor juries, during this reign, seemed to be guided by any other proofs than the will of the crown. This young nobleman was, therefore, condemned for high treason, notwithstanding his eloquent and spirited defence ; and the sentence was soon after executed upon him on Tower-hill. In the mean time the duke endeavoured to mollify the king by letters and submissions ; but the monster's hard heart was rarely subject to tender impressions. As soon as

the parliament re-assembled, a bill of attainder was found against the duke, as it was thought he could not so easily have been convicted on a fair hearing by his peers. The only crime that his accusers could allege against him was, that he had once said that the king was sickly, and could not hold out long; and the kingdom was likely to be torn between the contending parties of different persuasions. Cranmer, though engaged for many years in an opposite party to Norfolk, and though he had received many and great injuries from him, would have no hand in so unjust a prosecution; but retired to his seat at Croydon. However, the death-warrant was made out, and immediately sent to the lieutenant of the Tower. The duke prepared for death, as the following morning was to be his last; but an event of greater consequence to the kingdom intervened, and prevented his execution.

The king had been for some time approaching fast towards his end; and for several days all those about his person plainly saw that his speedy death was inevitable. The disorder in his leg was now grown extremely painful; and this, added to his monstrous corpulency, which rendered him unable to stir, made him more furious than a chained lion. He had been ever stern and severe: he was now outrageous. In this state he had continued for near four years before his death, the terror of all, and the tormentor of himself; his courtiers having no inclination to make an enemy of him, as they were more ardently employed in conspiring the death of each other. In this manner, therefore, he was suffered to struggle, without any of his domestics having the courage to warn him of his approaching end, as more than once, during this reign, persons had been put to death for foretelling the death of the king. At last, sir Anthony Denny had the courage to disclose to him this dreadful secret; and, contrary to his usual custom, he received the tidings with an expression of resignation. His anguish and remorse were at this time greater than can be expressed: he desired that Cranmer might be sent for; but, before that prelate could arrive, he was speechless. Cranmer desiring him to give some sign of his dying in the faith of Christ, he squeezed his hand, and immediately expired, after a reign of thirty-seven years and nine months, in the fifty-sixth year of his [1547.] age. Some kings have been tyrants from contradiction and revolt, some from being misled by favourites, and

some from a spirit of party : but Henry was cruel from a depraved disposition alone ; cruel in government, cruel in religion, and cruel in his family. Our divines have taken some pains to vindicate the character of this brutal prince, as if his conduct and our Reformation had any connexion with each other. There is nothing so absurd as to defend the one by the other ; the most noble designs are brought about by the most vitious instruments ; for we see even that cruelty and injustice were thought necessary to be employed in our holy redemption.

With regard to foreign states, Henry made some expeditions into France, which were attended with vast expense to the nation, and brought it no kind of advantage. However, he all along maintained an intercourse of friendship with Francis, which appeared disinterested and sincere. Against the Scots he was rather more successful ; his generals having worsted their incursive armies on several occasions. But that which gave England the greatest ascendancy over that nation, was the spirit of concord which soon after seemed to prevail between the two kingdoms ; and that seemed to pave the way for their being in time united under the same sovereign. There were ten parliaments summoned in this reign, and twenty-three sessions held ; but the whole time in which these parliaments sat, during this long reign, did not exceed three years and a half. The foreign commerce of England, during this age, was mostly confined to the Netherlands. The merchants of the Low-Countries bought the English commodities, and distributed them into the other parts of Europe. These commodities, however, were generally little more than the natural productions of the country, without any manufactures ; for it must be observed at this time, that foreign artificers much surpassed the English in dexterity, industry, and frugality ; and it is said that at one time not less than fifteen thousand artisans, of the Flemish nation alone, were settled in London.

## CHAP. XXIV.

## EDWARD VI.

**H**ENRY the Eighth was succeeded on the throne by his only son, Edward the Sixth, then in the tenth year of his age. The late king in his will, which he expected would be absolutely obeyed, fixed his majority of the prince at the completion of the eighteenth year; and, in the mean time, appointed sixteen executors of his will, to whom, during the minority, he intrusted the government of the king and kingdom. But the vanity of his aims was soon discovered; for the first act of the executors was to choose the earl of Hertford, who was afterwards made duke of Somerset, as protector of the realm; and in him was lodged all the regal power, together with a privilege of naming whom he would for his privy-council.

This was a favourable season for those of the reformed religion; and the eyes of the late king were no sooner closed than all of that persuasion congratulated themselves on the event. They no longer suppressed their sentiments, but maintained their doctrines openly, in preaching and teaching, even while the laws against them continued in full force. The protector had long been regarded as the secret partisan of the reformers; and, being now freed from restraint, he scrupled not to express his intention of correcting all the abuses of the antient religion, and of adopting still more the doctrines propagated by Luther. His power was not a little strengthened by his military success. He wished to compel the Scots to give their young queen (the unfortunate Mary) in marriage to Edward; and, attacking a part of their army, he slew about eight hundred men. The popularity which he gained upon this occasion seconded his views in the propagation of the new doctrines. But the character of Somerset did not stand in need of the mean supports of popularity acquired in this manner, as he was naturally humble, civil, affable, and courteous, to the meanest suitor, while his actions were in general directed by motives of piety and honour.

The protector, in his schemes for advancing the Reformation, had always recourse to the counsels of Cramner, who, being a



man of moderation and prudence, was averse to violent changes; and determined to bring over the people by insensible innovations to his own peculiar system. The person who opposed with the greatest authority any further advances towards reformation, was Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, who, though he had not obtained a place at the council-board, yet, from his age, experience, and capacity, was regarded by most men with some degree of veneration. Upon a general visitation of the church, which had been commanded by the primate and protector, Gardiner defended the use of images, which the protestants now openly attacked: he even wrote an apology for holy water; but he particularly alleged, that it was unlawful to make any change in religion during the king's minority. This opposition of Gardiner drew on him the indignation of the council; and he was sent to the Fleet prison, where he was treated with harshness and severity.

These internal regulations were in some measure retarded by the war with Scotland, which still continued to rage with some violence. But a defeat which that nation suffered at Musselburgh, in which above ten thousand perished in the field of battle, induced them to sue for peace, in order to gain time; and the protector returned to settle the business of the Reformation, which was as yet only begun. But, though he acquired great popularity by this expedition, he did not fail to attract the envy of several noblemen, by procuring a patent from the young king, his nephew, to sit in parliament on the right hand of the throne, and to enjoy the same honours and privileges which had usually been granted to the uncles of kings in England. However, he still drove on his favourite schemes of reformation, and gave more consistency to the tenets of the church. The cup was restored to the laity in the sacrament of the Lord's supper; private masses were abolished; the king was empowered to create bishops by letters-patent; vagabonds were adjudged to be slaves for two years, and to be marked with a red-hot iron; an act commonly supposed to be levelled against the strolling priests and friars. It was enacted also, that all who denied the king's supremacy, or asserted that of the pope, should, for the first offence, forfeit their goods and chattels, and suffer imprisonment during pleasure; that, for the second offence, they should incur the pain of premunire; and, for the third, be attainted of treason. Orders

were soon after issued by the council, that candles should no longer be carried about on Candlemas-day, ashes on Ash-Wednesday, or palms on Palm-Sunday. These were antient superstitious practices, which led to immoralities that it was thought proper to restrain. An order also was issued for the removal of all images from the churches; an innovation which was much desired by the reformers, and which alone, with regard to the populace, amounted almost to a change of the established religion. The people had for some time been extremely distracted by the opposite opinions of their preachers; and as they were totally incapable of judging of the arguments advanced on either side, and naturally regarded every thing they heard at church as of the greatest authority, much confusion and fluctuation resulted from this uncertainty. The council first endeavoured to remove the inconvenience by laying some restraints upon preaching: but finding this expedient fail, they imposed a total silence upon preachers; which, however, was removed by degrees, in proportion as the Reformation gained ground among the people.

But these innovations, evidently calculated for the good of the people, were not brought about without some struggles at home, while the protector was but too busily employed against the Scots, who, united with, and seconded by, France, still pushed on their inroads with unremitting animosity. Besides, there was still an enemy that he had yet to fear more than any of the former; and this was his own brother, lord Thomas Seymour, the admiral, a man of uncommon talents, but proud, turbulent, and intractable. This nobleman could not endure the distinction which the king had always made between him and his elder brother; so that they divided the whole court and the kingdom by their opposite cabals and pretensions. By his flattery and address he had so insinuated himself into the good graces of the queen-dowager, that, forgetting her usual prudence and decency, she married him immediately upon the decease of the late king. This match was particularly displeasing to the elder brother's wife, who now saw that, while her husband had the precedency in one place, she was obliged to yield it in another. His next step was to cabal and make a party among the nobility, who, as they hated his brother, fomented his ambition. He then bribed the king's domestics to his interest; and young Edward fre-

quently went to his house, on pretence of visiting the queen. There he ingratiated himself with his sovereign, by the most officious assiduities, particularly by supplying him with money to distribute among his servants and favourites, without the knowledge of his governor. In the protector's absence with the army in Scotland, he made it his business to redouble all his arts and insinuations; and thus obtained a new patent for admiral, with an additional appointment. Sir William Paget, perceiving the progress he daily made in the king's affection, wrote on the subject to the protector; who finished the campaign in Scotland with all possible dispatch, that he might return in time to counterwork his machinations. But before he could arrive in England, his brother had engaged in his party several of the principal nobility, and had even prevailed on the king himself to write a letter to the two houses of parliament with his own hand, desiring that the admiral might be appointed his governor; but the council, being apprised of his schemes, sent deputies to assure him, that, if he did not desist, they would deprive him of his office, send him prisoner to the Tower, and prosecute him on the last act of parliament, by which he was subject to the penalty of high-treason, for attempting to disturb the peace of the government. It was not without some severe struggles within himself, and some menaces divulged among his creatures, that he thought proper to submit, and desired to be reconciled to his brother. But he still nourished the same designs in secret; and his brother, suspecting his sincerity, employed spies to inform him of all his private transactions.

It was not in the power of persuasions or menaces to shake the admiral's unalterable views of ambition. His spouse, the queen-dowager, had died in child-bed; and this accident, far from repressing his schemes, only seemed to promote them. He made his addresses to the princess Elizabeth, afterwards so revered by the English; and it is said that she listened to his insinuations, contrary to the will of her father, who had excluded her from the succession, if she should marry without the consent of the council. The admiral, however, it is observed, had formed a scheme calculated to remove that objection; and his professions seemed to give reason to believe that he intended aiming at regal authority. By promises and persuasions he brought over many of the

principal nobility to his party ; he neglected not even the most popular persons of inferior rank ; and he computed that he could on occasion command the service of ten thousand men among his servants, tenants, and retainers. He had already provided arms for their use ; and having engaged in his interests sir John Sharrington, master of the mint at Bristol, a very corrupt man, he flattered himself that money would not be wanting.

[1548.] Somerset, being well ascertained of all these alarming circumstances, endeavoured, by every expedient that his power or his near connection could suggest, to draw him from his designs. He reasoned, he threatened ; he heaped new favours upon him ; but all to no purpose. At length he resolved to make use of the last dreadful remedy, and to attain his own brother of high treason. In consequence of this resolution, and secretly advised to it by Dudley earl of Warwick, a wicked ambitious man, who expected to rise upon the downfall of the two brothers, he deprived him of his office of high-admiral, and signed a warrant for committing him to the Tower. Yet still the protector suspended the blow, and showed reluctance to ruin one so nearly connected with himself : he offered once more to be sincerely reconciled, and give him his life, if he would be contented to spend the remainder of his days in retirement and repentance. But finding himself unable to work on the inflexible temper of his brother by any methods but severity, he ordered a charge to be drawn up against him, consisting of thirty-three articles ; and the whole to be brought into parliament, which was now the instrument used by ministers for the punishment of their enemies. The charge being brought first into the house of lords, several peers, rising up in their places, gave an account of what they knew concerning lord Seymour's conduct, and his criminal words and actions. There was greater difficulty in managing [1549.] the prosecution in the house of commons ; but upon receiving a message from the king, requiring them to proceed, the bill passed in a very full house, near four hundred voting for it, and not above nine or ten against it. The sentence was soon after executed by beheading him on Tower-hill. His death, however, was, in general, disagreeable to the nation, who considered the lord Seymour as hardly dealt with, in being condemned upon general allegations, without having an opportunity of making a

defence, or confronting his accusers. But the chief odium fell upon the protector; and it must be owned that there was no reason for carrying his severity to such a length as he did.

This obstacle being removed, the protector went on to reform and regulate the new system of religion, which was now become the chief concern of the nation. A committee of bishops and divines had been appointed by the council to frame a liturgy for the service of the church; and this work was executed with great moderation, precision, and accuracy. A law was also enacted, permitting priests to marry; the ceremony of auricular confession, though not abolished, was left at the discretion of the people, who were not displeased at being freed from the spiritual tyranny of their instructors; the doctrine of the real presence was the last tenet of popery that was wholly abandoned by the people, as both the clergy and laity were loth to renounce so miraculous a benefit as it was asserted to be. However, at last, not only this, but all the principal opinions and practices of the catholic religion, contrary to what the scripture authorises, were abolished; and the Reformation, such as we have it, was almost entirely completed in England. In these innovations the majority of the people and clergy acquiesced; and Gardiner and Bonner were the only persons whose opposition was thought of any weight; they were, therefore, sent to the Tower, and threatened with the king's further displeasure in case of disobedience.

But it had been well for the credit of the reformers, had they stopped at imprisonment only. They also resolved to become persecutors in turn; and although the very spirit of their doctrines arose from a freedom of thinking, they could not bear that any should controvert what they had been at so much pains to establish. A commission was granted to the primate and some others, to search after all anabaptists, heretics, or contemners of the new liturgy. Among the number of those who were supposed to incur guilt upon this occasion, was one Joan Boucher, commonly called Joan of Kent; who was so extremely obstinate, that the commissioners could gain nothing upon her. She had maintained an abstruse metaphysical sentiment, that Christ, as man, was a sinful man; but, as the Word, he was free from sin, and could be subject to none of the frailties of the flesh with which he was clothed. For maintaining this doctrine, which none of

them could understand, this poor ignorant woman was condemned to be burned to death as a heretic. The young king, who, it seems, had more sense than his ministers, refused at first to sign the death-warrant; but, being at last pressed by Cranmer, and vanquished by his importunities, he reluctantly complied; declaring that, if he did wrong, the sin should be on the head of those who had persuaded him to it. The primate made a new effort to reclaim the woman from her opinions; but, finding her obstinate against all his arguments, he at last committed her to the flames. Some time after, one Van Paris, a Dutchman, being accused of Arianism, was condemned to the same punishment. He suffered with so much satisfaction, that he hugged and caressed the faggots that were consuming him, and died exulting in his situation.

Although these measures were intended for the benefit of the nation, and in the end turned out entirely to the advantage of society, yet they were at that time attended with many inconveniences, to which all changes whatsoever are liable. When the monasteries were suppressed, a prodigious number of monks were obliged to earn their subsistence by their labour; so that all kinds of business were overstocked. The lands of the monasteries also had been formerly farmed out to the common people, so as to employ a great number of hands; and the rents being moderate, they were able to maintain their families on the profits of agriculture. But now these lands being possessed by the nobility, the rents were raised; and the farmers, perceiving that wool was a better commodity than corn, turned all their fields into pasture. In consequence of this practice, the price of meal rose, to the unspeakable hardship of the lower class of people. Beside, as few hands were required to manage a pasture farm, a great number of poor people were utterly deprived of subsistence, while the nation was filled with murmurs and complaints against the nobility, who were considered as the sources of the general calamity. To add to these complaints, the rich proprietors of lands proceeded to enclose their estates; while the tenants, regarded as an useless burthen, were expelled from their habitations. Cottagers, deprived of the commons on which they formerly fed their cattle, were reduced to misery; and a great decay of people, and diminution of provisions, were observed in every part of the king-

dom. To add to this picture of general calamity, all the good coin of the kingdom was hoarded up or exported; while a base metal was coined, or imported from the continent in great abundance; and this the poor were obliged to receive in payment, but could not disburse at an equal advantage. Thus an universal diffidence and stagnation of commerce took place; and loud complaints were heard in every quarter.

The protector, who knew that his own power was to be founded on the depression of the nobility, espoused the cause of the sufferers. He appointed commissioners to examine whether the possessors of the church-lands had fulfilled the conditions on which those lands had been sold by the crown; and ordered all late enclosures to be laid open on an appointed day. As the object of this commission was very disagreeable to the gentry and nobility, they called it arbitrary and illegal; while the common people, fearing it would be eluded, and being impatient for redress, rose in great numbers, and sought a remedy by force of arms. The rising began at once in several parts of England, as if an universal conspiracy had been formed among the people. The rebels in Wiltshire were dispersed by sir William Herbert; those of Oxford and Gloucester, by lord Grey of Wilton; the commotions in Hampshire, Sussex, Kent, and other counties, were quieted by gentle methods; but the disorders in Devonshire and Norfolk were the most obstinate, and threatened the greatest danger. In the former of these counties, the insurgents, amounting to ten thousand men, were headed by one Humphry Arundel, an experienced soldier; and they were still more encouraged by sermons, which gave their revolt the air of a religious confederacy. They accordingly sent a set of articles to court, which, in general, demanded an abolition of the statutes lately made in favour of the Reformation; but the ministry rejected their demands with contempt, at the same time offering a pardon to all who would lay down their arms and return to their habitations. But the insurgents were now too far advanced to recede; and, still encouraged by the monks who were with them, they laid siege to Exeter, carrying before them crosses, banners, holy-water, candlesticks, and other implements of their antient superstition; but the town was gallantly defended by the inhabitants. In the mean time, lord Russel had been sent against them with a

small body of forces ; and, being reinforced by lord Grey and others, he attacked and drove them from all their entrenchments. Great slaughter was committed upon these deluded creatures, both in the action and the pursuit. Arundel, their leader, and several others, were sent to London, where they were condemned and executed. Many of the inferior sort were put to death by martial law. The vicar of St. Thomas, one of the principal incendiaries, was hanged on the top of his own steeple, arrayed in his popish habit, with his beads at his girdle.

The sedition in Norfolk appeared still more alarming. The insurgents there amounted to twenty thousand men ; and, as their forces were numerous, their demands were exorbitant. They required the suppression of the gentry, the placing new counsellors about the king, and the re-establishment of their ancient religious ceremonies. One Ket, a tanner, had assumed a priority among them ; he erected his tribunal near Norwich, under an old oak, which was termed the Oak of Reformation. He afterwards undertook the siege of Norwich ; which having reduced, he imprisoned the mayor, and some of the principal citizens. The marquis of Northampton was first sent down against them, but met with a repulse ; the earl of Warwick followed soon after, at the head of six thousand men, and, coming to a general engagement, put them entirely to the rout. Two thousand of them fell in the fight and pursuit ; Ket was hanged at Norwich castle, nine of his followers on the boughs of the Oak of Reformation ; and the insurrection, which was the last in favour of popery, was thus entirely suppressed.

But though the suppression of these insurrections seemed to be very favourable to the interests of the protector, the authority which the earl of Warwick gained in quelling that of Norfolk terminated in Somerset's ruin. Of all the ministers at that time in the council, Dudley, earl of Warwick, was the most artful, ambitious, and unprincipled. Resolved at any rate to possess the principal place under the king, he cared not what means were to be used in acquiring it. However, unwilling to throw off the mask, he covered the most exorbitant views under the fairest appearances. Having associated himself with the earl of Southampton, he formed a strong party in the council, who were determined to free themselves from the control the protector assum-



ed over them. That nobleman was, in fact, now grown obnoxious to a very prevailing party in the kingdom. He was hated by the nobles for his superior magnificence and power; he was hated by the catholic party for his regard to the Reformation; he was disliked by many for his severity to his brother: besides, the great estate he had raised at the expense of the church and the crown rendered him obnoxious to all. The palace which he was then building in the Strand, served also, by its magnificence, and still more by the unjust methods that were taken to raise it, to expose him to the censures of the public. The parish church of St. Mary, and three bishops' houses, were pulled down, to furnish ground and materials for the structure. Several other churches were demolished, to have their stones employed for the same purpose; and it was not without an insurrection that the inhabitants of the parish of St. Margaret, Westminster, prevented their church from being pulled down to make room for the new fabric.

These imprudences were soon exaggerated and enlarged upon by Somerset's enemies. They represented him as a parricide, a sacrilegious tyrant, and an unjust usurper upon the privileges of the council and the rights of the king. In consequence of this, the lord St. John, president of the council, the earls of Warwick, Southampton, and Arundel, with five counsellors more, met at Ely-house; and, assuming to themselves the whole power of the council, began to act independently of the protector, whom they pretended to consider as the author of every public grievance. They wrote letters to the chief nobility and gentry of England, informing them of the present measures, and requiring their assistance. They sent for the mayor and aldermen of London, and enjoined them to concur in their measures, which they represented as the only means of saving the nation. The next day several others of the council joined the seceding members; and the protector now began to tremble, not merely for his authority, but for his life.

He had no sooner been informed of these transactions than he sent the king to Windsor, and armed the inhabitants of Hampton and Windsor also for his security. But finding that no man of rank, except Cranmer and Paget, adhered to him, and that the people did not rise at his summons; perceiving that he was in a manner deserted by all, and that all resistance was fruitless; he

resolved to apply to his enemies for pardon. This gave fresh strength and confidence to the party of Warwick; they assured the king, with the humblest professions of obedience, that their only aim was to put the council on the same footing on which it had been ordained by the will of their late sovereign, and to rescue his authority from the hands of a man who had assumed all power to himself. The king, who had little regard for Somerset, gave their address a favourable reception; and the protector was sent to the Tower, with some of his friends and partisans. Meanwhile the council ordered six lords to act as governors to the king, two at a time officiating alternately. It was then, for the first time, that the earl of Warwick's ambition began to appear in full splendour; he set himself forward as the principal promoter of the protector's ruin; and the other members, without the least opposition, permitted him to assume the reins of government.

It was now concluded that Somerset's fate was fixed, as his enemies were numerous, and the charges against him were supposed to be of a very heinous nature. The chief article of which he was accused was his usurpation of the government, and the taking all power into his own hands; several others of a slighter tint were added to invigorate this accusation; but none of them could be said to amount to the crime of high-treason. In consequence of these, a bill of attainder was preferred against [1550.] him in the house of lords; but Somerset contrived, for this time, to elude the rigour of their sentence, by having previously, on his knees, confessed the charge before the members of the council. This confession, which he signed with his own hand, was alleged and read against him at the bar of the house, who sent a deputation to him, to know whether the confession was voluntary or extorted. Somerset thanked them for their candour; owned that it was his voluntary act, but strenuously insisted, that he had never harboured a sinister thought against the king or the commonwealth. In consequence of this confession, he was deprived of all his offices and goods, together with a great part of his landed estate, which was forfeited to the use of the crown. This fine on his estate was soon after remitted by the king; and, contrary to the expectation of all, he recovered his liberty. He was even re-admitted into the council: happy for him if his ambition had not revived with his security!

The catholics were extremely elevated at the protector's fall ; and they began to entertain hopes of a revolution in their favour. But they were mistaken in their opinion of Warwick, who now took the lead, as ambition was the only principle in his breast ; and to that he was resolved to sacrifice all others. He soon gave an instance of his disregard to their sect, in permitting Gardiner to undergo the penalties prescribed against disobedience. Many of the prelates, and he among the rest, though they made some compliance, were still addicted to their antient communion. A resolution was therefore taken to deprive them of their sees ; and it was thought proper to begin with him, in order to strike a terror into the rest. He had been now for two years in prison, for having refused to inculcate the duty of obedience to the king during his minority ; and the council took this opportunity to send him several articles to subscribe, among which was one, acknowledging the justice of the order for his confinement. He was likewise to own that the king was supreme head of the church ; that the power of making and dispensing holidays was a part of the prerogative ; and that the Common Prayer Book was a godly and commendable form. Gardiner was willing to put his hand to all the articles, except that by which he accused himself ; which he refused to do, justly perceiving that their aim was either to ruin or dishonour him. For this offence he was deprived of his bishopric, and committed to close custody ; his books and papers were seized ; all company was denied him ; and he was not even permitted the use of pen and ink. This severity, in some measure, countenanced those which this prelate had afterwards an opportunity of retaliating when he came into power.

But the reformers did not stop here ; the rapacious courtiers, never to be satisfied, and giving their violence [1551.] an air of zeal, deprived, in the same manner, Day, bishop of Chichester, Heath of Worcester, and Vesey of Exeter. The bishops of Llandaff, Salisbury, and Coventry, came off rather less disadvantageously, by sacrificing the most considerable share of their ecclesiastical revenues. Not only the revenues of the church, but the libraries also, underwent a severe scrutiny. The libraries of Westminster and Oxford were ordered to be ransacked, and purged of the Romish missals, legends, and other superstitious volumes ; in which search great devastation was made even in

useful literature. Many volumes, clasped in silver, were destroyed for the sake of their rich bindings; many of geometry and astronomy were supposed to be magical, and met no mercy. The university, unable to stop the fury of those barbarians, silently looked on, and trembled for its own security.

Warwick was willing to indulge the nobility with these humiliations of the church; and perceiving that the king was extremely attached to the Reformation, he supposed that he could not make his court to the young monarch better than by a seeming zeal in the cause. But he was still steadfastly bent on enlarging his own power; and, as the last earl of Northumberland died without issue or heirs, Warwick procured for himself a grant of his ample possessions, and obtained the title also of duke of Northumberland. The duke of Somerset was now the only person he wished to have entirely removed; for, fallen as he was by his late spiritless conduct, yet he still preserved a share of popularity that rendered him formidable to this aspirer. Indeed Somerset was not always upon his guard against the arts of Northumberland, but could not help now and then bursting out into invectives, which were quickly carried to his secret enemy. As he was surrounded by the creatures of the new duke, they took care to reveal all the schemes which they had themselves suggested; and Somerset soon found the fatal effects of his rival's resentment. He was, by Northumberland's command, arrested, with many more accused of being his partisans; and he was, with his wife the duchess, thrown into prison. He was now accused of having conspired to raise an insurrection in the North, to attack the trained-bands on a muster-day, secure the Tower, and excite a rebellion in London. These charges he strenuously denied; but he confessed one of as heinous a nature, which was, that he had laid a project for murdering Northumberland, Northampton, and Pembroke, at a banquet which was to be given them by lord Paget. He was soon after brought to a trial before the marquis of Winchester, who sat as high-steward on the occasion, with twenty-seven peers more, including Northumberland, Pembroke, and Northampton, who were at once his judges and accusers. He was accused of an intention to secure the person of the king, and re-assume the administration of affairs; to assassinate the duke of Northumberland, and raise an insurrection in the city.

He pleaded "not guilty" to the first part of the charge, and of this he was accordingly acquitted; but he was found guilty of conspiring the death of a privy counsellor, which crime had been made felony in the reign of Henry the Seventh; and for this he was condemned to death. The populace, seeing him reconveyed to the Tower without the axe, which was no longer carried before him, imagined that he had been entirely acquitted, and in repeated shouts and acclamations manifested their joy; but this was suddenly damped, when they were better informed of his doom. Care, in the mean time, had been taken to prepossess the young king against his uncle; and, lest he should relent, no access was given to any of Somerset's friends, while the prince was kept from reflection by a series of occupations and amusements. At last the prisoner was brought to the scaffold on Tower-hill, where he appeared without the least emotion, in the midst of a vast concourse of the populace, by whom he was beloved. He spoke to them with great composure, protesting that he had always promoted the service of his king, and the interests of true religion, to the best of his power. The people attested their belief to what he said, by crying out, "It is most true." As an universal tumult was beginning to take place among [1552.] them, Somerset desired them to be still, and not to interrupt his last meditations, but to join with him in prayer: he then laid down his head, and submitted to the stroke of the executioner. Sir Ralph Vane and sir Miles Partridge were hanged; sir Michael Stanhope and sir Thomas Arundel were beheaded, as being his accomplices.

Nothing could have been more unpopular than the measure of destroying Somerset, who, though some actions of his life were very exceptionable, consulted the good of the people. The house of commons was particularly attached to him; and of this Northumberland was very sensible. He therefore advised the king to dissolve the parliament, and call another that would be more obsequious to his will. Edward was even prevailed upon to write circular letters to all the sheriffs, in which he enjoined them to choose such men as he and the privy-council should recommend. With this despotic mandate the sheriffs readily complied; and the members returned fully answered Northumberland's expectations. He had long aimed at the first authority; and the infirm

[1553.] state of the king's health opened the prospects of his ambition. He represented to that young prince that his sisters Mary and Elizabeth, who were appointed by Henry's will to succeed on the failure of direct heirs to the crown, had been both declared illegitimate by parliament; that the queen of Scotland was excluded by the king's will, and, being an alien also, lost all right of succeeding; that as the three princesses were thus legally excluded, the succession naturally devolved to the marchioness of Dorset (niece of Henry), whose heir was the lady Jane Grey, a lady every way accomplished for government, as well by the charms of her person as the virtues and acquirements of her mind. The king, who had long submitted to all the politic views of this designing minister, agreed to have the succession submitted to council, where Northumberland hoped to procure an easy concurrence.

In the mean time, as the king's health declined, the minister laboured to strengthen his own interests and connexions. His first aim was to secure the interest of the marquis of Dorset, father to lady Jane Grey, by procuring for him the title of duke of Suffolk, which was lately become extinct. Having thus obliged this nobleman, he then proposed a match between his fourth son, lord Guilford Dudley, and the lady Jane Grey, whose interests she had been at so much pains to advance. Still bent on spreading his interests as widely as possible, he married his own daughter to lord Hastings, and had these marriages solemnized with all possible pomp and festivity. Mean while, Edward continued to languish; and several fatal symptoms of a consumption began to appear. It was hoped, however, that his youth and temperance might get the better of his disorders; and from their love the people were unwilling to think him in danger. It had been remarked indeed by some, that his health was visibly seen to decline from the time that the Dudleys were brought about his person. The character of Northumberland might have justly given some colour to suspicion; and his removing all, except his own emissaries, from about the king, still further increased the disgusts of the people. Northumberland was no way uneasy at their murmurs; he was assiduous in his attendance upon the king, and professed the most anxious concern for his safety, but still drove forward his darling scheme of transferring the succession to his own

daughter-in-law. The judges who were appointed to draw up the king's letters-patent for that purpose warmly objected to the measure, and gave their reasons before the council. They begged that a parliament might be summoned, both to give it force, and to free its partisans from danger; they said, that the form was invalid, and would not only subject the judges who drew it, but every counsellor who signed it, to the pains of treason. Northumberland could not brook their demurs; he threatened them with the dread of his authority; he called one of them a traitor, and said that he would fight in his shirt with any man in so just a cause as that of the lady Jane's succession. A method was therefore found out of screening the judges from danger, by granting them the king's pardon for what they should draw up; and at length, after much deliberation, and some refusals, the patent for changing the succession was completed. By this patent, Mary and Elizabeth were set aside, and the crown was settled on the heirs of the duchess of Suffolk; for the duchess herself was contented to forego her claim.

Northumberland, having thus far succeeded, thought physicians were no longer serviceable in the king's complaint; they were dismissed by his advice; and Edward was put into the hands of an ignorant woman, who very confidently undertook his cure. After the use of her medicines, all the bad symptoms increased to a most violent degree; he felt a difficulty of speech and breathing; his pulse failed, his legs swelled, his colour became livid, and many other symptoms appeared of his approaching end. He expired at Greenwich, in the six-  
July 6,  
1553.
 teen year of his age, and the seventh of his reign, greatly regretted by all, as his early virtues gave a prospect of the continuance of a happy reign. What were the real qualities of this young prince's heart, there was not time to discover; but the cultivation of his understanding, if we may credit historians, was amazing. He was said to understand the Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish languages. He was versed in logic, music, natural philosophy, and theology. Cardan, the extraordinary scholar and physician, happening to pay a visit to the English court, was so astonished at his early progress, that he extols him as a prodigy of nature. It is probable, however, that so much flattery as he received would have contributed to corrupt him, as it had formerly corrupted his father.

## CHAP. XXV.

## MARY.

THE death of Edward only served to prepare fresh troubles for a people that had hitherto greatly suffered from the depravity of their kings, or the turbulence of their nobility. The succession to the throne had hitherto been obtained partly by lineal descent, and partly by the aptitude for government in the person chosen. Neither quite hereditary, nor quite elective, it had made ancestry the pretext of right, while the consent of the people was necessary to support all hereditary pretensions. In fact, when wisely conducted, this is the best species of succession that can be conceived, as it prevents that aristocracy which is ever the result of a government entirely elective, and that tyranny which is too often established, where there is never an infringement of hereditary claims.

Whenever a monarch of England happened to be arbitrary, and to enlarge the prerogative, he generally considered the kingdom as his property, and not himself as a servant of the people. In such a case, it was natural for him at his decease to bequeath his dominions as he thought proper, making his own will the standard of his subjects' happiness. Henry the Eighth, in conformity to this practice, made his will, in which he settled the succession merely according to his caprice. In that, Edward his son was the first nominated to succeed him; then Mary, his eldest daughter by Catharine of Spain; but with a special mark of condescension, by which he would intimate her illegitimacy. The next that followed was Elizabeth, his daughter by Anne Boleyn, with the same marks, intimating her illegitimacy also. After his own children, his sisters' children were mentioned: the issue of his younger sister the duchess of Suffolk were preferred to those of his elder sister the queen of Scotland; which preference was thought by all to be neither founded in justice, nor supported by reason. This will was now, however, set aside by the intrigues of Northumberland, by whose advice a will was made, as we have seen, in favour of lady Jane Grey, in prejudice of all other claimants. Thus, after the death of this young monarch, there were



no fewer than four princesses who could assert their pretensions to the crown : Mary, who was the first upon Henry's will, but who had been declared illegitimate by an act of parliament, which had not been repealed : Elizabeth was next to succeed ; and though she had been declared illegitimate, yet she had been restored to her rights during her father's life. The young queen of Scotland, grand-daughter of Henry's eldest sister, was first in right, supposing the two daughters illegitimate, while lady Jane Grey might allege the will of the late king in her own favour.

Of these, however, only two put in their pretensions to the crown ; Mary, relying on the justice of her cause, and lady Jane upon the support of the duke of Northumberland, her father-in-law. Mary was strongly bigoted to the popish superstitions, having been bred up among churchmen, and having been even taught to prefer martyrdom to a denial of belief. As she had lived in continual restraint, she was reserved and gloomy ; she had, even during the life of Henry, the resolution to maintain her sentiments, and refused to comply with his new institutions. Her zeal had rendered her furious ; and she was not only blindly attached to her religious opinions, but even to the popish clergy who maintained them. On the other hand, Jane Grey was strongly attached to the reformers ; and, though yet but sixteen, her judgment had attained to such a degree of maturity as few have been found to possess. All historians agree that the solidity of her understanding, improved by continual application, rendered her the wonder of her age. Ascham, tutor to Elizabeth, informs us, that, having visited lady Jane at her father's house in Leicestershire, he found her reading Plato's works in Greek, while all the rest of the family were hunting in the park. Upon his testifying his surprise at her situation, she assured him that Plato was a higher amusement to her than the most studied refinements of sensual pleasure ; and she, in fact, seemed born for philosophy, and not for ambition.

Such were the present rivals for power ; but lady Jane had the start of her antagonist. Northumberland, now resolving to secure the succession, carefully concealed the death of Edward, in hope of securing the person of Mary, who, by an order of council, had been required to attend her brother during his illness ; but being informed of his death, she immediately prepared

to assert her pretensions to the crown. This crafty minister, therefore, finding that further dissimulation was needless, went to Sion-house, accompanied by the duke of Suffolk, the earl of Pembroke, and others of the nobility, to salute lady Jane Grey, who resided there. Jane was in a great measure ignorant of all these transactions; and it was with equal grief and surprise that she received intelligence of them. She shed a flood of tears, appeared inconsolable, and it was not without the utmost difficulty that she yielded to the entreaties of Northumberland and the duke her father. At length, however, they exhorted her to consent, and next day conveyed her to the Tower, where it was usual for the sovereigns of England to pass some days after their accession. Thither also all the members of the council were obliged to attend her; and thus were in some measure made prisoners by Northumberland, whose will they were under a necessity of obeying. Orders were also given for proclaiming her throughout the kingdom; but these were very remissly obeyed. When she was proclaimed in the city, the people heard her accession made public without any signs of pleasure: no applause ensued, and some even expressed their scorn and contempt.

In the mean time Mary, who had retired, upon the news of the king's death, to Kenning-Hall in Norfolk, sent circular letters to all the great towns and nobility in the kingdom, reminding them of her right, and commanding them to proclaim her without delay. Having taken these steps, she retired to Framlingham-Castle in Suffolk, that she might be near the sea, and escape to Flanders in case of failure. But she soon found her affairs wear the most promising aspect. The men of Suffolk came to pay her their homage; and, being assured by her that she would defend the laws and the religion of her predecessor, they enlisted themselves in her cause with alacrity and affection. The people of Norfolk soon after came in; the earls of Bath and Sussex, and the eldest sons of lord Wharton and lord Mordaunt, joined her; and lord Hastings, with four thousand men, who had been raised to oppose her, revolted to her side. Even a fleet, that had been sent to lie off the coast of Suffolk to prevent her escaping, engaged in her service; and now, but too late, Northumberland saw the deplorable end of all his schemes and ambition.

This minister, with the consent of the council, had assembled

some troops at Newmarket, had set on foot new levies in London, and appointed the duke of Suffolk general of the army, that he might himself continue with and over-awe the deliberations of the council. But he was diverted from this mode of managing his affairs, by considering how unfit Suffolk was to head the army; so that he was obliged himself to take upon him the military command. It was now, therefore, that the council, being free from his influence, and no longer dreading his immediate authority, began to declare against him. The earl of Arundel led the opposition, by representing the injustice and cruelty of Northumberland, and the exorbitancy of his ambition. Pembroke seconded him with declarations that he was ready to fight all of a contrary opinion; the mayor and aldermen, who were sent for, readily came into the same measures; the people expressed their approbation by shouts and applauses; and even Suffolk himself, finding all resistance fruitless, threw open the gates of the Tower, and joined in the general cry. Mary's claims now became irresistible: in a little time she found herself at the head of a powerful army; while the few who attended Northumberland continued irresolute; and he even feared to lead them to the encounter.

Lady Jane, thus finding that all was lost, resigned her royalty, which she had held but nine days, with marks of real satisfaction, and retired with her mother to her own habitation. Northumberland also, who found his affairs desperate, and that it was impossible to stem the tide of popular opposition, attempted to quit the kingdom; but he was prevented by the band of pensioner guards, who informed him that he must stay to justify their conduct in being led out against their lawful sovereign. Thus circumvented on all sides, his cunning was now his only resource; and he began by endeavouring to recommend himself to Mary, by the most extravagant protestations of zeal in her service. He repaired to the market-place in Cambridge, proclaimed her queen of England, and was the first to throw up his cap in token of joy. But he reaped no advantage from this mean duplicity; he was the next day arrested in the queen's name by the earl of Arundel, at whose feet he fell upon his knees, begging protection with the most abject submission. Three of his sons, his brother, and some more of his followers, were arrested with him, and committed to

the Tower of London. Soon after, the lady Jane Grey, the duke of Suffolk her father, and lord Guilford Dudley her husband, were made prisoners by order of the queen, whose authority was now confirmed by universal assent.

Northumberland was the first who suffered for opposing her, and was the person who deserved the punishment the most. When brought to his trial, he openly desired permission to ask two questions of the peers who were appointed to sit on his jury: "Whether a man could be guilty of treason, who obeyed orders given him by the council under the great seal; and whether those involved in the same guilt with himself could act as his judges?" Being told that the great seal of an usurper was no authority, and that his judges were proper, as they were unimpeached, he acquiesced, and pleaded Guilty. At his execution, he owned himself a papist, and exhorted the people to return to the catholic faith, as they hoped for happiness and tranquillity. Sir John Gates and sir Thomas Palmer, two of the infamous tools of his power, suffered with him; and the queen's resentment was appeased by the lives of three men, who had forfeited them by several former crimes. Sentence was pronounced against lady Jane and lord Guilford, but without any intention for the present of putting it in execution: the youth and innocence of the persons, neither of whom had completed their seventeenth year, pleaded powerfully in their favour.

Mary now entered London, and, with very little effusion of blood, saw herself joyfully proclaimed, and peaceably settled on the throne. This was the crisis of English happiness: a queen whose right was the most equitable, in some measure elected by the people, the aristocracy of the last reign almost wholly suppressed, the house of commons by this means reinstated in its ancient authority, the pride of the clergy humbled, and their vices detected, peace abroad, and unanimity at home; this was the flattering prospect on Mary's accession: but soon this pleasing phantom was dissolved. Mary was morose, and a bigot; she was resolved to give back their former power to the clergy, and thus once more to involve the kingdom in all the horrors it had just emerged from. The queen had promised the men of Suffolk, who first came to declare in her favour, that she would suffer religion to remain in the situation in which she found it. This promise,

however, she by no means intended to perform ; she had determined on bringing the sentiments of the people to correspond with her own ; and her extreme ignorance rendered her utterly incapable of doubting her own belief, or of granting indulgence to the doubts of others. Gardiner, Bonner, Tonsal, Day, Heath, and Vesey, who had been confined, or suffered losses, for their catholic opinions, during the late reigns, were taken from prison, reinstated in their sees, and their former sentences repealed. On pretence of discouraging controversy, she silenced, by her prerogative, all preachers throughout England, except such as should obtain a particular licence, which she was previously determined to grant only to those of her own persuasion. Men now foresaw that the Reformation was to be overturned ; and though the queen still pretended that she would grant a general toleration, yet no great favour could be expected by those whom from inveterate prejudice she hated.

The first step that caused an alarm among the protestants was the severe treatment of Cranmer, whose moderation, integrity, and virtues, had made him dear even to most of the catholic party. A report being spread, that this prelate, in order to make his court to the queen, had promised to officiate in the Latin service, he drew up a declaration, in which he entirely cleared himself of the aspersion, but incurred what was much more terrible, the queen's resentment. On the publication of this paper, Cranmer was thrown into prison, and tried for the part he had acted, in concurring, among the rest of the council, to exalt lady Jane, and set aside the rightful sovereign. This guilt he had in fact incurred ; but as it was shared with a large body of men, most of whom were not only uncensured, but even taken into favour, the malignancy of the prosecution was easily seen through. Sentence of high treason was, therefore, pronounced against him ; but it was not then executed, as this venerable man was reserved for a more dreadful punishment. Shortly after, Peter Martyr, a German reformer, who had in the late reign been invited over to England, seeing how things were likely to go, desired leave to return to his native country. But the zeal of the catholics, though he had escaped them, was malignantly, though harmlessly, wreaked upon the body of his wife, which had been interred some years before at Oxford : it was dug up by public order, and buried in a

dunghill. The bones also of Bucer and Fagius, two foreign reformers, were about the same time committed to the flames at Cambridge. The greater part of the foreign protestants took early precautions to leave the kingdom; and many arts and manufactures fled with them. Nor were their fears without foundation; a parliament, which the queen called soon after, seemed willing to concur in all her measures; they at one blow repealed all the statutes with regard to religion, which had passed during the reign of her predecessor; so that the national religion was again placed on the same footing on which it stood at the death of Henry the Eighth.

While religion was thus returning to its pristine abuses, the queen's ministers, who were willing to strengthen her power by a catholic alliance, had been for some time looking out for a proper consort. The person on whom her own affections seemed chiefly placed was the earl of Devonshire; but that nobleman, either disliking her person, or having already placed his affections on her sister Elizabeth, neglected all overtures to such an alliance. Pole, who, though a cardinal, was not a priest, and was therefore at liberty to marry, was proposed as a husband for the queen, as he was a person of high character for virtue, generosity, and attachment to the catholic religion. But, as he was in the decline of life, Mary soon dropped all thoughts of him. The person last thought of, and who succeeded, was Philip prince of Spain, son of the celebrated Charles the Fifth. In order to avoid any disagreeable remonstrances from the people, the articles of marriage were drawn as favourably as possible to the interests and honour of England; and this, in some measure, stilled the clamours that had already arisen against it. It was agreed, that, though Philip should have the title of king, the administration should be entirely in the queen; that no foreigner should be capable of enjoying any office in the kingdom; that no innovation should be made in the English laws, customs, and privileges; that her issue should inherit, together with England, Burgundy and the Low-Countries; and that if Don Carlos, Philip's son by a former marriage, should die, the queen's issue should enjoy all the dominions possessed by the king. Such was the treaty of marriage, from which politicians foresaw very great changes in the system of Europe; but which in the end came to nothing, by the queen's having no issue.

The people, however, who did not see so far, were much more just in their surmises that it might be a blow to their liberties and religion. They loudly murmured against it, and a flame of discontent was kindled over the whole nation. Sir Thomas Wyatt, a Roman-catholic, at the head of four thousand insurgents, marched from Kent to Hyde Park, publishing, as he went forward, a declaration against the queen's evil counsellors, and against the Spanish match. His first aim was to secure the Tower; but this rashness undid him. As he marched forward through the city of London, and among the narrow streets, without suspicion, care was taken by the earl of Pembroke to block up the way behind him by ditches and chains thrown across, and guards were placed at all the avenues, to prevent his return. In this manner did the bold rebel pass onward; and he supposed himself ready to reap the fruits of his undertaking, when, to his utter confusion, he found that he could neither go forward, nor yet make good his retreat. He now perceived that the citizens, from whom he had expected assistance, would not join him; and, losing all courage in this exigency, he surrendered at discretion.

The duke of Suffolk was not less guilty also; he had joined in a confederacy with sir Peter Carew, to excite an insurrection in the counties of Warwick and Leicester; but his confederate's impatience engaging him to rise in arms before the day appointed, the duke vainly endeavoured to excite his dependants. He was so closely pursued by the earl of Huntingdon, that he was obliged to disperse his followers; and, being discovered in his retreat, was led prisoner to London, where he, together with Wyatt, and seventy persons more, suffered by the hand of the executioner. Four hundred were conducted before the queen with ropes about their necks; and, falling on their knees, received pardon, and were dismissed.

But what excited the compassion of the people most of all, was the execution of lady Jane Grey, and her husband lord Guilford Dudley, who were involved in the punishment, though not in the guilt, of this insurrection. Two days after Wyatt was apprehended, lady Jane and her husband were ordered to prepare for death. Lady Jane, who had long before seen the threatened blow, was no way surprised at the message, but bore it with heroic resolution; and being informed that she had three days to prepare,

she seemed displeased at so long a delay. On the day of her execution, her husband desired permission to see her; but this she refused, as she knew the parting would be too tender for her fortitude to withstand. The place at first designed for their execution was without the Tower; but their youth, beauty, and innocence, being likely to raise an insurrection among the people, orders were given that they should be executed within the verge of that fortress. Lord Dudley was the first that suffered; and while the lady Jane was proceeding to the place of execution, the officers of the Tower met her, bearing along the headless body of her husband streaming with blood, in order to be interred in the Tower-chapel. She looked on the corpse for some time without any emotion; and then, with a sigh, desired them to proceed. Sir John Gage, constable of the Tower, as he led her to execution, desired her to bestow on him some small present, which he might keep as a perpetual memorial of her. She gave him her tablets, where she had just written three sentences on seeing her husband's dead body, one in Greek, one in Latin, and one in English, importing that human justice was against his body, but divine mercy would be favourable to his soul; and that God and posterity, she hoped, would do justice to them and their cause. On the scaffold she made a speech, in which she alleged that her offence was not the having laid her hand upon the crown, but the not rejecting it with sufficient constancy; that she had less erred through ambition than filial obedience; that she willingly accepted death, as the only atonement she could make to the injured state; and was ready, by her punishment, to show that innocence is no plea in excuse for deeds that tend to injure the community. After speaking to this effect, she caused herself to be disrobed by her women, and with a steady serene countenance submitted to the executioner.

The enemies of the state being thus suppressed, the theatre was now opened for the pretended enemies of religion. The queen, being freed from apprehensions of an insurrection, began by assembling a parliament, which, upon this as upon most occasions, seemed only met to give countenance to her various severities. The nobles, whose only religion was that of the prince who governed, were easily gained over; and the house of commons had long been passive under all the variations of regal caprice. But



a new enemy had started up against the reformers, in the person of the king, who, though he took all possible care to conceal his aversion, yet secretly influenced the queen, and inflamed all her proceedings. Philip had for some time been in England, and had used every endeavour to increase that share of power which had been allowed to him by parliament, but without effect. The queen, indeed, who loved him with a foolish fondness, that sat but ill on a person of her years and disagreeable person, endeavoured to please him by every concession she could make or procure; and finding herself incapable of satisfying his ambition, she was not remiss in concurring with his zeal; so that heretics began to be persecuted with inquisitorial severity. The old sanguinary laws were now revived: orders were given that the bishops and priests who had married should be ejected; that the mass should be restored; that the pope's authority should be established; and that the church and its privileges, all but their goods and estates, should be put upon the same foundation on which they were before the commencement of the Reformation. As the gentry and nobles had already divided the church-lands among them, it was thought inconvenient, and indeed impossible, to make a restoration of these.

At the head of those who drove such measures forward, but not in an equal degree, were Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, and cardinal Pole, who had lately arrived in England from the continent. Pole, who was nearly allied by birth to the royal family, had always conscientiously adhered to the catholic religion, and had incurred Henry's displeasure, not only by refusing his assent to his measures, but by writing against him. It was for this adherence that he was cherished by the pope, and now sent over to England as legate from the holy see. Gardiner was a man of a very different character: his chief aim was to please the reigning prince, and he had shown already many instances of his prudent conformity. He now perceived that the king and queen were for rigorous measures; and he knew that it would be the best means of paying his court to them, even to outgo them in severity. Pole, who had never varied in his principles, declared in favour of toleration; Gardiner, who had often changed, was for punishing those changes in others with the utmost rigour. However, he was too prudent to appear at the head of a persecu-

tion in person ; he therefore consigned that odious office to Bonner, bishop of London, a cruel, brutal, and ignorant man.

[1555.] This bloody scene began by the martyrdom of Hooper, bishop of Gloucester, and Rogers, prebendary of St. Paul's. They were examined by commissioners appointed by the queen, with the chancellor at the head of them. It was expected that by their recantation they would bring those opinions into disrepute which they had so long inculcated : but the persecutors were deceived ; they both continued steadfast in their belief ; and they were accordingly condemned to be burned, Rogers in Smithfield, and Hooper in his own diocese at Gloucester. Rogers, beside the care of his own preservation, lay under very powerful temptations to deny his principles, and save his life ; for he had a wife whom he tenderly loved, and ten children ; but nothing could move his resolution. Such was his serenity after condemnation, that the jailors, we are told, waked him from a sound sleep upon the approach of the hour appointed for his execution. He desired to see his wife before he died ; but Gardiner told him, that being a priest he could have no wife. When the faggots were placed around him, he seemed no way daunted at the preparation, but cried out, " I resign my life with joy, in testimony of the doctrine of Jesus !" When Hooper was tied to the stake, a stool was set before him with the queen's pardon upon it, in case he should recant ; but he ordered it to be removed, and prepared cheerfully to suffer his sentence, which was executed in its full severity. The fire, either from malice or neglect, had not been sufficiently kindled ; so that his legs and thighs were first burned, and one of his hands dropped off, while with the other he continued to beat his breast. He was three quarters of an hour in torture, which he bore with inflexible constancy.

Sanders and Taylor, two other clergymen, whose zeal had been distinguished in carrying on the Reformation, were the next that suffered. Taylor was put into a pitch-barrel ; and, before the fire was kindled, a faggot from an unknown hand was thrown at his head, which made it stream with blood. Still, however, he continued undaunted, singing the thirty-first Psalm in English ; which one of the spectators observing, struck him a blow on the side of the head, and commanded him to pray in Latin. Taylor continued a few minutes silent, and with his eyes steadfastly fixed

upward ; when one of the guards, either through impatience or compassion, struck him down with his halberd, and thus happily put an end to his torments.

The death of these only served to increase the savage appetite of the popish bishops and monks for fresh slaughter. Bonner, bloated at once with rage and luxury, let loose his vengeance without restraint, and seemed to take a pleasure in the pains of the unhappy sufferers ; while the queen, by her letters, exhorted him to pursue the pious work without pity or interruption. Soon after, in obedience to her commands, Ridley, bishop of London, and the venerable Latimer, bishop of Worcester, were condemned together. Ridley had been one of the ablest champions for the Reformation ; his piety, learning, and solidity of judgment, were admired by his friends, and dreaded by his enemies. The night before his execution, he invited the mayor of Oxford and his wife to see him ; and when he beheld them melted into tears, he himself appeared quite unmoved, inwardly supported and comforted in that hour of agony. When he was brought to the stake to be burned, he found his old friend Latimer there before him. Of all the prelates of that age, Latimer was the most remarkable for his unaffected piety, and the simplicity of his manners. He had never learned to flatter in courts ; and his open rebuke was dreaded by all the great, who at that time too much deserved it. His sermons, which remain to this day, show that he had some learning and much wit ; and there is an air of sincerity running through them not to be found elsewhere. When Ridley began to comfort his antient friend, Latimer, on his part, was as ready to return the kind office. “ Be of good cheer, brother,” cried he, “ we shall this day kindle such a torch in England, as, I trust in God, shall never be extinguished.” A furious bigot ascended to preach to them and the people while the fire was preparing ; and Ridley gave a most serious attention to his discourse. No way distracted by the preparations about him, he heard him to the last, and then told him that he was ready to answer all that he had preached upon, if a short indulgence should be permitted : but this was refused him. At length fire was set to the pile : Latimer was soon out of pain ; but Ridley continued to suffer much longer, his legs being consumed before the fire reached his vitals.

One Thomas Haukes, when conducted to the stake, had agreed with his friends, that if he found the torture supportable, he would make them a signal for that purpose in the midst of the flames. His zeal for the cause in which he suffered was so strong, that when the spectators thought him near expiring, by stretching out his arms he gave his friends the signal that the pain was not too great to be borne. This example, with many others of the like constancy, encouraged multitudes not only to suffer, but even to aspire after martyrdom.

But women seemed persecuted with as much severity even as men. A woman in Guernsey, condemned for heresy, was delivered of a child in the midst of the flames. Some of the spectators humanely ran to snatch the infant from danger; but the magistrate, who was a papist, ordered it to be flung in again; and there it was consumed with the mother.

Cranmer's death followed soon after, and struck the whole nation with horror. This prelate, whom we have seen acting so very conspicuous a part in the Reformation during the two preceding reigns, had been long detained a prisoner, in consequence of his imputed guilt in obstructing the queen's succession to the crown. But it was now resolved to bring him to punishment; and, to give it all its malignity, the queen ordered that he should be punished for heresy rather than for treason. He was accordingly cited by the pope to stand his trial at Rome; and though he was kept a prisoner at Oxford, yet, upon his not appearing, he was condemned as contumacious. But his enemies were not satisfied with his tortures, without adding to them the poignancy of self-accusation. Persons were, therefore, employed to tempt him by flattery and insinuation, by giving him hopes of once more being received into favour, to sign his recantation, by which he acknowledged the doctrines of the papal supremacy and the real presence. His love of life prevailed. In an unguarded moment he was induced to sign this paper; and now his enemies, as we are told of the devil, after having rendered him completely wretched, resolved to destroy him. But it was determined, before they led him out to execution, that they should try to induce him to make a recantation in the church before the people. The unfortunate prelate, either having a secret intimation of their design, or having recovered the native vigour of his mind, en-

tered the church prepared to surprise the whole audience by a contrary declaration. When he had been placed in a conspicuous part of the church, a sermon was preached by Cole, provost of Eton, in which he magnified Cranmer's conversion as the immediate work of heaven itself. He assured the archbishop, that nothing could have been so pleasing to God, the queen, or the people; he comforted him, by intimating, that, if he should suffer, numberless dirges and masses should be said for his soul; and that his own confession of his faith would still more secure his soul from the pains of purgatory. During the whole rhapsody Cranmer expressed the utmost agony, anxiety, and internal agitation; he lifted up his eyes to heaven, he shed a torrent of tears, and groaned with unutterable anguish. He uttered a prayer, filled with the most pathetic expressions of horror and remorse. He then said he was well apprised of his duty to his sovereign; but that a superior duty, the duty which he owed his Maker, obliged him to declare that he had signed a paper contrary to his conscience; that he took this opportunity of atoning for his error by a sincere and open recantation: he was willing, he said, to seal with his blood that doctrine, which he firmly believed to be communicated from heaven; and that, as his hand had erred by betraying his heart, it should undergo the first punishment. The assembly, consisting chiefly of papists, who hoped to triumph in the last words of such a convert, were equally confounded and incensed at this declaration. They called aloud to him to leave off dissembling; and led him forward, amidst the insults and reproaches of his audience, to the stake at which Latimer and Ridley had suffered. He resolved to triumph over their insults by his constancy and fortitude; and, the fire beginning to be kindled round him, he stretched forth his right hand, and held it in the flames till it was consumed, while he frequently cried out in the midst of his sufferings, "That unworthy hand!" at the same time exhibiting no appearance of pain or disorder. When the fire attacked his body, he seemed to be quite insensible of his torments; his mind was occupied wholly upon the hopes of a future reward. After his body was destroyed, his heart was found entire: an emblem of the constancy with which he suffered.

These persecutions were now become odious to the whole nation; and, as it may be easily supposed, the [1556.]

perpetrators of them were all willing to throw the odium from themselves upon others. Philip, sensible of the hatred which he must incur upon this occasion, endeavoured to remove the reproach from himself by a very gross artifice. He ordered his confessor to deliver in his presence a sermon in favour of toleration; but Bonner, in his turn, would not take the whole of the blame, and retorted the severities upon the court. In fact, a bold step was taken to introduce a court similar to that of the Spanish inquisition, that should be empowered to try heretics, and condemn them without any other form of law than its own authority. But even this was thought a method too dilatory in the present exigence of affairs. A proclamation, issued against books of heresy, treason, and sedition, declared, that all persons who had such books in their possession, and did not burn them without reading, should be deemed rebels, and suffer accordingly. This, as might be expected, was attended with bloody effects: whole crowds were executed, till even at last the very magistrates, who had been instrumental in these cruelties, refused to lend their assistance. It was computed that, during this persecution, two hundred and seventy-seven persons suffered by fire, besides those punished by imprisonment, fines, and confiscations. Those who suffered by fire were five bishops, twenty-one clergymen, eight lay-gentlemen, eighty-four tradesmen, one hundred husbandmen, fifty-five women, and four children.

All this was terrible; and yet the temporal affairs of the kingdom did not seem to be more successful. From Philip's first arrival in England the queen's pregnancy was talked of; and her own extreme desire that it should be true, induced her to favour the report. When Pole, the pope's legate, was first introduced to her, she fancied the child stirred in her womb; and this her flatterers compared to the leaping of John the Baptist in his mother's belly, at the salutation of the Virgin. The catholics were confident that she was pregnant; they assured themselves that this child would be a son; they were even confident that heaven would render him beautiful, vigorous, and witty. But it soon turned out that all their confidence was ill-founded; for the queen's supposed pregnancy was only the beginning of a dropsy, which the disordered state of her health had brought upon her.

This opinion of the queen's pregnancy was carefully kept up

by Philip, as it was an artifice by which he hoped to extend his authority in the kingdom. But he was mistaken : the English parliament, however lax in their principles at that time, harboured a continual jealousy against him, and passed repeated acts by which they ascertained the limits of his power, and confirmed the authority of the queen. Ambition was his only ruling passion ; and the extreme fondness of the queen for his person was rather permitted by him than desired. He only wanted to make her inclination subservient to the purposes of his power ; but finding her unable to satisfy him in that hope, he no longer treated her with any return of affection, but behaved to her with apparent indifference and neglect : at length, tired with her importunities and jealousies, and finding his authority extremely limited in England, he took the first opportunity of leaving her, and went over to the emperor his father in Flanders. In the mean time the queen's passion increased in proportion to the coolness with which it was returned. She passed most of her time in solitude ; she gave vent to her sorrows, either by tears or by writing fond epistles to Philip, who, except when he wanted money, seldom returned her any answer. To supply his demands upon these occasions, she took several very extorting methods, by loans which were forced from many whom she thought most affectionate to her person, or best able to spare it. She offered the English merchants at Antwerp fourteen per cent. for a loan of thirty thousand pounds, and yet was mortified by a refusal ; but she at length prevailed, when the corporation of London became surety for her.

She was more successful in her attempts to engage the English in a war with France, at the instigation of her husband, although in the end it turned out to her utter confusion. A war had just been commenced between Spain and that kingdom ; and Philip, who took this occasion to come over to England, declared, that if he were not seconded by England at this crisis, he would never see the country more. This declaration greatly heightened the queen's zeal for promoting his interests ; and though she was warmly opposed in this measure by cardinal Pole and the rest of her council, yet, by threatening to dismiss them all, she at last succeeded. War was declared against France, and [1557.] preparations were every where made for attacking that

kingdom with vigour. An army was levied, to the amount of ten thousand men, who, when their wants had been supplied by various methods of extortion, were sent over into Flanders.

A battle gained by the Spaniards at St. Quintin seemed to promise great success to the allied arms; but soon an action performed by the duke of Guise, in the midst of winter, turned the scale in favour of France; and affected, if not the interests, at least the honour of England in the tenderest point. Calais had now for above two hundred years been in possession of the English; it had been made the chief market for wool, and other British commodities; it had been strongly fortified at different times, and was then deemed impregnable. But all the fortifications which were raised before gunpowder was found out, were very ill able to resist the attacks of a regular battery from cannon; and they only continued to enjoy an antient reputation for strength, which they were very ill able to maintain. Coligny, the French general, had remarked to the duke of Guise, that as the town of Calais was surrounded by marshes, which during winter were impassable, except over a dyke guarded by two castles, St. Agatha and Newnham-Bridge, the English were of late accustomed, to save expense, to dismiss a great part of the garrison at the approach of winter, and recall them in spring. The duke of Guise upon this made a sudden and unexpected march towards Calais, and assaulted the castle of St. Agatha with three thousand arquebusiers. The garrison were soon obliged to retreat to the other castle, and shortly after compelled to quit that post, and to take shelter in the city. Meanwhile a small fleet was sent to block up the entrance of the harbour; and thus Calais was invested by land and sea. The governor, lord Wentworth, made a brave defence; but his garrison, being very weak, could not effectually resist an assault given by the French, who made a lodgement in the castle. On the night following Wentworth attempted to recover this post; but having lost two hundred men [1558.] in the attack, he was obliged to capitulate: so that, in less than eight days, the duke of Guise recovered a city that had been in possession of the English since the time of Edward the Third, and which he had spent eleven months in besieging. This loss filled the whole kingdom with murmurs, and the queen with despair; she was heard to say, that, when dead, the name of Calais would be found engraven on her heart.



These complicated evils,—a murmuring people, an increasing heresy, a disdainful husband, and an unsuccessful war,—made dreadful depredations on Mary's constitution. She began to appear consumptive; and this rendered her mind still more morose and bigoted. The people now therefore began to turn their thoughts to her successor; and the princess Elizabeth came into a greater degree of consideration than before. During this whole reign the nation was in continual apprehensions with regard not only to the succession but the life of this princess. The violent hatred of the queen broke out upon every occasion; while Elizabeth, conscious of her danger, passed her time wholly in reading and study, entirely detached from business. Proposals of marriage had been made to her by the Swedish ambassador, in his master's name; but she referred him to the queen, who leaving it to her own choice, she had the magnanimity to reserve herself for better fortune. Nor was she less prudent in concealing her sentiments of religion, and eluding all questions relative to that dangerous subject. She was obnoxious to Mary for two reasons: as she was next heir to the throne, it was feared she might aspire to it during her sister's lifetime; but it was still more reasonably apprehended that she would, if ever she came to the crown, make an innovation in that religion which Mary took such pains to establish. The bishops, who had shed such a deluge of blood, foresaw this; and often told Mary that her destroying meaner heretics was of no advantage to the state, while the body of the tree was suffered to remain. Mary saw and acknowledged the cogency of their arguments, confined her sister with proper guards, and only waited for some fresh insurrection, or some favourable pretext, to destroy her. Her own death prevented the perpetration of her meditated cruelty.

Mary had been long in a declining state of health; and having mistaken her dropsy for a pregnancy, she made use of an improper regimen, which had increased the disorder. Every reflection now tormented her. The consciousness of being hated by her subjects, the prospect of Elizabeth's succession, whom she hated, and, above all, her anxiety for the loss of her husband, who never intended to return,—all these preyed upon her mind, and threw her into a lingering fever, of which she died, after a short and unfortunate reign of five years four months and eleven days, in the forty-third year

of her age. Cardinal Pöle, whose gentleness in power we have had occasion to mention, survived her but one day. She was buried in Henry the Seventh's chapel, according to the rites of the church of Rome.

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CHAP. XXVI.

ELIZABETH.

Nov. 17,  
1558. **W**ERE we to adopt the maxim of the catholics, that evil may be done for the production of good, one might say that the persecutions in Mary's reign were permitted only to bring the kingdom more generally over to the protestant religion. Nothing could preach so effectually against the cruelty and vices of the monks as the actions of the monks themselves. Wherever heretics were to be burned, the monks were always present, rejoicing at the flames, insulting the fallen, and frequently the first to thrust the flaming brand against the faces of the sufferers. The English were effectually converted, by such sights as these, from their antient superstitions. To bring the people over to any opinion, it is only necessary to persecute instead of attempting to convince. The people had formerly been compelled to embrace the protestant religion, and their fears induced them to conform; but now almost the whole nation were protestants from inclination.

Nothing, therefore, could exceed the joy that was diffused among the people upon the accession of Elizabeth, who now came to the throne without any opposition. She was at Hatfield, when informed of her sister's death; and, hastening to London, was received by the multitude with universal acclamations. Elizabeth had her education in that best school, the school of adversity; and she had made the proper use of her confinement. Being debarred the enjoyment of pleasures abroad, she sought for knowledge at home; she cultivated her understanding, learned the languages and sciences; but of all the arts which she acquired, that of concealing her opinions, of checking her inclinations, of

displeasing none, and of learning to reign, were the most beneficial to her.

This virgin monarch, as some historians have called her, upon entering the Tower according to custom, could not refrain from remarking on the difference of her present and her former fortune, when she was sent there as a prisoner. She had also been scarcely proclaimed queen, when Philip, who had been married to Mary, but who ever testified a partiality in favour of Elizabeth, ordered his ambassador in London, the duke of Feria, to make her proposals of marriage from his master. What political motives Elizabeth might have against this marriage, are not mentioned; but certain it is, that she neither liked the person nor the religion of her admirer. She was willing at once to enjoy the pleasures of independence, and the vanity of numerous solicitations. But while these were her views, she returned him a very obliging though evasive answer; and he still retained such hopes of success, that he sent a messenger to Rome, with orders to solicit the dispensation.

Elizabeth had, from the beginning, resolved upon reforming the church, even while she was held in the constraints of a prison; and now, upon coming to the crown, she immediately set about it. But not to alarm the partisans of the catholic religion all at once, she retained eleven of her sister's council; and, in order to balance their authority, added eight more, who were known to be affectionate to the protestant religion. Her particular adviser, however, was sir William Cecil, secretary of state, a man more earnestly employed in the business than the speculations of the times; and whose temper it was to wish for any religion that he thought would contribute to the welfare of the state. By his advice, therefore, she immediately recalled all exiles, and gave liberty to all prisoners who were confined on account of religion. She next published a proclamation, by which she forbade all preaching without a special licence. She also suspended the laws so far as to have a great part of the service to be read in English, and forbade the host to be elevated in her presence. [1559.] A parliament soon after completed what the prerogative had begun; various acts were passed in favour of the Reformation; and in a single session the form of religion was established as we at present have the happiness to enjoy it.

The opposition which was made to these religious establishments, was furious, but feeble. A conference of nine doctors on each side was proposed and agreed to, in presence of the lord-keeper Bacon. They were to dispute publicly upon either side of the question; and it was resolved that the people should hold to that which came off with the victory. Disputations of this kind never carry conviction to either party; so much is to be said, and so wide is the field that both sides have to range in, that the strength of both is exhausted before the engagement may be properly said to begin. The conference therefore came to nothing; the catholics declare that it was not in their power to dispute a second time upon topics on which they had gained a former victory; while the protestants, on the other side, ascribed their caution to their fears.

Of nine thousand four hundred beneficed clergymen, which was the number of those in the kingdom, only fourteen bishops, twelve deans, as many archdeacons, fifty prebendaries, fifteen heads of colleges, and about eighty of the parochial clergy, chose to quit their preferments rather than give up their religion. Thus England was seen to change its belief in religion four times since the beginning of the reign of Henry the Eighth. "Strange," says a foreign writer, "that a people so resolute should be guilty of so much inconstancy; that the same people who this day assisted at the execution of heretics should, the next, not only think them guiltless, but conform to their systems of thinking."

Elizabeth was now fixed upon a protestant throne, and had consequently all the catholic powers of Europe her open or secret enemies. France, Scotland, the pope, and even Spain itself, began to think of combining against her. Her subjects of Ireland were concealed enemies; and the catholic party in England, though professing obedience, were yet ready to take advantage of her slightest misfortunes. These were the dangers she had to fear; nor had she formed a single alliance to assist her, nor possessed any foreign friends that she could safely rely on. In this situation she could hope for no other resource than what proceeded from the affection of her own subjects, her own insight into her affairs, and the wisdom of her administration. From the beginning of her reign, she seemed to aim at two very difficult attainments; to make herself loved by her subjects, and feared by

her courtiers. She resolved to be frugal of her treasure, and still more sparing in her rewards to favourites. This at once kept the people in good humour, and the great too poor to shake off their dependance. She also showed that she knew how to distribute both rewards and punishments with impartiality; that she knew when to soothe, and when to upbraid; that she could dissemble submission, but preserve her prerogatives. In short, she seemed to have studied the people she was born to govern, and even showed that she knew when to flatter their foibles to secure their affections.

Her chief minister was Robert Dudley, son to the late duke of Northumberland, whom she seemed to regard from capricious motives, as he was possessed neither of abilities nor virtue. But to make amends, the two favourites next in power were the lord-keeper Bacon and Cecil, men of great capacity and infinite application; they regulated the finances, and directed the political measures with foreign courts, that were afterwards followed with so much success.

A state of permanent felicity is not to be expected here; and Mary Stuart, commonly called Mary queen of Scots, was the first person that excited the fears or the resentment of Elizabeth. We have already mentioned, that Henry the Seventh married his eldest daughter, Margaret, to James the Fourth, king of Scotland, whose son and successor left no issue that came to maturity, except Mary. At a very early age, this princess, being possessed of every accomplishment of person and mind, was married to Francis the dauphin, afterwards king of France, who, dying, left her a widow at the age of eighteen. As Elizabeth had been declared illegitimate by Henry the Eighth, Francis, in right of his wife, began to assume the title of king of England; nor did the queen of Scots, his consort, seem to decline sharing this empty appellation. But though nothing could have been more unjust than such a claim, or more unlikely to succeed, Elizabeth, knowing that such pretensions might produce troubles in England, sent an ambassador to France, complaining of the behaviour of that court in this instance. Francis, however, was not upon such good terms with Elizabeth as to forego any claims that would distress her; and her ambassador was sent home without satisfac-

tion. Upon the death of Francis, Mary, the widow, [1560.] still seemed disposed to keep up the title; but finding herself exposed to the persecutions of the dowager queen, who now began to take the lead in France, she determined to return to Scotland, and demanded a safe passage from Elizabeth through England. But it was now Elizabeth's turn to refuse; and she sent back a very haughty answer to Mary's request. From this [1561.] time a determined personal enmity began to prevail between the rival queens, which subsisted for many years after, until at last the superior fortune of Elizabeth prevailed.

As the transactions of this unfortunate queen make a distinguished part in Elizabeth's history, it will be necessary to give them greater room than I have hitherto given to the occurrences of Scotland. The Reformation in England having taken place, in Scotland also that work was begun, but with circumstances of greater animosity against the antient superstitions. The mutual resentment of the two parties in that kingdom knew no bounds; and a civil war was likely to end the dispute. It was in this divided state of the people that Elizabeth, by giving encouragement to the reformers, gained their affections from their natural queen, who was a catholic, and who consequently favoured those of that persuasion. Thus religion at last effected a sincere friendship between the English and Scots, which neither treaties nor marriages, nor the vicinity of situation, were able to produce. The reformers, to a man, considered Elizabeth as their patroness and defender, and Mary as their persecutor and enemy.

It was in this state of affairs that Mary returned from France to reign in Scotland, entirely attached to the customs and manners of the people she had left, and consequently very averse to the gloomy severity which her reformed subjects affected, and which they fancied made a proper ingredient in religion. A difference in religion between the sovereign and the people is ever productive of bad effects; since it is apt to produce contempt on one side, and jealousy on the other. Mary could not avoid regarding the sour manners of the reformed clergy, who now bore sway among the people, with a mixture of ridicule and hatred; while they, on the other hand, could not look tamely on the gaieties and levities which she introduced among them, without abhorrence and resentment. The jealousy thus excited, began every

day to grow stronger; the clergy only waited for some indiscretion in the queen, to fly out into open opposition; and her indiscretion too soon gave them sufficient opportunity.

After two years had been spent in altercation and reproach between Mary and her subjects, it was resolved at last by her council, that she should look out for some alliance, by which she might be sheltered and protected against the insolence and misguided zeal of her spiritual instructors. After some [1564.] deliberation, the lord Darnley, son to the earl of Lenox, was the person in whom their opinions and wishes centred. He had been born and educated in England, was now in his twentieth year, was cousin-german to the queen; and, what perhaps she might admire still more, he was extremely tall. Elizabeth was secretly no way averse to this marriage, as it freed her from the dread of a foreign alliance; but when informed that it was actually concluded and consummated, she pretended to testify the utmost displeasure: she menaced, complained, protested; seized the English estate of the earl of Lenox, and threw the countess and her second son into the Tower. This duplicity of conduct was common enough with Elizabeth; and, on the present occasion, it served her as a pretext for refusing to acknowledge Mary's title to the succession of England, which that princess had frequently urged, but in vain.

Notwithstanding Elizabeth's complaints and resentment, Mary resolved to indulge her own inclinations; and, struck with the beauty of Darnley's figure, the match was driven forward with all expedition. Some of the first weeks of their connection seemed to promise a happy union for the rest of their lives. However, it was not without some opposition from the reformers that this marriage was completed. It was agitated, whether the queen could marry without the consent of the people. Some lords rose up in arms to prevent it; but being pursued by a superior force, they found themselves obliged to abandon their country and take refuge in England. Thus far all was favourable to Mary; and thus far she kept within the bounds of strict virtue. [1565.] Her enemies were banished, her rival overruled, and she herself married to the man she loved.

While Mary had been dazzled by the pleasing exterior of her new lover, she had entirely forgotten to examine his mental ac-

accomplishments. Darnley was a weak and ignorant man; violent, yet variable in his enterprises; insolent, yet credulous, and easily governed by flatterers; devoid of all gratitude, because he thought no favours equal to his merit; and being addicted to low pleasures, he was equally incapable of all true sentiments of love and tenderness. Mary, in the first effusions of her fondness, had taken a pleasure in exalting him beyond measure: but having leisure afterwards to remark his weakness and his vices, she began to convert her admiration into disgust; and Darnley, enraged at her increasing coldness, pointed his vengeance against every person to whose suggestions he attributed this change in her sentiments and behaviour.

There was then in the court one David Rizzio, the son of a musician at Turin, himself a musician; who, finding it difficult to subsist by his art in his own country, had followed the ambassador from that court into Scotland. As he understood music to perfection, and sung a good bass, he was introduced into the queen's concert, who was so pleased with him, that she desired the ambassador, upon his departure, to leave Rizzio behind. The excellence of his voice soon procured him greater familiarities; and, although he was by no means handsome, but rather ugly, the queen seemed to place peculiar confidence in him, and ever kept him next her person. Her secretary for French dispatches having some time after fallen under her displeasure, she promoted Rizzio to that office, who, being shrewd, sensible, and aspiring beyond his rank, soon after began to entertain hopes of being promoted to the important office of chancellor of the kingdom. He was consulted on all occasions; no favours could be obtained but by his intercession; and all suitors were first obliged to gain Rizzio to their interests, by presents, or by flattery. It was easy to persuade a man of Darnley's jealous uxorious temper, that Rizzio was the person who had estranged the queen's affections from him; and a surmise once conceived became to him a certainty. He soon, therefore, consulted with some lords of his party, stung as he was with envy, rage, and resentment; and they not only fanned the conflagration in his mind, but offered their assistance [1566.] to dispatch Rizzio. George Douglas, natural brother to the countess of Lenox, the lords Ruthven and Lindsay, settled the circumstances of this poor creature's assassination



among them, and determined that, as a punishment for the queen's indiscretions, the murder should be committed in her presence. Mary was at this time in the sixth month of her pregnancy, and was then supping in private, at table with the countess of Argyle, her natural sister, some other servants, and her favourite Rizzio. Lord Darnley led the way into the apartment by a private staircase, and stood for some time leaning at the back of Mary's chair. His fierce looks and unexpected intrusion greatly alarmed the queen, who nevertheless kept silence, not daring to call out. A little after, lord Ruthven, George Douglas, and the other conspirators, rushed in, all armed, and showing in their looks the brutality of their intentions. The queen could no longer restrain her terrors, but demanded the reason of this bold intrusion. Ruthven made her no answer; but ordered her favourite to quit a place of which he was unworthy. Rizzio instantly saw that he was the object of their vengeance; and, trembling with apprehension, took hold of the queen's robes to put himself under her protection, while, on her part, she strove to interpose between him and the assassins. Douglas, in the meantime had reached the unfortunate Rizzio; and snatching a dagger from the king's side, while the queen filled the room with her cries, plunged it into the bosom of Rizzio, who, screaming with fear and agony, was torn from Mary by the other conspirators, and dragged into the ante-chamber, where he was dispatched with fifty-six wounds. The unhappy princess continued her lamentations; but, being informed of his fate, at once dried her tears, and said she would weep no more, for she would now think of revenge. The insult indeed upon her person and honour, and the danger to which her life was exposed on account of her pregnancy, were injuries so atrocious and so complicated, that they scarcely left room for pardon.

This act of violence was only to be punished by temporising; she pretended to forgive so great a crime; and exerted the force of her natural allurements so powerfully, that her husband submitted implicitly to her will. He soon gave up his accomplices to her resentment, and retired with her to Dunbar; while she, having collected an army which the conspirators had no power to resist, advanced to Edinburgh, and obliged them to fly into England, where they lived in great poverty and distress. They

made application, however, to the earl of Bothwell, a new favourite of Mary's; and that nobleman desirous of strengthening his party by the accession of their interest, was able to pacify her resentment; and he soon after procured them liberty to return home.

The vengeance of the queen was implacable to her husband alone; his person was before disagreeable to her; and having persuaded him to give up his accomplices, she treated him with merited disdain and indignation. But it would have been well for her character and happiness had she rested only in despising:—she secretly resolved on a severer revenge. The earl of Bothwell, who was now become her favourite, was of a considerable family in Scotland: and though not distinguished by any talents, civil or military, yet he made some noise in the dissensions of the state, and was an opposer of the Reformation. He was a man of profligate manners, had involved his fortune in great debts, and had reduced himself to beggary by his profusion. This nobleman, notwithstanding, had ingratiated himself so far with the queen, that all her measures were entirely directed by his advice and authority. Reports were even spread of more particular intimacies; and these gave such uneasiness to Darnley, that he left the court, and retired to Glasgow, to be no longer a spectator of her supposed excesses. But this was not what the queen aimed at; she was determined upon more ample punishment. Shortly after, all those who wished well to her character, or repose to their country, were extremely pleased, and somewhat surprised, to hear that [1567.] her tenderness for her husband was revived, and that she had taken a journey to visit him during his sickness. Darnley was so far allured by her behaviour on this occasion, that he resolved to part with her no more; he put himself under her protection, and soon after attended her to Edinburgh, which it was thought would be a place more favourable to his declining health. She lived in Holyrood-house; but as the situation of that place was low, and the concourse of persons about the court necessarily attended with noise, which might disturb him in his present infirm state, she fitted up an apartment for him in a solitary house at some distance, called the Kirk of Field. Mary there gave him marks of kindness and attachment; she conversed cordially with him, and she lay some nights in a room under him. It was on the

ninth of February that she told him she would pass the night in the palace, because the marriage of one of her servants was to be there celebrated in her presence. But dreadful consequences ensued. About two o'clock in the morning the whole city was much alarmed at hearing a great noise; the house in which Darnley lay was blown up with gun-powder. His dead body was found at some distance in a neighbouring field, but without any marks of violence or contusion. No doubt could be entertained that Darnley was murdered; and the general suspicion fell upon Bothwell as the perpetrator.

All orders of the state, and the whole body of the people, began to demand justice on the supposed murderer; the queen herself was not entirely exempt from the general suspicion; and papers were privately stuck up every where, accusing her of being an accomplice. Mary, more solicitous to punish others than defend herself, offered rewards for the discovery of those who had spread such reports; but no rewards were offered for the discovery of the murderers. One indiscretion led on to another; Bothwell, though accused of being stained with her husband's blood, though universally odious to the people, had the confidence, while Mary was on her way to Stirling on a visit to her son, to seize her at the head of a body of eight hundred horse, and to carry her to Dunbar, where he forced her to yield to his purposes. It was then thought by the people that the measure of his crimes was complete; and that he who was supposed to have murdered the queen's husband, and to have offered violence to her person, could expect no mercy: but they were astonished upon finding, instead of disgrace, that Bothwell was taken into more than former favour; and, to crown all, that he was married to the queen, having divorced his own wife to procure this union.

This was a fatal alliance to Mary; and the people were now wound up by the complication of her follies, to pay very little deference to her authority. The protestant teachers, who had great power, had long borne great animosity towards her; the opinion of her guilt was by their means more widely diffused, and made the deeper impression. The principal nobility met at Stirling; and an association was soon formed for protecting the young prince, and punishing the king's murderers. Lord Hume was the first in arms; and, with a body of eight hundred horse,

he suddenly surrounded the queen and Bothwell in the castle of Borthwick. They found means, however, to make their escape ; and Bothwell, at the head of a few forces, meeting the associators within about six miles of Edinburgh, was obliged to capitulate, while Mary was conducted by the prevailing party into Edinburgh, amidst the insults and reproaches of the populace. Thence she was sent a prisoner to the castle of Lochleven, situated in a lake of that name, where she suffered all the severities of an unkind keeper, and an upbraiding conscience, with a feeling heart. Bothwell was more fortunate ; he fled, during the conference, unattended, to Dunbar ; and, fitting out a few small ships in that port, he subsisted among the Orkneys for some time by piracy. Being pursued thither, and his domestics taken, who made a full discovery of his crimes, he escaped in an open boat to Denmark, where he was thrown into prison, lost his senses, and died miserably about ten years afterwards.

In this situation, Mary was not entirely without protection and friends. Elizabeth, who now saw her rival entirely humbled, began to relent ; she reflected on the precarious state of royal grandeur, and the danger of encouraging rebellious subjects ; she therefore sent sir Nicholas Throgmorton as her ambassador to Scotland, to interpose in the queen's behalf ; but the associated lords thought proper to deny him, after several affected delays, all access to Mary's person. However, though he could not confer with her, he procured her the best terms with the rebellious lords that he could ; which were, that she should resign the crown in favour of her infant son ; that she should nominate the earl of Murray (who had from the beginning testified a hatred to lord Darnley) regent of the kingdom ; and, as he was then in France, that she should appoint a council till his arrival. Mary could not think of resigning all power, without a plentiful effusion of tears ; but at last signed what was brought to her, even without inspection. In consequence of this forced resignation, the young prince was proclaimed king, under the title of James the Sixth. The queen had now no hopes but from the kindness of the earl of Murray ; but even in that respect she was disappointed ; the earl, upon his return, instead of comforting her, loaded her with reproaches, which reduced her almost to despair.

The calamities of the great, even though deserved, [1568.] seldom fail of creating pity, and procuring friends. Mary, by her charms and promises, had engaged a young gentleman, whose name was George Douglas, to assist her in escaping from the place where she was confined : and this he effected, by conveying her in disguise in a small boat, rowed by himself, ashore. It was now that the news of her enlargement being spread abroad, all the loyalty of the people seemed to revive. As Bothwell was no longer associated in her cause, many of the nobility, who expected to succeed him in favour, signed a bond of association for her defence ; and in a few days she saw herself at the head of six thousand men.

The earl of Murray was not slow in assembling his forces ; and although his army was inferior in number to that of the queen of Scots, he boldly took the field against her. A battle was fought at Langside near Glasgow, which was decisive in his favour ; and he seemed to merit victory by his clemency after the action. Mary, now totally ruined, fled to the southward from the field of battle with great precipitation ; and came with a few attendants to the borders of England, where she hoped for protection from Elizabeth. With this hope she embarked on board a fishing-boat in Galloway, and landed the same day at Workington in Cumberland, about thirty miles distant from Carlisle, whence she immediately dispatched a messenger to London, craving protection, and desiring liberty to visit the queen. Elizabeth, being informed of her misfortunes and retreat, deliberated for some time upon the proper methods of proceeding, and resolved at last to act in a friendly yet cautious manner. She immediately sent orders to lady Scrope, sister to the duke of Norfolk, a lady who lived in that neighbourhood, to attend on the queen of Scots ; and soon after dispatched lord Scrope himself, and sir Francis Knolles, to pay her all possible respect. Notwithstanding these marks of distinction, the queen refused to admit Mary into her presence, until she had cleared her character from the many foul aspersions with which it was stained. It might, perhaps, have been Elizabeth's duty to protect, and not to examine, her royal fugitive. However, she acted entirely under the direction of her council, who observed, that if the crimes of the Scottish princess were really so great as they were represented, the treating her with

friendship would but give them a sanction ; if she should be found guiltless upon trial, every enterprise which friendship should inspire in her defence, would be considered as laudable and glorious.

Mary was now, though reluctantly, obliged to admit her antient rival as an umpire in her cause ; and the accusation was readily undertaken by Murray the regent, who expected to remove so powerful an assistant as Elizabeth, by the atrociousness of Mary's offences. This extraordinary conference, respecting the conduct of a foreign queen, was managed at York ; three commissioners being appointed by Elizabeth, seven by the queen of Scots, and five by the regent, among whom he himself was included. These conferences were carried on for some time at the place first appointed ; but, after a while, Elizabeth, either unwilling to decide, as she would thus give up the power she was now possessed of, or perhaps desirous of throwing all light possible upon Mary's conduct, ordered the commissioners to continue their conferences at Hampton-court, where they were spun out by affected delays. Whatever might have been the cause of protracting this conference in the beginning, is not known ; but many of the proofs of Mary's guilt, which were suppressed at York, made their appearance before the board at Hampton-court. Among other proofs, were many letters and sonnets written in Mary's own hand to Bothwell, in which she discovers her knowledge of Darnley's intended murder, and her contrivance to marry Bothwell, by pretending a forced compliance. These papers, it must be owned, are not free from the suspicion of forgery ; yet the reasons for their authenticity seem to prevail. However this be, the proofs of Mary's guilt appearing stronger, it was thought proper to engage her advocates to give answers to them ; but they, contrary to expectation, refused, alleging, that as Mary was a sovereign princess, she could not be subject to any tribunal ; not considering that the aim of this conference was not punishment, but reconciliation ; that it was not to try Mary in order to inflict penalties, but to know whether she was worthy of Elizabeth's friendship and protection. Instead of attempting to justify her conduct, the queen of Scots laboured nothing so much as to obtain an interview with Elizabeth, conscious that her insinuations, arts, and address, of all which she was a perfect mistress, would be sufficient to persuade her royal sister, and stand in place of inno-

cence. But as she still persisted in a resolution to make no defence, this demand was finally refused her. She continued, however, to demand Elizabeth's protection; she desired that either she might be assisted in her endeavours to recover her authority, or that liberty should be given her for retiring into France, there to make trial of the friendship of other princes. But Elizabeth, sensible of the danger which attended either of these proposals, was secretly resolved to detain her in captivity; and she was accordingly sent to Tutbury castle, in the county of Stafford, where she was put under the custody of the earl of Shrewsbury; there she gave her royal prisoner hopes of one day coming into favour; and that, unless her own obstinacy prevented, an accommodation might at last take place.

But this unhappy woman was fated to nothing but misfortunes; and those hopes of accommodation which she had been taught to expect were still put off by some sinister accident. The factions of her own subjects in Scotland tended not a little to alarm the jealousy of Elizabeth, and increase the rigours of Mary's confinement. The regent of Scotland, who had been long her inveterate enemy, happening to be assassinated, in revenge of a private injury, by a gentleman of the name of Hamilton, upon his death the kingdom relapsed into its former anarchy. Mary's party once more assembled, and became masters of Edinburgh. They even ventured to approach the borders of England, where they committed some disorders, which called upon the vigilance of Elizabeth to suppress. She quickly sent an army commanded by the earl of Sussex; who, entering Scotland, severely chastised the partisans of the captive queen, under a pretence that they had offended his mistress by harbouring English rebels.

But the designs and arts of Elizabeth did not rest here: while she kept up the most friendly correspondence with Mary, and the most warm protestations of sincerity passed between them, she was far from either assisting her cause, or yet from rendering it desperate. It was her interest to keep the factions in Scotland still alive, to restrain the power of that restless and troublesome nation: for this purpose she weakened the reviving party of the queen by tedious negotiations and other arts; and in the mean time procured the earl of Lenox to be appointed regent, in the room of Murray.

This attempt, which promised to be favourable to Mary, proved thus unsuccessful, as well as another, which was concerted near the place of her captivity. The duke of Norfolk was the only peer who enjoyed that highest title of nobility in England; and the qualities of his mind corresponded to his high station. Beneficent, affable, and generous, he had acquired the affections of the people; and yet, from his moderation, he had never alarmed the jealousy of his sovereign. He was at this time a widower; and being of a suitable age to espouse the queen of Scots, her own attractions, as well as his interests, made him desirous of the match. But the obtaining Elizabeth's consent, previous to their nuptials, was considered as a circumstance essential to his aims. While he made almost all the nobility of England confidants to his passion, he never had the prudence, or the courage, to open his full intentions to the queen herself. On the contrary, in order to suppress the surmises that were currently reported, he spoke contemptuously of Mary to Elizabeth; affirmed that his estates in England were of more value than the revenue of the whole kingdom; and declared that, when he amused himself in his own tennis-court at Norwich, he was a more magnificent prince than a Scottish king. This duplicity only served to inflame the queen's suspicions, and finding that she gave his professions no great degree of credit, he retired from the court in disgust. Repenting, however, soon after this measure, he re-  
[1569.] solved to return, with a view of regaining the queen's good graces; but on the way he was stopped by a messenger from the queen, and soon committed to the Tower, under the custody of sir Henry Nevil.

But the duke of Norfolk was too much beloved by his partisans in the North, to be confined without an effort made for his release. The earls of Westmorland and Northumberland had prepared measures for a rebellion; had communicated their intentions to Mary and her ministers; had entered into a correspondence with the duke of Alva, governor of the Low-Countries, and had obtained his promise of men and ammunition. But the vigilance of Elizabeth's ministers was not to be eluded: orders were immediately sent for their appearance at court; and now the insurgent lords, perceiving their schemes discovered, were obliged to begin their revolt before matters were entirely pre-



pared for its opening. They accordingly published a manifesto, in which they alleged that no injury was intended against the queen, to whom they vowed unshaken allegiance; but that their sole aim was to re-establish the religion of their ancestors, to remove all evil counsellors from about the queen's person, and to restore the duke of Norfolk to his liberty and the queen's favour. Their number amounted to four thousand foot, and sixteen hundred horse; and they expected to be joined by all the catholics in England. But they soon found themselves miserably undeceived; the queen's conduct had acquired the general good-will of the people, and she now perceived that her surest support was the justice of her actions. The duke of Norfolk himself, for whose sake they had revolted, used every method that his circumstances would permit, to assist and support the queen; the insurgents were obliged to retire before her forces to Hexham; and hearing that reinforcements were upon their march to join the royal army, they found no other expedient but to disperse themselves without a blow. Northumberland fled into Scotland, and was confined by the regent to the castle of Lochleven: Westmorland, after attempting to excite the Scots to revolt, was obliged to escape into Flanders, where he found protection. This rebellion was followed by another, led on by Leonard Dacres, but with as little success. Some severities were used against these revolters; and it is said that no less than eight hundred persons suffered by the hands of the executioner on this occasion. The queen was so well pleased with the duke's behaviour, that she now released him from the Tower, and allowed him to return home, only exacting a promise from him, not to proceed in his pretensions to the queen of Scots. [1570.]

But the queen's confidence was fatal to this brave, but undesigning nobleman. He had not scarcely been released a year, when new projects were set on foot by the enemies of the queen and the reformed religion, secretly fomented by Rodolphi, an instrument of the court of Rome, and the bishop of Ross, Mary's minister in England. It was concerted by them that Norfolk should renew his designs upon Mary, to which it was probable he was prompted by passion; and this nobleman entering into their schemes, he, from being at first only ambitious, now became crim-

inal. It was mutually agreed, therefore, that the duke [1571.] should enter into all Mary's interests; while, on the other hand, the duke of Alva promised to transport a body of six thousand foot, and four thousand horse, to join Norfolk, as soon as he should be ready to begin. This scheme was so secretly laid, that it had hitherto entirely escaped the vigilance of Elizabeth, and that of her secretary Cecil, who now bore the title of lord Burleigh. It was found out merely by accident; for the duke, having sent a sum of money to lord Herries, one of Mary's partisans in Scotland, omitted trusting the servant with the contents of his message; and he finding, by the weight of the bag, that it contained a larger sum than the duke mentioned to him, began to mistrust some plot, and brought the money, with the duke's letter, to the secretary of state. It was by the artifices of that great statesman that the duke's servants were brought to make a full confession of their master's guilt; and the bishop of Ross soon after, finding the whole discovered, did not scruple to confirm their testimony. The duke was instantly committed to the Tower, and ordered to prepare for his trial. A jury [1572.] of twenty-five peers unanimously passed sentence upon him; and the queen, four months after, reluctantly signed the warrant for his execution. He died with great calmness and constancy; and though he cleared himself of any disloyal intentions against the queen's authority, he acknowledged the justice of the sentence by which he suffered. A few months after, the earl of Northumberland, being delivered up by the regent, underwent a similar trial, and was brought to the scaffold for his rebellion. All these ineffectual struggles in favour of the unfortunate queen of Scots seemed only to rivet the chains of her confinement; and she now found relief only in the resources of her own mind, which distress had contributed to soften, refine, and improve. Henceforth she continued for many years a precarious dependant on Elizabeth's suspicions; and only waited for some new effort of her adherents, to receive that fate, which political and not merciful motives seemed to suspend.

## CHAP. XXVII.

ELIZABETH (Continued.)

HAVING thus far attended the queen of Scotland, whose conduct and misfortunes makes such a distinguished figure in this reign, we now return to some transactions, prior in point of time, but of less consideration.

In the beginning of this reign, the Huguenots, or re- [1562.]  
formed party in France, were obliged to call in the protection of the English; and, in order to secure their confidence, as they were possessed of the greatest part of Normandy, they offered to put Havre de Grace into the queen's hands; a proffer which she immediately accepted. She wisely considered, that, as that port commanded the mouth of the river Seine, it was of much greater importance than Calais; and she could thus have the French still in her power. Accordingly three thousand English took possession of Havre, under the command of sir Adrian Poinings; and an equal number landed at Dieppe. The latter place was found so little capable of defence, that it was soon abandoned: but Havre was retained until the summer [1563.]  
of the following year. It was fiercely assaulted by the French: but it felt a severer enemy within its walls; for the plague had made its way into the town, and committed such havock among the soldiers, that a hundred were commonly seen to die of it in one day. The garrison being thus dispirited, and diminished to fifteen hundred men, finding the French indefatigable in their approaches, were obliged to capitulate; and thus the English lost all hopes of making another establishment in the kingdom of France. This misfortune was productive of one still more dreadful to the nation; for the English army carried back the plague with them to London, which made such ravages, that twenty thousand persons died there in one year.

This, if we except the troubles raised upon the account of Mary, seems to have been the only disaster that, for thirty years, contributed to disturb the peace of this reign. Elizabeth, ever vigilant, active, and resolute, attended to the slightest alarms, and repressed them before they were capable of producing their

effect. Her frugality kept her independent, and her dissimulation made her beloved. The opinion of the royal prerogative was such, that her commands were obeyed as statutes ; and she took care that her parliament should never venture to circumscribe her power. In her schemes of government she was assisted by lord Burleigh, and sir Nicholas Bacon, two of the most able ministers that ever directed the affairs of England ; but while she committed to them all the drudgery of duty, her favourite, Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, engrossed all her favour, and secured all the avenues to preferment. All requests were made through him ; and nothing given away without his consent and approbation. His merits, however, were by no means adequate to his successes ; he was weak, vain, and boastful ; but these qualities did no injury to the state, as his two co-adjutors were willing, while he maintained all the splendour of office, to secure to themselves the more solid emoluments.

During this peaceable and uniform government, England furnishes but few materials for history. While France was torn with internal convulsions ; while above ten thousand of the Huguenots were massacred in one night, in cool blood, on the feast of St. Bartholomew, at Paris ; while the inhabitants of the Low-Countries had shaken off the Spanish yoke, and were bravely vindicating their rights and their religion ; while all the rest of Europe was teeming with plots, seditions, and cruelty ; the English, under their wise queen, were enjoying all the benefits of peace, extending commerce, improving manufactures, and setting an example of arts and learning to all the rest of the world. Except the small part, therefore, which Elizabeth took in foreign transactions, there scarcely passed any occurrence which requires a particular detail.

There had for some time arisen disgusts between the court of England and that of Spain. Elizabeth's rejection of the suit of Philip might probably have given rise to these disgusts ; and Mary's claiming the protection of that monarch tended to widen the breach. This began, as usual, on each side, with petty hostilities : the Spaniards, on their part, had sent into Ireland a body of seven hundred of their nation and Italians, who built a fort there, but were soon after cut off to a man, by lord Grey. On the other hand, the English, under the conduct of sir Francis Drake,

assaulted the Spaniards in the place where they deemed themselves most secure—in the New World. This was the first Englishman that sailed round the globe; and the queen was so well pleased with his valour and success, that she accepted a banquet from him at Deptford, on board the ship which had achieved so memorable a voyage.

In this manner, while hostilities were daily multiplying between Spain and England, and while the power of Spain, as well as the monarch's inclinations, were very formidable to the queen, she began to look out for an alliance that might support her against such a dangerous adversary. The duke of Anjou had long made pretensions to Elizabeth; and though she was near twenty-five years older than that prince, he took the resolution to prefer his suit in person, and paid her a visit in secret at Greenwich. It appears that, though his figure was not advantageous, his address was pleasing. The queen ordered her ministers to fix the terms of the contract; a day was appointed for the solemnization of the nuptials, and every thing seemed to speak an approaching union. But Elizabeth could not be induced, as that event appeared to approach, to change her condition; she was doubtful, irresolute, and melancholy; she was observed to pass several nights without any sleep, till at last her settled habits of prudence prevailed over her ambition, and the duke of Anjou was dismissed.

The queen, thus depriving herself of a foreign ally, looked for approbation and assistance from her own subjects at home. Yet even here she was not without numberless enemies, who either hated her for religion, or envied her for success. There were several conspiracies formed against her life, many of which were imputed to the intrigues of the queen of Scots: at least it is certain that her name was used in all. Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, brother to the peer who had been beheaded some years before, and Philip Howard, earl of Arundel, son of the unfortunate duke of Norfolk, fell under suspicion; and the latter was, by order of council, confined to his own house. Francis Throgmorton, a private gentleman, was committed to custody, on account of a letter which he had written to the queen of Scots; and shortly after confessing his guilt, he was condemned and executed. Soon after, William Parry, a catholic gentleman, who had on a former

occasion received the queen's pardon, was found engaged in a desperate conspiracy to assassinate his sovereign and benefactor. He had consulted upon the justice and expediency of this vile measure both with the pope's nuncio and legate, who exhorted him to persevere in his resolution, and extremely applauded his design. He therefore associated himself with one Nevil, who entered zealously into the design; and it was determined to shoot the queen, while she was taking the air on horseback. But while they were watching an opportunity for the execution of their purpose, the earl of Westmorland happened to die in exile; and as Nevil was next heir to the family, he began to entertain hopes, that, by doing some acceptable service to the queen, he might recover the estate and honours which had been forfeited by the rebellion of the last earl. He betrayed the whole conspiracy to the ministers; and Parry, being thrown into prison, confessed the guilt both to them, and to the jury who tried him. He was shortly after condemned and executed.

These attempts, which were entirely set on foot by the catholic party, served to increase the severity of the laws against them. Popish priests were banished; those who harboured or relieved them were declared guilty of felony; and many were executed in consequence of this severe edict. Nor was the queen of Scots herself without some share of the punishment. She was removed from the care of the earl of Shrewsbury, who had always been indulgent to his prisoner, particularly with regard to air and exercise; and she was committed to the custody of sir Amias Paulet, and sir Drue Drury, men of honour, but inflexible and rigid in their care and attention.

These conspiracies served to prepare the way for Mary's ruin, whose greatest misfortunes proceeded rather from the violence of her friends than the malignity of her enemies. Elizabeth's ministers had long been waiting for some signal instance of [1586.] the captive queen's enmity, which they could easily convert into treason; and this was not long wanting. John Ballard, a popish priest, who had been bred in the English seminary at Rheims, resolved to compass the death of a queen whom he considered as the enemy of his religion; and with that gloomy resolution came over into England in the disguise of a soldier, with the assumed name of captain Fortescue. He bent his en-

deavours to bring about at once the project of an assassination, an insurrection, and an invasion. The first person he addressed himself to was Anthony Babington, of Dethick in the county of Derby, a young gentleman of good family, and possessed of a very plentiful fortune. This person had been long remarkable for his zeal in the catholic cause, and his attachment to the captive queen. He, therefore, came readily into the plot, and procured the concurrence and assistance of some other associates in this dangerous undertaking; Barnwell, a person of a noble family in Ireland; Charnock, a gentleman of Lancashire; Abington, whose father had been cofferer to the household; and, chief of all, John Savage, a man of desperate fortune, who had served in the Low-Countries, and came into England under a vow to destroy the queen. He indeed did not seem to desire any associate in the bold enterprise, and refused for some time to permit any to share with him in what he esteemed his greatest glory. He challenged the whole to himself; and it was with some difficulty that he was induced to depart from his preposterous ambition. The next step was to apprise Mary of the conspiracy formed in her favour; and this they effected by conveying their letters to her (by means of a brewer that supplied the family with ale) through a chink in the wall of her apartment. In these, Babington informed her of a design laid for a foreign invasion, the plan of an insurrection at home, the scheme for her delivery, and the conspiracy for assassinating the usurper, by six noble gentlemen, as he termed them, all of them his private friends, who, from the zeal which they bore the catholic cause, and her majesty's service, would undertake the tragical execution. To these Mary replied, that she approved highly of the design; that the gentlemen might expect all the rewards which it should ever be in her power to confer; and that the death of Elizabeth was a necessary circumstance, previous to any further attempts either for her delivery, or the intended insurrection.

Such was the scheme laid by the conspirators; and nothing seemed so certain as its secrecy and its success. But they were all miserably deceived; the active and sagacious ministers of Elizabeth were privy to it in every stage of its growth, and only retarded their discovery till the meditated guilt was ripe for punishment and conviction. Ballard was actually attended by one

Maude, a catholic priest, who was a spy in pay with Walsingham, secretary of state. One Polly, another of his spies, had found means to insinuate himself among the conspirators, and to give an exact account of their proceedings. Soon after, one Giffard, a priest, came over, and, discovering the whole conspiracy to the bottom, made a tender of his service to Walsingham. It was he that procured the letters to be conveyed through the wall to the queen, and received her answers; but he had always taken care to show them to the secretary of state, who had them deciphered, and took copies of them all.

The plot being thus ripe for execution, and the evidence against the conspirators incontestable, Walsingham resolved to suspend their punishment no longer. A warrant was accordingly issued out for the apprehending of Ballard; and this giving the alarm to Babington, and the rest of the conspirators, they covered themselves with various disguises, and endeavoured to keep themselves concealed. But they were soon discovered, thrown into prison, and brought to trial. In their examination, they contradicted each other; and the leaders were obliged to make a full confession of the truth. Fourteen were condemned and executed, seven of whom died acknowledging their crime.

The execution of these wretched men only prepared the way for one of still greater importance, in which a captive queen was to submit to the unjust decisions of those who had no right, but that of power, to condemn her. Though all England was acquainted with the detection of Babington's conspiracy, every avenue to the unfortunate Mary was so strictly guarded, that she remained in utter ignorance of the whole matter. But her astonishment was equal to her anguish, when sir Thomas Gorges, by Elizabeth's order, came to inform her of the fate of her unhappy confederates. She was at that time mounted on horseback, going to hunt; and was not permitted to return to her former place of abode, but conducted from one gentleman's house to another, till she was lodged in Fotheringay castle, in Northamptonshire, where the last scene of her miserable tragedy was to be performed.

The council of England was divided in opinion about the measures to be taken against the queen of Scots. Some members proposed, that, as her health was very infirm, her life might be shortened by close confinement; and the earl of Leicester advised that



she should be dispatched by poison ; but the majority insisted on her being put to death by legal process. Accordingly a commission was issued for forty-one peers, with five judges, or the major part of them, to try and pass sentence upon Mary, daughter and heir of James the Fifth, king of Scotland, commonly called queen of Scots, and dowager of France.

Thirty-six of these commissioners arriving at the castle of Fotheringay, presented her with a letter from Elizabeth, commanding her to submit to a trial for her late conspiracy. Mary perused the letter with great composure ; and, as she had long foreseen the danger that hung over her, received the intelligence without emotion or astonishment. She said, however, that she wondered the queen of England should command her as a subject, who was an independent sovereign, and a queen like herself. She would never, she said, stoop to any condescension which would lessen her dignity, or prejudice the claims of her posterity. The laws of England, she observed, were unknown to her ; she was destitute of counsel ; nor could she conceive who were to be her peers, as she had but one equal in the kingdom. She added, that, instead of enjoying the protection of the laws of England, as she had hoped to obtain, she had been confined in prison ever since her arrival in the kingdom ; so that she derived neither benefit nor security from them. When the commissioners pressed her to submit to the queen's pleasure, otherwise they would proceed against her as contumacious, she declared she would rather suffer a thousand deaths than own herself a subject to any prince on earth : that, however, she was ready to vindicate herself in a full and free parliament ; as, for aught she knew, this meeting of commissioners was devised against her life, on purpose to take it away with a pretext of justice. She exhorted them to consult their own consciences, and to remember that the theatre of the world was much more extensive than that of the kingdom of England. At length the vice chamberlain Hatton vanquished her objections, by representing that she injured her reputation by avoiding a trial, in which her innocence might be proved to the satisfaction of all mankind. This observation made such an impression upon her, that she agreed to plead, if they would admit and allow her protest, of disallowing all subjection. This, however, they refused ; but they satisfied her, by entering it upon record ; and thus they proceeded to a trial.

Oct. 14,  
1586. The principal charge against her was urged by serjeant Gaudy, who accused her of knowing, approving, and consenting to Babington's conspiracy. This charge was supported by Babington's confession; by the copies which were taken of their correspondence, in which her approbation of the queen's murder was expressly declared; by the evidence of her own secretaries, Nau a Frenchman, and Curle a Scotchman, who swore that she received the letters of that conspirator, and that they had answered them by her orders. These allegations were corroborated by the testimony of Ballard and Savage, to whom Babington had shown some letters, declaring them to have come from the captive queen. To these charges Mary made a sensible and resolute defence; she said Babington's confession was produced by his fears of the torture; which was really the case: she alleged that the letters were forgeries; and she defied her secretaries to persist in their evidence, if brought into her presence. She owned, indeed, that she had used her best endeavours to recover her liberty, which was only pursuing the dictates of nature; but as for harbouring a thought against the life of the queen, she treated the idea with horror. In a letter which was read during the trial, mention was made of the earl of Arundel and his brothers. On hearing their names, she shed a flood of tears, exclaiming, "Alas! what hath the noble house of Howard endured for my sake!" She took occasion also to observe, that this letter might have been a base contrivance of Walsingham, who had frequently practised both against her life and that of her son. Walsingham, thus accused, rose up, and protested that his heart was free from malice; that he had never done any thing unbecoming an honest man in his private capacity, nor aught unworthy of the place he occupied in the state. Mary declared herself satisfied of his innocence, and begged he would give as little credit to the malicious accusations of her enemies, as she now gave to the reports which she had heard to his prejudice.

Whatever might have been this queen's offences, it is certain that her treatment was very severe. She desired to be put in possession of such notes as she had taken preparative to her trial; but this was refused her. She demanded a copy of her protest; but her request was not complied with: she even required an advocate to plead her cause against so many learned lawyers as had

undertaken to urge her accusations ; but all her demands were rejected ; and after an adjournment of some days, sentence of death was pronounced against her in the Star-chamber in Westminster, all the commissioners except two being present. At the same time a declaration was published by the commissioners, implying, that the sentence against her did in no wise derogate from the title and honour of James, king of Scotland, son to the attainted queen.

Though the condemnation of a sovereign princess at a tribunal to which she owed no subjection was an injustice that must strike the most inattentive, yet the parliament of England did not fail to approve the sentence, and to go still farther, in presenting an address to the queen, desiring that it might Oct. 29,  
1586. speedily be put into execution. But Elizabeth still possessed, or pretended to possess, an horror for such precipitate severity. She entreated the two houses to find some expedient to save her from the necessity of taking a step so repugnant to her inclination. But at the same time she seemed to dread another conspiracy to assassinate her within a month ; which probably was only an artifice of her ministers to increase her apprehensions, and, consequently, her desire of being rid of a rival that had given her so much disturbance. The parliament, however, reiterated their solicitations, arguments, and entreaties ; and even remonstrated, that mercy to the queen of Scots was cruelty to them, her subjects, and her children. Elizabeth affected to continue inflexible, but at the same time permitted Mary's sentence to be made public ; and lord Buckhurst, and Beale, clerk to the council, were sent to the unhappy queen to apprise her of the sentence, and of the popular clamour for its speedy execution.

Upon receiving this dreadful information, Mary seemed no way moved ; but insisted, that since her death was demanded by the protestants, she died a martyr to the catholic religion. She said, that as the English often embued their hands in the blood of their own sovereigns, it was not to be wondered at that they exercised their cruelty towards her. She wrote her last letter to Elizabeth, not demanding her life, which she now seemed willing to part with, but desiring that, after her enemies should be satiated with her innocent blood, her body might be consigned to her servants, and conveyed to France, there to repose in a catholic country, with the sacred remains of her mother.

In the mean time, accounts of this extraordinary sentence were spread into all parts of Europe; and the king of France was among the foremost who attempted to avert the threatened blow. He sent over Believre as an extraordinary ambassador, with a professed intention of interceding for the life of Mary. But James of Scotland, her son, was, as in duty obliged, still more pressing in her behalf. He dispatched Keith, a gentleman of his bed-chamber, with a letter to Elizabeth, conjuring her to spare the life of his parent, and mixing threats of vengeance in case of a refusal. Elizabeth treated his remonstrances with the utmost indignation; and when the Scottish ambassador begged that the execution might be put off for a week, the queen answered with great emotion, "No, not for an hour." Thus Elizabeth, when solicited by foreign princes to pardon the queen of Scots, seemed always disposed to proceed to extremities against her; but when her ministers urged her to strike the blow, her scruples and her reluctance seemed to return.

Whether the queen was really sincere in her reluctance to execute Mary, is a question which, though usually given against her, I will not take upon me to determine. Certainly there were great arts used by her courtiers to determine her to the side of severity; as they had every thing to fear from the resentment of Mary, in case of her succeeding to the throne. Accordingly the kingdom was now filled with rumours of plots, treasons, and insurrections; and the queen was continually kept in alarm by fictitious dangers. She therefore appeared to be in great terror and perplexity; she was observed to sit much alone, and to mutter to herself half-sentences, importing the difficulty and distress to which she was reduced. In this situation, she one day called her secretary, Davidson, whom she ordered to draw out secretly the warrant for Mary's execution, informing him, that she intended to keep it by her in case any attempt should be made for the delivery of that princess. She signed the warrant, and then commanded it to be carried to the chancellor to have the seal affixed to it. Next morning, however, she sent two gentlemen successively to desire that Davidson would not go to the chancellor, until she should see him; but the secretary telling her that the warrant had been already sealed, she seemed displeased at his precipitation. Davidson, who probably wished to see the sentence executed, laid the affair before the council, who unanimously re-

solved, that the warrant should be immediately put in execution, and promised to justify Davidson to the queen. Accordingly, the fatal instrument was delivered to Beale, who summoned the noblemen to whom it was directed, namely, the earls of Shrewsbury, Derby, Kent, and Cumberland; and these together set out for Fotheringay castle, accompanied by two executioners, to dispatch their bloody commission.

Mary heard of the arrival of her executioners, who ordered her to prepare for death by eight o'clock the next morning. Without any alarm, she heard the death-warrant read with her usual composure, though she could not help expressing her surprise, that the queen of England should consent to her execution. She even abjured her being privy to any conspiracy against Elizabeth, by laying her hand upon a New Testament, which happened to lie on the table. She desired that her confessor might be permitted to attend her; which, however, these zealots refused. After the earls had retired, she ate sparingly at supper, while she comforted her attendants (who continued weeping and lamenting the fate of their mistress) with a cheerful countenance, telling them, they ought not to mourn, but to rejoice, at the prospect of her speedy deliverance from a world of misery. Towards the end of supper, she called in all her servants, and drank to them; they pledged her in order on their knees, and craved her pardon for any past neglect of duty. She craved mutual forgiveness; and a plentiful effusion of tears attended this last solemn separation.

After this, she reviewed her will, and perused the inventory of her effects. These she bequeathed to different individuals, and divided her money among her domestics, recommending them in letters to the king of France and the duke of Guise. Then going to bed at her usual hour, she passed part of the night in uninterrupted repose, and, rising, spent the remainder in prayer and acts of devotion. Towards morning, she dressed herself in a rich habit of silk and velvet, the only one which she had reserved for this solemn occasion. Thomas Andrews, the under-sheriff of the county, then entering the room, informed her that the hour was come, and that he must attend her to the place of execution. She replied, that she was ready; and bidding Feb. 8,  
1587. her servants farewell, she proceeded, supported by two of her guards, and followed the sheriff with a serene composed aspect,

with a long veil of linen on her head, and in her hand a crucifix of ivory. In passing through a hall adjoining to her chamber, sir Andrew Melvil, master of her household, fell upon his knees, and, shedding a flood of tears, lamented his misfortune in being doomed to carry the news of her unhappy fate to Scotland. "Lament not," said she, "but rather rejoice. Mary Stuart will soon be freed from all her cares. Tell my friends that I die constant in my religion, and firm in my affection and fidelity to Scotland and France. God forgive them that have long desired my end, and have thirsted for my blood as the hart panteth for the water-brook! Thou, O God, who art truth itself, and perfectly understandest the inmost thoughts of my heart, knowest how greatly I have desired that the realms of Scotland and England might be united. Commend me to my son, and assure him I have done nothing prejudicial to the state or the crown of Scotland. Admonish him to persevere in amity and friendship with the queen of England; and, for thy own part, do him faithful service. And so, good Melvil, farewell; once again farewell, good Melvil, and grant the assistance of thy prayers to thy queen and thy mistress." In this place she was received by the four noblemen, who with great difficulty were prevailed upon to allow Melvil, with her physician, apothecary, and two female attendants, to be present at her execution. She then passed (the noblemen and the sheriff going before, and Melvil bearing up her train) into another hall, where was a scaffold erected and covered with black.

As soon as she was seated, Beale began to read the warrant for her execution. Then Fletcher, dean of Peterborough, standing without the rails, repeated a long exhortation, which she desired him to forbear, as she was firmly resolved to die in the catholic religion. The room was crowded with spectators, who beheld her with pity and distress, while her beauty, though dimmed by age and affliction, gleamed through her sufferings, and was still remarkable in this fatal moment. The earl of Kent, observing that in her devotions she made frequent use of the crucifix, could not forbear reproving her, exhorting her to have Christ in her heart, not in her hand. She replied, with presence of mind, that it was difficult to hold such an object in her hand, without feeling her heart touched for the sufferings of him whom it represented. She now began, with the aid of her two women, to undress for

the block ; and the executioner also lent his hand to assist them. She smiled, and said that she was not accustomed to undress herself before so large a company, or to be attended by such servants. Her women bursting into tears and loud exclamations of sorrow, she turned about to them, put her finger upon her lips, as a sign of imposing silence upon them ; and, having given them her blessing, desired their prayers in return. The two executioners kneeling, and asking her pardon, she said she forgave them, and all the authors of her death, as freely as she hoped forgiveness of her Maker ; and once more made a solemn protestation of her innocence. Her eyes were then covered with a linen handkerchief ; she laid herself down without any fear or trepidation ; and when she had recited a psalm, and repeated a pious ejaculation, her head was severed from her body at two strokes. The executioner instantly held it up to the spectators, streaming with blood, and agitated with the convulsions of death. The dean of Peterborough alone exclaimed, "So perish all queen Elizabeth's enemies!" The earl of Kent replied Amen, while the rest of the spectators wept and sighed at this affecting spectacle ; for flattery and zeal alike gave place to stronger and better emotions. Thus died Mary, in the forty-fifth year of her age, and the nineteenth of her captivity—a princess unmatched in beauty, and unequalled in misfortunes. In contemplating the contentions of mankind, we find almost ever both sides culpable ; Mary, who was stained with crimes that deserved punishment, was put to death by a princess who had no right to inflict punishment on her equal.

It is difficult to be certain of the true state of Elizabeth's mind, when she received the first account of the death of Mary. Historians in general are willing to ascribe the extreme sorrow she testified on that occasion to falsehood and deep dissimulation. But where is the necessity of ascribing to bad motives, what seems to proceed from a more generous source ? There is nothing more certain than that, upon hearing the news, she testified the utmost surprise and indignation. Her countenance changed, her speech faltered and failed her, and she stood fixed for a long time in mute astonishment. When the first burst of sorrow was over, she still persisted in her resentment against her ministers, none of whom dared to approach her. She committed Davidson to prison, and ordered him to be tried in the Star-chamber for his misdemean-

our. He was condemned to imprisonment during the queen's pleasure, and to pay a fine of ten thousand pounds; in consequence of which he remained a long time in custody; and the fine, though it reduced him to want and beggary, was rigorously levied upon him. It is likely, therefore, that Elizabeth was sincere enough in her anger for the fate of Mary, as it was an event likely to brand her reign with the character of cruelty; and though she might have desired her rival's death, yet she must certainly have been shocked at the manner of it.

But the uneasiness the queen felt from this disagreeable forwardness of her ministry was soon lost in one much greater. Philip, who had long meditated the destruction of England, and whose extensive power gave him grounds to hope for success, now began to put his projects into execution. The point on which he rested his glory, and the perpetual object of his schemes, was to support the catholic religion, and exterminate the Reformation. The revolt of his subjects in the Netherlands inflamed his resentment against the English, as they had encouraged that insurrection, and assisted the revolters. He had, therefore, for some time been making preparations to attack England by a powerful invasion; and now every part of his vast empire resounded with the noise of armaments, and every art was used to levy supplies for that great design. The marquis of Santa Cruz, a sea-[1588.] officer of great reputation and experience, was destined to command the fleet, which consisted of a hundred and thirty vessels, of a greater size than any that had been hitherto seen in Europe. The duke of Parma was to conduct the soldiers, twenty-thousand of whom were on board the fleet, and thirty-four thousand more were assembled in the Netherlands, ready to be transported into England. The most renowned nobility and princes of Italy and Spain were ambitious to share in the honour of this great enterprise. Don Amadæus of Savoy, Don John of Medicis, Gonzaga duke of Sabionetta, and others, hastened to join this great equipment; no doubt was entertained of its success, and it was ostentatiously styled the Invincible Armada. It carried on board, beside the land forces, eight thousand four hundred mariners, two thousand galley-slaves, and two thousand six hundred and thirty great pieces of brass ordnance. It was victualled for six months, and was attended with twenty smaller ships, called caravels, and ten salves.



Nothing could exceed the terror and consternation which all ranks of people felt in England upon news of this terrible Armada being under sail to invade them. A fleet of not above thirty ships of war, and those very small in comparison, was all that was to oppose it by sea; and as for resisting by land, that was supposed to be impossible, as the Spanish army was composed of men well disciplined, and long inured to danger. The queen alone seemed undismayed in this threatening calamity: she issued all her orders with tranquillity; animated her people to a steady resistance; and the more to excite the martial spirit of the nation, she appeared on horseback in the camp at Tilbury, exhorting the soldiers to their duty, and promising to share the same dangers and the same fate with them. "I myself," cried she, "will be your general, your judge, and the rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field. Your alacrity has already deserved its rewards, and, on the word of a prince, they shall be duly paid you. Persevere then in your obedience to command; show your valour in the field; and we shall soon have a glorious victory over those enemies of my God, my kingdom, and my people." The soldiers with shouts proclaimed their ardour, and only wished to be led on to conquest.

Nor were her preparations by sea driven on with less alacrity: although the English fleet was much inferior in number and size of shipping to that of the enemy, yet it was much more manageable, the dexterity and courage of the mariners being greatly superior. Lord Howard of Effingham, a man of great courage and capacity, as lord admiral, took on him the command of the navy. Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher, the most renowned seamen in Europe, served under him; while a small squadron, consisting of forty vessels, English and Flemish, commanded by lord Henry Seymour, lay off Dunkirk, in order to intercept the duke of Parma. This was the preparation made by the English; while all the protestant powers of Europe regarded this enterprise as the critical event which was to decide forever the fate of their religion.

While the Spanish Armada was preparing to sail, the admiral, Santa Cruz, died, as likewise the vice-admiral Paliano; and the command of the expedition was given to the duke de Medina Sidonia, a person utterly inexperienced in sea-affairs; and this,

in some measure, served to frustrate the design. But some other accidents also contributed to its failure. Upon leaving the port of Lisbon, the Armada next day met with a violent tempest, which sunk some of the smallest of the shipping, and obliged the fleet to put back into harbour. After some time spent in refitting, they again put to sea, where they took a fisherman, who gave them intelligence that the English fleet, hearing of the dispersion of the Armada in a storm, had retired into Plymouth harbour, and that most of the mariners were discharged. From this false intelligence, the Spanish admiral, instead of going directly to the coast of Flanders to take in the troops stationed there, as he had been instructed, resolved to sail to Plymouth, and destroy the shipping laid up in that harbour. But Effingham, the English admiral, was very well prepared to receive them; he had just weighed anchor, when he saw the Spanish Armada coming full sail towards him, disposed in the form of a half moon, and stretching seven miles from one extremity to the other. However, the English admiral, Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher, attacked the Armada at a distance, pouring in their broadsides with admirable dexterity. They did not choose to engage the enemy more closely, because they were greatly inferior in the number of ships, guns, and weight of metal; nor could they pretend to board such lofty ships without manifest disadvantage. However, two Spanish galleons were disabled and taken. As the Armada advanced up the Channel, the English still followed and infested its rear; and their fleet continually increasing from different ports, they soon found themselves in a capacity to attack the Spaniards more nearly; and accordingly fell upon them while they were taking shelter in the port of Calais. To increase their confusion, Howard took eight of his smaller ships, and, filling them with combustible materials, sent them, as if they had been fire-ships, one after the other into the midst of the enemy. The Spaniards, taking them for what they seemed to be, immediately took flight in great disorder; while the English, profiting by their panic, took or destroyed about twelve of the enemy's ships.

This was a fatal blow to Spain: the duke de Medina Sidonia being thus driven to the coast of Zealand, held a council of war, in which it was resolved, that, as their ammunition began to fail, as their ships had received great damage, and as the duke of

Parma had refused to venture his army under their protection; they should return to Spain by sailing round the Orkneys, as the winds were contrary to his passage directly back. Accordingly they proceeded northward, and were followed by the English fleet as far as Flamborough-head, where they were terribly shattered by a storm. Seventeen of the ships, having five thousand men on board, were afterwards cast away upon the Western Isles and the coast of Ireland. Of the whole Armada, three-and-fifty ships only returned to Spain, in a miserable condition: and the seamen as well as soldiers who remained, only served, by their accounts, to intimidate their countrymen from attempting to renew so dangerous an expedition.

These disasters of the Spanish Armada served only to excite the spirit and courage of the English to attempt invasions in their turn. It would be endless to relate all the advantages obtained over the enemy at sea, where the capture of every ship must have been made a separate narrative; or their various descents upon different parts of the coast, which were attended with effects too transient for the page of history. It is sufficient to observe, that the sea-captains of that reign are still considered as the boldest and most enterprising set of men that England ever produced; and among this number we reckon our Raleigh and Howard, our Drake, our Cavendish, and Hawkins. The English navy then began to take the lead, and has since continued irresistible in all parts of the ocean.

One of those who made the most signal figure in these depredations upon Spain, was the young earl of Essex, a nobleman of great bravery, generosity, and genius; and fitted, not only for the foremost ranks in war by his valour, but to conduct the intrigues of a court by his eloquence and address. But with all these endowments both of body and mind, he wanted prudence; being impetuous, haughty, and totally incapable of advice or control. The earl of Leicester had died some time before, and now left room in the queen's affections for a new favourite, which she was not long in choosing, since the merit, the bravery, and the popularity of Essex were too great not to engage her attention. Elizabeth, though she rejected a husband, yet appeared always passionately desirous of a lover; and flattery had rendered her so insensible to her want of beauty, and the depredations of age,

that she still thought herself as powerful by her personal accomplishments as by her authority. The new favourite was young, active, ambitious, witty, and handsome; in the field, and at court, he always appeared with superior lustre. In all the masques which were then performed, he and Elizabeth were generally coupled as partners; and although she was older, by thirty-four years, than the earl, her vanity overlooked the disparity; the world told her that she was young, and she herself was willing to think so. This young earl's interest in the queen's affections, as may naturally be supposed, promoted his interests in the state; and he conducted all things at his discretion. But, young and inexperienced as he was, he at length began to fancy that the popularity he possessed, and the flatteries he received, were given to his merits and not to his favour. His jealousy also of lord Burleigh, who was his only rival in power, made him still more intractable; and the many successes he had obtained against the Spaniards increased his confidence. In a debate before the queen, between him and Burleigh, about the choice of a governor for Ireland, he was so heated in the argument, that he entirely forgot the rules both of duty and civility. He turned his back on the queen in a contemptuous manner; which so provoked her resentment, that she instantly gave him a box on the ear. Instead of recollecting himself, and making the submission due to her sex and station, he clapped his hand to his sword, and swore he would not bear such usage even from her father. This offence, though very great, was overlooked by the queen; her partiality was so prevalent, that she re-instated him in his former favour, and her kindness seemed to have acquired new force from that short [1598.] interruption of anger and resentment. The death also of his rival lord Burleigh, which happened shortly after, seemed to confirm his power.

But though few men were possessed of Essex's talents both for war and peace, yet he had not art enough to guard against the intrigues of a court; his temper was too candid and open, and gave his enemies many advantages over him. At that time the earl of Tyrone headed the rebellious natives of Ireland; who, not yet thoroughly brought into subjection to the English, took every opportunity of making incursions upon the more civilized inhabitants, and slew all they were able to overpower. To subdue these was

an employment that the earl thought worthy of his ambition ; nor were his enemies displeas'd at thus removing a man from court, who obstructed all their private aims of preferment. But it ended in his ruin.

Essex, upon entering on his new command in Ireland, employ'd his friend the earl of Southampton, who was [1599.] long obnoxious to the queen, as general of horse ; nor was it till after repeated orders from Elizabeth that he could be prevail'd on to displace him. This indiscretion was followed by another : instead of attacking the insurgents in their grand retreat in Ulster, he led his forces into the province of Munster, where he only exhausted his strength, and lost his opportunity against a people that submitted at his approach, but took up arms again when he retired. It may easily be supposed that these miscarriages were urg'd by the enemies of Essex at home ; but they had still greater reason to attack his reputation, when it was known that, instead of humbling the rebels, he had only treated with them ; and instead of forcing them to a submission, he had concluded a cessation of hostilities. This issue of an enterprise, from which much was expected, did not fail to provoke the queen most sensibly ; and her anger was heighten'd by the peevish and impatient letters which he wrote to her and the council. But her resentment against him was still more justly let loose, when she found that, leaving the place of his appointment, without any permission demand'd or obtain'd, he had return'd from Ireland to make his complaints to herself in person.

At first, indeed, Elizabeth was pleas'd at seeing a favourite come back whom she long'd to see ; but the momentary satisfaction of his unexpected appearance being over, she reflect'd on the impropriety of his conduct with greater severity, and order'd him to remain a prisoner at his own house. This was a reception Essex was not unprepared for : he us'd every expression of humiliation and sorrow, and try'd once more the long-unpractis'd arts of insinuation that had brought him into favour. The queen still continuing inflexible, he resolv'd to give up every prospect of ambition ; but previous to his retiring into the country, he assur'd the queen that he could never be happy till he again saw those eyes which were us'd to shine upon him with such lustre ; that, in expectance of that happy moment, he would, like another

Nebuchadnezzar, dwell with the beasts of the field, and be wet with the dew of heaven, till she again propitiously took pity on his sufferings. This romantic message, which was quite in the breeding of the times, seemed peculiarly pleasing to the queen : she thought him sincere from the consciousness of her own sincerity ; she therefore replied, that, after some time, when convinced of his sincerity, something might be expected from her lenity. When these symptoms of her returning affection were known, they equally renewed the fears of his real enemies and the assiduities of his pretended friends. He did not therefore decline an examination of his conduct before the council, secure in his mistress' favour and their impotence to do him a real injury. In consequence of this he was only sentenced, for his late misconduct, to resign his employments, and to continue a prisoner in his own house, till her majesty's further pleasure should be known.

[1600.] He now had in some measure triumphed over his enemies ; and the discretion of a few months might have reinstated him in all his former employments ; but the impetuosity of his character would not suffer him to wait for a slow redress of what he considered as wrongs ; and the queen's refusing his request to continue him in the possession of a lucrative monopoly of sweet wines, which he had long enjoyed, spurred him on to the most violent and guilty measures. Having long built with fond credulity on his great popularity, he began to hope, from the assistance of the giddy multitude, that revenge upon his enemies in the council, which he supposed was denied him from the throne. With these aims he began to increase the general propensity in his favour, by a hospitality little suited to his situation or his circumstances. He entertained men of all ranks and professions ; but particularly the military, who, he hoped, in his present views, might be serviceable to him. But his greatest dependance was upon the professions of the citizens of London, whose schemes of religion and government he appeared entirely to approve ; and while he gratified the puritans by railing at the government of the church, he pleased the envious by exposing the faults of those in power. However, the chief severity of his censure was heard to rest upon the queen, whom he did not hesitate to ridicule ; and of whom he declared that

she was now become an old woman, and that her mind was grown as crooked as her body.

It may well be supposed that none of these indiscretions were concealed from the queen : his enemies, and [1601.] her emissaries, took care to bring her information of all his resentments and aims, and to aggravate his slightest reflections into treason. Elizabeth was ever remarkably jealous where her beauty was in question ; and, though she was now in her sixty-eighth year, yet she eagerly listened to all the flattery of her courtiers, when they called her a Venus, or an angel. She therefore began to consider him as unworthy of her esteem, and permitted his enemies to drive him to those extremities to which he was naturally inclined to proceed. He had, in fact, by this time collected a select council of malcontents, who flattered him in his wild projects ; and supposing their adherents much more numerous than they really were, they took no pains to conceal their intentions. Among other criminal projects, the result of blind rage and despair, they resolved at last that sir Christopher Blount, one of his creatures, should, with a choice detachment, possess himself of the palace gates ; that sir John Davies should seize the hall, sir Charles Davers the guard-chamber, while Essex himself would rush from the Mews, attended by a body of his partisans, into the queen's presence, intreat her to remove his and her enemies, to assemble a new parliament, and to correct the defects of the present administration.

It was the fortune of this queen's reign, that all projects against it were frustrated by a timely notice of their nature and intent. The queen and council, alarmed at the great resort of people to Essex-house, and having some intimations of the earl's design, sent secretary Herbert to require his appearance before the council, which was assembled at the lord keeper's. While Essex was deliberating upon the manner in which he should proceed, whether to attend the summons or to fly into open rebellion, he received a private note, by which he was warned to provide for his safety. He now, therefore, consulted with his friends on the emergency of their situation ; they were destitute of arms and ammunition, while the guards at the palace were doubled, so that any attack upon it would be fruitless. While he and his confidants were in consultation, a person, probably employed by his enemies, came in as a

messenger from the citizens, with tenders of friendship and assistance against all his adversaries. Wild as the project was of raising the city, in the present terrible conjuncture, it was resolved on; but the execution of it was delayed till the day following.

Early in the morning of the next day he was attended by his friends the earls of Rutland and Southampton, the lords Sandys, Parker, and Montegle, with three hundred persons of distinction. The doors of Essex-house were immediately locked, to prevent all strangers from entering; and the earl now discovered his scheme for raising the city more fully to the conspirators. In the mean time, sir Walter Raleigh sending a message to sir Ferdinando Gorges, this officer had a conference with him in a boat on the Thames, and there discovered all their proceedings. The queen being informed of the whole, sent in the utmost haste Egerton, the lord keeper, sir William Knollys, the comptroller, Popham, the lord chief justice, and the earl of Worcester, to Essex-house, to demand the cause of these unusual proceedings. It was some time before they received admittance through the wicket into the house; and it was not without some degree of fury that they ordered Essex and his adherents to lay down their arms. While they continued undaunted in the discharge of their duty, and the multitude around them clamoured loudly for their punishment, the earl of Essex, who now saw that all was to be hazarded, resolved to leave them prisoners in his house, and to sally forth to make an insurrection in the city. But he had made a very wrong estimate in expecting that popularity alone could aid him in time of danger; he issued out with about two hundred followers, armed only with swords; and in his passage to the city was joined by the earl of Bedford and lord Cromwell. As he passed through the streets, he cried aloud, "For the queen! for the queen! a plot is laid for my life!" hoping to engage the populace to rise: but they had received orders from the mayor to keep within their houses; so that he was not joined by a single person. He then proceeded to the house of Smith, the sheriff, on whose aid he greatly depended; but the crowd gathered round him rather to satisfy their curiosity than to lend him any assistance. Essex now perceived that he was quite undone; and hearing that he was proclaimed a traitor by the earl of Cumberland and lord Burleigh, he began to think of retreating to his own



house, there to sell his life as dearly as he could. But he was prevented in his aims even there; the streets in his way were barricaded, and guarded by the citizens, under the command of sir John Levison. In fighting his way through this obstruction, Henry Tracy, a young gentleman for whom he had a singular affection, was killed, and sir Christopher Blount wounded and taken. The earl himself, attended by a few of his followers, the rest having privately retired, made towards the river: and, taking a boat, arrived once more at Essex-house, where he began to make preparations for his defence. But his case was too desperate for any remedy from valour; wherefore, after demanding in vain for hostages and conditions from his besiegers, he surrendered at discretion, requesting only civil treatment, and a fair and impartial hearing.

Essex and Southampton were immediately carried to the archbishop's palace at Lambeth, whence they were next day conveyed to the Tower, and tried by their peers on the nineteenth of February. Little could be urged in their defence; their guilt was too flagrant; and though it deserved pity, it could not meet an acquittal. Essex, after condemnation, was visited by that religious horror which seemed to attend him in all his disgraces. He was terrified almost to despair by the ghostly remonstrances of his own chaplain; he was reconciled to his enemies, and made a full confession of his conspiracy. It is alleged upon this occasion that he had strong hopes of pardon, from the irresolution which the queen seemed to discover before she signed the warrant for his execution. She had given him formerly a ring, which she desired him to send her in any emergency of this nature, and that it should procure his safety and protection. This ring was actually sent to her by the countess of Nottingham, who, being a concealed enemy to the unfortunate earl, never delivered it; while Elizabeth secretly fired at his obstinacy in making no applications for mercy and forgiveness. The fact is, she appeared herself as much an object of pity, as the unfortunate nobleman she was induced to condemn. She signed the warrant for his execution; she countermanded it; she again resolved on his death, and again felt a new return of tenderness. At last she gave her consent to his execution, and was never seen to enjoy one happy day more.

After the beheading of Essex, which death he suffered in the thirty-fifth year of his age, some of his associates were brought in like manner to their trials. Cuffe, his secretary, a turbulent man, but possessed of great learning, Davers, Blount, and Meric, were condemned and executed; the queen pardoned the rest, being persuaded that they were culpable only from their friendship to their benefactor.

The remaining events of this reign are not considerable enough to come into a picture already crowded with great ones. With the death of her favourite Essex, all Elizabeth's pleasures seemed to expire: she afterwards went through the business of the state merely from habit; but her satisfactions were no more. She had fallen into a profound melancholy, which all the advantages of her high fortune, all the glories of her prosperous reign were unable to remove. She had now found out the falsehood of the countess of Nottingham; who, on her death-bed, sent for the queen, and informed her of the fatal circumstance of the ring, which she had neglected to deliver. This information only served to awaken all that passion which the queen had vainly endeavoured to suppress. She shook the dying countess in her bed, crying out, that "God might pardon her, but she never would." She then broke from her, and resigned herself to the dictates of her fixed despair. She refused food and sustenance; she continued [1603.] silent and gloomy; sighs and groans were the only vent she gave to her despondence; and she lay for ten days and nights upon the carpet, leaning on cushions which her maids brought her. Perhaps the faculties of her mind were impaired by long and violent exercise; perhaps she reflected with remorse on some past actions of her life, or perceived but too strongly the decays of nature and the approach of her dissolution. She saw her courtiers remitting their assiduity to her, in order to pay their court to James, the apparent successor. Such a concurrence of causes was more than sufficient to destroy the remains of her constitution; and her end visibly approached. Feeling a perpetual heat in her stomach, attended with an unquenchable thirst, she drank without ceasing, but refused the assistance of her physicians. Her distemper gaining ground, sir Robert Cecil, and the lord admiral, desired to know her sentiments with regard to the succession. To this she replied, that as the crown of England

had always been held by kings, it ought not to devolve upon any inferior character, but upon her immediate heir, the king of Scotland. Being then advised by the archbishop of Canterbury to fix her thoughts upon God, she replied, that her thoughts did not in the least wander from him. Her voice soon after left her; she fell into a lethargic slumber, which continued some hours, and she expired gently without a groan in the seventieth year of her age, and the forty-fifth of her reign. Her character differed with her circumstances; in the beginning, she was moderate and humble; towards the end of her reign, haughty and severe. But ever prudent, active, and discerning, she procured for her subjects that happiness which was not entirely felt by those about her. She was indebted to her good fortune, that her ministers were excellent; but it was owing to her indiscretion that the favourites, who were more immediately chosen by herself, were unworthy. Though she was possessed of excellent sense, she never had the discernment to discover that she wanted beauty; and to flatter her charms at the age of sixty-five, was the surest road to her favour and esteem.

But whatever were her personal defects, as a queen she is to be ever remembered by the English with gratitude. It is true, indeed, that she carried her prerogative in parliament to its highest pitch; so that it was tacitly allowed in that assembly, that she was above all laws, and could make and unmake them at her pleasure; yet still she was so wise and good, as seldom to exert that power which she claimed, and to enforce few acts of her prerogative, which were not for the benefit of the people. It is true, in like manner, that the English during her reign were put in possession of no new or splendid acquisitions; but commerce was daily growing up amongst them, and the people began to find that the theatre of their truest conquests was to be on the bosom of the ocean. A nation which hitherto had been the object of every invasion, and a prey to every plunderer, now asserted its strength in turn, and became terrible to its invaders. The successful voyages of the Spaniards and Portuguese began to excite their emulation; and they fitted out several expeditions for discovering a shorter passage to the East Indies. The famous sir Walter Raleigh, without any assistance from government, colonised Virginia in North-America, while internal commerce was

making equal improvements ; and many Flemings, persecuted in their native country, found, together with their arts and industry, an easy asylum in England. Thus the whole island seemed as if roused from her long habits of barbarity ; arts, commerce, and legislation, began to acquire new strength ; and such was the state of learning at the time, that some fix this period as the Augustan age of England. Sir Walter Raleigh, and Hooker, are considered as among the first improvers of our language. Spenser and Shakspeare are too well known as poets, to be praised here ; but of all mankind, Francis Bacon, lord Verulam, who flourished in this reign, deserves, as a philosopher, the highest applause ; his style is copious and correct, and his wit is only surpassed by his learning and penetration. If we look through history, and consider the rise of kingdoms, we shall scarcely find an instance of a people becoming, in so short a time, wise, powerful, and happy. Liberty, it is true, still continued to fluctuate ; Elizabeth knew her own power, and stretched it to the very verge of despotism : but now that commerce was introduced, liberty soon followed ; for there never was a nation perfectly commercial, that submitted long to slavery.

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CHAP. XXVIII.

JAMES I.

**J**AMES, the Sixth of Scotland and the First of England, the son of Mary, came to the throne with the approbation of all orders of the state, as in his person was united every claim that either descent, bequest, or parliamentary sanction could confer. He had every reason, therefore, to hope for a happy reign ; and he was taught, from his infancy, that his prerogative was uncontrollable, and his right transmitted from heaven. These sentiments he took no care to conceal ; and even published them in many parts of those works which he had written before he left Scotland.

But he was greatly mistaken in the spirit of thinking of the times ; for new systems of government, and new ideas of liberty, had for some time been stealing in with the Reformation ; and

only wanted the reign of a weak or merciful monarch to appear without control. In consequence of the progress of knowledge, and a familiar acquaintance with the governments of antiquity, the old Gothic forms began to be despised; and an emulation took place to imitate the freedom of Greece and Rome. The severe though popular government of Elizabeth had confined this rising spirit within very narrow bounds; but when a new sovereign and a new family appeared, less dreaded and less loved by the people, symptoms immediately began to be seen of a more free and independent genius in the nation.

James had scarcely entered England when he gave disgust to many. The desire in all to see their new sovereign was ardent and natural; but the king, who loved retirement, forbade the concourse that attended on his journey from Scotland, pretending that this great resort of people would produce a scarcity of provisions. To this offence to the people he added, soon after, what gave disgust to the higher orders of the state, by prostituting titles of honour, so that they became so common as to be no longer marks of distinction. A pasquinade was fixed up at St. Paul's, declaring that there would be a lecture given on the art of assisting short memories, to retain the names of the new nobility.

But though his countrymen shared a part of these honours, yet justice must be done the king, by confessing that he left almost all the great offices in the hands in which he found them. Among these, Cecil, created earl of Salisbury, was continued prime minister and chief counsellor. This crafty statesman had been too cunning for the rest of his associates; and while, during Elizabeth's reign, he was apparently leagued against the earl of Essex, whom James protected, yet he kept up a secret correspondence with that monarch, and secured his interests without forfeiting the confidence of his party.

But it was not so fortunate with lord Grey, lord Cobham, and sir Walter Raleigh, who had been Cecil's associates. They felt immediately the effects of the king's displeasure, and were dismissed from their employments. These three seemed to be marked out for peculiar indignation; for, soon after, they were accused of entering into a conspiracy against the king; neither the proofs of which, nor its aims, have reached posterity: all that is certain is, that they were condemned to die, but had their sentence miti-

gated by the king. Cobham and Grey were pardoned, after they had laid their heads on the block. Raleigh was reprieved, but remained in confinement many years afterwards, and at last suffered for this offence, which was never proved.

This mercy, shown to those supposed delinquents, was very [1604.] pleasing to the people; and the king, willing to remove all jealousy of his being a stranger, began his attempts in parliament by an endeavour to unite both kingdoms into one. However, the minds of the people were not yet ripe for this coalition; they were apprehensive that the posts and employments, which were in the gift of the court, would be conferred on the Scots, whom they were as yet taught to regard as foreigners. By the repulse in this instance, as well as by some exceptions the house of commons took to the form of his summons to parliament, James found that the people he came to govern were very different from those he had left behind; and perceived that he must give reasons for every measure he intended to enforce.

He now, therefore, attempted to correct his former mistake, and to peruse the English laws, as he had formerly done those of his own country; and by these he resolved to govern. But even here he again found himself disappointed. In a government so fluctuating as that of England, opinion was ever deviating from law; and what was enacted in one reign was contradicted by custom in another. The laws had all along declared in favour of an almost unlimited prerogative, while the opinions of the people were guided by instructors who began to teach opposite principles. All the kings and queens before him, except such as were controlled by intestine divisions, or awed by foreign invasion, rather issued their commands to parliament than gave their reasons. James, unmindful of this alteration in the opinions of the people, resolved to govern in the antient manner; while the people, on the contrary, having once gotten an idea of the inherent privileges of mankind, never gave it up, sensible that they had reason and power also on their side.

Numberless were the disputes between the king and his parliament during this reign; the one striving to keep the privileges of the crown entire, the other aiming at abridging the dangerous part of the prerogative; the one labouring to preserve customs established for time immemorial, the other equally assiduous in

defending the inherent privileges of humanity. Thus we see laudable motives actuating the disputants on both sides of the question, and the principles of both founded either in law or in reason. When the parliament would not grant a subsidy, James had examples enough among his predecessors, which taught him to extort a benevolence. Edward the Fourth, Henry the Eighth, and queen Elizabeth herself, had often done so; and precedent undoubtedly entitled him to the same privilege. On the other hand, the house of commons, who found their growing power to protect the people, and not suffer the impositions of the crown, considered that this extorted benevolence might at length render the sovereign entirely independent of the parliament, and therefore complained of it, as an infringement of their privileges. These attempts of the crown, and these murmurings of the commons, continued through this whole reign, and first gave rise to that spirit of party which has ever since subsisted in England; the one for preserving the antient constitution, by maintaining the prerogative of the king, the other for trying an experiment to improve it, by extending the liberties of the people,

During these contests, James, who supposed no arguments sufficient to impair the prerogative, seemed entirely secure that none would attempt to allege any. He continued to entertain his parliament with set speeches and florid harangues, in which he urged his divine right and absolute power as things incontestable: to these the commons made as regular answers, not absolutely denying his pretensions, but slowly and regularly abridging his power.

However, though James persevered in asserting his prerogative, and threatened those who should presume to abridge it, yet his justice and clemency were very apparent in the toleration which he gave to the teachers of different religions throughout the kingdom. The minds of the people had long been irritated against one another, and each party persecuted the rest, as it happened to prevail; it was expected, therefore, that James would strengthen the hands of that which was then uppermost; and that the catholics and sectaries should find no protection. But this monarch wisely observed, that men should be punished for actions, and not for opinions; a decision which gave general dissatisfaction; but the complaint of every sect was the best argument of his moderation towards all.

Yet mild as this monarch was, there was a project contrived in the very beginning of his reign for the re-establishment of popery, which, were it not a fact known to all the world, could scarcely be credited by posterity. This was the gunpowder plot; than which a more horrid or terrible scheme never entered into the human heart to conceive; and which shows at once that the most determined courage may be united with the most execrable intentions.

The Roman catholics had expected great favour and indulgence on the accession of James, both as a descendant from Mary, a rigid catholic, and also from his having shown some partiality to that religion in his youth. But they soon discovered their mistake, and were at once surprised and enraged to find James on all occasions express his resolution of strictly executing the laws enacted against them, and of persevering in the conduct of his predecessor. This declaration determined them upon more desperate measures; and they at length formed a resolution of destroying the king and both houses of parliament at a blow. The scheme was first broached by Robert Catesby, a gentleman of good parts and antient family, who conceived that a train of gunpowder might be so placed under the parliament-house, as to blow up the king and all the members at once. He opened his intention to Thomas Percy, a descendant from the illustrious house of Northumberland, who was charmed with the project, and readily came into it. Thomas Winter was next intrusted with the dreadful secret; and he went over to Flanders in quest of Guy Fawkes, an officer in the Spanish service, with whose zeal and courage the conspirators were thoroughly acquainted. When they enlisted any new zealot into their plot, the more firmly to bind him to secrecy, they always, together with an oath, employed the sacrament, the most sacred rite of religion. Every tender feeling, and all pity, were banished from their breasts; and Garnet, a Jesuit, superior of the order in England, absolved their consciences from every scruple.

How horrid soever the contrivance might appear, [1605.] every member seemed faithful and secret in the league; and they hired a house in Percy's name, adjoining to that in which the parliament was to assemble. Their first intention was to bore a way under the parliament-house, from that which they



occupied, and they set themselves laboriously to the task; but when they had pierced the wall, which was three yards in thickness, they were surprised to find, on approaching the other side, that the house was vaulted underneath, and that coals were usually deposited there. From their disappointment on this account they were soon relieved, by information that the coals were in a course of sale, and that the vault would be then let to the highest bidder. They therefore seized the opportunity of hiring the place, and bought the remaining quantity of coals with which it was then stored, as if for their own use. The next thing done was to convey thither thirty-six barrels of gunpowder, which had been purchased in Holland; and the whole was covered with the coals and with faggots brought for that purpose. Then the doors of the cellar were boldly flung open, and every body admitted, as if it contained nothing dangerous.

Confident of success, they now began to plan the remaining part of their project. The king, the queen, and prince Henry, the king's eldest son, were all expected to be present at the opening of the parliament. The king's second son, by reason of his tender age, would be absent, and it was resolved that Percy should seize or assassinate him. The princess Elizabeth, a child likewise, was kept at lord Harrington's house, in Warwickshire; and sir Everard Digby was to seize her, and immediately proclaim her queen.

The day for the sitting of parliament now approached. Never was treason more secret, or ruin more apparently inevitable; the hour was expected with impatience, and the conspirators gloried in their meditated guilt. The dreadful secret, though communicated to above twenty persons, had been religiously kept during the space of near a year and a half; but, when all the motives of pity, justice, and safety, were too weak, a remorse of private friendship saved the kingdom.

Percy, one of the conspirators, had conceived a design of saving the life of lord Monteaule, his intimate friend and companion, who also was of the same persuasion with himself. About ten days before the meeting of parliament, this nobleman, upon his return to town, received a letter from a person unknown, and delivered by one who fled as soon as he had discharged his message. The letter was to this effect: "My lord, stay away from

this parliament; for God and man have concurred to punish the wickedness of the times. And think not slightly of this advertisement, but retire yourself into your country, where you may expect the event in safety. For though there be no appearance of any stir, yet I say they will receive a terrible blow this parliament; and yet they shall not see who hurts them. This counsel is not to be contemned; because it may do you good, and can do you no harm. For the danger is past as soon as you have burned the letter."

The contents of this mysterious letter surprised and puzzled the nobleman to whom it was addressed; and though inclined to think it a foolish attempt to fright and ridicule him, yet he judged it safest to carry it to lord Salisbury, secretary of state. That minister was inclined to give little attention to it, yet thought proper to lay it before the king, who came to town a few days after. None of the council were able to make any thing of it, although it appeared serious and alarming. In this universal agitation between doubt and apprehension, the king was the first who penetrated the meaning of this dark epistle. He concluded that some sudden danger was preparing by gunpowder; and it was thought adviseable to inspect all the vaults below the houses of parliament. This care belonged to the earl of Suffolk, lord chamberlain, who purposely delayed the search till the day before

Nov. 5, the meeting of parliament. He remarked those great  
1605. piles of faggots which lay in the vault under the house of peers; and he cast his eye upon Fawkes, who stood in a dark corner, and who passed himself for Percy's servant. That daring determined courage for which he had long been noted, even among the desperate, was fully painted in his countenance, and struck the lord chamberlain with strong suspicion. The great quantity of fuel also kept there for the use of a person seldom in town did not pass unnoticed; and he resolved to take his time to make a more exact scrutiny. About midnight, therefore, sir Thomas Knevet, a justice of the peace, was sent with proper attendants; and just at the entrance of the vault he seized a man preparing for the terrible enterprise, dressed in a cloak and boots, and a dark lantern in his hand. This was no other than Guy Fawkes, who had just disposed every part of the train for its taking fire the next morning; the matches and other combusti-

bles being found in his pockets. The whole of the design was now discovered; but the atrociousness of his guilt, and the despair of pardon, inspiring him with resolution, he told the officers of justice, with an undaunted air, that had he blown them and himself up together, he had been happy. Before the council, he displayed the same intrepid firmness, mixed even with scorn and disdain; refusing to discover his associates, and showing no concern but for the failure of his enterprise. But his bold spirit was at length subdued; being confined to the Tower for two or three days, and the rack just shown him, his courage, fatigued with so long an effort, at last failed him, and he made a full discovery of all his accomplices.

Catesby, Percy, and the conspirators who were in London, hearing that Fawkes was arrested, fled with all speed into Warwickshire, where sir Everard Digby, relying on the success of the plot, was already in arms, in order to seize the princess Elizabeth. But the country soon began to take the alarm; and wherever they turned, they found a superior force ready to oppose them. In this exigence, beset on all sides, they resolved, to about the number of eighty persons, to fly no further, but make a stand at a house in Warwickshire, to defend it to the last, and sell their lives as dearly as possible. But even this miserable consolation was denied them: a spark of fire happening to fall among some gunpowder that was laid to dry, it blew up, and so maimed the principal conspirators, that the survivors resolved to open the gate and sally out against the multitude that surrounded the house. Some were instantly cut to pieces; Catesby; Percy, and Winter, standing back to back, fought long and desperately, till in the end the two first fell covered with wounds, and Winter was taken alive. Those that survived the slaughter were tried and convicted; several fell by the hands of the executioner, and others experienced the king's mercy. The [1606.] Jesuits, Garnet and Oldcorn, who were privy to the plot, suffered with the rest; and, notwithstanding the atrociousness of their treason, Garnet was considered by his party as a martyr, and miracles were said to have been wrought by his blood.

Such was the end of a conspiracy that brought ruin on its contrivers, and utterly supplanted that religion it was intended to establish. Yet it is remarkable, that, before this audacious at-

tempt, the chief conspirators had borne a fair reputation : Catesby was loved by all his acquaintance ; and Digby was as highly respected, both for his honour and integrity, as any man in the nation. However, such are the lengths to which superstition and early prejudice can drive minds originally well formed, but impressed by a wrong direction.

The king's moderation, after the extinction of this conspiracy, was as great as his penetration in the prevention of it. The hatred excited in the nation against the catholics knew no bounds ; and nothing but a total extinction of those who adhered to that persuasion seemed capable of satisfying the greater part of the people. James bravely rejected all violent measures, and nobly declared that the late conspiracy, however atrocious, should never alter his plans of government ; but as, on the one hand, he was determined to punish guilt, so, on the other, he would still support and protect innocence.

This moderation was at that time no way pleasing to the people ; and the malignant part of his subjects were willing to ascribe this lenity to the papists to his being himself tinctured with their superstitions. However this be, he still found his parliaments refractory to all the measures he took to support his authority at home, or his desire of peace with foreign states. His speeches, indeed, betrayed no want of resolution to defend his rights ; but his liberality to his favourites, and the insufficiency of his finances to maintain the royal dignity, still rendered him dependant upon his parliament for money, and they took care to keep him in indigence. Thus he was often forced into concessions, which, when once granted, could never be recalled ; and, while he supposed himself maintaining the royal prerogative, it was diminishing on every side.

It was, perhaps, the opposition which James met with from his people, that made him place his affections upon different persons about the court, whom he rewarded with a liberality that bordered [1612.] on profusion. The death of prince Henry, a youth of great hopes, gave him no very great uneasiness, as his affections were rather taken up by newer connexions. In the first rank of these stood Robert Carre, a youth of a good family in Scotland, who, after having passed some time in his travels, arrived in London, at about twenty years of age. All his natu-

ral accomplishments consisted in a pleasing visage ; all his acquired abilities, in an easy and graceful demeanour. This youth came to England with letters of recommendation, to see his countryman lord Hay ; and that nobleman took an opportunity of assigning him the office of presenting the king his buckler at a match of tilting. When Carre was advancing to execute his office, he was thrown by his horse, and his leg was broken in the king's presence. James approached him with pity and concern, and ordered him to be lodged in the palace, till his cure was completed. He himself, after tilting, paid him a visit in his chamber, and returned frequently during his confinement. The ignorance and simplicity of the youth confirmed the king's affections, as he disregarded learning in his favourites, of which he found very little use in his own practice. Carre was therefore soon considered as the most rising man at court : he was knighted, created viscount Rochester, honoured with the order of the Garter, made a privy-counsellor ; and, to raise him to the highest pitch of honour, he was at last created earl of Somerset.

This was an advancement which some regarded with envy ; but the wiser part of mankind looked upon it with contempt and ridicule, sensible that ungrounded attachments are seldom of long continuance. Nor was it long before the favourite gave proofs of his being unworthy of the place he held in the king's affections. Among the friends whom he consulted at court, was sir Thomas Overbury, a man of great abilities and learning : among the mistresses whom he addressed, was the young countess of Essex, whose husband had been sent by the king's command to travel, until the young couple should arrive at the age of puberty. But the assiduities of a man of such personal accomplishments as the favourite possessed were too powerful to be resisted ; a criminal correspondence was commenced between the countess and the earl ; and Essex, upon his return from his travels, found his wife beautiful and lovely indeed, but her affections entirely placed upon another. But this was not all ; not contented with denying him all the rights of a husband, she resolved to procure a divorce, and then to marry the favourite to whom she had granted her heart. It was upon this occasion that Overbury was consulted by his friend, and that this honest counsellor declared himself utterly averse to the match. He described the countess as an in-

famous and abandoned woman ; and went so far as to threaten the earl that he would separate himself from him forever, if he could so far forget his honour and his interest as to prosecute the intended marriage. The consequence of this advice was fatal to the giver. The countess, being made acquainted with his expostulations, urged her lover to ruin him. In consequence of this [1613.] command, the king was persuaded by the favourite to order Overbury on an embassy into Russia ; sir Thomas was persuaded by the same adviser to refuse going ; the delinquent was shut up in the Tower, and there he was poisoned, by the direction of the countess, in a tart.

In the mean time, the divorce, which had been with some difficulty procured, took place, and the marriage of the favourite was solemnised with all imaginable splendour. But the suspicion of Overbury's being poisoned every day grew stronger, and reached the favourite, amidst all the glare and splendour of seeming happiness and success. The graces of his youth gradually disappeared ; the gaiety of his manners was converted into sullen silence ; and the king, whose affections had been engaged by these superficial accomplishments, began to cool to a man who no longer contributed to his amusement. But the adoption of another favourite, and the discovery of Somerset's guilt, soon removed all remains of affection which the king might still harbour for him.

An apothecary's apprentice, who had been employed in making up the poison, having retired to Flushing, divulged the secret there ; and the affair being thus laid before the king, he commanded sir Edward Coke, lord chief justice, to sift the affair to the bottom, with rigorous impartiality. This injunction was executed with great industry and severity ; and the whole [1615.] complication of guilt was carefully unravelled. The lieutenant of the Tower, and some of the inferior criminals, were condemned and executed ; Somerset and his countess were soon after found guilty, but reprieved and pardoned, after some years of strict confinement. The king's duplicity and injustice on this occasion are urged as very great stains upon his character. Somerset was in his presence at the time the officer of justice came to apprehend him ; and boldly reprehended that minister's presumption for daring to arrest a peer of the realm before the king. But James, being informed of the cause, said with a

smile, "Nay, nay, you must go; for, if Coke should send for myself, I must comply." He then embraced him at parting, begged he would return immediately, and assured him he could not live without his company; yet he had no sooner turned his back, than he exclaimed, "Go! and the devil go with thee! I shall never see thy face again." He was also heard to wish, some time after, that God's curse might fall upon him and his family, if he should pardon those whom the law should condemn. However, he afterwards restored them both to liberty, and granted them a pension, with which they retired, and languished out the remainder of their lives in guilt, infamy, and mutual recrimination.

But the king had not been so improvident as to part with one favourite before he had provided himself with another. This was George Villiers, a younger brother of a good family, who had returned from his travels at the age of twenty-two, and whom the enemies of Somerset had taken occasion to throw in the king's way, certain that his beauty and fashionable manners would do the rest. Accordingly he had been placed in a comedy full in the king's view, and immediately caught the monarch's affections. The history of the time, which appears not without some degree of malignity against this monarch, does not however insinuate any thing flagitious in these connections, but imputes his attachment rather to a weakness of understanding than to any perversion of appetite. Villiers was immediately taken into the king's service, and the office of cup-bearer was bestowed upon him. It was in vain that Somerset had used all his interest to depress him; his stern jealousy only served the more to interest the king in the young man's behalf.

After Somerset's fall, the favour of James was wholly turned upon young Villiers; in the course of a few years he created him viscount Villiers, earl, marquis, and duke of Buckingham, knight of the garter, master of the horse, chief justice in eyre, warden of the cinque ports, master of the king's-bench office, steward of Westminster, constable of Windsor, and lord high-admiral of England. His mother obtained the title of countess of Buckingham; his brother was created viscount Purbeck; and a numerous train of needy relations were all pushed up into credit and authority. It may, indeed, be reckoned among the most capricious circumstances of this monarch's reign, that he, who was bred a

scholar, should choose for his favourites the most illiterate persons about his court; that he, whose personal courage was greatly suspected, should lavish his honours upon those whose only accomplishments were a skill in the warlike exercises of the times.

When unworthy favourites were thus advanced, it is not to be wondered at if the public concerns of the kingdom were neglected, and men of real merit left to contempt and misery. Yet such was the case at present, with regard to the cautionary towns in Holland, and the brave sir Walter Raleigh at home.

In the preceding reign, Elizabeth, when she gave assistance to the Dutch, at that time shaking off the Spanish yoke, was not so disinterested, upon her lending them large sums of money, as not to require a proper deposit for being repaid. The Dutch, therefore, put into her hands the three important fortresses of Flushing, Brille, and Ramekins, which were to be restored upon payment of the money due, which amounted in the whole to eight hundred thousand pounds. But James, in his present exigence, having to supply a needy favourite, and a craving court, agreed to evacuate these fortresses, upon the payment of a third part of the money which was strictly due. The cautionary towns [1616.] were evacuated, which had held the states in total subjection, and which an ambitious or enterprising prince would have regarded as his most valuable possessions.

The universal murmur which this impolitic measure produced was soon after heightened by an act of severity which still continues as the blackest stain upon this monarch's memory. The brave and learned Raleigh had been confined in the Tower almost from the beginning of James's accession, for a conspiracy which had never been proved against him; and in that abode of wretchedness he wrote several valuable performances, which are still in the highest esteem. His long sufferings, and his ingenious writings, had now turned the tide of popular opinion in his favour; and they who once detested the enemy of Essex, could not help pitying the long captivity of this philosophical soldier. He himself still struggled for freedom; and perhaps it was with this desire that he spread the report of his having discovered a gold mine in Guiana, which was sufficient not only to enrich the adventurers that should seize it, but to afford immense treasures to the nation. The king, either believing his assertions, or willing to



subject him to further disgrace, granted him a commission to try his fortune in quest of these golden schemes ; but still reserved his former sentence as a check upon his future behaviour.

Raleigh was not long in making preparations for this adventure, which, from the sanguine manner in which he carried it on, many believed he thought to be as promising as he described it. He bent his course to Guiana ; and remaining himself at the mouth of the river Oroonoko with five of the largest ships, he sent the rest up the stream, under the command of his son and of captain Keymis, a person entirely devoted to his interests. But instead of a country abounding in gold, as the adventurers were taught to expect, they found the Spaniards warned of their approach, and prepared in arms to receive them. Young Raleigh, to encourage his men, called out that " This was the true mine," meaning the town of St. Thomas, which he was approaching ; " and that none but fools looked for any other : " but just as he was speaking, he received a shot, of which he immediately expired. This was followed by another disappointment : for, when the English took possession of the town, they found nothing in it of any value.

It was Keymis who pretended that he had seen the mine, and gave the first account of it to Raleigh : but he now began to retract ; and though he was within two hours' march of the place, he refused, on the most absurd pretences, to take any effectual step towards finding it. He returned, therefore, to Raleigh with the melancholy news of his son's death ; and then going into his cabin, put an end to his own life in despair.

Raleigh, in this forlorn situation, found now that all his hopes were over ; but saw his misfortunes aggravated by the reproaches of those whom he had undertaken to command. Nothing could be more deplorable than his situation, particularly when he was told that he must be carried back to England to answer for his conduct to the king. It is pretended that he employed many artifices, first to engage his men to attack the Spanish settlements at a time of peace ; and, on failure of that scheme, to make his escape into France. But all these proving unsuccessful, he was delivered into the king's hands, and strictly examined, as well as his fellow-adventurers, before the privy-council. Count Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, made heavy complaints against the expedition ; and the king declared that Raleigh had express

orders to avoid all disputes and hostilities against the Spaniards : wherefore, to give the court of Spain a particular instance of his attachment, he signed a warrant for his execution, not [1618.] for the present offence, but for his former conspiracy ; thus showing himself guilty of complicated injustice ; unjust in originally having condemned him without proof ; unjust in having trusted a man with a commission, without a pardon expressive of that confidence ; unjust in punishing with death a transgression that did not deserve it ; but most unjust of all, when he refused a new trial, and condemned him upon an obsolete sentence. This great man died with the same fortitude that he had testified through life ; he observed, as he felt the edge of the axe, that it was a sharp but a sure remedy for all evils ; his harangue to the people was calm and eloquent ; and he laid his head on the block with the utmost indifference. His death ensured him that popularity which his former intrepidity and his sufferings, so much greater than his crimes, had tended to procure him ; and no measure in this reign was attended with so much public dissatisfaction. The death of this great man was soon followed by the disgrace of a still greater, namely, the chancellor Bacon, who was accused of receiving bribes in his office ; and, pleading guilty, was degraded and fined forty thousand pounds ; but his fine was afterwards remitted by the king.

The reasons for James's partiality to the court of Spain in the case of Raleigh soon appeared. This monarch had entertained an opinion, which was peculiar to himself, that in marrying his son Charles, the prince of Wales, any alliance below that of royalty would be unworthy of him ; he therefore was obliged to seek, either in the court of France or Spain, a suitable match ; and he was taught to think of the latter. Gondomar, perceiving this weak monarch's partiality to a crowned head, made an offer of the second daughter of Spain to prince Charles : and that he might render the temptation irresistible, he gave hopes of an immense fortune which should attend the princess. However, this was a negotiation which was not likely soon to be concluded ; and from the time the idea was first started, James saw five years elapse without bringing the treaty to any kind of conclusion.

A delay of this kind was very displeasing to the king, who had all along an eye on the great fortune of the princess ; nor was it

less disagreeable to prince Charles, who, bred up with ideas of romantic passion, was in love without ever seeing the object of his affections. In this general tedium of delay, a project entered the head of Villiers (who had for some years ruled the king with absolute authority), that was fitter to be conceived by the knight of a romance, than by a minister and a statesman. It was nothing less than that the prince should travel in disguise into Spain, and visit the object of his affections in person. Buckingham, who wished to ingratiate himself with the prince, offered to be his companion; and the king, whose business it was to check so wild a scheme, gave his consent to this hopeful proposal. Their adventures on this strange project could fill novels, and have actually been made the subject of many. Charles was the knight-errant, and Buckingham was his 'squire. They [1623.] travelled through France in disguise, assuming the names of Jack and Tom Smith. They went to a ball at Paris, where the prince first saw the princess Henrietta, whom he afterwards married, and who was then in the bloom of youth and beauty. They were received at the court of Spain with all possible demonstrations of respect; but Buckingham filled the whole city with intrigues, adventures, serenades, challenges, and jealousy. To complete the catalogue of his follies, he fell in love with the countess of Olivarez, the prime minister's wife, and insulted that minister in person. These levities were not to be endured at such a court as that of Spain, where jealousy is so prevalent, and decorum so much observed; the match was therefore broken off. Historians do not assign the reason; but if we may credit the novelists of that time, the prince had already fixed his affections upon the French princess.

In fact, a match for this prince was soon after negotiated with Henrietta, who was the daughter of the great Henry the Fourth; and this met with better success than the former. However, the king had not the same allurements in prosecuting this match as the former, as the portion promised him was much smaller; but, willing that his son should not be altogether disappointed of a bride, as the king of France demanded only the same terms which had been offered to the court of Spain, James consented to comply. In an article of his treaty of marriage, it was stipulated that the education of the children, till the age of thirteen, should

belong to the mother ; and this probably gave that turn towards popery, which has since been the ruin of that unfortunate family.

Indeed a variety of causes seemed to conspire with their own imprudence to bring down upon them those evils which they afterwards experienced. The house of commons was by this time become quite unmanageable ; the prodigality of James to his favourites had made his necessities so many, that he was contented to sell the different branches of his prerogative to the commons, one after the other, to procure supplies. In proportion as they perceived his wants, they found out new grievances ; and every grant of money was sure to come with a petition for redress. The struggles between him and his parliament had been growing more and more violent every session ; and the last advanced their pretensions to such a degree, that he began to take the alarm ; but those evils, to which the weakness of this monarch had contributed to give birth, fell upon his successor.

These domestic troubles were attended by others still more important in Germany, and which produced in the end the most dangerous effects. The king's eldest daughter had been married to Frederic, the elector palatine of Germany ; and this prince, having accepted the Bohemian crown from the rebellious subjects of the emperor Ferdinand the Second, was defeated in a decisive battle, and obliged to take refuge in Holland. His affinity to the English crown, his misfortunes, but particularly the protestant religion for which he had contended, were strong motives for the people of England to wish well to his cause ; and frequent addresses were sent from the commons to spur up James to take a part in the German contest, and to replace the exiled prince upon the throne of his ancestors. James at first attempted to ward off the misfortunes of his son-in-law by negotiations ; but these proving utterly ineffectual, it was resolved at last to rescue the Palatinate from the emperor, by force of arms. Accordingly war was declared against Spain and the emperor ; six [1624.] thousand men were sent over into Holland, to assist prince Maurice in his schemes against those powers ; the people were every where elated at the courage of their king, and were satisfied with any war which was to exterminate the papists. This army was followed by another consisting of twelve thousand men, commanded by count Mansfeldt ; and the court of France

promised its assistance. But the English were disappointed in all their views. The troops, sailing to Calais, found no orders for their admission. After waiting in vain for some time, they were obliged to sail towards Zealand, where no proper measures were yet taken for their disembarkation. Meanwhile a pestilential distemper crept in among the forces, so long cooped up in narrow vessels; half the army died while on board, and the other half, weakened by sickness, appeared too small a body to march into the Palatinate; and thus ended this ill-concerted and fruitless expedition.

Whether this misfortune had any effect upon the constitution of the king, is uncertain; but he was soon after seized with a tertian ague. When his courtiers assured him [1625.] from the proverb that it was health for a king, he replied, that the proverb was meant for a young king. After some fits, he found himself extremely weakened, and sent for the prince, whom he exhorted to persevere in the protestant religion; then preparing with decency and courage to meet his end, he expired, after a reign over England of twenty-two years, and in the fifty-ninth year of his age. With regard to foreign negotiations, James neither understood nor cultivated them; and perhaps in a kingdom so situated as England, domestic politics are alone sufficient. His reign was marked with none of the splendours of triumph, nor with any new conquests or acquisitions; but the arts were nevertheless silently going on to improvement. Reason was extending her influence, and discovering to mankind a thousand errors in religion, in morals, and in government, that had long been revered by blind submission. The Reformation had produced a spirit of liberty, as well as of investigation, among all ranks of mankind, and taught them that no precedents could sanctify fraud, tyranny, or injustice. James taught them by his own example to argue upon the nature of the king's prerogative, and the extent of the subject's liberty. He first began by setting up the prescriptive authority of kings against the natural privileges of the people; but when the subject was submitted to a controversy, it was soon seen that the monarch's was the weaker side.

## CHAP. XXIX.

## CHARLES I.

March 27,  
1625. FEW princes have ascended a throne with more apparent advantages than Charles ; and none ever encountered more real difficulties. The advantages were such as might flatter even the most cautious prince into security ; the difficulties were such as no abilities could surmount. He found himself, upon coming to the crown, possessed of a peaceful and flourishing kingdom, his right undisputed, his power strengthened by an alliance with one of the most potent nations in Europe, his absolute authority tacitly acknowledged by one part of his subjects, and enforced from the pulpit by the rest. To add to all this, he was loved by his people, whose hearts he had gained by his virtues, his humility, and his candour.

But on the opposite side of the picture we are presented with a very different scene. Men had begun to think of the different rights of mankind, and found that all had an equal claim to the inestimable blessings of freedom. The spirit of liberty was roused ; and it was resolved to oppose the antient claims of monarchs, who usurped their power in times of ignorance or danger, and who pleaded in succeeding times their former encroachments as prescriptive privileges. Charles had been taught from his infancy, to consider the royal prerogative as a sacred pledge, which it was not in his power to alienate, much less his duty to abridge. His father, who had contributed so much to sink the claims of the crown, had, nevertheless, boldly defended them in his writings, and taught his son to defend by the sword what he had only inculcated by the press. Charles, though a prince of tolerable understanding, had not comprehension enough to see that the genius and disposition of his people had received a total change ; he resolved therefore to govern, by old maxims and precedents, a people who had lately found out that these maxims were established in times of ignorance and slavery.

In the foregoing reigns, I have given very little of the parliamentary history of the times, which would have led me out of the way ; but in the present it will be proper to point out the trans-

actions of every parliament, as they make the principal figure in this remarkable æra, in which we see genius and courage united in opposing injustice, seconded by custom, and backed by power.

Charles undertook the reins of government with a fixed persuasion that his popularity was sufficient to carry every measure. He was burthened with a treaty for defending the Palatinate, concluded in the late reign ; and the war declared for that purpose was to be carried on with vigour in this. But war was more easily declared, than supplies were granted. After some reluctance, the commons voted him two subsidies ; a sum far from being sufficient to support him in his intended equipment, to assist his brother-in-law ; and to this was added a petition for punishing papists, and redressing the grievances of the nation. Buckingham, who had been the late king's favourite, and who was still more caressed by the present monarch, did not escape their censures ; so that, instead of granting the sums requisite, they employed the time in disputations and complaints, till the season for prosecuting the intended campaign was elapsed. Charles, therefore, wearied with their delays, and offended at the refusal of his demands, thought proper to dissolve a parliament which he could not bring to reason.

To supply the want of parliamentary aids, Charles had recourse to some of the antient methods of extortion, practised by sovereigns when in necessitous circumstances. That kind of tax called a benevolence was ordered to be exacted, and privy-seals were issued accordingly. In order to cover the rigour of this step, it was commanded that none should be asked for money but such as were able to spare it ; and he directed letters to different persons, mentioning the sums he desired. With this the people were obliged, though reluctantly, to comply ; it was in fact authorised by many precedents ; but no precedents whatsoever could give a sanction to injustice.

With this money, a fleet was equipped against Spain, carrying ten thousand men ; the command of which army was intrusted to lord Wimbleton, who sailed directly to Cadiz, and found the bay full of ships of great value. But he failed in making himself master of the harbour, while his undisciplined army landing, instead of attacking the town, could not be restrained from indulging themselves in the wine, which they found in great abundance

on shore. Further stay therefore appeared fruitless; they were re-embarked; and the plague attacking the fleet soon afterwards, they were obliged to abandon all hopes of success, and return to England. Loud complaints were made against the court, for intrusting so important a command to a person who was judged so unqualified for the undertaking.

This ineffectual expedition was a great blow to the court: and to retrieve the glory of the nation, another attempt was to be made, but with a more certain prospect of success. New supplies therefore being requisite, the king was resolved to obtain them in a more regular and constitutional manner than before. Another parliament was accordingly called; and though [1626.] some steps were taken to exclude the more popular leaders of the last house of commons, by nominating them as sheriffs of counties, yet the present parliament seemed more refractory than the former. When the king laid before the house his necessities, and asked for a supply, they voted him only three subsidies, which amounted to about a hundred and sixty thousand pounds; a sum no way adequate to the importance of the war, or the necessities of the state. But even this was not to be granted until the grievances of the state were redressed. Their chief indignation was levelled against Buckingham, a minister who had no real merit, and the great infelicity of being the king's favourite. Whenever the subjects resolve to attack the royal prerogative, they begin with the favourites of the crown; and wise monarchs seldom have any. Charles was not possessed of the art of making a distinction between friends and ministers; and whoever was his friend was always trusted with the administration of his affairs. He loved the duke, and undertook to protect him; although to defend a person so obnoxious to the people, was to share his reproach. The commons undertook to impeach him in the lower house, while the earl of Bristol, who had returned from his embassy in Spain, accused him among his peers. The purport of the charge against him amounted to little more than that he had engrossed too much power for himself and his relations; that he had neglected to guard the seas with the fleet; and that he had applied a plaster to the late king's side, which was supposed to be poisonous, and to hasten his end. These frivolous accusations must have sunk of themselves, had they not been intemperately



opposed by the royal authority. The king gave orders to the lord-keeper to command the commons expressly in his name not to meddle with his minister and servant Buckingham. The more to enrage them, he had him elected chancellor of the university of Cambridge, and wrote that body a letter of thanks for their compliance. He assured the commons, that if they would not comply with his demands, he would try *new counsels*. But what justly enraged them beyond all sufferance, was, when two of their members, sir Dudley Digges and sir John Elliot, complained of this partiality in favour of a man odious to the nation, the king ordered both to be committed to prison for seditious behaviour. This was an open act of violence, and should have been supported, or never attempted.

It was now that the commons justly exclaimed that their privileges were infringed, and all freedom of debate destroyed. They protested in the most solemn manner, that neither of their members had said any thing disrespectful of the king; and they made preparations for publishing their vindication. The king, whose character it was to show a readiness to undertake harsh measures, but not to support them, released the two members; and this compliance confirmed that obstinacy in the house which his injuries had contributed to give rise to. The earl of Arundel, for being guilty of the same offence in the house of lords, was rashly imprisoned, and as tamely dismissed by the king. Thus, the two houses having refused to answer the intentions of the court without previous conditions, the king, rather than give up his favourite, chose to be without the supply, and therefore once more dissolved the parliament.

The new counsels which Charles had mentioned to the parliament were now to be tried, in order to supply his necessities. Instead of making peace with Spain, and thus trying to abridge his expenses, since he could not enlarge his income, he resolved to carry on the war, and to keep up a standing army for this purpose. Perhaps, also, he had a further view in keeping his army in pay, which was to seize upon the liberty of his subjects, when he found matters ripe for the execution. But at present his forces were new levied, ill paid, and worse disciplined; so that the militia of the country, that could be instantly led out against him, were far his superiors. In order, therefore, to gain time and

money, a commission was openly granted to compound with the catholics, and agree for a dispensation of the penal laws against them. He borrowed a sum of money from the nobility, whose contributions came in but slowly. But the greatest stretch of his power was in the levying of *ship-money*. In order to equip a fleet (at least this was the pretence made), every maritime town was required, with the assistance of the adjacent counties, to arm a certain number of vessels. The city of London was rated at twenty ships. This was the commencement of a tax, which afterwards, being carried to very violent lengths, created such great discontents in the nation. But the extortions of the ministry did not rest here. Persons of birth and rank, who refused the loan, were summoned before the council; and, upon persisting in a refusal, were put into confinement. Thus we see here, as in every civil war, something to blame on one side and the other; both sides guilty of injustice, yet each actuated by general motives of virtue; the one contending for the inherent liberties of mankind, the other for the prescriptive privileges of the crown; both driven to all the extremes of falsehood, rapine, and injustice, and, by a fate attendant on humanity, permitting their actions to degenerate from the motives which first set them in motion.

Hitherto the will of the monarch was reluctantly obeyed: most of those who refused to lend their money were thrown into prison, and patiently submitted to confinement, or applied by petition to the king for their release. Five persons alone undertook to defend the cause of the public; and, at the hazard of their whole fortunes, were resolved to try whether the king legally had a right to confine their persons without an infringement of any law. The names of these patriots were sir Thomas Darnel, sir John Corbet, sir Walter Earl, sir John Heveningham, and sir Edward Hampden. Their cause was brought to a solemn trial before the King's Bench, and the whole kingdom was attentive to the result of so important a trial.

Nov. [1626.] By the debates on this subject it appeared that personal liberty had been secured by no less than six different statutes, and by an article of the Great Charter itself; that in times of turbulence and sedition, the princes infringed those laws; and of this also many examples were produced. The difficulty then lay to determine when such violent measures

were expedient; but of that the court pretended to be the supreme judge. As it was legal, therefore, that these five gentlemen should plead the statute, by which they might demand bail, so it was expedient in the court to remand them to prison, without determining on the necessity of taking bail for the present. This was a cruel evasion of justice; and, in fact, satisfied neither the court nor the country party. The court insisted that no bail could be taken: the country exclaimed that the prisoners should be set free.

The king being thus embroiled with his parliament, his people, and some of the most powerful foreign states, it was not without amazement that all men saw him enter into a war with France, a kingdom with which he had but lately formed [1627.] the most natural alliance. This monarch, among the foibles of a good disposition, relied too much on the sincerity of his servants; and, among others, permitted Buckingham to lead him as he thought proper. All historians agree that this minister had conceived hopes of gaining the heart of the queen of France, while, at the same time, cardinal Richelieu aspired to the same honour. The rivalry of these favourites produced an inveterate enmity between them; and, from a private quarrel, they resolved to involve their respective nations in the dispute. However this be, war was declared against France; and Charles was taught to hope, that hostilities with that kingdom would be the surest means of producing unanimity at home.

But fortune seemed to counteract all this monarch's attempts. A fleet was sent out, under the command of Buckingham, to relieve Rochelle, a maritime town in France, that had long enjoyed its privileges independent of the French king, but which had for some years embraced the reformed religion, and now was besieged by a formidable army. This expedition was as unfortunate as that on the coast of Spain. The duke's measures were so ill concerted, that the inhabitants of the city shut their gates, and refused to admit allies, of whose coming they were not previously informed. Instead of attacking the island of Oleron, which was fertile and defenceless, he bent his course to the isle of Rhé, which was garrisoned, and well fortified. He attempted there to starve out the garrison of St. Martin's castle, which was copiously supplied with provisions by sea. By that time the French had landed their

forces privately at another part of the island; so that Buckingham was at last obliged to retreat, but with such precipitation, that two thousand of his men were cut to pieces before he could re-embark, though he was the last of the whole army that quitted the shore. This proof of his personal courage, however, was but a small subject of consolation for the disgrace which his country had sustained; and his own person would have been the last they would have regretted.

The bad success of this expedition served to render the duke [1628.] still more obnoxious, and the king more needy. He therefore resolved to call a third parliament; for money was to be had at any rate. In his first speech, he intimated to the two houses, that they were convoked on purpose to grant the supplies; and that, if they should neglect to contribute what was necessary for the support of the state, he would, in discharge of his conscience, use those means which God had put into his hands, for saving that which the folly of certain persons would otherwise endanger. But the king did not find his commons intimidated by his threats, or by those of the lord-keeper, who commented upon what he said. They boldly inveighed against his late arbitrary measures, forced loans, benevolences, taxes without consent of parliament, arbitrary imprisonments, billeting soldiers, martial laws; these were the grievances complained of, and against these they insisted that an eternal remedy should be provided. An immunity from these vexations they alleged to be the inherent right of the subject; and their new demands they resolved to call a petition of right, as implying privileges they had already been possessed of. Nothing could be more just than the enactment of the contents of this petition of right. The Great Charter, and the old statutes, were sufficiently clear in favour of liberty; but as all the kings of England, in cases of necessity or expediency, had been accustomed at intervals to elude them; and as Charles, in a complication of instances, had lately violated them; it was requisite to enact a new law, which might not be eluded or violated by any authority, or any precedent to the contrary.

But though this was an equitable proposal, and though a ready compliance with it might have prevented many of the disorders that were about to ensue, Charles was taught to consider it as the

most violent encroachment on his prerogative, and used at first every method to obstruct its progress. When he found that nothing but his assent would satisfy the house, he gave it; but at first in such an ambiguous manner as left him still in possession of his former power. At length, however, to avoid their indignation, and still more to screen his favourite, he thought proper to give them full satisfaction. He came therefore to the house of peers, and pronouncing the usual form of words, "*Soit fait comme il est désiré*, Let it be law as it is desired," he gave the petition of right all the sanction that was necessary to pass it into a law. The acclamations with which the house resounded, sufficiently testified the joy of the people; and a bill for five subsidies, which passed soon after, was the strongest mark of their gratitude.

But the commons, finding their perseverance crowned with success in this instance, were resolved to carry the scrutiny into every part of government which they considered as defective. The leaders of the house of commons at this time were very different from those illiterate barbarians who, a century or two before, came up to the capital, not to grant supplies, but to consider where supplies were to be procured; not to debate as legislators, but to receive commands as inferiors. The men of whom the present parliaments were composed, were persons of great knowledge and extensive learning, of undaunted courage and inflexible perseverance.

A little before the meeting of this parliament, a commission had been granted to thirty-three of the principal officers of state, empowering them to meet and concert among themselves the methods of levying money by impositions or otherwise. The commons applied for cancelling that commission; and indeed the late statute of the petition of rights seemed to render such a commission entirely unnecessary. They objected to another commission for raising money for the introduction of a thousand German horse, which, with just reason, they feared might be turned against the liberties of the people. They resumed also their censure of Buckingham, whom they resolved implacably to pursue. They also openly asserted, that the method of levying money used by the king, called tonnage and poundage, without the consent of parliament, was a palpable violation of the liberties of the people. All these grievances were preparing to be drawn up in

a remonstrance to his majesty, when the king, hearing of their intentions, came suddenly to the house, and closed the session.

But they were not so easily to be intimidated in their schemes [1629.] for the liberty of the people. They urged their claims with still more force on their next sitting; and the duty of tonnage and poundage was discussed with greater precision than before. This tax upon merchandise was a duty of very early institution, and had been conferred on Henry the Fifth, and all succeeding princes, during life, in order to enable them to maintain a naval force for the protection of the kingdom. But the parliament had usually granted it as of their special favour, in the beginning of each reign, except to Henry the Eighth, who had it not conferred on him by parliament till the sixth year of his sitting on the throne. Although he had continued to receive it from the beginning, yet he thought it necessary to have the sanction of parliament to ensure it to him; which certainly implied that it was not an inherent privilege of the crown. Upon this argument the commons founded their objections to the levying of it in the present reign; it was a tax which they had not yet granted, and it had been granted by them in every preceding reign. They refused, therefore, to grant it now; and insisted that the king could not levy it without their permission.

This bred a long contest, as may be supposed, between the commons and the crown. The officers of the custom-house were summoned before the commons, to give an account by what authority they seized the goods of the merchants who had refused to pay these duties. The barons of the Exchequer were questioned with regard to their decrees on that head; and the sheriff of London was committed to the Tower for his activity in supporting the custom-house officers. These were bold measures; but the commons went still farther, by a resolution to examine into religious grievances; and a new spirit of intolerance began to appear. The king, therefore, resolved to dismiss a parliament which he found himself unable to manage; and sir John Finch, the speaker, just as the question concerning tonnage and poundage was going to be put, rose up, and informed the house that he had a command from the king to adjourn.

Nothing could exceed the consternation and indignation of the commons upon this information. Just at the time they were car-

rying their most favourite points to a bearing, to be thus adjourned, and the parliament dissolved, rendered them furious. The house was in an uproar; the speaker was pushed back into his chair, and forcibly held in it by Holles and Valentine, till a short remonstrance was framed, and passed by acclamation rather than vote. In this hasty production, Papists and Arminians were declared capital enemies to the state; the obnoxious duty was condemned as contrary to law; and not only those who raised it, but those who paid it, were considered as guilty of a high crime.

In consequence of this violent procedure, sir Miles Hobart, sir Peter Hayman, Selden, Coriton, Long, and Strode, were, by the king's order, committed to prison, under pretence of sedition. But the same temerity that impelled Charles to imprison them, induced him to grant them a release. Sir John Elliot, Holles, and Valentine, were summoned before the King's Bench; but they refusing to appear before an inferior tribunal, for faults committed in a superior, were condemned to be imprisoned during the king's pleasure, to pay a fine, the two former of a thousand pounds each, and the latter of five hundred, and to find sureties for their good behaviour. The members triumphed in their sufferings, while they had the whole kingdom as spectators and applauders of their fortitude.

While the king was thus distressed by the obstinacy of the commons, he felt a much severer blow in the death of the duke of Buckingham, who fell a sacrifice to his unpopularity. It had been resolved once more to undertake the raising of the siege of Rochelle; and the earl of Denbigh, brother-in-law to Buckingham, had been sent thither in the year 1628, but returned without effecting any thing. In order to repair this disgrace, the duke of Buckingham went in person to Portsmouth, to hurry on another expedition, and to punish such as had endeavoured to defraud the crown of the legal assessments. In the general discontent that prevailed against this nobleman, it was daily expected that some severe measures would be resolved on; and he was stigmatised as the tyrant and the betrayer of his country. There was one Felton, who caught the general contagion,—an Irishman of a good family, who had served under the duke as lieutenant, but had resigned on being refused his rank on the death of his captain, who was killed at the isle of Rhé. This man was naturally melan-

choly, courageous, and enthusiastic; he felt for his country, as if labouring under a calamity which he thought it in the power of his single arm to remove. He therefore resolved to kill the duke, and thus revenge his own private injuries, while he did service also to God and man. Animated in this manner with gloomy zeal and mistaken patriotism, he travelled down to Portsmouth alone, and entered the town while the duke was surrounded by his levee, and giving out the necessary orders for embarkation. He was at that time engaged in conversation with Soubise, and other French gentlemen; and a difference of sentiment having arisen in the conference, it was attended with all those violent gesticulations with which foreigners generally enforce their meaning. The conversation being finished, the duke drew towards the door; and while he was speaking to one of his colonels, Felton struck him over that officer's shoulder in the breast with his knife. The duke had only time to say, "The villain has killed me," when he fell at the colonel's feet, and instantly expired. No one had seen the blow, or the person who gave it; but in the confusion it was generally supposed that he was murdered by one of the Frenchmen who appeared so violent in their motions but a little before. They were accordingly secured, as for certain punishment; but in the mean time a hat was picked up, on the inside of which was sewed a paper containing four or five lines of the remonstrance of the commons against the duke; and under these lines a short ejaculation, desiring aid in the attempt. It was now concluded that this hat must belong to the assassin; and while they were employed in conjectures whose it could be, a man without a hat was seen walking very composedly before the door, and was heard to cry out, "I am he." He disdained denying a murder in which he gloried; and averred that he looked upon the duke as an enemy to his country, and as such deserving to suffer. When asked at whose instigation he had performed that horrid deed, he answered, that they needed not trouble themselves in that inquiry; that his conscience was his only prompter; and that no man on earth could dispose him to act against its dictates. He suffered with the same degree of constancy to the last; and there were many who admired not only his fortitude, but the action for which he suffered.

The king had always the highest regard for Buckingham, and



was extremely mortified at his death ; he began to perceive that the tide of popularity was entirely turned from him, and that the behaviour of the house of commons only served to increase the general discontent. He felt therefore a disgust against parliaments ; and he was resolved not to call any more, till he should see greater indications of a compliant disposition in the nation. Having lost his favourite, he became more his own minister, and never afterwards reposed such unlimited confidence in any other. But, though the minister of the crown was changed, the measures still continued the same ; the same disregard to the petitions of the people, the same desire of extending and supporting the prerogative, the same temerity, and the same weakness of condescension.

His first measure, however, now being left without a minister and a parliament, was a prudent one. He made peace with the two crowns against whom he had hitherto waged war, which had been entered upon without necessity, and conducted without glory. Being freed from these embarrassments, he bent his whole attention to the management of the internal policy of the kingdom, and took two men as his associates in this task, who still acted an under-part to himself. These were sir Thomas Wentworth, whom he created earl of Strafford, and Laud, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury.

Strafford, by his eminent talents and abilities, merited all the confidence which the king reposed in him. His character was stately and austere ; more fitted to procure esteem than love ; his fidelity to the king was unshaken ; but, in serving the interests of the crown, he did not consider himself as an agent also for the benefit of the people. As he now employed all his counsels to support the prerogative, which he formerly endeavoured to diminish, his actions were liable to the imputation of self-interest and ambition ; but his good character in private life made up for that seeming duplicity of public conduct.

Laud was in the church somewhat resembling Strafford in the state, rigid, severe, punctual and industrious. His zeal was unrelenting in the cause of religion ; and the forms, as established in the reign of queen Elizabeth, seemed essentially connected with it. His desire to keep these on their former footing was imprudent and severe ; but it must be confessed that the furious opposition he met with was sufficient to excite his resentment.

Since the times of Elizabeth, a new religious sect had been gaining ground in England ; and its members, from the supposed greater purity of their manners, were called Puritans. Of all other sects, this was the most dangerous to monarchy ; and the tenets of it more calculated to support that imagined equality which obtains in a state of nature. The partisans of this religion, being generally men of warm, obstinate tempers, pushed their sentiments into a total opposition to those of Rome ; and in the countries where their opinions had taken place, not only a religious but a political freedom began to be established. All enthusiasts, indulging themselves in rapturous flights, ecstasies, visions, and inspirations, have a natural aversion to all ceremonies, rites, or forms, which are but external means of supplying that devotion which they want no prompter but their hearts to inspire. The same bold and daring spirit which accompanied them in their addresses to the divinity, appeared in their political speculations ; and the principles of civil liberty, which had hitherto been almost totally unknown in Europe, began to shoot forth in this ungracious soil. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that kings and bishops were eager to suppress the growth of opinions so unfavourable to their authority ; and that Laud, who of all men alive was the most attached to ceremony and show, should treat with rigour men who braved him into severity. The truth is, that, in the histories of the times, we find the great cause of the present contest between the king and his people to arise not from civil but religious motives ; not from a desire on the one hand of extending power, and on the other of promoting liberty ; but merely from the ardour of the king in supporting bishops, surplices, and other ceremonies of the church, and the fury of the puritans in abolishing those distinctions as remnants of popish idolatry. Those distinctions in religion, at this day, are regarded with more unconcern ; and, therefore, we are more apt to impute the disorders of those times to civil motives of establishing liberty, which, in reality, made but a very subordinate consideration.

The humour of the nation ran, at that time, into that extreme which was opposite to superstition ; and those antient ceremonies to which men had been accustomed in England, since the commencement of the Reformation, were in general considered as impious and idolatrous. It was, therefore, the most impolitic

time in the world for Laud to think of introducing new ceremonies and observances, which could not fail of being treated with utter detestation. Nevertheless, he went on boldly with his injunctions for the observance of those rites which in themselves were of no moment, and were as unnecessary to be urged by him, as ridiculous in being opposed by the puritans.

Orders were given, and rigorously insisted on, that the communion-table should be removed from the middle of the church where it hitherto stood since the Reformation, to the east end; where it should be railed in and denominated the altar. The kneeling at the altar, and the using of copes (embroidered vestments used in popish countries), were introduced, to the great discontent of the people. Some pictures were again admitted into the churches by his command. All such clergy as neglected to observe every ceremony, were suspended, and deprived by the high-commission court. And to mortify the puritans still more, orders were issued from the council, forbidding any controversy, either from the pulpit or the press, on the points in dispute between them and their opponents, concerning free will and predestination. At the same time that they obtained the king's protection for carrying on these measures, the clergy took care to repay the monarch by magnifying on every occasion the regal authority, and treating all pretensions to independence as a puritanical innovation. The king's divine, hereditary, and indefeasible right was the theme of every sermon; and those who attempted to question such doctrines were considered as making an attack upon religion itself. The king, who had now resolved to call no more parliaments (to which resolution he adhered for the space of eleven years), was very well satisfied with these doctrines, as they were the only means of facilitating his measures of government, and procuring those pecuniary supplies which he had no legal means of obtaining.

While Laud, therefore, during this long interval, ruled the church, the king and Strafford undertook to manage the temporal interests of the nation. A proclamation was issued, in which Charles declared, "That whereas, for several ill ends, the calling again of a parliament is divulged; yet the late abuses having for the present unwillingly driven him out of that course, he will account it presumption for any one to prescribe to him any time

for calling that assembly." This was generally construed as a declaration, that, during that reign, no more parliaments would be summoned; and every measure of the king seemed to confirm the suspicion.

It was now that the people, without a defender, or hopes of redress, saw themselves at the mercy of a monarch, who, though good and gentle in his own nature, might at any time change in his conduct. They now saw the constitution at one blow wholly overthrown, and one branch of the legislature assuming those rights which had been divided between three. Tonnage and poundage were continued to be levied by royal authority alone: custom-house officers received orders from the council to enter any house whatever in search of suspected goods; compositions were openly made with papists; and their religion was become a regular part of the revenue. The court of Star-chamber exercised its power, independent of any law, upon several bold innovators in liberty, who only gloried in their sufferings, and contributed to render government odious and contemptible. Sir David Foulis was fined by this court five thousand pounds, merely for dissuading a friend from compounding with the commissioners who called upon him to take up the title of knighthood. Prynne, a barrister of Lincoln's inn, had written an enormous quarto of a thousand pages, which was entitled *Histriomastix*, or a Scourge for the Stage. In this, beside much paltry declamation against the stage, he took occasion to blame the ceremonies and late innovations of the church; and this was an offence that Laud was not likely to forgive. He was condemned by the Star-chamber [1634.] to be degraded from the bar; to stand in the pillory, in two places, Westminster and Cheapside; to lose his ears, one at each place; to pay five thousand pounds to the king, and to be imprisoned during life. This sentence, which was equally cruel and unjust, was rigorously executed; and Prynne gloried in his sufferings. Burton, a divine, and Bastwick, a physician, were tried before this tribunal for schismatical libels, in which they attacked, with great severity and intemperate zeal, the ceremonies of the church of England. They were condemned to the same punishment that had been inflicted upon Prynne; and Prynne himself was also tried for a new offence, for which he was fined five thousand pounds more, and sentenced to lose

the remainder of his ears. The answers which these bold demagogues gave into court, were so full of contumacy and invective that no lawyer could be prevailed with to sign them. The rigours, however, which they underwent, being so unworthy of men of their profession, gave general offence; and the patience, or rather alacrity, with which they suffered, increased still further the public indignation.

The puritans restrained in England shipped themselves off for America, where they laid the foundations of a new government, agreeable to their systems of political freedom. But the government, unwilling that the nation should be deprived of its useful members, or dreading the unpopularity of these emigrations, at length issued a proclamation, debarring these devotees from access even to those inhospitable regions. Eight ships, lying in the Thames, and ready to sail, were detained by order of council; and in these were embarked sir Arthur Haselrig, John Hampden, and Oliver Cromwell, who had resolved forever to abandon their native country. This may stand as a proof of the sincerity these men afterwards testified in the cause for which they fought; and is a clear proof that hypocrisy, with which they were charged in the beginning at least, was not among the motives of their opposition.

Every year, every month, every day, gave fresh instances, during this long intermission of parliaments, of the resolution of the court to throw them off forever: but the levying of *ship-money*, as it was called, being a general burthen, was universally complained of as a national grievance. This was a tax which had, in former reigns, been levied without the consent of parliament; but then the exigency of the state demanded such a supply. As the necessity at present was not so apparent, and the impost might excite murmurs among the people, a question was proposed by the king to the judges, whether, in a case of necessity, for the defence of the kingdom, he might not levy this tax? and whether he was not sole judge of this necessity? To this the judges replied that he might; and that he was sole judge of the necessity. In this universal appearance of obedience to the king's injunctions, John Hampden, a gentleman of fortune in Buckinghamshire, refused to comply with the tax, and resolved to bring it to a legal determination. He had been rated at twenty shillings

for his estate, which he refused to pay ; and the case was argued twelve days in the Exchequer-chamber, before all the judges of England. The nation regarded, with the utmost anxiety, the result of a trial that was to fix the limits of the king's power : but after the former opinion of the judges on this subject, the event might have been easily foreseen. All the judges, four only [1638.] excepted, gave sentence in favour of the crown ; while Hampden, who lost his cause, was more than sufficiently recompensed by the applauses of the people. Nothing now was heard in every company but murmurs against government, and encomiums on him who had withstood its usurpations. It was now alleged that tyranny was confirmed into system ; and that there was no redress except in sullen patience or contented slavery. Ecclesiastical tyranny was thought to give aid to political injustice ; and all the rights of the nation, transmitted through so many ages, secured by so many laws, and purchased by the blood of so many heroes, now lay prostrate in undistinguished neglect. In this universal state of despondence, or clamour, an accident gave the people of England an opportunity of vindicating their antient privileges, and even of acquiring greater than it was compatible with the subjects' happiness to possess.

The Scots had, during the reign of James the First, shown a strong attachment to puritanical principles ; and though they still continued to allow of bishops, yet they were reduced to poverty, and treated with contempt. James, indeed, had seen the low estate of episcopacy in that kingdom, and had endeavoured to exalt and establish it once more ; but he died in the midst of his endeavours. It was the fate of Charles forever to aim at projects which were at once impracticable and unnecessary ; he resolved therefore to complete what his father had begun. This ill-judged attempt served to alienate the affections of his Scottish subjects as much as his encroachments on liberty had rendered him unpopular in England. The flame of sedition in Scotland passed from one town to another, while the puritans formed a *Covenant*, to support and defend their opinions, and resolved to establish their doctrines, or overturn the state. On the other hand, the king was determined to establish the liturgy of the church of England ; and both sides being obstinate in opinion, those san-

guinary measures were soon begun in Scotland, which had hitherto been only talked of among the English.

The discontent and opposition which Charles met with in maintaining episcopacy among his English subjects might, one would think, deter him from attempting to introduce it among those of Scotland ; but such was his ardour, that he was resolved to have it established in every part of his dominions. When he had published an order for reading the liturgy in their principal church in Edinburgh, the people received it with clamours and imprecations. The court party, indeed, with great justice, blamed their obstinacy, as the innovations were but trifling ; but the people might have retorted with still greater force the folly of their thus earnestly attempting the establishment of trifles. The seditious disposition in that kingdom, which had hitherto been kept within bounds, was now too furious for restraint, and the insurrection became general over the country.

Yet still the king could not think of desisting from his design ; and so prepossessed was he in favour of royal right, that he thought the very name of king, when forcibly urged, would induce the people to return to their duty. But he was soon undeceived ; the puritans of Scotland were republicans in principle as well as those in England ; and they only wished to see the bishops first humbled, in order to make a more successful attack upon unguarded monarchy. Charles therefore finding them in arms, and that they insisted on displacing the bishops, considered their demands as an open declaration of war ; and accordingly summoned such of the nobility of England as held lands of the crown, to furnish him with a proper number of forces to oppose them. To add to these supplies, he demanded a voluntary contribution from the clergy, as he was in fact fighting their cause ; and by means of his queen, the catholics were also pressed for their assistance. By these methods he soon found himself at the head of an undisciplined and reluctant army, amounting to about twenty thousand men, and commanded by generals less willing to fight than to negotiate. His superiority in numbers, however, gave him the manifest advantage over his rebellious subjects, who were no way slow in marching to give him battle. But Charles, who inherited the peaceable disposition of his father, was unwilling to come to extremities, although a blow [1639.]

then struck with vigour might have prevented many of his succeeding misfortunes. Instead of fighting with his opponents, he entered upon a treaty with them; so that a suspension of arms was soon agreed upon, and a treaty of peace concluded, which neither side intended to observe; and then both parties agreed to disband their forces. This step of disbanding the army was a fatal measure to Charles, as he could not levy a new army without great labour and expense; while the Scottish insurgents, who all were volunteers in the service, could be mustered again at pleasure. Of this the heads of the malcontents seemed sensible; for they lengthened out the negotiations with affected difficulties, and threw in obstructions in proportion as they were confident of their own superiority. At length, after much altercation, and many treaties signed and broken, both parties once more had recourse to arms, and nothing but blood could satiate the contenders.

War being thus resolved on, the king took every method, as before, for raising money to support it. Ship-money was levied as usual; some other arbitrary taxes were exacted from the reluctant people with great severity; but one method of raising the supplies reflects immortal honour on those who contributed. The counsellors and servants of the crown lent the king whatever sums they could spare, and distressed their private fortunes to gratify their sovereign. These were the resources of the crown to prepare an army; but they were far from being sufficient; and there now remained only one method more, the long-neglected method of parliamentary supply.

[1640.] It was now about eleven years since the king had called a parliament. The fierce and ungovernable spirit of the last had taught him to hate and to fear such an assembly; but all resources being exhausted, and great debts contracted, he was obliged to call another parliament, from which he had no great reason to expect any favour. The many illegal and the numerous imprudent steps of the crown, the hardships which several persons had suffered, and their constancy in undergoing punishment, had as much alienated the affections of the king's English as of his Scottish subjects. Instead of supplies, the king was harassed with murmurs and complaints. The zealous in religion were pleased with the distresses of the crown, in its attempts against their brethren in opinion; and the real friends to



the liberties of mankind saw, with their usual penetration, that the time was approaching when the royal authority must fall into a total dependance on popular assemblies, when public freedom must acquire a full ascendant.

The house of commons could not be induced to treat the Scots, who were of the same principles with themselves, and contended against the same ceremonies, as enemies to the state. They regarded them as friends and brothers, who first rose to teach them a duty which it was incumbent on all virtuous minds to imitate. The king, therefore, could reap no other fruits from this assembly than murmurings and complaints. Every method he had taken to supply himself with money was declared an abuse, and a breach of the constitution. Tonnage and poundage, ship-money, the sale of monopolies, the billeting soldiers upon refractory citizens, were all condemned as stretches of arbitrary power. The king, finding no hopes of redress from the commons, had recourse to the house of peers; but this was equally ineffectual with the former application. The king, finding no hopes of a compliance with his request, but recrimination instead of redress, dissolved the parliament, to try more feasible methods of removing his necessities.

The king having now made enemies of his Scottish subjects by controlling them in their mode of worship, and of the commons by dissolving them, it remained to exasperate the city of London against him by some new imprudence. Upon their refusing to lend money to carry on the war against the Scots, he sued the citizens in the Star-chamber for some lands in Ireland, and made them pay a considerable fine. He continued also to exact all the taxes against which every former parliament had remonstrated; but all was insufficient. A loan of forty thousand pounds was extorted from the Spanish merchants, who had bullion in the Tower, exposed to the attempts of the king. Coat and conduct money for the soldiers was levied on the counties; an antient practice, but supposed to be abolished by the petition of right. All the pepper was bought from the East India company upon trust, and sold at a great discount for ready money. A scheme was proposed for coining two or three hundred thousand pounds of base money; and yet all these methods were far from being effectual. The Scots, therefore, sensible of the extremities to

which he was reduced, led on an army of twenty thousand men as far as Newcastle-upon-Tyne, to lay their grievances before their sovereign, as they were pleased to term their rebellion. One of the most disgusting strokes in the puritanical character of the times was this gentle language, and humble cant, in the midst of treason, and their flattery to their prince while they were attempting to dethrone and destroy him.

To these troops, inspired by religion, flushed with some slight victories obtained over straggling parties of the royalists, and encouraged by the English themselves, among whom they continued, the king was able only to oppose a smaller force, new levied, undisciplined, seditious, and ill paid. Being, therefore, in despair of stemming the torrent, he at last yielded to it. He first summoned a great council of peers to York; and, as he foresaw that they would advise him to call a parliament, he told them in his first speech that he had already taken that resolution. Having

Nov. 3, thus prepared for his misfortunes, he a short time after  
1640. called that long parliament which did not discontinue sitting till his ruin had been accomplished,

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### CHAP. XXX.

CHARLES I. (Continued.)

THE ardent expectations of men with regard to a parliament, at such a critical juncture, and during such general discontents, might naturally engage the attendance of the members on their duty. The house of commons was never, from its first institution, observed to be so numerous, or the assiduity of its members greater. Without any interval, therefore, they entered upon business; and, by unanimous consent, they struck a blow that might be regarded as decisive. Instead of granting the demanded subsidies, they impeached the earl of Strafford, the king's first minister, of high treason. Pym, a tedious but sensible speaker, who at first opened the accusation against him in the house of commons, was sent up to defend it at the bar of the house of lords; and most of the house accompanied their member on so agreeable an errand.

To bestow the greatest solemnity on this important trial, scaffolds were erected in Westminster-Hall, where [1641.] both houses sat, the one as judges, the other as accusers. Beside the chair of state, a close gallery was prepared for the king and queen, who attended during the whole trial. The articles of impeachment against him were twenty-eight in number; the substance of which was, that he had attempted to extend the king's authority at home, and had been guilty of several exactions in Ireland. But though four months were employed by the managers in framing the accusation, yet there appears very little just cause of blame in him, since the stretches of the king's power were made before he came into authority. However, the managers for the house of commons pleaded against him with vehemence stronger than their reasons, and summed up their arguments by insisting, that though each article taken separately did not amount to a proof, yet the whole taken together might be fairly concluded to carry conviction. This is a method of arguing frequently used in the English courts of justice even to this day; and perhaps none can be more erroneous; for almost every falsehood may be found to have a multiplicity of weak reasons to support it. In this tumult of aggravation and clamour, the earl himself, whose parts and wisdom had been long respectable, stood unmoved and undaunted. He defended his cause with all the presence of mind, judgment, and sagacity, that could be expected from innocence and ability. His children were placed beside him, as he was thus defending his life, and the cause of his master. After he had in a long and eloquent speech, delivered without premeditation, confuted all the accusations of his enemies; after he had endeavoured to show, that, during his government in Ireland, he had introduced the arts of peace among the savage part of the people, and that, if his measures in England were harsh, he had been driven into them by necessity; after he had clearly refuted the argument upon the accumulated force of his guilt, he thus drew to a conclusion: "But, my lords, I have troubled you too long; longer than I should have done, but for the sake of these dear pledges, which a saint in heaven has left me."—Upon this he paused, dropped a tear, looked upon his children, and proceeded:—"What I forfeit for myself is a trifle; that my indiscretions should reach my posterity, wounds me to the heart.—Pardon my

infirmity.—Something I should have added, but am not able; therefore let it pass. And now, my lords, for myself; I have long been taught that the afflictions of this life are overpaid by that eternal weight of glory which waits the innocent; and so, my lords, even so, with the utmost tranquillity, I submit myself to your judgment, whether that judgment be life or death; not my will but thine, O God, be done!" His eloquence and innocence induced those judges to pity who were the most zealous to condemn him. The king himself went to the house of lords, and spoke for some time in his defence; but the spirit of vengeance, that had been chained for eleven years, was now roused, and nothing but his blood could give the people satisfaction. He was found guilty by both houses of parliament; and nothing remained but for the king to give his consent to the bill of attainder. But, in the present commotions, the consent of the king was a thing that would very easily be dispensed with; and imminent dangers might attend his refusal. Yet still Charles, who loved Strafford tenderly, hesitated, and seemed reluctant, trying every expedient to put off so dreadful a duty as that of signing the warrant for his execution. While he continued in this agitation of mind, not knowing how to act, his doubts were at last silenced by an act of heroic bravery in the condemned lord. He received a letter from that unfortunate nobleman, desiring that his life might be made the sacrifice of a mutual reconciliation between the king and his people; adding, that he was prepared to die, and to a willing mind there could be no injury. This instance of noble generosity was ill repaid by his master, who complied with his request. He consented to the signing the fatal bill by commission; Strafford was beheaded on Tower-hill, behaving with all that composed dignity of resolution that was expected from his character. The people, taught by his death to trample upon the rights of humanity, soon after resolved to shed blood that was still more precious.

But the commons did not stop their impeachments here. Laud also, after a deliberation which did not continue half an hour, was considered as sufficiently culpable to incur the same accusation, and was committed to custody. Finch, the lord-keeper, was also impeached; but he had the precaution to make his escape, and retire into Holland, as did sir Francis Windebank, the secretary, into France.

The crown being thus deprived of the services of its ministers, the commons next proceeded to attack the few privileges it still possessed. During the late military operations, several powers had been exerted by the lieutenants and deputy-lieutenants of counties, who were all under the influence of the crown. These were, therefore, voted *Delinquents*; a term now first used to signify transgressors whose crimes were not as yet ascertained by law. The sheriffs also, who had obeyed the king's mandate in raising ship-money, were voted to be delinquents. All the farmers and officers of the customs, who had been employed during so many years in levying tonnage and poundage, were subjected to the same imputation, and only purchased their safety by paying a hundred and fifty thousand pounds. Every discretionary or arbitrary sentence of the Star-chamber and High-commission courts underwent a severe scrutiny; and all those who had any hand in such sentences were voted to be liable to the penalties of the law. The judges who had declared against Hampden, in the trial of ship-money, were accused before the peers, and obliged to find security for their appearance. All those monopolies which had been lately granted by the crown were now annihilated by the order of the commons; and they carried their detestation of that grievance so far as to expel from their own house all such members as had been monopolists or projectors.

Hitherto we have seen the commons in some measure the patrons of liberty and of the people; boldly opposing the stretches of illegal power, or repressing those claims which, though founded on custom, were destructive of freedom. Thus far their aims, their struggles, were just and honourable: but the general passions of the nation were now excited; and having been once put into motion, they soon passed the line, and knew not where to stop. Had they been contented with resting here, after abridging all those privileges of monarchy which were capable of injuring the subject, and leaving it all those prerogatives that could benefit, they would have been considered as the great benefactors of mankind, and would have left the constitution nearly on the same footing on which we enjoy it at present. But they either were willing to revenge their former sufferings, or thought that some terrible examples were necessary to deter others from attempting to enslave their country. The horrors of a civil war

were not sufficiently attended to; and they precipitately involved the nation in calamities which they themselves were the first to repent.

The whole nation was thrown into a general ferment. The harangues of the members, now first published and dispersed, kept alive the horrors which were felt for the late administration. The pulpits, delivered over to the puritanical preachers, whom the commons arbitrarily placed in all considerable churches, resounded with faction and fanaticism. The press, freed from all fear or restraint, swarmed with productions, dangerous by their sedition and calumny more than by their eloquence or style.

In this universal uproar against the crown, Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick, who had some years before suffered so severely for their licentious abuses, and had been committed to remote prisons, were set at liberty by order of the commons, and were seen making their triumphant entry into the capital. Bastwick had been confined in Scilly, Prynne in Jersey, and Burton in Guernsey; and upon landing at their respective places, they were received by the acclamations of the people, and attended by crowds to London. Boughs were carried in this tumultuous procession; the roads were strewed with flowers, their sufferings were aggravated, and their persecutors reviled. Every person who had been punished for seditious libels during the foregoing administration, now recovered their liberty, and had damages given them upon those who had decreed their punishment.

Grievances, no doubt, and heavy ones, had been endured during the intermission of parliament; but the very complaints against them now became one of the greatest grievances. So many were offered within doors, and petitioned against without, that the house was divided into above forty committees, charged each of them with the examination of its respective complaints. The torrent rising to so dreadful and unexpected a height, despair seized all those who, from interest or habit, were attached to monarchy; while the king himself saw, with amazement, the whole fabric of government overturned. "You have taken," said he to the parliament, "the whole machine of government to pieces; a practice frequent with skilful artists, when they desire to clear the wheels from any rust which may have grown upon them. The engine may be restored to its former use and mo-

tions, provided it be fitted up entire, so as not a pin be wanting." But the commons, in their present temper, were much better adapted to destroy than to fit up; and having taken the machine asunder, they soon found an expeditious set of workmen ready to step in and take the whole business off their hands.

But in this universal rage for abolishing the former constitution, the parliament fell with great justice on two courts, which had been erected under arbitrary kings, and had seldom been employed but in cases of necessity. These were the High-commission court, and the court of Star-chamber. A bill unanimously passed the houses to abolish both; and in them to annihilate the principal and most dangerous articles in the king's prerogative. The former, which was instituted for defending the establishments of the church, had great power in all ecclesiastical matters; and the judges in that court were entirely arbitrary in whatever punishments or fines they thought proper to inflict. The Star-chamber had given force to the king's proclamations, and punished such as ventured to transgress them; but that being now taken away, his proclamations were of no effect, and might be opposed with impunity. Such were the transactions of this first session of the long parliament; and though in some cases they acted with anger, and in others with precipitation, yet their merits so much overbalanced their mistakes, that they deserve the highest gratitude from posterity.

After this the parliament seemingly adjourned; but a committee of both houses, a thing altogether unprecedented, was appointed to sit during the recess, with very ample powers, and very little less than those of the parliament in the plenitude of its authority. Pym was appointed chairman of the lower house; in this, further attempts were made for assuming the sovereign executive powers, and publishing the ordinances of this committee as statutes enacted by all the branches of the legislature. In the mean time, the king went to pay a visit to his subjects in Scotland.

In the midst of these troubles, the papists of Ireland fancied they had found an opportunity of throwing off the English yoke. There was a gentleman called Roger More, who, though of a narrow fortune, was descended from a very antient Irish family, and was very much celebrated among his countrymen for his valour and capacity. This man first formed the project of expelling the

English, and asserting the independency of his native country. The occasion was favourable; the English, warmly engaged in domestic animosities, were unable to attend to a distant insurrection; and those of that nation who resided among them, were too feeble to resist. Struck with these motives, sir Phelim O'Neale entered into a conspiracy; lord Macguire came into his designs, and soon after all the chiefs of the native Irish promised their concurrence.

Their plan was laid accordingly, which was, that sir Phelim O'Neale, and the other conspirators, should all begin an insurrection on one day throughout the provinces; should destroy all the English, while lord Macguire and Roger More should surprise the castle of Dublin. They had fixed on the approach of winter for this revolt; the day was appointed, every thing in readiness, the secret profoundly kept, and the conspirators promised themselves a certainty of success. The earl of Leicester, who had been appointed lord lieutenant, was then in London. Sir William Parsons, and sir John Borlase, the two lords justices, were men of mean intellects; and, without attending to the interests of their country, indulged themselves in the most profound tranquillity on the brink of ruin.

The very day before the intended seizure of the castle of Dublin, the plot was discovered by one O'Conolly, an Irishman, but a protestant, to the justices, who fled to the castle, and alarmed all the protestant inhabitants of the city to prepare for their defence. Macguire was taken, but More escaped; and new informations being every hour added to those already received, the project of a general insurrection was no longer a secret.

But though the citizens of Dublin had just time enough to save themselves from danger, the protestants, dispersed over the different parts of the country, were taken unprepared. O'Neale and his confederates had already taken arms in Ulster. The Irish, every where intermingled with the English, needed but a hint from their leaders and priests to massacre a people whom they hated for their religion, and envied for their riches and prosperity. The insurrections of a civilised people are usually marked with very little cruelty; but the revolt of a savage nation generally aims at extermination. The Irish accordingly resolved to cut off all the protestants of the kingdom at a stroke; so that



neither age, sex, nor condition, received any pity. In such indiscriminate slaughter, neither former benefits, nor alliances, nor authority, were any protection: numberless were the instances of friends murdering their intimates, relations their kinsmen, and servants their masters. In vain did flight save from the first assault; destruction, which had an extensive spread, met the hunted victims at every turn. Not only death, but studied cruelties were inflicted on the unhappy sufferers; the very avarice of the revolters could not restrain their thirst for blood, and they burned the inhabitants in their own houses, to increase their punishment. Several hundreds were driven upon a bridge, and thence obliged, by these barbarians, to leap in the water, where they were drowned. The English colonies were totally annihilated in the open country of Ulster; but in the other provinces the rebels pretended to act with great humanity.

The protestants were driven there from their houses, to meet the severity of the weather, without food or raiment; and numbers of them perished with the cold, which happened at that time to be peculiarly severe. By some computations, those who perished by all these cruelties are made to amount to a hundred and fifty or two hundred thousand; but, by a moderate computation, they could not have been less than forty thousand.

In the mean time, the English Pale, as it was called, consisting of the old English catholics, who had first come over, joining with the native Irish, a large army was formed, amounting to above twenty thousand men, which threatened a total extermination of the English power in that island. The king was in Scotland when he received the first account of this rebellion: and though he did all in his power to induce his subjects there to lend assistance to the protestant cause, he found them totally averse to sending any succours into Ireland. Their aim was to oblige the parliament of England with what succours they could spare, and not to obey the injunctions of their sovereign. They went still farther, and had the assurance to impute a part of these dreadful massacres to the king's own contrivance. In fact, the rebels of Ireland did not fail to show a royal patent, authorising their attempts; and it is said that sir Phelim O'Neale, having found a royal patent in the house of lord Caulfield, whom he had murdered, tore off the seal, and affixed it to a commission which he had forged for himself.

However this be, the king took all the precautions in his power to show his utter detestation of these bloody proceedings; and being sensible of his own inability to suppress the rebellion, he had once more recourse to his English parliament, and craved their assistance for a supply. But here he found no hopes of assistance; many insinuations were thrown out, that he had himself fomented this rebellion, and no money could be spared for the extinction of distant dangers when they pretended that the kingdom was threatened with greater at home.

It was now that the republican spirit began to appear without any disguise in the present parliament; and that party, instead of attacking the faults of the king, resolved to destroy monarchy. They had seen a republican system of government lately established in Holland, and attended with very noble effects; they began therefore to wish for a similar system at home; and many productions of the press at that time sketched out the form. It would be unjust to deny these men the praise of being guided by honest motives; but it would be unwise not to say also, that they were swayed by wrong ones. In the comparison between a republic and a limited monarchy, the balance entirely inclines to the latter, since a real republic never yet existed, except in speculation; and that liberty which demagogues promise to their followers, is generally only sought after for themselves. The aim in general of popular leaders is rather to depress the great than exalt the humble; and in such governments, the lower ranks of people are too commonly the most abject slaves. In a republic, the number of tyrants are capable of supporting each other in their injustice; while in a monarchy there is one object, who, if he offends, is easily punishable, and ought to be brought to justice.

The leaders of the opposition began their operations by a resolution to attack episcopacy, which was one of the strongest bulwarks of the royal power; but previously framed a remonstrance in which they summed up all their former grievances. These they ascribed to a regular system of tyranny in the king, and asserted that they amounted to a total subversion of the constitution. This, when drawn up by a tumultuous majority of the house, they ordered to be printed and published, without being carried up, as is usual in such cases, to the house of peers, for their assent and approbation. The commons, having thus endeavoured to render the king's administra-

tion universally odious, began upon the hierarchy. Their first measure was, by their own single authority, to suspend all the laws which had been made for the observance of public worship. They particularly forbade bowing at the name of Jesus. They complained of the king's filling five vacant bishoprics; and considered it as an insult upon them, that he should complete and strengthen an order which they were resolved to abolish. They accused thirteen bishops of high-treason, for enacting canons without the consent of parliament; and endeavoured to prevail upon the house of peers to exclude all the prelates from their seats and votes in that august assembly. But, notwithstanding all their efforts, the lords refused their concurrence to this law, and to all such as any way tended to the further limitation of royal authority. The majority of the peers adhered to the king; and plainly foresaw the depression of the nobility as a necessary consequence of the popular usurpations on the crown. The commons murmured at their refusal, mixed threats with their indignation, and began, for the first time, to insinuate that the business of the state could be carried on without them.

In order to intimidate the lords into their measures, the populace were let loose to insult and threaten them. Multitudes of people flocked every day towards Westminster, and insulted the prelates and such lords as adhered to the crown. Some seditious apprentices being seized and committed to prison, the house of commons immediately ordered them to be set free. Encouraged by the countenance of the house, the populace crowded about White-hall, and threw out insolent menaces against the king himself. It was at this time that several reduced officers, and students of the inns of court, offered their services to the king, to repress the rioters; and many frays ensued, not without bloodshed. The rabble, by way of reproach, were called Roundheads, from the manner of wearing their hair; and the gentlemen, Cavaliers. These names afterwards served to distinguish the partisans of either side, and served still more to divide the nation.

The fury of the commons, and also of the populace, did not fail to intimidate the bishops: they saw the storm that was gathering against them; and, probably to avert its effects, they resolved to attend their duty in the house of lords no longer; but drew up a protest, which was signed by twelve of them, in which

they declared, that, being hindered by the populace from attending at the house of lords, they resolved to go there no more till all commotions should be appeased; protesting, in the mean time, against all such laws as should be enacted in their absence.

This secession of the bishops from the house of lords was what the commons most ardently wished for; and they seized the opportunity with pleasure. An impeachment of high-treason was immediately sent up against them, as guilty of subverting the fundamental laws, and invalidating the legislative authority. In consequence of this, they were by the lords excluded from parliament, and committed to custody; no man in either house daring to speak a word in their vindication. One of the lords, indeed, was heard to say, that he did not believe they were guilty of treason, but thought they were mad, and therefore were fitter for confinement than a seat in parliament.

This was a fatal blow to the royal interest; but it soon felt a much greater from the king's own imprudence. Charles had long suppressed his resentment, and only strove to satisfy the commons by the greatness of his concessions; but, finding that all his compliance had but increased their demands, he could no longer contain. He gave orders to Herbert, his attorney-general, [1642.] to enter an accusation of high-treason, in the house of peers, against lord Kimbolton, one of the most popular men of his party, together with five commoners, sir Arthur Haselrig, Holles, Hampden, Pym, and Strode. The articles were, that they had traitorously endeavoured to subvert the fundamental laws and government of the kingdom, to deprive the king of his regal power, and to impose on his subjects an arbitrary and tyrannical authority; that they had invited a foreign army to invade the kingdom; that they had aimed at subverting the very rights and being of parliaments, and had actually raised and countenanced tumults against the king. Men had scarcely leisure to wonder at the precipitancy and imprudence of this impeachment, when they were astonished by another measure, still more rash and more unsupported. A serjeant at arms, in the king's name, demanded of the house the five members, and was sent back without any positive answer. This was followed by a conduct still more extraordinary. The next day the king himself was seen to enter the house of commons alone, advancing

through the hall, while all the members stood up to receive him. The speaker withdrew from his chair, and the king took possession of it. Having seated himself, and looked round him for some time, he told the house that he was sorry for the occasion that forced him thither; that he was come in person to seize the members whom he had accused of high-treason, seeing they would not deliver them up to his serjeant at arms. Addressing himself to the speaker, he desired to know whether any of them were in the house; but the speaker, falling on his knees, replied, that he had neither eyes to see, nor tongue to speak, in that place, but as the house was pleased to direct him; and he asked pardon for being able to give no other answer. He then sat for some time, to see if the accused were present; but they had escaped a few minutes before his entry. Thus disappointed, perplexed, and not knowing on whom to rely, he next proceeded, amidst the clamours of the populace, who continued to cry out "Privilege! privilege!" to the common-council of the city, and made his complaint to them. The common-council only answered his complaint with a contemptuous silence; and on his return one of the populace, more insolent than the rest, cried out, "To your tents, O Israel!" a watch-word among the Jews, when they intended to abandon their princes.

When the commons were assembled the next day, they affected the greatest terror, and passed an unanimous vote that the king had violated their privileges, and they could not assemble again in the same place till they should have obtained satisfaction, with a guard for their security. They ascribed the last measure of the king to the counsels of the papists; and the city was thus filled with groundless consternation.

As the commons had artfully kept up their panic, in order to inflame the populace, and as the city was now only one scene of confusion, the king, afraid of exposing himself to any fresh insult from the fury of the populace, retired to Windsor, overwhelmed with grief, shame, and remorse. There he began to reflect on the rashness of his former proceedings, and now too late resolved to make some atonement. He therefore wrote to the parliament, informing them that he desisted from his former proceedings against the accused members; and assured them, that upon all occasions he would be as careful of their privileges as of his life

or his crown. Thus his former violence had rendered him hateful to his commons, and his present submission now rendered him contemptible.

The commons had already stripped the king of almost all his privileges; the bishops were fled, the judges were intimidated: it now only remained that, after securing the church and the law, they should get possession of the sword also. The power of appointing governors, generals, and levying armies, was still a remaining prerogative of the crown. Having, therefore, first magnified their terrors of popery, which perhaps they actually dreaded, they proceeded to petition that the Tower might be put into their hands, and that Hull, Portsmouth, and the fleet, should be intrusted to persons of their choosing. These were requests, the complying with which would level all that remained of the antient constitution: however, such was the necessity of the times, that they were at first contested, and then granted. At last, every compliance only increasing the avidity of making fresh demands, the commons desired to have a militia raised, and governed by such officers and commanders as they should nominate, under pretext of securing them from the Irish papists, of whom they were in great apprehensions,

It was here that Charles first ventured to put a stop to his concessions; and that not by a refusal, but a delay. He was at that time at Dover, attending the queen, and the princess of Orange, who had thought it prudent to leave the kingdom. He replied to the petition of the commons, that he had not now leisure to consider a matter of such great importance, and therefore would defer an answer till his return. But the commons were well aware, that, though this was depriving him even of the shadow of power, yet they had now gone too far to recede, and were therefore desirous of leaving him no authority whatsoever, as being conscious that themselves would be the first victims to its fury. They alleged that the dangers and distempers of the nation were such as could endure no longer delay; and that, unless the king would speedily comply with their demands, they should be obliged, both for his safety and that of the kingdom, to dispose of the militia by the authority of both houses, and were resolved to do it accordingly. In their remonstrances to the king, they desired even to be permitted to command the army for an

appointed time ; which so exasperated him, that he exclaimed, "No, not for an hour !" This peremptory refusal broke off all further treaty ; and both sides were now resolved to have recourse to arms.

Charles, taking the prince of Wales with him, retired to York, where he found the people more loyal, and less infected with the religious phrensy of the times. He found his cause there backed by a more numerous party than he had expected among the people. The queen, who was in Holland, was making successful levies of men and ammunition, by selling the crown jewels. But before war was openly declared, the shadow of a negotiation was carried on, rather to serve as a pretence to the people than with a real design of reconciliation. The king offered proposals to the commons which he knew they would not accept ; and they in return submitted nineteen propositions to his consideration, which, if complied with, would have rendered him entirely subservient to their commands. Their import was, that the privy-council, the principal officers of state, the governors of the king's children, the commanders of the forts, his fleet and army, should be all appointed by, and under the control of, parliament ; that papists should be punished by their authority ; that the church and liturgy should be reformed at their discretion ; and that such members as had been displaced should be restored. These proposals, which, if they had been complied with, would have moulded the government into an aristocracy, were, happily for posterity, rejected by the king. "Should I grant these demands," said he in his reply, "I might be waited on bare-headed ; I might have my hand kissed, the title of majesty be continued to me, and the king's authority be signified by both houses of parliament might be still the style of your commands ; I might have swords and maces carried before me, and please myself with the sight of a crown and sceptre (though even these twigs would not long flourish, when the stock upon which they grew was dead) : but as to true and real power, I should remain but the outside, but the picture, but the sign of a king." War on any terms, therefore, was esteemed preferable to such an ignominious peace. Thus the king and his parliament reproached each other for beginning a scene of slaughter, of which both were equally culpable,

## CHAP. XXXI.

CHARLES I. (Continued.)

Aug. 22,  
1642. No period since England began could show so many instances of courage, abilities, and virtue, as the present fatal opposition called forth into action. Now was the time when talents of all kinds, unchecked by authority, were called from the lower ranks of life, to dispute for power and pre-eminence. Both sides, equally confident of the justice of their cause, appealed to God to judge of the rectitude of their intentions. The parliament was convinced that it fought for heaven, by asserting its regards for a peculiar mode of worship; and the king was not less convinced that his claims were sacred, as he had ever been taught to consider them as of divine original. Thus passion and enthusiasm on each side animated the combatants; and courage rather than conduct, among these undisciplined troops, decided the fortune of the day.

Never was contest more apparently unequal than this seemed at first to be; the king being almost destitute of every advantage. His revenue had been seized by his opponents: all the sea-port towns were in their hands, except Newcastle; and thus they were possessed of the customs which these could supply; the fleet was at their disposal; all magazines of arms and ammunition were seized for their use; and they had the wishes of all the most active members of the nation.

To oppose this, the king had that acknowledged reverence which was paid to royalty, to give sanction to his cause. The greater part of the nobility adhered to him, as their distinctions must rise or fall with the source of honour. Most of the men of education also, and the antient gentry, still considered loyalty as a virtue, and armed their tenants and servants in his cause. With these followers and hopes he resolved to take the field, and erected the royal standard at Nottingham.

Manifestoes on the one side and the other were now dispersed throughout the kingdom; and the whole nation composed two factions, distinguished by the names of Cavaliers and Roundheads. The king, to bind himself by the most solemn engagements to



his people, made the following protestation before his whole army :

“ I do promise, in the presence of almighty God, and as I hope for his blessing and protection, that I will, to the utmost of my power, defend and maintain the true reformed protestant religion, established in the church of England ; and, by the grace of God, in the same will live and die.

“ I desire that the laws may be ever the measure of my government, and that the liberty and property of the subject may be preserved by them with the same care as my own just rights. And if it please God, by his blessing on this army raised for my necessary defence, to preserve me from the present rebellion, I do solemnly and faithfully promise, in the sight of God, to maintain the just privileges and freedom of parliament, and to govern, to the utmost of my power, by the known statutes and customs of the kingdom ; and particularly to observe inviolably the laws to which I have given my consent this parliament. Meanwhile, if this emergence, and the great necessity to which I am driven, beget any violation of law, I hope it shall be imputed by God and man to the authors of this war, not to me, who have so earnestly laboured to preserve the peace of the kingdom.

“ When I willingly fail in these particulars, I shall expect no aid or relief from man, nor any protection from above. But in this resolution I hope for the cheerful assistance of all good men, and am confident of the blessing of heaven.”

The sincerity with which this speech was delivered, and the justice of its contents, served to strengthen the king's cause. At first he appeared in a very low condition ; besides the trained bands of the county, raised by sir John Digby, the sheriff, he had not assembled above three hundred infantry. His cavalry, which composed his chief strength, exceeded not eight hundred, and were very ill provided with arms. Indeed, he was soon reinforced ; but not being then in a condition to face his enemies, he thought it prudent to retire by slow marches to Derby, and thence to Shrewsbury, in order to countenance the levies which his friends were making in those quarters.

In the mean time his enemies were not remiss in preparations. They had a magazine of arms at Hull, and sir John Hotham was appointed governor of that place by parliament. Charles had some time before presented himself before that town, but was re-

fused admission; and from this they drew their principal resources. The forces also, which had been every where raised on pretence of the service of Ireland, were now more openly enlisted by the parliament for their own purposes; and the command given to the earl of Essex, a bold man, who rather desired to see monarchy abridged than totally destroyed. In London no less than four thousand men were enlisted in one day; and the parliament voted a declaration, which they required every member to subscribe, that they would live and die with their general. Orders were also issued out for loans of money and plate, which were to defend the king and both houses of parliament; for they still preserved this style. This brought immense quantities of plate to the treasury; and so great was men's ardour in the cause, that there was more than they could find room for. By these means they found themselves in a short time at the head of sixteen thousand men; and the earl of Essex led them towards Northampton against the king.

The army of the royalists did not equal that of Essex in number: however, it was supposed to be better disciplined, and better conducted. The two sons of the unfortunate elector Palatine, prince Rupert and prince Maurice, offered to the king their services, which were gladly accepted. A slight advantage gained by prince Rupert over colonel Sandys, in the beginning, gave great hopes of his future activity, and inspired the army with resolution to hazard a battle. So little were both armies skilled in the arts and stratagems of war, that they were within six miles of each other before they were acquainted with their mutual approach; and, what is remarkable, they had been ten days within twenty miles of each other without knowing it.

Edge-Hill was the first place where the two armies were put in array against each other, and the country first drenched in civil slaughter. It was a dreadful sight, to see above thirty thousand of the bravest men in the world, instead of employing their courage abroad, turning it against each other, while the dearest friends, and the nearest kinsmen, embraced opposite sides, and prepared to bury their private regards in factious hatred. In the beginning of this engagement, sir Faithful Fortescue, who had levied a troop for the Irish war, but had been obliged to serve in the parliamentary army, deserted to the royalists, and so intim-

idated the parliamentary forces, that the whole body of cavalry fled. The right wing of their army followed their example ; but, the victors too eagerly pursuing, Essex's body of reserve wheeled upon the rear of the pursuers, and made great havoc among them. After the royalists had a little recovered from their surprise, they made a vigorous stand ; and both sides for a time stood gazing at each other, without sufficient courage to renew the attack. They all night lay under arms, and next morning found themselves in sight of each other : this was the time for the king to strike a decisive blow : he lost the opportunity ; and both sides separated with equal loss. Five thousand men are said to have been found dead on the field of battle.

It would be tedious, and no way instructive, to enter into the marchings and counter-marchings of these undisciplined and ill-conducted armies : war was a new trade to the English, as they had not seen a hostile engagement in the island for near a century before. The queen came to reinforce the royal party ; she had brought soldiers and ammunition from Holland, and immediately departed to procure more. But the parliament who knew its own strength felt no discouragement. Their demands seemed to increase in proportion their losses ; and as they were repressed in the field, they grew more haughty in the cabinet. Such governors as gave up their fortresses to the king were attainted of high-treason. It was in vain for the king to send proposals after any success ; this only raised their pride and their animosity. But though this desire in the king to make peace with his subjects was the highest encomium on his humanity, yet his long negotiations, one of which he carried on at Oxford, were faulty as a warrior. He wasted that time in altercation and treaty which he should have employed in vigorous exertions in the field.

However, the two first campaigns, upon the whole, wore a favourable aspect. One victory followed another : Cornwall was reduced to peace and obedience under the king : a vic- [1642.] tory was gained over the parliamentarians at Stratton-hill, in Devonshire ; another at Round-way down, near the Devizes ; and a third in Chalgrave-field. Bristol was besieged and taken ; and Gloucester was besieged : the battle of Newbury was favourable to the royal cause ; and great hopes of success were formed from an army in the north, raised by the marquis of Newcastle.

But, in the second of these campaigns, the two bravest and greatest men of their respective parties were killed; as if it was intended, by the kindness of Providence, that they should be exempted from seeing the miseries and the slaughter which were shortly to ensue. These were John Hampden, and Lucius Cary, lord Falkland.

In an incursion made by prince Rupert to within about two miles of the enemy's quarters, a great booty was obtained. This the parliamentarians attempted to rescue; and Hampden, at their head, overtook the royalists in Chalgrave-field. As he ever was the first to enter into the thickest of the battle, he was shot in the shoulder with a brace of bullets, and the bone broken. Some days after, he died in great pain; nor could his whole party, had their army met a total overthrow, have been cast into greater consternation. Even Charles, his enemy, felt for his disaster, and offered his own surgeon to assist his cure. Hampden, whom we have seen, in the beginning of these troubles, refused to pay ship-money, gained, by his inflexible integrity, the esteem even of his enemies. To these he added affability in conversation, temper, art, eloquence in debate, and penetration in council.

But Falkland was still a greater loss, and a greater character. He added to Hampden's severe principles a politeness and elegance but then beginning to be known in England. He had boldly withstood the king's pretensions, while he saw him making a bad use of his power; but when he perceived the design of the parliament to overturn the religion and the constitution of his country, he changed his side, and steadfastly attached himself to the crown. From the beginning of the civil war, his natural cheerfulness and vivacity forsook him; he became melancholy, sad, pale, and negligent of his person. When the two armies were in sight of each other, and preparing for the battle of Newbury, he appeared desirous of terminating his life, since he could not compose the miseries of his country. Still anxious for his country alone, he dreaded the too prosperous success of his own party as much as that of the enemy; and he professed that its miseries had broken his heart. His usual cry among his friends, after a deep silence, and frequent sighs, was, "Peace! Peace!" He now said, upon the morning of the engagement, that he was weary of the times, and should leave them before night. He was

shot by a musket-ball in the belly ; and his body was next morning found among a heap of slain. His writings, his eloquence, his justice, and his courage, deserved such a death of glory ; and they found it.

The king, that he might make preparations during the winter for the ensuing campaign, and to oppose the designs of the Westminster parliament, called one at Oxford ; and this was the first time that England saw two parliaments sitting at the same time. His house of peers was pretty full ; his house of commons consisted of about a hundred and forty, which [1644.] amounted to not above half of the other house of commons. From this shadow of a parliament he received some supplies ; after which it was prorogued, and never after assembled. In the meantime the parliamentary leaders were equally active on their side. They passed an ordinance, commanding all the inhabitants of London and its neighbourhood to retrench a meal a week, and to pay the value of it for the support of the public cause. But, what was much more effectual, the Scots, who considered their claims as similar, led a strong army to their assistance. The two houses levied an army of fourteen thousand men in the east, under the earl of Manchester ; they had an army of ten thousand men under Essex, and another of nearly the same force under sir William Waller. These were superior to any force the king could bring into the field, and were well appointed with ammunition, provisions, and pay.

Hostilities, which even during the winter-season had not been wholly discontinued, were renewed in spring with their usual fury, and served to desolate the kingdom without deciding victory. Each county joined that side to which it was addicted from motives of conviction, interest, or fear. Some, however, petitioned for peace ; and all the wise and good were earnest in the cry. What particularly deserves remark, was an attempt of the women of London, who, to the number of two or three thousand, went in a body to the house of commons, earnestly demanding a peace. "Give us those traitors," said they, "that are against a peace ; give them, that we may tear them in pieces." The guards found some difficulty in quelling this insurrection, and one or two women lost their lives in the fray.

The battle of Marston-moor was the beginning of the king's

misfortunes and disgrace. The Scots and parliamentary army had joined, and were besieging York, when prince Rupert, joined by the marquis of Newcastle, determined to raise the siege. Both sides drew up on Marston-moor, to the number of fifty thousand, and the victory seemed long undecided between them. Rupert, who commanded the right wing of the royalists, was opposed by Oliver Cromwell, who now first came into notice, at the head of a body of troops whom he had taken care to levy and discipline. Cromwell was victorious; he pushed his opponents off the field, followed the vanquished, returned to a second engagement, and a second victory; the prince's whole train of artillery was taken; and the royalists sustained irreparable injury.

While the king was unfortunate in the field, he was not more successful in negotiation. A treaty was begun at Uxbridge, which, like all others, came to nothing. The puritans demand-  
 [1645.] ed a total abolition of the episcopacy and all church ceremonies; and this Charles, from conviction, from interest, and persuasion, was not willing to permit. He had all along adhered to the episcopal jurisdiction, not only because it was favourable to monarchy, but because all his adherents were passionately devoted to it. He esteemed bishops as essential to the christian church; and thought himself bound, not only by temporal but sacred ties, to defend them. The parliament was as obstinately bent upon removing this order; and, to show their resolution, began with the foremost of the number.

William Laud, archbishop of Canterbury, as we have already seen, had been imprisoned in the Tower at the same time with Strafford; and he had patiently endured so long a confinement without being brought to any trial. He was now, therefore, accused of high-treason, in endeavouring to subvert the fundamental laws, and of other high crimes and misdemeanours. The groundless charge of popery, which his life and afterwards his death belied, was urged against him. In his defence he spoke several hours with that courage which seems the result of innocence and integrity. The lords, who were his judges, appeared willing to acquit him: but the commons, his accusers, finding how his trial was likely to go, passed an ordinance for his execution, and terrified the lords, who continued obstinate, to give their consent. Seven peers alone voted in this important question; all the rest,

either from shame or fear, did not appear. When brought to the scaffold, this venerable prelate, without any terror, but in the usual tone of his exhortations from the pulpit, made the people a long speech. He told them that he had examined his heart; and thanked God that he found no sins there which deserved the death he was going to suffer. The king, he said, had been traduced by some, as labouring to introduce popery; but he believed him as sound a protestant as any man in the kingdom; and as for parliaments, though he disliked the conduct of one or two, yet he never designed to change the laws of his country, or the protestant religion. After he had prayed for a few minutes, the executioner severed his head at a blow. It is a melancholy consideration, that, in these times of trouble, the best men were those on either side who chiefly suffered.

The death of Laud was followed by a total alteration of the ceremonies of the church. The Liturgy was, by a public act, abolished on the day of his death, as if he had been the only obstacle to its formal removal. The church of England was in all respects brought to a conformity to the puritanical establishment; while the citizens of London, and the Scotch army, gave public thanks for so happy an alteration.

The abolition of the reformed religion, as established by queen Elizabeth, seemed at first to promise vigour and consistence to the counsels of the parliamentarians. But such is the nature of man, that if he does not find, he makes opposition. From the moment the puritans began to be apparently united, and ranked under one denomination of presbyterians, they began to divide into fresh parties, each professing different views and interests. One part of the house was composed of presbyterians, strictly so called; the other, though a minority, of independents, a new sect that had lately been introduced, and gained ground surprisingly.

The difference between these two sects would be hardly worth mentioning, did not their religious opinions influence their political conduct. The church of England, as we have seen, had appointed bishops of clerical ordination, and a book of common-prayer. The presbyterians exclaimed against both; they were for having the church governed by clergymen elected by the people, and prayers made without premeditation. The independents went still farther; they excluded all the clergy; they maintained

that every man might pray in public, exhort his audience, and explain the scriptures. Their political system kept pace with their religious. Not contented with reducing the king to a first magistrate, which was the aim of the presbyterians, this sect aspired at the abolition not only of all monarchy, but of all subordination. They maintained, and they maintained right, that all men were born equal; but they alleged also, that no accidental or artificial institutions could destroy this equality; and there they were deceived. Could such a plan of government as theirs be practicable, it would, no doubt, be the most happy; but the wise and industrious must in every country prevail over the weak and idle; and the bad success of the independent scheme soon after showed how ill adapted such speculative ideas were to human infirmity. Possessed, however, with a high idea of their own rectitude both in religion and politics, they gave way to a surly pride, which is ever the result of narrow manners and solitary thinking.

These were a body of men that were now growing into consideration; their apparent sanctity, their natural courage, excited by enthusiasm, and their unceasing perseverance, began to work considerable effects; and, though they were out-numbered in the house of commons, which was composed of more enlightened minds, they formed a majority in the army, made up chiefly of the lowest of the vulgar.

The royalists endeavoured to throw a ridicule on this fanaticism, without being sensible how much reason they had to apprehend its dangerous consequences. The forces of the king were united by much feebler ties; and license among them, which had been introduced by the want of pay, had risen to a dangerous height, rendering them as formidable to their friends as their enemies. To increase this unpopularity, the king, finding the parliament of Scotland as well as that of England declaring against him, thought proper to make a truce with the papists of Ireland, in order to bring over the English forces who served in that kingdom. With these troops he also received some of the native Irish into his service, who still retained their fierceness and their barbarity. This gave the parliament a plausible opportunity of upbraiding him with taking papists into his service, and gave a colour to the antient calumny of his having excited



them to rebel. Unfortunately, too soon after, it was found that they rather increased the hatred of his subjects than added to the strength of his army. They were routed by Fairfax, one of the generals of the parliament army; and, though they threw down their arms, they were slaughtered without mercy. It is said that several women were found among the slain, who with long knives had done considerable execution; but the animosity of the English against these wretches at that time might have given rise to the report.

These misfortunes were soon after succeeded by another. Charles, who had now retired to Oxford, found himself at the head of a turbulent seditious army, who, from wanting pay, were scarcely subject to control; while, on the other hand, the parliamentarians were well supplied and paid, and held together from principle. The parliament, to give them an example of disinterestedness in their own conduct, passed an act, called the *self-denying ordinance*, which deserved all commendation. They resolved, lest it should be suggested by the nation that their intent was to make themselves masters, that no member of their house should have a command in the army. The former generals were, therefore, changed; the earls of Essex, Denbigh, and Manchester, gave up their commissions; and Fairfax, now appointed general with Cromwell, who found means to keep at once his seat and his commission, new-modelled the army. This, which might at first have seemed to weaken their forces, gave them new spirit; and the soldiers, become more confident in their new commanders, were irresistible.

Never was a more singular army assembled than that which now drew the sword in the parliamentary cause. The officers exercised the office of chaplains; and, during the intervals of action, instructed their troops by sermons, prayers, and exhortations. Rapturous ecstasies supplied the place of study and reflection; and while they kindled as they spoke, they ascribed their own warmth to a descent of the spirit from heaven. The private soldiers, seized with the same spirit, employed their vacant hours in prayer, in perusing the holy scriptures, in ghostly conferences. When marching to the field of battle, the hymn and the ejaculation mixed their notes with those of the trumpet. An army thus actuated became invincible.

June 14,  
1645. The well-disputed battle which decided the fate of Charles, was fought at Naseby, a village in Northamptonshire. The main body of the royal army was commanded by lord Astley; prince Rupert led the right wing, sir Marmaduke Langdale the left, and the king himself headed the body of reserve. On the opposite side, Fairfax and Skippon commanded the main body; Cromwell led on the right wing, and Ireton, his son-in-law, the left. Prince Rupert attacked the left wing with his usual impetuosity and success: they were broken, and pursued as far as the village; but he lost time in attempting to make himself master of their artillery. Cromwell, in the mean time, was equally successful on his side, and broke through the enemy's horse after a very obstinate resistance. While these were thus engaged, the infantry on both sides maintained the conflict with equal ardour; and, in spite of the efforts of Fairfax and Skippon, their battalions began to give way. But it was now that Cromwell returned with his victorious forces, and charged the king's infantry in flank with such vigour, that a total rout began to ensue. By this time prince Rupert had rejoined the king and the small body of reserve; but his troops, though victorious, could not be brought to a second charge. They were at all times licentious and ungovernable; but they were now intimidated; for the parliamentarians, having recovered from the first shock, stood ready in order of battle to receive them. The king was desirous of charging them at the head of his reserve; but the earl of Carnwath, who rode by his majesty's side, seizing the bridle of his horse, turned him round, saying, with a loud oath, "Will you go upon your death in an instant?" The troops seeing this motion wheeled to the right, and rode off in such confusion that they could not be rallied during the rest of the day. The king, perceiving the battle wholly lost, was obliged to abandon the field to his enemies, who took all his cannon, baggage, and above five thousand prisoners.

From this fatal blow the king never after recovered; his army was dispersed, and the conquerors made as many captives as they thought proper. Among the other spoils taken on this occasion, the king's cabinet was seized, in which was contained all his private correspondence with the queen. The letters were shortly after published by the command of the parliament, who

took a vulgar and brutal pleasure in ridiculing all those tender effusions which were never drawn up for the public eye.

The battle of Naseby put the parliamentarians in possession of almost all the strong towns of the kingdom—Bristol, Bridgewater, Chester, Sherborn, and Bath. Exeter was besieged; and all the king's troops in the western counties being entirely dispersed, Fairfax pressed the place, and it surrendered at discretion. The king's interests seemed going to ruin in every quarter. The Scottish army, which, as has been said, took part with the parliament, having made themselves masters of Carlisle, after an obstinate siege, marched to the southward, and laid siege to Hereford. Another engagement followed between the king and the parliamentarians, in which his forces were put to the rout by colonel Jones, a thousand of his men made prisoners, and five hundred slain. Thus harassed on every side, he retreated to Oxford, which in all conditions of his fortune had been steady to his cause; and there he resolved to offer new terms to his victorious pursuers.

Nothing could be more affecting than the king's situation during his abode at Oxford. Saddened by his late melancholy disasters, impressed with the apprehensions of such as hung over him, harassed by the murmurs of those who had followed his cause, and stung with sorrow for his incapacity to relieve them, he now was willing to grant the parliament their own terms, and at any rate to procure a reconciliation. He therefore sent them repeated messages to this purpose; but they did not deign to make him the least reply. At last, after reproaching him with the blood spilt during the war, they told him that they were preparing some bills, to which if he would consent, they would then be able to judge of his pacific inclinations.

In the mean time, Fairfax was approaching with a powerful and victorious army, and was taking the [1646.] proper measures for laying siege to Oxford, which promised an easy surrender. To be taken captive, and led in triumph by his insolent subjects, was what Charles justly abhorred; and every insult and violence might be dreaded from the soldiery, who had felt the effects of his opposition. In this desperate extremity, he embraced a measure which, in any other situation, might justly lie under the imputation of imprudence and indiscretion. He

resolved to give himself up to the Scottish army, who had never testified such implacable animosity against him, and to trust to their loyalty for the rest.

That he might the better conceal his design from the people of Oxford, orders were given at every gate of the city for allowing three persons to pass. In the night, the king, accompanied by doctor Hudson and Mr. Ashburnham, took the road towards London, travelling as Ashburnham's servant. He, in fact, came so near London, that he once entertained some thoughts of entering that city, and of throwing himself on the mercy of the parliament. At last, after passing through many cross-roads and by-ways, he arrived at the Scottish camp before Newark, and discovered himself to lord Leven, the general.

The Scots, who had before given him some general assurances of their fidelity and protection, now seemed greatly surprised at his arrival among them. Instead of bestowing a thought on his interests, they instantly entered into a consultation upon their own. The commissioners of their army sent up an account of the king's arrival to the parliament; and declared that his coming was altogether uninvited and unexpected. In the mean time, they prevailed upon the king to give directions for surrendering all his garrisons to the parliament; with which he complied. In return for this condescension, they treated him with very long sermons among the ecclesiastics, and with the most cautious reserve, but very different from respect, among the officers. The preachers of the party indeed insulted him from the pulpit; and one of them, after reproaching him to his face with his misconduct, ordered that psalm to be sung which begins,

“ Why dost thou, tyrant, boast thyself,  
Thy wicked deeds to praise ?”

The king stood up, and called for that psalm which begins with these words,

“ Have mercy, Lord, on me, I pray,  
For men would me devour.”

The audience accordingly sang this psalm in compassion to majesty in distress.

The parliament being informed of the king's captivity, immediately entered into a treaty with the Scots, about delivering up their prisoner. The Scots had, from their first entrance into

England, been allowed pay by the parliament, in order to prevent their plundering the country : much of this, however, remained unpaid, from the unavoidable necessities of the times ; and much more was claimed by the Scots than was really due. Nevertheless, they now saw that this was a convenient time for insisting on their arrears ; and they resolved to make the king the instrument by which this money was to be obtained. After various debates upon this head between them and the parliament, in which they pretended to great honour, and insisted upon many punctilios, they agreed, that upon payment of four hundred thousand pounds they would deliver up the king to his enemies : and this was cheerfully complied with. An action so atrocious may be palliated, but can never be defended : they returned home, laden with plunder, and the reproaches of all good men.

From this period to the despotic government of Cromwell, the constitution was convulsed with all the agitations of faction, guilt, ignorance, and enthusiasm. The kingly power being laid low, the parliament attempted to assume the reins ; but they were soon to submit in turn to the military power, which, like all democracies, was turbulent, transient, feeble, and bloody.

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CHAP. XXXII.

CHARLES I. (Continued.)

**T**HE king being delivered over by the Scots to the parliamentary commissioners, he was conducted under a [1647.] guard to Holdenby Castle in Northamptonshire. They treated him in confinement with the most rigorous severity, dismissing all his antient servants, debarring him from all visits, and cutting off all communication with his friends and family.

The civil war was now over ; the king had absolved his followers from their allegiance, and the parliament had now no enemy to fear, except those very troops by which they had extended their overgrown authority. But in proportion as the terror of the king's power diminished, the division between the independents and the presbyterians became more apparent. The major-

ity in the house were of the presbyterian sect ; but the majority of the army were staunch independents. At the head of this sect was Cromwell, who secretly directed its operations, and invigorated all their measures.

Oliver Cromwell, whose talents now began to appear in full lustre, was the son of a private gentleman of Huntingdon ; but being the son of a second brother, he inherited a very small paternal fortune. He had been sent to Cambridge ; but his inclinations not at that time turning to the calm occupations of elegant literature, he was remarkable only for the profligacy of his conduct, and the dissipation of his paternal fortune. It was, perhaps, his poverty that induced him to fall into the opposite extreme shortly after ; for, from being one of the most debauched men in the kingdom, he became the most rigid and abstemious. The same vehemence of temper which had transported him into the extremes of pleasure, now distinguished his religious habits. He endeavoured to improve his shattered fortunes by agriculture ; but this expedient served only to plunge him into farther difficulties. He was even determined to go over and settle in New-England ; but was prevented by the king's ordinance to the contrary. From accident or intrigue, he was chosen member for the town of Cambridge, in the long parliament ; but he seemed at first to possess no talents for oratory, his person being ungraceful, his dress slovenly, his elocution homely, tedious, obscure, and embarrassed. He made up, however, by zeal and perseverance, what he wanted in natural powers ; and being endowed with unshaken intrepidity, much dissimulation, and a thorough conviction of the rectitude of his cause, he rose, through the gradations of preferment, to the post of lieutenant-general under Fairfax ; but, in reality, possessing the supreme command over the whole army.

Soon after the retreat of the Scots, the presbyterian party, seeing every thing reduced to obedience, began to talk of dismissing a considerable part of the army, and sending the rest to Ireland. It may easily be supposed, that for every reason the troops were as unwilling to be disbanded as to be led over into a country as yet uncivilised, uncultivated, and barbarous. Cromwell took care to inspire them with a horror of either ; they loved him for his bravery and religious zeal, and still more for his seeming affection to them. Instead, therefore, of submitting, they resolved to pe-

tion; and they began by desiring an indemnity, ratified by the king, for any illegal actions which they might have committed during the war. This the commons, in turn, treated with great severity; they voted, that this petition tended to introduce mutiny, to put conditions upon the parliament to obstruct the relief of the kingdom of Ireland; and they threatened to proceed against the promoters of it as enemies to the state, and disturbers of the public peace.

The army now began to consider themselves as a body distinct from the commonwealth; and complained, that they had secured the general tranquillity, while they were, at the same time, deprived of the privileges of Englishmen. In opposition, therefore, to the parliament at Westminster, a military parliament was formed, composed of the officers and common soldiers of each regiment. The principal officers formed a council to represent the body of peers; the soldiers elected two men out of each company to represent the house of commons; and these were called the Agitators of the army. Cromwell took care to be one of the number, and thus contrived an easy method under-hand of conducting and promoting the sedition of the army.

This fierce assembly, having debated for a very short time, declared that they found many grievances to be redressed; and began by specifying such as they desired to be most speedily removed. The very same conduct which had formerly been used with success by the parliament against their sovereign, was now put in practice by the army against the parliament. As the commons granted every request, the agitators rose in their demands; the former accused the army of mutiny and sedition; the army retorted the charge, and alleged that the king had been deposed only to make way for their usurpations.

The unhappy king, in the mean time, continued a prisoner at Holdenby Castle; and as his countenance might add some authority to that side which should obtain it, Cromwell, who secretly conducted all the measures of the army while he apparently exclaimed against their violence, resolved to seize the king's person. Accordingly a party of five hundred horse appeared at the castle, under the command of one Joyce, who had been originally a tailor, but who, in the present confusion of all ranks and orders, was advanced to the rank of cornet. Without any opposition, he en-

tered the king's apartment, armed with pistols, and told him that he must prepare and go with him. "Whither?" said the king. "To the army," replied Joyce. "By what warrant?" asked the king. Joyce pointed to his followers. "Your warrant," replied Charles, "is written in fair characters." And then, without further delay, he went into his coach, and was safely conducted to the army, who were hastening to their rendezvous at Triploe-heath, near Royston. The next day Cromwell arrived among them, where he was received with acclamations of joy, and was instantly invested with the supreme command.

It was now that the commons perceived a settled design in the army to prescribe laws to their employers; and they did not fail to spread the alarm through the city. But it was too late to resist; the army, with Cromwell at their head, advanced with precipitation, and arrived in a few days at St. Alban's; so that the commons now began to think of temporising. The declaration by which they had voted the military petitioners enemies to the state, was recalled and erased from their journal-book. But all submission was vain; the army still rose in their demands, in proportion as those demands were gratified, until at last they entirely threw off the mask, and claimed a right of modelling the whole government, and settling the nation.

But as too precipitate an assumption of authority might appear invidious, Cromwell began by accusing eleven members of the house as guilty of high-treason, and enemies to the army. The members accused were the leaders of the presbyterian party, the very men who had prescribed such rigorous measures to the king, and now, in their turn, were threatened with popular resentment. As they were the leading men in the house, the commons were willing to protect them; but the army insisting on their dismissal, they voluntarily left the house rather than be compelled to withdraw.

At last the citizens of London, who had been ever foremost in sedition, began to open their eyes, and to perceive that the constitution was totally overturned. They saw an oppressive parliament now subjected to a more oppressive army; they found their religion abolished, their king a captive, and no hopes of redress but from another scene of slaughter. In this exigence, therefore, the common-council assembled the militia of the city; the works were manned, and a manifesto published, aggravating the hostile



intentions of the army. Finding that the house of commons, in compliance with the request of the army, had voted that the city militia should be disbanded, the multitude rose, besieged the door of the house, and obliged them to reverse that vote which they had passed so lately.

In this manner was this wretched house intimidated on either side; obliged at one time to obey the army, at another to comply with the clamours of the city rabble. This assembly was, in consequence, divided into parties, as usual; one part siding with the seditious citizens, while the minority, with the two speakers at their head, were for encouraging the army. In such an universal confusion, it is not to be expected that any thing less than a separation of the parties could take place; and accordingly the two speakers, with sixty-two members, secretly retired from the house, and threw themselves under the protection of the army, then encamped upon Hounslow heath. They were received with shouts and acclamations; their integrity was extolled; and the whole body of the soldiery, a formidable force of twenty thousand men, now moved forward to reinstate them.

In the mean time, the remaining members resolved to act with vigour, and resist the encroachments of the army. They chose new speakers; they gave orders for enlisting troops; they ordered the trained bands to man the lines; and the whole city boldly resolved to resist the invasion. But this resolution only held while the enemy was thought at a distance; for, when the formidable force of Cromwell appeared, all was obedience and submission; the gates were opened to the general, who attended the two speakers, and the rest of the members, peaceably to their habitations. The eleven impeached members, being accused as causes of the tumult, were expelled, and most of them retired to the continent. The mayor, sheriff, and three aldermen, were sent to the Tower; several citizens, and officers of militia, were committed to prison, and the lines about the city were levelled to the ground. The command of the Tower was given to Fairfax, the general; and the parliament ordered him their hearty thanks for having disobeyed their commands.

It now only remained to dispose of the king, who had been sent by the army a prisoner to Hampton-Court. The independent army, at the head of whom was Cromwell, on one hand, and

the presbyterians in the name of either house, on the other hand, treated separately with him in private. He had at one time even hopes, that, in these struggles for power, he might have been chosen mediator in the dispute; and he expected that the kingdom, at last sensible of the miseries of anarchy, would, like a froward child, hushed with its own importunities, settle into its former tranquil constitution. However, in all his miseries and doubts, though at first led about with his army, and afterwards kept a prisoner by them at Hampton, such was his admirable equality of temper, that no difference was perceived in his countenance and behaviour. Though a captive in the hands of his most inveterate enemies, he still supported the dignity of a monarch; and he never one moment sunk from the consciousness of his own superiority.

It is true, that at first he was treated with some flattering marks of distinction; he was permitted to converse with his old servants, his chaplains were admitted to attend him, and celebrate divine service their own way. But the most exquisite pleasure he enjoyed was in the company of his children, with whom he had several interviews. The meeting on these occasions was so pathetic, that Cromwell himself, who was once present, could not help being moved; he was heard to declare, that he had never beheld such an affecting scene before: and we must do justice to this man's feelings, as he was himself a tender father.

But those flattering instances of respect and submission were of no long continuance. As soon as the army had gained a complete victory over the house of commons, the independents began to abate of their expressions of duty and respect. The king, therefore, was now more strictly guarded: they would hardly allow his domestics to converse with him in private, and spies were employed to mark all his words and actions. He was every hour threatened with false dangers of Cromwell's contrivance; by which he was taught to fear for his personal safety. The spies and creatures of that artful man were sedulously employed in raising the king's terrors, and representing to him the danger of his situation. These at length prevailed, and Charles resolved to withdraw himself from the army. Cromwell considered, that if he should escape from the kingdom, there would be then a theatre open to his ambition; if he should be apprehended, the

late attempt would aggravate his guilt, and apologise for any succeeding severity.

Early in the evening, the king retired to his chamber, on pretence of being indisposed; and about an hour after midnight, he went down the back-stairs, attended by Ashburnham and Legge, both gentlemen of his bed-chamber. Sir John Berkeley waited for him at the garden-gate with horses, which they instantly mounted, and travelling through the Forest all night, arrived at Tichfield, the seat of the earl of Southampton. Before he arrived at this place, he had gone towards the shore, and expressed great anxiety that a ship, which Ashburnham had promised to be in readiness, was not to be seen. At Tichfield he deliberated with his friends upon his next excursion, and they advised him to cross over to the Isle of Wight, where Hammond was governor; who, though a creature of Cromwell, was yet a nephew of doctor Hammond, the king's chaplain. To this inauspicious protector it was resolved to have recourse; Ashburnham and Berkeley were sent before to exact a promise from this officer, that, if he would not protect the king, he would not detain him. Hammond seemed surprised at their demand; expressed his inclination to serve his majesty, but at the same time alleged his duty to his employers. He therefore attended the king's gentlemen to Tichfield, with a guard of soldiers, and remained in a lower apartment while Ashburnham went up to the king's chamber. Charles no sooner understood that Hammond was in the house with a body of troops, than he exclaimed, "O Jack! thou hast undone me!" Ashburnham shed a flood of tears, and offered to go down and dispatch the governor; but the king repressed his ardour. When Hammond came into his presence, he repeated his professions of regard; Charles submitted to his fate; and, without further delay, attended him to Carisbrook castle, in the Isle of Wight, where he at first found himself treated with marks of duty and respect.

While the king continued in this forlorn situation, the parliament, new modelled as it was by the army, became every day more feeble and factious. Cromwell, on the other hand, was strengthening the army, and taking every precaution to repress any tendency to factious division among them. Nor were his fears without just cause; for, had it not been for the quickness of

his penetration, and the boldness of his activity, the whole army would have been thrown into a state of ungovernable phrensy.

Among the independents, who, in general, were for having no ecclesiastical subordination, a set of men grew up called *Levellers*, who disallowed all subordination whatsoever, and declared that they would have no other chaplain, king, or general, but Christ. They declared that all men were equal; that all degrees and ranks should be levelled, and an exact partition of property established in the nation. This ferment spread through the army; and as it was a doctrine well suited to the poverty of the daring soldiery, it promised every day to become more dangerous and fatal. Several petitions were presented, urging the justice of a partition, and threatening vengeance on a refusal of redress.

Cromwell now saw that he was upon the point of losing all the fruits of his former schemes and dangers; and dreaded this new faction still more, as they turned his own pretended principles against himself. Thus finding all at stake, he resolved, by one resolute blow, to disperse the faction, or perish in the attempt. Having intimation that the levellers were to meet at a certain place, he unexpectedly appeared before the terrified assembly, at the head of his red regiment, which had been hitherto invincible. He demanded, in the name of God, what these meetings and murmurings meant; he expostulated with them upon the danger and consequence of their precipitate schemes, and desired them immediately to depart. But instead of obeying, they returned an insolent answer; wherefore, rushing on them in a fury, he laid, with his own hands, two of them dead at his feet. His guards dispersing the rest, he caused several of them to be hanged upon the spot; he sent other prisoners to London; and thus dissipated a faction, no otherwise criminal than in having followed his own example.

This action served still more to increase the power of Cromwell in the camp and in the parliament; and while Fairfax was nominally general of the troops, Oliver was invested with all the power. But his authority soon became irresistible, in consequence of a new and unexpected addition to his successes. The Scots, perhaps ashamed of the reproach of having sold their king, and stimulated by the independents, who took all occasions to mortify them, raised an army in his favour, and the chief com-

mand was given to the duke of Hamilton ; while Langdale, who professed himself at the head of the more bigoted party, who had taken the covenant, marched at the head of his separate body, and both invaded the North of England. Their two armies amounted to about twenty thousand men. But [1648.] Cromwell, at the head of eight thousand of his hardy veterans, feared not to give them battle ; he attacked them one after the other, routed and dispersed them, took Hamilton prisoner ; and, following his blow, entered Scotland, where he settled the government entirely to his satisfaction. An insurrection in Kent was quelled by Fairfax at the same time with the same ease ; and nothing but success attended all this bold usurper's criminal attempts.

During these contentions, the king, who was kept a prisoner at Carisbrook, continued to negotiate with the parliament for settling the unspeakable calamities of the kingdom. The parliament saw no other method of destroying military power, but to depress it by the kingly. Frequent proposals for an accommodation passed between the captive king and the commons ; but the great obstacle which had all along stood in the way, still kept them from agreeing. This was the king's refusing to abolish episcopacy, though he consented to the liturgy of the church. However, the treaty was still carried on with vigour, as the parliament had more to apprehend from the designs of their generals than from the attempts of the king ; and, for the first time, they seemed in earnest to conclude their negotiations.

But all was now too late ; their power was soon totally to expire ; for the rebellious army, crowned with success, had returned from the destruction of their enemies, and, sensible of their own power, with furious remonstrances began to demand vengeance on the king. At the same time they advanced to Windsor ; and, sending an officer to seize the king's person, where he was lately sent under confinement, they conveyed him to Hurst castle, in Hampshire, opposite the Isle of Wight. It was in vain that the parliament complained of this harsh proceeding, as being contrary to their approbation ; it was in vain that they began to issue ordinances for a more effectual opposition ; they received a message from Cromwell, that he intended paying them a visit the next day

with his army; and in the mean time he ordered them to levy forty thousand pounds upon the city of London for the public use.

The commons, though destitute of all hopes of prevailing, had still courage to resist, and attempted, in the face of the whole army, to close their treaty with the king. They had taken into consideration the whole of his concessions; and though they had formerly voted them unsatisfactory, they now renewed the consultation with fresh vigour. After a violent debate, which had lasted three days, it was carried in the king's favour by a majority of a hundred and twenty-nine against eighty-three, that his concessions were a foundation for the houses to proceed upon, in the settlement of the kingdom. This was the last attempt in his favour: for the next day colonel Pride, at the head of two regiments, blockaded the house, and seized in the passage forty-one members of the presbyterian party, and sent them to a low room belonging to the house, that passed by the denomination of Hell. Above a hundred and sixty members more were excluded; and none were allowed to enter but the most furious and determined of the independents, in all not exceeding sixty. This atrocious invasion of the parliamentary rights commonly passed by the name of Pride's *Purge*; and the remaining members were called the *Rump*. These soon voted, that the transactions of the house, a few days before, were entirely illegal, and that the conduct of their general was just and necessary.

Nothing now remained, after the constitution had been destroyed, after the parliament had been ejected, after the religion of the country had been abolished, after the bravest and the best of its subjects had been slain, but to murder the king! This vile parliament, if it now deserves the name, was composed of a medley of the most obscure citizens, and the officers of the army. In this assembly, a committee was appointed to bring in a charge against the king; and, on their report, a vote passed, declaring it treason in a king to levy war against his parliament. It was therefore resolved, that a high court of justice should be appointed to try his majesty for this new-invented treason. For the sake of form, they desired the concurrence of the few remaining lords in the other house; but here there was virtue enough left unanimously to reject the horrid proposal.

But the commons were not to be stopped by so small an obstacle. They voted, that the concurrence of the [1649.] house of lords was unnecessary; they voted that the people were the origin of all just power; a fact which, though true, they never could bring home to themselves. To add to their zeal, a woman of Hertfordshire, illuminated by prophetic visions, desired admittance, and communicated a revelation which she had received from heaven. She assured them that their measures were consecrated from above, and ratified by the sanction of the Holy Ghost. This intelligence gave them great comfort, and much confirmed them in their present resolutions.

Colonel Harrison, the son of a butcher, was commanded to conduct the king from Hurst castle to Windsor, and thence to London. His afflicted subjects, who ran to have a sight of their sovereign, were greatly affected at the change that appeared in his face and person. He had allowed his beard to grow; his hair had become venerably grey, rather by the pressure of anxiety than the hand of time; while the rest of his apparel bore the marks of misfortune and decay. Thus he stood a solitary figure of majesty in distress, which even his adversaries could not behold without reverence and compassion. He had been long attended only by an old decrepit servant, whose name was sir Philip Warwick, who could only deplore his master's fate, without being able to revenge his cause. All the exterior symbols of sovereignty were now withdrawn; and his new attendants had orders to serve him without ceremony. The duke of Hamilton, who was reserved for the same punishment with his master, having leave to take a last farewell as he departed from Windsor, threw himself at the king's feet, crying out, "My dear master!" The unhappy monarch raised him up, and, embracing him tenderly, replied, while the tears ran down his cheeks, "I have indeed been a dear master to you." These were severe distresses: however, he could not be persuaded that his adversaries would bring him to a formal trial; but he every moment expected to be dispatched by private assassination.

From the sixth to the twentieth of January was spent in making preparations for this extraordinary trial. The court of justice consisted of a hundred and thirty-three persons named by the commons; but of these never above seventy met upon the trial.

The members who attended were the chief officers of the army, most of them of very mean birth, together with some of the lower house, and a few citizens of London. Bradshaw, a lawyer, was chosen president; Coke was appointed solicitor for the people of England; Dorislaus, Steele, and Aske, were named assistants. The court sat in Westminster-hall.

The king was now conducted from Windsor to St. James's and, the next day, was brought before the high court to take his trial. While the crier was calling over the names of the commissioners for trying him, nobody answering for lord Fairfax, a female voice from the gallery was heard to cry out, "He has more wit than to be here." When the impeachment was read in the name of the people of England, the same voice exclaimed, "No, nor a tenth part of them." Axtel, the officer who guarded the court, giving orders to fire into the box from which the voice proceeded, it was discovered that these bold answers came from the lady Fairfax, who alone had courage to condemn their proceedings.

When the king was brought before the court, he was conducted by the mace-bearer to a chair placed within the bar. Though long detained a prisoner, and now produced as a criminal, he still sustained the dignity of a king; he surveyed the members of the court with an intrepid haughty air; and, without moving his hat, sat down, while the members also were covered. His charge was then read by the solicitor, accusing him of having been the cause of all the bloodshed which followed since the commencement of the war: at that part of the charge he could not suppress a smile of contempt and indignation. After the charge was finished, Bradshaw directed his discourse to the king, and told him that the court expected his answer.

The king with great temper entered upon his defence, by declining the authority of the court. He represented, that having been engaged in treaty with his two houses of parliament, and having finished almost every article, he expected a different treatment from that which he now received. He perceived, he said, no appearance of an upper house, which was necessary to constitute a just tribunal; observed that he was himself the king and fountain of law, and consequently could not be tried by laws to which he had never given his assent; that, having been entrusted with the liberties of the people, he would not now betray



them, by recognizing a power founded in usurpation ; that he was willing before a proper tribunal to enter into the particulars of his defence ; but that before them he must decline any apology for his innocence, lest he should be considered as the betrayer of, and not a martyr for, the constitution.

Bradshaw, in order to support the authority of the court, insisted that they had received their power from the people, the source of all right. He pressed the prisoner not to decline the authority of the court, that was delegated by the commons of England ; and interrupted and over-ruled the king in his attempts to reply.

In this manner the king was three times produced before the court, and as often persisted in declining its jurisdiction. The fourth and last time he was brought before this self-created court, as he was proceeding thither he was insulted by the soldiers and the mob, who exclaimed, " Justice ! justice ! Execution ! execution !" but he continued undaunted. His judges having now examined some witnesses, by whom it was proved that the king had appeared in arms against the forces commissioned by parliament, they pronounced sentence against him. He seemed very anxious at this time to be admitted to a conference with the two houses ; and it was supposed that he intended to resign the crown to his son : but the court refused compliance, and considered his request as an artifice to delay justice.

The conduct of the king, under all these instances of low-bred malice, was great, firm, and equal ; in going through the hall from this execrable tribunal, the soldiers and rabble were again instigated to cry out Justice and Execution. They reviled him with the most bitter reproaches. Among other insults, one miscreant presumed to spit in the face of his sovereign. He patiently bore their insolence. " Poor souls," cried he, " they would treat their generals in the same manner for sixpence." Those of the populace, who still retained the feelings of humanity, expressed their sorrow in sighs and tears. A soldier, more compassionate than the rest, could not help imploring a blessing upon his royal head. An officer overhearing him struck the honest sentinel to the ground before the king, who could not help saying, that the punishment exceeded the offence.

At his return to Whitehall, he desired the permission of the

house to see his children, and to be attended in his private devotions by doctor Juxon, late bishop of London. These requests were granted, and also three days to prepare for the execution of the sentence. All that remained of his family now in England were the princess Elizabeth, and the duke of Gloucester, a child of eight years of age. After many seasonable and sensible exhortations to his daughter, he took his little son in his arms, and, embracing him, "My child," said he, "they will cut off thy father's head; yes, they will cut off my head, and make thee a king. But mark what I say; thou must not be a king as long as thy brothers Charles and James are alive. They will cut off their heads when they can take them, and thy head too they will cut off at last, and therefore I charge thee do not be made a king by them." The child, bursting into tears, replied, "I will be torn in pieces first."

Every night, during the interval between his sentence and execution, the king slept soundly as usual, though the noise of the workmen, employed in framing the scaffold, continually resounded in his ears. The fatal morning being at last arrived, he rose early, and calling one of his attendants, he bade him employ more than usual care in dressing him, and preparing him for so great and joyful a solemnity. The street before Whitehall was the place destined for his execution; for it was intended that this should increase the severity of his punishment. He was led through the Banqueting-house to the scaffold adjoining to that edifice, attended by his friend and servant bishop Juxon, a man endowed with the mild and steady virtues of his master. The scaffold, which was covered with black, was guarded by a regiment of soldiers under the command of colonel Tomlinson, and on it were to be seen the block, the axe, and two executioners in masques. The people in great crowds stood at a greater distance, in dreadful expectation of the event. The king surveyed all these solemn preparations with calm composure; and as he could not expect to be heard by the people at a distance, he addressed himself to the few persons who stood round him. He there justified his own innocence in the late fatal wars; and observed, that he had not taken arms till after the parliament had shown him the example; that he had no other object in his warlike preparations than to preserve that authority entire which had

been transmitted to him by his ancestors; but, though innocent towards his people, he acknowledged the equity of his execution in the eyes of his Maker. He owned that he was justly punished for having consented to the execution of an unjust sentence upon the earl of Strafford. He forgave all his enemies, exhorted the people to return to their obedience, and acknowledged his son as his successor; and signified his attachment to the protestant religion as professed in the church of England. So strong was the impression his dying words made upon the few who could hear him, that colonel Tomlinson himself, to whose care he had been committed, acknowledged himself a convert.

While he was preparing himself for the block, bishop Juxon called out to him: "There is, sir, but one stage more, which, though turbulent and troublesome, is yet a very short one. It will soon carry you a great way: it will carry you from earth to heaven; and there you will find, to your great joy, the prize to which you hasten—a crown of glory." "I go," replied the king, "from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no disturbance can have place." "You exchange," replied the bishop, "a temporal for an eternal crown—a good exchange." Charles, having taken off his cloak, delivered his George to the prelate, pronouncing the word, "Remember." Then he laid his neck on the block; and, when he had stretched out his hands as a signal, one of the executioners severed his head from his body at a blow, while the other, holding it up, exclaimed, "This is the head of a traitor!" The spectators testified their horror at the sad spectacle in sighs, tears, and lamentations; the tide of their duty and affection began to return, and each blamed himself either for active disloyalty to his king, or a passive compliance with his destroyers. The very pulpits, that used to resound with insolence and sedition, were now bedewed with tears of unfeigned repentance; and all united in their detestation of those dark hypocrites, who, to satisfy their own enmity, involved a whole nation in the guilt of treason.

Charles was executed in the forty-ninth year of his age, and the twenty-fourth of his reign. He was of a middling stature, robust, and well proportioned. His visage was pleasing, but melancholy; and it is probable that the continual troubles in which he was involved might have made that

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impression on his countenance. As for his character, the reader will deduce it with more precision and satisfaction to himself from the detail of his conduct, than from any summary given of it by the historian. It will suffice to say, that all his faults seem to have arisen from the error of his education ; while all his virtues (and he possessed many) were the genuine offspring of his heart. He lived at a time when the established exercise of the prerogative was at variance with the genius of the people ; and, governing by old rules and precedents, instead of accommodating himself to the changes of the times, he fell, and drew down, as he sunk, the constitution in ruins round him. Many kings before him expired by treason or assassination ; but never, since the times of Agis the Lacedæmonian, was there any other sacrificed by his subjects with all the formalities of justice. Many were the miseries sustained by the nation in bringing this monarch to the block ; and more were yet to be endured previous to the settlement of the constitution : yet these struggles were ultimately productive of domestic happiness and security ; the laws became more precise, the monarch's privileges better ascertained, and the subject's duty better delineated ; all became more peaceable, as if a previous fermentation in the constitution was necessary for its subsequent refinement.

END OF VOLUME I.

















